

# **Shellmouth Dam Compensation Program: Progress Update on the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) Recommendations**

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Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization  
(EMO)

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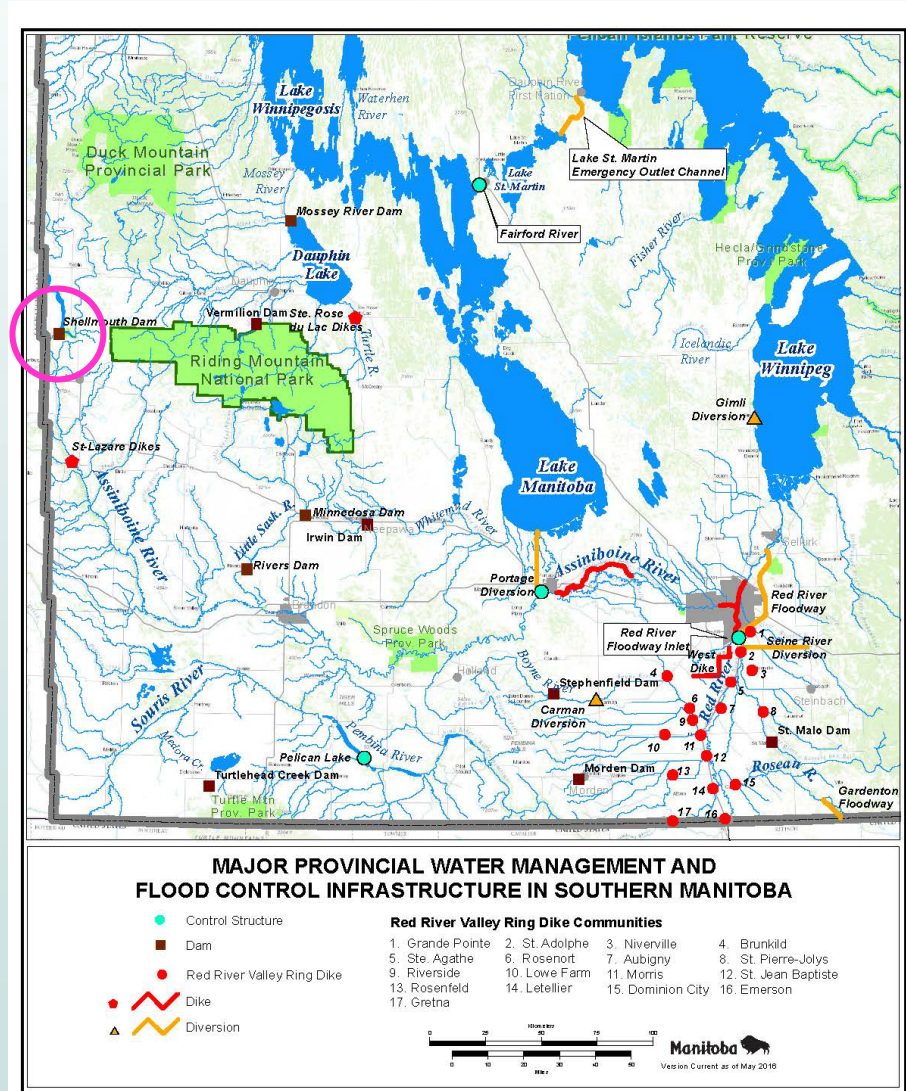
Miniota, Manitoba

# Overview

- 1 **Shellmouth Dam** Overview of the Shellmouth Dam and artificial flooding
- 2 **OAG Recommendations** Review the five OAG recommendations
- 3 **Program Update** Progress update on departmental changes to the compensation program as per OAG recommendations
- 4 **Public feedback** Station presentation boards and survey questions
- 5 **Wrap-up** Next steps

# Background

- Multi-purpose water control structure located on the upper Assiniboine River
- 1971 – Operational
- 1975 - Ownership and operational responsibilities transferred from the Government of Canada to the Government of Manitoba



# Purpose of the Shellmouth Dam

- Two original purposes:
  - Flood mitigation for downstream communities, specifically Brandon and Winnipeg
  - Water storage to supplement low flows on the river
- Additional operation objectives and constraints:
  - Security drinking water supply for Brandon, Portage la Prairie, water cooperatives
  - Water supply for downstream agricultural interests
  - Flood mitigation for agricultural interests in the Assiniboine River Valley
  - Tourism and recreation on Lake of the Prairies
  - Management of flows on the lower Assiniboine River
  - Fisheries and instream flow needs on the Assiniboine River
  - Water quality (indirectly)

