



## Environmental Effects Evaluation – Projects on Federal Lands or Outside of Canada *(Pursuant to s.82-91 of the Impact Assessment Act)*

*This form is to be completed by the sector policy/program officer. For instructions on completing this form, contact the Impact Assessment Division at [ea-ee@nrcan-mcan.gc.ca](mailto:ea-ee@nrcan-mcan.gc.ca) for further assistance.*

OCS-EA File #: 2023-002

### Part 1: Applicability of the *Impact Assessment Act*

#### ❖ General Information

##### NRCan Sector Representative – Contact Information:

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##### General Project Information:

Project Title:	SREPS-IEST-257 La Plonge Solar 500 kW
Project Type:	Solar – Renewable Energy
Location Description/Address:	Poplar St, La Plonge, Saskatchewan
GPS Coordinates:	55.16208, -107.57853
Status of Land Ownership:	Indian Reserve
Proximity to Waterbodies:	600 meters

#### ❖ Applicability of Sections 82-91 of the *Impact Assessment Act*

<p><b>Q1.</b> Does the proposed project occur on federal lands<sup>1</sup> or outside of Canada?</p> <p><small>-for a list of properties owned by the Government of Canada, consult the <a href="#">Directory of Federal Real Property</a></small></p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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<sup>1</sup> "Federal lands" as defined under S.2 of the IAA (i.e., national parks, military bases, and First Nation reserves (under the *Indian Act*)).



<b>Q2.</b> Does the proposed project involve a physical activity <sup>2</sup> in relation to a physical work <sup>3</sup> ?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Q3.</b> Will NRC be exercising an authority, duty or function (e.g. providing financial assistance, licences or permits) that would enable the project to be carried out?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

If the answer to any of the three questions above is NO, then the project does not require assessment under the *Impact Assessment Act*, and this form does not need to be completed.

If the answer to all three questions is YES, complete Part 2 and 3.

## Part 2: Project and Site Information

### ❖ Project Overview and Current Environment

Project Overview:

<sup>2</sup> "Physical activity" includes any activity that involves physical effort including but not limited to construction, installation, modification, operation, decommissioning or abandonment.

<sup>3</sup> "Physical work" is defined as a man-made structure and that possesses a defined area and a fixed locality.



*Briefly describe the proposed project and timeline/schedule, including context for its purpose and rationale. See the accompanying guidance document for a full description of the required information.*

The LaPlonge Solar project is a Northern 500kW (AC) owned by the English River First Nations and developed by their economic development group, Des Nedhe Developments (English River Enterprises Inc.) and built by Tron Construction & Mining. The La Plonge solar project is located on the English River First Nations land, in the village of La Plonge and near Patuanak, SK. The project is an approved SaskPower Partner Generation Program Project with construction planned for 2023.

The project is connected to a rural radial distribution line, fed by a lower reliability transmission line from the main grid. In addition to generating renewable energy, reducing Saskatchewan's greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing dependence on coal for electricity generation, the La Plonge solar project provides grid re-enforcement for the remote radial feeder. This project includes 500 kW of solar energy and in the future, there are plans for a grid-scale battery energy storage system (BESS).

Tron Construction & Mining, a 100% indigenous-owned subsidiary of Des Nedhe Developments, will build the solar project. The labour, journeypersons, and maintenance personnel will be from the local English River First Nations communities.

This project is **100% owned by the English River First Nations** and **will directly benefit the English River First Nations through job creation, skill development, and dividends from the ownership of a renewable solar power generation facility.** The project will also re-enforce the electrical grid near the end of a long radial transmission and distribution line and enable future grid-enhancing projects to improve the reliability of electricity to the community.

The project will be built by Tron Construction & Mining, which is 100% owned by the English River First Nations. Tron's workforce is typically more than 55% indigenous, including numerous English River First Nations community members.

This project will reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by offsetting and reducing coal and natural gas use to generate electricity within Saskatchewan. The project is expected to **reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 220 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/year.**

This project has net positive social-economic and environmental benefits.

**Description of Current Environment:**



*Describe the current biophysical environment at the project site including details regarding its land use, and information/data gathered during an environmental study. Include pictures, diagrams and maps where possible. See the accompanying **guidance document** for a full description of the required information.*

As part of the SaskPower Partner Generation Program, SaskPower completed a preliminary environmental desktop screening. A separate desktop screening was done based on the publicly available information from the Government of Saskatchewan Interactive Mapping tool. The project is located on English River First Nations reserve land. The project site consists of vegetation and small-diameter trees and shown in the images below. According to the Government of Canada geological records, the area is geologically categorized as “Till Blanket - Diamicton thick and continuous may include fluted landforms, drumlins and morainal deposits.” The site is located within the Mead Lake Timber Supply Area (Commercial Forest). Refer to the map below for the Government of Saskatchewan Interactive Mapping Environmental Assessment layers.

