



# WEBEQUIE SUPPLY ROAD FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT / IMPACT STATEMENT

---

January 30, 2026

AtkinsRéalis Ref: 661910

## Section 19:

Assessment of Effects on  
Indigenous Peoples and  
Impacts to the Exercise of  
Aboriginal and Treaty Rights



WEBEQUIE FIRST NATION

AtkinsRéalis



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## Disclaimer

***Due to potential sensitivity and confidentiality of some features referred to in this Section 19 of the EAR/IS, mapping or locations of such features have been redacted.***



# 19 Assessment of Effects on Indigenous Peoples and Impacts to the Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights

In preparing the Webequie Supply Road Project (the Project) Environmental Assessment Report/Impact Statement (EAR/IS), the effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts to the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights were considered, pursuant to requirements of the Provincial Terms of Reference (ToR) (Webequie First Nation, 2020; Appendix A-2) and the Federal Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines (TISG) (IAAC, 2020; Appendix A-1).

The EAR/IS assessment approach is supported by studies that characterized the existing conditions of Indigenous communities to identify and assess the effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts to the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

The assessment of the potential effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts on the exercise of their Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is presented as follows:

- Scope of the Assessment;
- Existing Conditions Summary;
- Potential Effects to Indigenous Peoples;
- Mitigation and Enhancement Measures;
- Impacts on the Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights; and
- Approach for Determining Severity of Impact on the Rights of Indigenous People.

## 19.1 Scope of the Assessment

### 19.1.1 Regulatory and Policy Setting

The effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts to the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are assessed in accordance with the requirements of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA) and the TISG for the Project; the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* and the ToR and EAR/IS guidance documents. Additionally, various regulatory requirements within the federal, provincial and community level regulatory framework.

**Table 19-1** outlines the key legislation, regulations, and policies relevant to the assessment of the effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights for the construction and operation phases of the Project.

**Table 19-1: Key Regulations, Legislations, Policies and Agreements Relevant to Indigenous Peoples and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

| Regulatory Agency  | Regulation, Legislation, Policy or Agreement  | Project Relevance  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Federal</b>   |   |  |
| Department of Justice Canada   | <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i>   | Under Part II, Section 35, of the <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i> , the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are recognized and affirmed. Aboriginal Peoples are defined to include First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples.  |
| Department of Justice Canada   | <i>Treaty No. 9 (James Bay Treaty)</i>  | Treaties are agreements made between the Government of Canada, Indigenous Peoples and often provinces and territories that define ongoing rights and obligations on all sides. Treaty rights are recognized and affirmed in Section 35 of the <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i> (CIRNAC, 2023a).   |
| Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC)  | <i>Impact Assessment Act (2023)</i>   | The Project is subject to the federal <i>Impact Assessment Act</i> (refer to Section 2). Factors To Be Considered under IAA Section 22(1) states " <i>The impact assessment of a designated project, whether it is conducted by the Agency or a review panel, must take into account the following factors:... (c) the impact that the designated project may have on any Indigenous group and any adverse impact that the designated project may have on the rights of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982;</i> "<br>The TISG issued by IAAC (2020) for the Project (Appendix A-1) included requirements for the assessment of the effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts on the Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. |
| Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) / Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) | <i>Indian Act (1985)</i>  | Project development on designated reserve land (or implicated via spatial bounds) will be subject to provisions and oversight via the <i>Indian Act</i> . The assessment will also consider Project effects related to the land-use mandate associated with the <i>Indian Act</i> in relation to governance, reserve lands, land management and allotment, land use and development, claims and additions to reserves related to First Nation communities.   |
| Department of Justice  | Canada's United Nations Declaration on the <i>Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act</i> (UNDA) and its Action Plan | The Webequie Supply Road (WSR) is planned in line with the measures outlined in the UNDA and UNDA Action plan. The UNDA mandates the Government of Canada to not only consult with Indigenous Peoples, but also cooperate with them. As a result, Projects must engage Indigenous communities early, incorporate traditional knowledge into environmental assessments, and design projects to align with Indigenous values and priorities. This shift introduces new legal and procedural requirements and creates opportunities for more equitable partnerships, where Indigenous communities play a central role in decision-making and benefit-sharing.   |

| Regulatory Agency  | Regulation, Legislation, Policy or Agreement   | Project Relevance   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Provincial</b>  |  |   |
| Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) | <i>Ontario Environmental Assessment Act (1990)</i>   | The Project is subject to the Ontario <i>Environmental Assessment Act (1990)</i> . The proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) (Webequie First Nation 2020), were approved by the MECP on October 8, 2021, and include the approved approach for assessing the Project's effects on Indigenous Peoples and impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.   |
| MECP   | <i>Environmental Protection Act (1990), Ontario Water Resources Act (1990)</i>             | Project effects assessed for the biophysical environment (e.g., air, water) will be considered in relation to potential changes in the well-being of community members and Section 35(1) rights.  |
| Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)                        | <i>Far North Act (2010)</i>  | The Far North Act, 2010 provides a framework for community-based land use planning with First Nation communities in the Far North of Ontario. The Project is generally consistent with Webequie First Nation Draft (in-progress/early version) Community-Based Land Use Plan (Webequie First Nation, and MNR, 2025).  |
| Ministry of Natural Resources                              | <i>Public Lands Act (1990)</i>   | The <i>Public Lands Act</i> is relevant to the Webequie Supply Road because it governs the use and development of Crown land, including road construction, work permits, and land-use planning, ensuring legal authorization and environmental stewardship throughout the Project.  |
| <b>Other</b>   |  |   |
| Webequie First Nation                                      | Webequie First Nation On-Reserve Land Use Plan (ORLUP) (2019)                              | The Webequie First Nation On-Reserve Land Use Plan (ORLUP) provides information and guidance for community land use and development projects that occur in the Webequie reserve. This includes, for example: housing, power, water and sewer, community buildings, roads, camps, the airport, the landfill, the pow-wow area, gardens, etc. (Webequie First Nation, 2019b).   |
| Webequie First Nation                                      | Webequie First Nation 2023 Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) February (2023)              | The Webequie First Nation 2023 Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) (Webequie First Nation, 2023) is a planning process designed to lay out a roadmap for the community's future. The planning process is led by the community and provides a holistic shared vision for the Webequie community on health, social, economic and environmental aspects of the community and governance.  |
| Webequie First Nation                                      | Webequie First Nation Draft in-progress/early version Community-Based Land Use Plan (2025) | The Webequie First Nation Draft (in-progress/early version) Community-Based Land Use Plan (CBLUP) outlines the vision, goals, objectives and principles set out by Webequie First Nation and Government of Ontario. The Draft CBLUP forms the basis for proposed land use activities and highlights the shared development and protection interests of Webequie First Nation and Ontario. It advances the Webequie community development goals and community direction for the protection of land, water, species habitat, cultural heritage features and community |



| Regulatory Agency                | Regulation, Legislation, Policy or Agreement  | Project Relevance   |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
|                                  |   | values. The Draft (in-progress/early version) CBLUP acknowledges Webequie community's customary stewardship responsibilities, including those that overlap with other First Nations, and <i>Far North Act, 2010</i> objectives that together enable development benefitting First Nations, protecting areas of cultural and natural significance and providing for interconnectedness in protected areas. The Draft CBLUP remains pending joint final approval from Webequie First Nation and Ontario, and is not available publicly. |
| <b>Additional First Nations</b>  |   |   |
| <b>Marten Falls First Nation</b> | Marten Falls First Nation in-progress/early version Draft Community Based Land Use Plan | The Draft CBLUP may provide the vision, goals, objectives, community values, principles, land uses, direction for management of land uses and proposed activities to protect the territorial lands, waters, habitats, and cultural heritage features and values of Marten Falls First Nation. This document has not yet been shared with the Project Team or released publicly.   |

**19.1.1.1 Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

**19.1.1.1.1 Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982***

The Government of Canada recognizes First Nations, the Métis Nation, and Inuit as the Indigenous Peoples of Canada, consisting of distinct, rights-bearing communities. Indigenous Rights (or Aboriginal Rights under the *Constitution Act, 1982*) are recognized as collective rights of distinctive Indigenous societies flowing from their status as the original peoples of Canada, which have been practiced since before European contact. Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are “recognized and affirmed” under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The Act does not define Aboriginal Rights under Section 35, rather Aboriginal Rights have been defined and protected by the courts in Canada. These Indigenous Rights have generally included:

- Aboriginal title (ownership rights to land);
- Right to enter into treaties;
- Occupation and use of lands and resources such as hunting, fishing and wood harvest;
- Self-determination and self-government;
- Customs and traditions; and
- Traditional livelihood.

Inherent rights to self-determination are described by the Centre for First Nations Governance as follows:

*“Our people have an inherent right to govern ourselves and decision-making authority over our title lands. We are free to create our own form of governance to preserve our culture, foster healthy families, build vibrant communities, develop our economies and restore our nations.”*  
 (Centre for First Nations Governance, 2025).

#### 19.1.1.1.2 James Bay Treaty/Treaty No. 9

The Project is located in the Treaty No. 9 area of Ontario, also known as the James Bay Treaty, which covers almost two-thirds of northern Ontario. Treaty No. 9 largely covers the James Bay and Hudson Bay watersheds that are the ancestral homelands of the Anishinaabe, and the Mushkeego Peoples and have been stewards of the land, holding inherent rights of self-determination, which are recognized under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The Mushkeego live primarily in the James Bay and Hudson Bay lowlands. The Anishinaabe live closer to the interior of the territory, “closer to the height of land that divides the James Bay and Hudson Bay watershed” (Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery, 2022).

In the mid-1800s, the Robinson-Huron and Robinson-Superior treaties were signed as a result of increasing conflict from mining prospectors and surveyors entering the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and other Indigenous Peoples of the area. These earlier Robinson-Huron and Robinson-Superior treaties became the model for the numbered treaties, which were signed across Canada, including Treaty No. 9 signed in northern Ontario some years later. As railways heading west across Canada were being built north of Lake Superior by the early 1900s, the Anishinaabe and other Indigenous Peoples grew concerned about encroachment from non-Indigenous trappers and prospectors that were depleting wildlife resources in their traditional territories of the James Bay and Hudson’s Bay watersheds.

Treaty Rights are rights set out in historic and modern treaty agreements, including Treaty No. 9, where the Project is proposed, and these rights are recognized and affirmed by Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982* (CIRNAC, 2023b). Treaties define specific rights, benefits, and obligations for the signatories that vary from treaty to treaty. Treaties and treaty rights also vary depending on the time and circumstances in which they were negotiated. Treaty rights can include annual payments, reserve lands and certain rights to trap, hunt, gather plants and fish. Treaties with Canada and Indigenous Nations in northern Ontario are shown on **Figure 19.1**.

The interpretation and implementation of Treaty No. 9 (and all the numbered treaties) remains a contested issue, but recent court decisions have supported the view that the honour of the Crown demands a liberal interpretation of the treaties. In the years following the signing of Treaty No. 9, First Nations have expressed dissatisfaction with the fulfillment of Treaty No. 9 promises, especially where allotment of reserve lands and hunting, fishing, and trapping rights conflicted with settler interests (Long, 2010 as cited in Stantec, 2025).

The difference between the spoken words of the Treaty No. 9 negotiations and the notes taken by the government’s own officials, and the words of the Treaty are the subject of a 2023 lawsuit brought by ten Treaty No. 9 First Nations. The lawsuit asserts that Treaty No. 9 has violated First Nations’ jurisdiction over its traditional territories for over a century and claims \$95 billion in compensation, and co-jurisdiction with Treaty No. 9 First Nations and the government on all activities being contemplated in the territory (The Narwal, 2023).





#### **19.1.1.1.3 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and Recognition of UNDRIP in Canadian Law**

In 2007, the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, the largest class-action settlement in Canadian history was first implemented (Government of Canada, 2024). One of the elements of the agreement was to establish the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) to facilitate reconciliation among the former students, families, communities, and all Canadians.

The residential school system was set up by the Government of Canada and the Catholic Church to “civilize” and assimilate Indigenous children by forcibly taking them from their families and communities to attend schools often located far from their homes (InterGroup, 2024; Government of Canada, 2017; National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation – NCTR, n.d-a). Beginning in 1831, residential schools had the explicit intent to rid Indigenous children of their language and culture. Children were harshly punished for speaking their own languages, and thousands were abused physically and sexually by residential school staff. Survivors of residential schools have endured lasting trauma, resulting in intergenerational effects. The TRC concluded that the residential school system in Canada amounted to cultural genocide for over 150 years, with more than 150,000 children attending residential schools over this period, many of whom did not return (InterGroup, 2024; NCTR, n.d-a).

Between 2007 and 2015, the TRC travelled to all parts of Canada and heard from 6,500 witnesses (Government of Canada, 2024). Events were held to engage the Canadian public about the history and legacy of the residential school system and share with the national audiences the trauma that occurred. The outcome of the process was a final report that included 94 Calls to Action (or recommendations) for working towards reconciliation (Government of Canada, 2024).

In relation to the recognition of Indigenous rights, in its Calls to Action, the TRC recommended that the Government of Canada fully recognize and adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at all levels of government in Canada, as follows:

- Call to Action 43: We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation. Call to Action 44: We call upon the Government of Canada to develop a national action plan, strategies, and other concrete measures to achieve the goals of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The completion of the TRC contributed to Canada’s adoption of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, described below.

#### **19.1.1.1.4 Canada’s *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA) and the UNDA Action Plan**

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is a human rights instrument that sets out the rights of Indigenous Peoples around the world (United Nations, 2007).

In June 2021, the federal government took an important step in fulfilling its pledge to adopt UNDRIP into Canadian law by passing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA). The UNDA provides a roadmap for the Government of Canada and Indigenous Peoples to work together to implement the Declaration based on lasting reconciliation, healing, and cooperative relations. The legislation requires the federal government to examine federal laws, policies and practices and to maintain consistency with the Declaration (Government of Canada, 2021). In the Government of Canada’s press release, it states:



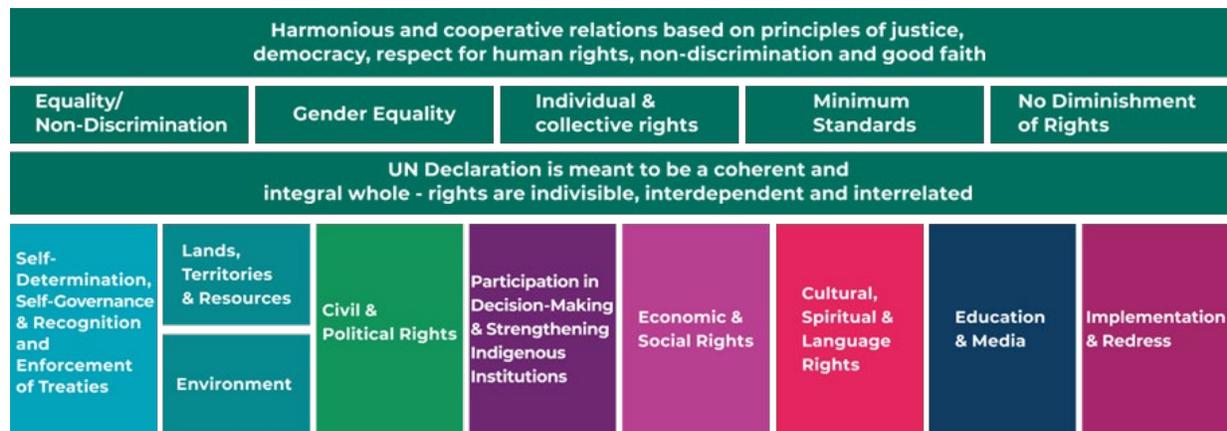
“Today represents a critical step in recognizing, promoting, protecting and upholding the human rights of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. It marks another important move forward in the evolving history of the Crown-Indigenous relationship, one that will help forge stronger relationships and support the path to self-determination for First Nations, Inuit and Métis while taking action to advance reconciliation, together” (Government of Canada, 2021).

In June 2023, the Action Plan for implementing UNDA was released, this was led by the Department of Justice Canada, and included input from First Nations, Métis and Inuit groups (AFN, 2023). The 2023-2028 Action Plan was prepared after two years of consultation with Indigenous Peoples and includes 181 measures, which are aimed at upholding the human rights of Indigenous Peoples; see **Figure 19.2**. This is considered a living document that will evolve through consultation and continued cooperation with First Nations, Métis and Inuit groups (AFN, 2023).

The UNDA is now being applied in interpreting Indigenous rights in Canadian courts. A recent court case in Quebec, R v White and Montour, reviewed Section 35(1) in a different way than previously looked at for Aboriginal Rights in Canada and the interpretation and application of UNDRIP to Section 35(1) Aboriginal Rights test (JFK Law LLP, 2023). The ruling is intended to “better recognize and protect generic Indigenous rights grounded in Indigenous legal systems instead of limiting Aboriginal Rights to specific precontact practices, traditions, or customs. The Court makes this move by recognizing the collective right as the generic right to freely determine and pursue economic development” (JFK Law LLP, 2023).

The UNDA and UNDRIP is considered as part of the Indigenous rights context for the assessment presented in **Section 19.3** and **Section 19.5**.

**Figure 19.2: Priority areas reflecting the Rights set out in the UN Declaration**



Source: Government of Canada, 2023

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a foundational principle of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). FPIC means that Indigenous Peoples have the right to give or withhold consent to projects that may affect their lands, territories, resources, cultures, or rights. It must be:

- Free: Without coercion, intimidation, or manipulation.
- Prior: Before any authorization or commencement of activities.
- Informed: Based on full disclosure of the project scope, risks, and impacts.
- Consent: Indigenous Peoples have the right to approve or reject the project.

#### **19.1.1.1.5 Nishnawbe Aski Nation and First Nations/Tribal Councils**

Indigenous rights have also been historically fought for by territorial organization and tribal councils. First Nations/Tribal Councils play a crucial role in supporting Indigenous Rights, fostering self-governance, and promoting cultural preservation.

#### **Nishnawbe Aski Nation**

The Nishnawbe Aski Nation represents 49 First Nations in northern Ontario, advocating for the rights and interests of its communities. First Nations within Nishnawbe Aski Nation assert Treaty No. 9 and Section 35(1) rights. According to the Declaration of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, the rights of Nishnawbe-Aski Nation people include (The Chiefs of Grand Council Treaty, 1977):

- The right to receive compensation for exploited natural resources;
- The right to receive compensation for the destruction and abrogation of hunting, fishing, and gathering rights;
- The right to renegotiate Treaty No. 9 as understood by Nishnawbe-Aki Nation people; and
- The right to approach other world nations to further the aims of the Cree and Ojibway Nations of Treaty No. 9.

#### **19.1.1.1.6 Webequie First Nation Three-Tier Model and Comprehensive Community Plan**

The Webequie First Nation CCP was completed in 2023 and was prepared over more than 4 years with Elders, community members, Webequie Administration staff and leadership (Webequie First Nation, 2023). The purpose of the Webequie First Nation CCP is to lay out a roadmap for the future of the Webequie community and how the community will work together to achieve its vision. The Webequie First Nation CCP builds on other plans and studies completed by the community, and is another community-led process, rooted in Webequie First Nation's Three-Tier governance model that supports reconciliation, rebuilding and healing.

The roots of the Three-Tier governance model come from the Webequie Anishininiwuk Elders. Before Treaty No. 9 was signed, the Elders were able to see that change was imminent and were given the Three-Tier model to maintain their relationship with the Creator. Today, it offers a model for respectful relationships with neighbouring communities, government and industry (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

The land areas around the community that are inherent in the Three-Tier model include:

- Tier 1 – Tawin – Community Land Base: This is the home of Webequie People and where members live;
- Tier 2 – Tashiikawiin/Tashiwiitoo – Protected Traditional Area: This is the area within a one-day walk (roughly 40-50 km radius) from the community. This area is used for traditional harvesting and Anishinabek cultural livelihood and supports who the Webequie people are; and
- Tier 3 – Bimachiiowiin Akkii – Area of Mutual Benefit: This is the area within another one-day walk and where Webequie people, neighbouring communities and outside parties can realize benefits from stewardship and development activities (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

The Webequie First Nation CCP focuses on eight “directions” as goals for the Webequie community:

1. Education and training;
2. Cultural Vibrancy and Traditional Life;
3. Housing and Infrastructure;
4. Environmental Quality and Relationship with the Land;



5. Community Health and Wellness;
6. Family and Social Conditions;
7. Economic Development; and
8. Community Leadership and Governance.

Each topic focuses on the strengths and challenges of each aspect and goals were created related to the topic. To reach these goals, four action categories were created, depending on the type of related project. The four action categories are: major capital projects, minor capital projects and community improvements, programs and plans and policies. The action categories included timing of when to start certain projects, outlined current progress status of projects, and provided a monitoring and evaluating tracker. Detailed action items are outlined within the document which specify steps required to address the issue, who needs to be involved and how they relate to the specific goals outlined in the plan (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

## 19.1.2 Consideration of Input from Engagement and Consultation Activities

The engagement and consultation activities for the Indigenous Peoples Interests and Rights, were carried out in several stages of the Project. The engagement and consultation program were guided by the Webequie First Nation Elders to uphold respect for the cultures and traditions of the Webequie people and their clans and neighbours outside the Webequie First Nation. In coordination with other provincial government agencies, Ontario (MECP) identified 22 potentially affected and/or interested Indigenous communities (First Nation communities and the Métis Nation of Ontario) that are to be consulted by the Webequie Project Team as part of its project planning. Sixteen of these Indigenous communities may be affected by the Project, whereas the other six Indigenous communities may have potential interest in the Project.

**Table 19-2** summarizes key feedback related to the Indigenous Peoples’ values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights received during engagement and consultation activities listed above, and how the comments and inputs are addressed in the EAR/IS. This feedback includes concerns raised primarily by Indigenous communities/groups, but also includes concerns raised by the public and stakeholders prior to the formal commencement of the federal Impact Assessment (IA) and provincial Environmental Assessment (EA), during the Planning Phase of the IA and ToR phase of the EA. The Project Team considered the comments received on the Draft EAR/IS in finalizing the EAR/IS. Details of responses and how the comments have been addressed are provided in the Record of Engagement and Consultation.

**Table 19-2: Indigenous Peoples Interests and Rights – Summary of Inputs Received During Engagement and Consultation**

| Comment Theme  | How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS  | Indigenous Community or Stakeholder                                       |
|--|--|---|
| Over-harvesting and encroachment of non-local harvesters was a voiced concern, as an increase in non-resident people in the territory would have a detrimental effect on food security in Homelands. Relies on the land and waters for sustenance and food sources include fish, sturgeon/ <i>Nameh</i> , beaver/ <i>Amik</i> , Caribou/ <i>Aatiik</i> and moose/ <i>Moonz</i> among others. | Potential effects are outlined in <b>Section 19.3</b> . Mitigation related to construction and operations of the WSR are outlined in <b>Section 19.4</b> . | Weenusk First Nation during Chief and Council meeting held on August 2023 |



| Comment Theme  | How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS   | Indigenous Community or Stakeholder   |
|--|---|---|
| Concerns on the lack of opportunities for using Indigenous healing systems and traditional medicines, as well as the lack of support from the government for research and records development of Indigenous healing systems and traditional medicines.   | The use of traditional plant medicine is captured in the effect pathway, as plant medicine areas were identified in Webequie Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use (IKLRU). The use of them in treatment may be considered in other sections of the EAR/IS (Section 17 -Health).   | Webequie First Nation – Meeting on May 2024   |
| Concerns with regard to usage of trapline as certain families use certain trap lines for hunting and harvesting, and that Project team should speak to each family who uses a trapline to gain their site-specific, and land use information. Families and members who use traplines will have specific information regarding the land that they use; and will know where burial sites, birth sites, and ceremonial sites are located. | Engagement with trapline holders and families/groups is included in the mitigation for Project-related effects to traplines/registered trapline System holders in <b>Section 19.4</b> . Mitigation also recognizes the value of trappers' knowledge of the lands. Further engagement will be undertaken to receive additional information that can be used in this EAR/IS.  | Webequie First Nation – Meeting on May 2024   |
| There are challenges of keeping Aboriginal and/or Treaty Rights and Interests information confidential. It will be up to each community to decide whether to share information, get feedback and report back to their communities.   | The Proponent acknowledges that it is up to each community to decide whether to share information. It is anticipated that Indigenous Knowledge collected through the IKLRU Program will be governed by Indigenous Knowledge Sharing Agreements that indicate how confidential information will be used to inform the effects assessment but will be protected from public or third-party disclosure.  | Webequie First Nation – Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Interests (ATRI) Forum (February 2023)   |
| Concerned about impacts to cultural heritage and archaeological resources of Indigenous groups, such as burial sites and locations used for the purpose of teaching. Commented on negative consequences to Indigenous ways of life, knowledge and language due to the Project. Commented on the need to engage Indigenous groups to identify what is culturally important to them and understand potential project-induced changes.    | <b>Section 19.3</b> and <b>Section 19.5</b> of the EAR/IS includes an assessment of potential effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.<br><b>Section 19.4</b> outlines proposed mitigation and enhancement measures related to effects on Indigenous Peoples as well as proposed measures to reduce or avoid impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.<br>Section 20 (Cultural Heritage Resources) outlines impacts to cultural heritage and archaeological resources | Raditional terri First Nation; Eabametoong First Nation; Fort Albany First Nation; Friends of the Attawapiskat River; Ginoogaming First Nation; Kasabonika First Nation; Marten Falls First Nation; Neskantaga First Nation; Nibinamik First Nation; Webequie First Nation; and Wildlife Conservation Society Canada. |



| Comment Theme  | How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS  | Indigenous Community or Stakeholder    |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Concerns about how emerging land usage issues will be addressed such as non-local community member access to land and/or water access points that will now be impacted by the Project; and the general impacts to accessing hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering locations. Another community also recommends that the specific activities of hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering be explicitly included within the Potential Environmental Effects.</p> | <p><b>Section 19.3.1</b> provides an analysis of Project effects on Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes and Activities sub-component.</p> <p><b>Section 19.4</b> outlines proposed mitigation and enhancement measures related to effects on Indigenous Peoples.</p>  | <p>Matawa First Nations Management</p> |
| <p>Concerned about the impacts of the Project on traditional territory and the natural resources across the area as the project directly impacts traplines and falls within the Community's Area of Interest.</p>  | <p><b>Section 19.3</b> outlines the Project effects on Neskantaga's First Nation territory and traplines.</p>  | <p>Neskantaga First Nation</p>         |
| <p>Concerned that the clauses in the WSR ToR document are not reflective of Treaty Rights and are not reflective of a Treaty relationship and are unacceptable to the Community.</p>   | <p><b>Section 19.1.1</b> indicates that the effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts to the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are assessed in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Impact Assessment Act (IAA)</i> and the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines (TISG) for the Project; the Ontario <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> and the Provincial EA Terms of Reference and EAR/IS guidance documents. <b>Table 19-1</b> outlines the key legislation, regulations, and policies relevant to the assessment of the effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights for the construction and operation phases of the Project. <b>Section 19.5</b> describes potential impacts on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.</p> | <p>Treaty 9 Alliance</p>               |
| <p>Concerned about establishing a terrestrial advisory group comprised of local, downstream and down-muskeg First Nations, harvesters, land users, regulatory officials and Proponent to review detailed design and construction phases so as to avoid or mitigate potential effects to Treaty lands and Aboriginal Rights.</p>  | <p><b>Section 19.4</b> describes the measures proposed to eliminate or minimize the predicted impacts of the Project on Indigenous and Treaty Rights.</p>  | <p>Mushkegowuk Council</p>             |



| Comment Theme   | How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS   | Indigenous Community or Stakeholder                      |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Concerned that despite the Mamow-Wecheekapawetchteewinn, this project is undergoing an individual provincial EA process in the absence of support opportunities for First Nations to participate in a manner that meets the Community consultation and engagement needs. Impacts on Indigenous rights are further emphasized by the planned advancement of the Northern Road Link project, which will result in the connection of the WSR to the Marten Falls Community Access Road and the provincial highway network that directly crosses other First Nation traditional territories.</p> | <p><b>Section 19.5</b> outlines potential effects on the LSA communities' Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.</p>   | <p>Long Lake # 58 First Nation</p>                       |
| <p>Requested the local and regional study areas for the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Interests (ATRI) Valued Component.</p>   | <p><b>Section 19.1.5</b> provides the spatial boundaries of the Local Study Area (LSA) and Regional Study Area (RSA) for the Project in which a preliminary assessment was completed for the LSA and RSA communities.</p>   | <p>Weenusk First Nation<br/>Kashechewan First Nation</p> |
| <p>Concerned that the ToR does not identify or explain linkages between "traditional/Indigenous land" use and "cultural environment" or between the Traditional Land and Resource Uses criterion and the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Interests criterion.</p>  | <p>Please refer to <b>Section 19.1.4</b>, with regard to the rationale taken for the Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights assessed under this section.</p>   | <p>Fort Albany First Nation</p>                          |
| <p>Concerns for adding an indication of how cumulative effects context – the magnitude of change to-date – especially on First Nations culture, traditional/Indigenous land use, and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and interests, will be integrated into effects characterization to the ToR.</p>   | <p><b>Section 19.5</b> outlines the relation of the Project impacts on different valued components related to the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in the LSA and RSA communities.</p>  | <p>Fort Albany First Nation</p>                          |
| <p>Request to revise the ToR to identify the approach, or potential approaches, that may be applied in the rights assessment and the contemplated role for each Indigenous Nation in the rights assessment, including in relation to the factors listed in the rationale column at left.</p>  | <p><b>Sections 19.1.4</b> and <b>19.2.1</b> outline the approach used to assess the Project's effects on Indigenous People' Interests and Rights. <b>Table 19-4</b> also identifies the Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and the Indicators which are assessed as being impacted by the Project and the rationale of the assessment.</p> | <p>Fort Albany First Nation</p>                          |



| Comment Theme  | How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS   | Indigenous Community or Stakeholder      |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Request to indicate that First Nations will be provided the opportunity to conduct a rights impact assessment of the Project in relation to their own rights and interests.</p>   | <p><b>Section 19.1</b> indicates that the federal and provincial government has a legal duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate Indigenous Nations, including First Nations and Métis Peoples, when the Project may adversely affect Aboriginal or Treaty Rights that are recognized and affirmed in Section 35(1) rights of the <i>Constitution Act</i>, 1982.</p> <p>The IKLRU program was initiated to engage and collaborate with Indigenous communities and groups, including Fort Albany First Nation on the collection and consideration of IKLRU information throughout the EAR/IS.</p> | <p>Fort Albany First Nation</p>          |
| <p>Concerned that there are clauses in the ToR that intend to eliminate the Inherent and Treaty Rights of Indigenous Nations who would be affected by the Ring of Fire project and the Supply road.</p>  | <p><b>Section 19.1</b> indicates that the federal and provincial government has a legal duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate Indigenous Nations, including First Nations and Métis Peoples, when the Project may adversely affect Aboriginal or Treaty Rights that are recognized and affirmed in Section 35(1) rights of the <i>Constitution Act</i>, 1982.</p>   | <p>O mushkegowuk Women Water Council</p> |
| <p>Concerns about the Omushkegowuk Inninuuk's Inherent and Treaty Rights on water, including fishing rights and that the Omushkegowuk Women's Water Council is not in acceptance with the Webequie Supply Road Draft Terms of Reference.</p>   | <p>The inherent and Treaty rights of the Indigenous communities are considered in <b>Section 19.3</b> and <b>Section 19.5</b>.</p>  | <p>O mushkegowuk Women Water Council</p> |
| <p>Concerned that it was the hereditary leadership that was recognized by the Crown during the time of Treaty signing, Treaty 9 and Adhesion. There was no Chief and Council system set up yet when the Treaties were signed. The representatives of the Crown asked for Head men. Today, there are descendants and community member of these Head men (Treaty 9 signatories) who use the inherent laws of their Nation for any lands and resources matters. Canada and Ontario have their version of consultation and consent which is not Treaty based. Our Water Council does not accept any consultation and consent policy drafted by the Canadian governments.</p> | <p><b>Section 19.1</b> indicates that the federal and provincial government has a legal duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate Indigenous Nations, including First Nations and Métis Peoples, when the Project may adversely affect Aboriginal or Treaty Rights that are recognized and affirmed in Section 35(1) rights of the <i>Constitution Act</i>, 1982.</p>   | <p>O mushkegowuk Women Water Council</p> |



### 19.1.3 Incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge

To enable Indigenous Knowledge communication and engagement, Webequie First Nation formed a Webequie Project Team, comprised of community members and elected councillors. The Webequie Project Team advised the consultant Project Team (AtkinsRéalis). The Webequie Project Team reports directly to the Chief and Council at crucial stages and decision-making junctures throughout the EAR/IS process. The Elders guide the Webequie Project Team to conduct respectful and inclusive engagement and consultation for the Project, aligning with the Elders’ guiding principles. This approach aims to reflect the culture and traditions of the Webequie people, including their clans, as well as neighbouring communities beyond the Webequie First Nation.

**Section 19.1.2** provides a context of the feedback and concerns received through engagement and consultation with reference to this section, whilst **Section 19.1.3** provides an understanding of how these concerns and feedback are addressed within this EAR/IS.

Following sequential engagement and consultation efforts, these First Nations provided knowledge via the Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use (IKLRU) study or the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program as input for the EAR/IS to-date:

- Webequie First Nation;
- Marten Falls First Nation;
- Weenusk First Nation;
- Kashechewan First Nation and
- Fort Albany First Nation.

