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4.0 ABORIGINAL AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

This Chapter of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) describes the broad history of engagement of Aboriginal peoples and the public undertaken by ESRA on the east side of Lake Winnipeg since 2000, as well as the specific Aboriginal and Public Engagement Program (APEP) undertaken for the proposed P4 all-season road Project (the Project) between Berens River First Nation/Northern Affairs Community (NAC) and Poplar River First Nation.

4.1 Aboriginal and Public Engagement Objectives and Approaches

4.1.1 Objectives

Aboriginal and public engagement for all of ESRA's projects and activities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg is considered a fundamental and influential component of the project planning process as it intends to comprehensively engage multiple parties in all phases of project development for the duration of the project life cycle. These engagement activities are considered to be independent of the Crown's Duty to Consult, but may help to frame and inform consultation between the Crown and Aboriginal communities.

The primary objective of ESRA's Aboriginal and public engagement initiatives and activities is to provide meaningful opportunities to engage in dialogue and exchange information about the ESRA projects with interested and potentially affected parties¹. Interested and potentially affected parties include east side communities (e.g., local First Nations and NACs), other Aboriginal peoples (Metis) and other interested parties such as government agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), and members of the general Manitoban public. The information received during many conversations with interested and affected parties is integrated into the various steps of project development to select, design and construct an all-season road (see **Figure 4-1**). ESRA is committed to working in partnership with local communities, their leadership (i.e., Chief and Council) and Elders to provide engagement processes that reflect the priorities of each community.

ESRA's approach to Aboriginal and public engagement achieves the primary objective in the following ways:

- Provides meaningful opportunities for the early involvement of interested and affected parties;
- Provides opportunities for continued participation throughout all stages of the project;
- Utilizes a variety of engagement approaches to provide information, receive feedback, and engage with participants in a transparent manner;
- Provides flexibility in approach such that engagement activities can be revised in response to comments and feedback received;

¹ Interested and affected parties – Interested parties are defined as Aboriginal and/or non-Aboriginal peoples of Manitoba who may be interested in participating or learning about the Project. Affected parties refer to Aboriginal and/or non-Aboriginal parties who may be directly or indirectly affected by the development of the Project.

Steps to Select, Design and Construct an All-Season Road

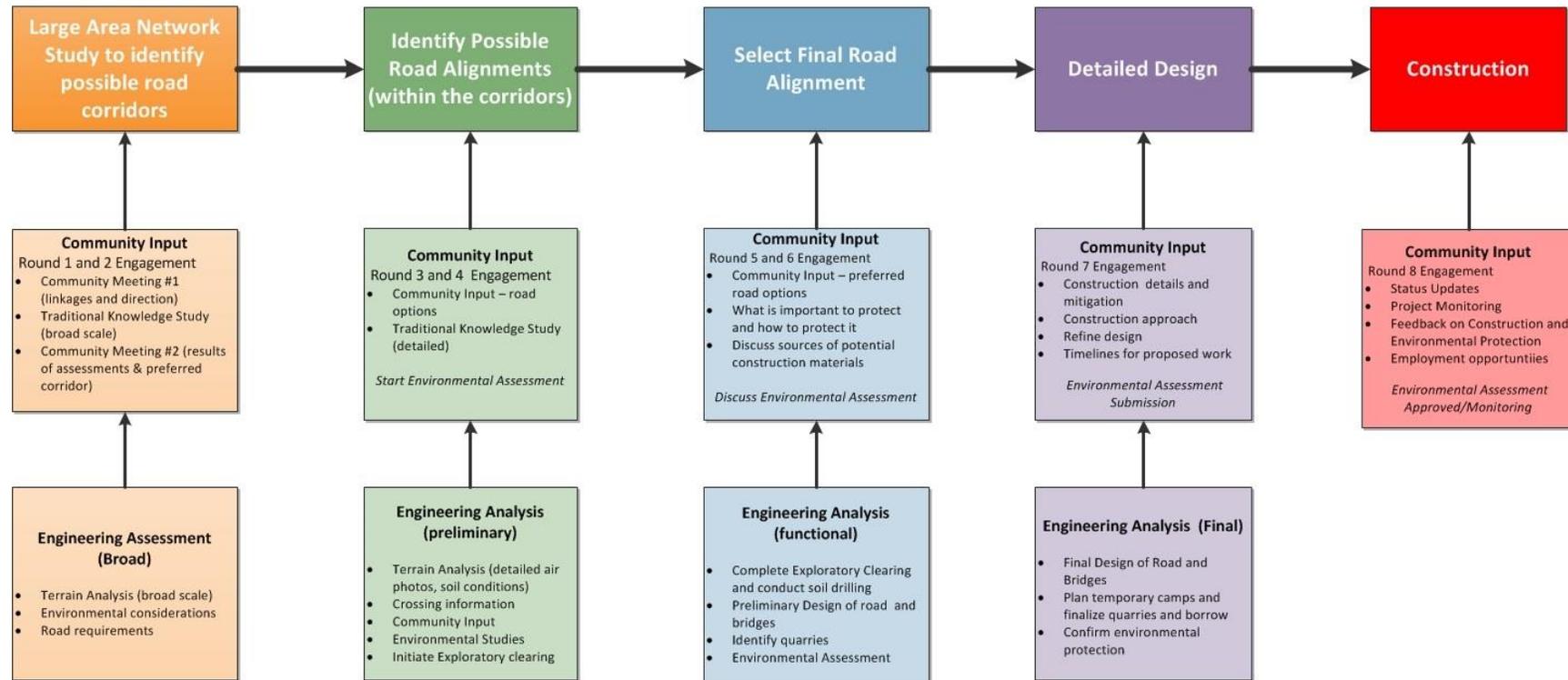


Figure 4-1: Steps to Select, Design and Construct an All-Season Road

- Effectively uses feedback provided by engagement to assist with decision-making with respect to project design and schedule, and to help avoid or minimize potential adverse effects and maximize project benefits; and
- Communicates how community, stakeholder, or public input and feedback are used.

The approach for Aboriginal and public engagement, including the APEP for the proposed P4 all-season road Project, is centered on:

- Providing participation opportunities for interested and affected parties;
- Addressing relevant biophysical, social, or cultural questions and comments so that they can be considered in relation to Valued Components (VCs) and addressed in the impact analysis section of the EIA;
- Respecting and incorporating community and Traditional Knowledge (TK) into the process; and
- Conducting communication between proponent and interested and affected parties in a culturally sensitive and understandable manner (e.g., translation services when needed).

4.1.2 Engagement Methods

The provision of information and the way in which information is communicated and shared is the foundation for an effective engagement program. **Table 4.1** outlines the broad suite of engagement and coordination methods used by ESRA for Aboriginal and public engagement. As a project proponent on the east side of Lake Winnipeg ESRA undertakes engagement and coordination methods in partnership with the members and associated leadership of each community respecting community-specific preferences for engagement as well as scheduled and unscheduled community events that occur.

Effective interaction is integral to the APEP process and assists ESRA in both sharing Project information and gathering local input. Similar to other ESRA projects, the engagement program for the proposed P4 all-season road was supported by local members of each community (referred to as Local Community Coordinators) who assist with the organization and coordination of in-community meetings/open houses, leadership meetings, and the distribution of project-related material within each community. The Local Community Coordinators and community leadership contribute to the coordination of engagement activities to ensure that these activities are tailored to the needs of each community.

Table 4.1: Aboriginal and Public Engagement and Coordination Methods Used by ESRA for Projects on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg Including Project 4

Method	Purpose and Description
Invitation and Notification Letters (Sent via Mail and E-mail)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invitation letters are sent to each community and other stakeholders that may have interest in the Project to attend public open houses. Letters generally provide a summary of what will occur at meetings, the date, time and proposed location, reasons for the meetings and a description of proposed topics for discussion. Follow-up telephone calls to Local Community Coordinators are typically made to confirm arrangements.
Leadership Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership meetings introduce the Project and discuss specific benefits and opportunities of the Project for community leadership (generally Chief and Council). Leadership meetings precede in-community meetings/open houses for planning purposes and the primary objectives are to introduce ESRA as the Project proponent, introduce the study team, introduce the Project and the anticipated work, provide additional Project-related updates, obtain feedback, and review information to be presented at the in-community meetings/open houses.
Elders Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The primary objectives of Elders meetings are to introduce ESRA as the Project proponent, introduce the study team, introduce the Project and anticipated work, provide additional Project-related updates, obtain feedback, and review information to be presented at the in-community meetings/open houses. Translators and/or interpreters are in attendance should they be required. Elders meetings show respect for the community’s Elders by preceding the in-community meetings/open houses.
In-Community Meetings/ Open Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-community meetings/open houses are organized in each community within a particular study area at various stages throughout the Project planning process. The main purpose is to introduce ESRA, provide Project updates and discuss Project components such as VCs and the EIA. In-community meetings/open houses are advertised through local media (e.g., radio, posters, and newspapers). ▪ PowerPoint presentations are used as visual aids during the in-community meetings/open houses. Paper copies of materials are provided to the communities for their use and records. Display boards, such as maps and text boards, are utilized to facilitate information exchange with individuals. Handouts are also provided. ▪ Presentations are made by Project Team members (ESRA and Technical Team) and comments and questions are solicited and responded to.
Public Open Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public open houses are held to provide information and feedback opportunities to a wide range of interested and affected parties including community members living off-reserve, organizations, NGOs, and the general public. The main purpose of public open houses is to provide updates and receive input on the Project, the VCs and the EIA. Public open houses are publicized in local/regional media (e.g., radio, newspapers). ▪ PowerPoint presentations are used as visual aids during the public open houses. Display boards such as maps and text boards are utilized to facilitate information exchange with individuals. Handouts are also provided. ▪ Presentations are made by Project Team members (ESRA and Technical Team) and comments and questions are solicited and responded to.
Other Stakeholder Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Other stakeholder meetings introduce the Project and discuss the East Side of Lake Winnipeg Transportation Initiative, and provide updates and receive input on the Project and EIA.
Government Stakeholder Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government stakeholder meetings are held to discuss updates on the Project and environmental studies, to solicit interest and input into the EIA and to determine the interest level of government agencies.

Method	Purpose and Description
Traditional Knowledge Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Traditional Knowledge exercises are used to gather local knowledge on traditional land uses (current and historic), resource use patterns, cultural/spiritual implications, local biophysical aspects, and sites of cultural, ecological, and archaeological importance for input into the Project and the EIA. Respondents can also express their personal views of the Project and identify potential impacts that the Project may have on each of the communities and the natural environment.
Other Community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community members are invited to participate in environmental baseline study data collection in the areas of wildlife (i.e., through the trapper program), fish and fish habitat, vegetation, and heritage resources.
Printed Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Newsletters, fact sheets, comment sheets, calendars, maps and presentation print-outs are distributed during in-community meetings and open houses and are made available in the community (i.e., band office, community hall). ▪ ESRA developed a document titled “All Season Road Construction Activities: What Can You Expect?” to inform the public about what to expect during construction and maintenance, and important safety measures.
Established Communication Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication channels such as the ESRA website, ESRA blog, ESRA contact email address, telephone numbers, and fax numbers are provided for interested and affected parties to communicate feedback or solicit Project information.

