



Wataynikaneyap Environmental Assessments: Phases 1 and 2 and the Pikangikum Distribution Line

**Northern Ontario First Nations Environment
Conference**

October 5, 2017

Karen Saunders, Golder Associates





PROJECT BACKGROUND

- Grid connection to Ontario's remote First Nation communities would:
 - Put an end to electrical load restrictions (10 communities on restriction in 2015)
 - Save \$1 billion compared to diesel generation (PWC Study)
 - Reduce environmental and health impacts (estimated \$830 million in social value)
 - Result in 6.6 million tonnes of avoided CO2 equivalent GHG emissions
 - Improve living conditions, spur economic development, and increase government revenues
- Successful transmission development requires partnership and leadership by First Nations, industry and government
- 22 First Nations long-term vision is to own major infrastructure in their homeland

“Connecting the remote communities is a priority for Ontario” - Ontario's Long Term Energy Plan





Ownership

- 51% owned by 22 First Nations partnership
 - Equal ownership and open to participation from additional First Nations communities with a vested interest in the project
 - Option to become 100% owner over time
 - The First Nation partnership provides Indigenous engagement, participation, and other services to the Project through its subsidiary “Opiikapawiin Services”
- 49% owned by FortisOntario
 - FortisOntario is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Fortis Inc. (“Fortis”) (TSX: FTS), with total assets of approximately CAD\$47 billion, and 10 utility operations serving more than 3.2 million customers across Canada, the United States and the Caribbean.
 - FortisOntario is the Project Manager for Wataynikaneyap

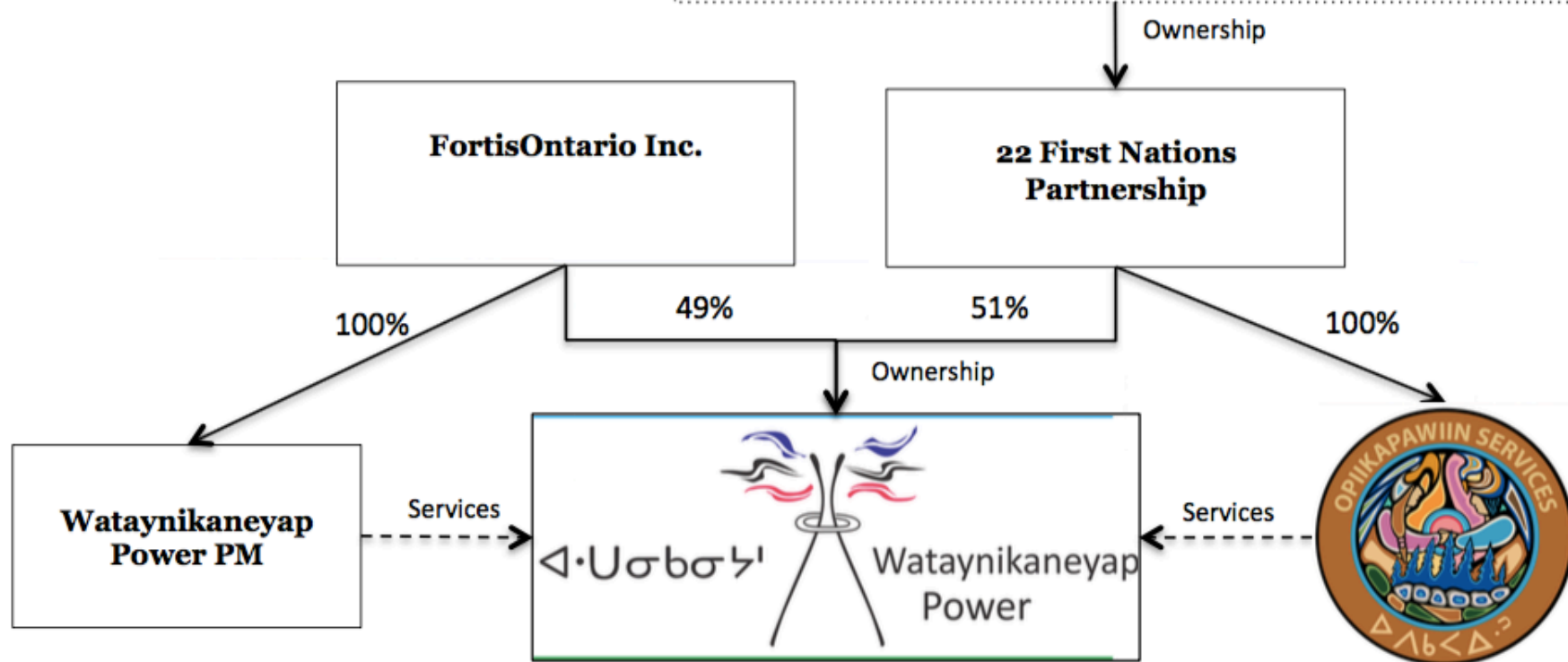
Unprecedented ownership model with First Nations controlling development in traditional homelands





