

# WEBEQUIE SUPPLY ROAD PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TERMS OF REFERENCE SUMMARY

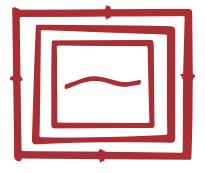
Thank you for your interest in the Webequie Supply Road (WSR) Project. This document presents a summary of what is in the Webequie Supply Road Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference (ToR).

## WEBEQUIE'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Webequie Project Team will be using Webequie First Nation's Three-Tier framework to carry out the project and when meeting with Webequie First Nation's neighbouring Indigenous communities. The Three-Tier approach is consistent with Webequie First Nation's traditional cultural values, customs and beliefs. This approach has been passed on through generations by Webequie First Nation's Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and forms part of the Elders' Guiding Principles that combine with federal and provincial regulatory requirements for consultation.

# WEBEQUIE'S THREE-TIER APPROACH

The three tiers are closely connected and depend on each other.



#### **CORE TIER: The Community and their Overall Well-Being**

- · Physical Health
- Mental Health
- Social Health
- Education
- Employment Opportunities
- Income

## RELATIONAL TIER: Preserving the Indigenous Culture of the Community

- Increasing understanding of the culture by others
- Language
- · Traditional cultural activities
- Ancestral knowledge inheritance recording and passing down knowledge down from the elders

#### FOUNDATIONAL TIER: Treaty and Partnerships

Fair sharing of benefits from the land with government and industry

## **ELDERS' PRINCIPLES**

The Elder's Principles are infused in our approach to consultation

- Mutual recognition of inherent rights
- Mutual recognition of ancestral knowledge
- >> Mutual recognition of traditional knowledge and practices
- Mutual recognition of clan families and relationships
- Mutual recognition of sustainable livelihood
- Mutual recognition of traditional protocols



## THE WEBEQUIE SUPPLY ROAD PROJECT

The WSR Project is a Webequie First Nation-led environmental assessment and preliminary engineering study for a proposed all-season road connecting Webequie Airport with the existing mineral exploration activities and proposed mine developments in the McFaulds Lake area. The purpose of the road would be to move minerals, supplies and people between Webequie Airport and the McFaulds Lake Area.

As the Proponent, Webequie First Nation is leading the environmental assessment and preliminary engineering study with the assistance of technical experts. The WSR Project is an important project to the community and Webequie First Nation wants to make sure that the impacts – both positive and negative – are thoroughly reviewed so that community members understand the environmental, socio-economic and cultural impacts of the WSR Project before making a decision. Throughout the planning and engagement process, the WSR Project Team will ensure that all project activities will be done according to Webequie First Nation's Elders' guiding principles and Webequie First Nation's three-tier approach to Indigenous community engagement.



## **WSR COMPONENTS**

Key components of the Supply Road include:

- New approximately 107 km all-season road running from Webequie Airport to mineral deposit development area
   near McFaulds Lake
- 17 km of the road is within Webequie First Nation Reserve lands
- A road of 35 metres in width, within an approximately 2 km wide preliminary preferred corridor, is proposed for the two (2)-lane gravel all-season road
- Waterbody/watercourse crossing structures
- Aggregate sources
- Construction camp locations
- Storage and laydown areas

## **PROJECT PHASES**

The WSR Project will occur in three main phases:

- Construction Phase: This includes activities associated with the development of the road and supporting works and facilities (such as camps, storage/laydown areas)
- Operations Phase: This includes activities associated with operation and maintenance of the road and any permanent facilities (such as operations and maintenance yard, aggregate pits, etc.)
- Decommissioning/Closure Phase: Although the Project will be operated for an indeterminate time period and retirement (or decommissioning) of the road is not anticipated, this would include all activities to close the road.

### THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

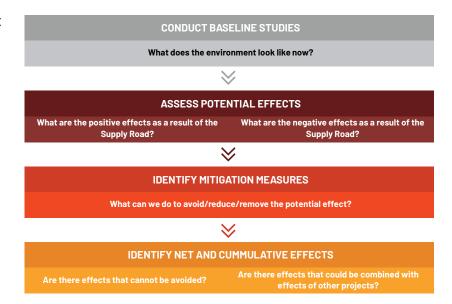
The WSR Project not only has to be looked at and thought about by community members before Webequie First Nation make their decision, it must also go through both provincial and federal reviews. The figure below illustrates what is considered in an environmental assessment (EA).



