

# LAKE MANITOBA LAKE ST. MARTIN

## OUTLET CHANNELS PROJECT

### Newsletter - June 2021 Issue 7

## LET'S TALK

Manitoba Infrastructure continues to engage and consult with Indigenous groups and communities; the Rural Municipality of Grahamdale; property owners on Lake Manitoba; and federal regulatory agencies. This ongoing process of sharing information and receiving feedback is essential input for the permitting and licensing process before construction of the Outlet Channels Project can begin. A highlight of recent and upcoming meetings is included below:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>May 21</b><br>Peguis First Nation                   | Meeting to review questions about the Outlet Channels Project from Peguis First Nation and Manitoba Infrastructure's responses  |
| <b>May 20, 28 and June 11</b><br>R.M. of Grahamdale    | Series of meetings to discuss key topics identified by the R.M. of Grahamdale, and present additional information regarding ongoing engineering design and analysis. Topics included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groundwater</li> <li>• Local surface water management (outside drain and surface water quality)</li> <li>• Sediment transport and channel commissioning</li> <li>• Potential aquatic effects</li> <li>• System hydraulics (movement of water from Lake Manitoba to Lake Winnipeg)</li> </ul> |
| <b>June 3, 17</b><br>Interlake Reserves Tribal Council | Regularly scheduled meetings to discuss project updates, ongoing and upcoming activities and consultation planning  |
| <b>June 23</b><br>Interlake Reserves Tribal Council    | Meeting with the IRTC, Dauphin River First Nation, Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation and Lake Manitoba First Nation to present and discuss specific environmental management and monitoring plans<br>Topics included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project overview</li> <li>- Groundwater, Surface Water and Sediment Environmental Management Plans</li> <li>- Aquatic Effects Monitoring Plan</li> <li>- Aquatic Offset Plan</li> </ul>   |
| <b>July 5</b><br>Peguis First Nation                   | Meeting to review questions from Peguis First Nation about the project and discuss Manitoba Infrastructure's responses.   |



## Environmental Assessment Process

Ongoing Indigenous, stakeholder and public feedback continues to be incorporated throughout all stages of the environmental assessment process. As more information becomes available, adjustments will be made to reflect this knowledge through:

- Preparing and responding to Information Requests
- Updating the environmental monitoring and management plans (EMPs)
- Finalizing detail design work and completing additional modelling and analysis

## Environmental Assessment Timelines

The environmental assessment process and approvals can take from 12 to 24 months once the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is submitted, but the exact duration depends on the complexity of the project.

A comparable flood protection project in Alberta called the Springbank Off-Stream Reservoir Project, submitted their EIS in March 2018 and has not yet obtained federal approvals. By comparison, Manitoba submitted the EIS for the Outlet Channels Project in August 2019 and is expecting to have met all federal requirements by late summer 2021. Manitoba continues to plan for construction to begin in the winter of 2021/22, pending federal approvals.

Manitoba recognizes the length of time required to achieve environmental licensing is a concern for some project stakeholders. The Manitoba government is committed to collaborating with the federal government to ensure efficient review of the project, but are also committed to ensuring that expressed concerns are addressed through the environmental approval, project design, and Indigenous consultation processes.

## Indigenous Consultation

The Manitoba government is currently in Phase 2 of its consultation and engagement process. To date, highlights include:

- Manitoba Infrastructure is continuing to consult, engage and implement the remainder of consultation activities under work plans with Indigenous communities.
- As of June 28, 2021, the Manitoba government has communicated by letter (802), meetings (196), and emails/ phone (3,394) with 39 Indigenous groups and communities about the Outlet Channels Project.

## IN YOUR AREA

### Field Work

Based on feedback, Manitoba Infrastructure has implemented the following changes to field work on the Outlet Channels Project:

- All field work equipment must arrive on site clean, so as not to track soil or vegetation from field to field
- Water sampling parameters have been refined

### Upcoming Six Weeks:

**Red-headed Woodpecker Survey** – Two replicate surveys of the Lake Manitoba Outlet Channel right-of-way will be done during peak breeding season. Surveys will be done to estimate the number and location of red-headed woodpecker breeding pairs and to estimate the number and general location of suitable decadent trees that could be salvaged as part of Project mitigation measures.

