Federal Authority Advice Record (FAAR)
FAAR Response must be submitted by September 29, 2026
Eastern Bridge Project – Public Services and Procurement Canada – Ontario and Quebec
Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (CIAR) Reference Number: 90709

Department/Agency	Environment and Climate Change Canada
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1. Will your department or agency exercise a **power, perform a duty or function**, or provide **financial assistance**, related to the project to enable it to be carried out in whole or in part?

   As relevant,

   a) Specify the power, duty or function, or financial assistance, and the likelihood that it will be required to construct the project, based on the Initial Project Description, as either Required, Potential, Likely, Unlikely or Not Required;

   There is potential that ECCC will be required to exercise a power or perform a duty or function related to the Project to enable it to proceed. On the Ontario side, the majority of the Project is located on federal land while on the Quebec side, a small portion of the Project is located on federal land. Species at risk and migratory birds are confirmed within the Project footprint.

   Please note that the following requirements may apply to the Project:
   - *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) permits
   - *Migratory Bird Convention Act* (MBCA) permits

   b) Describe any associated Indigenous or public consultation, including timelines;

   Should a SARA permit be required, ECCC would evaluate and determine consultation requirements. ECCC-led Indigenous consultations related to the issuance of SARA permits will be coordinated with consultation during the impact assessment where possible.
   If applicable, ECCC encourages proponents to submit clear and complete permit applications at least 4-6 months prior to the anticipated start of project activities that require a SARA permit. During the analysis and before the regulatory decision, ECCC may undertake additional Indigenous consultations, as required under s.73(4) and (5) of SARA.

c) Describe any associated information requirements (e.g., alternative means assessment, habitat offsetting) and specify those that may be coordinated with the impact assessment process, if an impact assessment is required;

If a SARA permit is required, the Proponent can apply for the permit concurrent to the impact assessment process. Note, that a SARA permit cannot be issued prior to an impact assessment decision, under IAA. See the following links for additional information:

- Guidelines for permitting under Section 73 of Species at Risk Act - Canada.ca
- Permits Authorizing an Activity Affecting Listed Wildlife Species Regulations

d) Identify any associated project-specific guidance or issues of which the proponent should be aware, or information the proponent should provide; and

To identify any associated project-specific guidance or issues of which the Proponent should be aware, additional information is required related to how the Project will affect migratory birds and SAR, their residences and/or critical habitat. The Proponent should be aware of the following general information related to SARA permits and MBCA permits.

Species at Risk Act permits

For species listed on Schedule 1 of SARA as Extirpated, Endangered or Threatened, a permit may be required from ECCC (section 73 of SARA) for activities that affect a listed terrestrial wildlife species, any part of its critical habitat, or the residences of its individuals, where those prohibitions are in place.

Prohibitions are in place for individuals and residences on federal lands in a province, reserve or any other lands under the Indian Act, or lands under the authority of the Minister of the Environment, and for birds listed under the MBCA wherever they occur regardless of land tenure.

Species that are both a migratory bird protected under the MBCA and listed on Schedule 1 of SARA as endangered, threatened, or extirpated, receive protections under the MBCA and SARA. For some migratory bird species listed under SARA, the residence prohibition (section 33) will protect nest and/or roost sites that are not active, for example when a species re-uses these sites in subsequent years. Please note that the protection afforded may differ between the two pieces of legislation, though both pieces of legislation/protection apply.

Refer to the Species at Risk Registry for more information on migratory bird residence and protection requirements: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/residence-descriptions.html

Furthermore, prohibitions may be in force on land other than federal land pursuant to other orders or regulations under SARA. It is possible that additional prohibitions may come into force in the future through orders made by the Governor in Council for individuals, residences and critical habitat on non-federal lands and/or for critical habitat on federal lands. It is also possible that, over the course of the assessment or after the assessment, additional species could be listed under SARA; permits may be required for project activities that affect these additional species. Proponents are advised to monitor for such

developments on the SARA Registry https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry.html.

