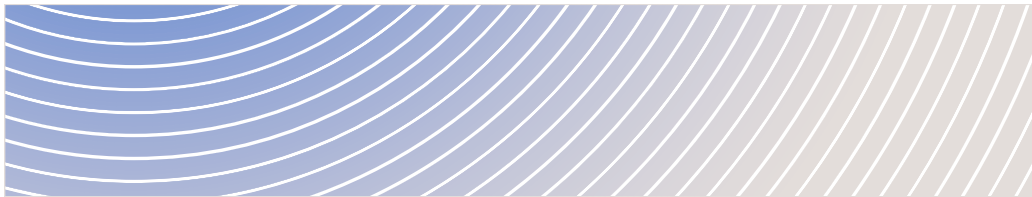


Cooperation Plan



ONTARIO PUMPED STORAGE HYDROPOWER PROJECT

SEPTEMBER 1, 2026



Impact Assessment
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation
d'impact du Canada

Canada



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1. Introduction

On May 29, 2026, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) determined that an impact assessment (IA) is required for the Ontario Pumped Storage Hydropower Project (the project), pursuant to section 16(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act*.

Aspects of the project may be subject to the provincial Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects (RSFD Class EA) and the Class EA for Transmission Facilities pursuant to Ontario's *Environmental Assessment Act*, and to various provincial permitting and approval requirements that include an assessment of environmental effects.

The Cooperation Plan (the plan) was developed by IAAC with input from Ontario ministries and regulatory agencies¹ (herein referred to as "participating ministries") to set out intentions and plans for a cooperative assessment process for the project. The Plan was developed in support of the intent of "one project-one assessment." The participating ministries in the impact assessment are included in [Appendix 1](#) and the anticipated provincial regulatory frameworks (including but not limited to permits, environmental assessments or registrations, compliance limits, and land use policies) that may apply to the project are included in [Appendix 2](#).

This Plan is intended to be flexible and does not prevent IAAC or participating ministries from making changes to the cooperative approach described in this Plan in response to changes that may occur during the assessment process.

For anticipated federal permits required, please see the project's [Detailed Permitting Plan](#).

2. Project

TC Energy (the proponent) is proposing to construct and operate a pumped storage hydropower facility located at the Department of National Defence's Army Training Centre – Central (ATCC), (formerly known as 4th Canadian Division Training Centre) near Meaford, Ontario, on Nottawasaga Bay. As proposed, the project would store excess electricity from the grid by moving water from the bay to a reservoir, that would then be released back to the bay to generate electricity during periods of demand. It will have a production capacity of 1000 megawatts and will operate indefinitely.

For more information on the impact assessment of the project or to view the information and comments received, visit the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (the registry) at <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/89803?culture=en-CA>.

3. Approach to cooperation

On December 18, 2025, the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario signed a [Co-operation Agreement on Environmental and Impact Assessment](#). Through cooperation, IAAC and potential participating Ontario ministries (see [Appendix 1](#)) will strive to increase efficiency and certainty for the proponent, as well as for the public and Indigenous communities, and ensure that the best available expertise is shared and applied. Where possible, IAAC may coordinate activities with participating ministries, to best share expertise. Each jurisdiction will retain its own decision-making authority in accordance with their respective legislative requirements.

¹ Participating regulatory agencies include the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority.



The following table outlines potential opportunities for cooperation², subject to proponent timelines for planning, design decisions, and sequencing of approvals. Provincial regulatory frameworks will only apply to project activities under provincial jurisdiction.