OWNERSHIP/MANAGEMENT

- Wataynikaneyap Power is a transmission company equally owned by 22 First Nations communities and Fortis Ontario.
- Wataynikaneyap will develop, own and operate new transmission facilities in Northern Ontario in order to connect 17 remote First Nation communities.





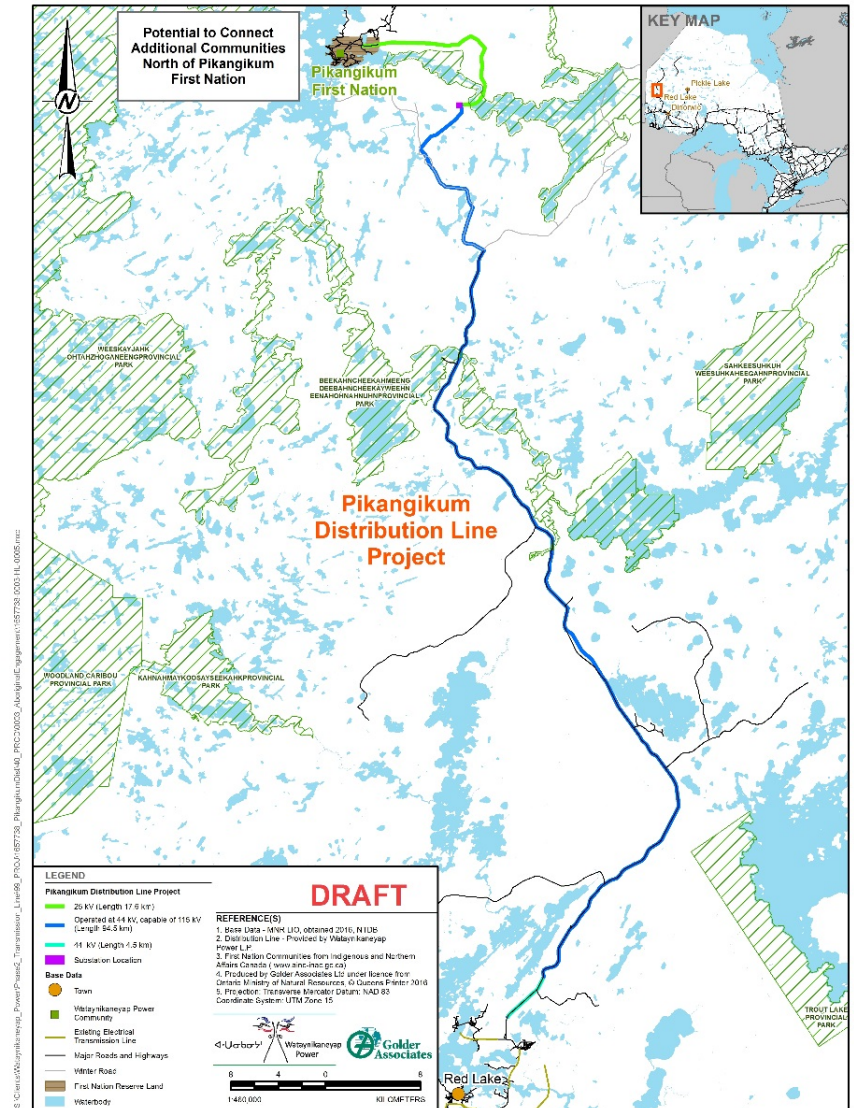
WATAYNIKANEYAP POWER: PHASE 1 AND 2

- Phase 1 – New Transmission Line to Pickle Lake
 - Approximately 300 km of 230 kV line
 - Assessed three corridor alternatives
 - Undergoing individual environmental assessment (EA)
- Phase 2 - Connecting 17 remote First Nation communities currently serviced by diesel generators
 - 1,500 km of 115 kV and 44 kV transmission lines
 - \$1.15 billion estimated capital cost
 - Potential first community grid connections in 2021; build out to 2023
 - Considers several Class EAs –
 - Minor Transmission (Hydro One)
 - Resource Stewardship and Facility Development (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry [MNRF])
 - Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves (MNRF)
 - Section 67 of the Canadian EA Act (portions of line crossing reserve land)



PIKANGIKUM DISTRIBUTION LINE

- New 44 kV/25 kV distribution line from Red Lake to Pikangikum First Nation
- Engineering and permitting started prior to Phase 2
- Separate EA process
 - Previously approved in 2009
 - Refresh to address changes in regulation and project design
