



CONSTRUCTION MOVES FORWARD ON THE PR 304 TO THE BERENS RIVER ALL-SEASON ROAD

Construction to replace the existing Rice River Road and winter road with a 156 km all-season road from PR 304 to the Berens River is progressing.

In August 2010, the East Side Road Authority (ESRA) received a licence under *The Environment Act* from Manitoba Conservation for the project. The federal Environmental Impact Assessment process, under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA), is ongoing. Approvals for the project, from the CEAA and the associated *Fisheries Act and Navigable Waters Protection Act*, are expected in the summer of 2011.

While waiting for federal environmental authorizations, ESRA is proceeding with construction work that is authorized under its provincial Environment Act License, including:

- completion of a temporary bridge and removal of the existing Wanipigow River Bridge over the Wanipigow River
- purchase of five Acrow panel bridges for installation along the all-season road network

- construction of a six-kilometre (km) section of the all-season road from the Loon Straits access north (48 to 55 km) on the Rice River Road

Preparations are also underway to begin construction on the Wanipigow River Bridge, Loon Creek Bridge and Longbody Creek Bridge. All of these projects are scheduled to begin this summer, as soon as federal environmental approvals are received.

To make sure local residents participate in, and benefit from, these projects, ESRA has entered into Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) with local communities. These agreements provide employment in pre-construction activities such as gravel crushing, right-of-way clearing and road improvement work. ESRA has signed CBAs, worth nearly \$50 million, with all thirteen First Nation communities throughout the region. Communities presently doing work under CBAs include:

- Hollow Water First Nation is doing gravel crushing, right-of-way clearing and road improvement work

- Bloodvein First Nation is doing gravel crushing, blast rock production, right-of-way clearing and road construction work
- Berens River First Nation is doing gravel crushing and right-of-way cleaning

Island Lake Bridge Projects

- Wasagamack First Nation has demolished and removed two old wooden bridges at Feather Rapids and Big Stone Lake which will be replaced with two new Acrow panel bridges
- Red Sucker Lake First Nation recently completed right-of-way and site preparation for a new Acrow panel bridge across the Red Sucker River

ESRA is also offering training programs in local communities, including Introduction to Construction, Skilled Labourer and first aid/chain saw safety. Approximately 100 people in Berens River, Bloodvein, Hollow Water, Wasagamack and Red Sucker Lake First Nations have received training so far. Additional training, including Heavy Equipment Operator training, will be offered as this project continues.



For more information on the East Side Transportation Initiative, please visit the ESRA website at www.eastsideroadauthority.mb.ca or contact ESRA at:

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