ECCC will require detailed information on the potential effects of the Project, including locations and/or occurrences of species at risk, their use of habitat and critical habitat within the Project area, and specific effects on federal land, before ECCC can determine whether a SARA permit is required.

Links to publicly available documents:

- Guidelines for permitting under Section 73 of *Species at Risk Act* (https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/policies-guidelines/permitting-under-section-73.html)
- Species at Risk Permitting Policy (https://ecprccsarstacct.z9.web.core.windows.net/files/SARAFiles/legacy/policies/Permitting_EN.pdf)

If not fully described in the Initial Project Description (IPD), the Proponent should provide any anticipated need for species at risk permits during all phases of the Project, in responses to the Summary of Issues and/or in the Detailed Project Description, if possible. The Proponent is encouraged to collect and submit the information necessary to determine if a SARA permit is required during the impact assessment process, and to submit their application well in advance of the proposed activities to avoid delays. For additional information see links above to publicly available documents as well as the following document available upon request: *Project Planning: Applying for a Species at Risk (SARA) permit administered by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC).*

Further information regarding species at risk permits will be provided in the Permitting Plan.

Migratory Birds Convention Act permits

The *Migratory Birds Regulations, 2022* (MBR 2022) protect migratory birds, their eggs and their nests, by prohibiting activities that may harm them. Unless a person has a permit or the regulations authorize it, it is prohibited to engage in the following activities:

- Capturing, killing, taking, injuring or harassing a migratory bird or attempting to do so;
- Destroying, taking or disturbing an egg; and
- Damaging, destroying, removing or disturbing a nest, nest shelter, eider duck shelter or duck nesting box, unless the following exceptions apply:
  - The nest does not contain a live migratory bird or a viable egg; and,
  - The nest was not built by a species listed in Schedule 1.

Modernization of the MBCA in 2022 has additionally identified 18 species of birds whose nests are protected year-round (Schedule 1 of MBR 2022). The nests of species listed in Schedule 1 are protected at all times, unless the following conditions are met:

- Notification of the unoccupied nest has been submitted/received through the Registry for Abandoned Nests; and,
- The waiting time designated in the regulations has passed, during which time the nest has not been occupied by a migratory bird.

In some situations, it may be possible to obtain a permit to move or destroy an unoccupied nest of a Schedule 1 species. If it is not possible to wait the prescribed period before destroying or relocating the nest of a species listed in Schedule 1, or if there is a need to destroy or relocate the nest of another species of migratory bird where the nest contains a live bird or viable egg and appropriate mitigation measures have been taken, a permit may be available. The MBR 2022 authorizes the issuance of permits for damage or danger, as well as scientific permits, which may apply in certain limited situations. For more information, please visit: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/avoiding-harm-migratory-birds.html.

e) Indicate whether your department or agency has identified any power that it will not be exercising or may not be able to exercise to allow the project to be carried out, in whole or in part.

ECCC is not aware of any power that it will be unable or may be unable to exercise to allow the Project to proceed in whole or in part as currently planned.

2. **Using Table 1**, identify project- and context- specific **key issues**, based on the expertise within your mandate[1] and the information in your possession, including the Initial Project Description, any exchanges with the proponent or others related to the project and known means to address the effects of the project.

   Please note for designated projects that are a *federal work or undertaking,* such as an interprovincial bridge, per section 2 of the *Impact Assessment Act*, adverse effects within federal jurisdiction takes on a broader meaning and includes any non-negligible adverse effects on environmental, health, social or economic conditions.

   For each key issue:
   a) Specify the key issue (e.g., specific species and location);
   b) Specify the project component or activity linked to the key issue;
   c) Explain why it's a key issue based on:
      i. biophysical effect pathway(s) from the specific project component or activity;
      ii. concern unique to the project or a priority within your mandate;
      iii. the issue being material[2] to decision making under the *Impact Assessment Act;*
   d) Identify how the issue could be resolved, including through means other than an impact assessment (e.g., other regulatory oversight); and
   e) Identify additional information the proponent could provide including to give confidence on how the issue can be addressed through other means.