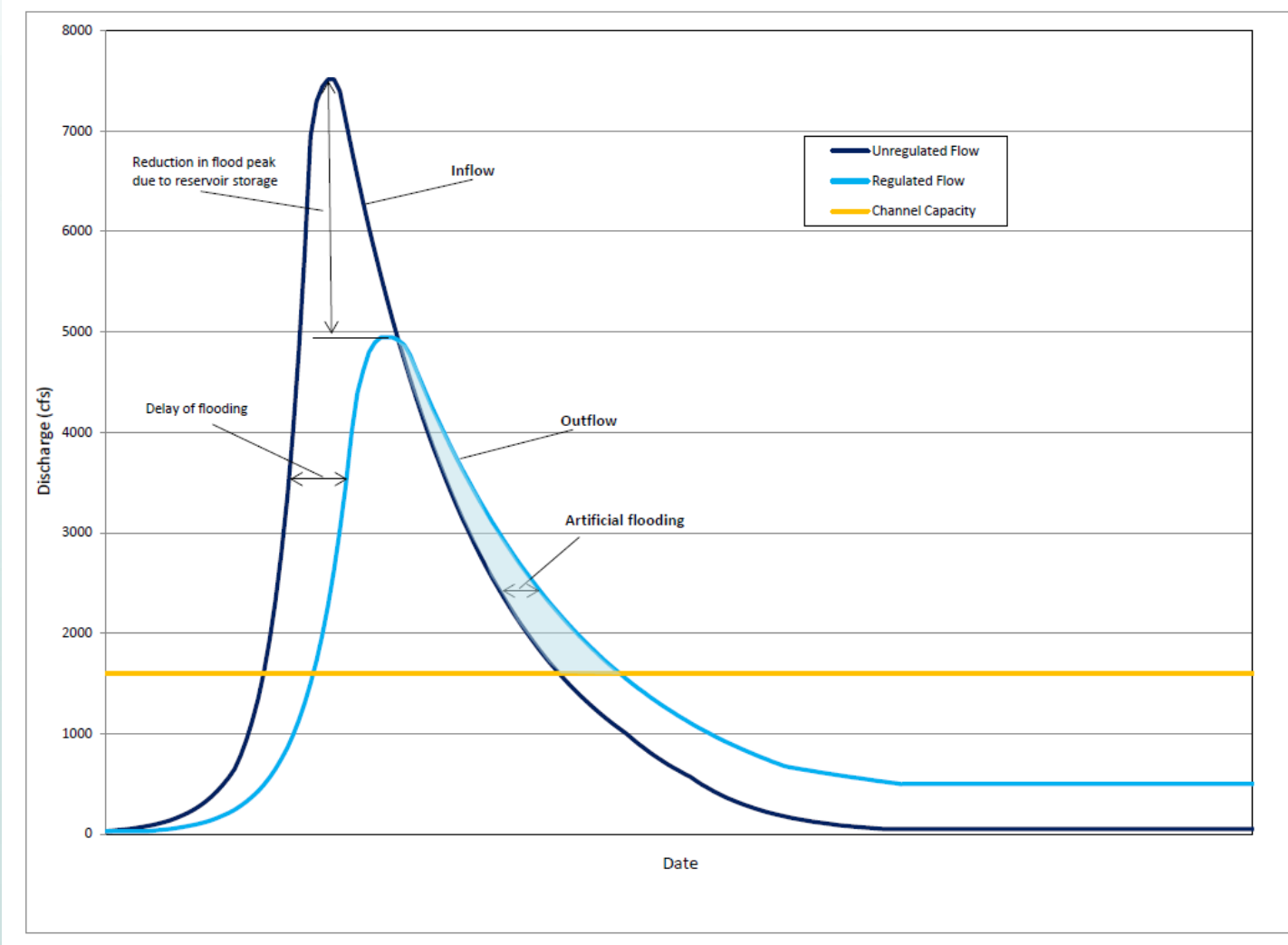
# Operation of the Shellmouth Dam

- Improvements in hydrologic modelling, weather data capture and predictive capabilities since 2014
- In 51 years of dam operations:
  - 48 years the desired water supply and recreational levels were met
    - 25 years flooding of downstream farmland was totally eliminated
    - 11 years flooding was significantly lessened. While the dam did reduce the extent of flooding the dam also created artificial flooding in 7 of the 11 years.
    - 12 years the inflows would not have exceeded downstream bankfull capacity.