Key Indigenous Knowledge that was shared and subsequently incorporated and/or considered in the assessment of the effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts to the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is presented in **Table 19-3**. Further details related to methods of IKLRU data collection are provided in Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report).

**Table 19-3: Indigenous Peoples’ Interests and Rights – Summary of Indigenous Knowledge**

| Common Theme                    | Key Information and Concerns  | Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Traditional Practices and Areas | <p><b>Information Shared</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Treaty No. 9 enabled the Crown to hold land title from Cree and Ojibwe Peoples in what is now northern Ontario in exchange for cash treaty payments, the creation of reserves, and the inclusion of hunting, fishing, trapping and other rights.</li> <li>▪ The connection to the Kistachowan Sipi is essential, influencing cultural, social, health, and economic aspects of their lives.</li> <li>▪ Routes following the Kistachowan Sipi and its tributaries provide First Nation members with access to their traditional territories for resource harvesting and cultural site visits.</li> <li>▪ Members actively exercise harvesting rights (hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering) across extensive traditional area which provides access to culturally preferred foods and to support “subsistence livelihood.”</li> </ul> | <p><b>Section 19.3.1</b> (Change to Current and Historical Use of Land for Traditional Purposes)</p> <p><b>Section 19.4</b> (Mitigation and enhancement measures)</p> <p><b>Section 19.5.1</b> (Rights related to Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes)</p> |



| Common Theme                           | Key Information and Concerns  | Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section   |
|--|---|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preferred harvesting relies on intact, quiet, remote environments, clean water, and accessible routes/waterways.</li> <li>▪ Stewardship of lands and waters is central to governance and reflects their inherent authority, predating Treaty No. 9.</li> <li>▪ First Nation community members trap in multiple areas of their traditional territory including, but not limited to, inland and upriver along the Albany River (including at Axe Island, Pledger Lake, Marten Falls, Ogoki River, Chemehagan River, and Henley River), as well as the inland areas along the Kapiskau River, and between the Kapiskau and Albany Rivers.</li> <li>▪ First Nation community members identified harvesting locations ranging from lakes in the upper reaches of the Albany River and its tributaries, from Marten Falls to Fort Albany, as well as the Chemahagan River and creeks and other major rivers such as the Ekwan and Attawapiskat Rivers, extending all the way to James Bay. The Omushkegowuk/Cree six season cycle guides the rhythm of traditional practices</li> </ul> <p><b>Concerns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Balance needs to be struck between enhancing enforcement presence while not letting government encroach on traditional activities or Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.</li> <li>▪ More enforcement is needed to prevent overhunting or overfishing from occurring in traditional areas.</li> <li>▪ The number and quality of traditional harvesting areas used for hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering are being reduced due to changing water levels, habitat disturbances and shifts in wildlife movement and availability. These changes affect fish harvesting locations, seasonal hunting grounds, wildlife breeding areas and family traplines, limiting First Nation community members access to these culturally important sites.</li> <li>▪ Environmental changes, including altered river flow, habitat shifts, and species loss, were seen as diminishing the sensory and spiritual experience of being on the land.</li> <li>▪ If access to camps and traditional sites across First Nation traditional territory is impacted, it could impact cultural transmission and aspects of Omushkegowuk/Cree cultural practice.</li> <li>▪ The Project is likely to result in adverse effects to the use of lands, practice of Treaty and Aboriginal rights and well-being.</li> </ul> |   |
| Historical uses of lands and resources | <p><b>Information Shared</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nobody owned or had exclusive rights to the land and its resources; there were no strictly defined geographical limits or boundaries.</li> <li>▪ Indigenous Peoples were able to explore the land freely and meet other people from different clans or nations.</li> <li>▪ Treaty No. 9 promised that they could practice harvesting (hunting, trapping, and fishing) throughout the tract surrendered. Additionally, they would receive annuities and certain protections from the Crown upon signing the Treaty.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Section 19.2.2 (Results)</b></p> <p><b>Section 19.3.1 (Change to Current and Historical Use of Land for Traditional Purposes)</b></p> |



| Common Theme         | Key Information and Concerns   | Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section   |
|----------------------|--|---|
|                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Signatories of Treaty No. 9 can use the land for harvesting, so long as they are in accordance with the rules set out in the Treaty.</li> <li>▪ Lands can be taken up by the Government for settlement or development without the consent of Indigenous signatories.</li> <li>▪ Kistachowan Sipi (Albany River) system flows through traditional territory, providing vital support to terrestrial and aquatic habitats that maintain resources like fish, wildlife, and plant life.</li> <li>▪ Community members caribou hunt along the Pagashi Lake and Kapiskau River</li> <li>▪ The Albany River is an important harvesting corridor during the Fall season.</li> </ul>   |   |
| Economic Development | <p><b><u>Information Shared</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Treaty No. 9 awarded title to the thereby freeing land up for development by settler society.</li> <li>▪ Signing of Treaty No. 9 resulted in the extinguishment of Aboriginal title to land. It also placed limitations on how Indigenous signatories could use the tracts of land surrendered. For example, according to the written Treaty, harvesting activities are subject to regulations and tracts of land can be “taken up from time to time for settlement, mining, lumbering, trading or other purposes”.</li> <li>▪ Treaty No. 9 stipulates that “no site suitable for the development of waterpower exceeding 500 horsepower shall be included within the boundaries of any reserve” (CIRNAC, 2013). This provision effectively limited the economic potential of First Nations by not allowing them to develop hydro projects within their reserves.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Concerns</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development has impacted traditional activities of living off the land like their ancestors once did, especially younger members.</li> <li>▪ Cumulative effects of mining development which may negatively impact aspects of Omushkegowuk/Cree cultural practice</li> </ul> | <p><b>Section 19.3.1</b> (Change to Current and Historical Use of Land for Traditional Purposes)</p> <p><b>Section 19.3.2</b> (Change to Cultural Continuity)</p> <p>Section 15.3.2 (Overall Economy)</p> |
| Traditional Roles    | <p><b><u>Information Shared</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Traditional activities: trapping has always been important for maintaining the family unit.</li> <li>▪ Community stewardship remains shared knowledge and a collective responsibility</li> <li>▪ Colonial legislation has made it challenging for First Nation communities to reclaim their traditional laws in this socio-political context, even when there is a desire to uphold First Nation inherent and Treaty rights</li> <li>▪ Gender Roles: Each gender had their roles; men of the family hunted, trapped and constructed items for transportation and homes; and women fished, hunted and trapped small game, gathered plants, collected firewood, prepared meals, created goods for family and traded and cared for children.</li> </ul> <p>Three-Tier model:</p>   | <p><b>Section 19.2.2</b> (Results)</p>  |



| Common Theme                          | Key Information and Concerns   | Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
|                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Identify our approach to land use, protection, management and resource development activities in relation to our community and surrounding traditional territory;</li> <li>▫ Guides how we ensure the continuity of our traditional way of life and ancestral relationship with the land into the future; and</li> <li>▫ Offers a path for respectful relationships with neighbouring communities, government and third parties based on mutual benefit for all people.</li> </ul>  |   |
| <p>Cultural and Social Traditions</p> | <p><b><u>Information Shared</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unity and kinship ties and values through community social traditions (i.e. spring goose/<i>Nika</i> hunt and cultural traditions like sharing meat).</li> <li>▪ Seasonal Gatherings in traditional areas to harvest, socialize and hold ceremonies.</li> <li>▪ Marriages generally functioned as alliances that would establish important social and political connections between clans.</li> <li>▪ Involvement in resource-based commercial activities including commercial fishing, commercial trapping and commercial tourism.</li> <li>▪ Some of these activities continue today but play less of a role in the community's economy.</li> <li>▪ Maintaining an interest in continuing existing commercial resource activities as well as seeking new commercial opportunities.</li> <li>▪ Cultural continuity for members depends on access to sufficient, high-quality lands and water to practice harvesting ceremony, language use, teaching and sharing.</li> <li>▪ Some ceremonies are place-specific and tied to important ceremonial sites within First Nation Traditional Territory.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Concerns</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Protect cultural values and respect traditional use while enabling resource development that supports social and environmental sustainability for communities and future generations.</li> <li>▪ Keeping traditional livelihood practices in order to sustain culture.</li> <li>▪ Value of the land both in the context of our customary livelihood but also in terms of its socio-economic importance.</li> <li>▪ Impacts to Cultural and Social Traditions include overhunting and/or overfishing.</li> <li>▪ Restricting the ability of First Nation community members to travel and gather at camps or traditional sites within their Traditional Territory impacts cultural transmission.</li> <li>▪ Concerns from First Nation community members on the potential reduced ability to maintain traditional diets due to an overall decline in the availability and health of wildlife.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Section 19.2.2</b> (Results)<br/> <b>Section 19.3.2</b> (Change to Cultural Continuity)<br/> Section 15.3.2 (Change to Overall Economy)</p> |



| Common Theme  | Key Information and Concerns   | Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section   |
|---------------|--|---|
|               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Each wildlife species requires specific habitat conditions and exhibits seasonal behaviors that have influenced how First Nations use the land and practice their cultural traditions</li> <li>▪ Concerns from First Nation community members on the potential reduced ability to maintain traditional diets due to an overall decline in the availability and health of wildlife.</li> <li>▪ Introducing new environmental impacts (e.g. potential pollution and contamination which may travel through the landscape via waterways) which negatively impact many aspects of Omushkegowuk/Cree cultural practice and way of life. This may lead to a reduced ability to transmit culture and Indigenous Knowledge</li> </ul> |   |
| Social Trauma | <p><b>Concerns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The natural process of parents being able to guide, train and teach their children was greatly disrupted by residential schools.</li> <li>▪ Being able to pass down these traditional and cultural teachings has also been hindered throughout this process.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Section 19.3.2</b> (Change to Cultural Continuity)<br/> <b>Section 14.2.2.7</b> (Community Well-Being and Safety)</p> |

**Notes:** Names of First Nations and associated location-specific description in some instances are not presented in this table due to potential sensitivity and confidentiality of IKLRU information.

## 19.1.4 Indigenous Peoples Values and Rights

The assessment of effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights was undertaken with consideration of identified values of importance by Indigenous Peoples. The term “Indigenous values” is used in this section of the EAR/IS to describe the values of importance to Indigenous communities.

This understanding of Indigenous Peoples’ values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights has been principally based on input and feedback from Indigenous communities that were identified as potentially affected by the Project, as well as professional experience, guidance and guidelines from federal and provincial government.

For the purposes of the EAR/IS, and as defined by the TISG, issued by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) in 2020, the potential effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples includes “both adverse and positive effects to the current use of land and resources for traditional purposes, physical and cultural heritage, and environmental, health, social and economic conditions of Indigenous Peoples impacted by the Project” (IAAC, 2020).

In keeping with the TISG, the EAR/IS provides contextual information including the following:

- The current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes (including those uses that may have ceased due to external factors) (see **Section 19.2**);
- Physical and cultural heritage of each Indigenous group (see Section 20: Cultural Heritage Resources of the EAR/IS), including continuity of Indigenous culture (see Section 20);
- The environmental, health, social and economic effects of Indigenous Peoples (see Section 14: Social Environment, Section 15: Economic Environment, and Section 17: Human Health of the EAR/IS); and
- Nature and extent of the Rights exercised (see **Section 19.5**).



For the Project assessment, the Identification of Potential Effects, Pathways, and Indicators (**Section 19.3**) utilizes the following Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and their associated indicators to assess effects on Indigenous Peoples and the impacts to Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

These include:

- Indigenous Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes;
- Cultural Continuity (ability to practice and transmit cultural traditions including historical disruptions where Indigenous Peoples have a desire to reinvigorate a cultural tradition); and
- Aboriginal and Treaty Rights:
  - Rights related to current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes and activities;
  - Rights related to cultural continuity;
  - Rights related to socio-economic, health and well-being; and
  - Rights related to self-determination and self-governance.

As presented in **Table 19-4** and **Table 19-5**, the nature and extent of, and the potential impacts of the Project takes into consideration the range of identified Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights required for a holistic assessment. Further details on the approach taken for the assessment of the impacts of the Project on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is described in **Section 19.5**.

**Table 19-4: Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, Indicators and Rationale**

| Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights                           | Indicators  | Rationale   |
|---|---|---|
| Indigenous Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes to availability of lands and resources for traditional purposes.</li> <li>▪ Loss of or change to the number of sites and areas expressed in hectares (ha) used for traditional activities (hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering).               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Location/number/area of fish harvesting areas affected.</li> <li>▫ Location/number/area (ha) of seasonal hunting areas affected.</li> <li>▫ Location/number/area (ha) of wildlife (e.g. moose/<i>Moonz</i>) mating, breeding or nursery areas affected.</li> <li>▫ Location/number/area (ha) of plants harvested for human consumption and /or medicinal purposes affected.</li> <li>▫ Location and number of traplines affected.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Changes in preferred harvested species.</li> <li>▪ Changes to, or restrictions on, preferred harvesting methods.</li> <li>▪ Changes to access/routes to harvested species, including use of navigable waterways.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indigenous community feedback regarding the importance of protecting Indigenous rights, interests, and use of land and resources.</li> </ul> |



| Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights   | Indicators  | Rationale  |
|---|---|--|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes to distance for harvesting preferred species.</li> <li>▪ Changes to timing/seasonality for harvesting preferred species.</li> <li>▪ Location/number/Type of cultural keystone species affected.</li> <li>▪ Changes to experience of place and being on the land (sensory, aesthetics, connections).</li> </ul>   |  |
| Cultural Continuity (ability to practice and transmit cultural traditions including historical disruptions where Indigenous Peoples have a desire to reinvigorate a cultural tradition) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Loss of or change to quantity (number or ha) or quality of culturally and spiritually important sites and areas (e.g., ceremonial sites, sacred areas, teaching sites).</li> <li>▪ Changes to access/routes to culturally and spiritually important sites and areas including use of navigable waterways.</li> <li>▪ Changes to distance to culturally and spiritually important sites and areas.</li> <li>▪ Sufficiency of lands and resources for cultural practices.</li> <li>▪ Changes to cultural traditions or practices.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indigenous community feedback regarding the importance of First Nations rights and interests and expression of cultural practices and values.</li> <li>▪ Avoid or minimize adverse effects to the exercise of First Nations rights and interests including land availability and harvesting practices and/or culturally sensitive sites.</li> </ul> |

**Table 19-5: Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Indicators and Rationale**

| Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights | Indicators  | Rationale   |
|---|---|---|
| Impacts on the Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Impacts on rights related to current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes and activities.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indigenous community feedback regarding the importance of protecting Indigenous rights, interests, and use of land and resources.</li> </ul>   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Impacts on rights related to cultural continuity.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Avoid or minimize adverse effects to the exercise of First Nations rights and interests including land availability and harvesting practices and/or culturally sensitive sites.</li> </ul> |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Impacts on rights related to socio-economic, health and well-being conditions.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indigenous community feedback regarding the importance of protecting Indigenous rights and interests related to socio-economic, health and well-being.</li> </ul>                          |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Impacts on rights related to self-determination and self-governance.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indigenous community feedback regarding the importance of protecting Indigenous rights and interests related to self-determination and self-governance.</li> </ul>                         |

## 19.1.5 Spatial and Temporal Boundaries

The following assessment boundaries have been defined for the Indigenous Peoples interests and exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. Project effects on the Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights will vary by Indigenous community due to differences in geographic proximity to the Project and where traditional land use is practiced, cultural connection to the Project area, community priorities and concerns and based on available information at the time of developing this EAR/IS.

### 19.1.5.1 Spatial Boundaries

The spatial boundaries for the assessment of effects on Indigenous Peoples interests and impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are shown on **Figure 19.3** and include the following delineations:

- **Project Footprint** – the area of direct disturbance (i.e., the physical area required for project construction and operations). The Project Footprint is defined as the 35-metre wide right-of-way (ROW) of the WSR; and temporary or permanent areas needed to support the Project that access roads, construction camps, laydown and storage yards, aggregate pits/quarries, and a maintenance and storage facility.
- **Local Study Area (LSA)** – the area where direct and indirect effects of the Project on Indigenous Peoples and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are likely to occur. The LSA extends 1 km from the centreline of the preliminary recommended preferred route and 500 m from temporary or permanent support infrastructure (**Figure 19.3**). The LSA also encompasses the following communities which may be beyond the 500 m delineation of the preferred route and permanent support infrastructure:
  - Webequie First Nation;
  - Attawapiskat First Nation;
  - Eabametoong First Nation;
  - Kasabonika Lake First Nation;
  - Marten Falls First Nation;
  - Neskantaga First Nation;
  - Nibinamik First Nation; and
  - Weenusk First Nation;
- **Regional Study Area (RSA)** – The area where potential indirect and cumulative effects of the Project in the broader, regional context may occur. The RSA extends to include area of the quaternary watersheds crossed by the recommended preferred route for the RSA (**Figure 19.3**). The RSA also encompasses the following communities, which may be beyond the quaternary watersheds:
  - Aroland First Nation;
  - Constance Lake First Nation;
  - Fort Albany First Nation;
  - Ginoogaming First Nation;
  - Kashechewan First Nation;
  - Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation;
  - Kingfisher Lake First Nation;
  - Long Lake #58 First Nation;
  - Métis Nation of Ontario Region 2;



- Mishkeegogamang First Nation;
- North Caribou Lake First Nation;
- Wunnumin Lake First Nation.
- Wapekeka First Nation; and
- Wawakapewin First Nation.

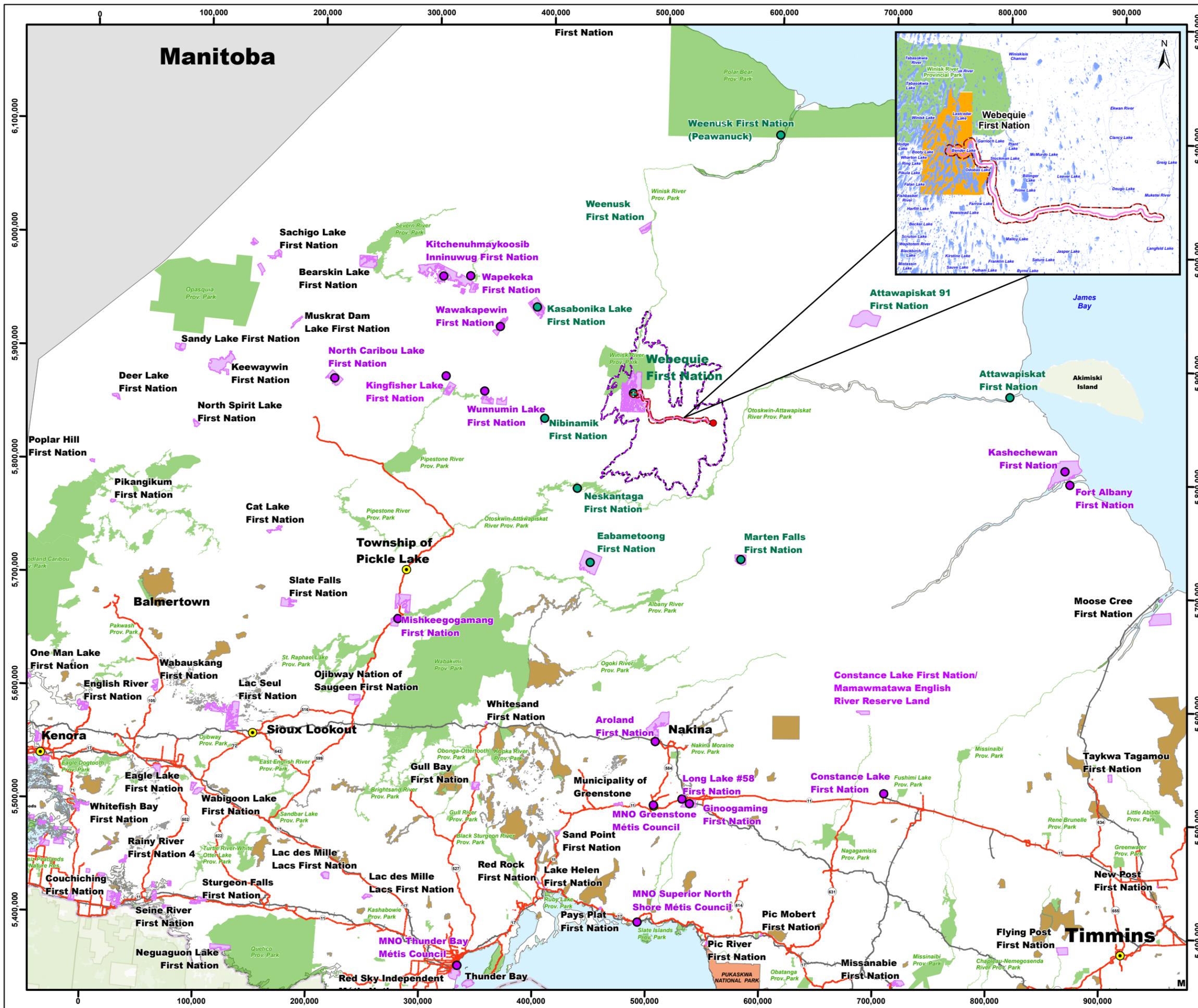
### 19.1.5.2 Temporal Boundaries

Temporal boundaries for the assessment address the potential effects of the Project over relevant timescales. The temporal boundaries for the Project consist of two main phases:

- **Construction Phase:** All activities associated with the initial development and construction of the road and supportive infrastructure from the start of the construction to the start of the operation and maintenance of the Project and is anticipated to be approximately five to six years in duration.
- **Operations Phase:** All activities associated with operation and maintenance of the road and permanent supportive infrastructure (e.g., operation and maintenance yard, aggregate extraction and processing areas) that will start after the construction activities are complete, including site restoration and decommissioning of temporary infrastructure (e.g., access roads, construction camps, etc.). The operations phase of the Project is anticipated to be 75 years based on the expected timeline when major refurbishment of road components (e.g., bridges) is deemed necessary.

The Project is proposed to be operated for an indeterminate period; therefore, future suspension, decommissioning and eventual abandonment was not evaluated in the EAR/IS (refer to Section 4.4 – Project Phases and Activities).





### Legend

- Preferred Route
- Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
- Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
- Local Study Area
- Regional Study Area
- First Nation Reserve
- Provincial Park
- Conservation Reserve
- Federal National Park
- All-Season Road
- Cities/Towns
- East terminus of the WSR in a proposed future mining development area

## Webequie Supply Road (WSR)

Indigenous Peoples and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Map

|                |                       |                 |           |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Figure Number: | 19 - 3                | REV             | PA        |
| Client:        | Webequie First Nation | Project Number: | 661910    |
|                |                       | Date:           | 1/22/2026 |
| DSC            |                       | DRN             | CHK       |
|                |                       | AD              | VS        |

**NOTES**

- Coordinate System: NAD 1983 Ontario MNR Lambert.
- Cadastral boundaries are for informational purposes only and should not be considered suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.
- Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information; and, Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date: 2021-02-04

**DISCLAIMER**

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## 19.1.6 Identification of Project Interactions with Indigenous Peoples Interests and Rights

The identification of project interactions with Indigenous Peoples Interests and Rights provides a basis for the subsequent assessment of the potential effects of the Project. The potential interactions between the 'Project Activity' and the 'Potential Effect' are identified in **Table 19-6** with a check mark (✓). Where no interaction between activity and effect is anticipated, a dash (-) is shown.

The potential effects shown below are categorized according to the Indigenous value (**Section 19.1.4**):

- Current and Historical Use of Land and Resources for Traditional Purposes;
- Cultural Continuity; and
- Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

The Project interactions shown in the table below take into consideration that several activities are interconnected and/or overlap, which can result in similar potential effects. The presentation of Project interactions below aims to streamline parameters to one primary pathway, thus reducing the need for duplicative discussion.

The interaction and effect pathways are presented in **Section 19.3** and is the basis for mitigation and enhancement measures and the assessment of net effects.

**Table 19-6: Project Interactions with Indigenous Peoples Interests and Rights**

| Project Activities   | Potential Effects  |                               |   |
|--|--|-------------------------------|---|
|  | Change to Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes | Change to Cultural Continuity | Impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights |
| <b>Construction</b>  |  |                               |   |
| Mobilization of Equipment and Supplies: Transport of equipment, materials and supplies to the Project site area using the winter road network and airport in Webequie  | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Surveying: Ground surveys are conducted to stake (physically delineate) the road route right-of-way and supportive infrastructure components of the Project (i.e., construction camps, access roads, laydown/storage areas, and aggregate extraction and processing areas) | -  | -                             | -   |
| Vegetation Clearing and Grubbing: Clearing and grubbing of vegetation (forest & wetland), including removal, disposal and/or chipping  | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Construction and Use of Supportive Infrastructure: This includes temporary construction camps, access roads and watercourse crossings, laydown/storage areas, and aggregate extraction (pits & quarries) and processing areas (screening, crushing), including blasting.   | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |

| Project Activities   | Potential Effects  |                               |   |
|--|--|-------------------------------|---|
|  | Change to Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes | Change to Cultural Continuity | Impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights |
| Construction of Road: removal and stockpiling of organics, subgrade excavation, placement of fill and gravel, grading and drainage work (e.g., road ditches, erosion protection, etc.)   | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Construction of Structures at Waterbody Crossings: Culverts and bridges – foundations (e.g., pile driving and concrete works), bridge girders, bridge decks, install of culverts.  | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Decommissioning / Closure of Temporary Aggregate Extraction and Processing Areas (pits and quarries): Demobilization of extracting and processing equipment, grading and site reclamation/revegetation. This also includes formalizing / re-purposing select pits and quarries proposed as permanent Project components during operations.   | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Decommissioning of Temporary Construction Camps, Access Roads, and Laydown / Storage Areas: Grading and site reclamation/revegetation. This also includes formalizing / re-purposing select access roads to permanent pits and quarries and a construction camp to an operations and maintenance facility as Project components for use during operations.   | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Emissions, Discharges and Wastes <sup>1</sup> : Noise, air emissions / GHGs, water discharge, and hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.  | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Completion of Project-Wide Clean-up, Site Restoration / Reclamation and Demobilization: Clean-up of excess materials, site revegetation and demobilization of equipment and materials  | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Employment and Expenditures <sup>2</sup>   | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| <b>Operations</b>  |  |                               |   |
| Road Use: Light and heavy vehicles and maintenance equipment with average annual daily traffic volume of less than 500 vehicles  | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Operation, Maintenance and Repair of Road: Includes: vegetation management control within road route; repairs/resurfacing of road granular surface and shoulders; dust control; winter/seasonal maintenance (i.e., snow clearing); road drainage system cleanout/repairs to culverts, ditches, and drainage outfalls; rehabilitation and repairs to structural culverts and bridges; and road patrols for inspection | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |



| Project Activities   | Potential Effects  |                               |   |
|--|--|-------------------------------|---|
|  | Change to Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes | Change to Cultural Continuity | Impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights |
| Operation of Pits, Quarries, and Maintenance Yard / Facility: Includes periodic extraction and blasting and processing operations (i.e., crushing, screening) and stockpiling of rock and aggregate materials. Also includes operation and repairs of Maintenance Yard/Facility and components within (office buildings, parking, storage of equipment and materials). | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions: Spills, vehicle collisions, flooding, forest fire and vandalism  | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Emissions, Discharges and Wastes <sup>1</sup> : Noise, air emissions / GHGs, water discharge, and hazardous and non-hazardous wastes   | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |
| Employment and Expenditures  | ✓  | ✓                             | ✓   |

**Notes:**

✓ = Potential interaction

– = No interaction



## 19.2 Existing Conditions

This section summarizes existing conditions based on socio-economic data collection, engagement and consultation conducted for the Project, and the integration of IKLRU. A detailed description of the existing conditions, study methods and results are provided in Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report).

### 19.2.1 Methods

To assess the current state of identified Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights within the project's defined spatial and temporal boundaries, a combination of data collection methods was used. These methods were complemented by analytical frameworks that integrate information from various perspectives to enhance the understanding of these conditions. Data collection methods included secondary and primary data source research, combined with analytical framework considerations such as: Indigenous Knowledge, community knowledge, meaningful engagement, and GBA+.

Community profiles related to existing environmental, health, social and economic conditions were developed through the data collection process. The profiles are intended to present metrics that define the indicators used to assess changes based on the summary presented in **Section 19.1.4**. The following sections describe the mixed methods approach of using quantitative and qualitative data collection, with inputs from secondary and primary sources.

#### 19.2.1.1 Engagement and Consultation

Overall engagement and consultation activities were conducted with Indigenous communities, stakeholders and the public related to the Project and/or effects predicted in the LSA and RSA. The assessment for the Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights focuses on engagement and consultation with Indigenous communities, in order to identify potential effects on Indigenous communities, preserve traditional and cultural heritage, and ensure transparency in the identification of effects. A full discussion of Project consultation and engagement is provided in EAR/IS Section 02 (Engagement and Consultation).

##### 19.2.1.1.1 Proponent Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use and Data Validation

The IKLRU program was launched to gain insights into the social environment, foster engagement and collaboration with Indigenous communities, and take into account social information specific to each community's experience. The IKLRU program was undertaken by the Indigenous communities and organizations/groups (and their selected advisors/consultants/contractors) with capacity support provided through the EAR/IS process.

Details of the engagement and consultation on IKLRU is presented in **Section 19.2.1.5**.

#### 19.2.1.2 Collection and Analysis of Baseline Information

Collection of Socio-Economic baseline information for the Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights involved a mixed methods approach. Mixed methods refer to a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. By combining these methods, a better understanding of issues and complex phenomena can be developed than by either method alone (Creswell and Clark, 2007).



Quantitative and qualitative data methods serve different study purposes and are designed to address different types of research questions and information needs. The quantitative approach allows the Project Team to collect information at a broader scale, on a wide range and across a number of indicators. The qualitative approach complements the quantitative approach as its purpose is to understand topics more in-depth from the perspective of lived experience, and the meanings attached to that experience (Winchester and Rofe, 2010). The Project Team and community facilitators have engaged interested communities where possible, to develop primary data using surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

The steps undertaken to collect and analyze data for social existing conditions, including the collection of secondary information, primary information and how GBA+ was incorporated, are described in detail in Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report (Part I)).

#### **19.2.1.2.1 Secondary Data Collection**

Secondary data collection refers to information that has been collected, processed, and published by someone else, rather than being gathered firsthand by the person or organization using it. Secondary data research and analysis for the Socio-Economic Baseline have included collecting and analyzing information from a range of quantitative and qualitative information sources to present a narrative of the existing environmental, health, social and economic conditions of communities in the LSA and RSA.

#### **Sources of Information**

Desktop research involved collecting and reviewing, where available and permissible, community websites, and recent community documents such as comprehensive community plans, housing plans, community-based land use plans, and development plans.

#### **19.2.1.2.2 Primary Data Collection**

Primary data is information that is collected firsthand by a researcher or organization specifically for a particular purpose or study. Specific data collection related to the social condition of the LSA and RSA required data collection from Indigenous communities. A Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program was developed to gather information about Indigenous communities that wished to participate in the Program, and to support the assessment of the Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. The methods to gather primary data related to the social environment included:

- **Community surveys:** Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in surveys through the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program. The survey format (i.e., online, in-person surveyors, and community sessions) and the survey content (i.e., questions posed to community members) was tailored to the needs of the community. Indigenous communities were able to choose to complete some or all of the surveys themselves and were provided with support via survey administrators or Project Team.
- **Focus groups:** Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in Socio-Economic focus group sessions, through the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program. Diverse subsections of the community participated in small group discussions related to the existing conditions in the community. Information regarding focus groups are in Appendix L.
- **Knowledge holder interviews:** Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in Socio-Economic knowledge holder interviews, through the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program. A range of community representatives provided key firsthand knowledge and insights about community through interviews. Although all 22 Indigenous communities were invited to participate in the Key Informant Interviews, only Webequie First Nation engaged in these discussions.



### 19.2.1.3 Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Assessment Approach

The assessment of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights relies on information provided by Indigenous communities participating in the IKLRU Program. For those Indigenous communities who applied for the Participant Funding Initiative, it enabled them to complete studies on their rights and interests, and how rights could be impacted by the Project. In addition, publicly available literature was reviewed to gather relevant information. To-date, most Indigenous communities have not taken part in the IKLRU Program; however, several communities have provided input about their values and interests at some point during the EA/IA process and this has been considered as part of the assessment. The assessment approach presented in the sections that follow included the review of information provided by Indigenous Communities, through engagement and consultation activities, which, although limited in the circumstances, articulated the communities' views on the Project' potential impacts on the exercise of rights to the extent available.

The preliminary assessment endeavoured to identify pathways from Project-related activities to the biophysical environment, as well as social, economic and health conditions that affect the conditions needed to exercise rights, such as access, quantity and quality of resources available for traditional use, as well as community well-being that supports the exercise of rights.

Community-specific information, if available, and IKLRU report information provided by Webequie First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation and Weenusk First Nation are included in **Section 19.2** and **Section 19.3**. The assessment considered information provided by Indigenous Nations about the potential impacts of the Project to understand the nature, scope, and extent of adverse impacts on rights.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (2023), notes that an Indigenous community's "longstanding connection to, use of, or occupation of an area is indicative of a community's rights". An Indigenous community can assert an area of interest or traditional territory and that these assertions may consider many factors including, but not limited to, hunting and trapping areas, wildlife migration patterns, travel routes, watersheds, etc. However, these assertions "may not be well understood by all parties, they may raise uncertainty as they lack information, or there may be differing interpretations" (IAAC, 2023).

