

LAKE MANITOBA LAKE ST. MARTIN

OUTLET CHANNELS PROJECT

Newsletter - June 2022 Issue 18

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT UPDATE

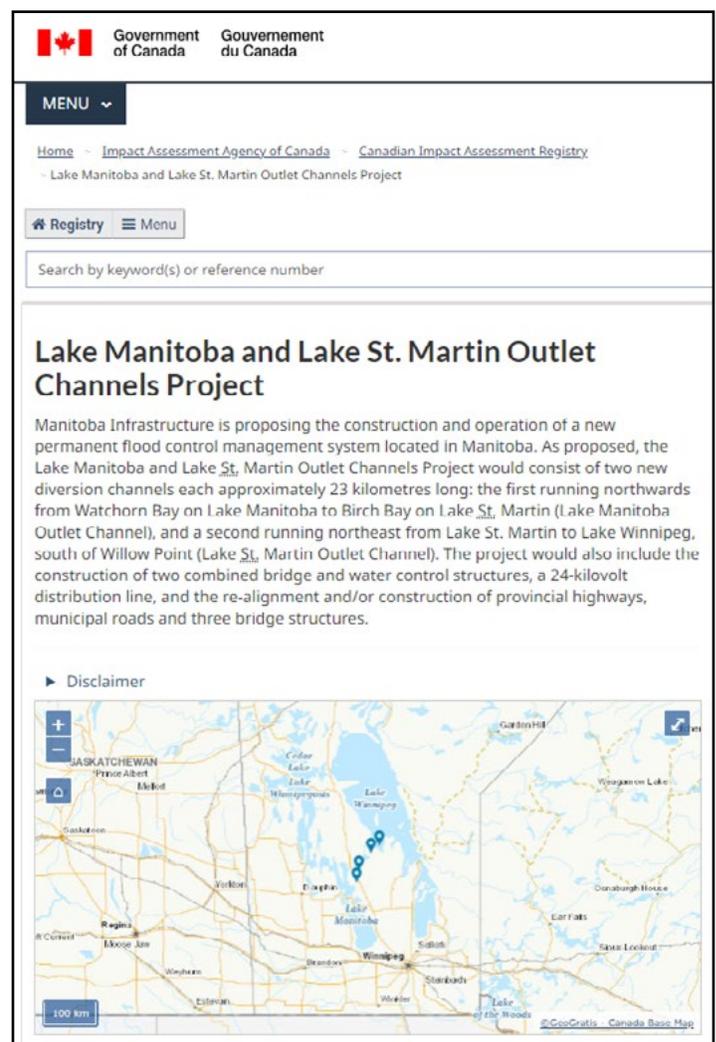
Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure (MTI) continues to make progress toward receiving environmental approvals for the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Channels project. The department recently submitted all current [technical and public information request responses to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada](#). The Outlet Channels project is a priority for the province as a significant step in Manitoba's long-term climate resiliency and flood mitigation plan to provide improved flood protection for Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin. This landmark project will represent an investment of approximately \$600 million and will take about three years to complete once approvals are received.

Manitoba and Canada continue to work collaboratively through the environmental assessment process. The initial package was submitted on May 31, 2022 and the remaining information was sent on June 30, 2022. Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure remains optimistic that the federal environmental assessment process will reach its successful conclusion in 2022 so that work on the project can commence this fall/winter.

MTI is also working to address all specific concerns raised by Indigenous communities and the Rural Municipality of Grahamdale that have been received throughout the consultation and engagement process. The department will provide written responses to each Indigenous group along with detailed responses to each concern. MTI is also offering meetings to discuss information request responses and updated Environmental Management Plans over the summer of 2022.

Project Information Sheets

In the spirit of Reconciliation and in the interest of ongoing engagement and consultation, Manitoba has translated a group of [information sheets](#) on various elements of the Outlet Channels project into the Cree and Ojibwe languages. Info sheets that have been translated so far include: Project Purpose; Project Components; Project Alignment Options; and Water Levels and Flows. In addition, design updates have also been