4.1.3 Traditional Knowledge

ESRA’s overarching Traditional Knowledge (TK) philosophy is based on respect, open communication and information sharing. As the owners of the information, TK information shared with ESRA by the communities is always returned to the individuals and/or communities that provided it.

Areas of TK that inform the development of the EIS are illustrated in **Figure 4-2**. More specifically, TK information shared with ESRA:

- Supports the selection and refinement of proposed alignments;
- Informs technical baseline studies of the existing environment;
- Supports engineering design of select Project components (e.g., identification of portages, identification of waterways where navigation needs to be accommodated);
- Provides information on the identification of VCs and possible environmental effects; and
- Supports construction planning.

Along with providing invaluable insight to inform a Project, TK studies also provide an opportunity for community members to obtain information about a Project and to provide questions and comments.

For the proposed P4 all-season road, the types of TK studies conducted with Aboriginal peoples included:

- Regional-scale TK studies with the local First Nation communities;
- Community-specific studies focusing on the preferred alignment, developed with input from the community members from Berens River and Poplar River; and
- Metis land use in the regional area from the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF).

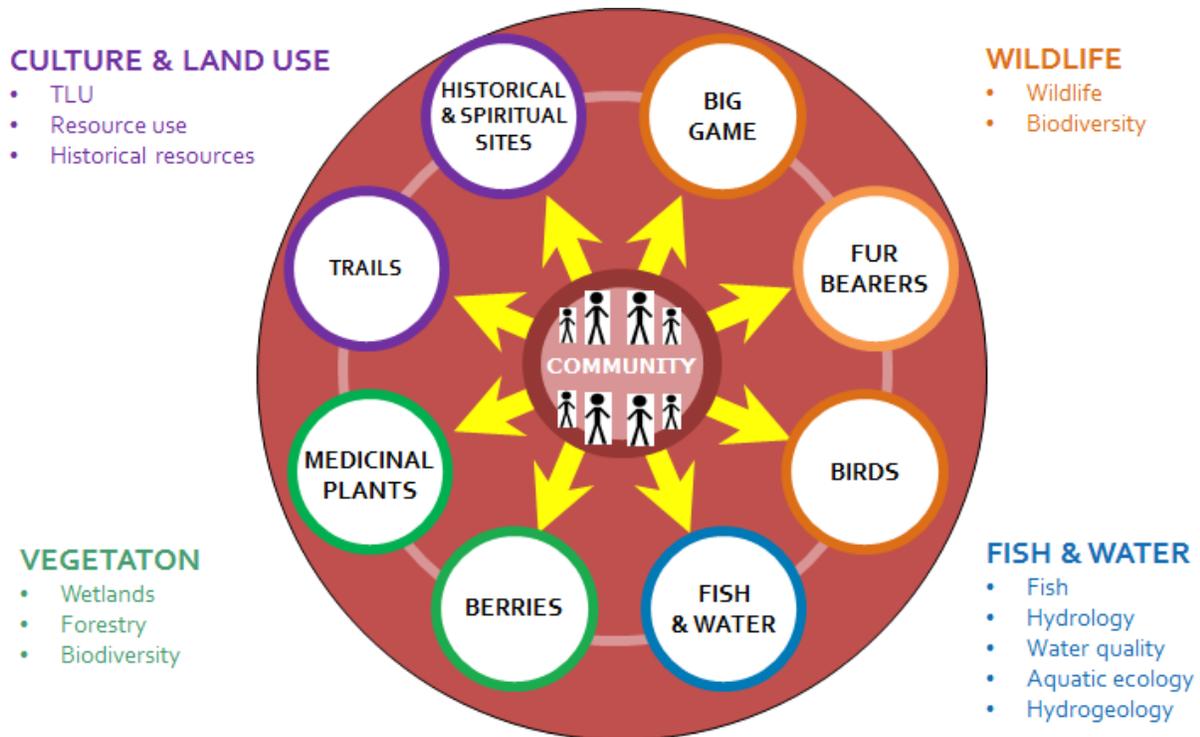


Figure 4-2: Areas of TK that Inform the EIS

Since 2010, 150 interviews with community members have occurred either through one-on-one interviews or workshops. Over 100 interviews were also conducted with the communities in the regional area and 23 interviews coordinated by the MMF, which have provided further supporting information to the Project. Additional information on TK and heritage resource studies is found in **Section 4.4.17**.

4.2 Engagement History on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg

4.2.1 Initial Provincial Engagement Steps

Provincial engagement regarding sustainable development and a network of all-season roads with Berens River First Nation, Poplar River First Nation, and other Aboriginal communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg spans the period of the past 20 years. **Figure 4-3** graphically captures the extensive history and key milestones of engagement with Aboriginal peoples and the public regarding an all-season road network on the east side of Lake Winnipeg.

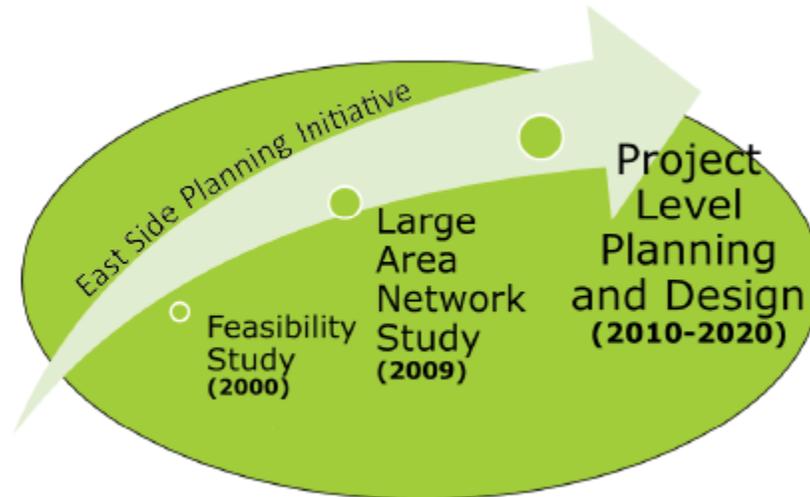


Figure 4-3: Key Elements of the East Side Planning Initiative

The engagement history of all-season road projects on the east side of Lake Winnipeg stems from a dialogue that began in the 1990s when the Manitoba Round Table on the Environment and the Economy released *Towards a Sustainable Development Strategy for Manitobans*. The document proposed principles and guidelines of sustainable development and a series of strategies for promoting sustainability, and led to a multi-stakeholder engagement initiative known as *Consultation on Sustainable Development Implementation* (COSDI). Recommendations from the COSDI Report (Government of Manitoba 1999) included:

- Creation of Broad Area Plans across the Province;
- Improved public participation and involvement of the public prior to the initiation of the formal development review process; and
- Development of a protocol to provide meaningful inclusion of Aboriginal communities in land and resource planning and decision-making processes.

In 2000, following the acceptance of the COSDI Report, the Manitoba government commenced the *East Side Planning Initiative* (ESPI) for the east side of Lake Winnipeg as a pilot for broad area planning across the Province. The ESPI involved a wide cross-section of stakeholders including east side of Lake Winnipeg area communities and First Nations, Metis, industry, and environmental organizations to develop a vision for the east side of the Lake. Recognizing the uniqueness of the region, the importance and abundance of natural resources in the area and the need for sustainable planning, the East Side Round Table (ESRT) was commissioned to develop the Broad Area Plan. The ESRT consisted of 21 members from local stakeholder groups including First Nations, Metis, local communities, a First Nation Council (consisting of one Chief from each of the First Nations within the planning area), as well as environment, industry, and recreational organizations (Heart of the Boreal 2014).

The Broad Area Plan was initiated in 2000 and an East Side Advisory Committee, comprising various stakeholder organizations, local governments, and others, was assembled to provide input. In 2004, the ESPI released a status report to the Province entitled *Promises to Keep... - Towards a Broad Area Plan for the East Side of Lake Winnipeg* (East Side Planning Initiative 2004).

The ESPI status report supported the development of an all-season road network on the east side of Lake Winnipeg and provided over 100 recommendations including involvement of east side communities in road route selection, environmental baseline surveys, and assessments of all-season road project effects. All-season road project effects focused on treaty and Aboriginal rights as well as the concept of establishing wildlife refuges. The report also recommended that future development should be based upon processes and policies that provide community involvement, training, and development.

Subsequent to the release of *Promises to Keep...*, the ESRT was dissolved and was replaced by the East Side First Nations Council (later renamed Wabanong Nakaygum Okimawin or WNO) to continue the initiative of broad area planning on the east side of the Lake.

The WNO was a 21-member Council that consists of:

- Sixteen east side First Nation Chiefs or their designates;
- One representative from the Metis Nation government or their designate; and
- Four representatives nominated by the ESRT (Heart of the Boreal 2014).

Over the past ten years the WNO has worked on various planning initiatives for the east side of Lake Winnipeg including the development of Traditional Area Land Use Plans (TALUPs) for First Nations communities in the area. To-date, Poplar River, Bloodvein, Little Grand Rapids, and Pauingassi First Nations have created TALUPs. The Poplar River TALUP is discussed in **Chapter 10**.

Engagement with individual communities during this stage included three main components:

- *Initial community contact;*
- *Individual community meetings; and*
- *Meeting summaries/follow-up engagement activities.*

Early engagement activities by the Province with Aboriginal communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg focused on sustainable development and broad area planning and laid the groundwork for further discussions for the development of an all-season road network on the east side of the Lake.

4.2.2 The East Side of Lake Winnipeg All-Weather Road Feasibility Study

As shown in **Figure 4-1**, the first element of the planning process in the ESPI was the preparation of a feasibility study. The feasibility study was completed in 2000 and assessed transportation options and the utility of a road network on the east side of Lake Winnipeg.

The feasibility study report was authored by Dillon Consulting Limited (Dillon) and referred to as the *East Side of Lake Winnipeg All-Weather Road Justification and Scoping Study*. The feasibility study concluded

that an all-season road on the east side of Lake Winnipeg could be justified on the basis of long-term transportation costs and savings. The area to the east side of Lake Winnipeg was noted to be one of the last major areas in Manitoba not served by a system of all-weather roads (Dillon Consulting Limited and H.N. Westdal & Associates 2000). While the small size of the communities in this area, their remoteness, and the lack of major economic enterprise resulted in an existing transportation system that had a modest capital cost, it provided an uncertain service to local residents (Dillon Consulting Limited and H.N. Westdal & Associates 2000).

