

LAKE MANITOBA LAKE ST. MARTIN

OUTLET CHANNELS PROJECT

Newsletter - October 2021 Issue 11

Aerial view of The Narrows on Lake St. Martin

LET'S TALK

Manitoba Infrastructure (MI) 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 can begin, to protect lives and property from the potentially devastating impacts of future flood events. A highlight of recent and upcoming meetings is included below:

September 9 October 7 October 21 Interlake Reserves Tribal Council (IRTC)	Regularly scheduled meetings to discuss project updates, ongoing and upcoming activities and consultation planning.
September 15 RM of Grahamdale	Provided project updates, discussed municipal road realignments, traffic control and drainage plans, and property related issues
September 21 Lake Manitoba First Nation / IRTC	Community Information Session #1: Present and discuss project overview and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
September 22 Dauphin River First Nation / IRTC	Community Information Session #1: Present and discuss project overview and EIS.
September 23 Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation / IRTC	Community Information Session #2: Present and discuss Aquatic Effects Monitoring Plan and Aquatics Offset Plan.
October 13 Manitoba Metis Federation	Meeting to discuss 2021 Aquatic Environmental Studies Field Work.
October 13 Multiple Indigenous Communities and the RM of Grahamdale	First meeting (virtual session) to establish an Environmental Advisory Committee for the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project.

Upcoming Meetings

November 3 RM of Grahamdale	Regularly scheduled monthly meetings to discuss project updates
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Indigenous Consultation

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

- MI has shared draft responses to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada's technical information requests, public information requests and associated engineering reports with Indigenous communities, and the R.M. of Grahamdale.
- Fisher River Cree Nation has submitted their Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Report.
- MI continues to review comments received from communities and is expecting initial comments on the environmental management and monitoring plans from several other communities once they review all engineering reports.
- Based on feedback from Indigenous communities, MI is reviewing opportunities to carry out in-person meetings that continue to respect public health orders.
- Based on feedback from Indigenous communities and project stakeholders, MI has adjusted design of the Lake St. Martin Outlet Channel to incorporate riprap along the length of the channel for sediment mitigation under higher flows.
- As of October 12, 2021, the Manitoba government has communicated by letter (929), meetings (218), and emails/ phone (3,916) with 39 Indigenous groups and communities about the Outlet Channels Project.



Boat electrofishing at night on the upper Dauphin River

Environmental Advisory Committee

Through the environmental assessment and consultation and engagement processes for the Outlet Channels Project, MI has received ongoing feedback regarding environmental monitoring, project construction, proposed mitigations and other matters of mutual interest. Based on this feedback, MI has initiated discussions with Indigenous communities and municipalities in the project area on the establishment of an Environmental Advisory Committee.

MI anticipates that the Committee will manage Indigenous Environmental Monitors and communications during the construction period, and will be working with Indigenous communities and stakeholders on the structure and purpose of the committee, including:

- Scope and role of the Committee (4-year plan)
- Environmental monitoring
- Communications
- Wash station for biosecurity
- Wetland compensation projects
- Special projects
- Changes/updates to the Project's environmental management monitoring plans

The first meeting to establish an Environmental Advisory Committee for the Project was held on October 13, 2021 with Indigenous communities and the Rural Municipality of Grahamdale.

The meeting provided an opportunity for communities and stakeholders to inform the role and scope of the committee. Key discussion items included the committee structure and number of representatives and environmental monitoring. Manitoba Infrastructure will be reviewing all feedback and following up with participants to continue to formalize the Committee.

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 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, proposed mitigations, and proposed monitoring activities can be adapted to ensure that feedback received through this process is addressed.

IN YOUR AREA

Access Road

Construction on the Access Road started in September 2021 and is expected to continue until December 2021. This work includes hauling and placing of borrow material; installation of culverts; hauling and placing of traffic gravel; seeding of disturbed areas; and reclamation of borrow areas.

Monitoring Well Decommissioning:

A groundwater monitoring well installed in 2019 within the Right-of-Way has developed a leak and will be decommissioned in October

Field Work – Fall 2021

Water Quality Data Collection:

- Sampling and monitoring at sentinel wells in Dauphin River First Nation
- Groundwater monitoring / sampling along Lake St. Martin Outlet Channel alignment
- Surface water sampling from Lake Manitoba, Fairford River, Lake St. Martin, Dauphin River and Sturgeon Bay (Lake Winnipeg), Watchorn Creek, Mercer Creek, Birch Creek, Goodison Lake, Water Lake, Clear Lake, Reed Lake and Buffalo Creek and at select locations along Lake St. Martin Outlet Channel alignment

Water Flow Activities:

- The program is a continuation of the work completed in Buffalo Creek and tributaries during the Spring of 2021. The data will support ongoing hydrologic analyses, various environmental assessments, and proposed commitments included in various environmental management plans.

Fish and Fish Habitat:

- Investigations to further understand the timing of Lake Whitefish and other species in the Dauphin and Fairford River during fall spawning.

Drone, Topographic and Bathymetry Surveys:

- Topographic and bathymetric surveys will be conducted at the Lake St. Martin Outlet Channel inlet and outlet to provide a more complete and consistent survey capture for channel excavation design and construction quantity estimates.

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 with questions about the Outlet Channels Project.