The screenshot shows the top portion of the Impact Assessment of Canada website. At the top, there are logos for the Government of Canada and the Government of Manitoba. Below this is a navigation menu with a 'MENU' dropdown. The breadcrumb trail reads: Home > Impact Assessment Agency of Canada > Canadian Impact Assessment Registry > Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project. There is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Search by keyword(s) or reference number'. The main heading is 'Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project'. Below the heading is a paragraph of text describing the project: 'Manitoba Infrastructure is proposing the construction and operation of a new permanent flood control management system located in Manitoba. As proposed, the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project would consist of two new diversion channels each approximately 23 kilometres long: the first running northwards from Watchorn Bay on Lake Manitoba to Birch Bay on Lake St. Martin (Lake Manitoba Outlet Channel), and a second running northeast from Lake St. Martin to Lake Winnipeg, south of Willow Point (Lake St. Martin Outlet Channel). The project would also include the construction of two combined bridge and water control structures, a 24-kilovolt distribution line, and the re-alignment and/or construction of provincial highways, municipal roads and three bridge structures.' Below the text is a 'Disclaimer' section followed by a map of the region. The map shows the lakes and surrounding areas, with a blue line indicating the project alignment. A scale bar for 100 km is visible at the bottom left of the map.

Impact Assessment of Canada Website image

translated into these languages. We acknowledge the importance of being inclusive and communicating with First Nations communities in multiple ways so that everyone can understand the various components of the project and have the ability to provide informed feedback.

LET'S TALK

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure continues to meet with Manitobans living within the flood-affected areas around Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin, including Indigenous groups and communities; the Rural Municipality of Grahamdale; and property owners around Lake Manitoba.

This process of sharing information and receiving feedback is essential to completing the licensing process before construction of the Outlet Channels project. Once constructed, this project will protect lives and property from the potentially devastating impacts of future flood events.

A highlight of recent meetings:

June 9 Fisher River Cree Nation	Meeting with Manitoba executive leadership to discuss consultation and project updates
June 15 Interlake Reserves Tribal Council	Meeting with Manitoba executive leadership to discuss consultation and project updates
June 21 Dauphin River Northern Affairs Community	Meeting with Manitoba executive leadership to discuss consultation and project updates
June 22 Peguis First Nation	Meeting with Manitoba executive leadership to discuss consultation and project updates

INDIGENOUS CONSULTATION

The Manitoba government is currently in phase two of its four-phase consultation and engagement process. This phase includes planning and implementing community-specific consultation processes and activities with each Indigenous community.

Highlights this past month include:

- Advising communities of the formal technical and public information requests that were filed with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada on May 31, 2022.
- Participation by Indigenous monitors in ongoing environmental field work activities associated with project planning and design.
- Meetings held with Manitoba executive leadership to discuss consultation and project updates. As of June 22, 2022, six meetings have been held with Lake St. Martin First Nation, Pinaymootang First Nation, the Manitoba Métis Federation, Berens River First Nation, Fisher River Cree Nation, the Interlake Reserves Tribal Council, Dauphin River Northern Affairs Community, and Peguis First Nation.

As of June 16, 2022, the consultation and engagement process has included total of 254 meetings in with all 39 Indigenous groups (First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs Communities, and Indigenous organizations), as well as 1,110 letters and 5,045 emails or telephone calls.



254
meetings



39
Indigenous
groups

5,045 emails
or telephone calls



1,110 letters

IN YOUR AREA

Access Road

Construction of the Access Road was substantially completed in March 2022. However, the road was damaged by flooding this spring and access is currently being limited. Repairs and some additional construction activities will take place this summer. Construction activities will include: trimming (fixing of the embankment side slopes), revegetation, cleanups, decommissioning of the borrow pits (source of road building materials), and correcting any surrounding deficiencies due to winter construction.

In the event that you have any feedback about upcoming fieldwork, please respond to the contact details indicated in Manitoba Transportation and 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** with questions about the Outlet Channels Project.

Upcoming Field Work in June

The survey and sample collection activities below will begin in the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin project areas. These activities will characterize existing conditions, monitor for changes and plan for any potential impacts that the project might have. These include:

- Monitoring wildlife and wetland surveys
- Sampling of surface water quality of agricultural spring

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Please share your thoughts on the Project. This may include voicing support, as well as concerns on the potential effects of the project by participating in meetings, or by contacting your local project Community Coordinator, band office, government office or association. You can also email outletchannels@gov.mb.ca or visit manitoba.ca/outletchannels.

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, mitigations, and proposed monitoring activities can be adapted to ensure that feedback received through this process is addressed. To learn more about the regulatory review of the project, or to provide commentary to federal and provincial regulators, please visit the provincial and federal Public Registries:

- Manitoba Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch – Public Registry:
 - <https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/eal/registries/59661stmartin/index.html>
- Canadian Impact Assessment Registry:
 - <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/80148>