[1] Refer to the Memoranda of Understanding with IAAC.

[2] An issue is material to decision making if its analysis is anticipated to affect the conclusions on (1) whether adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or direct and incidental adverse effects (collectively adverse federal effects) are likely not significant, or of low, medium or high significance; (2) appropriate mitigation measures for significant adverse federal effects; or (3) justification in the public interest.

Ravi Patel
Environmental Assessment Officer

Name and title of Departmental / Agency Responder

September 29, 2026

Date

Table 1: Key Issues to inform the impact assessment process

This table should outline key issues to inform the impact assessment process, including whether an impact assessment is required and, if so, the scope of the assessment and tailoring of the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines. Key issues are the major concerns directly related to a project component or activity, the analysis of which is anticipated to be material to decision-making under the *Impact Assessment Act*.
Federal authorities' advice should be guided by the identification and resolution of key issues. If an impact assessment is required, it will be focused on key issues.

Comment ID	a) Key issue	b) Project component or activity	c)(i) Biophysical effect pathway(s)	c)(ii) Concern unique to the project or a priority within your mandate	c)(iii) Material to federal decision-making	d) Means for issue resolution	e) Additional information from the proponent

Identify comments by organization and comment number.
 	
e.g.: IAAC-01
	Specify the key issue (e.g., specific species and location).	*Identify the project component or activity linked to the key issue.*
		
		Be specific about the nature, scale, novelty and complexity or the component or activity.
			Identify the specific biophysical effect pathway between the project component or activity and the affected environmental or human receptor (including Indigenous Peoples).	*Describe why it's a key issue within the mandate of your department or agency, including in terms of priorities of the federal government and in terms of anticipated likelihood, severity or uncertainty of effects.*
				
				Identify if the key issue is common for projects of this nature or in this sector, or whether it's unique to this project due to its complexity, size or novelty; a sensitive or rare receiving environment; and/or proximity of sensitive environmental or human receptors (including Indigenous Peoples).
					Describe why the key issue is material to decision-making as either:
					• *an adverse effect within federal jurisdiction, or a direct or incidental adverse effect, that may be significant based on available evidence including:*
					  ○ *federal experts' knowledge and experience with past project assessments;*
					  ○ *presence of sensitive species, habitats or human receptors (including Indigenous Peoples);*
					  ○ *novel or complex project activities, components or technologies;*
					  ○ *high uncertainties in effects or in the effectiveness of mitigation measures;*
					  ○ *unknown or unproven mitigation; or*
					• *a factor for the justification in the public interest anticipated to be material to decision-making such as a likely positive effect contributing to sustainability, to Canada's environmental obligations or climate change commitments or in supporting governmental priorities, such as reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.*
						Describe how the key issue could be resolved or addressed by:
						• *Any means, including powers, duties, functions, frameworks, policies or guidance that your department or agency has;*
						• *Any means, including powers, duties, functions, frameworks, policies or guidance from another jurisdiction, including the province;*
						• *Common, proven, well-understood or standard mitigation measures to mitigate the effect or effect pathway(s); or*
						• *Commitments made by the proponent (e.g., in the Initial Project Description).*
							Describe information the proponent can provide, or commitments the proponent can make, in their Response to the Summary of Issues that would provide confidence that the issue can be resolved by existing means.
							
							Consider whether information, studies, analyses or collaborative work with other authorities would be required to address the issue beyond existing means.

