

## **Enclosure 4b: Summary of Information on Potential for Impacts on Webequie First Nation from the Northern Road Link Project**

This **draft** document was prepared by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) to set out the Agency's preliminary understanding of the **potential** for impacts on Webequie First Nation, due to the Northern Road Link Project (the Project). The Agency is seeking to learn about direct impacts the Project could have on the exercise of Webequie First Nation's Aboriginal and Treaty rights. There are prompting questions in this document, which the Agency hopes could guide your input to the Agency. The Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines for the Project will identify the valued components that the Proponent will be required to study during the preparation of its Impact Statement.

As additional information about impacts of the Project that are specific to Webequie First Nation are shared with the Agency throughout the impact assessment process, this document will be updated, and will inform the Proponent's studies and the impact assessment.

### **The Proposed Project**

*Marten Falls First Nation and Webequie First Nation (the Proponent) is proposing the construction and operation, including maintenance, of an all-season multi-use public highway approximately 117 km to 164 km in length. The highway would connect the proposed Webequie Supply Road to the proposed Marten Falls Community Access Road. The highway would become part of a future all-season road network connecting mineral development activities in the Ring of Fire area to the provincial highway network system at or near Nakina, Ontario.*

### **Summary of Information Available to the Agency about:**

- a) the nature and extent of Webequie First Nation's Aboriginal and treaty rights;**
  - b) potential for impacts from the Project on the exercise of Webequie First Nation's Aboriginal and treaty rights; and**
  - c) potential changes to health, social, or economic conditions of Webequie First Nation due to the Project.**
- a) Summary of the information available to the Agency related to the nature and extent of Webequie First Nation's Aboriginal and treaty rights:
- Members of Webequie First Nation have Aboriginal and treaty rights that are recognized and affirmed under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.
  - Webequie First Nation is a signatory to Treaty 9, which provides rights to hunting, trapping and fishing throughout the treaty area.
  - Webequie First Nation's reserve is approximately 74 kilometres northwest of the Project.
  - The Project is located within the traditional territory of Webequie First Nation, as depicted in the Webequie First Nation Community Based Land Use Plan Terms of Reference, 2014.
  - Webequie First Nation is part of the Matawa First Nations, the Chiefs of Ontario and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation.

- b) Summary of the information available to the Agency on the potential for impacts to the exercise of Webequie First Nation’s rights, resulting from any change to the environment due to the Project:

**Potential impacts to physical and cultural heritage**

**Seeking to Learn More**

If there are any cultural sites of importance that could be impacted, the Agency requests that you kindly share as much detail about these sites, including their approximate locations, to assist the Agency with understanding the potential for impacts on Webequie First Nation. These sites can be identified using buffers to protect Indigenous Knowledge.

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If there are specific cultural practices near the Project that would be impacted, the Agency is interested to learn more. For example, if there are areas near the Project that are used to pass on teachings to youth or are used for ceremonies, the Agency would be able to understand more clearly the potential impacts to your community.

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**Potential impacts to the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes**

- Potential changes to access, experience or abundance of lands and resources used for traditional purposes.
  - For example, Webequie First Nation indicated that the Project would intersect trap line areas registered to community members.

**Seeking to Learn More**

If there are specific fishing, trapping or hunting sites used by Webequie First Nation that potentially could be impacted by the Project (including by increased access), the Agency would like more information about the locations of these sites.

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The Agency would like to know of any wildlife species important to Webequie First Nation.

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**Potential impacts to any structure, site, or thing that is of historical, archeological, paleontological, or architectural significance**

**Seeking to Learn More**

The Agency kindly requests that Webequie First Nation shares any areas on a map that contain important historical structures or symbols, or potential archeological sites, of which the Proponent should be aware to minimize potential impacts. These areas can be identified using buffers to protect Indigenous Knowledge.

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- c) Summary of the information available to the Agency on any potential changes to the health, social, or economic conditions of Webequie First Nation due to the Project:

**Potential changes to health, social or economic conditions**

**Seeking to Learn More**

If Webequie First Nation is aware of potential changes to health, social, or economic conditions of your community, the Agency would be interested to learn more about these concerns.

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**FOR ACTION:** The Agency is seeking by **July 21, 2023**, your validation of the information set out above and any additional information about impacts the Project may have on Webequie First Nation. Additional detail about the nature and extent of potential impacts to Webequie First Nation or the exercise of rights by Webequie First Nation may refine our understanding of the potential impacts of the Project, and allow the Agency to adjust its consultation approach, where necessary. Please provide your comments to the Agency by either using the **Submit a comment** button on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site<sup>1</sup> or sending an email to *NorthernRoad-RouteDuNord@iaac-aeic.gc.ca*.

In addition, the Agency would like to meet with your community to discuss the information set out above to understand better, how your community may be impacted by the Project.

The Agency encourages Webequie First Nation to share information with the Proponent to inform the development of the Proponent’s Impact Statement.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/84331>