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**MANITOBA GOVERNMENT, EAST SIDE ROAD AUTHORITY ANNOUNCES SECOND COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT WITH BUNIBONIBEE FIRST NATION**

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Local Residents will benefit from Good Jobs, Improved Infrastructure: Minister Robinson

The East Side Road Authority has signed a second community benefits agreement with Bunibonibee First Nation for pre-construction on the East Side Road, Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Minister Eric Robinson, minister responsible for the East Side Road Authority, announced today. The total investment to the community is \$10 million over three years.

"This agreement will see the creation of good paying jobs for the people of Bunibonibee," Minister Robinson said. "I am also very excited that workers will get on-the-job training in specialized job skills that will allow workers to compete for high-paying jobs in the future."

Under the agreement, the Oxford House Road Authority will receive two contracts for the construction of approach roadways, bridge foundations, and the erection of two modular bridges at Hayes River and Laidlaw River, valued at \$5.7 million and \$4.3 million respectively, the minister said.

"This is a great economic development opportunity for our community," said Chief Irvin Sinclair, Bunibonibee First Nation. "These bridge projects will create good jobs in our community, and the training and mentoring that come with it will prepare our workers for long-term work in the future."

Today's announcement is in addition to the \$269 million invested in the East Side Road Authority to date, which has created over 600 job opportunities, 270 training opportunities and invested \$86 million in local community benefits, Minister Robinson said.

"These bridge replacements are strategic improvements to the current winter road system which help keep the winter roads open longer and allow improved access to the communities that use them to connect with Norway House while also being fundamental to the construction of the all weather road system," said Ernie Gilroy, CEO, Manitoba Floodway and East Side Road Authority. "The East Side Road Authority is pleased to be part of this historic announcement."

The Manitoba Floodway and East Side Road Authority (MFESRA) has been given the mandate to maintain the winter road network along the east side of Lake Winnipeg. This will allow MFESRA to strategically improve the winter road network toward the all-season road alignment, extending the length of the winter road season for East Side Road residents and reducing the time they are dependent on more expensive air travel.

In 2010, Manitoba committed to \$75 million annually towards the construction of the East Side Transportation Network. Last fall, MFESRA announced the opening of a permanent all-season road link to Bloodvein First Nation.

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*The Province of Manitoba is distributing this release on behalf of the Manitoba East Side Road Authority and the Government of Manitoba.*