# WHAT DOES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CONSIDER?

An Environmental Assessment is a planning tool to:

- Identify potential effects (positive and negative) to the environment (natural, social, cultural)
- Identify mitigation measures to reduce or remove potential negative effects
- Facilitate decision-making
- Provide opportunities to comment on how the Project may impact communities and their use of land



The provincial (Ontario) process is called an environmental assessment and the federal process is called an impact assessment. Below are descriptions of each process:

#### THE PROVINCIAL PROCESS:

Under the provincial Environmental Assessment (EA) process, the proponent or developer of the project prepares a work plan for the proposed project. Within the work plan, it proposes the range of studies that will be undertaken by the proponent. The work plan and studies are called the Terms of Reference (ToR). The proponent (Webequie First Nation for the WSR Project) must consult the public and Indigenous communities on the draft ToR, incorporate input received, and submit the Final ToR to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). The Minister of MECP reviews the ToR, along with all comments made about the ToR and the proponent's responses to address the issues and concerns raised in the comments. The MECP then makes a decision to either approve the ToR; approve ToR with amendments; or reject the ToR. The figure below illustrates the provincial process.



# ONTARIO ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS



## THE FEDERAL PROCESS:

An Impact Assessment (IA) is the process for studying and determining what environmental impacts can happen during a project and how to minimize those impacts. The term "environment" includes the natural, social, economic, and cultural environments.

The law ensures that the environmental impacts of many large-scale activities are assessed or evaluated before the activities are approved. The impact assessment also informs the general public about the project and gives interested parties the right to comment before a decision is made on whether to approve the project.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) is responsible for conducting impact assessments under the Impact Assessment Act.



The figure below outlines the steps involved in the federal process:



- To meet with the public and indigenous communities to identity issues, concerns, and impacts to inindigenous rights
- To produce a Detailed Project Description
- To find out whether an impact assessment is required for the project
- To provide a clear plan for meeting with the public and indigenous communities about the project
- To prepare a work plan for the impact assessment that explains the studies to be done and the information required

- Starts with the Notice of Commencement
- To generally identify and evaluate the impacts
- Webequie First Nation (WFN) prepares its report identifying and evaluating impacts (called the Impact Statement) based on what is expected to study to identify and understand impacts (the work plan, called the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines)
- WFN gaters information through studies and by engaging with indigenous groups and the public to inform the Impact Statement

- To outline and evaluate impacts of the project
- Done by IAAC or a review panel
- Considers sustainability and the good and bad environmental, health, social and economic impacts of the project
- Considers other factors such as Indigenous rights, knowledge and culture
- Finalized Impact Assessment Report and potential conditions that are sent to the Minister to inform the public interest decision
- Determination by the Minister, or by Governor in Council (Cabinet) on whetherthe negative effects in federal jurisdictions, and negative direct or indirecteffects, are in the public interest

#### Follow-up in the Monitoring

- to check how well the measure to control impacts are working
- To provide opportunities for Indigenous peoples and the public to participate in the monitoring

#### Compliance and Enforcement

Ability to set up
 Environmental Monitoring
 Committees to help provide
 more confidence in the
 science and evidence used



For the WSR Project, there is a coordinated EA/IA process that incorporates both the federal and provincial processes with Webequie First Nation's community process. The figure below demonstrates the coordinated Webequie-Federal-Provincial EA process.

## COORDINATED WEBEQUIE-FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL EA PROCESS



### RATIONALE FOR ALTERNATIVES

A key step in the environmental impact assessment process is considering alternatives for achieving the objectives of the project. During the Terms of Reference phase, the Webequie Project Team assessed the advantages and disadvantages of a range of alternatives to building the supply road, including: a new rail line, the use of hovercraft and heavy-lift airships; upgrading existing winter roads and trails; and managing/reducing the demand for travel to and from Webequie by providing more and better services in the community.

The Project Team concluded that the preferred option is the construction of a new all-season road between Webequie and the McFaulds Lake area because it would provide the most reliable mode of transportation that would achieve the desired level of social and economic benefits.

## Where will the Proposed Webequie Supply Road be Built?

Alternative locations for building the new all-season road were developed based on the previous road/transportation studies prepared by Webequie First Nation and other First Nation partners, as well as mining development companies in the McFaulds Lake area, and are considered to be complementary to Webequie's draft Community Based Land Use Plan. Each road corridor under consideration is approximately 2 km in width, within which the Supply Road (35 m right-of-way) is located. The alternative concepts were initially screened using criteria most important to Webequie community members, as well as a broader range of criteria required under the EA Act, to identify a "community preferred" corridor. Sub-alternatives to that corridor were subsequently assessed considering soil and landform characteristics that would make the road easiest to build by minimizing the length over poor soil conditions. These are shown in the figure below. The C and G series alternatives have been segmented for assessment in the Environmental Assessment phase.