The area examined in the feasibility study extended from Hollow Water First Nation in the south to Oxford House First Nation (now known as Bunibonibee Cree Nation) in the north, Lake Winnipeg to the west, and to the Ontario border in the east. A community engagement program with communities potentially interested or affected by the all-season road network was initiated as part of the feasibility study. Community support for, and interest in, the construction of an all-season road network was a central finding of the engagement program.

The engagement process included working with and visiting interested communities potentially affected by the development of a new road system. Communities involved in engagement activities completed for the feasibility study included the Bloodvein, Berens River, Poplar River, Little Grand Rapids, Pauingassi, St. Theresa Point, Wasagamack, Garden Hill, Oxford House (Bunibonibee), Gods Lake Narrows, Gods River (Manto Sipi), and Red Sucker Lake First Nations. The purpose of each community visit was to provide information on the study and the concept of an all-season road network, and to gather community input and perspectives.

A full summary of comments received during this initial round of engagement regarding a network of all-season roads was presented in the feasibility study report (Dillon Consulting Limited and H.N. Westdal & Associates 2000). A summary of comments received is provided in **Table 4.2**. Key feedback/messages received were:

- Varying degrees of Project support from different communities;
- Support qualified based on the need to address the comments raised in **Table 4.2**;
- Control required over natural resource development and loss of traditional land;
- Importance of Aboriginal participation in road construction and maintenance;
- Emphasis on maximizing community benefits; and
- Requirement for in-depth community engagement on comments identified in **Table 4.2**.

4.2.2.1 Aboriginal and Public Engagement - Round 1

The initial round of engagement (Round 1) under the Large Area Transportation Network Study consisted of meetings and TK studies conducted by ESRA and their consultants. In-community meetings were held with all First Nations and NACs on the east side of Lake Winnipeg including the Bloodvein, Little Grand Rapids, and Pauingassi First Nations which all had no comment on the proposed road connection between the Berens River and Poplar River First Nations. Meetings were also held with the

Manitoba Metis Federation to provide the opportunity for their input into the Large Area Transportation Network Study.

Table 4.2: Summary of Community Comments Related to Existing and Future Road Networks Compiled by the Feasibility Study (Dillon Consulting Limited and H.N. Westdal & Associates 2000)

Winter Road/Current Transportation Comments	Future All-Season Road Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Winter road season is unpredictable and short. ▪ Rough winter road surface is hard on vehicles. ▪ Current winter road conditions are poor. ▪ Goods are often damaged in transit. ▪ Very long travel times. ▪ Air freight and passenger fares are expensive. ▪ No inter-community flights. ▪ Access to airports in some communities is inhibited by a requirement for over-water travel. ▪ Cost of air freight for perishable food items is very expensive. ▪ Personal boat travel on Lake Winnipeg is dangerous. ▪ Gang, drug, and alcohol activity increase during winter road season. ▪ Teachers must act as counsellors due to lack travel ease for mental health providers. ▪ Driving conditions are dangerous due to curves along winter road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced cost of living (cost of goods, fuel, freight, etc.), transportation, and construction for housing and community infrastructure. ▪ Improved diet, health, and mental healthcare. ▪ Improved inter-community contacts and recreation/activities, and reduced isolation. ▪ Economic and community development opportunities, and will not impact existing economic ties. ▪ Opportunities to visit children who are away at school and hospital patients. ▪ Access to higher quality education for youth. ▪ Reduced travel times and potential for bus service. ▪ Lack of control over natural resource development and loss of traditional lands. ▪ Impacts to trapping and hunting (particularly due to construction phase noise). ▪ Potential for increased access to drugs and alcohol, and increased gang development. ▪ Potential for environmental impacts (i.e., water quality, water quantity, wildlife). ▪ Promote tourism and increased access to local markets for community-developed goods. ▪ Improvement in RCMP and emergency services capacity and a possible community dispatch. ▪ Possible increased frequency of collisions, but more reliable as the winter seasons shorten. ▪ Increased use of traditional lands by outsiders/tourists and increased hunting, trapping, and fishing pressure. ▪ Road alignment should not follow winter road due to dangerous curves. ▪ Road paralleling lake shore would protect inland areas from mining companies and reduce costs due to shallower bog. ▪ Reduction in cost of winter fishing and better/less expensive access to Winnipeg fishing market for commercial fishermen. ▪ Benefit for on-reserve residents without permanent full-time jobs, and potential decrease in on-reserve populations.

4.2.3 Large Area Transportation Network Study

In 2008, the Province commissioned a multi-disciplinary planning and engineering study to identify a preferred network of all-season roads connecting communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. The study, known as the *Large Area Transportation Network Study*, set out to assess the best route network of all-season roads, the likely scope of social and economic impacts and benefits of the road network on local communities, potential environmental and cultural impacts, and construction and maintenance cost estimates (SNC Lavalin, Mollard and AECOM 2011a). Engagement with Aboriginal peoples on the east side of Lake Winnipeg was a key element of the study and served as the initial formal “round” of engagement with the Berens River and Poplar River First Nations as well as other east side of Lake Winnipeg communities.

Round 1 specifically focused on engagement activities with Berens River First Nation, Berens River NAC and Poplar River First Nation and reflected growing collaboration between ESRA and Aboriginal leadership, communities and the public. The purpose of this initial round of engagement was to provide information about the Network Study, confirm interest in an all-season road (i.e., the P4 Project), and solicit input into the possible route corridors connecting the communities to the provincial highway system to the south. Meetings were held on the following dates:

Berens River First Nation	Berens River NAC	Poplar River First Nation
May 5, 2009	May 5, 2009	April 2, 2009
July 6, 2009		December 2, 2009

Figure 4-4 illustrates ESRA’s all-season road planning process and the “Rounds” of Aboriginal and public engagement associated with each planning step.

Seven initial road network options, the selection criteria used to develop them, and potential future all-season road connections were discussed at the 2009 meetings. At both community meetings, members of the Poplar River First Nation expressed a clear preference to be connected to the existing Manitoba all-season road network. Most community members stated their desire to be connected to the south (Winnipeg) via Berens River First Nation and Bloodvein First Nation, but a few preferred to be connected to the north (via Norway House Cree Nation) because of greater ties to those communities. Based on this, all-season road route options were identified to connect the Poplar River First Nation to the future Provincial Road (PR) 304 – Berens River All-Season Road (Project 1) segment (see **Figure 4-5**). Community input received helped to focus where data was gathered and was incorporated into the analysis of options.

Comments received during Round 1 included both general support for the Project and discussion of potential environmental and socio-economic impacts of an all-season road. The major Project benefits and opportunities noted by community members included a decrease in cost-of-living and transportation and increased access to services and desired locations. Potential adverse impacts noted by the community members included a potential decrease in traditional activities, impacts to wildlife, an increase in criminal activities, and an increase in drug and alcohol use. A full summary of comments from the Round 1 engagement program is provided in **Appendix 4-1**.

