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Highway maintenance keeps traffic moving smoothly

Fort McMurray... The journey to Alberta's oil sands will be smoother thanks to \$10 million in maintenance and upkeep this year for Highways 63, 69 and 881.

The road work, funded by the province, includes repaving more than 18 kilometres of Highway 63 south of Mariana Lake, and maintenance repairs to the deck of the Grant MacEwan Bridge in Fort McMurray.

"This summer marks the beginning of many new highway construction projects, such as the twinning of Highway 63 and major intersection improvements in Fort McMurray," said Guy Boutilier, Environment Minister and MLA for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo. "It is good to know that while these projects move forward, the existing highways will continue to be well maintained."

Maintenance work on area highways includes the following:

\$5.4 million	Repaving 18 kilometres of Highway 63 from north of House River to south of Mariana Lake - construction began May 30 th and is anticipated to be completed by the end of June, weather permitting
\$100,000	Repairs to Grant MacEwan Bridge - anticipated to begin in mid-July
\$1.7 million	Ongoing highway maintenance north of Atmore, not including Fort McMurray and surrounding area. Maintenance work includes 1175 kilometres of line painting from Redwater north. (This is in addition the twinning of Highway 63, estimated to be over \$650 million, and \$55 million for the completion of paving work this summer on Highway 881.)
\$2.8 million	Ongoing maintenance on Highway 63 within Fort McMurray and surrounding area (This is in addition to \$18.5 million in funding provided by the Alberta government for three major intersection improvements in Fort McMurray this summer.)

"Keeping traffic moving smoothly on Alberta's highways means supporting and maintaining the infrastructure that is already in place," said Ty Lund, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation.

"Alberta has more than 26,000 kilometres of paved highways and our economy and families depend on those roads being kept in good condition for safe driving."

In addition to repaving work this summer, ongoing maintenance includes crack sealing, spray patching, pothole repairs, signage replacement, guard rail repairs and debris pickup as needed. To enhance visibility, mowing along Highways 63, 69 and 881 will begin closer to July, and will occur within Fort McMurray on a monthly basis throughout the summer.

The Alberta government will invest a record \$1.1 billion this year to build, repair, and maintain the province's highway network. The 2006-07 investment marks an increase of approximately \$300 million or 37 per cent from last year.

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