

Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority

More capacity. More opportunities. - FALL 2004

Message from CEO - "We are Listening..."

In 1997, the Red River Floodway came within inches of its limit during the Flood of the Century. The Red River Floodway Expansion project will increase the capacity of the floodway and improve flood protection.

Over the past 8 months, the Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority has been listening to Manitobans about this important project. Throughout our public consultation process, we have asked for your ideas, invited your questions and encouraged your participation.

Since January, 2004, the authority has sponsored 13 open houses and has consulted extensively with local municipal governments.

We have invited grassroots organizations to provide input on a wide variety of issues, from groundwater quality and drainage to recreation and economic opportunities. The result is an improved project design that is sensitive to local concerns and protects the environment.

As the project proceeds, we will continue to consult with you and provide the most up-to-date information available about this historic project, including another round of public consultation this fall. To assist us, we have established a website at www.floodwayauthority.mb.ca and a toll-free line for rural residents at 1-866-356-6355.

This newsletter provides you with a list of the most frequently asked questions we have received from the public. We hope that these questions and answers will provide a greater understanding of the project.

Thank you for your ongoing interest and input into one of the most important infrastructure projects in Manitoba's history.



Ernie Gilroy
CEO

IMPROVEMENTS TO FLOODWAY PROJECT ANNOUNCED

Groundwater Protected, Drainage Improved, Land Acquisition Requirements Reduced, and Bridges to be Replaced

Since the beginning of the public consultation process, the authority has heard a number of concerns from residents regarding a variety of issues including groundwater protection, drainage, land acquisition and transportation.

To address these concerns, the authority has announced significant improvements to the project:

- **Protecting Our Groundwater** – The authority has scaled back plans to deepen the floodway channel from up to six feet to no more than two feet.
- **Improving Drainage Capacity** – The authority will maintain or increase drainage capacity for all rural drainage structures on the floodway and associated drainage channels within the floodway right of way.
- **Reducing Land Acquisition Requirements** – The authority has scaled back plans to acquire land for channel widening from 1,000 additional acres (405 hectares) to a maximum of 500 acres (202 hectares).
- **Improving Transportation Links** – A four lane crossing is being planned for PTH 15 to meet increased traffic flows in the future. The following six highway bridges that cross the floodway will also be replaced with upgraded structures as part of the expansion:
 - St. Mary's Road, PR 200
 - PTH 59 south
 - Trans Canada Highway East
 - PTH 15
 - PTH 59 north
 - PTH 44

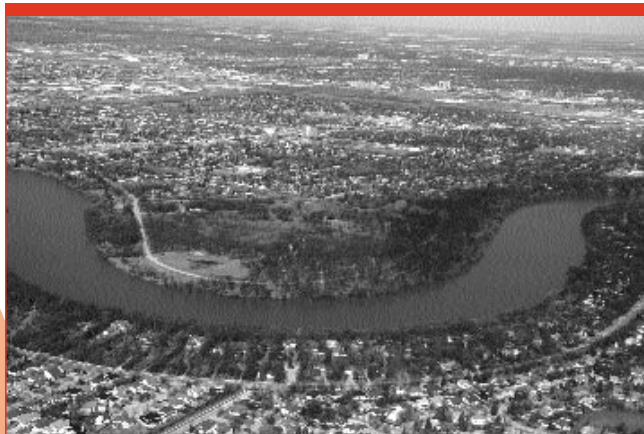
Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why are we expanding the floodway?

The floodway is an important part of Manitoba's economic infrastructure. It was built between 1962 and 1968 at a cost of \$63 million. Since that time, the floodway has saved Manitobans more than \$8 billion in flood losses, not to mention the environmental and social devastation that would have occurred.