There is a potential for adverse effects on Aboriginal Rights where there is an interaction between construction and operation activities and resources that are essential to the exercise of the Aboriginal right, or to the access of a resource. In considering potential effects on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, it is assumed these types of activities may occur in the vicinity of the Project, even if site-specific areas or activities were not well identified or characterized by the majority of the Indigenous communities.

The Project Team recognizes that each Indigenous community has specific values and interests that affect its exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. Potential impacts to Aboriginal and Treaty Rights will vary by Indigenous community, depending on its proximity and potential effect pathways from the Project. The Project Team will continue to engage with Indigenous communities as the EAR/IS progresses. The Project Team will make efforts to review and consider all additional input from Indigenous communities if received following the completion of this report.

For the purposes of the EAR/IS, information on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights has been organized into the following areas:

- Rights related to current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes and activities;
- Rights related to cultural continuity;
- Rights related to socio-economic, health and well-being conditions; and



- Rights related to self-determination and self-governance.

These indicators for the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights assessment were chosen for the EAR/IS as they reflect a holistic understanding of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in relation to Indigenous Peoples' relationships with their lands, cultures, communities, and governance systems.

In the absence of information currently available from the majority of the Indigenous communities, the assessment of impacts on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights has been largely inferred based on general information; however, this approach is in no way intended to indicate an absence of these rights. As described in Sections 6 to 18 and 20 of the EAR/IS, the Project has the potential to cause adverse environmental, social, economic and health effects, which may lead to adverse impacts on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, as outlined above. Due to the connectivity of Indigenous communities in Treaty 9, potential impacts on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights as a result of the construction and operation of the WSR Project are described in **Section 19.3** and **Section 19.5**.

#### **19.2.1.4 Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)**

Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) is a required analytical approach for any project operating under Section 22 of the *IA Act* and is considered part of this EAR/IS process. GBA+ is not a method unto itself, but an approach that is associated with a variety of standard quantitative and qualitative data collection tools.

GBA+ recognizes that historical and current power structures (e.g., laws, policies, governments, and other institutions) have shaped society and created inequalities. This is especially important with respect to legacies of colonialism and the impacts on Indigenous Peoples, and in particular, Indigenous women and Two-Spirited people.

In the context of the EAR/IS, GBA+ is intended as a means to understand and assess how potential Project effects could disproportionately impact more vulnerable groups, including women, youth, two-spirited and gender diverse persons, disabled persons, and Elders with respect to the Project. It is particularly important to consider how the impacts, benefits, and risks of the Project could be unequally distributed across diverse groups within a community, and to develop targeted plans and mechanisms that can be put in place to avoid and mitigate impacts, and/or compensate these groups.

##### **19.2.1.4.1 GBA+ Data Validation Session**

Validation of GBA+ information included in the Social-Economic Baseline took place on May 13 and 14, 2024 in Webequie First Nation with Webequie community members. Representatives of the Webequie Supply Road (WSR) Project Team visited Webequie First Nation to provide an update about the Project and to talk to community members and request feedback and validation on the socio-economic and health conditions as well as GBA+ information of the community that have been assembled into baseline study reports and circulated to the community leadership. The Project Team also heard from community members about concerns and issues related to the potential effects of the WSR Project on the community.

#### **19.2.1.5 Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use**

The IKLRU program was initiated to engage and collaborate with Indigenous communities and groups on the collection and consideration of IKLRU information throughout the EAR/IS. It is important to note that the IKLRU program was undertaken by the Indigenous communities and organizations/groups (and their selected advisors/consultants/contractors) with capacity support provided through the EAR/IS process.



The types of information that were sought with regard to Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights included:

- Sharing of historical, cosmological and spiritual learnings that provide context and direction to the community;
- Physical and cultural heritage of each Indigenous community, including burial sites, values of spiritual, cultural, sacred and/or historical importance and meanings attached to places, plants, animals, objects, beings, or things;
- Areas of Indigenous land and resource use for traditional purposes presently or historically practiced (e.g., hunting, trapping, fishing and plant harvesting areas); as defined by location, frequency, duration and/or timing of these activities; types of resources used and their habitats; the quantity and quality of resources; culturally important resources and places they are harvested; access to resources or places used;
- Cultural practices such as resource preparation and use; values associated with, and importance assigned to resources; and
- Knowledge regarding the existing environment and trends within the study area in both past and present, including locations or areas of specific importance for wildlife, fish, and/or vegetation (e.g., calving areas, spawning areas, plants).

The process of collecting Indigenous Knowledge for the EAR/IS involved multiple steps, including gathering, documenting, obtaining permission for use, and validating the information. Community validation involves the community and its knowledge holders verifying the accuracy, completeness and sensitivity of the Indigenous Knowledge collected for a project.

During Indigenous Knowledge data collection, the community's practitioners and/or contractors may meet with community members, especially Indigenous Knowledge holders, to review Indigenous Knowledge collected, to discuss, questions, add to the information and verify that the community is comfortable and confident with the accuracy and completeness of the information presented. The process is consistent with the TISG and adheres to the following guiding principles: respect to Indigenous Knowledge holders; building relationships; carrying on an ongoing dialogue with community members; community involvement in ensuring the context and the meaning of the Indigenous Knowledge provided is understood and maintained; transparency of the process; gaining permissions from communities for usage; and Ownership, Control, Access and Possession.

**Table 19-7** outlines the dates when the Project team completed community visits.

**Table 19-7: Dates of Project Team Visits to First Nations**

| First Nation          | Dates of Community Visits   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Webequie First Nation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2021: October 13, October 27, November 10.</li> <li>▪ 2022: March 30, June 20, July 19.</li> <li>▪ 2023: May 3, May 12, June 7, August 29, September 26.</li> <li>▪ 2024: January 12, May 13-14, August 20-22, September 12, December 18.</li> <li>▪ 2025: March 17, March 25, May 21-23, October 24, November 6, November 19, November 20.</li> </ul> |
| Weenusk First Nation  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2022: July 19, August 26.</li> <li>▪ 2023: August 17-18.</li> <li>▪ 2024: August 29.</li> </ul>  |



| First Nation                | Dates of Community Visits   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Constance Lake First Nation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2023: June 22, June 29.</li> <li>▪ 2024: September 12.</li> <li>▪ 2025: January 28.</li> </ul> |
| Nibinamik First Nation      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2024: January 16, August 6.</li> </ul>   |
| Marten Falls First Nation   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2023: August 24.</li> <li>▪ 2025: July 21.</li> </ul>  |
| Kashechewan First Nation    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2023: September 6.</li> </ul>  |

A data validation meeting was held with Webequie First Nation in August 2024, where information collected via the primary data collection methods were discussed and refined. This community visit validated primary and secondary information regarding Indigenous Knowledge, cultural heritage and GBA+.

A second data validation session was held in September 2024 with Elders of Webequie First Nation at Thunder Bay, where Elders’ knowledge on existing conditions and their concerns was identified and discussed.

Webequie First Nation completed a document ‘Webequie First Nation Indigenous Knowledge Study for the Webequie Supply Road’, dated October 4, 2024. This draft document was made available to the Project Team on October 7, 2024 as confidential information, and as guidance for development of the EAR/IS (Stantec, 2024).

Weenusk First Nation completed a draft version of Weenusk First Nation Existing Conditions Report for the Project. This draft was made available to the Project Team in July 2023 with the understanding that it was confidential, pending community verification/confirmation (MNP LLP, n.d). In November 2023, the community completed a verification of the reports, and January 2024, the final report for the Weenusk First Nation Existing Conditions Report for the Project was made available to the Project Team (MNP LLP, 2024).

Marten Falls First Nation completed a draft version of the Marten Falls First Nation Indigenous Knowledge, Land Use and Occupancy Study for the Northern Access Roads. The draft report was made available to the Project Team in May 2024, and it was indicated that the report was subject to change (Suslop Inc., 2024).

Kashechewan First Nation completed a draft version of the Kashechewan First Nation Existing Conditions Report specific to the proposed Webequie Supply Road. The draft report was made available to the Project Team in March 2025 (MNP LLP, 2024).

Fort Albany First Nation completed a draft version of the Fort Albany First Nation Indigenous Knowledge and Use Study Specific to the proposed Webequie Supply Road. The draft report was made available to the Project Team in November 2025, and it was indicated that the report was subject to change (Fort Albany First Nation and Firelight Research Inc., 2024).

**19.2.1.6 Summary of Data Sources**

**Table 19-8** identifies the method data sources that were used to define the existing Indigenous Peoples and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.





**Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

[REDACTED]

*Availability of Lands and Resources for Traditional Harvesting*

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

### Traditional Land and Resource Use

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[Redacted text block]

---

<sup>1</sup> This total represents multiple line features that create each route, and this sum represents all of the features (Stantec, 2024).

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

**Hunting**

[Redacted text block]



[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

**Plant Gathering**

[Redacted text block]

*Fishing*

[Redacted text block]



[Redacted text block]

*Drinking Water*

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

*Trails and Waterways*

[Redacted text block]

**Habitation**

[Redacted text block]

**Cultural Continuity**

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]



*Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
|------------|------------|
| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[Redacted text block]

*Cultural Traditions and Practices*

[Redacted text block]



[Redacted text block]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



**WSR**  
WEBOUIE  
SUPPLY ROAD



WEBOUIE FIRST NATION

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

*Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages*

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

**Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions**

Further details on existing social environment conditions are stated in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are stated in Section 15.2 and existing health conditions of Webequie First Nation are outlined in Section 17.2.

**Traditional Laws, Roles and Responsibilities and Self-Governance**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The community is formally affiliated with Nishnawbe Aski Nation.

**19.2.2.2 Local Study Area**

A description of existing conditions of health, social and economic conditions can be found in Sections 14 (Social Environment), Section 15 (Economic Environment), Section 16 (Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use), Section 17 (Human Health) and Section 20 (Cultural Heritage Resources).

Baseline data for Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes was collected through available information provided directly by Indigenous communities and data gathered specifically for the Project. Additional data was gathered through a review of internal reports received by AtkinsRéalis (formerly SNC-Lavalin) and publicly available sources relevant to the project study areas. Indigenous communities utilize land and resources for food, utility, travel, medicinal, cultural, and spiritual purposes. Indigenous communities could potentially experience changes to their traditional land and resource use as a result of the Project, as explained in **Section 19.3**.

The receipt of Indigenous Knowledge and traditional land and resource use information, collected and provided by Indigenous communities, was limited at the time of the EAR/IS preparation. However, some communities were involved in gathering this information through community-led studies. At the time of developing this report, Webequie First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation and Weenusk First Nation provided Indigenous Knowledge and traditional land and resource use studies. Additional information has been provided by other Indigenous communities throughout the EAR/IS preparation, and efforts were undertaken to integrate information from Indigenous communities.

Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA customarily use the lands and the resources of their traditional territories for various purposes as part of traditional way of life, which can be described as the aspiration of Mino Bimaadiziwin (The Good Life) in Anishinaabe culture. Mino Bimaadiziwin is a cultural value that includes spiritual, physical, mental and emotional well-being, which is tied to a reciprocal relationship with Aki (Land). Anishinaabe way of life includes hunting, harvesting and stewardship of Aki while keeping in mind the respectful value of sustainability.

Indigenous Knowledge of traditional land and resource use practices is held by Indigenous communities and passed down from generation to generation. There is in-depth historical and current understanding of the physical, as well as spiritual context of lands, waters, plants, animals, and entire landscape and environment, which cannot be easily substituted by western scientific surveys. Traditional territories are, to some extent, shared between LSA and RSA communities, with a mutual understanding of their collective interests, roles, and responsibilities in environmental stewardship.

The lands and waters traditionally provide important resources for Indigenous communities for health and well-being, such as food, water, materials for clothing and shelter and medicine. Indigenous communities obtain these resources through traditional practices, including hunting, trapping, fishing, and gathering plants. Identifying sites and areas where traditional activities are practiced historically and currently is helpful to identify how the Project may affect those areas and affect Indigenous communities' traditional way of life.

Culturally and spiritually important sites of Indigenous communities include trails, travel routes, burial sites, ceremonial and gathering sites, areas and landscapes. Cultural practices like traditional crafting, gatherings, teachings, ceremonies and traditional food harvesting do not always occur at a specific location, although some cultural activities and events, such as community feasts and pow-wows, may be associated with specific sites. The social and cultural value of these sites and areas is an important consideration for Indigenous communities.

Water as life is a recurrent theme for many Indigenous communities. Water, as a sacred element, has deep spiritual and cultural significance. Water connects all life, whether it's through consumption, honoured in ceremony or used as transportation. These activities are integral to communities as they relate directly to identity, cultural reclamation and the transference of knowledge.

The Results section that follows describes, using available information, the nature and extent of sites and areas used by Indigenous communities within the LSA and RSA for traditional harvesting and cultural traditions and practices, and why these areas are important to Indigenous communities.

#### **19.2.2.2.1 Attawapiskat First Nation**

Information regarding Attawapiskat First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Attawapiskat First Nation. The following section and impacts assessment



(Section 19.3) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

In 1930, an adhesion to Treaty No. 9 provided a reserve for Attawapiskat First Nation. The Treaty adhesion set aside Attawapiskat Indian Reserve 91 on the Ekwan River, a parallel river north of the Attawapiskat River, totalling approximately 27,040 ha. Attawapiskat Indian Reserve 91 is mainly used for traditional purposes (Five Nations Energy, 2025). Local leaders established the community in its present location in 1964 on the Attawapiskat River due to an existing trading post and access to James Bay shipping routes (Library and Archives Canada, n.d). The new reserve was numbered Attawapiskat Indian Reserve 91A and is approximately 235.8 ha (CIRNAC, 2023a).

Attawapiskat First Nation has indicated that their traditional territory extends into the WSR Project Area due to the location of the Attawapiskat River. The Attawapiskat First Nation's hunting lands extend from Kapiskau River in the south to Hudson Bay in the north, westwards along Hudson Bay towards the Winisk River, and from Akimiski Island in the east to Mississa Lake area in the west (Cummins, 1992).

Akimiski Island is the largest island in James Bay, and Attawapiskat First Nation is the closest community, located 80 km to the west. This area is a traditional hunting and trapping area of the Attawapiskat people and is located on land designated as Crown Land (Tsuji et al., 2019). Akimiski Island was also historically used for harvesting, gathering berries and trapping. Attawapiskat First Nation is surrounded by wilderness and waterways teeming with wild food, plants used in traditional medicines and other natural resources that for generations sustained Cree communities and became a central focus of their cultural stories (Smith, 2017).

Attawapiskat First Nation initiated a territorial plan independent of the CBLUP and the *Far North Act*. A planning area was identified, which shows its approximate size, including the portion that overlaps with the WSR (Figure 19.4).

#### ***Hunting, Trapping and Fishing***

Attawapiskat First Nation's traditional harvest focused on fish, waterfowl, moose, Caribou, rabbit, beaver, bear, Canada geese, blue geese, partridge, ptarmigan and fish (Cummins, 1992). Attawapiskat First Nation community members fish for whitefish, ling, jackfish, trout, coastal sucker, inland sucker, walleyed pike and sturgeon (Honigmann, 1948). Goose hunts continue to be of importance to Attawapiskat First Nation, and there are annual spring goose hunts along the James Bay and Hudson Bay Coast (Kataquapit, 2025).

#### ***Plant Gathering***

Attawapiskat First Nation has historically gathered the following food and plants: low bush cranberries, blackberries, blueberries, black currant, labrador tea, tamarack roots, stone moss, spruce gum, juniper, willow, roots of a large tamarack (Honigmann, 1948). Berry picking was traditionally done by girls and women in the Attawapiskat community who went in groups of 2-3 during late summer to the first snowfall (Honigmann, 1948).



## **Travel and Access**

The Attawapiskat River traditionally provided Attawapiskat First Nation with transportation routes, water sources, temporary camp sites and fishing and hunting locations (Cummins, 1992). Traditionally, the Attawapiskat Cree have hunted, fished, and trapped to support themselves, and moved their camps seasonally in pursuit of game. Original hunting territories extended from the Hudson Bay area to the north, to the Kapuskau River to the south. From the Terms of Reference comments received from Attawapiskat First Nation for the WSR, the Ekwon and Attawapiskat Rivers have been identified to be heavily used for harvesting by Attawapiskat First Nation traditional land users (Nakogee, 2020). These watersheds, including the headwaters are culturally and spiritually important to Attawapiskat First Nation. The subsistence economy is critically important to the economic vitality of the region and sustains Attawapiskat First Nation members culturally, physically, spiritually, and socially (Nakogee, 2020).

## **Cultural Continuity**

### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

The Attawapiskat River traditionally provided Attawapiskat First Nation with transportation routes, water sources, temporary camp sites and fishing and hunting locations (Cummins, 1992). Akimiski Island has been identified by Attawapiskat First Nation as an important place for social and cultural reasons and contains burial sites, spiritual sites and Cree seasonal camps (Tsuji et al., 2019). Akimiski Island includes a migratory bird sanctuary on the east side of the island (Kataquapit, 2022).

The Victor Diamond Mine was seeking approval to dispose of mine demolition waste which is being decommissioned and the proposed location within their traditional territory “is a place of critical cultural, spiritual and subsistence importance to the Attawapiskat Cree people” (Jamasmie, 2021).

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Attawapiskat First Nation Elders have used the term *pimaatisiwi* (living the good life), which is a holistic concept of life which includes everything imaginable in life and includes respect for ‘*the other*’ (Hookimaw-Witt, 1998). Several Elders have stated that “land is precious, rich and very important” (Hookimaw-Witt, 1998).

Community members have indicated in studies that the land is not only for hunting, “but to also renew your spirit” (Hookimaw-Witt, 1998). Protection of their traditional way of life and protection of water is a primary interest to the Attawapiskat First Nation People (Koostachin, 2005). Water is a sacred part of Attawapiskat ceremonies (Koostachin, 2005). Reconnecting to the community and land through traditional ceremony land-based activities of hunting, fishing and spending time in nature are important components of Attawapiskat First Nation’s right to well-being. The spring goose hunt is an important event every year and an important cultural activity that Attawapiskat First Nation members participate in (Smith, 2017).

In 2019, Omushkego Education Student Success hosted a Cree Language and Culture Teachers Gathering to create culturally relevant curriculum that utilized land-based Omushkego culture (Mushkegowuk Council, 2024).

Attawapiskat First Nation hosts Camp Chikepak, which is a two-week youth camp held at Camp Bickell on Chapman Lake open to youths aged 9-14 years old across the Mushkegowuk territory; the camp provides land-based cultural and traditional activities and knowledge. The costs for this annual camp are provided by Choose Life program implemented through a Nishnawbe Aski Nation program (Grech, 2022).



The Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA) offers various services that supports providing optimum health care as close to home as possible. This includes a holistic approach that reflects the distinct needs of all peoples in the Weeneebayko region. (WAHA, 2018). WAHA is committed to providing high-quality health services that include traditional and cultural healing methods (WAHA, 2025).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

The community's traditional language is Omushkego Cree and is an important part of their culture and identity that is passed down by their Elders (Hookimaw-Witt, 1998). Attawapiskat means "people of the parting of the rocks" in Swampy Cree language; from the limestone island formations at the mouth of the Attawapiskat River (Come Explore Canada, 2024).

The Attawapiskat First Nation Education Authority (2025) is responsible for developing and implementing educational programs at Kattawapiskak Elementary School and Vezina Secondary School where students can learn Omushkego Cree as a subject course, and cultural education to learn traditional skills and teachings of the local area (211 Ontario North, 2023).

The Mushkegowuk Council, which Attawapiskat First Nation is a member of, also supports these language preservation efforts by providing resources and programs aimed at maintaining and strengthening the Cree language among its member communities (Mushkegowuk Council, 2024).

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Attawapiskat First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Attawapiskat First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Attawapiskat First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

Attawapiskat First Nation is one of 10 northern First Nations who launched a lawsuit against the Ontario and federal government in April 2023 (McIntosh, 2023). They have requested that the Canadian government be barred from making any decisions about how land could be used in the Ring of Fire for mining and other purposes without Indigenous consent. The lawsuit centres on Treaty No. 9 and the contrast between the verbal and written promises of Treaty No. 9 as recorded (McIntosh, 2023). The First Nations assert that they did not cede or surrender their territories, and that Treaty No. 9 did not give the Ontario government the right to allow resource extraction (McIntosh, 2023). Attawapiskat First Nation expressed concerns about the Project regarding adequate consultation, regulatory process and cumulative effects on its community (Attawapiskat First Nation, 2021).

In August 2024, Attawapiskat First Nation was one of six First Nations who have filed a court case challenging a major section of Ontario's mining law, an attempt to strike down the existing system for how mineral claims are staked (McIntosh, 2024). The current system allows miners to stake claims without consulting First Nations which they outline violates their Treaty and Charter Rights.

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-governance)***

Attawapiskat First Nation has a Custom Electoral System, with one Chief, one Deputy Chief and twelve Councillors elected every three years. The next election will be in August 2025.



The community is formally affiliated with Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Mushkegowuk Council.

Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

The Omushkego Wahkohtowin Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) is an Indigenous-led conservation initiative that enables First Nations to manage the lands, waters, and ocean, and that align and protect treaty and inherent rights (Mushkegowuk Council Lands and Resources Department, 2024). Protection will include ecological, economic, and cultural benefits to the Omushkego. Creating new protected and conserved areas will help maintain the rich biodiversity and ecological integrity of the homelands. Protecting the land also safeguards inherent rights, treaty rights and establishes a foundation for spirituality, culture, and traditions to be passed on to future generations.

Attawapiskat First Nation is part of the Omushkego Wahkohtowin Conservation Plan, which was written to provide people, especially Omushkego and adjacent Nations and communities, with information on community conservation planning their lands and waters (Mushkegowuk Council Lands and Resources Department 2024). This plan has a 10-year implementation period, which outlines steps to manage lands and resources and a framework to carry out the vision for Omushkego Wahkohtowin. There are four streams within the plan:

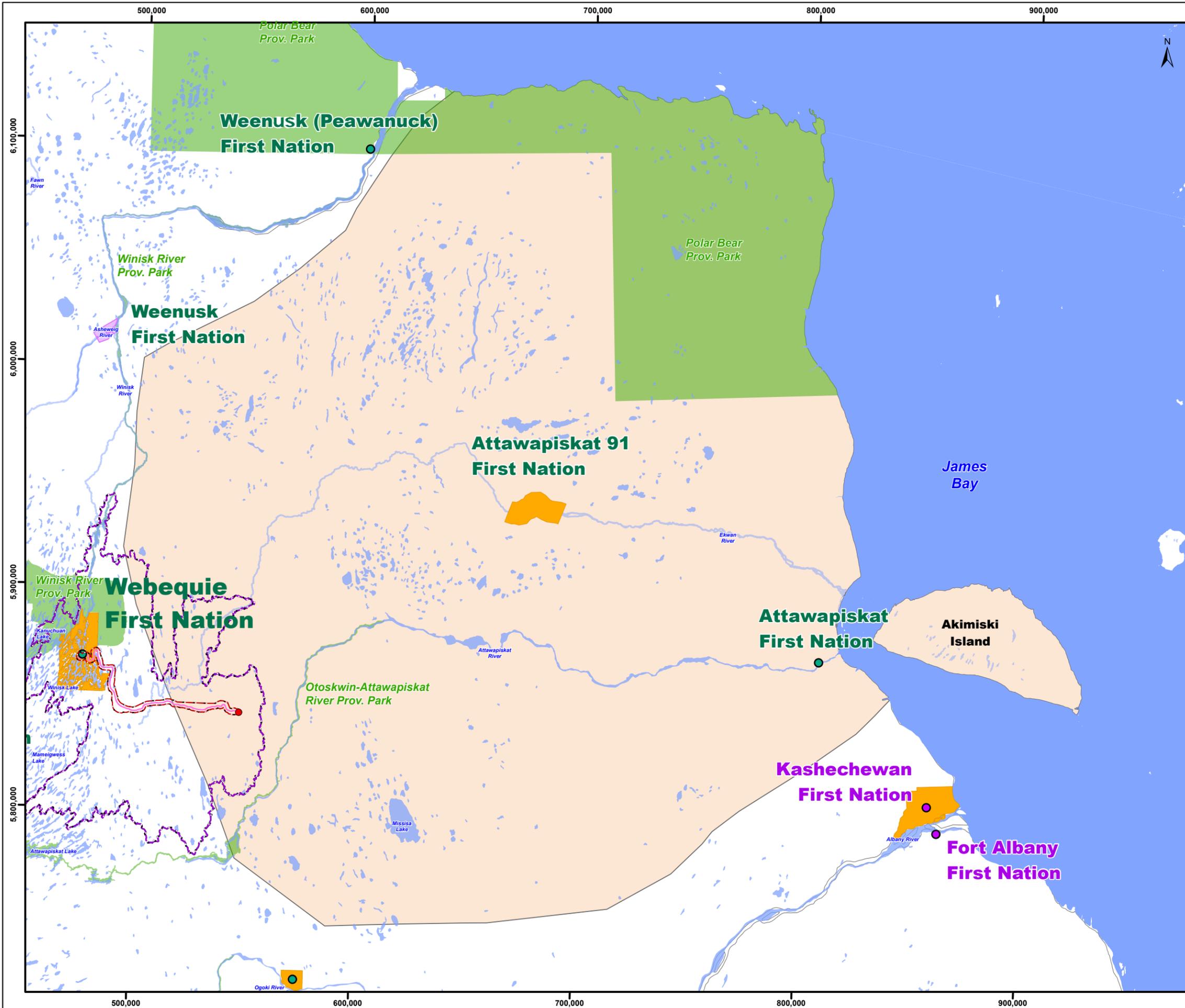
- Stream 1: Create protected and conserved areas to ensure ecological integrity for the preservation of inherent, treaty, and harvesting rights, and spirituality, culture, and traditions;
- Stream 2: Establish Omushkego Wahkohtowin governance and management;
- Stream 3: Care for ecosystem health; and
- Stream 4: Economic and cultural development, sustainable livelihoods, and community well-being

Attawapiskat First Nation has not yet finalized or made public its territorial plan and is concerned that Webequie's potential exemption from certain provisions of the *Far North Act* will interfere with Attawapiskat's decision-making authority over areas of shared use as per their comments provided for the WSR ToR (Nakogee, 2020).

Attawapiskat First Nation initially came to an impact benefit agreement (IBA) with De Beers Canada for the Victor diamond mine opening in 2005; a 2013 document showed that Attawapiskat's diamond royalties earned as part of the IBA was around 0.5% of the mine's annual revenue (Porter, 2013). As part of the IBA signed in 2005, De Beers makes payments to a trust fund that was set up by Attawapiskat First Nation (Porter, 2013). The initial IBA promised numerous benefits, including training, employment, business opportunities, environmental management, and financial compensation (Canada Mining Journal, 2005). Attawapiskat First Nation Chief Nakogee stated "these expensive diamonds from my Nation's homeland, in our backyard, and yet we continue to live in horrendous conditions where we can't even drink the water here from the taps. We keep watching the wealth of our Traditional Territories from the waters and lands to the wildlife, get industrialized" (Socialist Project, 2020). Concerns in the community range from the environmental impact on the Attawapiskat River to how big a cut of the profits the first nation received (CBC News, 2016).

As a result, the Attawapiskat people have lost trust in future projects entering their community, given the broken promises and lack of equitable benefits from the previous agreement (Socialist Project, 2020).





- Legend**
- Preferred Route
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
  - Local Study Area
  - Regional Study Area
  - Attawapiskat Planning Area
  - First Nation Reserve – Community Engaged in the Project
  - First Nation Reserve
  - Waterbody
  - Provincial Park
  - Conservation Reserve
  - Federal National Park
  - All-Season Road
  - +— Rail
  - Cities/Towns

## Webeque Supply Road (WSR)

Attawapiskat First Nation  
Planning Area

|                |                      |                 |           |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Figure Number: | 19 - 4               | REV             | PA        |
| Client:        | Webeque First Nation | Project Number: | 661910    |
|                |                      | Date:           | 1/21/2026 |
| DSC            |                      |                 | DRN<br>LZ |
|                |                      |                 | CHK<br>VS |
|                |                      |                 | APP<br>VS |



**NOTES**

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 Ontario MNR Lambert.
2. Cadastral boundaries are for informational purposes only and should not be considered suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.
3. Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information; and, Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date : 2021-02-04

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#### 19.2.2.2.2 Eabametoong First Nation

Information regarding Eabametoong First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Eabametoong First Nation. The following section and impacts assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

#### Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Eabametoong and Mishkeegogamang First Nations' CBLUP was signed in July 2013 (Eabametoong and Mishkeegogamang First Nations, 2013). The ToR is intended to guide the CBLUP, which outline the community's values and objectives for land use planning. Eabametoong and Mishkeegogamang have identified an Area of Interest for Planning that encompasses an area of 2,487,752 ha (**Figure 19.5**). This Area of Interest for Planning is defined by Eabametoong First Nation and Mishkeegogamang First Nation. This is the traditional land use area that is bordered primarily by the Albany River on the south and approximately along the height of land of the Attawapiskat watershed on the north. This area is southwest of the project footprint for WSR. Traditional harvest areas have been used to help define the boundaries of the planning area, with respect for neighbouring First Nations.

Eabametoong First Nation and Mishkeegogamang First Nation describe their traditional use territory as Tassshikaywin, which means "our places on the Earth and in nature's realm" (Eabametoong and Mishkeegogamang First Nations, 2013).

A report completed by the Firelight Group for the Greenstone Gold Mine project has outlined Indigenous values that were identified as critical conditions that must be present for the continued practice of Eabametoong First Nation culture: water and fishing, hunting and cultural continuity (The Firelight Group, 2017a).

#### *Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*

Eabametoong First Nation has outlined that water and fishing are important to their traditional way of life, food security and cultural continuity (The Firelight Group, 2017b). Many of the Anishinaabe people of Eabametoong First Nation divide their time between living in town and fishing and hunting in their traditional territory. During the Spring and Summer, Eabametoong First Nation members typically hunt for moose, ducks, and geese, and fish for suckers, and walleye. Throughout the year, many families will make trips by boat, truck, or snowmobile to hunting camps outside of town. During the spring and summer there are also cookouts and events hosted in the community to bring the community together (Kirton, 2020).

Moose are an important species that the Eabametoong First Nation use for food and cultural purposes. Other animals that they hunt, and trap include beavers, marten, mink, grouse, duck, wolves, bear and partridge (Stantec, 2017). Eabametoong First Nation traditionally process moose and other game to use in clothing, crafts, and tanning. Eabametoong First Nation identified Kenogamisis Lake as an important fishing location (Stantec, 2017). Fish species caught by Eabametoong First Nation include Northern Pike, minnow, pickerel/walleye and whitefish (Stantec, 2017). Miminiska is a tourist camp that is accessible by air or travel on a boat on the Albany River. Every fall, hunters from Eabametoong will fly to Miminiska to hunt for moose and set nets for sturgeon (Eabametoong First Nation, 2017).



Eabametoong First Nation is continuing to use the land and resources in keeping with treaty rights and those recognized and affirmed under the constitution. Traditional practices are deeply rooted in the community's connection to the land and water. The land holds cultural and practical significance for the Eabametoong First Nation. Preserving the land enables community members to continue their traditional practices like fishing and hunting, which are vital for their way of life and culture. Protecting these lands from development is crucial for maintaining their connection to the environment and sustaining their cultural traditions (Shantz, 2018).

### ***Travel and Access***

Eabametoong First Nation members have outlined that there is a traditional route to Marten Falls First Nation from Eabametoong First Nation along the Wabasse River, to the north of the Albany River, which some families, including the Whiteheads, from Eabametoong and Marten Falls use (AtkinsRéalès Inc, 2023a). The route connects these communities. The Albany River continues to be used for travel and to carry on the community's traditional customs and harvesting by hunting, fishing, and trapping (Teach for Canada, 2017a).

### **Cultural Continuity**

#### ***Sites and Area Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Eabametoong First Nation, previously known as Fort Hope First Nation, is located on the shores of Eabamet Lake along the Albany River System. The Albany River acts as an east-west highway that allows Eabametoong First Nation members to travel and carry on their traditional customs and harvesting by hunting, fishing and trapping and gathering (Teach for Canada, 2017a). The Eabamet Narrows – between Eabamet Lake and the Albany River – is a culturally important place because Eabametoong First Nation's name is derived from where the reversing naturally occurs during the Spring river break up. Eabamet Lake has been occupied by Eabametoong First Nation People for generations, predating colonial contact and the fur trade. The lake is also an important cultural and historical site to the Eabametoong First Nation (The Firelight Group, 2017a).

#### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Oral traditions and storytelling are vital for preserving history, culture, and teachings. Elders play a crucial role in sharing these stories with the younger generation (Eabametoong First Nation, 2004). Traditional crafts such as beadwork, birchbark canoes, and moccasin making are still practiced and passed down through generations (Eabametoong First Nation, 2004). Sioux Lookout First Nations Healthy Authority serves Eabametoong First Nation, providing traditional teachings and activities and wellness journeys through ceremonies.