*Figure 1: Government of Saskatchewan Interactive Mapping Environmental Assessment layers.*

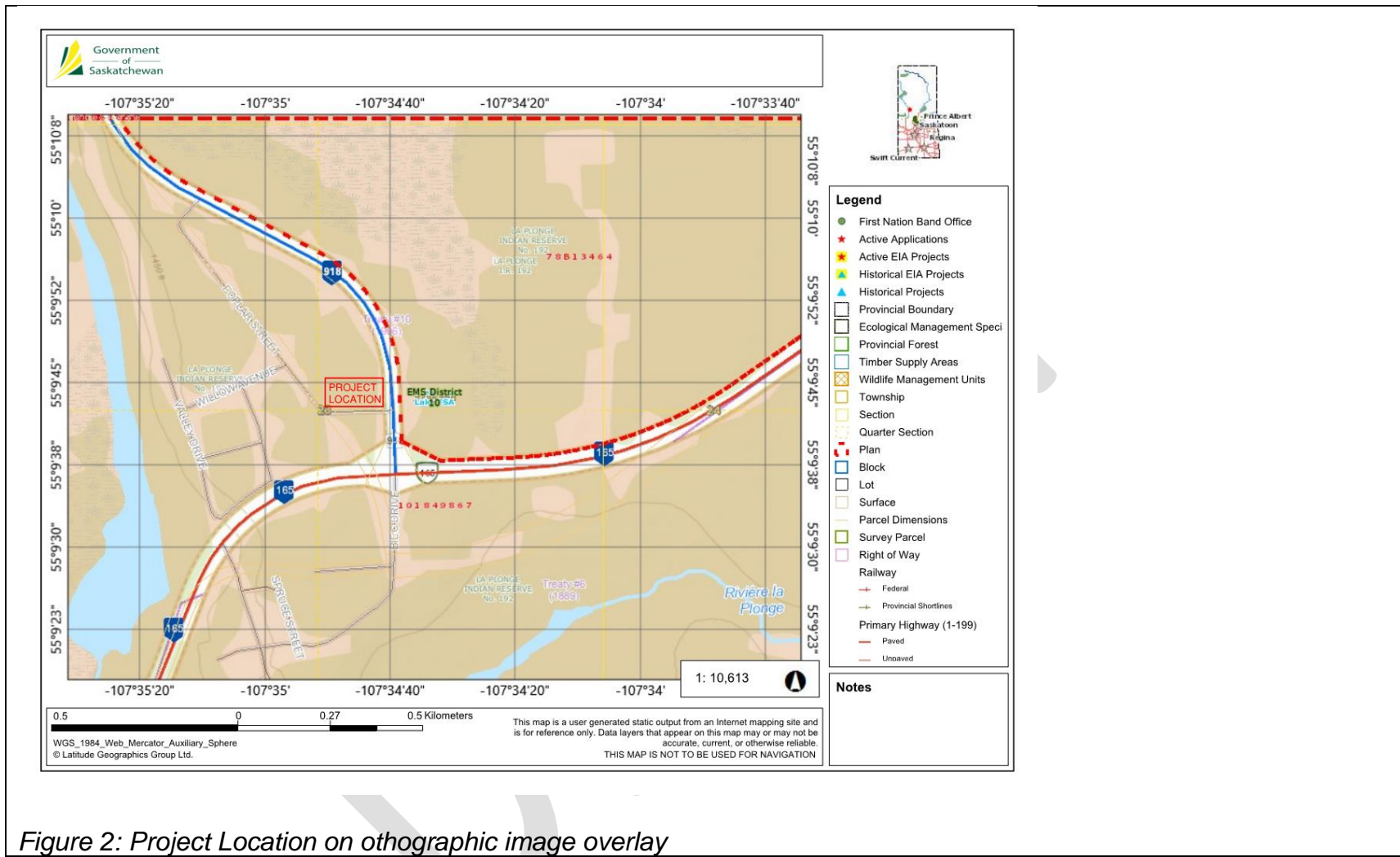




Figure 3: Site photo from Google Earth street view (2021)





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### Part 3: Exemption from the *Impact Assessment Act* Requirements

#### ❖ Exclusion Analysis

The [Designated Classes of Projects Order](#) (i.e., the Ministerial Order) describes a set of projects that the Minister of the Environment is of the opinion will cause only insignificant environmental effects, and thus are excluded/exempt from the *Impact Assessment Act* requirements. To determine if the project is excluded from further assessment, review the Ministerial Order and associated legislation, and then complete Q1-Q4. **If you have any questions, or need support in reviewing the Ministerial Order, you are encouraged to contact the [Impact Assessment Division](#).**