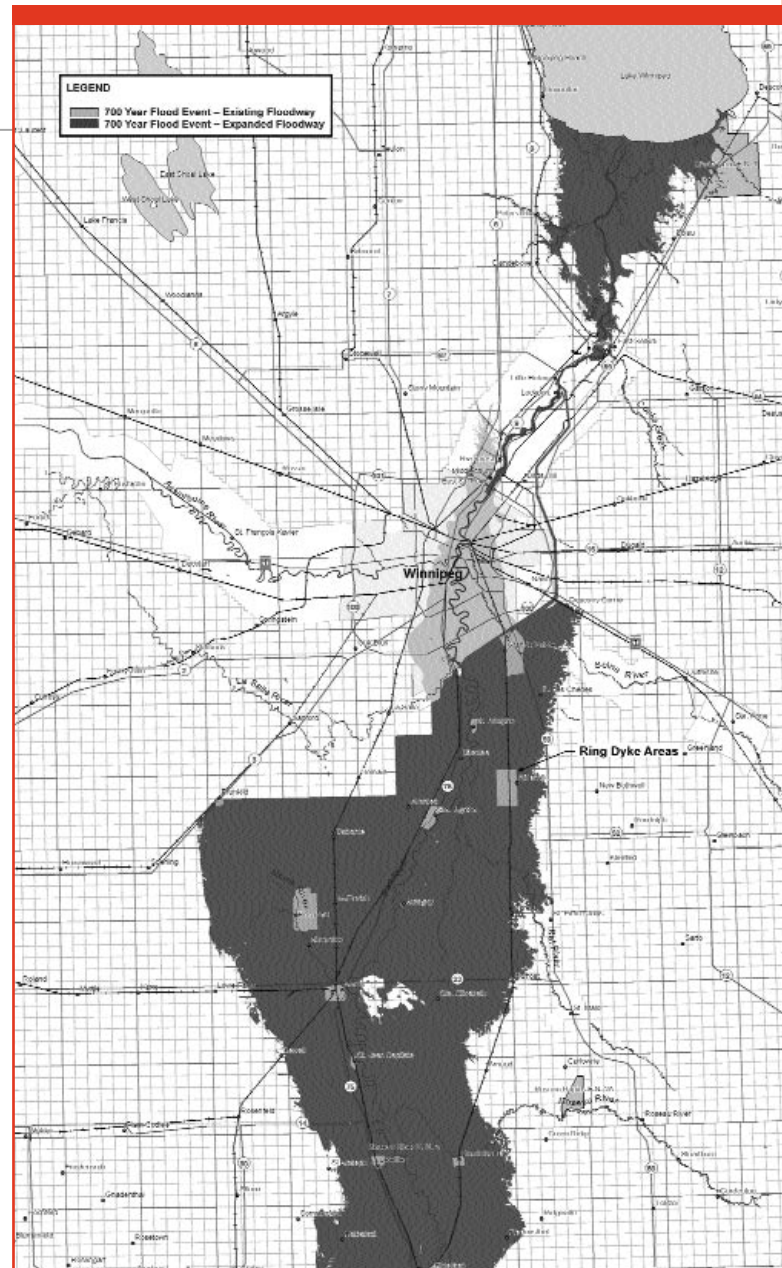
In 1997, the Red River Floodway came within inches of its limit during the Flood of the Century. In the aftermath, residents rightfully called for an increased level of flood protection.

Although significant, the 1997 flood was dwarfed by the flood of 1826, which was 40 per cent larger - Manitoba's largest recorded flood. It is estimated that a repeat of that 1826 flood today would cause \$5 billion in damage and an even larger 1 in 700 year flood would cause in excess of \$10 billion in damages to the Manitoba economy. The new, expanded floodway will provide protection against a 1 in 700 year flood and would protect 450,000 Manitoba residents who otherwise would be flooded during a 700 year flood.



2. After the floodway is expanded, how high would the water be at my house if the 1997 flood rates were repeated?

An expanded floodway would significantly increase the level of flood protection for Winnipeg and a number of communities in southern Manitoba. The vast majority of residents of the Red River Basin would see lower water levels and increased flood protection with a repeat of the 1997 flood. Water levels south of Ste. Agathe would not be affected by the floodway expansion. North of Winnipeg, on a stretch of the Red



Without an expanded floodway, many areas within Winnipeg and approximately 450,000 residents would be flooded in the event of a 700 year flood event

River from Lockport to Breezy Point, peak water levels would increase on average of 150 millimetres (six inches) but would not cause any additional flooding. Residents in this area would continue to be better protected during a 1 in 700 year flood because water levels would still be considerably lower than without the major flood protection works.

3. How will this project affect me?

The expansion project will improve the quality of life for all Manitobans and will have a long-lasting benefit for the province. It will provide increased flood security, create thousands of direct and indirect jobs, protect the environment and provide residents with an opportunity to help shape the future of their communities. For young people, the construction of the expanded floodway will provide employment and training opportunities, not to mention improve flood protection of their future home, business or place of work.