The community practices various ceremonies that honour their ancestors and the natural world. These include seasonal celebrations and rituals that mark important life events (Eabametoong First Nation, 2004). Individuals participate in prayers, smudging, and sweat lodges to deepen their Indigenous spirituality and foster their well-being. Workshops and programs put on by Health and Social Services also incorporate these practices, as well as the teachings of the Medicine Wheel, to help facilitate healing for those who are interested (Kirton, 2020). The community has a mix of Christian and traditional spiritual practices. There are several churches, but many also follow traditional spiritual beliefs and practices (Eabametoong First Nation, 2004). Prior to baptisms, children received their name from an Elder at a special naming ceremony. Names were kept as private and not used for everyday purposes. Nicknames were utilized for other groups and outsiders (Atlin, 2019). For Eabametoong First Nation, considering the



wisdom and experience of Elders, and the needs and understandings of youth is crucial to decision-making (Atlin, 2019).

The Family Well-being Program is a Nishnawbe Aski Nation initiative that aims to support each Indigenous community in designing and delivering their own comprehensive and culturally appropriate services and programs to promote community health and family well-being.

Community recreational facilities include an arena, community hall, Pow-wow grounds, recreational trails and swimming spots where cultural traditions are practiced.

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

The Ojibwe language (spoken and written) is the working language used by the older generation while English (spoken and written) is predominant as the working language with the younger generation (Matawa First Nations Management, 2014). Children are taught in Ojibwe and English at John C. Yesno Education Centre as part of language revitalization. The school was burnt down in January 2024, but a temporary one was opened in November 2024 (Stimpson, 2024). The Ojibwe language is an important part of their cultural heritage. The language of the Eabametoong people is part of the Algonquian group and the Ojibway subculture. Many dialects exist and Eabametoong has its own dialect. Ojibway ancestry is a verbal society (Teach for Canada, 2024).

As part of the Matawa Education Department, Eabametoong First Nation is included in the Matawa Waka Tere language program. See **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Use and Preservation of Indigenous Language' for further details.

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Eabametoong First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Eabametoong First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Eabametoong First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

Eabametoong First Nation is one of 10 northern First Nations who have launched a lawsuit against the Ontario and federal government in April 2023 (McIntosh, 2023). The other communities included in the lawsuit are Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope 64), Apitipi Anicinapek Nation, Aroland First Nation, Constance Lake First Nation, Fort Albany First Nation, Ginoogaming First Nation, Kashechewan First Nation, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation and Neskantaga First Nation. These communities have requested that the Canadian government be barred from making any decisions about how land could be used without Indigenous consent. The lawsuit centres on Treaty No. 9 and the contrast between the verbal and written promises of Treaty No. 9 as recorded (McIntosh, 2023). The Nations are arguing that they did not cede or surrender their territories, and that Treaty No. 9 did not give the Ontario government the right to allow resource extraction (McIntosh, 2023).

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.



### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-governance)***

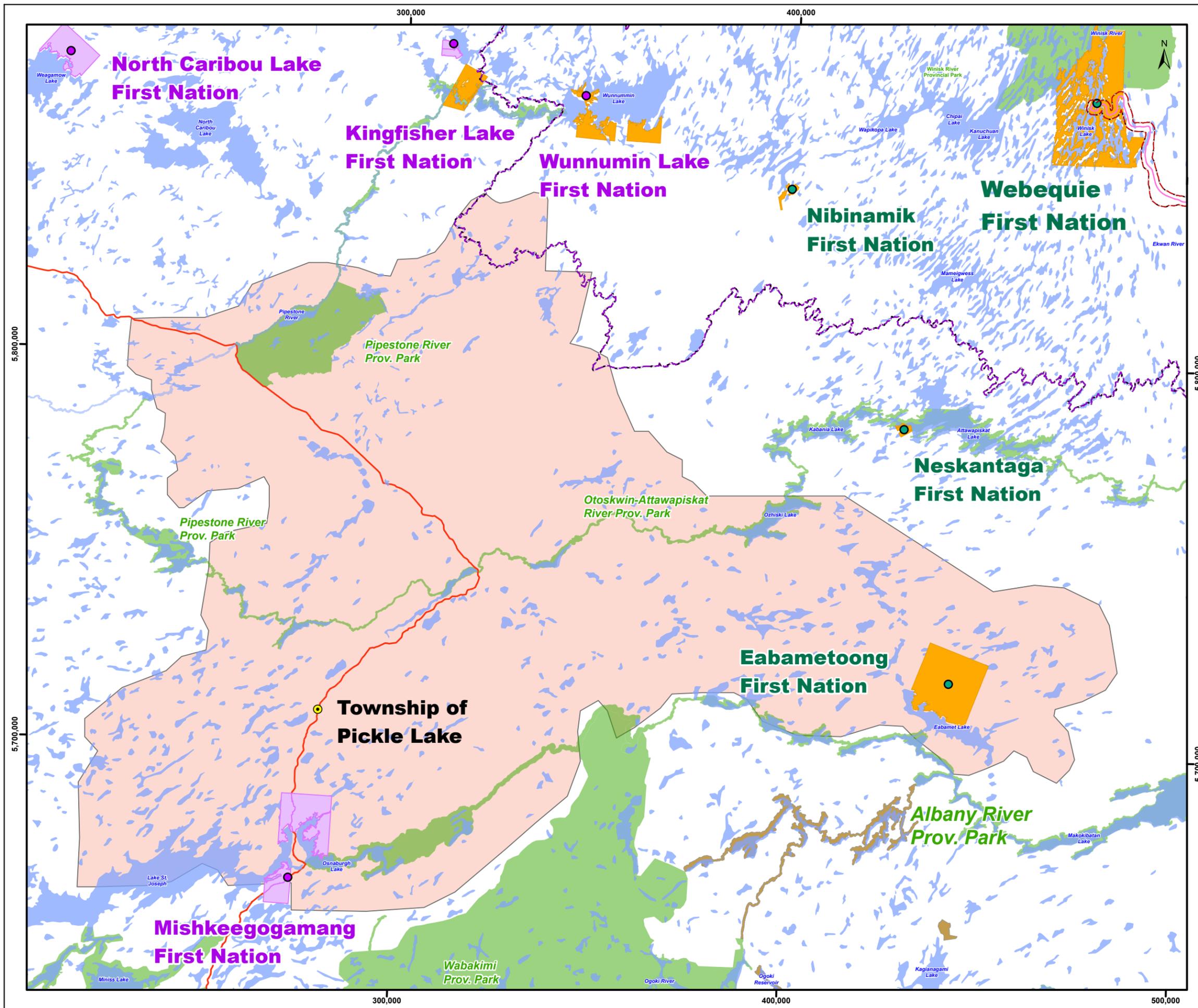
The community is formally affiliated with the following Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Matawa First Nations Management. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

The community is governed by an elected Chief and five councillors, who serve for two-year terms.

Eabametoong First Nation formed an alliance with Neskantaga First Nation in 2018, to assert their principles, values and knowledge over the management and stewardship of their lands. The communities felt that their voices were being ignored or not invited into the discussions with the province on road projects (including the WSR) that may be constructed through their homelands (Mining Watch, 2018). Opening up their territory to mining in the Ring of Fire will change their way of life, increase risks to the fish and wildlife they depend upon, and pollute the lakes and rivers (Mining Watch, 2018). The communities have not said 'no' to these projects and seek to safeguard their future through "positive community and regional development... that anything that happens in our region is a positive contribution to community life. We are declaring our role as informed decision-makers must be recognized in the planning, assessment, and final decisions for any projects in our area" (Neskantaga and Eabametoong First Nations, 2018). Using "bare-bones" environmental processes and not "an enhanced environmental assessment process on a regional basis [for] a 'joint decision-making processes' [that] involve[s] all of the Nations in the region" undermines their visions for a healthy and prosperous region, and their rights and responsibilities as stewards of the land.

In 2016, the Fort Hope First Nation (Eabametoong) participated in the identification of earth science, life science, and recreational values of the Mojikit Lake Conservation Reserve Management Statement. This conservation reserve is adjacent to the Wabikimi Provincial Park and covers an area of 62,000 ha. Three existing water control structures and eight outpost camps are covered under the Land Use Permit (LUP). Management guidelines include no new resources roads, commercial forestry, mining, or hydroelectric power; and will continue to permit sport hunting and fishing, camping, all terrain vehicle (ATV) and snowmobiling. New outpost or tourism facilities may be considered through the LUP process. Aboriginal interests within this conservation reserve span from the remote outpost camp to west Ogoki Reservoir outpost camp, its ownership and operations, as well as hunting and trapping. "This Statement of Conservation Interest in no way affects any existing or future aboriginal or treaty rights" (MECP, 2016).





- Legend**
- Preferred Route
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
  - Local Study Area
  - Regional Study Area
  - Eabametoong (and Mishkeegogamang) First Nation Area Of Interest for Planning
  - First Nation Reserve – Community Engaged in the Project
  - First Nation Reserve
  - Waterbody
  - Provincial Park
  - Conservation Reserve
  - Federal National Park
  - All-Season Road
  - Rail
  - Cities/Towns

## Webequie Supply Road (WSR)

Eabametoong (and Mishkeegogamang)  
First Nation Area of Interest for Planning

|                |                       |                 |           |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Figure Number: | 19 - 5                | REV             | PA        |
| Client:        | Webequie First Nation | Project Number: | 661910    |
|                |                       | Date:           | 1/22/2026 |
| DSC            |                       | DRN             | CHK       |
|                | LZ                    | VS              | APP       |

**NOTES**

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 Ontario MNR Lambert.
2. Cadastral boundaries are for informational purposes only and should not be considered suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.
3. Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information; and, Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date : 2021-02-04

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### 19.2.2.2.3 Kasabonika Lake First Nation

Information regarding Kasabonika Lake First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Kasabonika Lake First Nation. The following section and impacts assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

#### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Kasabonika Lake First Nation is a fly-in Anishiniimowin (Oji-Cree) Nation in Treaty No. 9 territory located in Northern Ontario. Kasabonika Lake First Nation is located 570 km north of Thunder Bay and 448 km northeast of Sioux Lookout. The community is situated on the southwestern shores of Kasabonika Lake within the Winisk River watershed.

Kasabonika Lake First Nation consists of more than 26,000 acres of land (Kehoe, 2014). Kasabonika Lake First Nation homeland is centred on the lakes of Kasabonika and Shibogama with heavy utilization of the lakes, and an overall east-west orientation and important connection with Big Trout Lake to the west. The Kasabonika Lake First Nation utilizes the land for hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering and travelling between communities (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Kasabonika Lake First Nation has asserted that they share traditional territory with Webequie First Nation and actively use these shared lands for hunting and fishing (ASI, 2021). The Webequie First Nation in-progress/early version Draft CBLUP denotes an area where there are shared use and interest with the Kasabonika Lake First Nation traditional territory (Webequie First Nation, 2019a).

#### ***Hunting, Fishing and Trapping***

Areas utilized for fishing include Kasabonika Lake, Shibongama Lake and Ashweig River, before it enters into Lake Kasabonika, north of Shibongama Lake and northwest of Croal Lake and Fawn River (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Kasabonika Lake First Nation members tend to focus on lakes and rivers to the south and west of Kasabonika (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Moose hunting occurs near the Asheweig River, southeast of the community (Golder Associates, 2018). Historically, Kasabonika Lake First Nation members trap in the area surrounding the lakes of Kasabonika and Shibogama (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). There is a preference for hunting to the north of the community, but hunting did not occur in the Bug River-Mishawamakan Rier area (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Kasabonika Lake First Nation harvest the following species: moose, sable, Caribou, beaver, lynx, marten, rabbit, grouse, ptarmigan, walleye, labrador tea, blueberries and cedar (Golder Associates, 2018).

As the Kasabonika Lake First Nation was an established community site even before the signing of the treaty, there was no need for families to settle in Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug so there are almost no historical records of people from Kasabonika Lake First Nation utilizing the territories further to the north (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

#### ***Travel and Access***

Kasabonika Lake's summer travel route focused on the heavy utilization of the route from the eastern end of Shibogama Lake to Post Island in Big Trout Lake (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). The route is not direct along the river, but it is important for Kasabonika Lake First Nation to maintain a connection to this route. Another summer travel route is along the Ashweig River from Shibongama Lake (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Winter travel routes focus on routes leading to the north, south and east of



Kasabonika-Shibogama Lakes. Ashweig-Winisk Rivers are important to the Kasabonika Lake residents (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

## **Cultural Continuity**

### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Kasabonika Lake First Nations have identified that Kasabonika Lake's Old Settlement has some existing structures which have cultural value, including a cemetery (Chitty, 2016). Kasabonika Lake First Nation members have noted that most burial grounds are unmarked and are located along the shores of waterways (Golder Associates, 2018).

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Kasabonika Lake First Nation continues to push for cultural reclamation, the community implements programs to foster intergenerational exchanges in order to combat cultural erosion (Kehoe, 2014). This involves engaging the younger generation and solidifying connections between Kasabonika Lake members, the land and culturally significant activities, such as promoting the importance of the teepee (Kehoe, 2014). When feasts are held within the community, the Elder women are responsible for the processing and preparation of the traditional food items. Traditional food items (depending on the season, these items may vary from fish, beaver, moose, duck, goose, etc.) are brought to the community by hunters (Kehoe, 2014). Kasabonika Lake First Nation members continue to partake in culturally significant practices around traditional land-based foods. Community members utilize the entire fish, often calling it "fish gut salad." When cleaning and preparing Suckerfish or Whitefish, the innards (such as air sacs, fish roe, intestines, etc.) are set aside and fried in oil (Kehoe, 2014).

Sioux Lookout First Nations Healthy Authority (2025) serves Kasabonika Lake First Nation, providing traditional teachings, activities and wellness journeys through ceremonies.

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

The traditional language of Oji-Cree is used by many of the Elders living in Kasabonika Lake First Nation (Keewaytinook Okimakanak, 2014). Anishininimowin or Oji-Cree (sometimes called Severn Ojibway) is closely related to the Ojibway language, but has a different literary tradition based in Cree. The English language, both spoken and written, is the working language for most of Kasabonika Lake First Nation younger community members (Keewaytinook Okimakanak, 2014).

Shibogama Education Authority provides support and assistance in developing and delivering the education program and system in the community with a focus on enhancing and furthering traditional language acquisition for the community (Shibogama First Nations Council, 2025).

## **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Kasabonika Lake First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Kasabonika Lake First Nation's Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are of importance to Kasabonika Lake First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.



**Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions**

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

**Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-governance)**

Kasabonika Lake First Nation is a member of Shibogama First Nations Council and Nishnawbe Aski Nation (Shibogama First Nations Council, 2025; Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020a). Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

The community elects a Chief, Deputy Chief, and six councillors for two-year terms under a custom electoral system.

**19.2.2.2.4 Marten Falls First Nation**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] An AIP was identified in the CBLUP Terms of Reference for Marten Falls First Nation and shows the approximate size of their AIP (**Figure 19.6**).

[REDACTED]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

**Traditional Land and Resource Use**

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

**Hunting**

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

**Plant Gathering**

[Redacted text block]

**Fishing**

[Redacted text block]

*Trapping*

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

*Drinking Water*

[Redacted text block]

**Habitation**

[Redacted text block]

**Cultural Continuity**

[Redacted text block]

**Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes**

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

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[Redacted text block]

**Cultural Traditions and Practices**

[Redacted text block]



[Redacted text block]

***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

**Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

[Redacted text block]

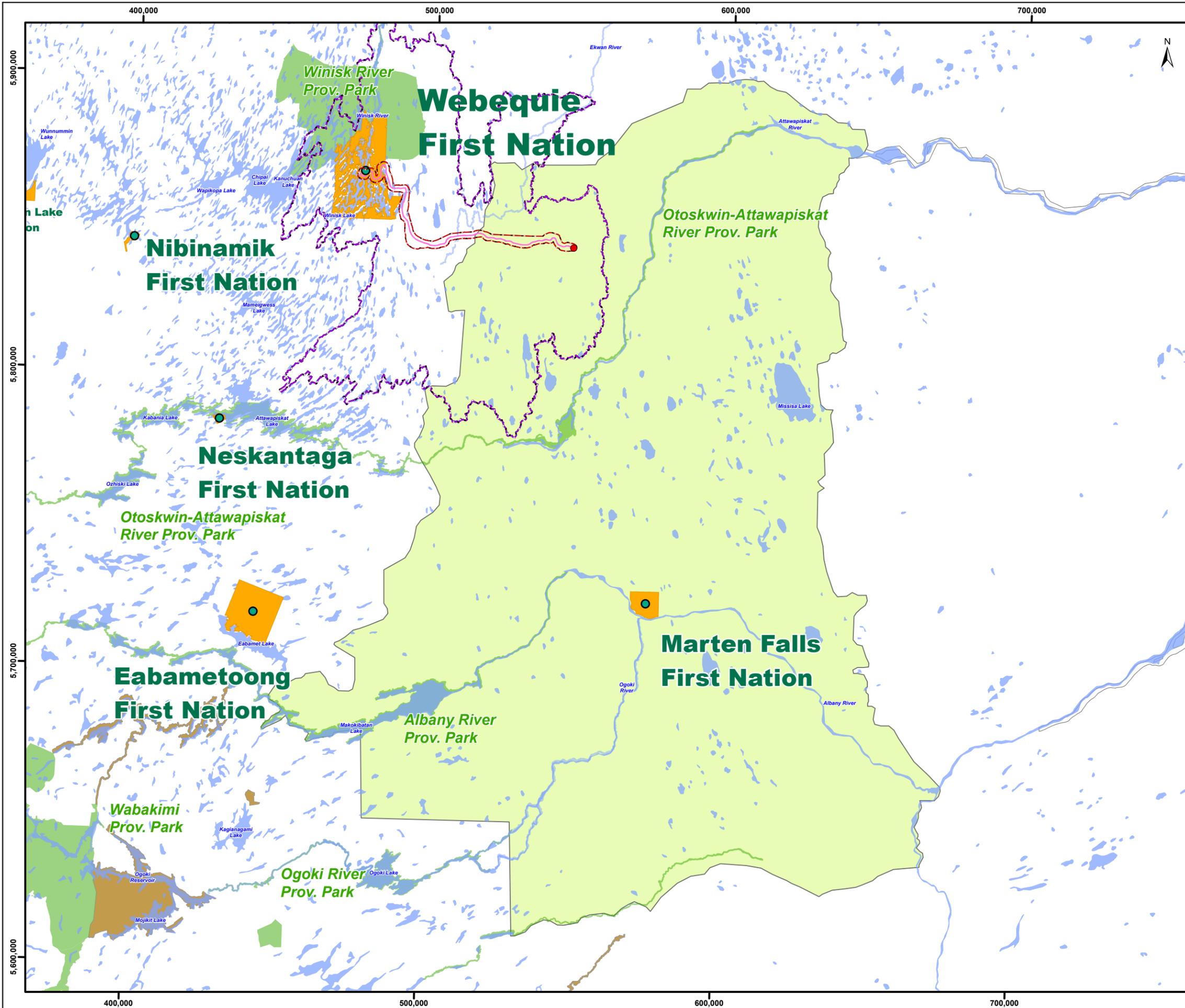
***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-governance)***

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]



- Legend**
- Preferred Route
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
  - Local Study Area
  - Regional Study Area
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  - First Nation Reserve – Community Engaged in the Project
  - First Nation Reserve
  - Waterbody
  - Provincial Park
  - Conservation Reserve
  - Federal National Park
  - All-Season Road
  - Rail
  - Cities/Towns

**Webequie Supply Road (WSR)**

Marten Falls  
Area of Interest for Planning

|                |                       |                 |           |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Figure Number: | 19 - 6                | REV             | PA        |
| Client:        | Webequie First Nation | Project Number: | 661910    |
|                |                       | Date:           | 1/21/2026 |

|     |  |  |  |     |     |     |
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| DSC |  |  |  | DRN | CHK | APP |
|     |  |  |  | LZ  | VS  | VS  |

**NOTES**

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#### **19.2.2.2.5 Neskantaga First Nation**

Information regarding Neskantaga First Nation’s cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Neskantaga First Nation. The following section and impact assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

#### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Neskantaga First Nation is an Anishiniimowin (Oji-Cree) Nation in Treaty No. 9 territory located in Northwestern Ontario, approximately 435 km north of Thunder Bay. The community is situated on the north shore of Attawapiskat Lake. It is one of the closest Indigenous communities to Webequie First Nation, which is located less than 100 km to the north.

Neskantaga First Nation is located at the headwaters of the Attawapiskat River, a waterway integral to fishing, travel, and cultural traditions (ASI, 2024). The Attawapiskat and Otokwin rivers surrounding the Neskantaga First Nation were once part of a major trade route. Many Neskantaga community members participate in traditional harvesting of wildlife and fish, plants, bark, trees and berries in the surrounding areas (Neskantaga First Nation, 2023).

According to the Webequie First Nation in-progress/early version Draft CBLUP, Neskantaga First Nation and Webequie First Nation share a common history of movement and Webequie First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation and Neskantaga First Nation have overlapping land use. Neskantaga First Nation has indicated direct impacts to their traditional territories by the WSR project (location unknown) (ASI, 2021). Neskantaga First Nation members practice a traditional way of life, which includes hunting, trapping, fishing, and plant gathering.

#### ***Hunting and Fishing***

Neskantaga First Nation hunt moose and undertake an annual fall hunt (Hale, 2024). Sturgeon is also a critical part of Neskantaga First Nation and is an “important part of who we are as a nation” (Turner, 2022).

#### ***Plant Gathering***

Many members participate in traditional harvesting of plants, bark, trees, berries and water from the cool, fresh springs located throughout the surrounding areas (Neskantaga First Nation, 2023).

#### ***Drinking Water***

Neskantaga First Nation has been under a boil-water advisory since February 1, 1995 (ISC, 2024). In 2021, Neskantaga First Nation shared videos of the importance of clean drinking water in their community. The effects of the 26-year boil-water advisory has affected the quality of life of Neskantaga’s community members and has resulted in medical, health and safety issues.

“Still fighting for our water...we want to be recognized as human beings, and we need clean water too, at our homes. I don’t know why it’s so hard for the government not to recognize that. It’s heartbreaking to see everybody going through it in my community. Some people don’t want to talk about it, because they gave up hope. Some people say there’s no hope. It’s like we’re being punished, what are we being punished for? I don’t know. Maybe the government should tell us why they don’t support us. Why aren’t we recognized as Canadian citizens” (Know Indigenous History, 2021).

## **Traplines**

Neskantaga First Nation has outlined that the project directly impacts Neskantaga traplines and falls within Neskantaga's Area of Interest; the registered trapline holders and location of these traplines are currently unknown (ToR Review, Internal Document Review).

## **Cultural Continuity**

### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

The Attawapiskat River has long been essential for various purposes, including hunting, fishing, trapping and serving as a primary means of travel during the warmer months.

Many locations along the river hold deep cultural significance for the Neskantaga First Nation. One area identified by Canada Chrome Corporation as a potential bridge crossing (not as part of WSR), is regarded as a crucial gathering place and the site of an old village. According to the Neskantaga people, this location has high archaeological potential (Bell, 2015).

Neskantaga First Nation Elders have identified an area south of Mameigwess Lake on a ridge between two unnamed water bodies, as a winter and a summer travel route that extends the length of these two unnamed water bodies (White Spruce, 2008). Copper Point, located on the west side of Rowlandson Lake, on a large peninsula, was historically used for camps and historical mining activity (White Spruce, 2008).

A historically occupied hamlet site, Shay-kaah-chii-wii-nange, located along the Attawapiskat River about halfway between Pym Island and the historic Beteau Lake settlement has been identified to be in close proximity to the Ring of Fire mineral development area (Hamilton, 2015).

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Traditional healing and ceremonies are practiced both actively and passively through a deep connection to and stewardship of the land (Neskantaga First Nation, 2023). Water symbolizes an eternal connection to the Creator and is revered as a sacred gift (Leonard et al., 2023). As such, it must be respected, conserved, and safeguarded for future generations, just as it has been by those who came before. This sentiment is powerfully echoed in community member Maggie Sakanee's words: "Water is life" underscoring its significance as more than just a natural resource (Lansdowne House, 2020).

The Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (2025) serves the Neskantaga First Nation by offering traditional teachings and activities, as part of its commitment to culturally grounded health services.

Birch bark has historically been used for crafting canoes, baskets, and medicinal purposes. Ash, Tamarack, and White Birch have traditionally been employed in snowshoe-making, ensuring mobility during the winter months (Macfie, 1991).

The community is rich with industrious individuals creating art, crafts, and other goods. Oral traditions remain strong, with many continuing to share legends and stories—such as the creation story—that unify members through a shared history and purpose (Neskantaga First Nation, 2023).



### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

The traditional language spoken in Neskantaga is Oji-Cree, a dialect of Anishinaabe with influences from the Cree language and is considered a distinct language and culture. Efforts are being made to support Indigenous youth in maintaining their language and cultural connections. Programs that incorporate traditional practices, oral histories, and cultural education are crucial in helping to preserve the Oji-Cree language and the cultural heritage of Neskantaga First Nation (Neskantaga First Nation, 2023).

As part of the Matawa Education Department, Neskantaga First Nation is included in the Matawa Waka Tere language program. See **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Use and Preservation of Indigenous Language' for further details.

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Neskantaga First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Neskantaga First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that is important to Neskantaga First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities and Governance (Self-governance)***

Neskantaga First Nation elects its officials under the Custom Electoral System is a member of the Matawa First Nations Management (Tribal Council) and Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b). Neskantaga First Nation identified valued components during the terms of reference review for WSR including: way of life, capacity to govern and steward their territory; water, traditional knowledge and culture, local capacity (i.e., human resources); health and emergency services; and community health and well-being (ToR Review, Internal Document Review).

In 2018, Neskantaga First Nation formed a political alliance with Eabametoong First Nation to assert their principles, values and knowledge over the management and stewardship of their lands. See **Section 19.2.2.2.2** for further details.

Neskantaga First Nation is working to start a sturgeon stewardship program to protect the fish from proposed development (Turner, 2022).

#### **19.2.2.2.6 Nibinamik First Nation**

Information regarding Nibinamik First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Nibinamik First Nation. The following section and impacts assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.



## **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver Settlement) is an Anishiniimowin (Oji-Cree) Nation in Treaty No. 9 territory in Northwestern Ontario. Nibinamik First Nation is located 480 km north of Thunder Bay. It is located on the Summer Beaver settlement along the eastern shores of Nibinamik Lake on the Winisk River system.

Nibinamik First Nation has outlined how important the land is to their members and how it is tied to their culture and tradition and as a place of healing. Community members hunt, fish, trap and gather traditional medicines on the land.

Canoes made out of birch tree bark was one of the main forms of transportation. Traditional food like sap from trees, carrots along the shore and edible grass were harvested. During the mid-1900s, there were 10 trap lines in the Nibinamik area (Nibinamik First Nation, 2014).

The Webequie First Nation in-progress/early version Draft CBLUP identifies shared areas with the Nibinamik First Nation that are used for traditional purposes (Webequie First Nation, 2019a).

### ***Hunting and Fishing***

The Nibinamik First Nation economy was traditionally based on hunting and trapping. Beaver, Caribou, musquash, lynx, rabbit and fish were wildlife that they relied on for food, clothing and trading (Nibinamik First Nation, 2014).

A 2014 study showed that half of the community members in Nibinamik still hunt, trap and fish to provide food for their families, as food costs are significant in the area and food gathered on the land supplements what is bought in stores. Rabbit, moose, geese, partridge, beaver and fish are among their traditional foods (Nibinamik First Nation, 2014). These activities remain central to the community's way of life, providing food and materials for clothing and crafts; these activities are not only vital for sustenance but also for maintaining a balanced ecosystem (Nibinamik First Nation, 2024). Traditional traplines are important as ancestors were buried when families travelled and lived on the land during different seasons (Nibinamik First Nation, 2014).

### ***Drinking Water***

Nibinamik First Nation has been under several long-term drinking water advisories, including September 15, 2003 – November 10, 2004, March 23, 2007 – November 04, 2008, February 26, 2009 – December 5, 2011, February 5, 2013 – June 20, 2021 (First Nations Drinking Water Settlement, 2025).

## **Cultural Continuity**

### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Before Treaty No. 9, the Nibinamik people lived in four separate villages – Mameigwess Lake, Eyes Lake, Wigwashnis Lake and Old Summer Beaver (now Nibinamik). People no longer live in these villages, but they still conduct traditional ceremonies within the old village sites (Nibinamik First Nation, 2014).

Nibinamik First Nation considers the land as somewhere to heal and where they feel at home. The land is tied to their culture and traditions (Nibinamik First Nation, 2014).



## ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Hunting, fishing, and trapping are not only means of sustenance but also integral to Nibinamik First Nation's cultural practices. These activities are passed down through generations, maintaining a deep connection to the land and traditional ways of life (Native Ministries International, 2022). The community participates in conservation planning and ecological stewardship initiatives. These programs aim to build skills and opportunities for sustainable land management (Begaye, 2017). By integrating traditional knowledge with modern conservation techniques, Nibinamik First Nation maintains the health and productivity of their traditional territory for future generations.

An annual youth wilderness retreat led by local Elders is usually held in July to teach youth about traditional practices. The retreat is held at the traditional O-ma-day-na-moh-win-nik (Breathing Grounds) site, which is a 25-minute boat ride from the community (Nibinamik First Nation, 2014).

Nibinamik First Nation community places a strong emphasis on educating the youth about their cultural heritage. This includes incorporating traditional knowledge and practices into the school curriculum and community programs. Moccasin making, wood carvings, and beadwork, continue to be important cultural expressions. These crafts are often taught to younger members of the community to keep the traditions alive (Native Ministries International, 2022). Youth engagement initiatives focus on fostering a sense of pride and identity among younger members, helping them carry forward the cultural legacy of Nibinamik First Nation.

A 2014 survey showed that 94% of community members who answered the survey outlined that teaching children about Ojibway culture was very important (Nibinamik First Nation, 2014). Many homes in Nibinamik are log cabins built using materials from the land, reflecting their resourcefulness and connection to their environment (Hutter, 2017). The community engages in traditional crafts such as moccasin making, wood carvings, and beadwork, which are both cultural expressions and sources of income and utilize natural resources sustainably, so that materials are harvested in a way that does not deplete the environment (Nibinamik First Nation, 2024).

Sioux Lookout First Nations Healthy Authority (2025) serves Nibinamik First Nation, providing traditional teachings and activities and wellness journeys through ceremonies, as part of its commitment to culturally grounded health services.

## ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Nibinamik First Nation speak Oji-Cree, also known as Severn Ojibwe (Summer Beaver, n.d.). The community actively works to preserve the Oji-Cree language, which is a vital part of their cultural identity. Language programs and initiatives are in place to teach younger generations, keeping the language remains vibrant. (Nibinamik First Nation, 2025; National Centre for Collaboration in Indigenous Education, 2018). An immersion program for junior kindergarten to Grade 2 students has been running for 13 years to promote the use and preservation of the Oji-Cree language.

As part of the Matawa Education Department, Nibinamik First Nation is included in the Matawa Waka Tere language program. See **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Use and Preservation of Indigenous Language' for further details.



## Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights

Nibinamik First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Nibinamik First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that is important to Nibinamik First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

Nibinamik First Nation's traditional laws, roles, responsibilities, and governance system are rooted in their cultural heritage and ancestral knowledge, reflecting a connection to their land and community. The Band Administration office offers a number of services to its members, such as employment programs, financial assistance, and a variety of healthcare programs, including extended health benefits (Nibinamik First Nation, 2024).

In 1979, Nibinamik First Nation prepared their land use plan which was updated in 1983 (McNeil, 2018). This land use plan outlines Nibinamik's traditional territory, includes strategies to address community concerns and plans for the future of the community (McNeil, 2018). No recent updates to the land use plan have been provided for the Project team's review.

The chief, deputy chief and Band Council members are elected for two years under a custom electoral system. Nibinamik First Nation is a member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Matawa First Nations Management. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

#### **19.2.2.2.7 Weenusk First Nation**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes

[REDACTED] An AIP was identified in the CBLUP Terms of Reference for Weenusk First Nations and shows the approximate size of their AIP (Figure 19.7).

