

**LAKE MANITOBA AND LAKE ST. MARTIN OUTLET CHANNELS PROJECT
RESPONSE TO IAAC TECHNICAL INFORMATION REQUESTS**

Question IAAC-52

Table of Contents

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	II
QUESTION IAAC-52	1

LAKE MANITOBA AND LAKE ST. MARTIN OUTLET CHANNELS PROJECT RESPONSE TO IAAC TECHNICAL INFORMATION REQUESTS

Question IAAC-52

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Program
EIS	environmental impact statement
EPP	Environmental Protection Plan
IAAC	Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
LAA	local assessment area
LMOC	Lake Manitoba outlet channel
PDA	project development area
PER	Project Environmental Requirement
PR	provincial road
RAA	regional assessment area
SAR	species at risk

Question IAAC-52

QUESTION IAAC-52

EIS Guideline Reference: 7.4 Mitigation Measures

EIS Reference: 8.3.6.3 Change in Mortality Risk

Context and Rationale

The EIS Guidelines require the proponent to present an assessment of the potential effects of the Project on SAR that includes mitigation. Subsection 79(2) of SARA establishes a requirement to avoid or lessen all adverse effects of a Project on listed wildlife species and critical habitat, regardless of the significance of those effects.

The EIS states, “overwintering amphibians and mammals are also at greater risk as they may encounter heavy machinery during ground disturbance activities.” The EIS does not describe mitigation required to address this effect, particularly for SAR including Northern Leopard Frog.

It is necessary to describe key mitigation measures in order to understand any residual effects and the nature of those effects.

Information Requests

- a) Describe how occupied habitat and key areas of seasonal use, where Project activities such as construction may introduce risk of mortality through heavy machinery use and ground disturbance, has been or will be identified. Provide measures to mitigate this effect.
 - i. Provide seasonal species-specific mitigation measures for overwintering amphibian and mammal SAR species within the Project affected area.

Response IAAC-52

- a) As described in Volume 1, Section 3.1.1 (Site Preparation and Construction), Project construction will include ground disturbance activities (e.g., excavation, clearing, grubbing) that have the potential to result in increased mortality risk to species at risk (SAR). Most other construction activities will occur after the sites have already been disturbed, or along existing disturbance corridors (i.e., provincial road [PR] 239 follows existing roads, bridges will span the channel, but along existing roadways). Land clearing will occur during the fall and winter therefore wildlife mortality risk will be elevated for those species that overwinter in the project development area (PDA), either in deep waterbodies (i.e., northern leopard frog) or dens (e.g., American badger). Due to the timing of clearing, the mortality risk to roosting bats is not anticipated to change. Bat hibernacula have not been identified in the local assessment area (LAA) through desktop review and baseline field investigations (Volume 3, Section 8.3.4) and overwintering habitat is not expected to be affected. Therefore, overwintering amphibian and mammalian species at risk (SAR) that are susceptible to increased mortality risk through contact with heavy machinery or ground disturbance (i.e., while underground) as a result of



LAKE MANITOBA AND LAKE ST. MARTIN OUTLET CHANNELS PROJECT RESPONSE TO IAAC TECHNICAL INFORMATION REQUESTS

Question IAAC-52

the Project are: 1) northern leopard frog; and 2) American badger. There are no known locations of American badger dens in the LAA but there is potential habitat within the LAA for this species to occur. As such, mitigation measures for overwintering northern leopard frog and American badger are described below.

- i. Potential northern leopard frog overwintering sites (i.e., semi-permanent and permanent waterbodies) were identified in the PDA and LAA using satellite imagery (Volume 3, Section 8.2.2.1). Targeted SAR field surveys in 2020 may provide additional information regarding the suitability of these waterbodies and surrounding uplands as breeding, overwintering, and/or foraging habitat for northern leopard frog. Construction activities (e.g., clearing, ground disturbance) that have the potential to affect known northern leopard frog breeding, overwintering, and upland habitats will be subject to mitigation outlined in the Project Environment Requirements (PERs) and other applicable management plans (e.g., Environmental Protection Plans) (Volume 1, Section 3.7), which will include measures to reduce potential disturbance (e.g., activity restriction windows and setback buffers) and mortality risk (e.g., exclusion fencing). In addition to mitigation outlined in Volume 3, Section 8.3.6.3, known overwintering sites will be incorporated into the Environmental Protection Plan (EPP) and mapping will include mitigation measures (e.g., buffers) outlined in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP; e.g., PERs; see Section 3.7).
- ii. American badger uses subterranean dens throughout the year for overwintering and raising young. Although American badgers and their dens have not been detected in the LAA or regional assessment area (RAA), there is potential habitat for this species to occur in areas of the Lake Manitoba outlet channel (LMOC) where grassland, pastureland or hayland exist (Volume 3, Section 8.3.4.1). Construction activities that result in ground disturbance (i.e., excavation, clearing) that have potential to affect known American badger dens, if identified, will be subject to mitigation outlined in the EPP, which will include measures to reduce potential disturbance (e.g., activity restriction windows and setback buffers, see IAAC-49) and mortality risk (e.g., exclusionary flagging around potential den sites). In addition to mitigation outlined in Section 8.3.6.3, known overwintering sites will be incorporated into the EPP and mapping will include mitigation measures (e.g., buffers) outlined in the CEMP (e.g., PERs; see Section 3.7).