In particular, this project will affect you, your friends or family, if you or they:

- live or work close to the Red River or floodway
- work in the construction or engineering industry
- own a business that has been or could be disrupted by a major flood
- are trying to attract investment or establish a business in Manitoba
- use the floodway for recreation purposes

4. What does the floodway expansion project include?

Work on the floodway expansion project includes:

- pre-design and engineering work
- channel widening
- reconstructed outlet control structure north of Winnipeg
- improvements to current inlet structure south of Winnipeg
- upgrading a dozen bridge crossings
- expansion of the west dike south of Winnipeg

Since 2003, Canada and Manitoba have announced \$240 million to begin work on the project. The federal government has recognized the Red River Floodway as a national infrastructure priority.

5. Have flood protection alternatives to the floodway expansion been considered, in particular pumping stations along the Red River and water retention south of Winnipeg?

Yes. The International Joint Commission studied a number of different options for flood protection in the Red River Basin, including water retention south of Winnipeg and flood pumping stations. After reviewing all the facts and options, the expansion of the current floodway was chosen by the federal and provincial governments as the most cost-effective and viable flood protection option.

6. What benefits can rural Manitobans expect from this project?

The expanded floodway will protect against a 1 in 700 year flood which, if occurred today, would result in excess of \$10 billion in damages to Manitoba's economy. Furthermore, in the event of another Flood of the Century, many rural communities would have increased levels of flood protection to complement the \$110 million invested in rural flood protection measures by Canada and Manitoba since the 1997 Flood of the Century.

The authority is committed to ensuring that the floodway expansion project addresses local concerns. For example, in addition to improving flood protection, the authority is committed to the following rural priorities:

- ensuring rural residents have a voice as the project proceeds
- protecting groundwater supplies
- mitigating riverbank erosion
- improving drainage along the floodway right of way
- reducing land acquisition
- providing local employment and training opportunities resulting from construction
- improving local transportation infrastructure, such as bridges
- providing opportunities for the reuse of excavated earth
- providing local recreation and economic development opportunities

Modifications to transmission lines



Construction of the West Dike



Rail & highway bridge upgrades

7. How will floodway expansion protect the environment in the event of a major flood?

Without the expansion, it is estimated that an 1826 level flood would result in the overland flooding of one-third of Winnipeg, including basement flooding resulting from sewer backup. In addition, hospitals, police stations, fire stations, water pumping stations, sewage treatment plants, Winnipeg's central business district and other commercial, manufacturing, and industrial operations within the city limits would be damaged. As a result, pollutants would be discharged causing significant pollution and environmental damage. Eventually, these pollutants would find their way into the Red River and Lake Winnipeg.

An expanded floodway will ensure that the public is protected from this threat.

8. What is the environmental licensing process for the project?

The principles of environmental stewardship and sustainable development are top priorities for the authority. Public involvement is a critical component of the environmental assessment process for the proposed floodway expansion. The authority has

more information, please visit www.floodwayeia.com. Before construction can proceed on the project, several environmental requirements must be met including:

- preparing an independent environmental impact assessment (submitted August, 2004);
- receiving a license under the provincial Environment Act; and
- receiving federal environmental authorization;

Under the *Canada-Manitoba Agreement on Environmental Assessment Co-operation*, Canada and Manitoba have agreed that both governments will participate in a co-operative review of the proposed project. This process will include the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission public hearings.

Wherever possible, the authority is committed to working toward engineering solutions to any environmental concerns.



Public Open House meeting in Selkirk.

9. How will deepening the floodway affect groundwater supply and quality?

The public consultation process demonstrated that local residents, municipalities and agriculture producers were very concerned about any negative effects that deepening the channel may have on their groundwater supplies.

As a result, initial plans to deepen the floodway channel by up to two metres (six feet) have been dramatically scaled back. The authority will now deepen the floodway by no more than 0.6 metres (two feet), if at all. The goal is to ensure the expanded floodway is no deeper than the existing channel.

The decision to scale back plans to deepen the channel will secure local groundwater supplies. The authority will also establish an environmental mitigation fund to mitigate any isolated groundwater effects that may arise.

10. Will the Red River handle increased water flows and velocities near the floodway outlet north of Winnipeg?

Yes. Hydraulic studies have confirmed that the Red River channel can handle the flow from the expanded floodway plus the existing flow in the Red River.



Project improvements will help reduce erosion in the vicinity of the floodway outlet.

A new, wider outlet structure which incorporates leading-edge technology to reduce water velocities and dissipate waves re-entering the Red River during major floods will be constructed at the current location. In addition, side walls will be constructed in the outlet channel to prevent erosion. On the west bank of the Red River immediately north of the floodway outlet, approximately 1 kilometre (0.6 miles) of riprap or other erosion control will be applied to mitigate any additional erosion during floodway operation.