Table 1 – Potential opportunities for cooperation on the assessment of effects

Project Activity	Responsible Entity	Potentially Applicable Regulatory Framework ³	Potential Opportunities for Cooperation
Water taking/dewatering activities during construction and operations	Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks	Permit to Take Water under the <i>Ontario Water Resources Act</i> and/or registration on the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry	• Information sharing and collaborative issue resolution • Joint technical working groups
Activities that are likely to result in killing or harming species at risk or their habitat off federal lands	Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks	Registration and/or Permits under the <i>Species Conservation Act, 2025</i>	• Information sharing and collaborative issue resolution
Potential effects to natural hazard features from project activities within the Municipality of Meaford and 5 km into Georgian Bay, off federal lands	Grey Sauble Conservation Authority	Permits under the <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i>	• Information sharing • Joint technical working groups
Discharge of industrial sewage, and stormwater	Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks	Environmental Compliance Approvals under the <i>Ontario Water Resources Act</i>	• Information sharing and collaborative issue resolution • Joint technical working groups
Air and noise emissions	Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks	Environmental Compliance Approvals for Air and Noise under the <i>Environmental Protection Act</i> or registration on the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry	• Information sharing and collaborative issue resolution • Joint technical working groups
In-water construction in Georgian Bay including the inlet/outlet structure and	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources	Permits and authorizations under the <i>Public Lands Act</i> to grant occupational authority, including the Class	• Information sharing • Joint technical working groups • Potential sequencing to streamline overall regulatory process

² Note that Table 1 only lists project activities with regulatory frameworks that have opportunities for cooperation beyond information sharing. [Appendix 2](#) provides a more exhaustive list of provincial regulatory frameworks that may apply to the project including those with marginal opportunities for cooperation.

³ References for provincial regulatory frameworks are listed in [Appendix 2](#).



marine access infrastructure		Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects	
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4. Gathering and review of proponent information

A Government Review Team (GRT), consisting of federal authorities and participating ministries with relevant expertise on the project, has been established. IAAC will continue to involve and share information with relevant Ontario ministries as members of the GRT (listed in [Appendix 1](#)). Timely review of proponent information by the GRT will support an efficient assessment, provide opportunities for early input on potentially applicable provincial regulatory frameworks, and allow updates, if needed, to the approach described in this Plan, should changes affect the Province of Ontario’s role in the assessment process.

The following table identifies factors considered by IAAC and participating ministries where opportunities exist for cooperation to support information sharing, expert advice and reduced duplication.⁴

Table 2 – List of common factors considered by IAAC and participating ministries

Common Factors related to the Assessment	Common Areas of Federal & Provincial Review
Changes to the natural and physical environment	Atmospheric, acoustic and visual environment Riparian, wetland and terrestrial environment Groundwater and surface water Fish and fish habitat Terrestrial wildlife and habitat Species at Risk ⁵
Changes to health, social and economic conditions	Land, water and resource use for recreation, tourism and commercial operations Navigation Cultural heritage resources (non-Indigenous) Public health and safety Traffic emissions, control and access Business, employment and service demands
Impacts on Indigenous Peoples and the exercise of Aboriginal and treaty rights	Physical and cultural heritage Navigation Traditional use of lands and resources Structures/sites/things of significance Aboriginal and treaty rights
Other effects	Effects of the environment on the project, including climate change resiliency

IAAC has prepared [Tailored Information and Studies Guidelines](#) that set out the information required of the proponent in the Impact Statement. General information requirements for the provincial regulatory frameworks are available in references listed in [Appendix 2](#).

⁴ IAAC acknowledges provincial ministries may choose to only provide advice where there is the potential for effects off federal lands.
⁵ Several species listed on Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act* receive protections by the province of Ontario under the *Species Conservation Act, 2025*.



IAAC and provincial ministries may participate in technical working groups with the proponent, Indigenous communities, federal expert departments, and community groups, as appropriate.

5. Timelines and time management

IAAC and participating ministries have agreed to undertake their respective assessment processes in a cooperative manner such that government review of proponent submissions (e.g., Impact Statement, Environmental Study Reports for Class Environmental Assessments) are coordinated, where possible when submissions align. IAAC will also work with the GRT to ensure that timely and effective communication occurs throughout the assessment process.

Where suitable, the proponent and participating ministries are also encouraged to align early government review and engagement on regulatory frameworks with IAAC's comment period on the draft Impact Assessment Report and draft potential federal conditions.

IAAC recognizes that efforts to align respective timelines do not supersede legislative obligations concerning time limits, which are prescribed in the IAA and relevant provincial legislation.

