



**Expanding all-weather road access  
By Steve Ashton  
Thompson Citizen  
November 25, 2014**

We are expanding all-weather road access in Manitoba.

This past week the Bloodvein River Bridge was officially opened by Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Minister Eric Robinson, minister responsible for the East Side Road Authority

With the completion of the new bridge, residents will now have year-round road access to the provincial road network. This will help to reduce the cost of goods and services, increase access to health and social services, and provide new economic opportunities for the community.

Having all-weather road access will make a huge difference to the community.

Bloodvein is now the first of many communities that will eventually be linked to the rest of the province through the all-season road project. At the same time, the project is also creating hundreds of jobs and training opportunities.

To date, four new bridges and approximately 43 kilometres of new road have been constructed on the 156-kilometre, all-season road from PR 304 to Berens River First Nation. Construction of approximately 30 kilometres of all-season road between Bloodvein and Berens River has recently started. Minister Robinson said the East Side Road Authority (ESRA) has installed three Acrow panel bridges over the Red Sucker, Mainland and Stevenson rivers. These bridges are helping to extend the length of time that local residents and commercial truckers can use the winter roads.

To date, over 600 job opportunities for local residents have been created for road and bridge projects on the all-season road project. The ESRA has also entered in community benefits agreements (CBAs) with each of the 13 east side First Nation communities for pre-construction work.

Expanding all-weather road access.

A priority for Northerners.

A priority for our government.

- See more at: <http://www.thompsoncitizen.net/opinion/columnists/mla-report-nov-21-2014-1.1620411#sthash.H3ZdKIqV.dpuf>