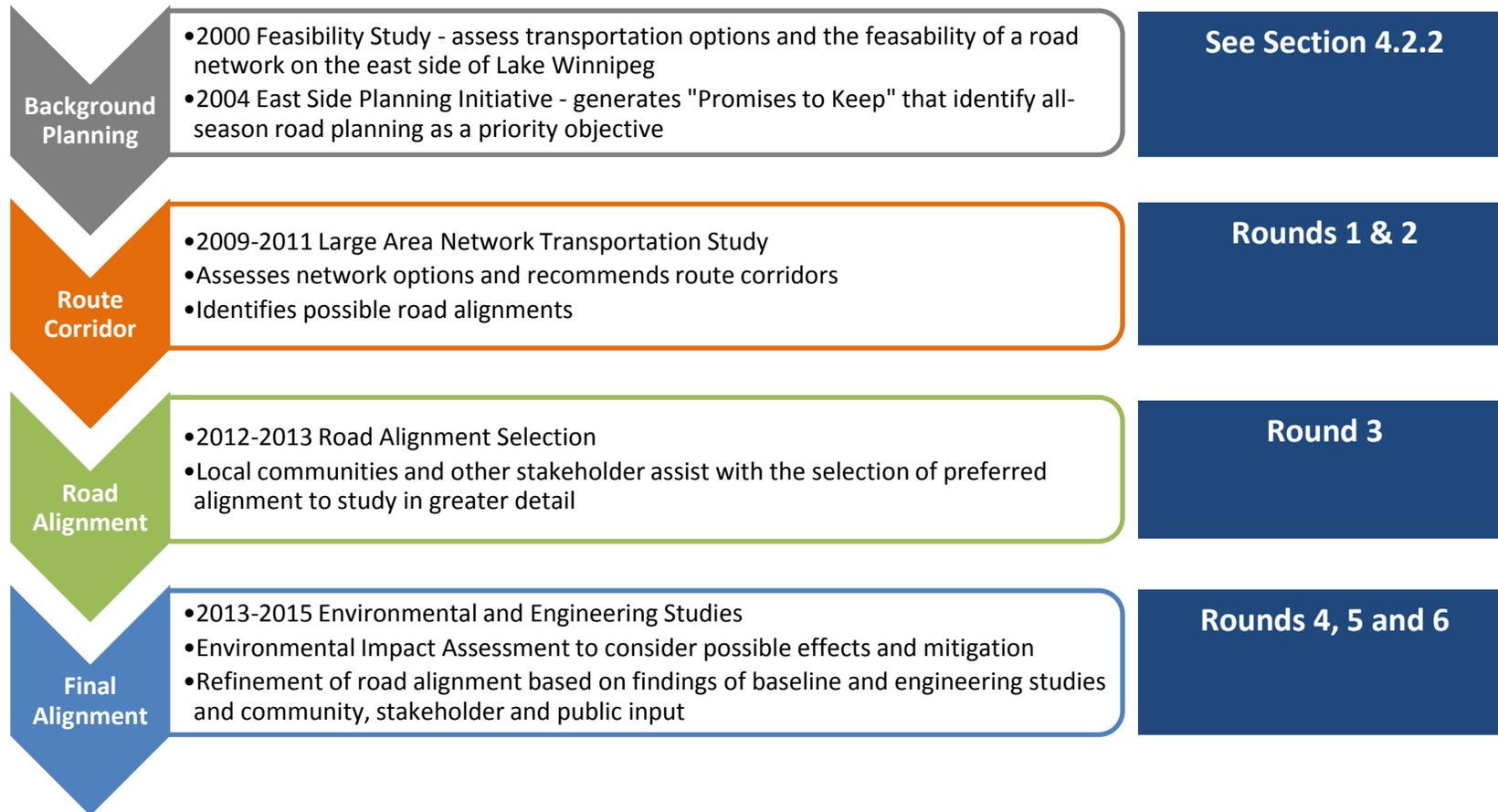
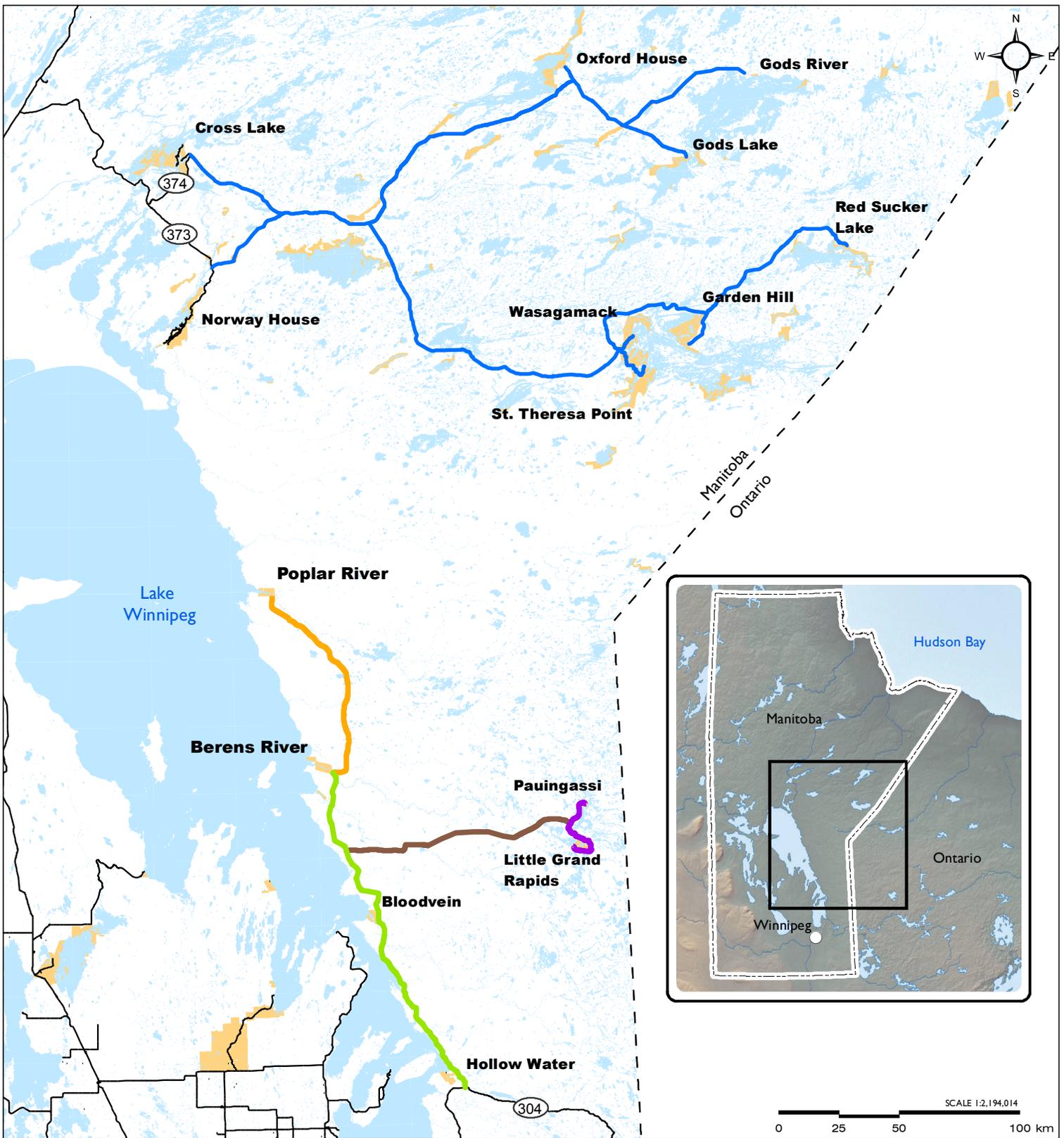


Figure 4-4: Summary of ESRA's All-Season Road Planning Process and Rounds of Public Engagement



Project 4 - All-Season Road Connecting Berens River to Poplar River First Nation

Figure 4-5
Regional Transportation Network of Planned All-Season Roads on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg in the Large Area Transportation Network Study

- Proposed P4 All-Season Road
- Project 1 All-Season Road (Currently Under Construction)
- Proposed Project 7a All-Season Road
- Proposed Project 7 All-Season Road
- Potential East-West All-Season Road Network
- First Nation Reserve

Map Drawing Information:
 ESRI Base Layers, Province of Manitoba, CanVec, GeoGratis,
 Dillon Consulting Limited

Map Created By: ECH
 Map Checked By: MG/PS/DM
 Map Projection: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 14N

DATE: 4/8/2016



4.2.3.1 *Aboriginal and Public Engagement - Round 2*

A second “round” of Aboriginal and public engagement during the Large Area Transportation Network Study (i.e., Round 2) was conducted between May and June 2010. The focus of this round was for ESRA to provide results and feedback from Round 1 engagement activities to the local communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg (with the exception of Norway House Cree Nation) and obtain additional input. Findings for the short-list of route alternatives resulting from a detailed evaluation incorporating stakeholder input and TK information was presented. Arising from the Round 2 meetings, additional TK surveys were initiated and additional input on the Project was received from the communities. Interviews with selected community representatives (e.g., band manager, school principal/teacher, healthcare officer, airport manager, general store manager) were completed during the Round 2 engagement to supplement information gathered at the in-community meetings and provide a more in-depth level of feedback in each community. Information collected was used to refine the preferred route option and to inform baseline environmental studies conducted for the EIS.

Community members engaged in Round 2 commented that an all-season road would bring a reduction in the cost of living as well as increased access to employment opportunities and healthcare services. Community feedback also noted the importance of environmental protection during all-season road development, as well as potential effects related to increased access to the area by non-community members. A summary of Round 2 comments is provided in **Appendix 4-2**.

4.2.4 **Project Level Planning and Design – Road Alignment Selection and Refinement**

The final element of the East Side Planning Initiative (**Figure 4-3**) is Project Level Planning and Design work that focuses on the selection and refinement of the all-season road alignment leading to a preferred Project alignment. Encompassed within this element are progressively more focused engagement activities that are coordinated with planning and design stages and the completion of project-specific environmental impact assessment activities and requirements. Aboriginal and public engagement activities through Project Level Planning and Design include Rounds 3 and the P4-specific APEP rounds of 4, 5, and 6 (see **Figure 4-4**).

4.2.4.1 *Aboriginal and Public Engagement - Round 3*

The third round of engagement (i.e., Round 3) took place over the four-year period between 2011 and 2014 and included community meetings to identify possible road alignments, to discuss Traditional Knowledge (workshop), and to review the Heritage Resources Impact Assessment (HRIA) for the Project. Meetings with community members and leadership provided the opportunity to provide Project updates as well as to solicit comments on the alignment, design, and the upcoming environmental impact assessment for the proposed P4 all-season road Project.

In collaboration with local community schedules and events, meetings were held in Poplar River First Nation in February 2012 and Berens River First Nation and NAC in June and October of 2014. The purpose of these meetings was to gather information to be used to select a road alignment within the

preferred route corridor identified during Round 1 and 2 community engagement activities. An interactive meeting format was provided where questions and comments on road alignment preferences from community members could be tabled and responses provided by ESRA. As the majority of the discussions among community members were conducted in Anishinaabe, a translator was present to facilitate communication between the community members and ESRA.

The TK workshop and HRIA were conducted with Poplar River First Nation in 2012, and a Traditional Land Use and Knowledge Study (TLUKS) was conducted by the MMF in 2011 on behalf of ESRA. The purpose of these studies and workshops was to gather more detailed archaeological, biophysical, and historical information on the area and receive input from community members and other resource users on the potential environmental, socio-economic, and cultural implications of the Project development on traditional lands and land uses. These are further discussed in **Section 4.4** and **Chapter 10**.

Input from Round 3 meetings, workshops and studies helped to further identify ecological, cultural, historical and other areas of importance, refine the proposed road alignment and design criteria, and inform environmental baseline studies and the EIA. A summary of key Round 3 meetings is provided in **Table 4.3** and **Appendix 4-3**.

Table 4.3: Summary of Key Round 3 Meetings with Berens River and Poplar River First Nations

First Nation	Community Group	Date
Berens River First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ September 18, 2012 ▪ May 28, 2013 ▪ March 28, 2014 ▪ June 11, 2014 ▪ December 9, 2014
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ June 11, 2014 ▪ October 28, 2014
Poplar River First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ November 28, 2012 ▪ April 9, 2013 ▪ January 22, 2014 ▪ November 20, 2014 ▪ January 23, 2015 ▪ April 18, 2015
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TK Workshop (HRIA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ September 24, 2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ February 9, 2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Asatiswisipe Aki Ma Ma Wichitowin Mutual Land Relationship Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ March 12, 2012 ▪ November 26, 2012 ▪ February 25, 2014

4.3 The P4 Aboriginal and Public Engagement Program

Since April, 2015 a focused Aboriginal and Public Engagement Program (APEP) for the proposed P4 all-season road has been implemented in association with the environmental impact assessment process. The APEP has built upon the long history of engagement undertaken by the Province and ESRA including the first three rounds of engagement completed since 2009. Since 2012, Project-specific discussions regarding the proposed all-season road have occurred with community leaders and members and have focused on discussing and sharing information on the specific alignment, Project components, and environmental and cultural values of importance found in the Project area. Engagement activities for the P4 APEP were specifically designed to:

- Provide information about the proposed Project to engage local First Nations communities and other potentially interested and affected parties in a dialogue;
- Gather input on the proposed Project from community leadership and members and other interested and affected parties for consideration early and throughout Project planning and design;
- Discuss opportunities for economic development and employment related to the Project; and
- Inform community members and other interested parties of ESRA's proposed projects and activities.

*Rounds 1 to 3 of community engagement as well as the results of Traditional Knowledge, archaeology, soils, and wildlife investigations led to the original road concept and proposed road alignment being refined several times. Further discussion is included in **Chapter 2: Project Alternatives, Section 2.2.***

Three additional rounds (Rounds 4, 5, and 6) of engagement, specific to the P4 Project and coordinated with the EIA, have been implemented (refer to **Figure 4-4**). Engagement activities for Rounds 4, 5 and 6 are described in **Sections 4.3.1, 4.3.2** and **4.3.3**, respectively.