ECCC-01	Effects to physical environment: Air quality Key issues include particulate matter (PM) and combustion-related pollutants (NOx, SOx, CO, Ozone, VOCs and PAHs) from equipment and increased traffic	The activities linked to construction include earthworks, excavation, soil and bedrock removal, pile installation, concrete works, and other civil works required for bridge foundations, piers, abutments, and roadway modifications on or	Construction activities may result in effects on Indigenous Peoples' health and use of traditional lands due to changes in air quality, noise levels, and light pollution. Key air quality concerns include particulate matter	ECCC considers air quality a key issue because construction and operation phases may affect sensitive receptors including Indigenous communities, aligning with the federal mandate to assess impacts on Indigenous Peoples.	In the absence of detailed construction methodologies, construction sequencing, or planned mitigation measures, impacts to sensitive receptors as a result of changes to local air quality remain a key issue. Construction-phase and operational-phase effects to air quality, including those influenced by the Project's operational design, have the potential to result in impacts to Indigenous Peoples and other sensitive human receptors located on or near federal lands.	Concerns regarding effects due to dust and air emissions during construction could be addressed through a detailed air quality assessment and the implementation of standard mitigation and monitoring measures. In addition, while the Proponent has indicated that a Dust Management Plan (Section 23, p.265) will be developed and implemented during construction, the Proponent has also committed to implementing construction-phase mitigation measures, including the use of	The Proponent should: • Provide a detailed construction and operation phase air quality assessment, as well as a description of the mitigation measures that will be implemented to reduce emissions of air contaminants, including nitrogen

	during construction and operation, in the residential neighborhoods of both Quebec, Ontario and on federal lands and land users.	adjacent to federal lands. These activities will require sustained use of heavy construction equipment and haul trucks, generating both particulate matter (PM) and combustion-related emissions from on-road vehicles, mobile off-road equipment, and stationary machinery.	(PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$) and combustion-related pollutants (e.g., NO_x, CO) from equipment, vehicles, and dust from earthworks and excavation. These emissions could impact federal land users, and Indigenous communities whose traditional lands overlap the Project area. During the operation phase, vehicle traffic including trucks using the bridge may generate ongoing combustion-related air emissions, with the potential to affect federal land users, and Indigenous communities whose traditional lands overlap the Project area.	The anticipated multi-year construction period and the scale of construction activities increase the likelihood of air quality effects during construction, and there is uncertainty regarding the severity of these effects in the absence of a detailed construction-phase air quality assessment. While dust and combustion-related emissions are common for projects of this nature, the proximity of Indigenous communities and other sensitive receptors warrants further consideration. ECCC provides expertise on the fate and dispersion of air emissions to support Health Canada's assessment of potential impacts on sensitive receptors.		electric equipment and fleet vehicles where feasible (Section 19.3.1.3, p.236). Where electrification is not feasible, encouraging or prioritizing the use of lower-emission construction equipment (e.g., Tier 4) would help reduce combustion-related air emissions during construction. ECCC recommends that the Proponent consider relevant mitigation measures for the construction and operation phases from recognized guidance documents, such as the Best Practices for the Reduction of Air Emissions from Construction and Demolition Activities: http://www.bv.transports.gouv.qc.ca/mono/1173259.pdf During the operation phase, increased traffic along the corridor is anticipated, and corridor design and traffic management measures intended to reduce vehicle idling and improve overall traffic flow could help limit vehicle-related air emissions. Implementing continuous air quality monitoring to track pollutants and other adaptive management measures (such as adjustment of traffic flow based on pollution levels) should be considered.	oxides (NO_x), sulphur oxides (SO_x), carbon monoxide (CO), ozone, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and dust and particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$, PM10 and TSP). While the Proponent has identified some construction-phase mitigation measures and indicated that a Dust Management Plan will be developed, additional detail would improve comprehension of the mitigation measures to be implemented. • Provide details on the follow-up air quality monitoring program to be implemented during the construction and operation phases. Details about monitoring to verify the effectiveness of implemented mitigation measures, and, if needed, adaptive management options should be included. The Proponent should further clarify whether a complaint tracking system is planned as part of this follow-up.

