



# Release

For Immediate Release  
April 14, 2008

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### **2008 ABORIGINAL SET-ASIDE INITIATIVE** **TENDER PLAN UNVEILED**

### **Approximately \$28 Million Already Invested To** **Strengthen and Improve 30 KM of the West Dike**

**Winnipeg, MB** – The Manitoba Floodway Authority (MFA) today unveiled its 2008 Tender Plan for work on the West Dike as part of the Red River Floodway Expansion Project's Aboriginal Set-Aside Initiative.

"During the 1997 'Flood of the Century', flood waters very nearly overtopped the West Dike and threatened Winnipeg's flood protection," said Ron Lemieux, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. "Over the past three years, Aboriginal construction companies have raised and strengthened the West Dike to ensure that it is able to protect against a one-in-700 year flood. As a result, the work that is being done as part of the set-aside is a critical component of Winnipeg's flood protection system."

"We are pleased to see that the Manitoba Floodway Authority is providing employment opportunities to First Nations", says Grand Chief Ron Evans of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. "Our goal is to see all of our people educated and working. Opportunities such as this one are the way forward. We look forward to continuing to work with the Manitoba Floodway Authority."

"The Aboriginal Set-Aside Initiative for the construction of the Floodway has and will continue to provide valuable work experience to our citizens as well as expose our Métis owned companies to new opportunities," said David Chartrand, President of the Manitoba Métis Federation. "We continue to embrace the partnerships made with the Manitoba Floodway Authority and look forward to working with them until the project is complete."

As part of the 2008 Aboriginal Set-Aside seven tenders will be advertised for construction of the West Dike including:

- 3 contracts for dike construction of a 7.2 km (4.3 miles) section of the West Dike running west from PR 330. The work will consist of the dike construction, ditch grading, culvert installation, traffic control, temporary detours, traffic signage, silt fencing and other temporary erosion control measures, granular road surfacing, and revegetation.
- 3 contracts for the supply and installation of rock rip rap on 7.3 km of the recently reconstructed West Dike;
- 1 contract for the supply and installation of additional road topping for an 11.9 km section of the recently reconstructed West Dike;

To date, 17 construction tenders, worth approximately \$28 million, have been awarded on the Aboriginal Set-Aside Initiative. All tenders awarded on the set-aside have been completed on time and on budget. As construction proceeds, the MFA is planning to advertise additional tenders on the set-aside initiative.

“The Aboriginal Set-Aside Initiative is one way that the Floodway Authority is addressing the skilled labour shortage,” said Ernie Gilroy, CEO of the MFA. “By providing opportunities for First Nation and Métis construction companies to bid on west dike work, we are bringing new players to the table to help get the job done. This benefits the Aboriginal companies, the Aboriginal community and the floodway project.” Gilroy noted that within this year’s Aboriginal Set-Aside Initiative, specific contracts have been designated for bidding by First Nation and Métis construction contractors. In addition, in recognition of the success of the initiative, MFA is planning to expand its scope to include work on the low flow channel and additional gravel hauling contracts later this year.

To qualify as an Aboriginal firm to bid for work on the Aboriginal set-aside, a contractor was required to be at least:

- 51% Aboriginal-owned; and
- 1/3 of its employees must be Aboriginal persons

The West Dike, which is currently approximately 45 km (28 miles) in length and located southwest of Winnipeg, will be extended between 10 km (6 miles) and 15 km (9 miles) and raised in height in varying amounts to 1.5 metres (6 feet) to increase the flood protection safety factor. To date, approximately 30 km of the 45 km long West Dike has been reconstructed. These improvements will provide increased protection against wind and wave action during major flood events.

For more information on the 2008 Aboriginal Set-Aside Tender Plan, contractors are encouraged to attend a bidders’ conference on Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Astoria Hotel, 2935 Pembina Highway. All tenders will be posted on the MERX electronic tendering service ([www.merx.ca](http://www.merx.ca)).

#### Backgrounder & Map Attached

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**2008 ABORIGINAL SET-ASIDE INITIATIVE**  
**WEST DIKE CONSTRUCTION TENDERS**

1. **Tender W18** – A road topping contract which will place approximately 23,900 tonnes of crushed limestone on 11.9 kms of the West Dike that was built in 2007;
2. **Tender W22** – A contract to construct the 3.1 kms of the West Dike on PR 305 which will include the excavation and placement of 288,000 cubic metres of compacted embankment;
3. **Tender W23** – A contract to construct 2.3 kms of the West Dike on PR 305 which will include the excavation and placement of approximately 170,000 cubic metres of compacted embankment
4. **Tender W24** – A contract to construction 1.8 kms of the West Dike on PR 305 which will include the excavation and placement of approximately 84,000 cubic metres of compacted embankment.
5. **Tender W25** – A contract to supply and install 73,000 tonnes of processed limestone rock rip rap on a 2 km section of the West Dike.
6. **Tender W26** – A contract to supply and install 50,000 tonnes of processed limestone rock rip rap on a 2.3 km section of the West Dike.
7. **Tender W27** – A contract to supply and install 45,000 tonnes of processed limestone rock rip rap on a 3 km section of the West Dike.

