

INFORMATION BULLETIN

DATE: August 6, 2014

SUBJECT: *New Clair-Fort Kent International Bridge officially opened*

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CLAIR (GNB) – Officials from both sides of the New Brunswick/Maine border today celebrated the official opening of the \$13.9 million Clair-Fort Kent International Bridge.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony also marked the partnership in building and funding the bridge between the province's Department of Transportation and Infrastructure and Maine's Department of Transportation.

"Investing in key transportation links that spur job creation and safe travel is a foundation of our government's plan to make life better in New Brunswick communities," said Premier David Alward. "We are celebrating the opening of a new bridge which provides a critical link between two countries and communities. This new infrastructure supports trade, tourism and business in the region, while also serving commuters who are visiting friends and relatives on both sides of the border."

The bridge opened ahead of schedule in order to accommodate the Congrès mondial acadien which takes place in August. This major cultural event is expected to draw significant cross-border traffic during the two-week celebration taking place in Maine, New Brunswick and Quebec.

"I congratulate all of those who put in so much hard work and dedication to make this bridge a reality," said Maine Governor Paul R. LePage. "Last week, Premier Alward and I signed a Memorandum of Understanding that is designed to strengthen relations between Maine and New Brunswick by working together to create jobs and co-operate in areas of trade development, tourism, transportation, energy, culture and emergency preparedness. This bridge represents a vital link for economic opportunity between our two regions for this generation and for many generations to come."

The bridge work was completed two months ahead of schedule.

"This is another example of how the department is transforming into a performance-based organization," said Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Claude Williams.

“We worked co-operatively with the contractors and sub-contractors to deliver a high quality product earlier than expected. This is good news for the public and the trucking industry. For many years to come, travelers from both countries will be able to cross a larger, reliable, state-of-the-art bridge.”

Caldwell and Ross Ltd. of Fredericton was the main contractor for the project. Steel fabrication was carried out by Modular Fabrication Ltd. of Miramichi and a sub-contractor from the State of Maine, Reed and Reed Ltd., constructed the abutment on the American side.

The new bridge over the St. John River links Route 1 in the United States with Route 161 on the Canadian side. Both countries are co-owners of the bridge. Construction and maintenance costs are shared equally by Maine and New Brunswick. Daily traffic on the bridge averages more than 1,000 cars and 45 trucks.

A contract for the demolition of the old bridge is currently ongoing in order to have the structure completely removed by June 30, 2015. The steel structure and two piers will be removed in March to accommodate the spring freshet.