During all three rounds, leadership meetings were held with the Chiefs and Councils of Berens River and Poplar River First Nations to provide progress updates, discuss Project and construction plans, and gather community input. ESRA also convened additional Project meetings outside of the three rounds for other interested and affected parties. Past and on-going communications between ESRA, the local communities and other interested and affected parties has been facilitated by the promotion and use of ESRA's website and the dissemination of ESRA contact information (e.g., email, telephone, and fax numbers).

The Project engagement activities focused on gathering community and stakeholder input on the proposed P4 all-season road for consideration in Project planning and design.

A supplemental document, **Annex A**, is provided with the EIS which presents information distributed (i.e., presentations, hand-outs, display boards, etc.) during community meetings as part of the APEP.

4.3.1 Round 4 (April 2015) – P4 Project Overview and Environmental Impact Assessment

The primary purpose of Round 4 was to introduce the specific P4 Project to the local First Nations and NAC communities and other interested or affected parties in the context of the EIA. This introduction included:

- A review of proposed Project details;
- A review of all-season road alignment options considered to-date;
- A summary of previous community engagement events and findings;
- A broad discussion of the EIA, baseline data collection, and the concept of Valued Components (VCs); and
- The securing of input and comments on the proposed EIA process and selection of VCs.

In collaboration with the leadership of Berens River and Poplar River First Nations, the dates, times and locations of proposed Round 4 community meetings were scheduled. One in-community meeting was held at Berens River for both First Nations and NAC members, and one in-community meeting was held at Poplar River for community members. Through communication with local Community Coordinators ESRA provided advance notice of upcoming meetings through posters placed on band office bulletin boards and at other community locations, as well as advertisements on local radio where possible. Agendas outlining the meeting purpose and proposed discussion topics were provided.

Round 4 community meetings included a series of display boards, a formal PowerPoint presentation by ESRA, an interactive question and answer period following the presentation, and informal discussions associated with information provided on the display boards as well as other discussion topics not presented. At Round 4 community meetings (and all subsequent rounds of engagement), a sign-in sheet was used to log attendees and a variety of printed materials were provided to each attendee (e.g., copies of display boards, comment sheets) (**Annex A**).

4.3.1.1 Berens River First Nation and NAC

The in-community meeting at Berens River First Nation occurred on April 30, 2015 and was open to individuals from both Berens River First Nation and the Berens River NAC at the suggestion of Berens River First Nation leadership. Seven individuals from both the First Nation and the NAC were in attendance (**Photograph 4-1**).

General comments and questions raised by the community members who attended the in-community meeting were heavily focused on the protection of wildlife and fish and their sensitive habitats. Questions raised were related to clarification of restrictions that could be in place during construction for the protection of wildlife and fish. ESRA responses summarized various restrictions planned during the Project and identified the opportunity in future engagement with the community to form assist in developing wildlife and fish protection strategies. A full summary of comments from the Berens River First Nation/NAC meeting is provided in **Appendix 4-4**.



Photograph 4-1: Berens River First Nation/NAC In-Community Meeting (Round 4)

4.3.1.2 Poplar River First Nation

The in-community meeting at Poplar River First Nation took place on April 23, 2015 with 20 community members in attendance (**Photograph 4-2**). A community meal was hosted for all attendees. General comments and questions raised by the community members, Elders, and leadership who attended the meeting were focused on wildlife and fish including the role that wildlife and fish play in the heritage, culture, and tradition of the Poplar River First Nation. Comments were also received regarding the need for traditional ceremonies to take place prior to the initiation of construction activities.

Specific questions raised by Poplar River First Nation community members and leadership were focused on mitigation measures and the use of TK information. In response to these questions, ESRA provided information regarding TK use and monitoring. A full summary of comments from the Poplar River First Nation meeting is provided in **Appendix 4-4**.



Photograph 4-2: Poplar River First Nation In-Community Meeting (Round 4)

4.3.2 Round 5 (May 2015) – EIA: Valued Components, Potential Effects and Mitigation

Round 5 engagement activities included in-community meetings at Berens River and Poplar River and a public open house held in Winnipeg to engage community members living off-reserve as well as other stakeholder groups and the general public. The purpose of the Round 5 meetings was to: communicate what was heard in the Round 4 engagement sessions; present a summary of environmental study results; review and discuss potential Project effects and proposed mitigation; and to obtain further feedback and input on the EIA process and VC selection. It was intended that feedback and input from these meetings would assist in identifying potential effects and suggested mitigation measures to be incorporated into the EIA, into construction specifications, and to further refine the proposed all-season road alignment and design.

Again, in partnership with the leadership of each community, dates, times and proposed venues for Round 5 meetings were selected. Advance notice was provided through posters and other forms of advertisement in consultation with local Community Coordinators. ESRA provided a summary of the meeting objectives and proposed discussion topics prior to each meeting.

For the public open house, posters were placed in local community buildings and advertisements were run in the Grassroots News and the Winnipeg Free Press prior to the meeting date. A number of stakeholders were also invited directly by letter to attend the Winnipeg meeting. Invitation letters included the meeting date, time, and location and provided a brief meeting summary including the

reasons for the public open house and a description of topics to be discussed. Invitation letters were distributed to:

- Berens River First Nation Chief and Council;
- Poplar River First Nation Chief and Council;
- Mayor of the Berens River NAC;
- Manitoba Metis Federation;
- Manitoba Eco-Network;
- Manitoba Model Forest;
- Manitoba Lodges and Outfitters Association;
- Manitoba Trappers Association;
- Mining Association of Manitoba;
- Manitoba Paddling Association;
- Manitoba Wildlife Federation;
- Manigotagan Community;
- Seymourville Community;
- Aghaming Community;
- Princess Harbour Community;
- Manitoba Wildlife Society;
- Manitoba Wilderness Committee;
- Manitoba Wetlands;
- Nature Conservancy of Canada;
- Lake Winnipeg Foundation;
- Eastern Regional Caribou Advisory Committee;
- CEA Agency;
- Invasive Species Council of Manitoba;
- South East Tribal Council; and
- Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce.

Round 5 engagement meetings included a series of display boards, a formal PowerPoint presentation by ESRA, an interactive question and answer period following the presentation, and informal discussions associated with information provided on the display boards as well as other discussion topics not presented. Sign-in sheets were again used to log attendees and a variety of printed materials were provided to each attendee (e.g., Project area maps, Project summary, comment sheets).

Prior to the Berens River First Nation/NAC community meeting the ESRA Project Team was featured on a 2-hour radio program on the Berens River radio station. The radio piece included a summary of the P4 all-season road project, summaries of findings by technical specialists involved in baseline studies, and a question and answer segment for community members calling in to the radio station. The radio show also allowed ESRA to encourage community members to attend the meeting that evening.

4.3.2.1 Berens River First Nation and NAC

The Berens River First Nation in-community meeting took place on May 21, 2015 (**Photograph 4-3**) and was also open to residents of the NAC at the invitation of Berens River First Nation leadership. Fifteen individuals attended the meeting.

General comments by the community members who called in to the Berens River radio segment prior to the meeting were focused on the livelihood and the economic benefits of the Project for community members. Other comments from callers were more technical such as observations of wildlife response to construction in the area. Approximately 24 community members participated in the radio segment.

Questions recorded during the Berens River community meeting were primarily related to an expected increase of tourism and non-community individuals in the area due to access provided by the all-season

road. Other comments were related to the proposed design, plan, and contracting opportunities associated with the road. ESRA discussed mitigation measures and detailed information regarding the road design, planning activities, and contracting opportunities in response to these questions. A full summary of Round 5 comments is provided in **Appendix 4-5**.



Photograph 4-3: Berens River First Nation/NAC In-Community Meeting (Round 5)

4.3.2.2 Poplar River First Nation

The Round 5 Poplar River community meeting occurred on May 25, 2015 with 18 community members in attendance. A community meal was hosted for meeting attendees. General comments and questions raised by the community members who attended were focused on the aquatic environment as well as how the community members preferred to receive communications from ESRA (radio and social media were preferred).

Specific questions and answers recorded during this round of community meetings were related to aquatic species at risk in Lake Winnipeg, and the inclusion of Elders and the use of TK in Project planning and design phases. ESRA responded with information regarding how Elders and collected TK could influence the Project, and presented technical information about structures (i.e., culverts) that would be used at watercourse crossings. A full summary of Round 5 comments is provided in **Appendix 4-5**.

4.3.2.3 Winnipeg Public Open House (May 2015)

A public open house was held by ESRA in Winnipeg on May 28, 2015. Nine First Nation community members and other interested/affected parties were in attendance (**Photograph 4-4**). General comments and questions raised by the attendees were focused on the methods used to invite the public to open houses, Project budget, and wildlife.



Photograph 4-4: Winnipeg Public Open House (Round 5)

Questions and answers recorded during the first Winnipeg public open house included ferry access associated with the all-season road, wildlife monitoring and hunting restrictions, and the potential for further meetings to discuss wildlife. Ferry access was noted by ESRA to be outside of the scope of the proposed P4 Project. Regarding wildlife monitoring and hunting restrictions, ESRA shared their ideas and thoughts and confirmed that they were amenable to further meetings to discuss wildlife. A summary of comments received at the Winnipeg open house is provided in **Appendix 4-5**.

4.3.3 Round 6 (August/September 2015) – EIA: Potential Effects and Mitigation Confirmation

Round 6 engagement activities included another round of in-community meetings at Berens River and Poplar River as well as a second public open house in Winnipeg to engage community members living off-reserve as well as other stakeholder groups and the general public. Key objectives of the Round 6 meetings included:

- The sharing of summary comments received during engagement Rounds 4 and 5;
- Further refinement of the preferred road alignment, if necessary; and
- Further discussion of potential Project effects and recommended mitigation measures (**Figure 4-6**).

It was intended that input from this round of engagement would help to identify and confirm design criteria, potential effects, and mitigation measures to be incorporated into the EIA and construction specifications.



Figure 4-6: Community Input into Potential Effects and Proposed Mitigation

Similar to previous rounds of engagement, ESRA worked in collaboration with community leaders to schedule appropriate dates, times, and venues for Round 6 meetings. Advance notice was, again, provided through posters and other forms of advertisement in consultation with local Community Coordinators. Agendas and/or summaries of the meeting objectives and proposed discussion topics were prepared and distributed by ESRA prior to each meeting.