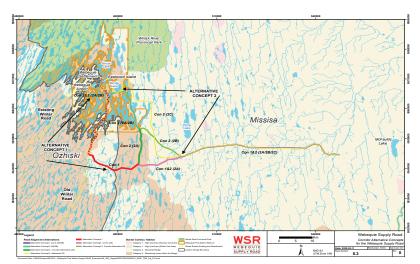


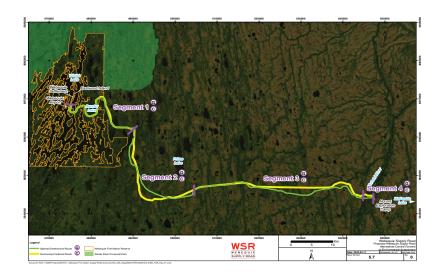
## ALTERNATIVE AND PREFERRED/OPTIMAL SUPPLY ROAD CONCEPTS

As part of the engagement and consultation process, these alternatives will be reviewed and refined during the Environmental Assessment phase, including the identification and development of additional alternatives.

Alternatives for the following things that are part of, or support the construction and operation of the Supply Road project will also be developed and evaluated during the Environmental Assessment phase:

- 1. Alternative sites for temporary and/or permanent aggregate extraction pits and production machinery needed for construction and operation of the road, including access roads to these sites;
- Alternative sites to house temporary workers (construction camps) and store equipment and building materials, including access roads to these areas;
- Watercourse crossing structure types (culverts, bridges), span lengths, and construction staging methods at waterbody crossings;
- How the road is laid out on the land (curves and gradients), including any necessary adjustments to the width of the road corridor;
- Construction timing (seasonal) and staging along the road corridor for ease of construction and to minimize potential effects on the natural environment and traditional Indigenous land and resource use.





### **CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**

The Project is located on provincial Crown land, Webequie First Nation Reserve land under federal jurisdiction, and the traditional territories of Webequie and several of its neighbouring Indigenous communities, which have asserted rights in the project area. The region is dominated by wetlands (bogs and fens; globally important peatlands), lakes, large rivers and streams (within the Attawapiskat, Winisk and Ekwan tertiary watersheds), with forest stands on higher ground formed on glacial materials, such as eskers.



Fish, birds and animals are present in the project area, and include species at risk that are protected under federal and provincial laws (caribou, wolverine and lake sturgeon) and other species that are important to Indigenous people. These, along with plants used for medicine and other types of plants help to provide food and economic security for Indigenous communities in the project area. Lands in the project area are used for traditional Indigenous activities, including hunting, gathering and fishing, as well as cultural and spiritual activities. There are also mining claims on or around the proposed Webequie Supply Road corridor.



## POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The Webequie Supply Road, like any other project, will have some effects on the environment. The effects assessment and alternatives evaluation will be completed for the identified preliminary preferred corridor, alternative routing alignments and supporting works and activities, focusing on the construction and operations/maintenance periods. The preliminary set of assessment and evaluation factors to consider whether the Webequie Supply Road could result in changes to the environment or people includes the following elements that the Project Team has identified as being both of value to potentially affected and interested parties consulted during the Terms of Reference phase, and required under the Environmental Assessment Act and the Impact Assessment Act:

BIOPHYSICAL	Upland Ecosystems, Lake/River/Stream Ecosystems and Wetlands/Muskeg Fish and Fish Habitat Provincial Parks, Conservation Reserves, Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) or Provincially Significant Wetlands Federal or Provincial Species at Risk (SAR) Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat Identified Significant Wildlife Habitat Significant Ecological Areas Migratory Birds Air Quality and Climate Change Noise and Vibration Surface Water (lakes, ponds, rivers, streams) Groundwater (springs, wells, baseflow to surface water features)
SOCIO-ECONOMIC	Indigenous Traditional Land and Resource Uses Commercial Activities and Labour Market Housing and Temporary Accommodation Community Health and Well-being Mineral and Aggregate Resources Recreational Activities Provincial Parks, ANSIs and Conservation Reserves
CULTURAL	<ul> <li>Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Interests</li> <li>Archaeological Resources</li> <li>Built Heritage Resources and Cultural Heritage Landscapes</li> <li>Burial Sites</li> </ul>
TECHNICAL	<ul> <li>Safety and Reliability</li> <li>Ease of Construction</li> <li>Construction and Operations/Maintenance Costs</li> <li>Location of Supporting Works and Activities</li> </ul>



Studies on these factors to consider started during the Terms of Reference phase and will continue into the Environmental Assessment phase to serve as the basis for predicting potential project effects.

The Project Team would like to know if there are any other things that are of value to you and should be considered in evaluating the Project.