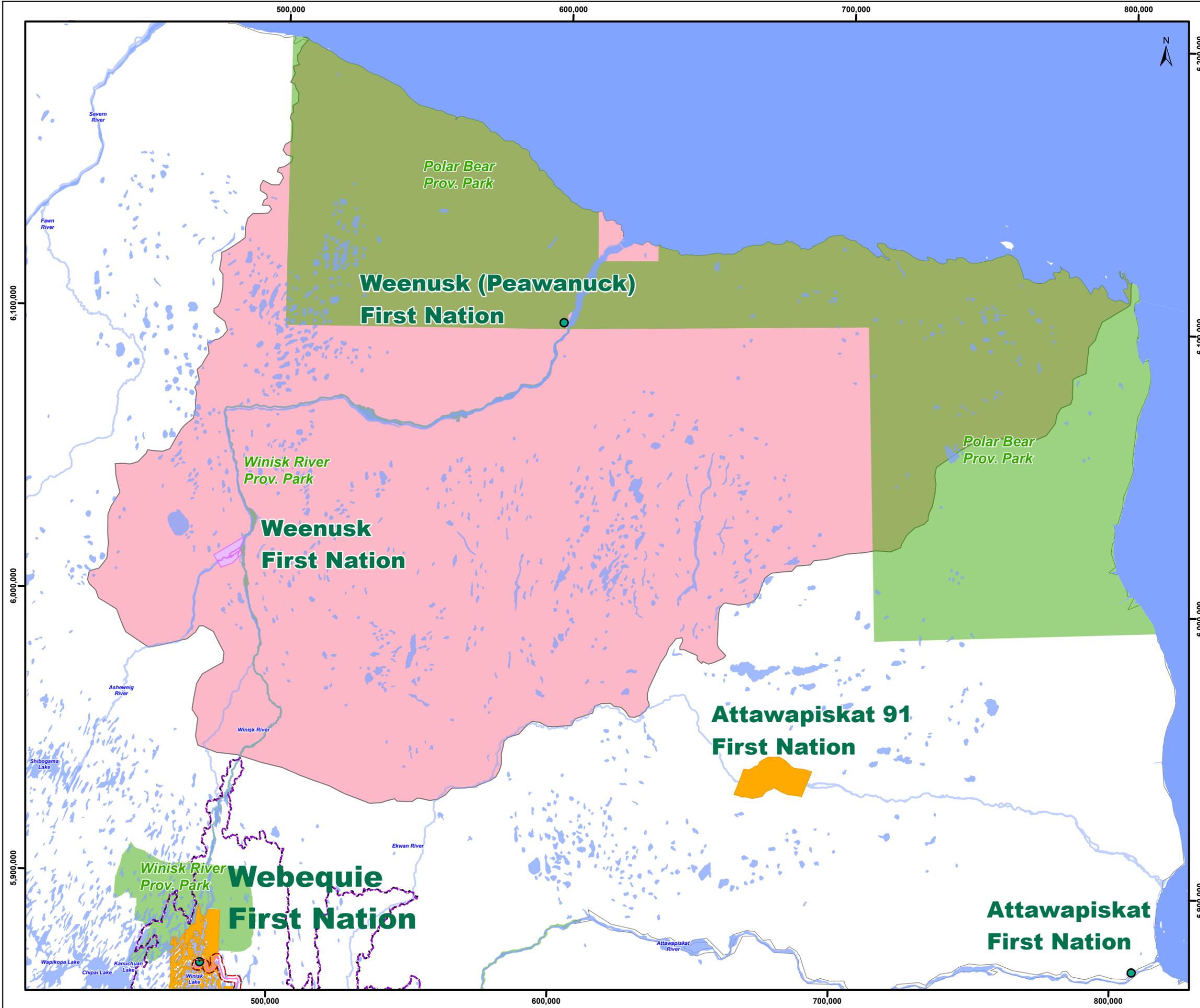
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]



- Legend**
- Preferred Route
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
  - Local Study Area
  - Regional Study Area
  - Weenusk First Nations Area of Interest for Planning
  - First Nation Reserve – Community Engaged in the Project
  - First Nation Reserve
  - Waterbody
  - Provincial Park
  - Conservation Reserve
  - Federal National Park
  - All-Season Road
  - +— Rail
  - Cities/Towns

## Webequie Supply Road (WSR)

Weenusk First Nation  
Area of Interest for Planning

|                |        |     |    |
|----------------|--------|-----|----|
| Figure Number: | 19 - 7 | REV | PA |
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|                       |                 |           |
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| Client:               | Project Number: | Date:     |
| Webequie First Nation | 661910          | 1/22/2026 |

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|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| DSC | DRN | CHK | APP |
|     | LZ  | VS  | VS  |

**NOTES**

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 Ontario MNR Lambert.
2. Cadastral boundaries are for informational purposes only and should not be considered suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.
3. Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information; and, Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date : 2021-02-04

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*Wildlife Harvesting*

[REDACTED]

*Seasonal Harvesting Cycle*

[REDACTED]





***Plant Gathering***

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

***Fishing***

[Redacted text block]

***Trapping***

[Redacted text block]

*Travel and Access*

[REDACTED]

*Water Resources*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*Cultural Continuity*

[REDACTED]

*Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*Cultural Traditions and Practices*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[Redacted text block]



WSR  
WEBÉOUIE  
SUPPLY ROAD



[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

[Redacted text block]

**Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are stated in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are stated in Section 15.2.

**Traditional Laws, Roles and Responsibilities and Governance (Self-Governance)**

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

Weenusk First Nation is one of the Omushkego (Mushkegowuk) communities participating in the Omushkego Wahkohtowin Conservation Plan, an Indigenous-led effort to care for and protect Omushkego lands and waters, prepared through the Mushkegowuk Council Lands and Resources Department (Mushkegowuk Council Lands and Resources Department 2024). This plan has a 10-year implementation period, which outlines steps to manage lands and resources and a framework to carry out the vision for Omushkego Wahkohtowin. There are four streams within the plan:

- Stream 1: Create protected and conservation areas to protect ecological integrity for the preservation of inherent, treaty, and harvesting rights, and spirituality, culture, and traditions;
- Stream 2: Establish Omushkego Wahkohtowin governance and management;
- Stream 3: Care for ecosystem health;
- Stream 4: Economic and cultural development, sustainable livelihoods, and community well-being.

Weenusk First Nation is a member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, which brings together Treaty 9 and Treaty 5 communities in northern Ontario. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, communities such as Weenusk work collectively on matters of governance, fiscal relations and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

### 19.2.2.3 Regional Study Area

#### 19.2.2.3.1 Aroland First Nation

Information regarding Aroland First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Aroland First Nation. The following section and impact assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited materials compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

#### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Aroland First Nation is located 260 km northeast of the City of Thunder Bay, 20 km west of Nakina, and 310 km south of Webequie First Nation in northern Ontario. It is situated near the southeastern shores of Wawong Lake along Highway 643, 75 km north of the Town of Geraldton within the Municipality of Greenstone. Aroland First Nation has access to the provincial highway system via an all-season road.

Aroland First Nation has a deep connection to the waters and lands in the traditional territory and a strong reliance on traditional land use activities, including fishing, hunting, trapping, and gathering (Aroland First Nation, 2022). Community members and groups continue to use their lands and resources for traditional purposes, maintaining a deep connection to their ancestral practices. Within Aroland First Nation's traditional territory, 1,426 locations for hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, travel routes, camp sites, cultural sites, habitation sites, and sites of traditional ecological knowledge have previously been mapped (Stantec, 2017). As a site-specific IK study was not received from Aroland First Nation for WSR, the extent of their traditional territory and specific mapped sites are unknown.

#### ***Hunting, Fishing and Trapping***

Hunting and Trapping activities are crucial for sustenance and cultural practices. Community members hunt and trap various species, following traditional methods passed down through generations. Fishing remains a vital activity, both for food and cultural significance. The community fishes in local lakes and rivers, including Goldfield Lake and Kenogamisis Lake, using techniques that have been refined over centuries (Aroland First Nation, 2022). The following fish species of importance were identified by Aroland First Nation: whitefish, walleye, sucker, sturgeon, trout, dace, and minnows (Stantec, 2017). An academic study in 2010 found that 73% of Aroland First Nation members rely on moose as a source of meat, but that fewer people are participating in traditional activities like moose hunting (McLaren, 2012).

#### ***Plant Gathering***

Aroland First Nation traditional territory is a highly productive source of blueberries (Stolz et. al, 2017). Aroland Youth Blueberries Initiative is a program for community youth to engage with land foraging and harvesting wild blueberries, which are sold as a fundraising activity. Berry picking is a way of life for Aroland First Nations and part of the traditional lifestyle (Stolz et. al, 2017).

Other wild plants and medicinal herbs are also gathered (Aroland First Nation, 2022).



## **Cultural Continuity**

### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Aroland First Nation's traditional territory encompasses areas of cultural and traditional significance, including the following: Pow-wow grounds located on the south shore of Wawong Lake, approximately 1 km west of the community; traditional burial grounds on the shores of Kawashkagam Lake; a historic portage route between Wawong Lake and Kawashkagama River; and a historical campsite located at the southern end of the portage (Northern Policy Institute, 2014).

Sites used for traditional activities include the following: Potato Island; Blueberry Hill; Moose River; Ozhiski Lake; Pym Island; Attawapiskat River; Albany River; Winisk River; McFauld's Lake; and Muketei River (LeBlanc, 2014).

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

The community continues to engage in traditional activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering. These practices are not only vital for their sustenance but also for maintaining a deep connection to their ancestral lands. Gathering wild plants, berries, and medicinal herbs is an important tradition. These resources are used for food, medicine, and ceremonial purposes (Aroland First Nation, 2022). Aroland First Nation is committed to conserving their traditional territory. This includes sustainable management of natural resources and protecting culturally significant sites, which is crucial to maintain the community's cultural practices so that future generations can continue to live in harmony with the land (Aroland First Nation, 2022).

Aroland First Nation is constructing an Elders Lodge to bring Elders closer to home, which will further support their role in cultural continuity by providing a space for them to share their knowledge and engage in cultural activities (Campbell, 2024). Many Elders move out of the community to access better healthcare services, which can disrupt their ability to pass on cultural knowledge and participate in community life. The new Elders Lodge aims to address this by providing healthcare services within the community. Despite these challenges, initiatives like the Elders Lodge and community programs aim to support Elders in their vital role of cultural preservation (Government of Canada, 2024; Campbell, 2024). Elders play a crucial role in maintaining cultural continuity within Aroland First Nation as they are the custodians of traditional knowledge, including stories, songs, and ceremonies. Their knowledge and wisdom are passed down to younger generations, preserving cultural practices and values. Elders often take on the role of educators, teaching the community's history, language, and traditional skills. This mentorship helps instill a sense of identity and pride in the younger members (Dei, 2022).

Sioux Lookout First Nations Healthy Authority (2025) serves Aroland First Nation, providing traditional teachings and activities, such as cultural safety, seasonal feasts, land-based activities, traditional medicines and teachings (Creation Story, 7 Grandfathers, Clans, Feather, Medicine Wheel, etc.) and supporting community members' wellness journeys through ceremonies, as part of its commitment to culturally grounded health services.

The land is integral to various cultural practices and ceremonies, such as sweat lodges and naming ceremonies, which are conducted in natural settings to maintain a connection with the environment (Aroland First Nation, 2022). Regular cultural events and ceremonies, such as pow-wows, are held to celebrate and reinforce their cultural identity. These gatherings provide opportunities for community members to come together, share stories, and pass on traditions (Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., 2018). Elders oversee spiritual practices and ceremonies, guiding these traditions to be carried out



correctly and with respect. This spiritual leadership helps maintain the community's connection to their ancestral beliefs (Heath, 2022).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Aroland First Nation offers Indigenous language courses for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 9 at Johnny Therriault School. High school students in grades 10-12 attend Geraldton Composite High School in the community of Geraldton, where community members can continue in the available Indigenous education program (Superior-Greenstone District School Board, 2024).

Efforts are made to teach the younger generation about their history, language, and cultural practices. This includes incorporating traditional knowledge into the education system and promoting the use of their native languages (Aroland First Nation, 2022).

As part of the Matawa Education Department, Aroland First Nation is included in the Matawa Waka Tere language program. See **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Use and Preservation of Indigenous Language' for further details.

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Aroland First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Aroland First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that is important to Aroland First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

Aroland First Nation is one of 10 northern First Nations which launched a lawsuit against the Ontario and federal governments in April 2023 (McIntosh, 2023). They have requested that the Canadian government be barred from making any decisions about how land is to be used without Indigenous consent. The lawsuit centres on Treaty No. 9 and the contrast between the verbal and written promises of Treaty No. 9 as recorded (McIntosh, 2023). The First Nations are arguing that they did not cede or surrender their territories, and that Treaty No. 9 does not give the Ontario government the right to allow resource extraction (McIntosh, 2023).

Aroland First Nation has expressed concern and dissatisfaction with the EAR/IS process for the Project. It emphasized the lack of adequate consideration given to the perception of connectivity of Webequie First Nation and the Project to the provincial highway system. . Aroland First Nation claims they have been excluded from the planning of these road projects, asserting their jurisdiction and the need for their valuable Indigenous Knowledge and insights to guide any road development activities in their territory (Aroland First Nation, 2020).

In January 2025, Aroland First Nation signed a "Shared Prosperity Agreement to drive economic growth and build and upgrade infrastructure in Northern Ontario. This agreement includes support for upgrades to Anaconda and Painter Lake Roads, which are important connections on the road to the Ring of Fire, as well as major new investments in infrastructure and energy transmission in the region. It also builds upon agreements that are in place with other First Nations partners along the entire proposed length of the roads to the Ring of Fire and helps set the stage for further potential partnerships" (Government of Ontario, 2025). The agreement includes "\$20 million for community infrastructure projects that support business development, boost community well-being and preparedness to participate in economic activities related to mineral development in the region".



In February 2025, Copper Lake Resources signed exploration agreements with Aroland First Nation for the Marshall Lake Project in Ontario, Canada. The Marshall Lake Project — prospective for volcanic massive sulphide copper, zinc, silver, and gold — comprises a 220 km<sup>2</sup> area located 120 km north of Geraldton, Ontario (Globe Newswire, 2025). The agreement contains measures to accommodate, compensate, prevent, mitigate, and address concerns, including impacts to Indigenous rights, cultural values, and the environment regarding planned activities.

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-governance)***

Aroland First Nation is part of the Matawa First Nations Management and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

Aroland First Nation holds interests in both stewardship of its traditional lands and in fostering the social and economic well-being and resilience of its members (Aroland First Nation, 2022).

Aroland First Nation has a Chief and seven Councillors and uses a custom electoral system. The next election is scheduled on November 26, 2025 (CIRNAC, 2023b).

#### **19.2.2.3.2 Constance Lake First Nation**

Information regarding Constance Lake First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Constance Lake First Nation. The following section and impact assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Constance Lake First Nation is located in the District of Cochrane, 220 km east of Geraldton, Ontario. Constance Lake First Nation is a progressive and rapidly growing community of 1,605 members of Cree and Ojibway ancestry with approximately 820 living on-reserve. The area of the reserve is 7,686 acres (3,110 hectares) of which approximately 18 acres are covered by water (Constance Lake First Nation and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, 2014).

Constance Lake First Nation identified a area of interest for planning in the ToR for Constance Lake First Nation CBLUP, which provides an indication of its traditional territory (**Figure 19.9**).

The abundance of creeks, rivers, and lakes, and large stands of poplar, birch, white and black spruce, jack pine, cedar, and tamarack are part of a historical connection to the land and play a vital role in the daily lives of community members (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, 2021a).



### ***Hunting, Fishing and Trapping***

Wildlife hunted by Constance Lake First Nation include moose, deer and geese (Stantec, 2017). The species fished by Constance Lake First Nation include northern pike, trout, whitefish, pickerel, perch (Stantec, 2017). Wildlife trapped by Constance Lake First Nation includes rabbit, beaver, muskrat, mink, marten and lynx (Stantec, 2017).

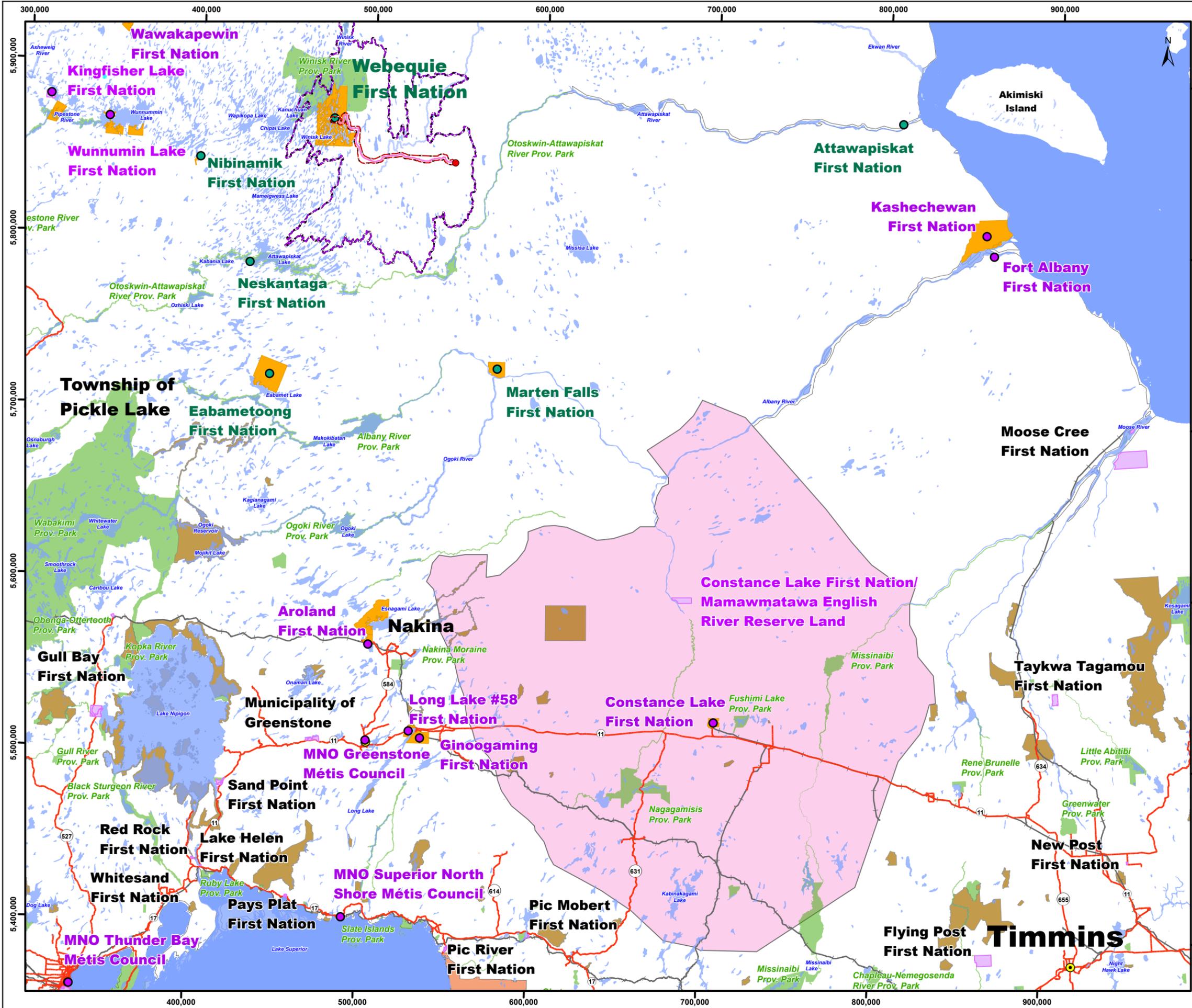
Community members hunt, trap, and fish along the Kenogami, Kabinakagami, Nagagami, Pagwachuan, Wakashi, Awagakama, Squirrel, Fox, Pitukupi, Little Ash, Big Ash, Little Current, Drowning, Ridge, Albany and Shekak river systems and Pledger, Pitukupi, Constance, Trilsbeck, Serinack, Martison, Ridge, Melanson, Fushimi, Fox, Bannerman, Luhta (Medicine Creek) lake systems since time immemorial (Constance Lake First Nation, 2024). The rivers were utilized for developing the community's economy. Barge and trade were known to the groups and families along these long stretches of water.

Constance Lake First Nation members trap on either side of Nagagami River, and south of Hornepayne (Collins, 2016).

### ***Travel and Access***

Mammamattawa (English River) is where the Kenogami River joins with the Kabinakagami and Nagagami Rivers. Throughout the area there is an abundance of birch, poplar, jack pine, white and black spruce, tamarack and cedar, which play a vital role in community members' connection to traditional land (Constance Lake First Nation and Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, 2014).





- Legend**
- Preferred Route
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
  - Local Study Area
  - Regional Study Area
  - Constance Lake First Nation Area of Interest for Planning (AIP)
  - First Nation Reserve – Community Engaged in the Project
  - First Nation Reserve
  - Waterbody
  - Provincial Park
  - Conservation Reserve
  - Federal National Park
  - All-Season Road
  - Rail
  - Cities/Towns

## Webequie Supply Road (WSR)

Constance Lake First Nation  
Area of Interest for Planning

|                |      |     |    |
|----------------|------|-----|----|
| Figure Number: | 19.9 | REV | PA |
|----------------|------|-----|----|

|         |                       |                 |        |       |           |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------|-------|-----------|
| Client: | Webequie First Nation | Project Number: | 661910 | Date: | 1/21/2026 |
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|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| DSC | DRN | CHK | APP |
|     | LZ  | VS  | VS  |



**NOTES**

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 Ontario MNR Lambert.
2. Cadastral boundaries are for informational purposes only and should not be considered suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.
3. Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information; and, Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date : 2021-02-04

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## **Cultural Continuity**

### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Constance Lake First Nation has identified sensitive areas through Indigenous Traditional Knowledge research. These areas include burial sites, historical camps and hunting sites, settlement locations, and culturally modified trees. These features testify to longstanding occupation by First Nations people, which is further confirmed through archaeological records (Constance Lake First Nation, 2024). The specific site locations have not been identified for the Project team.

Kenogami watershed provides wild harvested food among other traditional land uses, such as fishing, trapping, and hunting (Constance Lake First Nation, 2024). Historical use of the lake includes harvesting activities for sustenance.

Mamawmatawa was identified as a culturally significant location during a meeting with Constance Lake First Nation representatives (AtkinsRéalıs Inc., 2023b).

Constance Lake has been a culturally significant area for fishing and harvesting; however, the community stated that they no longer had a connection with the lake due to a perception of leachate from Calstock Waste Disposal Site, and from forestry practices (Kelly, 2023).

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

The community is dedicated to revitalizing their culture, language, and traditions. "Working together as one, community members are revitalizing our culture, our language and our traditions" (Constance Lake First Nation, n.d.). Constance Lake First Nation is deeply rooted in the traditional teachings and wisdom of their ancestors. These teachings are integral to their cultural identity and community practices. Families continue to maintain yearly goose hunts, beaver trapping, deer and moose hunting, fishing for pike and pickerel, and making tea and medicines from the trees (Daigle, 2010).

Constance Lake First Nation hold various traditional ceremonies that are integral to their cultural heritage and community life. Some of these are Pow-wows, smudging ceremonies, naming ceremonies and seasonal ceremonies that mark important times of the year, such as the changing of seasons, harvest time, and solstices. These ceremonies often include feasts, dances, and prayers. "Our seasonal ceremonies help us stay connected to the natural cycles and honour the gifts of the land" (Constance Lake First Nation, n.d.).

Constance Lake First Nation noted in discussion at the Three Road Projects Gathering hosted by Webequie First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation event in November 2023 in Thunder Bay that there is a harvest every spring. During this time, the community maintains burial sites in the area as well as completes data collection on the fish. A small bird hunt is also held every spring (AtkinsRéalıs, 2023).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Constance Lake First Nation's original language is Cree, and their language has changed due to migrating south. Throughout the 1920s-1930s, families moved south from English River (Mammamatawa) to Pagwa River, which resulted in Objibway and Oji-cree dialects being mixed with Cree. Constance First Lake First Nation has formed a grassroots group, Reclaiming Our Language Constance Lake First Nation, dedicated to revitalizing their language. Their goals are to establish a Constance Lake First Nation Language and Culture Authority to take responsibility for the future of their language through revitalization.



Efforts are continuously made to revitalize and preserve the culture, language, and traditions of the Constance Lake First Nation. This includes initiatives like Cree language classes and traditional teachings combined with Bible studies (Anglican Diocese of Moosonee, 2023). A five-year plan has been created, refer to **Figure 19.10** that outlines their objectives through community engagement and events, and the development of language classes and resources (Constance Lake First Nation, 2024).

**Figure 19.10: Constance Lake Reclaiming Our Language Plan**

Source: Constance Lake First Nation, 2024

**Reclaiming Our Language Constance Lake First Nation Plan | Draft #2 | February 23, 2019**

The following activities are designed for all ages as follows: (1) fluent speakers (2) silent speakers (3) members who understand but can't speak (4) members who can't understand and can't speak. It needs to be incorporated into the larger Community Language Plan.

| Year 1<br>(2020-2021)   | Year 2<br>(2021-2022)   | Year 3<br>(2022-2023)   | Year 4<br>(2023-2024)   | Year 5<br>(2024-2025)   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research into 'CLFN Language and Culture Authority' incorporation   | Continue with incorporation and begin with infrastructure planning  | Continue Language Immersion House & Cultural Centre infrastructure dev't  | Continue Language Immersion House & Cultural Centre infrastructure dev't  | Complete Language Immersion House & Cultural Centre   |
| Complete logo design and webpage  | Develop 2 <sup>nd</sup> Language Learners Program   | Implement 2 <sup>nd</sup> Language Learners Program   | Continue with 2 <sup>nd</sup> Language Learners Program   | Continue with 2 <sup>nd</sup> Language Learners Program   |
| Begin Language App (yr 1 of 2)  | Complete Language App (yr 2 of 2)   | Continue with supplementary digital tools from Language App   | Continue with supplementary digital tools from Language App   | Continue with supplementary digital tools from Language App   |
| Develop Mentor Apprentice Program (MAP)   | Implement MAP with goal of 5 new speakers   | Continue with MAP with goal of 8 new speakers   | Continue with MAP with goal of 10 new speakers  | Continue with MAP with goal of 12 new speakers  |
| Establish Community Language Classes:<br>• Family Language Nights (July – Nov)<br>• Youth Language Nights (Nov – Mar)   | Continue Community Language Classes<br>• (learners TBD)   | Continue Community Language Classes<br>• (learners TBD)   | Continue Community Language Classes<br>• (learners TBD)   | Continue Community Language Classes<br>(learners TBD)   |
| Develop and implement Angela Moore Awards for Community Excellence in Language  | Implement Angela Moore Awards for Community Excellence in Language  | Implement Angela Moore Awards for Community Excellence in Language  | Implement Angela Moore Awards for Community Excellence in Language  | Implement Angela Moore Awards for Community Excellence in Language  |
| Community Events:<br>• Language Activity Day (March)<br>• Language Day (June)<br>• 75 <sup>th</sup> anniversary (Aug)<br>• Present AM awards at Pow Wow (Aug)<br>• Language Camp (Aug/Sept) | Community Events:<br>• Language Day (June)<br>• Speakers/Elders Gathering (date tbd)  | Community Events:<br>• Language Day (June)<br>• Others TBD  | Community Events:<br>• Language Day (June)<br>• Others TBD  | Community Events:<br>• Language Day (June)<br>• Others TBD  |
| Development of Resources:<br>• Cree syllabics flash cards<br>• Decks of playing cards in 3 languages<br>• Household labels book<br>• Pocketbook of starter words<br>• Flags, banner, poster | Continued development of resources and begin to establish archival project<br>• Resources TBD   | Continued development of resources and continued establishment of archival project<br>• Resources TBD   | Continued development of resources and continued establishment of archival project<br>• Resources TBD   | Continued development of resources and establishment of archival project within Language Immersion House & Cultural Centre<br>• Resources TBD                                 |
| Implement immersion in ROL meetings (as a standing agenda item) as follows:<br>• 5 mins for fluent speakers<br>• 2 mins for silent speakers<br>• 1 min for new speakers                     | Implement full immersion in ROL meetings (as a standing agenda item) as follows:<br>• 5 mins for fluent speakers<br>• 3 mins for silent speakers<br>• 2 mins for new speakers | Implement full immersion in ROL meetings (as a standing agenda item) as follows:<br>• 5 mins for fluent speakers<br>• 4 mins for silent speakers<br>• 3 mins for new speakers | Implement full immersion in ROL meetings (as a standing agenda item) as follows:<br>• 5 mins for fluent speakers<br>• 5 mins for silent speakers<br>• 4 mins for new speakers | Implement full immersion in ROL meetings (as a standing agenda item) as follows:<br>• 5 mins for fluent speakers<br>• 6 mins for silent speakers<br>• 5 mins for new speakers |
| Increase visibility of the language in the community (street & building signage)  |   |   |   |   |

As part of the Matawa Education Department, Constance Lake First Nation is included in the Matawa Waka Tere language program. See **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Use and Preservation of Indigenous Language' for further details.

### Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights

Constance Lake First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Constance Lake First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that is important to Constance Lake First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

### Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

**Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)**

Constance Lake First Nation's self-governance is comprised of an elected Chief and six Councillors, who are elected by ballot from registered members who are 18 years of age and older; elected councillors serve for two terms.

Constance First Nation enacts laws and by-laws regarding the development, use, possession, and management of their reserve. Each member of council is involved in committees, external boards, and agencies (Constance Lake First Nation, 2022).

The Constance Lake First Nation emphasizes the importance of maintaining a strong relationship with the land. This connection is seen as vital for the community's well-being and sustainability. As stated in their terms of reference for their CBLUP, "Maintaining a relationship to the land to support our Native way of life in conjunction with and through community-based land use planning is imperative" (Constance Lake First Nation and Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, 2014).

As stewards of the Kenogami Watershed, the Constance Lake First Nation takes pride in protecting their lands and waters. They are involved in training and certification for aquatic biomonitoring to protect the health of their environment (Constance Lake First Nation, n.d.).

Traditional land users respect each other along the waterways such as creeks and lakes, with families recognizing each other's designated harvest territories. This understanding led to protocols being followed, and customary laws governing the territory of Constance Lake First Nation (Constance Lake First Nation, 2024).

In November 2023, Constance Lake First Nation indicated that a CBLUP was almost complete; this has been not shared with the Project team (AtkinsRéalis Inc., 2023).

Constance Lake First Nation is a member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Matawa First Nations Management. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

**19.2.2.3.3 Fort Albany First Nation**

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes

Fort Albany First Nation is a Mushkegowuk (Omuskego) Cree Nation located within Treaty No.9 territory, along the Albany River. The main water artery for Fort Albany First Nation is the Albany River (Kistachowan River), which is used to access areas for hunting, fishing, camping, connecting communities, teaching children and connecting to ancestors at points along the river (Restoule et. al, 2013).

### *Availability of Lands and Resources for Traditional Harvesting*

Fort Albany First Nation community members rely on the land as their primary source of sustenance and food resources, particularly moose, fish, geese, berries, and other animals and plants. The land continues to be their grocery store, and that wildlife remains important to nutrition and food security in the community (Minkin et al., 2014).

## Traditional Land and Resource Use

### *Hunting and Trapping*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

One Elder explained how the unavailability of commercial meat contributes to the continuance of the hunting tradition (Minkin, 2014):

*“...You know, we hardly have fresh meat in the store, so we eat almost [all] wildlife stuff. That’s what can happen with our generation, they gonna be doing the same thing what the people do in the past, catching wildlife...”*

[REDACTED]

Fur and traplines, have been described as both a sustenance and a commercial resource. Trapping was the only traditional land use that that took place within territories with rigid boundaries to which individual families had exclusive rights (Minkin, 2014). Some Fort Albany First Nation traplines have been previously mapped from a study on the registered trapline system in Kashechewan First Nation and shown in **Figure 19.11** (Sutherland, 2017).

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Figure 19.11: Fort Albany First Nation and Kashechewan First Nation Traplines (Sutherland, 2017)



### Plant Gathering

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Blueberries are also a popular food item harvested by Fort Albany First Nation members (Minkin, 2014). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

*Fishing*

[Redacted text block]

## Waterways

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## Travel and Access

Fort Albany First Nation community members use navigable rivers as travel routes and they use the waterways as their highways, which are used to access resources and neighbouring communities by boat (Minkin, 2014). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

***Habitation and Seasonal Camps***

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

***Cultural Continuity***

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Water resources, specifically potable groundwater is highly important to Fort Albany First Nation community and that they value local rivers as an important source of drinking water (Minkin, 2014).

[Redacted text block]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Cultural Traditions and Practices**

[REDACTED]

The community maintains a variety of traditional gathering practices that are integral to their cultural heritage and way of life (Minkin, 2014), such as:

- Berry Picking: Community members gather wild berries such as blueberries, raspberries, and cranberries. These berries are used for food, medicine, and in various traditional recipes.
- Medicinal Plants: Gathering medicinal plants is a crucial practice. Elders and knowledge keepers teach younger generations about the healing properties of various plants and how to use them in traditional medicine.
- Wild Edibles: In addition to berries, other wild edibles such as mushrooms, roots, and nuts are collected. These are important for both nutrition and cultural practices.
- Seasonal Cycles: Gathering activities are closely tied to the seasonal cycles. For example, certain plants and berries are harvested at specific times of the year, promoting sustainability and respect for the natural environment.
- Community Involvement: These practices are often communal activities involving multiple generations. This not only aids in gathering resources but also strengthens community bonds and facilitates the transmission of traditional knowledge (Minkin, 2014).

These gathering practices are essential for maintaining the cultural identity and sustainability of Fort Albany First Nation, ensuring that their traditions continue to thrive (Minkin, 2014).

Community members have spoken about the importance of traditional knowledge and regaining lost knowledge due to the residential school experience. Traditional knowledge is taught by Elders, immediate family, and in-laws/relatives on the land (Minkin, 2014). Elders share knowledge with youths about ways to live off the river and lands and note culturally significant sites (Restoule, 2013). Maintaining traditional values and knowledge was stated by some community members as necessary to prevent over-harvesting of the community's resources.

Community members participate in sweat lodge ceremonies (Gadacz, 2006). A sundance ceremony was held in summer of 2016 for the first time (in modern history) at Fort Albany First Nation; the main purpose is to ask for forgiveness and guidance for a good life and reconnects community members to their culture (Kozak, 2017).

Community residents participate in various recreational activities on the land such as camping (colloquially referred to as “going to the bush”) with family along rivers; wintertime offers the most access to camping sites (Minkin, 2014). Community events such as farmer’s markets are hosted by Peetabeck Academy (Mundo Peetabeck Education Authority, 2022).