For the second public open house held in Winnipeg, posters were placed in community buildings and advertisements were run in the Winnipeg Free Press, the Winnipeg Sun, and on ESRA’s website prior to the meeting date. Similar to the previous meeting, ESRA sent out letters inviting key stakeholders to attend the Winnipeg meeting. Invitation letters provided meeting details (i.e., date, time, location) as well as an overview of purpose and discussion topics. The following stakeholders were invited directly by letter from ESRA:

- Berens River First Nation and Poplar River First Nation Chiefs and Councils;
- Mayor of Berens River NAC;
- Manitoba Metis Federation;
- Chief of Pauingassi First Nation;
- Chief of Little Grand Rapids First Nation;
- Seymourville Community;
- Aghaming Community;
- Princess Harbour Community;
- Manitoba Wildlife Society;
- Manitoba Wilderness Committee;

- Chief of Hollow Water First Nation;
- Manitoba Eco-Network;
- Manitoba Model Forest;
- Manitoba Lodges and Outfitters Association;
- Manitoba Trappers Association;
- Mining Association of Manitoba;
- Manitoba Paddling Association;
- Manitoba Wildlife Federation;
- Manigotagan Community;
- Manitoba Wetlands;
- Nature Conservancy of Canada;
- Lake Winnipeg Foundation;
- Eastern Regional Caribou Advisory Committee;
- CEA Agency;
- Invasive Species Council of Manitoba;
- South East Tribal Council;
- Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce; and
- Lac Du Bonnet Wildlife Association.

Per previous engagement rounds, Round 6 meetings included a multi-media format using display boards, a formal PowerPoint presentation, an interactive question and answer period, and informal discussions. In this round of meetings, participants were encouraged to provide their personal feedback by indicating their preference for mitigation types directly onto the display boards using markers. The approach was effective in engaging meeting participant and learning about their perspectives. Meeting attendees were identified on a sign-in sheet and a variety of printed materials (e.g., comment sheets, meeting summary) were provided to each attendee. A summer 2015 newsletter was also developed by ESRA to provide an update on the East Side Transportation Initiative, the EIA process, and APEP activities to-date. The newsletter was distributed to community members in Poplar River First Nation in August 2015 and Berens River First Nations in September 2015.

4.3.3.1 Berens River First Nation and NAC

The Berens River First Nation/NAC community meeting occurred on September 10, 2015. Nineteen individuals from both communities attended.

General comments from community members were broad in nature and pertained to the overall Project, technical aspects such as vegetation, wildlife, and the aquatic environment, and community heritage, culture, and tradition. Mitigation measures were suggested to avoid or minimize potential effects on all of these factors.

Questions and answers recorded during this community meeting included potential effects of blasting residue on wildlife and water, and a suggestion that the community have access to environmental monitoring reports for work around rivers. ESRA provided information regarding rock testing (i.e., geochemistry) and blasting regulations, and committed to providing community members with access to monitoring reports through the ESRA website. A full summary of Round 6 comments from the Berens River community meeting is provided in **Appendix 4-6**.

4.3.3.2 Poplar River First Nation

The Round 6 community meeting at Poplar River First Nation occurred on August 24, 2015. Twenty-four community members were in attendance (**Photograph 4-5**). Fifteen children joined the meeting for the informal segment following the presentation. A community meal was hosted for all attendees.

With a meeting focus on potential Project effects and proposed mitigation measures, general comments and questions raised by the community members were highlighted potential effects on the aquatic environment (e.g., proper design of stream crossings) and suggested mitigation of restricting boat launches and access points around river and stream crossings for road users. Meeting participants had differing opinions in their responses to proposed clearing “windows”, protection of nesting and spawning areas, and relocation of culturally important sites and objects. Overall, the Elders and community members of Poplar River noted that they felt heard and enjoyed participating in the meetings. They invited ESRA back for additional community meetings. Although some individuals had questions in regards to specific sites along the alignment, as a whole the group believed it was important to move the Project along without delays.

Questions recorded during the Poplar River First Nation meeting were associated with the aquatic environment and specifically the measurement of water levels and bridge crossing locations as well as the appropriateness of the transmission corridor to serve as an all-season road alignment. ESRA responded with detailed technical information pertaining to these topics. A full summary of comments arising from the Poplar River First Nation meeting is provided in **Appendix 4-6**.



Photograph 4-5: Poplar River First Nation In-Community Meeting (Round 6)

4.3.3.3 Winnipeg Public Open House (September 2015)

The second Winnipeg public open house occurred on September 15, 2015 with ten attendees (**Photograph 4-6**). General comments raised by the community members and other stakeholders who attended the public open house regarded wildlife preserves.

Questions and answers recorded during the second Winnipeg public open house were related to sensitive environmental sites near the road alignment, employment training for local community members, establishment of wildlife preserves, road maintenance activities, and the existing freshwater fishery. A full summary of comments received at the second Winnipeg meeting is provided in **Appendix 4-6**.



Photograph 4-6: Winnipeg Public Open House (September 2015)

4.4 Additional Engagement Information

A record of community interests from Hollow Water First Nation, Bloodvein First Nation, Little Grand Rapids First Nation, Little Grand Rapids NAC and Pauingassi First Nation regarding the Large Area Transportation Network Study, as well as PR 304, Project 4, Project 7 and Project 7a specifically, is provided in **Appendix 4-7**.

A table of detailed comments on Project 4 from First Nations, throughout all rounds of engagement specific to Project 4, is provided in **Appendix 4-8**. A table of detailed comments on Project 4 from MMF, throughout all rounds of engagement specific to Project 4, is provided in **Appendix 4-9**.

In addition to the six rounds of broad and Project-specific engagement activities that have been on-going since 2000, additional engagement activities have also been on-going that have not been directly

captured in the preceding discussion. The following sections detail other ESRA initiatives and activities intended to engage Aboriginal peoples and other interested and potentially affected parties (e.g., stakeholders, regulators) in dialogue regarding the proposed P4 all-season road.

4.4.1 Aboriginal Communities

4.4.1.1 Memorandum of Understanding and Community Benefits Agreements

ESRA has successfully entered into Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the Berens River and Poplar River First Nations to set out their respective rights and responsibilities related to the proposed P4 all-season road. The MOU with Berens River First Nation was signed in 2009 and the MOU with Poplar River First Nation signed in 2010. Subsequent to the MOU signing, both First Nations finalized and signed Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) with ESRA. The CBAs outline how these communities may benefit by maximizing local procurement, employment, and training opportunities related to the proposed road. The Poplar River First Nation CBA was signed in 2010 and the Berens River First Nation CBA was fully executed in 2013.

4.4.1.2 Environmental Baseline Studies and Trapper Participation Program

Community members from both Berens River and Poplar River First Nations have been engaged through the participation of trappers and other community members in Project-related environmental baseline studies in the following technical areas:

- Wildlife (through the Trapper Participation Program outlined below);
- Fisheries Assistant*;
- Vegetation Assistant*;
- Heritage Resources (Elder involvement in the 2013 Heritage Resources Impact Assessment [HRIA]); and
- HRIA (2015 HRIA) Assistant*.

Note: *One or more community members were hired to assist with conducting field work and the delivery of services.

The Trappers Participation Program (TPP) was initiated in the fall of 2013 and occurred over two seasons (2013-2014 and 2014-2015). The purpose of the TPP is to initiate trapper involvement in research and monitoring activities being conducted on furbearers. Through the program baseline data is acquired to assess the potential effects of construction, operation and maintenance of the Project on furbearer distribution and harvest by trapping. TPP initiatives were developed with the specific intent to incorporate local trapper knowledge in monitoring and research activities and to promote collaboration with the trapping community.

Information collected in the field included baseline data on local and regional furbearer distribution, movement and behaviour, and traditional and current land uses by community members. Trappers recorded fur harvest information, weather conditions, animal tracks and sign, and collected samples among other things. Further information on data collected through the TPP is included in **Chapter 9: Terrestrial Environment**.

In 2013-2014 two trappers from Poplar River First Nation participated. During the 2014-2015 season three trappers from Poplar River First Nation and one trapper from Berens River First Nation participated in the TPP.

4.4.1.3 Leadership Meetings

Leadership meetings have occurred on an on-going basis between ESRA representatives and the Chiefs and Councils of the Berens River and Poplar River First Nations. These meetings have been convened to collaboratively plan the Project and define Project-specific benefits and opportunities for the individual communities. Leadership meetings preceded community meetings to discuss with community leaders the proposed engagement and to introduce ESRA representatives in attendance, the key messages and information to be delivered to community members, and allow community leaders to ask questions or provide guidance regarding the community meeting. In addition to formal Leadership meetings, many informal discussions with Chiefs and Councillors have occurred.

Meetings were held with the Berens River First Nation leadership on May 21, 2015 and with the Poplar River First Nation leadership on April 23, 2015 and May 26, 2015.

4.4.1.4 Manitoba Metis Federation Meetings

The MMF has been invited to share any specific information and comments on the proposed P4 all-season road project so that their interests can be considered during the Project planning phase. To this end, Project-related information has been provided to the MMF by ESRA.

ESRA and several members of the Project Team met with the MMF in June 2015 to provide an overview of the proposed Project, highlight changes in the proposed alignment based on previous community input, provide an overview of next steps in the EIA process, and to learn of their interest in the Project. The MMF has indicated that they are not opposed to the P4 Project and they will consider the Project for potential effects on Metis and advise ESRA of the proposed mitigation measures. In June 2015, ESRA and Manitoba Conservation held a subsequent meeting with MMF to discuss the P4 Project and other topics.

ESRA met with the MMF again on October 28, 2015 followed by a conference call on November 26, 2015 to provide a Project update and to discuss additional TK work by the MMF. It was determined that ESRA would implement appropriate actions prior to and/or during construction for MMF findings of relevance. It was also agreed that if heritage sites of Metis origin were identified and potentially affected by the Project, the MMF would be contacted prior to the implementation of mitigation measures.

General comments received from MMF during communications on the Project included:

- The MMF does not oppose transportation on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, and an all-season road is important due to the current lack of access to supplies and health care; and
- Request for consideration of potential effects on traditional rights.

Specific comments received from MMF during communications on the Project included:

- Project cumulative effects, in relation to other projects, are important (ESRA responded that cumulative effects of the Project, in relation to other projects including future roads, would be addressed in the EIA);
- Request for consideration of additional traditional information as it becomes available² (ESRA responded that additional information brought forward would be considered, and ESRA will work with the interested community on the application of appropriate mitigation measures); and
- Inquiry on how heritage resources would be addressed if found during construction, and how communities would be notified and consulted (ESRA responded that heritage resource studies are being conducted during the design phase in advance of construction. Environmental Protection Procedures are in place in the event that heritage resources are discovered during construction, and these procedures include discussions with Manitoba Heritage Resources and potentially affected communities on how to address the find).

4.4.1.5 Elders Meetings

Elders meetings were organized in collaboration between ESRA and the local communities. Where possible, meetings with Elders preceded community meetings. The primary objectives of these meetings were to keep the Elders apprised of ESRA representatives working in their communities as well as to keep them up-to-date regarding P4-specific planning activities.

Meetings were held with Elders from Berens River First Nation on April 22, 2015 and with Elders from Poplar River First Nation on September 24, 2012 and April 23, 2015. A translator was in attendance for all meetings.

