

---

# Release

For Immediate Release  
May 16, 2011

## **GOD'S LAKE FIRST NATION ENTERS INTO A \$2.25 MILLION COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT RELATED TO ALL-SEASON ROAD PROJECT**

### **Agreements Worth Nearly \$50 Million Signed With All Thirteen East Side First Nations**

With the signing of a \$2.25 million Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) with God's Lake First Nation, the East Side Road Authority (ESRA) has announced that it has entered into CBAs with all thirteen east side First Nations.

"By entering into Community Benefits Agreements, east side First Nations have clearly expressed their support for an all-season road network and their desire to be involved in the project," said Eric Robinson, Minister responsible for ESRA. "I congratulate all of the leadership from the communities on the east side and look forward to working with them to ensure that their residents benefit from the opportunities that will result from the project."

"Our community is entering into this agreement of opportunity with ESRA with the understanding that ESRA and Manitoba will, through the consultation process, ensure that our traditional, Aboriginal, inherent and treaty rights, including territorial interests are not negatively impacted by project activities," said Peter Watt, Chief of God's Lake First Nation. "We have been waiting a long time for an all-weather road and now we will have an opportunity to ensure that our people achieve employment and training opportunities from the project. However, we will not limit the opportunities to pre-construction activities but through the consultation process and in the spirit of partnership with ESRA and Manitoba, the window of opportunities will extend to involvement with construction activities. We have planned and will continue to expand our construction equipment inventory and skilled workforce to ensure our involvement with other project activities identified within the agreement. We are pleased to acknowledge and recognize the tremendous efforts made by our MLA, the Honourable Eric Robinson, to have achieved this tremendous opportunity for our people."

"We are very pleased to be signing this agreement with God's Lake First Nation," said Daryl Harvey, Acting CEO of the ESRA. "With this agreement in place, residents from God's Lake will be able to receive training, jobs and economic opportunities related to pre-construction activities. As we move forward with construction of an east-west all-season road link, we look forward to working with local residents and improving transportation in the region."

-more-

Under the agreement, God's Lake First Nation will undertake exploratory clearing and clearing of access roads to assist in determining the viability and potential alignment for a future all-season road. The agreement also allows the First Nation to utilize all usable harvested material for community purposes. In addition, the agreement also establishes a construction training program that will provide training opportunities for basic and essential construction skills and skilled labourer or heavy equipment operator training related to gravel crushing, right-of-way clearing and road construction for up to thirty training positions.

Under the terms of the agreement, God's Lake First Nation will be required to establish a separate corporate entity to undertake the pilot project and related activities. ESRA will perform project and contract administration services for the community in order to assist the First Nation in project management, mentoring and ensuring appropriate oversight. The total value of the three-year agreement, including the training provided by ESRA, is estimated to a maximum of \$2,250,000.

With today's signing ESRA has entered into CBAs, worth \$49.25 million, with the communities of Berens River, Bloodvein, Hollow Water, Wasagamack, Red Sucker Lake, Garden Hill, St. Theresa Point, Bunibonibee, Manto Sipi, Poplar River, Little Grand Rapids, Pauingassi and God's Lake First Nations.

For more information on the East Side Transportation Initiative, please visit the ESRA website at [www.eastsideroadauthority.mb.ca](http://www.eastsideroadauthority.mb.ca) or contact (204) 945-4900 or toll-free 1-866-356-6355.

-30-

**Contact:**

Matt Williamson  
Cabinet Communications  
Government of Manitoba  
(204) 945-1494

Chief Peter Watt  
God's Lake First Nation  
(204) 335-2130

Ronuk Modha  
East Side Road Authority  
(204) 945-4900 (work)  
(204) 793-3969 (cell)