6. Sharing of information

IAAC and participating ministries will share, as appropriate, the following information obtained during the assessments of the project on matters identified in Table 2:

- expert advice received;
- existing studies and information;
- comments from Indigenous communities, subject to confidentiality requirements;
- information received from the proponent (e.g., technical submissions);
- provincial regulatory, policy or other instruments and measures that could manage potential adverse effects of the project (e.g., complementary measures), and regulatory decision criteria;
- public comments;
- information requests;
- responses to information requests; and
- draft federal conditions.

IAAC and participating ministries will, subject to applicable legislation, endeavour to respect preferences of Indigenous communities related to confidentiality of Indigenous Knowledge.

7. Public participation and participant funding

If the province or proponent identifies comment periods for potential provincial regulatory frameworks and approval applications that can be aligned with impact assessment comment periods, IAAC will collaborate with participating ministries to include links to each other's websites, coordinate public notices, and share comments received, where appropriate.

Funding to support public participation in the federal impact assessment process is available through IAAC's Participant Funding Program. For information about the activities that are eligible for funding or on how to apply for funding please see the [National Program Guidelines](#) on the following page,



<https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/public-participation-impact-assessments/funding-programs/participant-funding-program.html>.

For further information on public participation and engagement activities, please see the project's [Public Participation Plan](#).

8. Indigenous consultation and engagement

IAAC will lead Crown Consultation on behalf of the Government of Canada for this assessment. If applicable, Ontario would be responsible for Crown Consultation for applicable provincial decisions. Where participating ministries also have consultation obligations, federal and provincial consultation and engagement may be aligned, where appropriate and in collaboration with Indigenous communities, to minimize consultation fatigue and promote information sharing. For further information on proposed Indigenous consultation and engagement activities for the assessment, please see the project's [Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan](#).

9. Decision statement

If applicable, IAAC will consult with participating ministries regarding draft federal conditions to ensure consistency of draft federal conditions and improve regulatory efficiencies.

10. Interpretation

This Plan is not a legal document and does not change any existing federal, provincial, or Indigenous legislative or regulatory jurisdiction, right, power, privilege, prerogative or immunity by virtue, nor does it create any new legal powers, duties or legally binding obligations.

11. Contact information

The IAAC office designated for administering the impact assessment of the project is:

Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
Ontario Regional Office
Email: Nottawasaga@iaac-aeic.gc.ca

Contact information for participating Ontario ministries and organizations is provided in [Appendix 1](#).



Appendix 1 – Participating ministries

The following is a list of participating ministries and contact information, including their relevant areas of expertise for the assessment of the project.

Provincial Ministry	Relevant Areas of Expertise	Contact Information
Grey Sauble Conservation Authority⁶	Watershed management, natural hazard risk management (flooding, erosion, unstable soils, shorelines, wetlands, watercourses, dynamic beaches and unstable bedrock), and land use planning.	Planning and Regulations 237897 Inglis Falls Road, RR 4 Owen Sound ON, N4K 5N6 Tel.: 519-376-3076 Email: M.Plewes@greysauble.on.ca
Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism	Cultural heritage resources, including archaeological resources, built heritage resources, and cultural heritage landscapes. Archaeological resources including artifacts, archaeological sites, and marine archaeological sites.	Heritage Planning Unit Heritage Operations Branch Citizenship, Inclusion, and Heritage Division 56 Wellesley St W Toronto, ON M5S 2S3 Tel.: 416-786-7553 Email: heritage@ontario.ca
Ministry of Energy and Mines⁷	Electricity policy and planning, electricity pricing, infrastructure development (generation and transmission), energy efficiency and conservation.	Electricity Policy and Economics Unit Tel.: 647-400-6579 Email: Daniel.Cayley@ontario.ca
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks	Air quality, noise impacts, groundwater and surface water (including sewage, stormwater management, and water taking), drinking water sources, protected species, environmental spills (land and surface water), alternatives assessment, and Aboriginal and treaty rights.	Environmental Assessment Branch 40 St Clair Ave W Toronto ON, M4V 1M2 Tel.: 416-314-8001 Toll free: 1-800-461-6290 Email: Nick.Collela@ontario.ca or Monika.Macki@ontario.ca
Ministry of Natural Resources	Ontario’s fish and wildlife resources, management of Ontario’s crown resources (lands, forests, water, oil, gas, salt and aggregates, provincially significant wetlands), outdoor recreation and resource use (fishing, hunting, trapping), and renewable energy on crown lands and natural hazards.	Land Use Planning and Strategic Issues Section 300 Water Street Peterborough ON, K9J 3C7 Tel.: 613-504-2254 Email: Jody.Marks@ontario.ca or Jeffrey.Dennis@ontario.ca
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming	Tourism, including resource-based tourism	Tourism Policy Unit 400 University Ave Toronto ON, M7A 2R9 Email: Josh.Wilson@ontario.ca or Laurie.Brownlee@ontario.ca