 - Statement of Completion pending
 - Construction poised to begin in October/November 2017
- Potential connection in 2018
- Distribution line will be converted to operate at a higher voltage (transmission) for Phase 2





WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT?

- Requirement under the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* and *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*
 - Identifies potential effects and benefits of the Project on the environment
 - Identifies how to reduce or remove potential effects or enhance benefits (e.g., through the Project design)
 - Contributes to responsible environmental decision-making
 - Provides opportunity to comment on how the Project may affect individuals and there use of the land
 - Includes issues identification, baseline description, effects assessment, mitigation and report preparation
- Aboriginal and Stakeholder Engagement is key throughout the process



WHAT IS CONSIDERED IN AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT?





STEPS IN AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Baseline Description

What is the environment like now?

Assess Project Effects

What effects might the project have on the environment?

Mitigation

What can we do to reduce/avoid effects?

Residual and Cumulative Effects

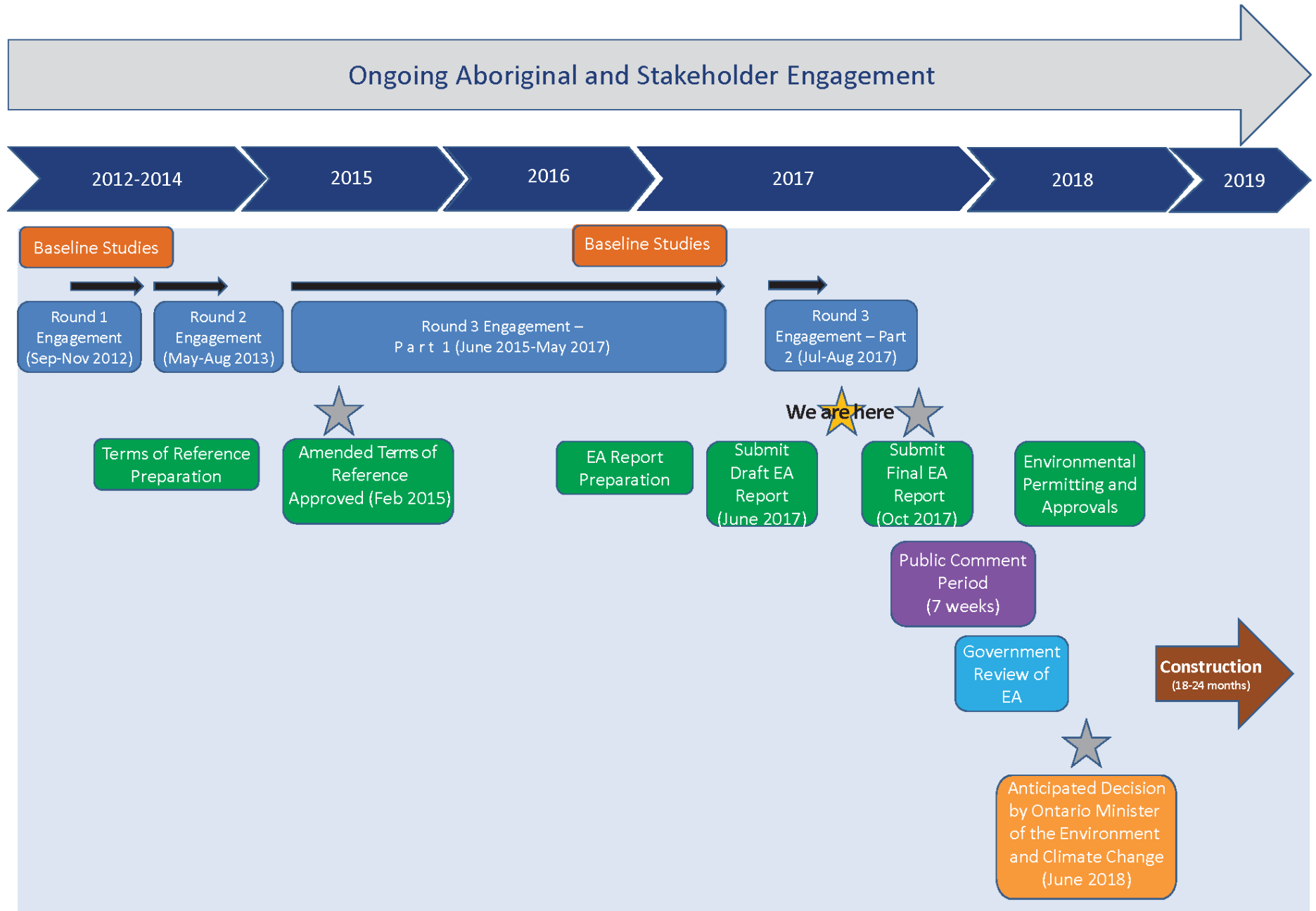
Are there any effects that cannot be avoided?