11. What is being planned for the highway and railway bridges that cross the floodway channel?

The following six highway bridge crossings will be replaced and upgraded as part of the floodway expansion project:

- St. Mary’s Road, PR 200
- PTH 59 south
- Trans Canada Highway East
- PTH 15
- PTH 59 north
- PTH 44

Replacement of these bridges will ensure that the structures will be above the water level in the event of a 1 in 700 year flood.

The authority is committed to ensuring minimal traffic disruptions during bridge construction at all locations. Existing bridges will remain operational at five bridge crossings on St. Mary’s Road, PTH 59 south, Trans Canada Highway #1 (East), PTH 15 and PTH 59 north. Plans to ensure minimal disruption are underway for PTH 44.

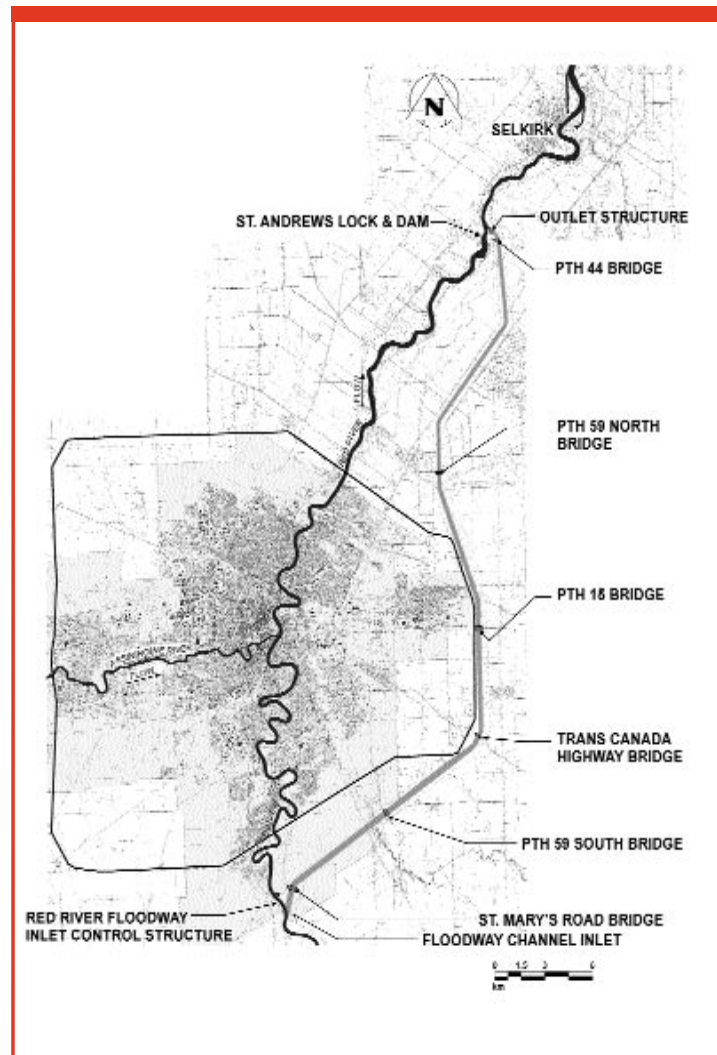
In addition, planning for the PTH 15 bridge will incorporate a design for a four-lane crossing to meet increased traffic flows in the future.

The authority is currently working with railway operators on the phased construction of the various railway bridges that cross the floodway channel.

12. Will the floodway authority need to buy land to complete the floodway expansion?

The authority’s goal is to minimize the need to acquire land to complete the project. Initial design estimates suggested that 1,000 additional acres (405 hectares) of land would be required to complete channel widening. That estimate has been dramatically reduced to a maximum of 500 acres (202 hectares). The authority will make efforts to reduce land requirements even further in the months ahead.

The authority anticipates acquiring additional land for the expansion of the west dike south of Winnipeg. The amount of land required will be determined once the design is finalized. The authority will continue to work closely with municipal governments, local residents and agricultural producers on this matter. As well, there will likely be some minor land requirements for the bridge replacements and associated rail and roadway improvements.



Twelve bridge crossings, including the replacement & upgrade of six highway bridges, will occur as part of the expansion project.

13. By raising the west dike, do you plan to raise water levels south of Winnipeg during a major flood event?

No. The west dike is being raised up to 2 metres (6.5 feet) to provide increased flood protection in the event of wind or rain during a flood event. This safety zone is referred to as “freeboard.” Water levels south of the city, during a major flood, will be maintained according to the current operating rules of the floodway.