**Water Quality Data Collection** – Field measurements and water samples will continue to be collected from Lake Manitoba, Lake St. Martin, and in the Watchorn Creek and Birch Creek watersheds. Water quality data from cattle runoff operations along the Lake Manitoba Outlet Channel will also be collected.

**Groundwater Monitoring** – Water levels readings will continue to be collected from areas along the Lake Manitoba Outlet Channel right-of-way.

**Heritage Excavation Work** – Proposed heritage resource excavation has been postponed based on input from Indigenous stakeholders. Manitoba Infrastructure will be contacting potentially affected Indigenous communities and the Rural Municipality of Grahamdale to provide additional detail and allow for ongoing discussion on this topic.

### R.M. of Grahamdale

**Land Exchange** – Manitoba Infrastructure and Manitoba Indigenous and Northern Relations are pleased to announce that a land exchange agreement was recently reached with the Rural Municipality of Grahamdale as facilitated by Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development. The Manitoba government appreciates the Rural Municipality of Grahamdale's willingness to accommodate requests for land required for the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project and ongoing negotiations with displaced Indigenous communities.

---

In the event that you have any concerns about upcoming field work, please respond to the contact details indicated in Manitoba Infrastructure's notification letters.

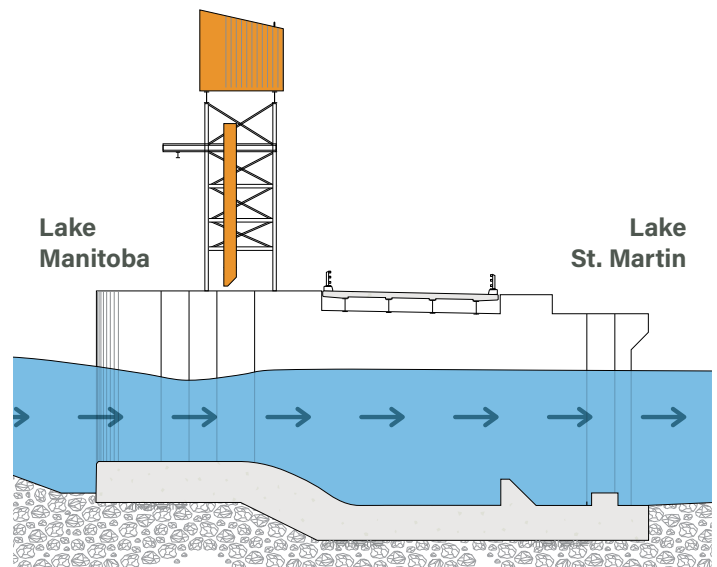
Stakeholders in the Rural Municipality of Grahamdale can contact Jacqueline Hickman at (204) 302-1870 or [Jacqueline.Hickman@gov.mb.ca](mailto:Jacqueline.Hickman@gov.mb.ca) with questions about the Outlet Channels Project.

## Operation of the Outlet Channels

An animated video and fact sheet are being developed to help explain how the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels will operate during a range of flood events.

Once complete, the video and fact sheet will be shared with Indigenous communities and project stakeholders; and will be posted online to the Outlet Channels Project website.

The graphic below shows a conceptual drawing of the control structure for the Lake Manitoba Outlet Channel. The control structures for the Outlet Channels Project are being designed with control gates that will be operated in a staged manner to greatly reduce erosion and sedimentation.



### We Want To Hear From You

Please share your comments on the potential effects of the project by participating in meetings, or by contacting your local project Community Coordinator, band office, government office, association or email [outletchannels@gov.mb.ca](mailto:outletchannels@gov.mb.ca). For updates on the Outlet Channels Project please visit [EngageMB.ca](http://EngageMB.ca)

The environmental assessment is both a planning and decision-making tool. This process is iterative and evolves as additional project information and community and stakeholder feedback is received. Project design, proposed mitigations, and proposed monitoring activities can be adapted to ensure that feedback received through this process is addressed.