Community gardening initiatives were implemented by Fort Albany First Nation Chief and Council because there was a desire to help the community collectively find alternative agricultural practices that align with First Nation’s traditional food provisioning activities. The garden initiatives involved community-based training, community workshops, school field trips, class presentations, and community planting and harvesting events (Wilton, 2023).

WAHA offers various services that supports providing optimum health care as close to home as possible. This includes a holistic approach that reflects the distinct needs of all peoples in the Weeneebayko region. (WAHA, 2018). WAHA is committed to providing high-quality health services that include traditional and cultural healing methods (WAHA, 2025).

Fort Albany First Nation members identified major stressors such as colonization and settler colonial policies, including the welfare system, reserve system, and residential schools that eroded family systems, traditional laws, and spirituality, while diminishing the use of Omushkegowuk/Cree language and hindering intergenerational knowledge transmission (Firelight Research Inc. and Fort Albany First Nation, 2024).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Fort Albany First Nation speak Swampy Cree, and Peetabeck Academy is committed to moving towards Cree immersion education. Mundo Peetabeck Education Authority’s mission is to promote traditional values, and the retention of the Cree language (Mundo Peetabeck Education Authority, 2022).

The Mushkegowuk Council, which Fort Albany First Nation is a member of, also supports these language preservation efforts by providing resources and programs aimed at maintaining and strengthening the Cree language among its member communities (Mushkegowuk Council, 2024).

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Fort Albany First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Fort Albany First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that is important to Fort Albany First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

During the Three Projects Gathering and Expo, members of Fort Albany First Nation requested information regarding which inherent rights are examined in the EAR/IS, and about the process for the assessment. Additional statements/concerns were raised by an Elder regarding Indigenous engagement methods, the need for an independent Indigenous review of EAR/IS, a provision of clear and easily understood project information directly to community members, a need for additional Elders’ consultation and discussion with residential school survivors, and concerns on project impacts need for Indigenous involvement.



### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

[REDACTED]

Fort Albany First Nation has both a traditional and contemporary governance structure that is led by an elected Chief and Council. Decision-making within the community involves general meetings, and chief and council meetings, which operate by an informal consensus and a spirit of openness (Minkin, 2014). Fort Albany First Nation is a formally affiliated with the Mushkegowuk Council and Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

Fort Albany First Nation is part of the Omushkego Wahkohtowin Conservation Plan which was written to provide people, especially Omushkego and adjacent Nations and communities, with information on community conservation planning for their lands and waters, with a 10-year implementation period (Mushkegowuk Council Lands and Resources Department 2024).

#### **19.2.2.3.4 Ginoogaming First Nation**

Information regarding Ginoogaming First Nation’s cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Ginoogaming First Nation. The following section and impact assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Ginoogaming First Nation (formerly the Long Lake 77 First Nation) is a small Anishinaabe (Ojibway) First Nation reserve located in Northern Ontario, located approximately 40 km east of Geraldton, Ontario, on the northern shore of Long Lake, immediately south of Long Lake #58 First Nation and the community of Longlac, Ontario. **Figure 19.12** shows an approximate area of Ginoogaming First Nation traditional territory in relation to WSR (Ginoogaming First Nation, 2021). This map is from 2019 and was not provided for the WSR project; the accuracy of the map cannot be confirmed. This map identifies that Ginoogaming First Nation traditional territory does not extend within the LSA and RSA.

### ***Hunting, Fishing and Trapping***

Hunting an important traditional activity that Ginoogaming First Nation members practice as it is important for maintenance of tradition and culture. Ginoogaming First Nation hunt moose, geese, grouse and duck (Stantec, 2017). An academic study in 2010 found that 73% of Ginoogaming First Nation members rely on moose as a source of meat but that fewer people are participating in traditional activities like moose hunting (McLaren, 2012). This study found that the ability of Ginoogaming First Nation members to

participate in food production activities has been restricted over time and become more of a “recreational activity than as participating in the traditional economy” (McLaren, 2012).

Ginoogaming First Nation identified the following as culturally significant in their traditional harvest: pike, perch, trout, walleye, moose, rabbit, martin, geese, grouse, and duck (Stantec, 2017).

Kenogagmisis Lake is an area that Ginoogaming First Nation hunt and fish (Beringia Community Planning Inc., 2015).

### ***Plant Gathering***

Ginoogaming First Nation identified the following as culturally significant in their traditional harvest: cedar, red willow, bear root, bulrush, sweetgrass, juniper, and cranberries (Stantec, 2017).

### ***Travel and Access***

Ginoogaming First Nation People have also historically travelled on the Pagwachuan River drainage system, which flows north from Pagwachuan Lake eventually to the Albany River. Ginoogaming First Nation People have also historically travelled by river on the Nagagamisis River waterway, which also flows north from Nagagamisis Lake eventually to the Albany River. Ginoogaming First Nation families utilize ancestral connections to migration routes both northward (to the James Bay coast) and southward (to Lake Superior coast) (Omushkegowuk Women’s Water Council, n.d). The importance of these waterways is enshrined in their Nanagjitoong Nibi Water Protection Declaration.

“The Ginoogaming First Nation members, with respect to their ancestral family traditional territories, have maintained their inherent authority to take care of the land and the rivers that flow through it. We have a spiritual connection with the land and waters, by way of the natural laws that were given to us since time immemorial. Our natural laws supersede colonial policies, and we have not given up our right to practice our cultural customs which include hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering medicines, and spiritual ceremonies on our lands and water” (Omushkegowuk Women’s Water Council, n.d.).

### ***Cultural Continuity***

#### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Ginoogaming First Nation was granted an interim injunction in 2021 for any mining activities to take place in Wiisinin Zaahgi’igan, an area of land which is located within their territory (Garrick, 2021). The area is roughly 360 km<sup>2</sup> in size and located 300 km northeast of Thunder Bay (Turner, 2021a). This area is sacred and of cultural importance to Ginoogaming First Nation and includes burial sites, hunting areas and areas where ceremonies have been performed (Turner, 2021a).

Wiisinin Zaahgi’igan is an area considered sacred by Ginoogaming First Nation, and described as the “breadbasket, its church, its heartland, its graveyard and its hospital” (Turner, 2021a). The community works to protect sacred sites within their traditional territory. For example, they have sought legal measures to prevent mining exploration in areas of cultural and spiritual significance (Turner, 2021a).

#### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

The community regularly hosts events to celebrate Anishinaabe heritage, including ceremonies, storytelling, and cultural workshops (Ginoogaming First Nation, 2024). Ginoogaming First Nation places importance in cultural education through programs in local schools and community centres, allowing younger generations to learn about history and traditions. Initiatives like the Aboriginal Head Start



program and various youth programs help instill cultural values and practices from an early age (Ginoogaming First Nation, n.d.).

Ginoogaming First Nation held a pow-wow in August 2024 to honour their culture, and traditions (Ginoogaming First Nation, 2024).

Historic log drives have impacted the waterways and waterbodies within Ginoogaming First Nation's Traditional Territory. Dams have changed the flow of the waters, impacting the fish that swim in the waters and causing confusion for people who fish. Significant forestry activity within Traditional Territory have displaced animals, affected harvesting of medicinal plants, and impacted hunters and trappers. Mineral exploration and mining have permanently changed certain areas and have caused significant adverse environmental impacts in the area (Greenstone Gold Mines, n.d.). Community members have seen a disruption of the sacred circle from industrial activities leading to adverse environmental impacts.

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Ginoogaming First Nation members have access to Ojibwe language courses at Our Lady of Fatima, Marjorie Mills Public School and Migizi Wazisin Elementary School (Ginoogaming First Nation, n.d.). Ginoogaming First Nation Training Centre has an educational program that promotes the community's language, culture, traditions and history. Students are offered an all-ages after-school immersion program to learn Anishnaabemowin virtually (Mannella, 2022).

As part of the Matawa Education Department, Ginoogaming First Nation is included in the Matawa Waka Tere language program. See **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Use and Preservation of Indigenous Language' for further details.

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Ginoogaming First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Ginoogaming First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Ginoogaming First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

During Round 1 of Engagement and Consultation of the EAR/IS, Ginoogaming First Nation outlined that their rights have the potential to be impacted by the WSR Project and believes that the cumulative effects from other project development in the Ring of Fire region should be considered.

Ginoogaming First Nation expressed that they have long inhabited and occupied the lands and waters of the area before Treaty 9 came into effect. Ginoogaming is seeking an interlocutory injunction to prevent mineral exploration on sacred land (Wiisnin Zaahgi'gan) in part of its traditional territory; seeking permanent protection and compensation for past harms; and wants any (possible) mining claims removed (TbnewsWatch Staff, 2023). In September 2021, they received an extension of an interim injunction preventing exploration firms from exploring an area that Ginoogaming First Nation had declared to be sacred and culturally significant (TbnewsWatch Staff, 2023). Ginoogaming's lawsuit includes seeking a declaration that it has Aboriginal Rights to protect sacred areas.

Ginoogaming is one of 10 northern First Nations which launched a lawsuit against the Ontario and federal governments in April 2023 (McIntosh, 2023). They have requested that the Canadian government be barred from making any decisions about how land is used without Indigenous consent. The lawsuit centres on Treaty No. 9 and the contrast between the verbal and written promises of Treaty No. 9 as recorded (McIntosh, 2023). The Nations are arguing that they did not cede or surrender their



territories, and that Treaty No. 9 does not give the Ontario government the right to allow resource extraction (McIntosh, 2023).

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

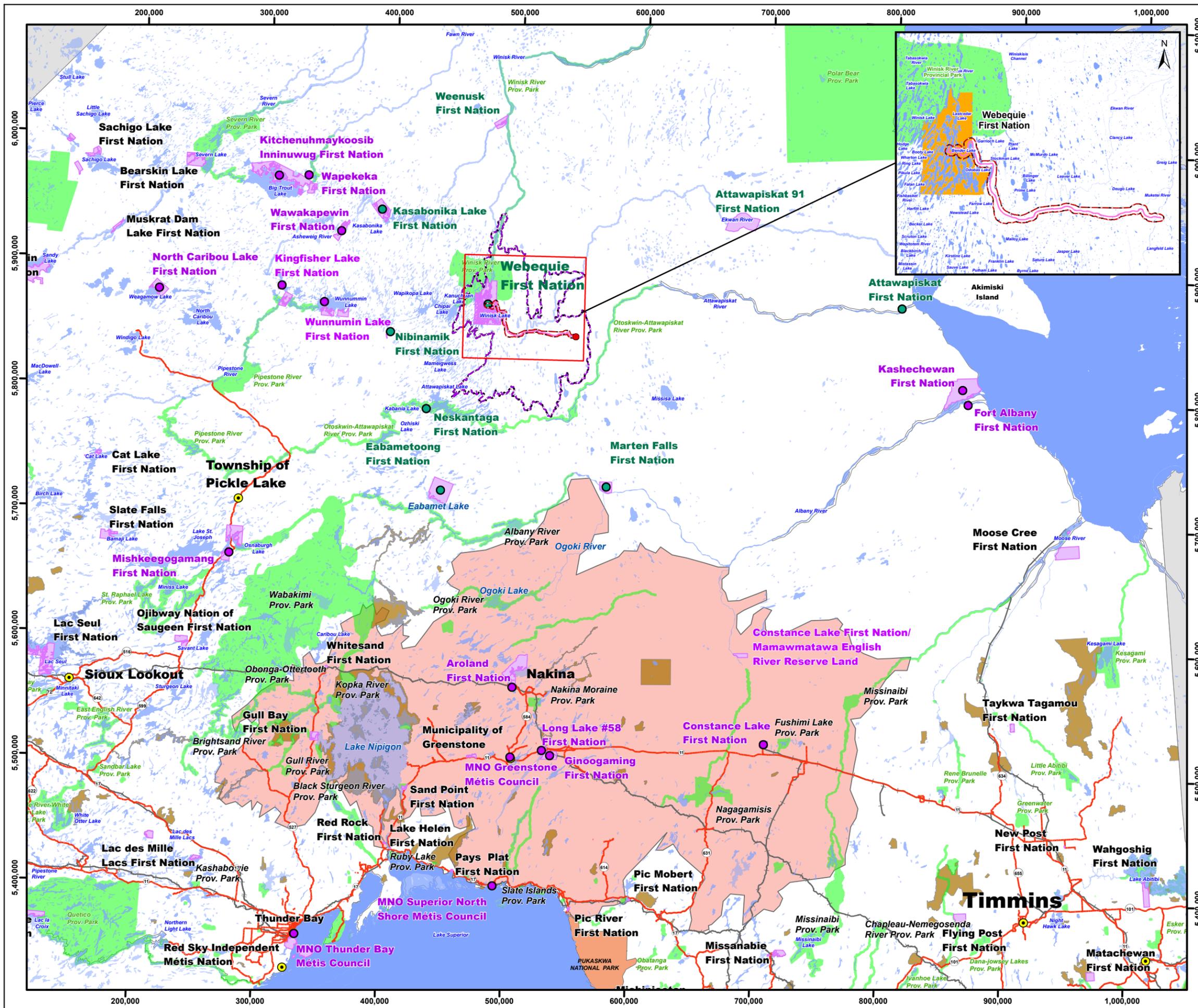
### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

Chief and council are elected for two terms in accordance with the Indian Band Election Regulations (Ginoogaming, 2024). Ginoogaming First Nation is a member of Matawa First Nations Management and of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

Ginoogaming First Nation is involved in several key initiatives related to their self-governance:

- **Economic Initiatives:** Ginoogaming First Nation is involved in partnerships with local businesses like Longlac Lumber Inc. (Ginoogaming First Nation, n.d.-a.).
- **Cultural Programs:** The community places a strong emphasis on cultural education through programs in schools and community centres. These programs include language instruction, traditional crafts, and ceremonies, so that cultural knowledge can be passed down to younger generations.
- **Community Engagement:** Regular traditional gatherings, ceremonies, and cultural workshops foster a strong sense of identity and continuity. These events bring the community together and reinforce cultural values and practices (Ginoogaming First Nation, 2025).





- Legend**
- Preferred Route
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
  - Local Study Area
  - Regional Study Area
  - Ginoogaming First Nation Traditional Territory (Unconfirmed)
  - First Nation Reserve
  - Waterbody
  - Provincial Park
  - Conservation Reserve
  - Federal National Park
  - All-Season Road
  - Rail
  - Cities/Towns

## Webequie Supply Road (WSR)

Ginoogaming First Nation Traditional Territory

|                |                       |                 |           |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Figure Number: | 19 - 12               | REV             | PA        |
| Client:        | Webequie First Nation | Project Number: | 661910    |
|                |                       | Date:           | 1/22/2026 |
| DSC            |                       | DRN             | CHK       |
|                | LZ                    | VS              | VS        |




**NOTES**

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 Ontario MNR Lambert.
2. Cadastral boundaries are for informational purposes only and should not be considered suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.
3. Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information, and Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date : 2021-02-04

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### 19.2.2.3.5 Kashechewan First Nation

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

In addition to the IK Study, Kashechewan First Nation has also initiated the CBLUP process under the *Far North Act, 2010* by developing a ToR in 2017 (Kashechewan First Nation and MNRF, 2017). The ToR included an Area of Interest for Planning (AIP) which shows its traditional territory (**Figure 19.13**).

#### Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes

Kashechewan First Nation is a Mushkegowuk (Omushkego) Cree Nation located within Treaty No.9 territory, on the northern delta of the Kistachowan Sipi (Albany River) between Fort Albany and Attawapiskat First Nations, approximately 15 km from James Bay. The surrounding rivers, wetlands, and muskeg form the foundation of the Kashechewan's harvesting practices and continue to sustain the community's seasonal way of life (Government of Ontario, 2017).



Kashechewan's traditional harvesting areas extend across the Albany River system, inland wetlands, coastal islands, and the waters of western James Bay, including areas within the jurisdiction of Nunavut (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, 2021b).

Through developing the ToR for the CBLUP, Kashechewan has identified a preliminary Area of Interest for planning and stewardship, reflecting longstanding use of adjacent islands, river corridors, and coastal routes for harvesting (**Figure 19.13**) (Government of Ontario, 2017). These areas are reached via established waterways, winter roads, and the James Bay winter road corridor linking Kashechewan and Fort Albany to Moosonee. This map identifies a preliminary area of interest and traditional harvesting area for Kashechewan First Nation.

In 2025, Kashechewan joined other Treaty No. 9 Nations in legal action seeking recognition that the Treaty was intended to establish co-jurisdiction between First Nations and the Crown, reaffirming that the Nations never surrendered their governance authority (Blackburn, 2025).

***Availability of Lands and Resources for Traditional Harvesting***

Challenges with the community's aging Level 3 water treatment system increase reliance on traditional freshwater sources and reinforce the need to protect river systems from pollution In January 2026. Kashechewan First Nation declared a state of emergency due to the community's water treatment and wastewater plant failing (Migneault, 2026). A community wide evacuation is currently underway (Chubak, 2026).

[REDACTED]



**Traditional Land and Resource Use**

**Hunting and Trapping**



**Figure 19.11** shows traplines within Kashechewan First Nation (Sutherland, 2017).

Hunting



Trapping



**Fishing**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Plant Gathering**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Water Resources**

[REDACTED]

**Trails and Waterways.**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



**Habitation and Seasonal Camps**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Travel and Access**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Cultural Continuity**

Cultural continuity in Kashechewan First Nation is grounded in the interrelationship between people, the land and the waters that sustain the community. The Albany River and the James Bay coast (Wee-nee-peg-kook), have long supported the community physically, spiritually, and culturally, forming the foundation of identity, governance and collective wellbeing (MNFR, 2021b). These relationships reflect Cree natural law principles, including respect, reciprocity and the responsibility to care for Creation.

[REDACTED]

**Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes**

Cultural and spiritual sites across Kashechewan’s territory are inseparable from the surrounding lands and waters. The Albany River, its tributaries, and the James Bay coastline are regarded as living entities that carry spiritual significance and connect the community to generations of ancestors (MNR, 2021b).

[REDACTED]

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Kashechewan First Nation’s cultural traditions are shaped by deep connections to the land, language and teachings passed down through Elders. Seasonal activities, such as hunting trapping, fishing and plant gathering, are accompanied by stories, songs and ceremonies that reinforce cultural knowledge and Cree relational values of respect, sharing and interconnectedness (Pope, 2006).

WAHA offers various services that supports providing optimum health care as close to home as possible. This includes a holistic approach that reflects the distinct needs of all peoples in the Weeneebayko region. (Weeneebayko Area Health Authority, 2018). WAHA is committed to providing high-quality health services that include traditional and cultural healing methods (Weeneebayko Area Health Authority, 2025).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Kashechewan First Nation has a strong connection to the Cree language. The community actively works to preserve and promote the Mushkego Cree language through various initiatives and programs. Language revitalization efforts include teaching Cree in schools, offering community language classes, and incorporating Cree into daily activities and ceremonies (CBC, 2020).

The Mushkegowuk Council, which Kashechewan First Nation is a member of, also supports these language preservation efforts by providing resources and programs aimed at maintaining and strengthening the Cree language among its member communities (Mushkegowuk Council, 2024).

### ***Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights***

Kashechewan First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Kashechewan First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Kashechewan First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

During the Consultation Round 2 of the EA/IA process, Kashechewan First Nation requested to understand the local and regional study areas for the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Interests Valued Component and had questions regarding potential opportunities for employment associated with the construction of the various projects in the region.

Kashechewan First Nation is one of 10 northern First Nations who have launched a lawsuit against the Ontario and federal government in April 2023 (McIntosh, 2023). They have requested that the Canadian government be barred from making any decisions about how land could be used without Indigenous consent. The lawsuit centres on Treaty No. 9 and the contrast between the verbal and written promises of Treaty No. 9 as recorded (McIntosh, 2023). The Nations are arguing that they did not cede or surrender their territories, and that Treaty No. 9 did not give the Ontario government the right to allow resource extraction (McIntosh, 2023).

**Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions**

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Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

**Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)**

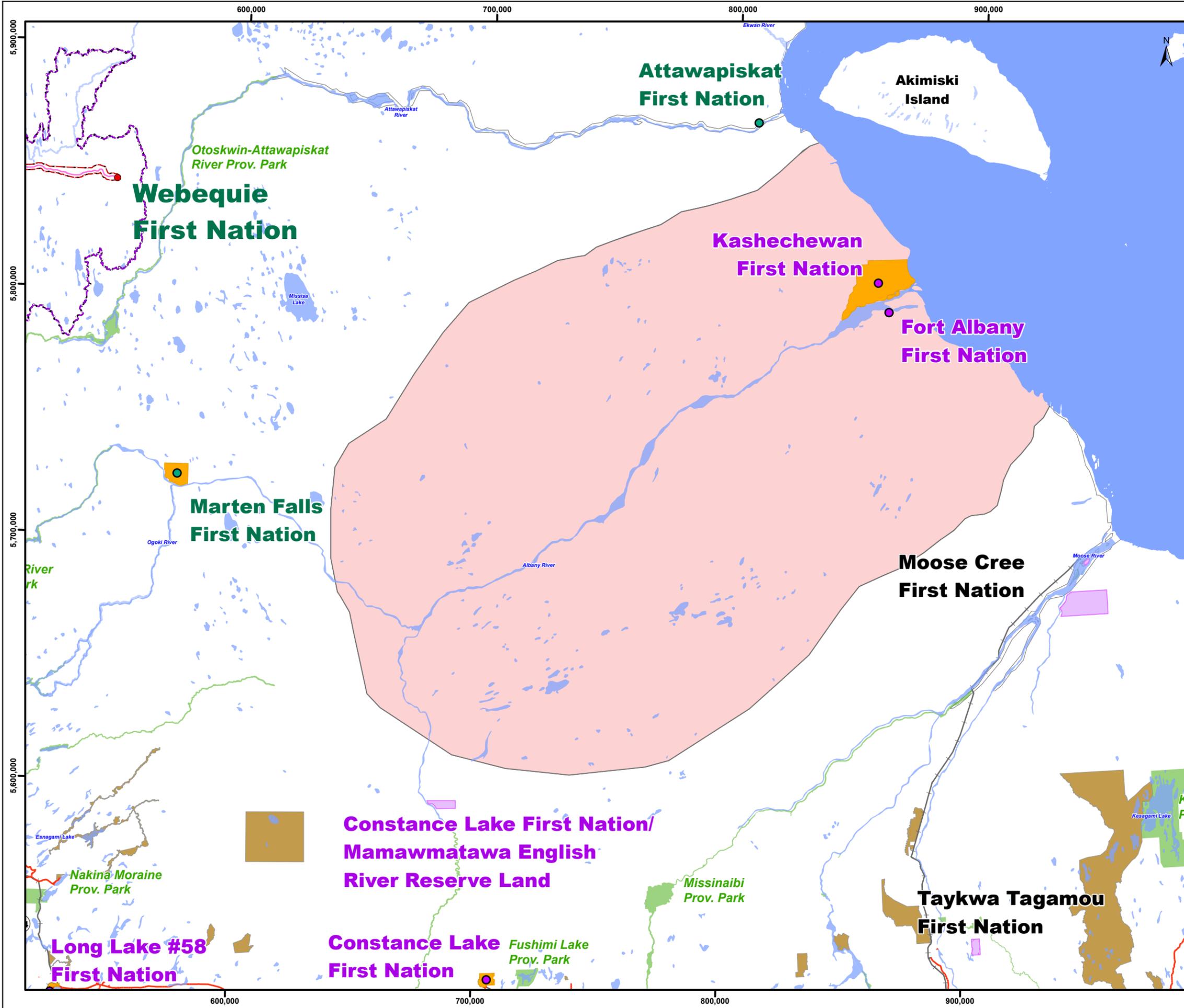
Kashechewan First Nation's governance includes the election of a Chief, Deputy Chief, and nine Band Council members. These elections are held every three years under the Custom Electoral Code, with the last election scheduled for August 2024. The elected officials oversee community programs, services, and facilities, ensuring the well-being and development of the community (211 Ontario North, 2024a).

Kashechewan First Nation is a member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Mushkegowuk Council. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

Kashechewan First Nation is part of the Omushkego Wahkohtowin Conservation Plan with a 10-year implementation strategy. This plan was developed to provide Omushkego and adjacent Nations and communities, with information on community conservation planning for their lands and waters (Mushkegowuk Council Lands and Resources Department, 2024).

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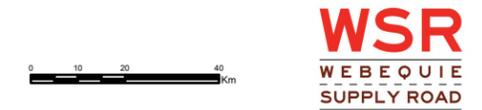


- Legend**
- Preferred Route
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
  - Local Study Area
  - Regional Study Area
  - Kashechewan First Nation Area of Interest for Planning
  - First Nation Reserve – Community Engaged in the Project
  - First Nation Reserve
  - Waterbody
  - Provincial Park
  - Conservation Reserve
  - Federal National Park
  - All-Season Road
  - Rail
  - Cities/Towns

## Webequie Supply Road (WSR)

Kashechewan First Nation  
Area of Interest for Planning

|                |                       |                 |           |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Figure Number: | 19 - 13               | REV             | PA        |
| Client:        | Webequie First Nation | Project Number: | 661910    |
|                |                       | Date:           | 1/22/2026 |
| DSC            |                       |                 | DRN       |
|                |                       | CHK             | APP       |
|                |                       | LZ              | VS        |
|                |                       | VS              | VS        |



**NOTES**

- Coordinate System: NAD 1983 Ontario MNR Lambert.
- Cadastral boundaries are for informational purposes only and should not be considered suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.
- Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information; and, Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date : 2021-02-04

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### **19.2.2.3.6 Kingfisher Lake First Nation**

Information regarding Kingfisher Lake First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Kingfisher Lake First Nation. The following section and effects assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

#### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Kingfisher Lake First Nation is located approximately 520 km north of the City of Thunder Bay and 165 km west of Webequie First Nation in northern Ontario. The community is situated on the western shore of Kingfisher Lake.

#### ***Hunting, Fishing, Trapping***

Kingfisher Lake First Nation exercise their right to hunt, fish and gather based on natural resources available within their territory (Kingfisher Lake First Nation, n.d.). Kingfisher Lake First Nation members hunt moose, Caribou, ducks and geese (Golder Associates, 2018).

The larger lakes in the Kingfisher Lake Area were historically used for both domestic and commercial fishing. The smaller lakes, creeks and rivers were solely fished for domestic use (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Kingfisher Lake First Nation historically fished commercially within the Ashweig and Pipestone Rivers.

In 1947, Ontario enacted the Trapline Registration and Fee Program, which eventually forced the Kingfisher Lake people to outline their ancestral hunting areas into trapping boundaries and to also pay for the land use requirements (Kingfisher Lake First Nation, N.D).

#### ***Travel and Access***

Kingfisher Lake First Nation members have expressed a strong reliance on the rivers, specifically the Ashweig, and Pipestone (this connects Marie Lake and Wunnummin Lake) (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Kingfisher Lake community members have a number of traditionally important meeting places along the Pipestone-Pineimuta River route (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). During the summer, groups from Windigo Lake, North Caribou Lake and Weagomow Lake will gather along this summer travel route (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). There are many summer routes that Kingfisher Lake community members utilize which include a northerly route to Big Trout Lake along the Ashweig River and a route south of Kingfisher Lake through Big Beaver House and then to Menako Lake and Obustiga Lake region (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). During the winter, there is significant movement between Kingfisher Lake, Big Beaver House and Wunnummin Lake (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

Kingfisher Lake and Wunnummin Lake had very close integration of territorial use between Maria Lake and Wunnummin Lake (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). The hunting territory has historically been larger in area than the trapping area (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Areas that are south of Maria Lake and the west and south of Big Beaver House were traditionally heavily utilized for hunting (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).



## **Cultural Continuity**

### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

In 1808, the Hudson's Bay Company established an outpost at Big Beaver House, located approximately 12 km southwest of the present Kingfisher Lake reserve (Kingfisher Lake First Nation, n.d.). Big Beaver House was frequented by Kingfisher Lake people for trading fur, community activity and freight hauling employment. Big Beaver House Lake has been identified as a culturally important site for Kingfisher Lake First Nation (Golder, 2018).

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (2025) serves Kingfisher Lake First Nation providing traditional teachings and activities and wellness journeys through ceremonies, as part of its commitment to culturally grounded health services; please refer to **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Cultural Traditions and Practices' for further details.

Kingfisher Lake First Nation has a hunter's festival every Fall, and this occasion brings the community together (Keewaytinook Okimakanak, 2014).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Kingfisher Lake First Nation's language is important for cultural continuity and the community speaks Oji-Cree, with more than half of the community being fluent in English (Kingfisher Lake First Nation, n.d.). Shibogama Education Authority provides support and assistance in developing and delivering the education program and system in the community with a focus on enhancing and furthering traditional language acquisition for the community (Shibogama First Nations Council, 2025).

### ***Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights***

Kingfisher Lake First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Kingfisher Lake First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Kingfisher Lake First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

Kingfisher Lake First Nation elects their chief and council for two-year terms through the Custom Electoral System (211 North). They are members of the Shibogama First Nations Council and the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).



### 19.2.2.3.7 Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation

Information regarding Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation. The following section and impact assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

#### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation is located 605 km north of the City of Thunder Bay and 190 km northwest of Webequie First Nation in northern Ontario. The community is situated on an island close to the eastern shores of Big Trout Lake and is accessible via air, water and winter road.

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug participate in traditional activities throughout their traditional territory. Between 2010 and 2015, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation undertook several research projects to compile a comprehensive inventory of mapped cultural sites and locations of importance to their identity such as old settlements, gathering places, heritage habitations, burials and birth sites, death sites, spirit sites, ceremony sites, sacred areas, and other (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d.). The Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug Cultural Atlas includes detailed maps showing over 20,000 sites where community members have engaged in activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering.

#### ***Hunting, Fishing and Trapping***

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation members hunt for moose, Caribou, black bear and deer. Other species such as ducks, geese, sandhill crane, loons, swans, partridge, ptarmigan and owl are also hunted. (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d). Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation members fish for jackfish, pickerel, whitefish, maria, suckers, sturgeon, lake trout, speckled trout, yellow perch and other fish (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d). Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation members trap for all furbearers including rabbits, marten, fisher, fox, mink, lynx and other small mammals (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d).

**Figure 19.14** Habitat Sites and Travel Routes for Mammals, Birds and Fish Map show approximate locations of traditional activity areas of the community which are located outside of LSA and RSA (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d).

#### ***Plant Gathering***

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation members harvest berries, food plants, medicine, tobacco, plants used for dyes, moss, construction wood, speciality wood and firewood (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d). **Figure 19.15** Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation Traditional Land and Resource Use Map show approximate locations of plants and wood harvesting sites, which are located outside of the LSA and RSA (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d).

#### ***Travel and Access***

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug summer travel route historically focused on two segments of well travelled routes. The first route is the western half of Big Trout Lake to the east to Wapekeka Lake and the second is from Severn Lake, west of Big Trout Lake to Bearskin Lake (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Other summer travel routes exist to other communities, but the route is often more complicated



with networks of rivers, lakes and portages (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Winter travel routes include a route that is diagonal from Wapekeka Lake to Otter River, an area around Long Dog Lake and south of Big Trout Lake from Lake Nemeigusabins to the Bug River-Mishwamakan River area (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation trapping and hunting areas encompasses a significant area including: Manitoba on the west side and Attawapiskat on the east side. Lands within the Fort Severn homeland are used for trapping and to the south Weagomow, North Spirit Lake and Lansdowne House lands are also utilized (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Traditionally, hunting in the areas north of the community was more popular. The areas around the Sachigo River and parts of the Fawn and Severn River are areas that are important to Caribou (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

## **Cultural Continuity**

### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation has a rich cultural identity deeply rooted in their land and traditions. The Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation watershed declaration protects Fawn River and Big Trout Lake which includes Caribou, wolverine, moose and a variety of fish and birds (Talaga, 2018).

The Fawn River watershed has cultural importance to Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nations as it provides food, sustenance and cultural value to the community (Wildlife Conservation Society Canada, 2022).

A 4,600-year-old burial was found at the mouth of the Bug River, near Big Trout Lake within Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation traditional area (Jarus, 2010).

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Algace Chapman Education Centre offers programs from kindergarten to Grade 10 that focus on outdoor, land-based learning and on the community's Elders to share traditional knowledge. Traditional activities are integrated into the school curriculum, such as cooking, snaring, ice fishing, and collecting firewood for Elders (Teach for Canada, 2024). Sioux Lookout First Nations Healthy Authority (2025) serves Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, providing traditional teachings and activities and support community members' wellness journeys through ceremonies; please refer to **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Cultural Traditions and Practices' for further details.

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation celebrates various ceremonies that reflect their cultural heritage and community values. One notable ceremony is the celebration of the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug Dibenjikewin Onaakonikewin (KIDO) Family Law, which marks a significant step in reclaiming jurisdiction over family well-being. Chief Donny Morris emphasized the importance of this ceremony: "Our children are a sacred gift from Kische-Manidoo, our Creator. Through KIDO, we are reclaiming our inherent responsibility to nurture them according to our traditional ways" (NNL Digital News, 2025). This ceremony is celebrated annually and includes community gatherings, traditional practices, and virtual participation to honour the strength of families and the wisdom of ancestors.

