



**Transportation and Infrastructure**

Assistant Deputy Minister  
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Sean Carriere  
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada  
Prairie Northern Region  
Canada Place, Suite 1145, 9700 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5J 4C3  
Sean.Carriere@iaac-aeic.gc.ca

Dear Sean Carriere:

Thank you for your April 8, 2024 letter, advising that the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) has commenced the public comment period for the draft Environmental Assessment Report (dEAR) and Potential Conditions under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012, for the proposed Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project (the Project). As per the requirements of the environmental assessment process, Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure (MTI) is submitting comments, as attached (Attachment 1), for your consideration.

The Manitoba government is committed to improving flood protection and developing more resilient water management infrastructure. Climate change is affecting the intensity and frequency of severe weather events, including flooding. Areas around Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin experience severe flooding, as demonstrated by the floods in 2011 and 2014. The Project will provide flood protection for communities surrounding Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin and allow for more effective management of water levels on both lakes. Without the Project, Manitoba will have fewer options to mitigate flood conditions and respond to our changing climate.

Similar to Manitoba, the Canadian government has shown a commitment to addressing the effects of climate change and flooding. This includes a 2018 commitment to \$247.5 million for the Project to be provided through the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund. The fund was launched in 2018 and committed \$2 billion over 10 years to increase community resilience to climate change-related disasters. It forms a key component of the Government of Canada Adaptation Action Plan. The plan clearly

states that governments must adapt to climate change, including “by making informed decisions, building resilience in our communities and businesses, and protecting each other and the places we value [...] ensuring that we are all better able to prevent, prepare, respond, and recover from climate impacts today and in years to come.”

The Project highlights Manitoba’s efforts to build this resilience and protect Manitoba, including the communities affected by the 2011 and 2014 floods. The Project has been recommended in three major provincial reviews/studies of these prior floods: the 2011 Flood Review Task Force, the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Regulation Review Committee (2013), and the Assiniboine River and Lake Manitoba Basins Flood Mitigation Study (2016). Several alternative alignments and locations were considered, and the department selected the proposed project as described in the Project Environmental Impact Statement (March 2020).

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure is committed to improving relationships with Indigenous groups and will continue to engage beyond the requirements of the environmental approval process. For example, MTI has and will continue to work to provide economic opportunities within the Project construction timeline, including:

- implementing new approaches to procurement that increase Indigenous participation.
- working with representative groups to develop an Indigenous business registry.
- identifying and supporting training initiatives.
- requesting local economic development proposals related to the Project.

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure recognizes that both engagement and consultation require meaningful dialogue and working together with Indigenous groups and others to listen to their input and to discuss their concerns and suggestions about a proposed decision or action. Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure is committed to resetting relationships with Indigenous groups and will continue to engage throughout the life of the Project and beyond.

Thank you again for sharing the dEAR and Potential Conditions for the proposed Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project. Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure appreciates the opportunity to consider this feedback and to refine how we are approaching this important climate resiliency project.

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

Cynthia Ritchie  
Assistant Deputy Minister

c: Ryan Klos, Deputy Minister, Transportation and Infrastructure