							• Outline baseline air quality conditions using representative National Air Pollution Surveillance (NAPS) data or other appropriate sources to adequately characterize existing ambient air quality in the Project area. • Provide the referenced air quality study noted in the IPD (Section 19.1.1.2, p. 216) indicating that air quality studies have been undertaken to assess operation-related air quality effects within the Project corridor (WSP 2019a, 2024c).
ECCC-02	Effects to physical environment: Water Quantity Effects on aquatic ecosystems from changes to water quality and quantity in the Ottawa River and other watercourses within the Study Area.	The activities linked to construction and operation of the new interprovincial bridge, including in-water works, bridge piers and abutments, roadway embankments, drainage infrastructure, and watercourse crossings.	Temporary and permanent project structures may partially obstruct flow and alter local hydraulic conditions, resulting in changes to flow velocities, water levels, sediment transport processes, erosion patterns, and scour potential. These changes may alter currents and increase localized erosion or sediment deposition, indirectly affecting water quality and aquatic ecosystems.	Changes to water quantity has the potential to affect aquatic ecosystems.	Changes to water quantity can result in adverse effects on aquatic ecosystems including fish & fish habitat, which are effects within federal jurisdiction.	ECCC recommends best management practices be applied to mitigate potential adverse effects to the aquatic ecosystem from changes to water quantity, including measures for controlled dewatering, staged construction, and the design of permanent structures to minimize flow disruption. Potential adverse effects can best be mitigated through detailed characterization of baseline hydrological and hydraulic conditions and assessment of changes resulting from the Project. Both construction and operation phases should be considered in the assessment.	ECCC recommends that the Proponent: • Describe all potential effects, both direct and indirect, of bridge project components or activities on water quantity at a suitable spatial and temporal scale to evaluate potential effects on aquatic ecosystems. This includes assessing potential changes to natural flow patterns and currents, water levels, and local hydraulic conditions resulting from temporary in-water construction

			During construction, dewatering activities, in-water works, and surface runoff may increase sediment transport and turbidity in the Ottawa River and other watercourses within the Study Area.				works and the placement of permanent bridge piers and abutments. These changes may influence sediment transport patterns, scour, and deposition rates and changes to channel morphology, which can affect water quality. • Include a detailed characterization of the receiving environment under baseline conditions and evaluate potential project-related effects through each phase of the Project. Effects assessment should consider seasonal variability of environmental conditions and potential project-related effects under climate change. • Include the hydrological and hydraulic studies conducted to support characterization of baseline and effects assessment.
ECCC-03	Effects to water quality and fish and fish habitat from potential increases in suspended sediments in the Ottawa River and other watercourses within the Study	Construction activities	Temporary in-water construction during dredging/caisson/ pile installation or cofferdam dewatering may affect water quality and fish and fish habitat.	Changes to water quality has the potential to affect fish and fish habitat.	Changes to water quality can result in adverse impacts to fish and fish habitat, which are effects within federal jurisdiction.	In the section for avoidance and mitigation measures for the construction phase in S18.2.4.2 when describing the use of settling basins and/or filtration systems for water flowing onto the site and water being pumped or diverted from the Project site a reference is made to the “CCME’s suspended solids thresholds.”	ECCC recommends that the Proponent: • Ensure the Project is referring to the correct guideline document in relation to ambient water quality. The proponent should use the CCME Canadian

