



Release

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FIVE POINT ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PLAN TO PROTECT ENDANGERED PEREGRINE FALCONS UNVEILED

Excavation of Earthen Ponds to Enhance Natural Habitat for Falcons

Winnipeg, MB – Today, Premier Gary Doer announced a plan to mitigate the impact of West Dike construction on Parkland Mews Falconry & Bird of Prey Education Centre. The plan will help to support and promote the protection of Endangered Peregrine falcons that nest in captivity just outside of Winnipeg.

“Parkland Mews has established a very unique initiative to protect Endangered Peregrine falcons,” said Premier Doer. “By working to understand the habits, breeding and nesting routine of these remarkable birds, Parkland Mews is contributing to the long-term protection and well-being of this species. We are very pleased that the MFA has been able to accommodate Parkland Mews into its plans for construction of the West Dike.”

“During our extensive public consultation and environmental licensing process, MFA made a commitment to mitigate adverse impacts related to floodway construction,” said Ernie Gilroy, CEO of the MFA. “By facilitating timely construction of the West Dike and by helping to protect an endangered species – today’s announcement is a win-win for the environment and the floodway project.”

While construction on the West Dike is underway in the vicinity of Parkland Mews, the facility will be required to suspend their recovery and research program. Although the program will be suspended temporarily, the long-term effects of construction on the program are unknown at this time. To mitigate this potential adverse impact, MFA has established a five-point mitigation plan that consists of the following:

1. MFA will not start construction on the West Dike within 1 km of the vicinity of Parkland Mews until August 15, 2007 to accommodate this year’s falcon hatching program.
2. MFA will create up to four new ponds in the vicinity of Parkland Mews to enhance the habitat for the falcons as a component of the excavation work on the West Dike;
3. MFA will construct fencing on the West Dike to discourage trespassing and disruption to the falcons particularly by motorized vehicles, which are detrimental to the well-being of the falcons;
4. MFA will contribute to the recovery and research program recognizing the unrecoverable disruption to the program due to construction activity;

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5. MFA will work with Manitoba Hydro to increase the height and replace the existing falcon tower when West Dike construction in the vicinity of the facility is completed.

“Peregrine falcons nest in areas where they are not readily disturbed,” said Robert Wheeldon, Falconer and Founding Director of Parkland Mews. “The Manitoba Floodway Authority is sensitive to this and has taken strong measures to accommodate the recovery program while constructing the West Dike. As a result of this partnership, Parkland Mews will be in stronger position to assist in conservation endeavours for saving the Peregrine in Manitoba. We congratulate the MFA for their leadership and commitment to conservation and environmental protection.”

In 2000, Parkland Mews developed the Manitoba Peregrine Falcon Recovery Plan and, subsequently developed the associated Recovery Strategy in 2001. Since that time Peregrine Falcons have been held on site and a number of offspring have been produced and released into the wild. A total of eight falcons were released – five in 2005 and three in 2006.

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Contact:

Jonathan Hildebrand
Manitoba Cabinet Communications
(204) 945-1494

Ronuk Modha
Manitoba Floodway Authority
(204) 945-4178, (204) 945-4900, or 793-3969 (cell)