4.4.1.6 Construction Training

Training has been delivered to community members from both Berens River First Nation and Poplar River First Nation since 2009. In total, 51 members from Berens River First Nation and 26 members from Poplar River First Nation have received training through ESRA. Training opportunities are detailed in **Table 4.4**.

² ESRA has extended a contract with the MMF to provide for additional traditional knowledge data collection.

Table 4.4: Training Courses Delivered to Berens River and Poplar River First Nations Community Members

First Nation	Training Course Delivered	Date	Number of Members Trained
Berens River First Nation	Skilled Labourer #1 (SL#1)	July 2009	5
	Introduction to Construction #1 (ITC#1)	August 2009	15
	Introduction to Construction #2 (ITC#2)	December 2009	12
	Heavy Equipment Operator #1 (HEO#1)	September 2013	19
Poplar River First Nation	Introduction to Construction #1 (ITC#1)	June 2011	10
	Introduction to Construction #2 (ITC#2)	January 2013	12
	Heavy Equipment Operator #1 (HEO#1)	October 2013	2
	Heavy Equipment Operator #2 (HEO#2)	May 2014	2

4.4.1.7 Traditional Knowledge and Heritage Resources Studies

A solid body of Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Heritage resource work has been amassed over many years of work and the involvement of many east side of Lake Winnipeg community members. The following sections summarize the various TK, HRIA, and other cultural heritage initiatives and activities of relevance to the proposed P4 all-season road Project.

4.4.1.7.1 LATNS Traditional Knowledge Study

During Round 1, as part of the Large Area Transportation Network Study, TK data collection activities were conducted with all of the communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg (with the exception of Norway House Cree Nation) to gather biophysical and historical information and to receive input from local residents on the potential environmental, socio-economic, and cultural implications of the development of an all-season road network on traditional lands and land uses. The TK studies included the traditional areas of Berens River First Nation, Berens River NAC, and Poplar River First Nation as well as the other communities in the regional area. Members of the Aboriginal communities who were considered holders of the community’s TK (Elders, trappers, and hunters) were interviewed to collect information on traditional activities. Participants were identified by a community member acting as a TK Coordinator in each community.

In Berens River First Nation 37 participants responded to the questionnaires; 12 were active trappers, 15 actively hunted large and small game, and 28 participants actively fished.

In Poplar River First Nation 43 participants responded to the questionnaires; 37 were active trappers, 40 actively hunted large and small game, and 39 participants actively fished.

Input from these studies helped to identify broad ecological, cultural and historical areas of importance and was used for analysis of corridor options. The other regional communities did not report land use activities in the local study area.

4.4.1.7.2 MMF Traditional Land Use Knowledge Study (TLUKS)

Under contract to ESRA, the MMF conducted a Traditional Land Use Knowledge Study (TLUKS) between October 2010 and September 2011 to gather Manitoba Metis input and collect information on Manitoba Metis use of lands and resources for traditional purposes. This information facilitates Large Area Network planning, road alignment, project planning, environmental assessment, and design of all-season roads within the P1, P4, P7, and P7a project areas on the east side of Lake Winnipeg.

A Screening Survey mailed to the Manitoba Metis community at large (as identified by MMF membership registration and/or MMF's Metis Harvester Card Registration) was used to identify potential land users.

An initial workshop held in Manigotagan in October 2010 to present the all-season road projects and TLUKS was attended by 23 individuals. Twenty-nine TLUKS interviews were completed documenting the 'what, where, when, who, and why' aspects of use of lands and resources for traditional purposes. The location and nature of historic and contemporary sites and features that hold cultural and/or spiritual value to Manitoba Metis were also recorded. Data was collected on harvesting activity, overnight places and access routes, cultural, and historic places and TK.

In February 2011, the MMF hosted three workshops to share the findings of the Screening Survey and TLUKs interviews and to receive feedback and input on the TLUKS and Project. Four participants attended the Winnipeg workshop, 12 participants attended the Selkirk workshop, and 20 participants attended the Manigotagan workshop. The MMF is undertaking additional TK interviews to bolster the information already provided and will provide relevant findings to ESRA.

4.4.1.7.3 Traditional Knowledge Workshop and Heritage Resources Impact Assessment

A TK workshop was held with nine Poplar River First Nation Elders and resource-users to identify points, lines, and polygons of historic and continued land use and occupancy in the area of the proposed Project. TK information collected included:

- Locations of a community trapline;
- Locations of two trapping cabins;
- Identification of spawning areas for fish;
- Identification of areas for harvesting medicines, plants and berries;
- Moose calving areas;
- Areas of cultural significance; and
- A healing camp.

A HRIA was completed by Northern Lights Heritage Services Inc. (2013a) for an area of P4 Regional Assessment Area from Poplar River First Nation to a point approximately 55 km south of the community to identify possible heritage sites. Following the completion of the HRIA, the proposed all-season road alignment was adjusted to avoid heritage resources identified during this assessment. Further heritage studies were conducted in 2015 by AMEC Foster Wheeler based on this information.

4.4.1.7.4 Project Specific TK Studies

Specific TK information has been collected for both Berens River First Nation and Poplar River First Nation for the area within the Project corridor of the proposed road alignment (i.e., the Local Assessment Area). As described in **Section 4.1.3**, the TK collected was used to inform the EIA, the Project design, construction planning, and to make considerations related to the final road alignment. The focus of the TK data collection exercises was to collect firsthand accounts of locations along the proposed road alignment related to:

- Local ecological features;
- Culturally important features; and
- General land use practices by community members.

For the Berens River First Nation the TK data collection exercises comprised the following activities:

- TK workshop (April 2015) – Collected and mapped biophysical and historical information within the Project corridor for the new road alignment; obtained input from 22 community members on environmental, socio-economic, and cultural implications of the Project.
- TK interviews (September 2015) – Collected further biophysical and historical information and validated local features of the landscape through one-on-one interviews.

During the Berens River TK workshop community comments, opinions and thoughts were recorded. In general there was support for the Project with some caution related to potential Project effects from an ecological perspective. Specifically, comments received were related to:

- Potential Project effects to residential and migratory bird populations along the road corridor;
- The need to preserve the land and ecology from further resource development; and
- Potential for displacement of community members' traditional trap lines within the proposed road alignment.

The TK data collection exercises in Berens River First Nation were presented as a TK Study for Berens River First Nation (Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources 2015).

For the Poplar River First Nation the TK exercises comprised the following activities:

- Group sessions – Three group sessions with both Elders and Land Users (June 8/9 and 17/18, 2015 and August 24, 2015) and one group session with only Elders (May 27, 2015); during these sessions data was collected and mapped for areas within the Project corridor (i.e., Local Assessment Area) that were used and continue to be used for traditional purposes. These sessions focused on aquatics, wildlife, heritage resources, vegetation and engineering during the group sessions and community comments and recommended mitigation measures were recorded.
- Individual interviews - Individual interviews were conducted with 18 participants over seven days to collect further traditional land use information (June 3/4 and 23/26 and 29, 2015).

During the three Poplar River First Nation group sessions, Elders and Land Users shared their knowledge of the land and provided comment on the Project. In general, most participants were satisfied with the Project location although ESRA was encouraged to look at pushing the alignment further from the Poplar River (around 3 km). Comments received on the P4 Project environmental assessment were related to:

- Request to have a ceremony prior to construction start each season;
- Interest in pollution from the Project does not runoff into the Poplar River and potential effects on fish populations;
- Potential Project effects of noise on hunting;
- Increase in unwanted access to the Poplar River;
- Potential for the road alignment being too close to important sites; however, most believe that the road alignment is far enough away from known sites;
- Suggestion that there be no access roads built from the Poplar River;
- Potential effects from culverts based on past experiences that fish may not spawn in waterways with culverts;
- Potential Project effects on moose behaviour due to disturbance;
- Importance of monitoring caribou; and
- Increase in access to berry picking areas.

The TK Study was completed internally by Poplar River First Nation with support from ESRA (CIER and Poplar River 2015).

Further discussion on the Project Specific TK Studies can be found in **Chapter 10**.

4.4.2 Government Engagement

Engagement with provincial and federal government representatives relevant to the proposed P4 all-season road Project has been on-going for many years. ESRA maintains close contact with Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship (MCWS) staff of various branches. Formal interaction with various government agencies/departments is summarized in the sections below.

4.4.2.1 Integrated Resource Management Team

ESRA has presented the proposed alignment, Project details and Project updates to the Integrated Resource Management Team through a series of meetings held in February 2012, January 2013, September 2013, February 2014, September 2014, and June 2015.

4.4.2.2 Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship, Wildlife Branch

ESRA has met with the MCWS Wildlife Branch staff on many occasions. ESRA has participated in a series of Wildlife workshops held in December 2012, December 2013, and June 2015 to provide updates on field data collection throughout the east side of Lake Winnipeg. In June 2014 ESRA met with MCWS Wildlife Branch staff to discuss the wildlife baseline data collection and analysis undertaken for the P4 Project. Informal contact between ESRA and MCWS Wildlife Branch staff is frequent and on-going.

4.4.2.3 *Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship and Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency*

A meeting was held between ESRA and the MCWS Environmental Licensing and Approvals Branch in August 2014 to present and discuss the proposed Project alignment. A meeting was held in August 2014 with the regulators (CEA Agency and MCWS) to provide a Project overview and answer initial questions.

4.4.2.4 *Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada*

A meeting was held between ESRA and INAC in March 2014 to discuss requirements for the Project description and EIA report that are required for the Community Access Road to be constructed on Poplar River First Nation reserve land.

4.4.3 Other Stakeholder Engagement

In addition to additional engagement activities completed with Aboriginal peoples and government representatives, ESRA has invested in additional engagement activities with other stakeholders interested and/or potentially affected by the proposed P4 all-season road.

Two meetings were held in October 2011 and June 2014 with the Eastern Manitoba Woodland Caribou Advisory Committee to discuss the proposed Project and describe associated technical studies. Recently (September 2015), a subsequent meeting with the Eastern Manitoba Woodland Caribou Advisory Committee was held. A number of other wildlife stakeholders also participated in this meeting to discuss the Project, potential effects on wildlife, and measures that could be implemented to mitigate possible effects. In addition to the Eastern Manitoba Woodland Caribou Advisory Committee, the following stakeholders were invited by ESRA to participate in the meeting:

- Manitoba Wildlife Society;
- Manitoba Wildlife Federation;
- Manitoba Model Forest; and
- Lac Du Bonnet Wildlife Association.

All stakeholders attended the meeting with the exception of the Manitoba Wildlife Society.