## WEBEQUIE-LED COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

It is the Crown's constitutional duty to determine if the Project requires consultation with other Indigenous communities, stakeholders and the public, and to identify Indigenous communities that need to be consulted with about the project. The WSR Project falls under both federal and provincial environment/impact assessment procedures, and within Webequie First Nation's traditional territory. As this is a unique situation, the Government of Ontario, specifically the MECP and the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines (ENDM), have delegated procedural aspects of the consultation process to Webequie First Nation.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Webequie First Nation, MECP and ENDM was signed on February 7, 2020, to outline the roles and responsibilities of the consultation process.

## Indigenous Communities to Engage

The Government of Ontario (MECP and ENDM) identified a list of Indigenous communities that are to be consulted by Webequie First Nation and the WSR Project Team as part of the ToR. These communities were identified as potentially having their rights and/or interests affected by the Project. These communities are:

- > Webequie First Nation
- Aroland First Nation
- > Attawapiskat First Nation
- > Constance Lake First Nation
- > Eabametoong First Nation
- > Long Lake #58 First Nation
- Marten Falls First Nation
- Mishkeegogamang First Nation
- > Neskantaga First Nation
- Nibinamik First Nation
- > North Caribou Lake First Nation

- Fort Albany First Nation
- Ginoogaming First Nation
- Kasabonika Lake First Nation
- Kashechewan First Nation
- Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI)
- > Wapekeka First Nation
- Wawakapewin First Nation
- > Weenusk (Peawanuck) First Nation
- Wunnumin Lake First Nation
- Métis Nation of Ontario Region 2

### **Public and Stakeholders**

General public, stakeholders (people or groups that are interested in the project), as well as other government ministries and agencies will be notified and consulted at ToR and EA milestones.

## **Outreach Activities**

A variety of materials and activities have been used to engage with Indigenous communities to date and will continue to be used as the EA progresses. When visiting and engaging with Indigenous communities, the WSR Project Team will respect the protocols of those communities. The figure below outlines the engagement activities.

Notification Letters	• Letters to Indigenous communities and Tribal Councils to inform them of ToR and EA milestones
Public Notices & Advertisements	<ul> <li>Will be published in the Wawatay News, Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal, Timmins Daily Press, and Sioux Lookout Bulletin</li> <li>Will be posted on the Project Website</li> </ul>
Community and Tribal Council Meetings	<ul> <li>Community visits with Indigenous communities for input and feedback at ToR and EA milestones</li> <li>Community meetings with off-reserve community members in the city of Thunder Bay</li> <li>Meetings with Tribal Councils</li> </ul>
Public Open Houses	• Public open houses in City of ThunderBay
Radio Information Sessions	<ul> <li>Radio information sessions to be broadcasted over Wawatay Radio</li> <li>Sessions will be in open dialogue throughout the EA process</li> </ul>
Project Newsletters and Fact Sheets	Fact Sheets and Newsletters in plain language with translation to provide project updates
Project Website	<ul> <li>Website containing project information in a variety of forms including Fact Sheets,</li> <li>Videos with Webequie leadership and technical experts, Project Newsletters, EA documents, etc</li> </ul>

At this time, the WSR Project Team is not directly meeting with Indigenous communities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This will change with time as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. In the meantime, engagement will be done either virtually or by teleconference. We encourage Indigenous communities to contact the WSR Project Team if they are interested in discussing the Project. The WSR Project Team has tools and platforms in place to meet virtually, should an Indigenous community opt for a virtual meeting.

## WEBEQUIE SUPPLY ROAD TIMELINE

Below is the timeline to complete the WSR EA.

SUMMER 2020	<ul> <li>Submission of Draft Terms of Reference</li> <li>Baseline data collection</li> <li>Identification of alternatives</li> <li>Consultation and engagement with Indigenous communinties, public and stakeholders</li> </ul>
FALL 2020	<ul> <li>Baseline data collection</li> <li>Consultation and engagement with Indigenous communities, public and stakeholders</li> <li>Identification of alternatives</li> </ul>
WINTER 2021	<ul> <li>Approval of Terms of Reference</li> <li>Evaluation of alternatives and preliminary effects assessment</li> <li>Consultation and engagement with Indigenous communities, public and stakeholders</li> </ul>
SPRING 2022	<ul> <li>Review of Draft Environmental Assessment Report/Impact Statement</li> <li>Consultation and engagement with Indigenous communities, public and stakeholders</li> </ul>

## **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Connect with the WSR Project Team. Please let us know, from your perspective, the following:

What are the good things about the supply road?

Michael Fox

What are the negative things about the supply road?

Do you have any comments on the route selection?

Don Parkinson

We encourage you to get in touch with our main contacts listed below and provide them with comments or ask them questions about the WSR Project.

Please visit other sections of the Project Website for more information on the Project. There is a lot of information, with videos with Webequie leadership and technical experts explaining the EA and the different studies being done as part of the EA. We welcome any suggestions you may have for future videos / fact sheets to help communicate more information about our Project.

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