14. What will be the impact on existing drainage structures connected to the floodway?

In response to input received from municipal governments and agricultural producers during the public consultation process, the authority will ensure current drainage capacity is maintained or increased for all structures on the floodway and associated channels within the floodway right of way. Replacements and improvements include drop structures at the Centreline Drain, North Bibeau Drain, Cooks Creek Diversion, Springfield Road Drain, Skholny Drain, Ashfield Drain, Country Villa Estates Drain and the Kildare trunk-Transcona sewer outlet drop structure.

“I am pleased with the consultative process that MFEA has undertaken to keep us informed of this project,”

George Sokal, Chairman of the Cooks Creek Conservation District.

In addition to these initiatives, the authority plans to construct a new gated culvert through the west dike, southwest of Labarriere Park, to improve drainage in the region to the La Salle River.

A new gate chamber will also be constructed on the Seine River overflow pipes to allow the pipes to be closed to prevent backwater flooding from the floodway to the community of Grande Pointe.

15. What does the Master Floodway Agreement mean to workers and taxpayers?

To maximize local employment opportunities, the authority will establish a master floodway agreement to provide cost certainty for taxpayers, ensure no strike/no lockout provisions, establish local hiring provisions, include effective job training measures and ensure that the project is completed on schedule.

Workers on the floodway project will not be required to join a union, and all union and non-union contractors will be eligible to bid on floodway work.

To ensure the construction industry’s participation, the authority is consulting with representatives from the industry to provide expertise and guidance as the process moves forward.

16. How will the floodway expansion project increase recreational and economic development opportunities?

The authority has a mandate to maximize recreation and economic opportunities associated with the floodway expansion project. In March, the authority invited Manitobans to submit their ideas. The authority received approximately 50 suggestions including hiking, biking and jogging trails, snowmobile and ski trails, horseback riding, tourism promotion, cultural, historic and environmental initiatives.

As a result of the public feedback, the authority will produce an *Opportunity Report* that summarizes the various ideas the authority received from local residents and stakeholder groups regarding recreation and economic opportunities. This report will identify next steps and will be available to the public, municipal governments, independent environmental review team, and federal and provincial governments.

Through the public consultation and expression of interest process, the authority also received a number of proposals and suggestions about the future use of earth excavated during construction. In light of this interest, the authority is considering initiating a separate process for public access to the excavated material. No excavated earth will be available until construction begins.

17. Will dredging the Red River north of Winnipeg have any positive impact on flood protection?

No. Studies have shown that the cost of dredging sections of the Red River would provide no benefit to water levels north of the outlet during a flood event. However, in response to public interest, the authority has raised the issue with the federal government regarding future plans to dredge in the area.

18. Does the floodway cause ice jams north of Winnipeg?

No. The formation of ice jams pre-date the floodway – they are a historic reality in the area near Selkirk. This year, many residents in the Selkirk area were flooded because of ice jamming. Unfortunately, this would have occurred regardless of the floodway operation. However, in response to public concerns, the authority has commissioned a study on the ice jam issue which should be completed this summer.

Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority

200 – 155 Carlton Street Winnipeg MB R3C 3H8
204-945-4900 Toll-free: 1-866-356-6355
www.floodwayauthority.mb.ca



Public Open Houses

Learn about the Floodway Expansion's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Since January 2004, the Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority (MFEA) has been listening to Manitobans about the proposed Red River Floodway expansion project. Your input has helped shape and improve the floodway project. Last month, MFEA submitted an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to Manitoba Conservation for review. A fourth round of public consultation has been scheduled so you can learn more about the project's EIA.

MFEA representatives will be available at public information booths at the following locations:

Selkirk	Saturday, September 25	Selkirk Town Plaza 366 Main Street
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Winnipeg	Sunday, September 26	St. Vital Centre
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In addition, Public Open Houses will take place at the following locations:

Lorette	Monday, September 27 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Lorette Parish Hall 1282 Dawson Road
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East St. Paul	Wednesday, September 29 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Henderson Highway Legion Hall 3600 Devries
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Winnipeg	Saturday, October 2 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Engineering Building University of Manitoba
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For more information, please visit our website at www.floodwayauthority.mb.ca or contact us at:

Manitoba Floodway Expansion Authority
200 – 155 Carlton Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 3H8
Toll free: 1-800-356-6355
Winnipeg: 945-4900