# Artificial Flooding and Compensation

- The Shellmouth Dam and Reservoir have a finite water storage capacity, just like all dams and reservoirs.
- The Water Resources Administration Act was revised in 2011 to replace ad hoc flood financial assistance programs and create a mechanism for providing compensation when artificial flooding occurs:
  - Artificial flooding occurs when the regulated water levels along the river exceed the natural water levels, resulting in land being flooded for a longer duration
  - Compensation required under the act for 100% of the damages/losses caused by artificial flooding

# Illustration of Artificial Stream Flows



# Artificial Flooding and Compensation

- Artificial flooding can be complex to understand:
  - Flooding that occurs in the Assiniboine River Valley downstream of the Shellmouth Dam is not always artificial flooding
  - You cannot visualize the effect of natural and artificial effect on the ground
  - Determining the duration and height of artificial flooding is a technical calculation comparing the unregulated hydrograph and regulated hydrograph



## Office of Auditor General (OAG) Review

- The OAG conducted a review of the 2011, 2012 and 2014 Shellmouth Dam Compensation Programs (report released in Fall 2021)
  1. Concerns related to timeliness and compliance with legislation including inspections and lack of supporting evidence.
  2. Concerns that EMO did not sufficiently communicate program information.
  3. There was adequate public consultation when updating operational guidelines for the dam.

## OAG Recommendations

1. Review existing policies and practices to determine what skills and experience levels are required to perform inspections and claim evaluations.
2. Place time limits on:
  - release of artificial flood reports
  - decision letters on applicants Intent to Claim Forms
  - inspections
  - payments
3. Program guidelines for inspections
4. Program guidelines for compensation files
5. Communication strategy

# Proposed Program Improvements

- Overall program improvements are underway to address OAG recommendations. These include:
  - Adhering to legislative timelines
  - Identifying inspector qualifications and pursuing an agreement with Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation to carry out inspections
  - Pursuing timeline improvements with the proposed inspection process (immediately after an event)
  - Identifying program administration and timelines
  - Improving communications through regular website updates, information sharing with local governments, Indigenous communities, and producer associations at all points throughout the proposed process

# Proposed Program Improvements

## 1. Artificial flood event occurs

- Aerial data captured at multiple points during the event
- Launch online portal to submit a “notice of flood damages and request for inspection”
- Artificial flood extent determined
- Inspections occur on properties within artificial flood extent to document total damages

**This is not an announcement of a program**

# Proposed Program Improvements

## 2. Inspections occur

- Collect damages early to avoid seasonal delays
- MASC inspectors collect agricultural information and document property damages
- Assessment shared with licenced private adjusters to provide valuation of property damages

**This is not an announcement of a program**

# Proposed Program Improvements

## 3. Determination of artificial flooding and program announcement

- Minister assesses and a program is launched if economic impact occurred due to artificial flooding (anticipated to occur post-harvest)
- Department publishes an artificial flood report and launches online portal for applications
  - Pending claims will be made active and evaluated
  - New applications can be submitted

# Proposed Program Improvements

## 4. Evaluation and award of claims

- Technical committee evaluates damages and losses attributed to artificial flooding
- Steering Committee reviews, amends, or approves the compensation statement
- Compensation statement packages are sent to claimant with evaluation and rationale

# Public Feedback

Public feedback can help inform improvements to compensation program delivery:

## Station Boards

- Circulate to the stations and share feedback on:
  - Proposed process during an artificial flood event
  - Proposed inspection process
  - Compensation program previously launched
  - Ongoing communication strategy

## Surveys

- Questions related to the four station boards are available at the stations and as handouts



## Wrap-up & Next Steps

- Compile feedback and information from this session
- Produce a summary document
- Incorporate feedback into approach/modify program approach
- Share plan of next steps (including potential further engagement)

# Station Boards and Questionnaires

- Questionnaire and pens
  - Available at the entry table
- Station boards
  - General
  - Detailed process
  - Questions
- Rotate through stations approximately every 15 min
- Participate with stickers or comments on boards and/or questionnaire.
- Leave questionnaire with representative or entry table

**QUESTIONS?**

**Thank you for participating!**