Q1. Is the project excluded under the Ministerial Order?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, list the item from the Ministerial Order:	Schedule __, Part __, Item __.
Rationale:	
Q2. Will the proposed project alter the characteristics of a water body, to a migratory bird or nest as defined in subsection 2(1) of the <a href="#">Migratory Bird Convention Act, 1994</a> , or to wildlife species as defined in subsection 2(1) of the <a href="#">Species at Risk Act</a> that is listed in Schedule 1 of the Act, or <i>residences</i> or <i>critical habitats</i> , as defined in subsection 2(1) of the <a href="#">Species at Risk Act</a> , of wildlife species referred to in subparagraph (iii)?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Q3. Will the proposed project involve activities referred to subsection 5(1) of the <a href="#">Canadian Navigable Waters Act</a> , subsection 35(1) or 36(3) of the <a href="#">Fisheries Act</a> , subsection 3(1) of the <a href="#">Wildlife Area Regulations</a> , or subsection 2(1) of the <a href="#">Scott Islands Protected Marine Area Regulations</a> ?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Q4. Will the proposed project involve the removal of, or damage to any structure, site or resource that is of historical, archeological, paleontological or architectural significance?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>





If the answer to Q1 is NO, the project is not exempt from the *Impact Assessment Act* requirements, and Parts 4-7 of this document must be completed.

If the answer to Q1 is YES, and the answers to Q2-4 are NO, the project is exempt from the *Impact Assessment Act* requirements. Delete Parts 4-6 of this document, and send to the [Impact Assessment Division](#) for the completion of Part 7.

## Part 4: Environmental Assessment and Regulatory Coordination

### ❖ Regulatory Context

Complete the following table to inform the need for coordination with other government departments and agencies:

<b>Q1.</b> Will the Project require approval, authorization, or licensing (or has already received approval) by a Provincial or Territorial regulatory body?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>If yes, list them and include the appropriate contact information:</u>
<b>Q2.</b> Will the Project require approval, authorization, or licensing by a Federal regulatory body (e.g., <i>Explosives Act</i> , <i>Fisheries Act</i> , <i>Species at Risk Act</i> , etc.)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>If yes, list all that apply:</u>
<b>Q3.</b> Has NRCan or the proponent of the Project been in contact or	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>If yes, provide contact information and the nature of the discussions:</u>



collaboration with other federal authorities/departments?		The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada provided a letter on November 22, 2022 confirming that the project is not a designated project under the IAA. NRCan has also contacted ECCC for advice regarding potential impacts of the project to caribou and migratory birds. Saskatchewan Wildlife was also contacted regarding data on caribou occurrences in the area of the proposed project. ISC was also contacted to determine whether an authorization needed to be completed. They responded that they do not need to issue an authorization for the project.
<b>Q4.</b> Has the Project or Project Site undergone an environmental analysis including, but not limited to, a Phase I/II Environmental Site Assessment, Baseline Study, and/or Feasibility Study?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>If yes, list all that would be of relevance (and include them in the Annex) to an environmental assessment:</u>  A preliminary environmental screening has been completed by a consultant.
<b>Q5.</b> Is it likely that the Project will result in significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Describe:</u>  The project will reduce GHG emissions.
<b>Q6.</b> If NRCan is providing funding for the Project to proceed, was a <a href="#">Strategic Environmental Assessment</a> completed for the NRCan policy, program or plan?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Describe:</u>

## Part 5: Physical Activities, Project Effects and Mitigation Measures

### ❖ Project Lifecycle and Physical Activities

*This table is meant to constitute a detailed accounting of all project-related physical activities, including any potential accidents or malfunctions. Select (and edit, as needed, to tailor the list to the Project) all activities that apply to the Project for each relevant phase of its lifecycle. Disclose any physical activities that are not captured in the list below. Add rows as needed.*

**Table 1: Project Activities Listing**



<b>Pre-Construction Phase – Timeline: e.g., August 2023 – December 2023</b>	
Transportation of machinery, equipment and material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of machinery and equipment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vegetation cutting and/or clearing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ground clearing and/or grubbing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Topsoil stockpile	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site fencing and/or wildlife fencing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fuel storage/handling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site grading	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Installation of signage	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Construction Phase – Timeline:</b>	
Use of machinery and equipment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excavation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dewatering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of chemicals or potentially deleterious or toxic substances	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road paving	<input type="checkbox"/>
Installation of lighting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fuel consumption, storage and/or handling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waste production and management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Final grading	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Operations Phase – Timeline:</b>	
Infrastructure maintenance or replacement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of machinery and equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fuel consumption, storage and/or handling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Decommissioning/Closure Phase – Timeline:</b>	
Waste management/disposal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site decontamination	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site reclamation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Infrastructure (i.e., buildings, structures, equipment) dismantling/demolition	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>List of Potential Accidents and Malfunctions</b>	
Spill of deleterious/toxic substance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Earthquakes, slope failure, floods, or other natural phenomena that threaten structural integrity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Release of radioactive materials	<input type="checkbox"/>



Explosions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

**❖ Identification of Mitigation Measures and Residual Effects**

Based on the potential interactions identified in Table 2 from the previous section, discuss the nature of the interaction (i.e., positive, negative, reversible, temporary, localized, etc.), and present the associated mitigation, management, monitoring and/or follow-up measure. If a residual effect remains after the implementation of a mitigation measure, it is to be disclosed in the Table.

