

Manitoba

Floodway Expansion Authority



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FLOODWAY AUTHORITY CONCLUDES SECOND ROUND OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION: PROGRESS ON PROJECT ELEMENTS ANNOUNCED

Winnipeg, Manitoba – The Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority (MFEA) today confirmed progress regarding project elements as a result of their recently completed second round of public consultation. The measures and findings announced today focus on groundwater mitigation, erosion and ongoing consultation.

“This round of public consultation was very informative and provided the public another opportunity to learn about and raise questions regarding the floodway expansion project,” said Ernie Gilroy, CEO of MFEA. “As the project design is refined and as the public consultation proceeds, the Authority will be providing more up-to-date information about this historic project.”

MFEA’s second round of public consultation was announced in March. It featured meetings with municipal governments, stakeholder roundtables and six public meetings attended by more than 500 residents. MFEA will issue a full public report on the public consultation process. A permanent web-site (www.floodwayauthority.mb.ca) and toll free phone line (1-866-356-6355) has also been established by MFEA.

“The public open houses have demonstrated that Manitobans are very concerned with the protection of groundwater as the expansion project proceeds,” said Gilroy. “We share these concerns and will focus our efforts to mitigate any adverse impact on groundwater.”

The measures and findings announced today by MFEA include:

- **Groundwater Mitigation**

Initial plans to deepen the floodway channel by up to six feet have been dramatically scaled back. MFEA will now deepen the floodway by no more than two feet in any location – if at all.

MFEA will establish a groundwater reserve fund to mitigate any isolated groundwater effects that may arise.

- Erosion

Independent engineering studies on erosion impacts have concluded the following items regarding the project:

- > Reduced erosion potential in the vicinity of the floodway inlet when the new floodway is in operation
- > No additional and possibly reduced erosion in floodway channel due to floodway expansion when the new floodway is in operation
- > No additional erosion in vicinity of floodway outlet due to floodway expansion when the new floodway is in operation.
- > No noticeable change in erosion or sediment in Red River from rainfall runoff due to construction of the new floodway outlet channel and control structure
- > Negligible erosion on slopes of the floodway channel and disposal piles when expanded floodway is inactive
- > No additional erosion due to Floodway Expansion on banks of Red River beyond Floodway outlet, including at Lower Fort Garry and Selkirk
- > No discernable long term difference in sediment transport to Lake Winnipeg due to floodway expansion

- Additional Consultation

Manitoba will facilitate additional public consultation regarding the *Red River Floodway Act* through its normal legislative review process.

A third round of public consultation will be initiated by the project's independent environmental consultant. Stakeholder sessions and municipal councils meetings began on May 11 and will run through to June 23, 2004. Another round of public open houses have also been scheduled:

- > June 2 - Ste Agathe Hall (4pm – 9pm)
- > June 8 - Dugald Community Centre (4pm – 9pm)
- > June 16 - Selkirk Legion (4pm – 9pm)
- > June 23 – Winnipeg Fort Rouge Leisure Centre (4pm – 9pm)

MFEA will establish an ongoing public consultation process beyond the environmental licensing process and throughout the project's construction phase

These items compliment other measures announced by MFEA during the public consultation process related to natural water levels, recreation & economic opportunities, and floodway operation. As design of the floodway expansion project continues to be refined and as the public consultation process proceeds, the public will be kept up to date on progress.

In the aftermath of the 1997 “flood of the century”, the Governments of Canada and Manitoba invested \$130 million in flood protection measures - \$110 million for rural Manitoba communities. Over the past year, Canada and Manitoba have announced an additional \$240 million to begin work on the floodway expansion – more than one-third the total project cost. Canada has recognized the project as a national infrastructure priority.