Determine Significance

How significant are the remaining effects?



PHASE 1 EA SCHEDULE





PHASE 2 EA SCHEDULE

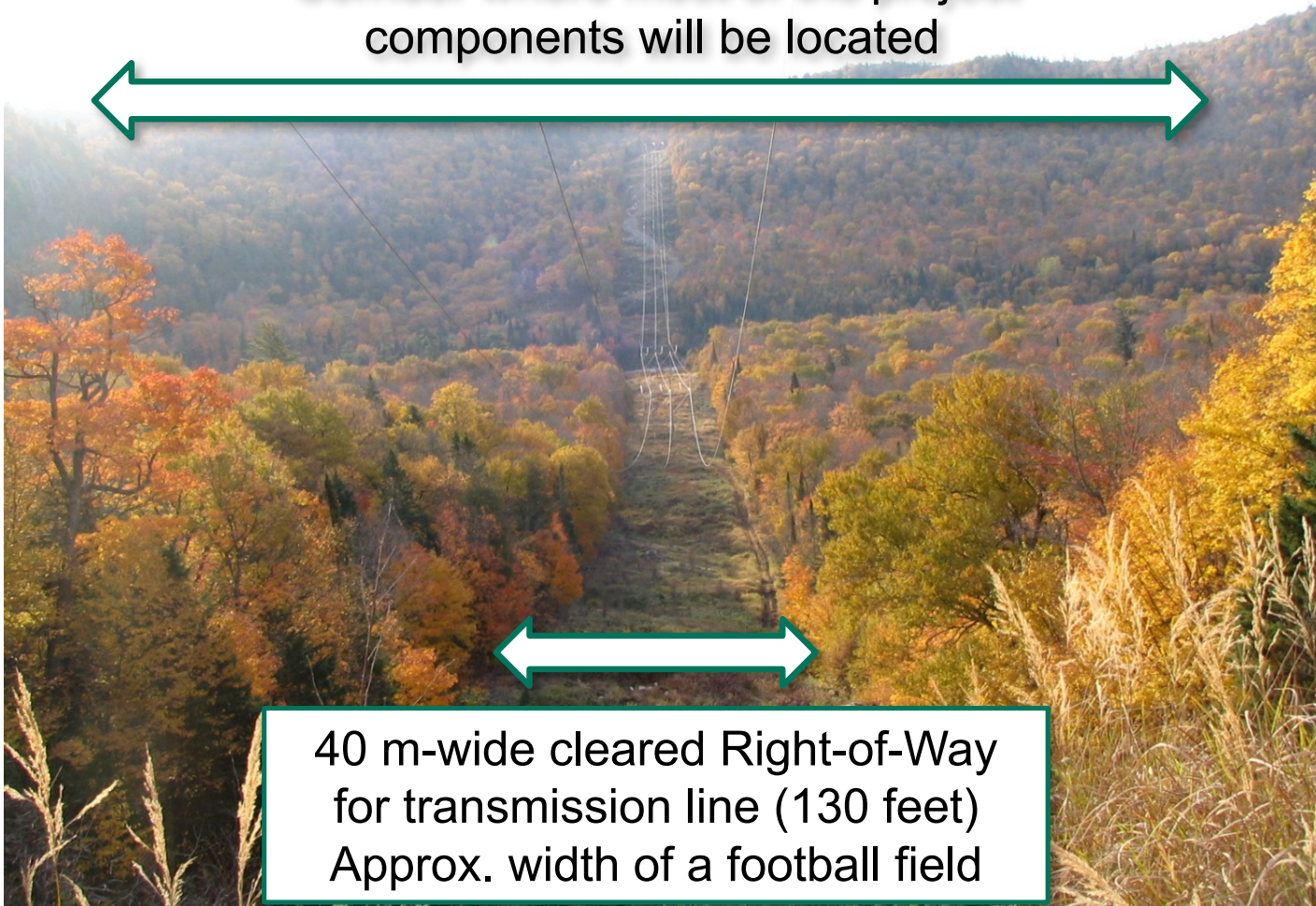


Ongoing Aboriginal and Stakeholder Engagement

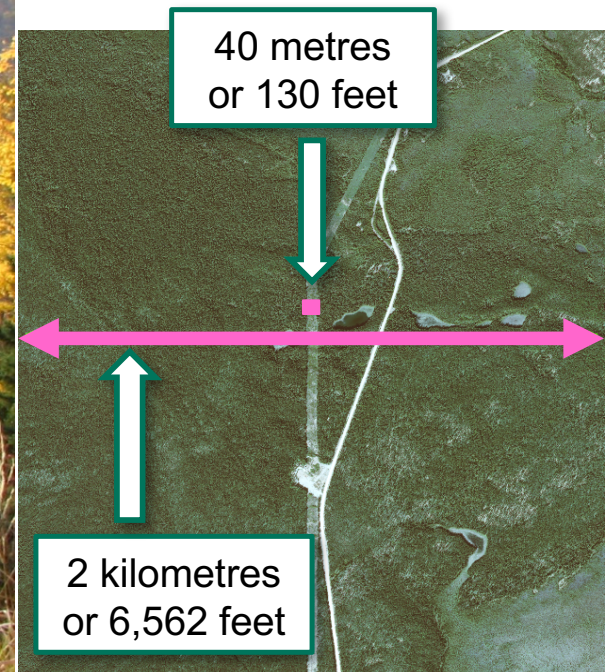


DEFINING THE CORRIDOR STUDY AREA AND RIGHT-OF-WAY

2 km-wide study area (6,562 feet)
Corridor where most of the project components will be located



40 m-wide cleared Right-of-Way for transmission line (130 feet)
Approx. width of a football field





DISCIPLINES ADDRESSED IN THE EAs

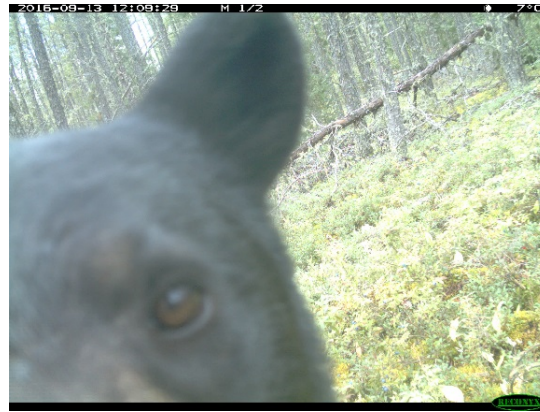
- Baseline data was compiled and effects assessments are being conducted on the following disciplines:
 - Surface Water
 - Ground Water
 - Air Quality
 - Climate
 - Noise
 - Vegetation and Wetlands
 - Fish and Fish Habitat
 - Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat
 - Archaeology
 - Cultural Heritage
 - Socio-Economics
 - Non-Aboriginal Land Use
 - Visual Aesthetics
 - Human Health
 - Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Interests