	Area from water flowing onto the site and water being pumped or diverted from the Project site during construction.		During construction, surface water runoff could result in the transport of sediments and increased turbidity in the Ottawa River and other watercourses within the Study Area.			There are CCME Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life (CWQGPAL) for Total Particulate Matter in relation to suspended sediments and turbidity. The CWQGPAL are ambient water quality guidelines developed for the protection of aquatic life and they provide the science-based benchmark for a nationally consistent level of protection for aquatic life in Canada.	Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life - Total Particulate Matter
ECCC-04	Effects on Species at Risk (SAR), including critical habitat, residences, and individuals on federal lands and within the Project footprint. This includes Bank Swallow critical habitat, Western Chorus Frog critical habitat, Butternut, Little Brown Myotis, Tri-coloured Bat and other federally listed SAR.	The activities linked to the construction and operation of the bridge, bridge approaches, roadway widening, pier installation, shoreline works, construction access, staging areas, laydown areas, vegetation clearing, lighting and maintenance activities.	Vegetation clearing, habitat removal, fragmentation, alteration of wetlands and riparian areas, disturbance from noise/vibration/light, mortality during construction, loss or degradation of critical habitat, residences and movement corridors, direct effects from in-water and shoreline works.	The Project is projected to cross federal lands and areas containing confirmed SAR occurrences and critical habitat. Multiple federally listed species have been documented within the Project area and uncertainty remains regarding final bridge alignment, footprint and temporary work areas. ECCC has regulatory responsibilities under SARA and expertise regarding species at risk.	Potential adverse effects within federal jurisdiction may occur through destruction or degradation of critical habitat, impacts to residences, and effects on listed species on federal lands. Determination of significance and permitting requirements under SARA cannot currently be assessed due to uncertainty regarding footprint and effects.	Application of the mitigation hierarchy (avoidance, minimization, on-site restoration and offsetting where appropriate); refinement of project design to avoid SAR and critical habitat; implementation of species-specific mitigation measures; consideration of SARA permitting requirements; follow-up and monitoring programs.	ECCC recommends that the Proponent: • Provide GIS-based mapping (shapefiles) of all project alternatives and temporary/permanent footprints in relation to SAR occurrences, residences, critical habitat, wetlands and federal lands to assist in quantifying temporary and permanent habitat losses. • Provide species-specific effects assessments, mitigation, residual effects analysis and preliminary assessment of anticipated SARA permit requirements.
ECCC-05	Effects on migratory birds, nests, nesting habitat, stopover habitat and migration functions.	The activities linked to vegetation clearing, bridge construction, shoreline works, in-water works, staging areas, lighting systems,	Loss or alteration of nesting habitat, destruction or disturbance of nests and eggs, collision risk, sensory disturbance (noise, vibration, lighting),	Surveys confirmed the presence of migratory birds and several migratory bird SAR within the Project area. The bridge crossing and associated lighting infrastructure may	Potential adverse effects within federal jurisdiction through direct effects on migratory birds, nests and habitat. The scale of habitat alteration and uncertainty around bridge design, lighting, and construction timing may influence significance determinations and permitting requirements.	Project design that incorporates bird-safe principles; avoidance of vegetation clearing during nesting periods; implementation of nest surveys and buffers; lighting design that minimizes attraction and disorientation; monitoring and adaptive management. Examples of bird-safe design measures are available	ECCC recommends that the Proponent: • Provide habitat-specific migratory bird effects assessment, quantification of habitat loss, evaluation of collision

		bridge design and operation.	habitat fragmentation, degradation of stopover and riparian habitats.	introduce long-term disturbance and collision risks. Some species may have year-round nest protection requirements. ECCC has regulatory responsibilities under the MBCA and expertise regarding migratory bird conservation.		from various sources, including the Safe Wings Ottawa Bird-safe Design Resources.	risk, assessment of operational lighting impacts, evaluation of stopover habitat functions, residual effects analysis and preliminary assessment of MBCA permit requirements.
ECCC-06	Effects on wetlands and wetland functions, particularly wetlands located on federal lands and wetlands supporting SAR and migratory birds.	Bridge approaches, roadway widening, access roads, staging areas, construction activities, drainage infrastructure and long-term operation of the transportation corridor.	Direct loss of wetlands, alteration of hydrology, fragmentation, changes in water movement, reduction of habitat functions, effects on wildlife habitat, effects on SAR habitat and migratory bird habitat.	Wetlands have been identified within the Project area and on federal lands; however, wetland functions, sensitivities and potential project impacts have not been fully characterized. Wetlands support important ecological functions and habitat for species within the ECCC mandate.	Potential adverse effects within federal jurisdiction may occur where wetlands on federal lands or wetlands supporting migratory birds and SAR are affected. Significance cannot currently be determined because wetland losses and functional changes have not been quantified.	Avoidance of wetlands through project design; minimizing footprint; maintaining hydrologic function; application of mitigation hierarchy; restoration and compensation where impacts are unavoidable; follow-up monitoring.	ECCC recommends that the Proponent: • Provide wetland delineation and mapping, wetland classification, functional assessments, hydrological assessments, quantification of temporary and permanent wetland losses, assessment of indirect effects, mitigation measures, residual effects analysis and demonstration of avoidance-first approach.