⁶ IAAC understands that the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority will be consolidated into the new Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority effective February 1, 2027, per the [Plan to Protect Ontario Act, 2026](#). IAAC will continue to work with the Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority throughout the impact assessment.

⁷ IAAC understands that the Ministry of Energy and Mines sets the overall policy for the energy sector while independent agencies, including the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) and Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), regulate and manage components of the energy sector. For the purposes of the impact assessment, the Ministry of Energy and Mines will serve as the point of contact for information from these other independent agencies.



Appendix 2 – Provincial regulatory frameworks

The following is a preliminary list of provincial regulatory frameworks that may apply if the project proceeds to permitting.

Provincial Ministry or Organization	Regulatory Framework and Reference
Grey Sauble Conservation Authority	Permit under O. Reg 41/24 (Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits) for development, interference with wetlands, and alterations to shorelines and watercourses under the <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r24041 https://www.greysauble.on.ca/planning-regulations/plan-inputreview-regulations/
Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism	Cultural heritage study and archaeological assessment under the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/page/archaeology https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o18 https://www.ontario.ca/page/heritage-ontario https://www.ontario.ca/page/archaeological-assessments
	Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties https://www.ontario.ca/page/standards-and-guidelines-conservation-provincial-heritage-properties
	Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists https://www.ontario.ca/page/standards-and-guidelines-consultant-archaeologists
Ministry of Energy and Mines including the Ontario Energy Board and Independent Electricity System Operator	Approvals for a revenue framework for the project under the <i>Electricity Act, 1998</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/98e15 The Ministry of Energy and Mines can direct the Independent Electricity System Operator pursuant to section 25.32 of the <i>Electricity Act, 1998</i> in regard to the procurement of electricity resources to ensure the reliable operation of Ontario’s electricity system in response to ongoing and growing electricity needs in the future. If the project was to be rate regulated by the Ontario Energy Board, a mandate expansion would be required under the <i>Ontario Energy Board, 1998</i> as well as amendments to Ontario Regulation 53/05 which covers payments under Section 78.1 of the <i>Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998</i> . https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/98o15
	Approvals to construct an electricity transmission or distribution line under the <i>Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/98o15 https://www.ieso.ca/Sector-Participants/Connection-Process/Overview
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks	Environmental Compliance Approval for Air, Noise and Sewage works under the <i>Environmental Protection Act</i> and <i>Ontario Water Resources Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/page/environmental-compliance-approval
	Permit to Take Water or Registration on the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry under the <i>Ontario Water Resources Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/page/permits-take-water https://www.ontario.ca/page/environmental-activity-and-sector-registry
	Registration and/or Permits under the <i>Species Conservation Act, 2025</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/25s04b https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0380



	https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0909
	Class EA for Transmission Facilities https://www.ontario.ca/page/class-ea-minor-transmission-facilities
Ministry of Natural Resources	Class EA for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects https://www.ontario.ca/page/class-ea-resource-stewardship-and-facility-development-projects
	Work Permits and Land Use Permits under the <i>Public Lands Act (1990)</i> https://www.ontario.ca/page/crown-land-work-permits
	Licences under the <i>Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p12
	Licence to Collect Fish for Scientific Purposes and Wildlife Scientific Collector's Authorization under the <i>Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/97f41
Niagara Escarpment Commission	Niagara Escarpment Development Permit under the <i>Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90n02