

# Manitoba PC Caucus Review

Proud to serve  
Manitobans

## A GRAND BARGAIN TO REPAIR CANADA'S ECONOMIC UNION

*March 1, 2019*



Premier Brian Pallister this week re-affirmed the tremendous cost of internal trade barriers to the economy and to households across Canada, and called for a grand bargain to bring collaborative action in the national interest.

“Our commitment to a national vision has eroded over the past few decades. We have taken some small positive steps but we need to think bigger and move faster,” Pallister said. “We need leadership in order to rediscover the blueprint for Confederation.”

Pallister confirmed he has sent a letter to fellow premiers seeking their support for a proposal to address two of the most important issues before Canadians: sustainable and predictable federal support for health care, and reduction of interprovincial trade barriers.

“I am proposing that we seek a commitment for stable federal health-care funding in return for our support for federal legislation establishing a Canadian economic union,” said Pallister. “Despite our best efforts, the current reality is that federal support for health care remains unacceptably low, and interprovincial trade barriers cost Canadians the equivalent of a seven per cent sales tax.”

Provincial and territorial premiers have recently made some modest progress on reducing trade barriers, but larger obstacles loom on the horizon, Pallister noted. We need to think much bigger in order to achieve the real results we all desire, he added.

The grand bargain envisioned with the federal government is more fully described in an op-ed at: <https://business.financialpost.com/opinion/how-to-stop-the-provinces-from-blocking-free-trade-offer-this-grand-bargain>.

## PROVINCE PROVIDES FIRST FLOOD OUTLOOK OF 2019

The risk of major spring flooding in the Red River Valley in 2019 is high, Infrastructure Minister Ron Schuler said this week while presenting the first flood outlook of 2019.

“Early forecasting data shows that we expect to see major flooding along the Red River, with both the Red River Floodway and the Portage Diversion pressed into service,” Schuler said. “Manitoba Infrastructure continues to gather data and work with counterparts in the United States and Saskatchewan to ensure timely information is available.”

With normal weather conditions, levels on the Red River south of the floodway are expected to be near 2011 levels. Unfavourable weather conditions, including late season snow, spring rains and a more rapid snowmelt, would bring Red River levels comparable to the 2009 levels, which saw extended road closures of PTH 75 and other roads, and evacuations in some areas. Water levels will be below the flood protection levels of community and individual dikes. However, partial closure of some community dikes may be required to maintain local access.

Flows on the Assiniboine and Souris rivers are also expected to be high. However, peak water levels will be below flood protection levels. Flows may produce some flooding of farmland and low-lying areas. The Shellmouth Dam will be operated to store a portion of the spring run-off, thereby reducing downstream river flows.

Further outlooks will be issued as updated forecast data becomes available. More information about flooding and how to prepare for an emergency situation is available at [www.gov.mb.ca/flooding](http://www.gov.mb.ca/flooding).

## MANITOBA SIGNS FORESTRY AGREEMENT WITH FIRST NATIONS CONSORTIUM



The Manitoba government has signed a forestry option licence with a group of four First Nations on the east side of Lake Winnipeg to explore Indigenous-led forest development. The agreement was announced this week by Sustainable Development Minister Rochelle Squires, Indigenous and Northern Relations Minister Eileen Clarke, Lac du Bonnet MLA Wayne Ewasko, and leaders from the First Nations that will benefit from this important agreement.

“This licence is a first-of-its-kind forestry development agreement in Manitoba between the provincial government and Indigenous governments,” Squires said. “This agreement has the potential to renew the area’s Crown forest and pursue economic development opportunities while adhering to our commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable forest management.”

The province signed a two-year forest management option licence with Black River First Nation, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, Hollow Water First Nation and Sagkeeng First Nation. This option licence represents over 5,000 square kilometres of land on the east side of Lake Winnipeg and northeast of the Winnipeg River, which has been without commercial forestry activity since the closure of the Tembec Industries mill in Pine Falls in 2009. It is expected the First Nation consortium will pursue private partnerships and investment for commercial development in the area, Squires said.