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation holds various traditional ceremonies that are integral to their cultural identity and community life. These ceremonies often revolve around their connection to the land, water, and ancestral practices. One significant ceremony is the Spring Goose Hunt, which is a time for community members to gather and hunt geese, a practice that has been passed down through



generations. This event not only provides food but also strengthens community bonds and cultural traditions (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, 2015). Chief Donny Morris has spoken about the importance of these ceremonies: "Our traditional ceremonies are a way for us to connect with our ancestors and the land. They are vital for maintaining our cultural heritage and passing it on to future generations" (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, 2015). Another important ceremony is the Fall Harvest, where community members come together to harvest wild rice and other traditional foods. This ceremony is a celebration of the bounty provided by the land and a time for communal sharing and gratitude (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, 2015). The Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug Cultural Atlas documents these practices and highlights their significance in maintaining the community's cultural identity.

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation community members speak Oji-Cree (Teach for Canada, 2024). Kitchenuhmaykoosib Education Authority (KEA) is responsible for the education of children and youths in the community and focuses on developing a child's traditional language fluency and fostering their connection to their culture and heritage (KEA, 2023). There are two native language teachers at Aglace Chapman Education Centre that promote Oji-Cree language and culture to help students honour and take pride in their heritage (Teach for Canada, 2024).

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation is one of 10 northern First Nations who have launched a lawsuit against the Ontario and federal government in April 2023 (McIntosh, 2023). They have requested that the Canadian government be barred from making any decisions about how land could be used without Indigenous consent. The lawsuit centres on Treaty No. 9 and the contrast between the verbal and written promises of Treaty No. 9 as recorded (McIntosh, 2023). The Nations are arguing that they did not cede or surrender their territories, and that Treaty No. 9 did not give the Ontario government the right to allow resource extraction (McIntosh, 2023).

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation is also part of an alliance with Grassy Narrows First Nation, Wapekeka First Nation and Neskantaga First Nation to defend their lands and waters against mining prospectors (Alhmidi, 2023). In 2011, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug held a community referendum that resulted in 96% of community members voting in support of the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug Water Declaration (Kenora Daily Miner & News, 2011), that declared "all waters that flow into and out of Big Trout Lake, and all lands whose waters flow into those lakes, rivers, and wetlands, to be completely protected through our continued care under Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug's authority, laws and protocols" (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug. N.D.).

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.



### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig First Nation has a Chief, Deputy Chief and six Councillors, with a custom electoral system (CIRNAC, 2023c).

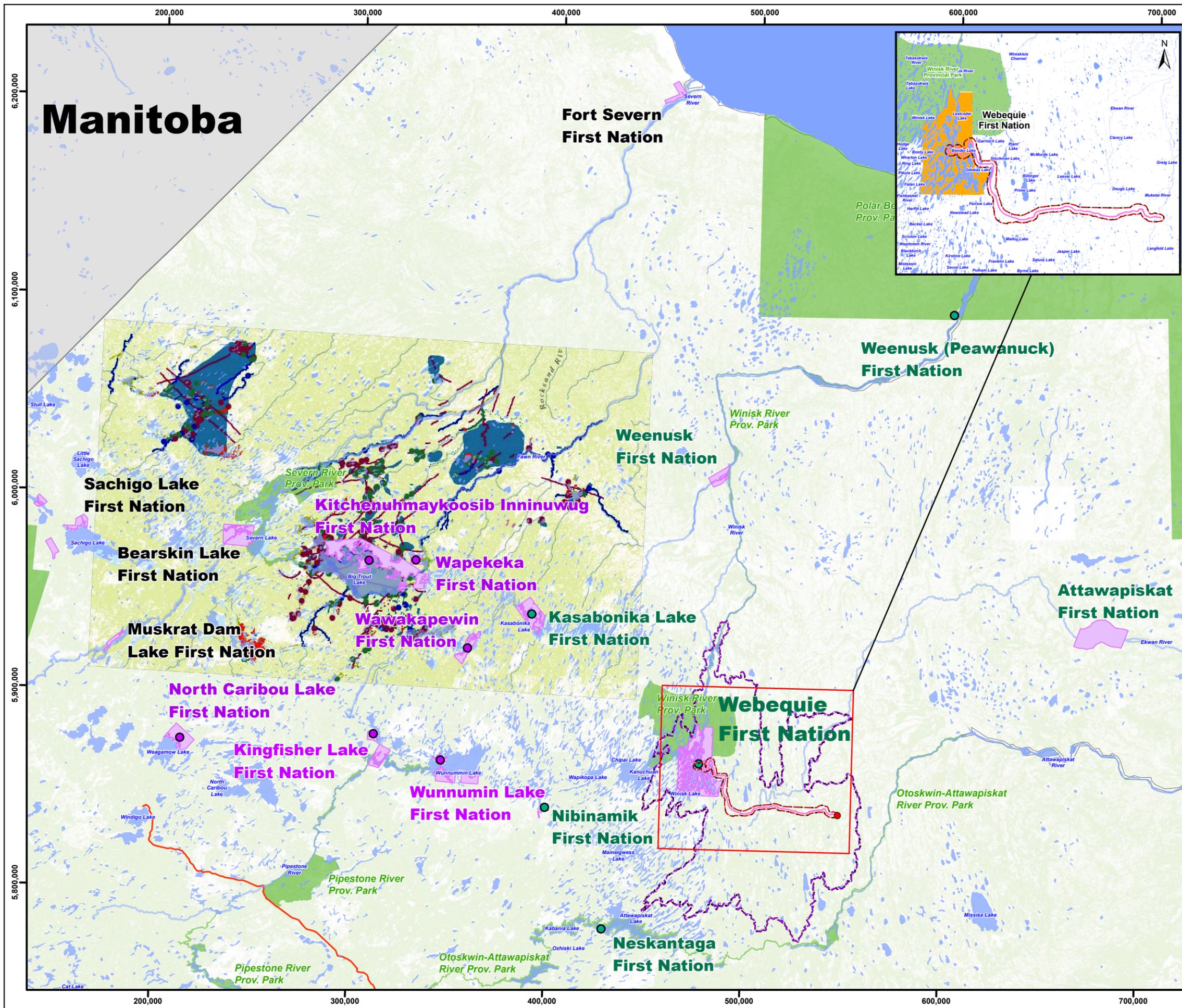
Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig First Nation passed a Water Declaration in 2011 that covers 13,025 square kilometres (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig First Nation, n.d). This water declaration outlined that “Big Trout Lake and watersheds are to be protected from all industrial uses that disrupt, poison, or harm the lands and waters. The protocol outlines the procedure for discussions with government and outside companies over resource management in all the rest of Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig territory that hinges on prior informed consent” (Wolfson, 2011). This watershed is crucial for the community's cultural, ecological, and economic well-being. Wildlife Conservation Society Canada highlighted the importance of this connection: “The Big Trout Lake Watershed is not only a vital source of freshwater for KI but also a key area for biodiversity and climate resilience. The community's efforts in co-creating an adaptation strategy for this watershed are essential for protecting these resources” (Chetkiewicz, 2013). Additionally, the Fawn River Indigenous Protected Area is another significant initiative supported by Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig First Nation (WCS, 2022). This project aims to preserve the freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems within the Fawn River watershed.

The community's commitment to protecting their freshwater resources is also evident in their resistance to mining activities that threaten their territory. Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig 's Chief and Council have been vocal about their dedication to safeguarding their land and water. (Korteweg and Root, 2016).

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig Dibenjikewin Onnakonikewin (KIDO) is Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig First Nation’s own welfare agency (Turner, 2023). The agency continues to work alongside Tikinagan Child and Family Services, which has been providing child welfare services across northern Ontario since the 1980s. KIDO’s services emphasize family healing and maintaining connections within the family and the community.

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig declared its independence from First Nation organizations in 1991 in order to pursue their own community aspirations and objectives (Independent First Nation Alliance, 2024). Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig is part of the Independent First Nation Alliance which provides technical advisory and development support programs to the community.





**Legend**

- Preferred Route
- Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
- Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
- Local Study Area
- First Nation Reserve
- Waterbody
- Provincial Park
- Conservation Reserve
- Federal National Park
- All-Season Road
- Cities/Towns
- SurfaceWater\_RSA

**User Occupancy Map - Kitchenuhmaykoosib Imminuwug**

- Mammal Attributes
- Fish Attributes
- Bird Attributes
- Birds Attributes
- Mammal Attributes
- Fish Attributes
- Birds Attributes
- Mammal Attributes
- Fish Attributes

## Webeque Supply Road (WSR)

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Imminuwug First Nation  
Habitat Sites and Travel Routes for  
Mammals, Birds and Fish

|                |                      |                 |           |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Figure Number: | 19 - 14              | REV             | PA        |
| Client:        | Webeque First Nation | Project Number: | 661910    |
|                |                      | Date:           | 1/21/2026 |
| DSC            |                      | DRN             | CHK       |
|                |                      | LZ              | VS        |
|                |                      | APP             | VS        |

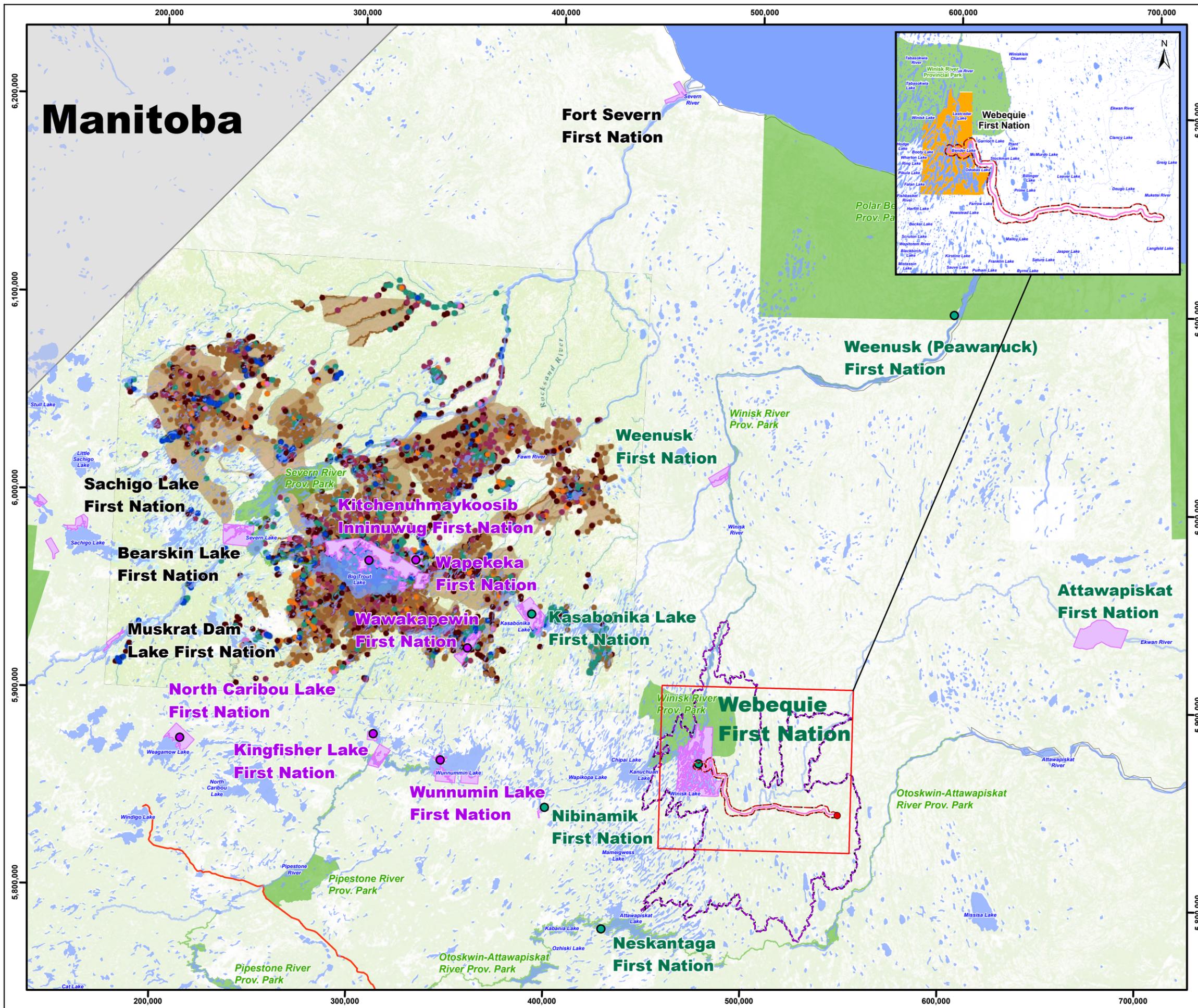
0 12.5 25 50 Km

**NOTES**

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- Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information; and, Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date : 2021-02-04

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**Legend**

- Preferred Route
- Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
- Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
- Local Study Area
- Regional Study Area
- First Nation Reserve
- Waterbody
- Provincial Park
- Conservation Reserve
- Federal National Park
- All-Season Road
- Cities/Towns

**User Occupancy Map - Kitchenuhmaykoosib Imminuwug**

- Occupancy and Fixed Cultural Sites
- Fish
- Birds
- Trapping
- Big Game
- Small Game
- Plants and Wood Harvesting Sites
- Plants and Wood Harvesting Sites
- Trapping
- Occupancy and Fixed Cultural Sites
- Plants and Wood Harvesting Sites
- Provincial Park
- Conservation Reserve

## Webequie Supply Road (WSR)

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwig First Nation  
Traditional Land and Resource Use Map

|                |                       |                 |           |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Figure Number: | 19 - 15               | REV             | PA        |
| Client:        | Webequie First Nation | Project Number: | 661910    |
|                |                       | Date:           | 1/22/2026 |
| DSC            |                       | DRN             | CHK       |
|                |                       | LZ              | VS        |
|                |                       | APP             | VS        |

0 12.5 25 50 Km

**NOTES**

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#### **19.2.2.3.8 Long Lake #58 First Nation**

Information regarding Long Lake #58 First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Long Lake #58 First Nation. The following section and impacts assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

#### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Long Lake #58 First Nation is located 250 km northeast of the City of Thunder Bay, 30 km east of Geraldton in the Municipality of Greenstone, and 370 km south of Webequie First Nation. It neighbours the community of Longlac, Ontario along Highway 11.

#### ***Hunting and Fishing***

Long Lake #58 First Nation community hunts moose, bear and birds along the shores of Long Lake, Kenogamisis Lake and Kenogamisis River (Stantec, 2017). A Traditional Land Use Survey prepared with Long Lake #58 First Nation for the Greenstone Gold Mine Project identified a number of specific hunting locations that Long Lake #58 First Nation use for hunting: Goldfield Road, McClusky Lake, Eldee Road Kenogamisis Lake, Kenogamisis River off Highway 11 (Aboriginal Business Network, 2015). Long Lake #58 First Nation fish for pickerel, sturgeon, lake trout, poke, whitefish, wall eye and smelts (Aboriginal Business Network, 2015).

#### ***Plant Gathering***

Long Lake #58 First Nation identified the following plants and species as culturally significant in their traditional harvest: cedar, sage, raspberries, sweetgrass, mountain ash, white willow, red willow, yarrow, birch, and balsam fir. Medicinal plants are often gathered along the shoreline of Kenogamisis Lake and the surrounding waterbodies including Nakina and MacLeod Lakes (Stantec, 2017). Medicine gathering locations occur east of Kenogamisis Lake south of Highway 11, in and around the Long Lake community, and west of Michael Power Boulevard (Stantec, 2017). A Traditional Land Use Survey prepared with Long Lake #58 First Nation for the Greenstone Gold Mine Project identified specific berry gathering locations: Goldfield Road, Wintering Lake, Blueberry Road, Eldee Landing, Nakina and Hardrock (Aboriginal Business Network, 2015).

#### ***Travel and Access***

Travel routes that have been previously identified include a route on the north end of Wildgoose Lake, through the Southwest Arm of Kenogamisis Lake and continuing through Kenogamisis Lake and a route through Long Lake (Stantec, 2017). Campsites were identified between the Ward of Geraldton and Kenogamisis Lake, south of the Southwest Arm of Kenogamisis Lake and along the western shore of Long Lake (Stantec, 2017). Cabins and campsites are used intermittently, depending on the season, with cabins mainly being used in the winter. These are strategically located within Long Lake #58 First Nation's traditional territory and an appropriate distance from sacred sites and natural resources (Stantec, 2017).



## **Cultural Continuity**

### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

The environmental assessment for the Greenstone Gold Mine Project identified that sacred sites have been identified near the railway, east of the Ward of Geraldton, along the shores of Long Lake and surrounding the community of Long Lake (Stantec, 2017). Narrows Lake is described as a sacred area. Medicine gathering locations occur east of Kenogamisis Lake south of Highway 11, in and around the Long Lake community, and west of Michael Power Boulevard (Stantec, 2017). MacLeod Provincial Park and the shores of Kenogamisis Lake were additionally recognized as ceremonial areas (Stantec, 2017).

Members of Long Lake #58 First Nation have also identified cabins near the railway between the Ward of Geraldton and the community of Long Lake, and along the shores of Long Lake. The location of cabins is typically an appropriate distance from sacred sites and near the natural resources being harvested (Stantec, 2017).

The Long Lake #58 Land Code emphasizes the community's relationship with the land and water, stating: "Long Lake #58 First Nation has a profound relationship with the Land that is rooted in respect for the Spiritual value of the Earth and the gifts of the Creator and has a deep desire to preserve their relationship with the Land" (Long Lake #58 First Nation, 2016).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Long Lake #58 First Nation Early Learning Centre implements daily Ojibway language and culture education along with the seven Grandfather Teachings into their curriculum. The community is committed to preserving and revitalizing their language. According to the Long Lake #58 First Nation website, "We strive to maintain our language and cultural practices through various community programs and initiatives" (Long Lake #58 First Nation, n.d.). Language education is a key component of the community's efforts.

As part of the Matawa Education Department, Long Lake #58 First Nation is included in the Matawa Waka Tere language program. See **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Use and Preservation of Indigenous Language' for further details.

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Migizi Wazisin Elementary School and Migizi Miigwanan Secondary School have education programming rooted in the Medicine Wheel and Seven Grandfathers teachings. Learning experiences at both schools are based on Anishinaabe tradition. At the beginning of each learning week, students gather in a Circle to hear announcements, say prayers, and to sing and drum (Long Lake #58 First Nation, 2025). Migizi Wazisin Elementary School and Migizi Miigwanan Secondary School play a significant role in holding community gatherings, feasts, ceremonies, and celebrations to share the goals, challenges, and successes of the students. The school grounds include a teaching lodge that holds classes and ceremonies throughout the seasons (Long Lake #58 First Nation, 2025). At the end of the school year, the community honour those students who are graduating Kindergarten and Grade 8 by having a 'Moving on Celebration' and pipe ceremony, the students also see the blessing of the berry and the water (Garrick, 2016).



Several camps have been held at Long Lake #58 including:

- Fasting and Traditional Teachings camp has been held for children 8 to 12 years old where they are taught the importance of traditional medicines and their uses (Garrick, 2016).
- Vision Quest Teachings camp has been held at Long Lake #58 and female youth and male youth attend at different times. Men guide the boys, imparting lessons on survival and responsibility, while women's teachings centre on caregiving (Garrick, 2016).

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Long Lake #58 First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Long Lake #58 First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Long Lake #58 First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

The WSR Project Team met with Long Lake #58 First Nation in November 2023 and February 2025 in Thunder Bay to discuss the Project, and how Long Lake #58 First Nation can participate in the EAR/IS preparation, including the assessment of potential impacts on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

During the terms of reference stage for WSR, Long Lake #58 First Nation affirmed that under Mamow-Wecheekapawetahteewinn (Matawa First Nations Management, 2011) the collective traditional territories of the nine Matawa member First Nations are under their control and that approval to operate in their respective territories cannot be given by the Government or any other external entities. The nine Matawa First Nations Management member communities are connected through their language, cultural, social and economic interests and all live and rely upon the lands, water and resources entrusted to us by the Creator. Long Lake #58 First Nation expressed concerns that this project is undergoing an individual provincial EA process. During the second Aboriginal and/or Treaty Rights and Interest Forum in November 2023, Long Lake #58 First Nation expressed interest in training for jobs during construction and operation of the Project. Long Lake #58 First Nation indicated that there will be both positive and negative impacts from the Project and that they want to be a partner in building the road.

### **Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions**

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### **Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)**

The Long Lake #58 First Nation Land Code includes (Long Lake #58, 2016):

- The "description of reserve lands and how new lands can be added;
- General rules and procedures for the use and occupation of these lands by members and others;
- Financial accountability for revenues and expenditures;
- The making and publishing of land laws;
- Stringent conflict of interest rules;
- A process to develop rules and procedures applicable to land on the breakdown of a marriage;
- A dispute resolution process;



- Procedures by which Long Lake #58 First Nation can grant interests in land or acquire lands for community purposes;
- The delegation of land management responsibilities; and
- Any other matter respecting the management of Long Lake #58 First Nation Land.

The Land Code provides the community with greater control over-land management, allowing them to make decisions about zoning, by-laws, land management, and more (Long Lake #58 First Nation, 2017a). The Land Code also includes provisions for protecting sites of cultural, historical, archaeological, anthropological, or spiritual importance, referred to as "Heritage Sites" (Long Lake #58 First Nation, 2016).

The First Nation community is governed by a Chief and Twelve Councillors, who are elected for two years under the *Indian Act*. Long Lake #58 First Nation is a member of Matawa First Nations Management and Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

#### **19.2.2.3.9 Métis Nation of Ontario (Region 2)**

Information regarding Métis Nation of Ontario (Region 2)'s cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Métis Nation of Ontario (Region 2). The following section and impacts assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions. Information in this section is general to the Métis Nation of Ontario.

### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

The Métis stand as a unique Indigenous community with a distinct history, culture, language and territory that encompasses the waterways of Ontario, encircles the great lakes, and spans the historical Northwest region. Founded in the early 1990's, the Métis Nation of Ontario represents the collective aspirations, rights and interests of Métis people and communities throughout Ontario.

#### ***Hunting and Fishing***

Métis Nation of Ontario members hunt moose, deer, ruffed grouse, geese and various duck species, black bear, beaver, marten, mink, rabbit, partridge and lynx (Stantec, 2017).

Métis Nation of Ontario fish for the following species: bass, burbot (ling cod) northern pike (jackfish), yellow perch, walleye, rainbow smelt (smelt), sucker, trout, lake whitefish, salmon, lake sturgeon and other non-commercial fish (Stantec, 2017). Fishing areas of importance that Métis Nation of Ontario have previously outlined include Kenogamisis Lake, Goldfield Lake, Magnet Creek, and Moser Lake and Southwest Arm Tributary (Stantec, 2017).

#### ***Plant Gathering***

Métis Nation of Ontario members gather ferns, berries (blueberries and raspberries), herbs, chanterelle, and shaggy mane mushrooms, chaga mushrooms and trees. These have multiple uses, including food, medicinal, ceremonial and construction purposes (Stantec, 2017).



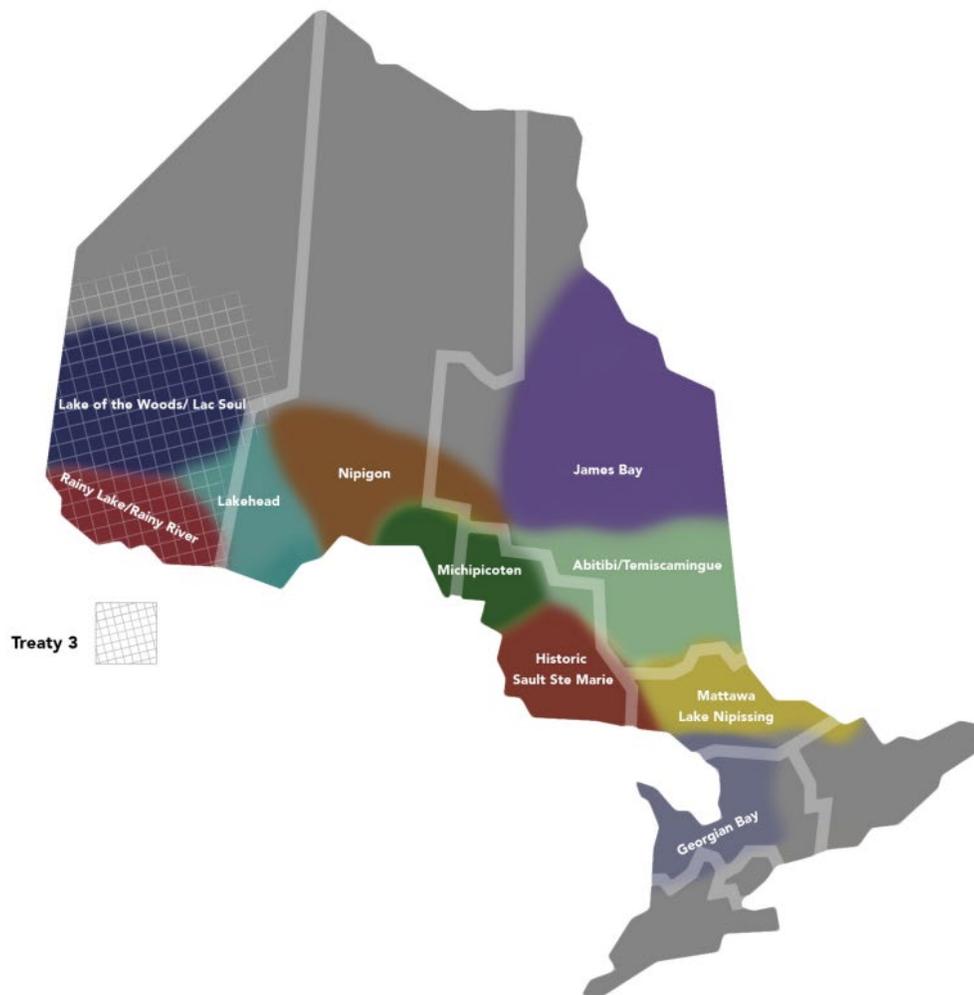
## Travel and Access

Métis Nation of Ontario have asserted regional rights for historic Métis communities throughout Ontario.

Métis sites and routes for cultural practices, land and water travel have been identified along Long Lake #58, Ginoogaming, Lake Nipigon, and areas near Longlac, reflecting the historical presence and mobility of Métis communities in Northwestern Ontario. While past Hudson's Bay Company posts in the region are recognized as historic Métis sites, contemporary land use continues to reflect traditional patterns. Citizens of the Métis Nation of Ontario actively participate in seasonal and cultural camps that emphasize land-based learning, including trapping, navigation, and harvesting, often held in natural settings around Geraldton and Beardmore. These camps involve the use of cabins, bush camps, and temporary structures, reinforcing the community's enduring connection to the land and traditional ways of life (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2022, 2024c, 2025h).

Métis Nation of Ontario Harvester map is shown in **Figure 19.16** which includes their traditional harvesting territories.

**Figure 19.16: Métis Nation of Ontario Harvester Map**



Source: Métis Nation of Ontario, 2025a



## **Cultural Continuity**

### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Métis Nation of Ontario consider camping sites as having important spiritual or ceremonial connections (Stantec, 2017). Bush camps along the east side of Kenogamisis Lake and west of Goldfield Lake have been identified (Stantec, 2017). Kenogamisis Lake is also an important travel and cultural route. Other areas identified as areas of Métis cultural practice include near the outlet of Goldfield Creek, north of Mosher Lake, Rosedale Point, Barton Bay (West), MacLeod Provincial Park and in the Geraldton area (Stantec, 2017).

Waterways were integral to the Métis people and communities and continue to be an important part of Métis culture, identity and traditional use of lands and resources. Historically, Métis communities developed interconnected Métis populations at Michipicoten, Pic River, Fort William, Nipigon House, and Long Lake (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2017).

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

The Métis are a distinct Indigenous People with a unique history, culture, language, and way of life. Distinct Métis settlements emerged as an outgrowth of the fur trade, along freighting waterways and watersheds. In Ontario, these settlements were part of larger regional communities, interconnected by the highly mobile lifestyle of the Métis, the fur trade network, seasonal rounds, extensive kinship connections and a shared collective history and identity (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2024).

The Métis Nation of Ontario emphasizes the importance of cultural identity, stating: "We, the Métis, are a people of the lands, which gave rise to our history and tradition and culture. These are the lands of our past which nurture us today and which we value as the lands of our future". The Métis Nation of Ontario supports its communities in striving toward the Métis Nation of Ontario Statement of Prime Purpose, which includes promoting Métis identity, culture (including Michif), and community (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2017).

The Métis Nation of Ontario emphasizes the importance of cultural ceremonies in preserving Métis identity and traditions. "The Métis are a distinct Indigenous People with a unique history, culture, language, and way of life. Cultural ceremonies and celebrations are vital in maintaining our collective history and identity" (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2025b). Louis Riel Day is held every year on November 16 across the Métis homeland, this is the anniversary of Riel's execution in 1885 (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2025c).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

The traditional language spoken by Métis people is Michif. It serves as the distinctive language of the Métis community. The number of Michif speakers has diminished over time due to the colonization process which suppressed languages other than French and English in Canada. Ongoing initiatives are now dedicated to conserve the Michif language, fostering a new generation of speakers (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2025d).

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

The Métis Nation of Ontario (Region 2) holds Section 35(1) rights, including the right to hunt, trap, fish, and gather material that are important to Métis culture. This includes being able to practice its culture and share it with future generations.



## ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

## ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

The Métis Nation of Ontario is governed by the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario. This structure guarantees that community and regional interests are represented, along with other demographic segments such as youth, women, and Senators (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2025e). The Métis Nation of Ontario is committed to preserving and sharing Métis history and truth. In 2021, the Métis National Council Annual General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the formation of an Expert Panel to review the history of the seven Métis communities in Ontario (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2024).

The Métis Nation of Ontario has a democratic, province-wide governance structure. Every four years Métis citizens have the opportunity to choose their provincial and regional leadership, by voting in province-wide ballot box elections (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2025f). Regional Métis Nation of Ontario communities have Aboriginal Rights in traditional territories in Ontario. These traditional territories support traditional activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, plant gathering for food and medicines, and other social and cultural activities. Métis Nation of Ontario “Region 2” is located in Northwestern Ontario, generally in the Thunder Bay district census division, and is made up of three Métis Nation of Ontario Community Councils that represent the Lakehead/Nipigon/Michipicoten traditional Métis Nation of Ontario territory (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2025g). The three Métis Nation of Ontario Community Councils are as follows:

- Superior North Shore Métis Council;
- Greenstone Métis Council; and
- Thunder Bay Métis Council.

On June 27, 2019, the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Government of Canada signed the Métis Nation of Ontario -Canada Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement. The signing of the Self-Government Agreement was an historic victory for Métis citizens and communities represented by the Métis Nation of Ontario. In the Self-Government Agreement, Canada recognizes that the Métis communities represented by the Métis Nation of Ontario hold the inherent right to self-government and self-determination (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2019). In 2023, The Métis Nation of Ontario and Canadian government signed an updated Self-Government Agreement. Canada officially recognizes that the MNO is the Indigenous government for the Métis communities represented by the MNO (Government of Canada, 2023). The Métis collectivity includes MNO citizens who are Métis rights-holders and those entitled to become citizens as well as Métis communities in Ontario. In addition, the 2023 agreement recognizes (Government of Canada, 2023):

- The Métis communities represented by the MNO are a successor to the historic Métis Nation and one of the Métis collectives that make up the Métis Nation today;
- The Métis communities represented by the MNO hold the inherent right of self-government recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*;
- The MNO has law-making powers in areas such as citizenship, leadership selection, and government operations;



- The MNO is an Indigenous governing body for the purposes of An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families.

In addition to the recognition set out above, the 2023 agreement includes a commitment to negotiate a self-government treaty between the MNO and Canada in the next two years (Government of Canada, 2023).

Métis Nation of Ontario has a ‘Framework Agreement on Métis harvesting’ that was signed in 2018 that states that Métis harvesting rights means “hunting, trapping, fishing and gathering of natural resources for food, social or ceremonial purposes (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2018). From this framework agreement, Métis Nation of Ontario Harvesters Card holders are able to exercise their Métis harvesting rights—within the Métis Nation of Ontario identified Harvesting Areas—consistent with Métis laws and traditions as expressed in the Métis Nation of Ontario Harvesting Policy (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2018). Métis Nation of Ontario have identified 12 Métis Traditional Harvesting Territories where it asserts Métis harvesting rights exist (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2016). Harvesters Cards are issued within the Métis Harvesting Territories for Métis Nation of Ontario citizens, subject to certain criteria being met that is set out by the Métis Nation of Ontario Harvester Policy (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2023)

The Métis Nation of Ontario has developed a province-wide Métis Traditional Land Use or Métis Way of Life Framework to collect Métis Traditional Knowledge and help gain a better understanding of Métis interests, rights, harvesting patterns, and land use (Métis Nation of Ontario, 2020). The Métis Way of Life Framework approach has been implemented through numerous Métis Nation of Ontario led studies to document traditional use of lands and resources as part of EAR/IS processes throughout Ontario, including in the RSA of the Project. These studies are typically not publicly available.

#### 19.2.2.3.10 Mishkeegogamang First Nation

Information regarding Mishkeegogamang First Nation’s cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Mishkeegogamang First Nation. The following section and impact assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

#### Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes

Mishkeegogamang First Nation, previously known as Osnaburgh House, is located 310 km north of the City of Thunder Bay and 283 km southwest of Webequie First Nation in northern Ontario. It is situated near the shores of Lake St. Joseph along Highway 599 which runs between Ignace and Pickle Lake. See **Figure 19.5** for a Area of Interest for Planning.