EA FIELD STUDIES

- Vegetation surveys
- Bird surveys – whip-poor-will, common nighthawk, breeding birds, waterfowl
- Remote cameras (Phase 2)
- Aerial reconnaissance
 - bat habitat
 - aquatic habitat
 - focused winter caribou habitat use (Phase 2)
- Archaeology (still underway for Phase 1 and 2)





FIELD STUDY CHALLENGES

- Fieldwork in remote locations can present unique situations:
 - Modifications to study design to adjust for access— sometimes can not drive to/land a helicopter at a planned site
 - Sampling seasons may coincide with high levels of land use by Aboriginal communities (i.e. hunting seasons)
 - Inclement weather (helicopter and airplane restrictions)
 - Dealing with a project study area of unprecedented size – adequate sampling to meet agency expectations
 - Communication challenges – intermittent or no cell phone/data
 - Logistics – long field days can make it hard to plan accommodations, food, transportation
 - Potentially dangerous terrain, animals
 - Ensuring First Nations are informed on a real time basis, and in advance of field work taking place on their homelands



ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACHES

- Community engagement must respect community protocols and principles and community autonomy – involve the community at an early stage
- “Ground up” community engagement from start to finish
 - Open and inclusive process – both sides need to take responsibility and exercise due diligence
- Joint engagement process driven by First Nations and industry to exceed regulatory requirements (EA) – open dialogue
- Community presentations, newsletters, website, radio programs etc.
- Continued engagement of First Nations with traditional lands impacted by the transmission corridor





ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Who are we Engaging:

- Aboriginal: First Nation communities, Aboriginal organizations, traditional land-based rights holders
- Stakeholder: Regulatory agencies, Municipalities and Townships (Dryden, Sioux Lookout, Pickle Lake, Ignace, Red Lake), land and resource users, landowners and service and business organizations, non-governmental organizations and general public





EFFECTS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Through the EA, project effects and mitigation measures are identified, such as:

Potential effect:	To reduce potential effect:
Loss of some areas or change in quality of upland, riparian and wetlands ecosystems through vegetation clearing for construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Project design (minimize removal)▪ Revegetation▪ Control invasive species▪ Mechanical clearing during operation – no herbicides
Loss of habitat, habitat degradation (e.g., air, noise, water), habitat fragmentation, sensory disturbance during construction and operation and/or direct mortality to wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Timing and spatial constraints particular to each species▪ Avoid sensitive habitats to the extent practical▪ Pre-construction surveys▪ Air, noise, waste, spill control and emergency response plans▪ Traffic/road management plan
Loss or damage to archaeological resources during construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Avoid known archaeological resources▪ Complete Stage 2 (3 or 4) assessments▪ Implement Chance Find Procedure▪ Continue engagement with Aboriginal communities



NEXT STEPS EA

- The goal is completion of EA and permitting approvals to enable start of construction in the winter of 2018-2019

PHASE 1

- Submission of Final EA Report
- There will be a 7 week public review period on the Final EA Report

PHASE 2

- Submission of Draft Environmental Study Report in late 2017
- Round 3 Engagement (Aboriginal and Stakeholder) Dec. 2017-March 2018
- Finalization and submission of Final ESR in April 2018
- Prior to construction (winter 2018-19), Stage 2 archaeology field surveys will be required
- Additional surveys may be required for permitting and/or as part of mitigation in the draft ESR (e.g., pre-construction nest sweeps)



POST-EA ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING STEPS

- Engage with agencies to confirm required permits (e.g., MNRF, ECCC)
- Secure required permits
- Ongoing engagement with Aboriginal Communities
- Continue to help prepare communities for grid connection and to benefit from the development
 - Initiate education & training
 - Business readiness
 - Ensure local distribution is up to standard and fully licensed (in progress)





QUESTIONS?