**Table 2: Description of Environmental Effects, Mitigation Measures and Residual Effects**

VC and Associated Physical Activity	Nature of Environmental Impact	Proposed Mitigation Measure or Best Management Practice	Proposed Monitoring/Follow-Up Measures	Nature of Residual Effect
Vegetation – Vegetation clearing	The permanent removal of approximately 19,000 square meters of forested area is expected to have a localized, impact on the surrounding environment and wildlife. Based on advice from Environment and Climate Change Canada removal of vegetation will include removal of critical caribou habitat and habitat used by migratory birds. The vegetation will be removed using chainsaws and/or heavy machinery.	Habitat compensation to mitigate impacts to caribou. Clearing outside of nesting season to avoid impact to migratory birds. . Follow standard procedures for operating equipment. Ensure equipment is in good running condition. Daily checking of equipment while work is in progress. Follow health & safety project plan and procedures.	Vegetation removal to take place in the fall, winter or very early spring to minimize impacts to wildlife and birds. Conduct bird and wildlife surveys prior to start of construction activities. Monitoring for impacts to birds as well as monitoring for mortality.	Residual effects are anticipated to be reduced to a non-significant level after the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures,
Bird mortality	Potential bird mortality from presence of solar panels	Bird mortality surveys	Bird mortality surveys to record any bird mortality.	Residual effects are anticipated to be reduced to non-significant. Adaptive management will be employed as needed.



Site grading	No impact anticipated.	None required since no impact is anticipated.	NA	NA
Perimeter fence installation to provide a barrier from wildlife interacting with the solar equipment and to prevent vandalism	No impact anticipated	None required since no impact is anticipated.	NA.	NA
olar foundation installation (concrete blocks or earth anchors)	No impact anticipated.	None required since no impact is anticipated.	NA	NA
Trenching for laying cable (50 to 100m with a 0.6m depth of cover.)	No impact anticipated.	None required since no impact is anticipated.	NA	NA
Heavy equipment use	Potential for fuel or mechanical fluid spill due to equipment malfunction or leak.	Follow standard procedures for operating heavy equipment. Ensure equipment is in good running condition. Daily checking of equipment while work is in progress. Follow health & safety project plan and procedures.	None required	None anticipated



## Part 6: Section 84 Factors to Consider

### ❖ Required Factors to Consider

The *Impact Assessment Act* requires that the following factors, as outlined in Section 84 of the *Impact Assessment Act*, be considered when determining whether the environmental effects of a Project are significant. Complete the following table (Note: If the Project is to be carried out outside of Canada, skip Questions 1 and 3a-b):

<b>Q1.</b> Will the Project result in any adverse impact on the rights of Indigenous Peoples of Canada as outlined in Section 35 of the <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i> ?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Rationale:</u> This project will be owned, built, and operated by the English River First Nations, on their land.
<b>Q2.</b> Does the Project have the potential to generate any public concern?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Description:</u>
<b>Q3a.</b> Will Indigenous consultation be required with respect to the Project?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Rationale:</u> The chief and council have approved the project.
<b>Q3b.</b> Has Indigenous knowledge been provided with respect to the Project?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Description:</u> The project will be owned built and operated by the English River First Nation.
<b>Q4.</b> Has community knowledge been provided with respect to the Project?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Description:</u> The First Nation has provided traditional knowledge including information regarding the occurrence of caribou at and around the proposed project site.
<b>Q5.</b> Has public comment been sought with respect to the Project as per subsection 86(1)?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Description:</u> This screening form will be posted on the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada registry, with the Notice of Intent, for a period of 30 days to facilitate public comments on the proposed project.





## Part 7: Determination, Approval and Signatures

### ❖ Approvals and Signatures

#### NRCan Sector Representative

Approved by:

Name:	
Title:	
Date:	
Signature:	

*The remainder to be completed by the Impact Assessment Division representative:*

#### Impact Assessment Division Representative

Approved by:

Name:	
Title:	
Date:	
Comments:	
Signature:	

Determination:

<input type="checkbox"/>	The Project is exempt from the <i>Impact Assessment Act</i> as per the Ministerial Order.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Significant environmental effects are not likely with the implementation of <u>routine or site-specific mitigation measures</u> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Significant environmental effects are expected and cannot be reduced to a non-significant level with the implementation of <u>routine or site-specific mitigation measures</u> .