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FLOODWAY AUTHORITY UNVEILS FIRST PHASE OF FLOOD SIMULATION PROJECT

Simulation Demonstrates Impact of 700 Year Flood With Existing and Expanded Floodway

Winnipeg, MB – Today, during their opening presentation at the Clean Environment Commission (CEC) public hearings on the Red River Floodway expansion project, the Manitoba Floodway Authority (MFA) unveiled the first phase of its flood simulation project, that uses advanced technology to simulate various Red River flood scenarios, assist engineers in project design, complement emergency measures planning, and helps to inform the public about the floodway project.

The first phase of the flood simulation project demonstrates the impact of a 1-in-700 year flood with the existing floodway on Winnipeg versus the impact of the same flood with an expanded floodway. The simulation, based on sophisticated computer software, demonstrates that the impact of a flood of this size would result in approximately two-thirds of Winnipeg being impacted by basement and overland flooding. With an expanded floodway, the amount of flooding within Winnipeg would be dramatically reduced to isolated locations along the Red River.

“The flood simulation reinforces the need for expanding the floodway in a timely manner,” said Steve Ashton, Minister of Water Stewardship. “It is critical that we begin the floodway expansion project to ensure that the province’s economic engine is protected in the event of a flood larger than the 1997 “Flood of the Century”. Moving forward with this project helps to ensure that Winnipeg is better protected in the upcoming years.”

“Floodway expansion will help to ensure that the devastation depicted in the flood simulation will be avoided in the future,” said Reg Alcock, President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. “The impact of a 700 year flood striking Manitoba today would be enormous and would have a long lasting social, economic and environmental impact. The floodway project will protect us and help to prevent this devastation.”

By more than doubling the capacity of the existing floodway, the expansion is designed to provide a 1-in-700 year level of flood protection and protect more than 450,000 Manitobans, more than 140,000 homes, more than 8,000 businesses, and prevent more than \$12 billion in damages to the provincial economy.



“This is an innovative project designed to enhance the public’s understanding of the floodway project,” said Ernie Gilroy, CEO of MFA. “As we build on the first phase, we anticipate applying this technology to assist in project design and construction, demonstrate project components, as well as examining the potential for its application for emergency preparedness.” He indicated that preliminary discussions regarding the application of this project have already begun with Emergency Preparedness Canada and the Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization (MEMO).

The flood simulation project is being developed in phases. The first phase consisted of the “mapping” of Winnipeg. The second phase of the project will include mapping the Red River Basin landscape from the Canada / United States border north through the Red River Valley.

The third phase of the project will involve local expertise through the Manitoba Industrial Technology’s Virtual Reality Centre and will establish a virtual tour of the floodway works for the expansion project. This component will consist of the depicting various components of the floodway expansion project such as bridges and utility crossings, channel excavation, inlet and outlet control structures, the West Dike, or other areas.

Gilroy noted that a flood simulation project was one of the main recommendations of the recently released “Recreation and Economic Development Opportunities Report”.

The first phases of the project are being accomplished with the expertise and technology of the Canadian Hydraulics Centre of the National Research Council. The overall budget for the flood simulation project over four years is estimated at approximately \$300,000. Partnership opportunities to cost-share other phases of the project will be pursued.

In the aftermath of the 1997 ‘Flood of the Century’, the Governments of Canada and Manitoba invested \$130 million in flood protection measures including \$110 million for rural Manitoba communities. Canada and Manitoba have announced an additional \$240 million to begin work on the floodway expansion. Canada has recognized the project as a national infrastructure priority.

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