4.5 Summary of Key Engagement Activities

Since 2009, six rounds of engagement of Aboriginal peoples, Project stakeholders and the public have taken place for the P4 Project with the first three rounds (i.e., Rounds 1, 2, and 3) focusing on the overall plan for the larger east side of Lake Winnipeg area and the latter three rounds (i.e., Rounds 4, 5, and 6) focusing on the P4 all-season road Project delivered

Aboriginal and Public Engagement related to the east side of Lake Winnipeg all-season road projects has been actively on-going since 2000.

Engagement activities specific to the Project having occurred between May 2009 and September 2015 and will be on-going throughout the Project life.

through the APEP.

An overview of the key engagement activities undertaken for the proposed Project, as outlined previously in this Chapter, is summarized in **Table 4.5** below for easy reference. The range of activities provided numerous opportunities for the communities to receive information and provide feedback.

Table 4.5: Summary of P4 All-Season Road Engagement Activities

Activity	Description
Leadership Meetings	Provided Project information and updates and received input from leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Berens River First Nation (2009-2015, multiple meetings). ▪ Poplar River First Nation (2009-2015, multiple meetings).
Elders Meetings	Provided Project information and received input and feedback from Elders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Berens River First Nation (April 22, 2015). ▪ Poplar River First Nation (September 24, 2012 and April 23, 2015).
In-Community Meetings	Three rounds of in-community meetings associated with the East Side Lake Winnipeg Large Area Transportation Network Study progressively focusing on the overall all-season road network through to the proposed P4 corridor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Round 1 (2009). ▪ Round 2 (2010). ▪ Round 3 (2010-2014). Three rounds of in-community meetings with Berens River First Nation/NAC and Poplar River First Nation associated with the P4 Environmental Impact Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Round 4 (April 2015). ▪ Round 5 (May 2015). ▪ Round 6 (August/September 2015).
Other Community Involvement	Project environmental baseline studies (wildlife, fisheries, vegetation, heritage resources): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Berens River First Nation (2014-2015). ▪ Poplar River First Nation (2014-2015). Employment training programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Berens River First Nation – SL#1 (July 2009), ITC#2 (August 2009, December 2009), HEO (September 2013). ▪ Poplar River First Nation - ITC#1 (June 2011), ITC#2 (January 2013), HEO#1 (November 2013), HEO#2 (May 2014).
Public Open Houses	Provided Project information and received input from off-reserve Berens River First Nation and Poplar River First Nation community members, interested stakeholders, and the general public: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Round 5 (May 2015). ▪ Round 6 (September 2015).
Printed Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Project newsletter</i> issued for Summer 2015 providing an update on the East Side Transportation Initiative, the EIA process and community engagement activities to date; newsletter also included a comment sheet and the option to fill out an exit survey electronically to be dropped off at local Band Office or faxed to ESRA; newsletter distributed to community members in Poplar River First Nation (August 2015) and Berens River First Nations (September 2015); second newsletter to be distributed to provide Project update and summary of Round 4-6 engagement activities; newsletter to be distributed to Poplar River and Berens River First Nations/NAC. ▪ <i>Information handouts</i> on ESRA, the East Side Transportation Initiative, the Project

Activity	Description
	<p>and Project benefits (e.g., employment opportunities) made available at each in-community meeting and public open house.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “All Season Road Construction Activities: What Can You Expect?” document prepared by ESRA and made available at each in-community meeting and public open house to inform community members and the public about the types of construction and maintenance activities that will occur, safety precautions, etc. (see Appendix 4-3).
Traditional Knowledge Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poplar River First Nation TK studies (April 2009 – January 2010). ▪ Berens River First Nation and NAC member TK studies (May 2009 – January 2010). ▪ MMF Traditional Land Use Knowledge studies covering P1, P4, P7, and P7a all-season road Project areas (October 2010 – September 2011). ▪ TK workshop associated with 2013 HRIA (September 2012). ▪ Poplar River First Nation supplementary TK work (April – September 2015). ▪ Berens River First Nation supplementary TK work (April – September 2015). ▪ MMF supplementary TK work (on-going).
Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invitation to share specific information and comments on the proposed P4 Project (May 2015). ▪ Meeting to provide Project update and to discuss completion of additional TK work (October 2015, November 2015).
Government Stakeholder Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MCWS Wildlife Branch (December 2012, December 2013, June 2015). ▪ MCWS Integrated Regional Management Team (February 2012, January 2013, September 2013, February 2014, September 2014, June 2015). ▪ INAC (March 2014). ▪ MCWS (June 2014). ▪ CEAA and MCWS (August 2014).
Other Stakeholder Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eastern Manitoba Woodland Caribou Advisory Committee (October 2011, June 2014, September 2015). ▪ Lac Du Bonnet Wildlife Association, Manitoba Wildlife Federation, Manitoba Model Forest (September 2015).

4.6 Summary of Questions/Comments and Responses

This Chapter of the EIS has described the history of engagement carried out on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, and more specifically for the proposed P4 all-season road project linking Berens River First Nation and Poplar River First Nation.

Rounds 4, 5, and 6 engagement activities (i.e., the APEP portion of overall engagement activities) focused on the detailed TK studies and discussions related to the results of baseline data collection activities and the EIA including the selection of VCs and potential Project effects and mitigation measures. The information obtained from the extensive array of engagement activities, including the APEP, has been used to inform the selection of the preferred road alignment, the road design and its components, and the completion of the EIA for the proposed Project. **Table 4.6** provides a summary of key comments received for this Project and how/where they have been addressed.

Table 4.6: Summary of Key Comments Received, Response and Reference Location in the EIA

Summary of Key Comments Received	Response	Reference Location in the EIA
Sensitive areas identified along the proposed road alignment - would like the alignment moved away from these areas (avoid and protect).	Community comments have been used to refine the alignment. The proposed road alignment changes have been well received when presented in-community.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives
Sensitive sites and areas should be protected through the consideration of setbacks, and by restricting access.	Sensitive site areas are considered throughout the EIA and the design phase. They have been used to refine the proposed route alignment and to identify appropriate mitigation through setbacks and restricted access including erecting temporary barriers to prohibit access during construction.	Throughout the EIA in various chapters including: Chapter 2 Project Alternatives Chapter 7 Physical Environment Chapter 8 Aquatic Environment Chapter 9 Terrestrial Environment
Moose, caribou, and their habitats identified as important to the local communities.	Moose and caribou are identified as VCs in this EIA.	Chapter 9 Terrestrial Environment
Potential for disturbances to ungulates during construction activities.	Construction mitigation measures have been developed to minimise disturbance to ungulates.	Chapter 9 Terrestrial Environment
Potential effects of blasting residue on the food chain, including water and meat of mammals that are regularly consumed by community members, highlighted.	ESRA generally does not blast near water, except at crossings, where DFO regulations are followed. Blasting mitigation (e.g., charge size) will be implemented to minimize potential effects. Blasted rock will not be acid-bearing.	Chapter 7 Physical Environment Chapter 9 Terrestrial Environment
Potential for restrictions to hunting in the area during construction identified.	Hunting restrictions have been identified within the contracts for construction workers around construction sites to protect workers.	Chapter 10 Socio-Economic and Cultural Environment
Potential effects of increased public access to previously inaccessible areas and natural resources (e.g., moose, fish, mineral extraction) highlighted.	Mitigation measures suggested include avoiding the construction of boat launches and decommissioning temporary access routes required for construction.	Chapter 9 Terrestrial Environment
First Nation communities should have access to independent environmental monitoring reports for work completed around rivers.	ESRA will consider posting environmental monitoring reports on the ESRA website. The results of the monitoring program may be reported to the communities and public as a part of ESRA’s APEP.	Chapter 14 Monitoring and Follow-up

Summary of Key Comments Received	Response	Reference Location in the EIA
Use of culverts on creeks used by community members must consider on-going navigation highlighted.	Part of the purpose of gathering TK is to identify travel requirements such as portages. This information will be used in design and project planning to better understand the use of the landscape by the communities and to maintain travel routes.	Chapter 10 Socio-Economic and Cultural Environment
Consideration of sensitive lifecycle stages (i.e., spawning fish) requested.	Required to do so as per the <i>Fisheries Act</i> .	Chapter 8 Aquatic Environment
Desire to maintain access for traplines expressed.	ESRA has considered this in the EIA and it is intended that trapline access will be maintained.	Chapter 10 Socio-Economic and Cultural Environment
Bridges or other river/stream crossing structures should consider continued access by motorized boats, canoes, and snowmobiles.	ESRA has considered this in the EIA. During the in-community meetings and public open houses, how various crossings points continue to be used by the communities was confirmed so that this could be considered during design.	Chapter 10 Socio-Economic and Cultural Environment Chapter 3 Project Description Chapter 4 Aboriginal and Public Engagement
Advance notice of construction should be provided to the communities to allow for cultural and traditional ceremonies to be undertaken prior to the start of work.	Chief and Council will be notified of upcoming contracts prior to their start so that they can coordinate ceremonies if desired.	
Ingoing communications with communities is requested as the Project moves forward.	The APEP plan for the Project contemplates on-going communication on Project status to the local communities as well as other interested parties such as trappers.	Chapter 4 Aboriginal and Public Engagement
Interest in understanding how to get employment information was expressed.	ESRA has a contact that is available to communities for discussing job opportunities. Information was provided at in-community meetings and is also available on the ESRA website.	Chapter 10 Socio-Economic and Cultural Environment

4.7 Future Engagement Activities

The APEP will continue throughout the development of the Project, and will provide updated information and opportunities for all interested parties to continue commenting on the Project. Comments and input received will be reviewed to assess whether the information alters the effects assessment and/or warrants modifications to proposed mitigation measures. **Table 4.7** outlines the key planned future engagement activities for the Project.

Table 4.7: Summary of Proposed Future Engagement Activities & Notifications

Activity	Description
In-Community Meetings/Public Open Houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Round 7 will commence following the approval of the EIA, during detailed design, and will involve discussions related to detailed design, Project updates post environmental assessment, and confirmation of final design with community members. ▪ Round 8 will take place during construction. Engagement activities will provide construction updates and seek to obtain input on construction and Project related aspects during construction.
Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A second newsletter will be distributed to the community members in Poplar River First Nation, Berens River First Nation, and the Northern Affairs Community following Round 6 to provide a Project update and summarize the engagement activities over Rounds 4 through 6. ▪ ESRA will continue with its practice of bi-annual newsletters to the communities on the Project status.
Notices/Communications Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESRA will have a Communications Plan to local community members, including resource users, during construction. ▪ ESRA will also provide advanced notice of construction activities, particularly when there could be short periods of reduced access for water travel routes and snowmobile routes. ▪ First Nation Leadership will also be notified of upcoming construction contracts so that they can coordinate ceremonies, where desired.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engagement will be ongoing with the use of established communication channels including but not limited to the ESRA website, email, and telephone and fax numbers.