#### *Hunting, Fishing and Trapping*

Various animals are noted in proximity to the community on their website, but it is unclear which of these species are hunted. Moose, black bear, woodland Caribou, wolverine and deer are some of the species mentioned (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2025).

Mishkeegogamang First Nation fish for the following species: whitefish, sturgeon, trout, pike pickerel and perch. A few community members fish commercially, selling through the Freshwater Fish Marketing Board (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2025).



Around 100 Band members receive trapping licenses each year. Beaver, mink, otter, lynx, and muskrat are trapped, and the furs are sent to auction houses such as the Fur Harvester's Auction of North Bay, Ontario, which sells furs all around the world (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2025).

### ***Plant Gathering***

Community members practice traditional activities on the land, such as harvesting blueberries during July and August. Wild rice has been grown in the past, but the practice has declined due to fluctuating water levels (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2025). Tobacco, cedar, sage and sweetgrass is also traditionally harvested, (Gray, N.d).

### **Cultural Continuity**

#### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

The traditional territory of Mishkeegogamang First Nation is made up of the communities of the Main Reserve, Bottle Hill, Poplar Heights, Sandy Road, Doghole Bay, Rat Rapids, Cedar Rapids, Ten Houses, Eric Lake, Ace Lake, Metcalfe, Pashkokogan, Mile 50, Fitchie Lake, Mile 42, Mile 29, Menako, and the shores of Lake St. Joseph. (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2010a). Mishkeegogamang First Nation members have previously camped around Lake St. Joseph, and log cabins and wigwams were built along the 1900s (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2010a).

Osnaburgh House on Lake St. Joseph had been a meeting place for a cluster of family groups prior to the signing of Treaty No. 9 in 1905 (Mishkeegogamang First nation, 2010a). The newly formed Band members were told at the signing of the treaty, that they would not have to live on the reserves that were designated to Mishkeegogamang First Nation (known as Osnaburgh Band at the time) (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2010a). In the decades following the signing of the treaty, the family groups continued to live as they had before, by spending summers on the shores of Lake St. Joseph, and winters in the bush (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2010a).

#### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Mishkeegogamang First Nation has a deep cultural connection to water resources which is integral to their way of life and traditions. Waterways are an integral part of community life. Waterways have been and continue to be an important socio-cultural and economic part of daily life of Indigenous communities. Waterways connect families and friends and provide an important part of the transportation network.

Mishkeegogamang First Nations tell stories (such as creations stories, legends, and certain life/well-being teachings) to pass knowledge to other generations (Mishkeegogamang First Nation 2010c).

Sioux Lookout First Nations Healthy Authority (2025) serves Mishkeegogamang First Nation, providing traditional teachings and activities and supporting community members' wellness journeys through ceremonies, as part of its commitment to culturally grounded health services; please refer to **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Cultural Traditions and Practices for further details.

Participants in the Junior Canadian Rangers Program for youth (12-18 years) teaches various skills including but not limited to first aid, using rifles safely, hunting and fishing, Native customs and traditions, healthy living, staying in school and problematic alcohol and substance use awareness" (211 Ontario North, 2024b).



## ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Approximately two-thirds of the people in Mishkeegogamang speak and understand Ojibwe. The language is written in syllabics, and today it is also written in the English alphabet (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2010a). The Ojibway language is integral to culture and community in Mishkeegogamang. A community member reflected on how information and communication technologies and translation programs could be very beneficial for community members, potentially supporting increased communication in Ojibway (Gibson et al, 2011).

Gaa-minwaajindizowaaj is an unincorporated, grassroots organization seeking to revitalize the Anishinaabe language among Indigenous youth founded by youth from Mishkeegogamang First Nation. The organization is community-driven, with an emphasis on relationship-building, (re)localization, Youth leadership, community healing and accessibility (Gaa-minwaajindizowaaj, n.d.). Their objectives are to:

- Create Anishinaabe language resources that support Anishinaabe language learning and revitalization efforts;
- Support Indigenous Youth in developing their language proficiency, building networks and developing leadership skills; and
- Facilitate Anishinaabe language classes that promote immersion-based learning.

Gaa-minwaajindizowaaj's (2020) work includes developing Anishinaabe language classes, hosting workshops, presenting keynotes, and participating on panels to share about Indigenous language revitalization, Youth leadership and the community arts (Gaa-minwaajindizowaaj, n.d.).

## ***Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights***

Mishkeegogamang First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Mishkeegogamang First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Mishkeegogamang First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

## ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

## ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

The community is not formally affiliated with any First Nations tribal council, but it is part of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

The community is governed by a Band Council consisting of a Chief and five Councillors, nominated and elected by the members of the community for two-year terms. Four of the six council members must be present to make formal decisions (Mishkeegogamang First Nation, 2010d).



### **19.2.2.3.11 North Caribou Lake First Nation**

Information regarding North Caribou Lake First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from North Caribou Lake First Nation. The following section and impact assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

#### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

North Caribou Lake First Nation is located 530 km north of Thunder Bay and 265 km northwest of Webequie First Nation. It is situated on the northern shore of Weagamow or Round Lake and is accessible year around by the all-season Northern Resource Trail from Pickle Lake.

#### ***Hunting, Fishing and Trapping***

Hunting is central activities for the North Caribou Lake First Nation. These practices provide food and reinforce cultural traditions and knowledge. North Caribou Lake First Nation members hunt moose, woodland Caribou, and other game (North Caribou Lake First Nation, 2014).

North Caribou Lake First Nation identified the following species that are caught: sturgeon, pike, bass and walleye (Golder, 2018). Other fish include whitefish, white sucker, longnose sucker and lake trout were also caught (Rogers, 1976).

North Caribou Lake First Nation identified the following species that are trapped: snowshoe hare, beaver, marten, (Golder, 2018). Hares are important in the food economy of North Caribou Lake First Nation (Rogers, 1976). Historically, there was less dependence on smaller game, such as beaver, muskrat, grouse, and waterfowl, for sustenance; smaller game was shot, snared or trapped (Rogers, 1976).

#### ***Plant Gathering***

The community gathers various medicinal plants from their traditional lands, which are used for healing and wellness, following traditional knowledge passed down through generations (North Caribou Lake First Nation, 2014).

#### **Cultural Continuity**

##### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

The community has used a series of "home base camps" along the shores of Meagamow Lake and North Caribou Lake to the east, as well as temporary "satellite camps" (Gordon, 1983).

North Caribou Lake First Nation would historically gather every summer at the home of their leader, Gici David, located at Atikup Point. When Gici David died in 1907, the Anglican Church built a church at this location (Gordon, 1983). Atikup Point continues to be an important gathering area for North Caribou Lake First Nation.

Banksian pines stands are a culturally important place because hares prefer them as habitat, and North Caribou Lake First Nation members have historically used these stands for annual trapping (Rogers, 1976).



### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Traditional ceremonies, such as pow-wows, smudging, and naming ceremonies, are integral to the community's cultural practices. These ceremonies provide opportunities for community members to connect and share their traditions. "Our ceremonies are a way to celebrate our culture and honour our ancestors" (North Caribou Lake First Nation, 2014).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

North Caribou Lake First Nation is actively involved in revitalizing their traditional language. A new school for North Caribou Lake First Nation was built in 2022 and it includes an immersive Oji-Cree language program for younger students to preserve and promote the native language (211 North, 2022).

### ***Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights***

North Caribou Lake First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. North Caribou Lake First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to North Caribou Lake First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

North Caribou Lake First Nation elect's officials through a custom electoral system, which consists of a Chief and seven councillors. The most recent election was held on February 23, 2024 (CIRNAC, 2023d). They are members of the Windigo First Nations Council and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (Windigo First Nations Council, 2025). Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

In 2015, North Caribou Lake First Nation entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Romios Gold Resources Inc. (Burega, 2015). In 2017, the community completed the Wa-Pik-Che-Wanoog Bridge, which connects to the Northern Ontario Resource Trail (NORT), providing year-round road access to Ontario's highway system.

North Caribou Lake First Nation is also part of a formal agreement with Newmont Musselwhite Mine that includes revenue sharing, employment, training and business development opportunities (Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission, N.D). "The agreement sets targets for First Nations employment, opportunities for business development and environmental protection. The communities decide how the funds are managed" (Natural Resources Canada, 2015.)

#### **19.2.2.3.12 Wapekeka First Nation**

Information regarding Wapekeka First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Wapekeka First Nation. The following section and impact assessment



(Section 19.3) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Wapekeka First Nation is located 610 km north of the City of Thunder Bay and 193 km northwest of Webequie First Nation in northern Ontario. The community is situated on the shores of Angling Lake.

In 1947, the origins of the Angling Lake community were formed as a satellite community used in winter by families from Big Trout Lake whose traplines were located in the area. Beginning in 1960, permanent communities apart from the Big Trout Lake Band were established. These communities were Kingfisher Lake, Wunnumin Lake, Bearskin Lake, Kasabonika, Muskrat Dam, Sachigo Lake and Wapekeka. Wapekeka received official Band status and two reserves in 1979. On August 28, 1981, the Angling Lake Band officially changed its name to Wapekeka First Nation (Wapekeka First Nation, 2025a).

In the absence of Project-specific information gathered by the Wapekeka community, the detailed land use and occupancy mapping published by the Kayahna Tribal Area Council in 1985, titled 'The Kayahna Region land utilization and occupancy study' (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985) was used to provide historical land and resource use information.

The traditional lands of Wapekeka First Nation are vital to their cultural identity. These lands include areas used for hunting, fishing, and gathering, which are essential for sustaining their way of life. Wapekeka First Nation has several sacred sites that hold spiritual significance. These sites are used for ceremonies, rituals, and other cultural practices. The community has various facilities that support cultural activities, including the community centre, school, and health centre. These facilities provide spaces for cultural education, gatherings, and health services. The natural resources within Wapekeka First Nation's traditional lands, such as forests, lakes, and rivers, are crucial for their cultural practices and sustainability. These resources are managed responsibly to protect their availability for future generations (Wapekeka First Nation, 2025c).

#### ***Hunting, Fishing and Trapping***

Hunting is a vital activity for Wapekeka First Nation, providing food and reinforcing cultural traditions. Community members hunt various game, including moose, Caribou, and small game. These practices are passed down through generations, preserving the continuation of traditional knowledge. During the fall Caribou hunt, families would meet at the confluence of the Sachigo and Severn Rivers (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Wapekeka First Nation heavily utilize the land around Big Trout Lake with a strong reliance on the Fawn River system. Hunting occurs throughout the Wapekeka First Nation community with multiple community members hunting the entire year. Moose, Caribou, beaver and marten have been identified as species that are hunted (Golder Associates 2018).

Fishing is equally important, with community members fishing in local lakes and rivers. Fishing not only supports the community's dietary needs but also strengthens their connection to the land and water (Wapekeka First Nation, 2025a). Fishing in local lakes and rivers is a key part of Wapekeka First Nation's connection to water. Sustainable fishing practices are employed to protect the health of fish populations and the continued availability of this vital resource. Water-related activities often involve community participation, with Elders teaching younger generations about traditional methods and the importance of respecting nature. There was a heavy dependence on rivers as a resource, especially Big Trout Lake, Long Lake, Wapekeka Lake and tributaries of the Severn and Fawn Rivers (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Fishing in the Asheweig River system for walleye, sturgeon, whitefish and pike are common



(Golder Associates, 2018). Areas along Big Trout Lake, Long Dog, Fawn River and Bug River and Mishwamakan River are also important areas for fishing and trapping.

Trapping routes and trails are used to access hunting areas. Some community members fly to the Asheweig River to hunt (Golder Associates, 2018). Trapping occurs mostly to the north as Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug traplines are to the south. Fishing in the Asheweig River system for walleye, sturgeon, whitefish, pike is common (Golder Associates, 2018). Areas along Big Trout Lake, Long Dog, Fawn River and Bug River and Mishwamakan River are also important areas for fishing and trapping. During the fall Caribou hunt, families would meet at the confluence of the Sachigo and Severn Rivers (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

Hunting and fishing are community activities, often involving group outings and shared knowledge. Elders play a crucial role in teaching younger generations about traditional methods and the importance of respecting nature (Wapekeka First Nation, 2025c).

### ***Travel and Access***

Fawn-Otter River is an important location for members of Wapekeka First Nation (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). There are multiple summer travel routes – two main ones have members travelling to Big Trout Lake from Wapekeka as well as north along the Fawn River (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Another summer route includes travel between Kasabonika and Big Trout Lake via Wapekeka Lake (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). There are two main winter travel routes for Wapekeka First Nation member – the first is north and east of Wapekeka Lake and Otter Lake between the Witegoo River on the west and Ghost Lake on the east. This route extends along Fawn River. The second winter route is south of Big Trout Lake, centred on the Bug and Mishwamakan Rivers (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

### **Cultural Continuity**

#### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

The traditional lands of Wapekeka First Nation are vital to their cultural identity. These lands include areas used for hunting, fishing, and gathering, which are essential for sustaining their way of life. Wapekeka First Nation has several sacred sites that hold spiritual significance. These sites are used for ceremonies, rituals, and other cultural practices. The community has various facilities that support cultural activities, including the community centre, school, and health centre. These facilities provide spaces for cultural education, gatherings, and health services. The natural resources within Wapekeka First Nation's traditional lands, such as forests, lakes, and rivers, are crucial for their cultural practices and sustainability. These resources are managed responsibly to protect their availability for future generations (Wapekeka First Nation, 2025c).

A precontact unmarked burial site was previously found in 1988 when the Wapekeka First Nation airstrip was under construction (Hamilton, 2004).

### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

Wapekeka First Nation offers various programs and services to support its community members, including health services, educational programs, and cultural initiatives. Efforts are continuously made to revitalize and preserve the community's cultural traditions, including language and ceremonies. These initiatives are crucial for maintaining the community's cultural identity (Wapekeka First Nation, 2025c).



The community practices hunting and fishing activities, food preparation (butchering, cleaning and cooking), community feasts, community cookouts, memorial feasts and informal meals. Wapekeka First Nation community members have a diet that consists of market food and food harvested from the land (Robidoux, 2021).

Sioux Lookout First Nations Healthy Authority (2025) serves Wapekeka First Nation, providing traditional teachings and activities and support community members' wellness journeys through ceremonies, as part of its commitment to culturally grounded health services.

Wapekeka First Nation hunters train younger hunters to build community capacity that works towards addressing access to traditional food. Disruptions to the dissemination of land-based knowledge are a challenge when attempting to strengthen food security and food sovereignty (Loukes et al., 2022).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

The main language spoken in Wapekeka First Nation is Oji-Cree, a mixture of Cree and Ojibway. Language is a vital part of their cultural identity, connecting community members to their heritage and traditions. Traditional practices such as hunting, fishing, and gathering are central to the community's way of life. These activities not only provide sustenance but also reinforce cultural traditions and knowledge passed down through generations. The teachings and wisdom of Elders are highly respected and form the foundation of many community practices. Elders play a crucial role in passing down knowledge and traditions (Wapekeka First Nation, 2025c).

Shibogama Education Authority provides support and assistance in developing and delivering the education program and system in the community with a focus on enhancing and furthering traditional language acquisition for the community (Shibogama First Nations Council, 2025).

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Wapekeka First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Wapekeka First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Wapekeka First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

In 2005, Wapekeka First Nation joined with Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, Muskrat Dam Lake First Nation and Wawakapewin First Nation to declare a moratorium on mining exploration and forestry on their traditional lands (Mining Watch, 2005). They outlined that they have the right to own, control and use the lands and territories as they have traditionally owned and occupied them (Mining Watch, 2005). Wapekeka First Nation is currently part of an alliance with Grassy Narrows First Nation, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation and Neskantaga First Nation to defend their lands and waters against mining prospectors (Alhmidi, 2023).

Wapekeka First Nation is a partner in the Thawikayhigan Limited Partnership (TKG Group), established in 2018, and which is owned equally by Kingfisher Lake, Kasabonika Lake, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, Wapekeka, Wawakapewin and Wunnumin Lake First Nations. The Group, based in Thunder Bay, works to generate new economic opportunities for its communities. "This is our first business acquisition that will directly service our First Nations," said Jonathon Mamakwa, President of the TKG Group. "This is key in our overall plan in contributing to the development of healthy First Nation communities with vibrant economies that support future generations," he adds (Dryden Now, 2023).



### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

Wapekeka First Nation's Chief, Deputy Chief and four Band Council members are elected every three years under the Custom Electoral System (211 Ontario North, 2022).

Wapekeka First Nation is part of the Shibogama First Nations Council and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (Shibogama First Nation Council, 2025). Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

The northern Ontario community was connected to the provincial power grid in December 2023. Upon grid connection, the community turned off the diesel generators which had previously provided them primary power (Wataynikaneyap Transmission Project, 2025).

#### **19.2.2.3.13 Wawakapewin First Nation**

Information regarding Wawakapewin First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Wawakapewin First Nation. The following section and impact assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

Wawakapewin First Nation is located 565 km north of Thunder Bay and 125 km west of Webequie First Nation in northern Ontario. The community is situated on the southeast shore of Long Dog Lake, which is part of the Asheweig River, a tributary of the Winisk River.

In the absence of Project-specific information gathered by the Wawakapewin community, the detailed land use and occupancy mapping published by the Kayahna Tribal Area Council in 1985, titled 'The Kayahna Region land utilization and occupancy study' (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985) was used to provide historical land and resource use information. Wawakapewin First Nation have identified within their ToR for their CBLUP an area of interest for planning which includes territory that has been used by Wawakapewin members (MNR, 2019). Wawakapewin First Nations participate in traditional activities throughout their traditional territory.

### ***Hunting and Fishing***

Wawakapewin First Nation members continue to hunt, fish and trap as a means of community sustainability (Smith, 2011). As residents within Wawakapewin First Nation were historically from Big Trout Lake, Kasabonika Lake or Wapekeka, their land utilization is very dispersed (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Trapping and hunting occur around the Otter River and Bug-Mishwamakan River and the area between Frog and Otter River (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Members typically utilize Big Trout Lake or Bug-Mishwamakan River for fishing, and Long Dog Lake (less often) (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).



Historically, Wawakapewin First Nation served up to 300 people in the region northeast of Pickle Lake with fish and game. Hunting, trapping, and fishing are activities that families do together in the surrounding areas. While the fish and game are still abundant in Long Dog Lake and the Ashewieg River, the community relies on external sources for other food. Community members have decided to re-learn traditional harvesting and address their food insecurity (Smith, 2011).

### ***Travel and Access***

The community is accessible by chartered aircraft, with access depending on the time of year. A winter road provides seasonal access for approximately two months of the year. Wawakapewin First Nation is part of the Asheweig Winter Roads Corporation, a network of roads linking five other First Nations with each other and to southern centres through Pickle Lake, Ontario (Wawakapewin First Nation, 2025).

Summer travel routes include members moving to Wapekeka Lake for the summer and returning to Long Dog Lake in the fall to trap (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). There are two routes south of Long Dog Lake, one that leads to Osnaburgh House and Pickle Lake, and the other route is to Lansdowne House (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). There is a preference for east-west travel in the summer (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). The heavily used winter travel routes are from Big Trout Lake south towards Wawakapewin First Nation homeland (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

### **Cultural Continuity**

#### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Wawakapewin First Nation have identified within their Terms of Reference for their CBLUP an area of interest for planning which includes territory that has been used by Wawakapewin members (**Figure 19.17**).

The history of Wawakapewin has been handed down through oral tradition from Elders. The Wawakapewuk are descendants of the people who lived and used this land and its resources for at least 7,000 years. The people of Wawakapewin maintain the practices of hunting, fishing, trapping, and plant gathering (Mason, 2017).

#### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

The community emphasizes the importance of maintaining a strong relationship with the land. This connection is seen as vital for the community's well-being and sustainability. Traditional practices such as hunting, fishing, and gathering are central to the community's way of life. The teachings and wisdom of Elders are highly respected and form the foundation of many community practices. Elders play a crucial role in passing down knowledge and traditions. Efforts are continuously made to revitalize and preserve the community's cultural traditions, including language and ceremonies. These initiatives are crucial for maintaining the community's cultural identity (Wawakapewin First Nation, n.d.). Wawakapewin First Nation offers various programs and services to support its community members, including health services, educational programs, and cultural initiatives. These programs help preserve the community's cultural heritage and protect the well-being of its members (Wawakapewin First Nation, n.d.).

Sioux Lookout First Nations Healthy Authority (2025) serves Wawakapewin First Nation, providing traditional teachings and activities and support for community members' wellness journeys through ceremonies, as part of its commitment to culturally grounded health services; please refer to **Section 19.2.2.1** 'Cultural Traditions and Practices for further details.



### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

The people of Wawakapewin First Nation communicate in two languages: Oji-Cree, a blend of Ojibway and Cree, and English. Most community members are fluent in both and use them with ease, however, some Elders may be less comfortable with English (Wawakapewin First Nation, 2025).

Shibogama Education Authority provides support and assistance in developing and delivering the education program and system in the community with a focus on enhancing and furthering traditional language acquisition for the community (Shibogama First Nations Council, 2025).

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Wawakapewin First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Wawakapewin First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Wawakapewin First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

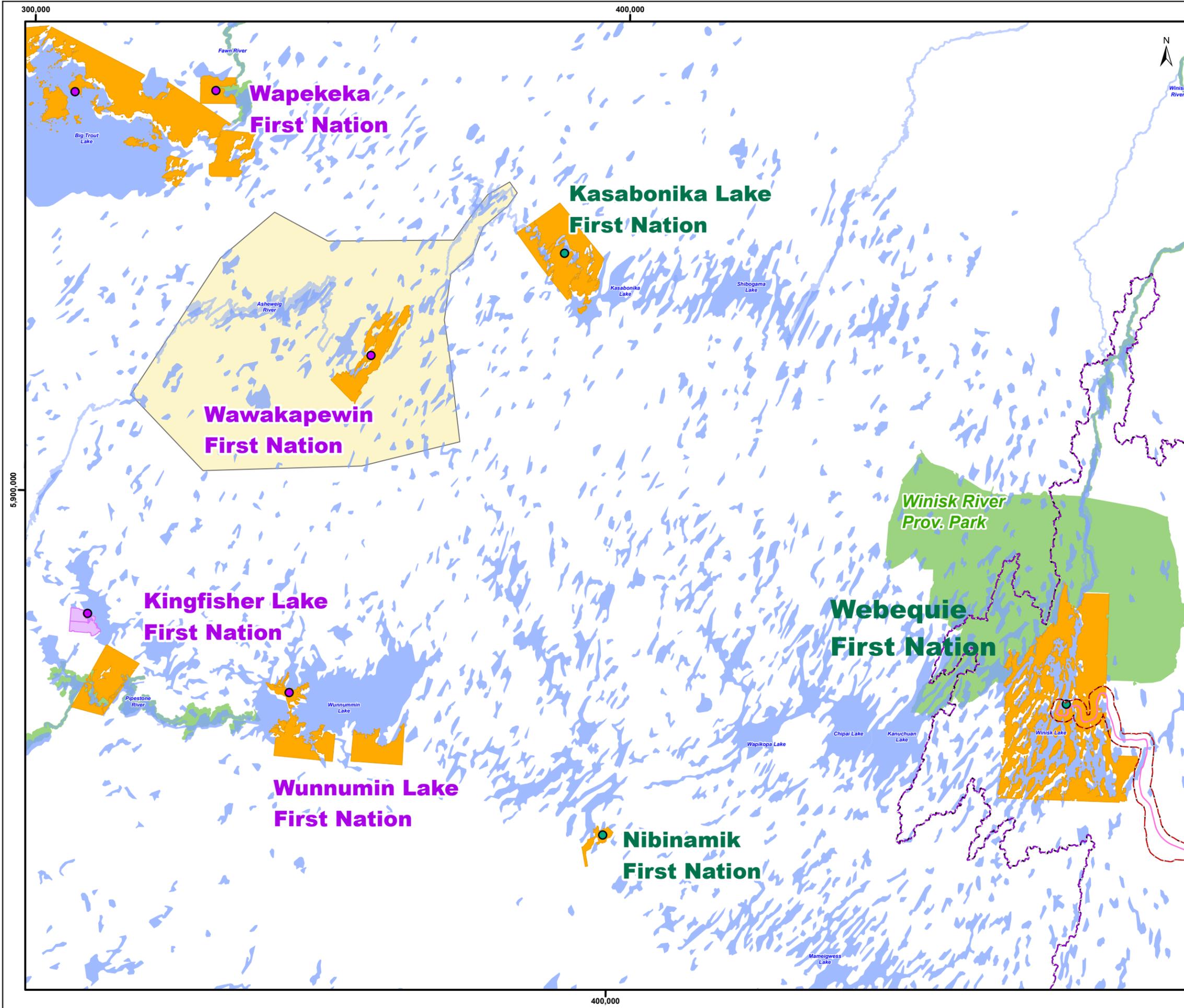
Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

Wawakapewin First Nation has a Chief and one Councillor, with a custom electoral system. The next election is scheduled for September 9, 2025 (CIRNAC, 2023e). The community elects a Chief and Councillors through a custom electoral system. Wawakapewin First Nation is a member of Shibogama First Nations Council, and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

Wataynikaneyap Power is supplying power to the community of Wawakapewin First Nation (Wataynikaneyap Transmission Project, 2025). The northern Ontario community was connected to the provincial power grid on August 16, 2023. Upon grid connection, the community turned off the diesel generators which had previously provided them primary power. Wawakapewin Chief Anne Marie Beardy stated, “This is a big day for our little community. Lack of reliable power meant not being able to grow. It limited the amount of community members who could stay in Wawakapewin all year long, instead of just seasonally. We are proud to majority own this power system on the Homelands, bringing reliable power to First Nations” (Wataynikaneyap Power, 2023).





- Legend**
- Preferred Route
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Local Study Area
  - Traditional Land and Resource Use, Cultural Continuity and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Regional Study Area
  - Local Study Area
  - Regional Study Area
  - Wawakapewin First Nation Area of Interest for Planning (AIP)
  - First Nation Reserve – Community Engaged in the Project
  - First Nation Reserve
  - Waterbody
  - Provincial Park
  - Conservation Reserve
  - Federal National Park
  - All-Season Road
  - Rail
  - Cities/Towns

## Webequie Supply Road (WSR)

Wawakapewin First Nation  
Area of Interest for Planning

|                |                       |                 |           |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Figure Number: | 19 - 17               | REV             | PA        |
| Client:        | Webequie First Nation | Project Number: | 661910    |
|                |                       | Date:           | 1/22/2026 |
| DSC            |                       | DRN             | CHK       |
|                |                       | LZ              | VS        |
|                |                       | APP             | VS        |



**NOTES**

- Coordinate System: NAD 1983 Ontario MNR Lambert.
- Cadastral boundaries are for informational purposes only and should not be considered suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.
- Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information; and, Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date : 2021-02-04

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#### **19.2.2.3.14 Wunnumin Lake First Nation**

Information regarding Wunnumin Lake First Nation's cultural and traditional existing conditions is limited. Information has been requested from the community, and when and/or if information is obtained it will be incorporated into further Project planning. At the time of the submission of the Final EAR/IS, no further information was received from Wunnumin Lake First Nation. The following section and impact assessment (**Section 19.3**) information has been developed based on limited material compiled via public sources and engagement and consultation sessions.

#### **Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes**

In the absence of Project-specific information from the Wunnumin Lake First Nation, the detailed land use and occupancy mapping published by the Kayahna Tribal Area Council in 1985, titled 'The Kayahna Region land utilization and occupancy study' (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985) was used to provide historical land and resource use information.

Wunnumin Lake First Nation is located 500 km north of Thunder Bay, 166 km north of Pickle Lake and 125 km west of Webequie First Nation in Northwestern Ontario. The community is closest geographically to Kingfisher Lake First Nation and Nibinamik First Nation. Wunnumin Lake is situated where the Pipestone River meets the Winisk River. Today the community is situated on a peninsula of Wunnumin Lake.

Wunnumin Lake First Nation and Kingfisher Lake First Nation were historically connected with Big Beaver House as a meeting place and for trade. The HBC trading post was established at Big Beaver House in 1808 (Wunnumin First Nation, 2010a). As a result of a forest fire that destroyed the buildings at Big Beaver House, the location was abandoned and communities relocated to two areas – Kingfisher Lake – 12 km north, and Wunnumin Lake – 40 km east of Big Beaver House (Wunnumin First Nation, 2010a).

Their traditional territory was known to overlap with those of other communities, and this formed an important connection between communities, and helped to sustain the communities on a social and economic basis (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). The Pipestone River has been identified as a common hunting area for hunting of moose and geese and fishing (Golder Associates, 2018). The Ashweig River, Pipestone River and Big Trout Lake are also understood to be highly utilized for fishing. The area around Wunnumin Lake, including the areas extending from Big Beaver House on the west to Long Dog Lake in the north down to Reeb Lake on the east side and to Wallington Lake are important hunting grounds (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). There are areas around Wunnumin Lake which have had forest fires in the past and moose are often drawn to these areas and hunting activity is more frequent in these areas (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

Wunnumin Lake and the Pipestone River took their names from a historical legend of the Broken Beaver Dam made by the Big Beaver that lived on the Pipestone River (Wunnumin First Nation, 2010a). In Oji-Cree, Wun-num-mun means red earth or red clay found in this area, which is explained by the historical legend (Wunnumin First Nation, 2010b).

#### ***Hunting, Fishing and Trapping***

Historically, at Wunnumin Lake, trapping, hunting, and fishing were important sources of food and cash as well as familial and individual prestige (Sieciechowicz, 1986). Territory was known to overlap with other communities' users, and this formed an important connection between communities, and helped sustain the community's social and economic basis (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). The Pipestone River has been identified as a common hunting area for hunting of moose and geese and fishing



(Golder Associates, 2018). Wunnumin Lake First Nation harvests birch, deer, beaver, moose, geese, Caribou, sturgeon and raspberries (Golder Associates, 2018).

The Ashweig River, Pipestone River and Big Trout Lake are also understood to be highly utilized for fishing. The area around Wunnumin Lake, including the areas extending from Big Beaver House on the west to Long Dog Lake in the north down to Reeb Lake on the east side and to Wallington Lake is important hunting grounds (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). There are areas around Wunnumin Lake which have had forest fires in the past and moose are often drawn to these areas, and hunting activity is higher in these areas (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

### ***Travel and Access***

A traditional summer route included canoeing from Wunnumin Lake to Kingfisher Lake via Maria Lake or via the Pipestone River (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). From Kingfisher Lake, members can go north on the Ashweig River with several portage routes to arrive at Big Trout Lake and Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). Historically, winter travel routes were more circular and were along trapping routes and did not always follow rivers or creeks. Winter travel routes typically were between Wunnumin Lake and Kingfisher Lake (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). The heaviest travelled route is the route southeast of Wunnumin Lake to the McKay Sturgeon/*Nemeh*, Martin/*Wahbeshayshii* trapping area (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

### **Cultural Continuity**

#### ***Sites and Areas Used for Cultural and Spiritual Purposes***

Wunnumin Lake is used for fishing, trapping and hunting however, there has been a decline in fishing, trapping and hunting for sustenance (Wunnumin Lake First Nation, 2010a). The cultural identity of Wunnumin Lake First Nation is closely tied to the land and waters, reflected in historical legends and places. This includes the area known as “Broken Beaver Dam made by the Big Beaver, and the red clay that is said to have come from the Baby Beaver known as “Wun-num-mun”. The pipe created by Big Beaver in the centre of the Pipestone River is used to make pipes by Wunnumin Lake First Nation Peoples (Wunnumin Lake First Nation, 2010a). Wunnumin means red clay, this special clay was used historically by the local community for painting and patching their birchbark canoes mixed with other vegetation.

#### ***Cultural Traditions and Practices***

The importance of the presence and connection of the Wunnumin Lake First Nation with water and waterways is extensive based on historical land use mapping, which depicts fishing practices, and winter and summer travel routes that make use of waterways (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985). The Wunnumin Lake’s historical legends are connected with the colouring of the waters and the role of the beaver in its cultural identity (Wunnumin Lake First Nation, n.d).

The Wunnumin Lake First Nation community has historical kinship ties with Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, and other related communities connected to its traditional territory (Kayahna Tribal Area Council, 1985).

Traditional way of life, language, ceremony and teachings all contribute to community well-being, including community cohesion in Wunnumin Lake First Nation. Norman Martin Community Hall hosts various engagements, such as conferences, meetings, gatherings and entertainment (Wunnumin Lake First Nation, 2010). The local recreation committee plans and implements annual events, such as



Christmas activities and hockey and broomball tournaments. Various picnic and park areas have been designated for leisure activities. Beaches, lakes rivers, trails, and camping grounds surround the community for summer outdoor activities, such as swimming, camping, biking, fishing, canoeing and boating.

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (2025) serves Wunnumin Lake First Nation, providing traditional teachings, activities and support community members' wellness journeys through ceremonies, as part of its commitment to culturally grounded health services.

There has been a revival of sweat lodge ceremonies conducted and cared for by community Elders using Medaywin practices. This ceremony is to help people cleanse their mind, body and spirit (Wunnumin Lake First Nation, 2010a).

### ***Use and Preservation of Indigenous Languages***

Wunnumin Lake First Nation is an Oji-Cree speaking First Nation. John George Martin Memorial School offers an Oji-Cree immersion program for junior kindergarten to Grade 2 students, who are taught entirely in Oji-Cree. Strengthening Oji-Cree in the community is one of the school's mandates, and students are able to continue learning the language in a separate class until Grade 10, where students must go to Sioux Lookout, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay or Ottawa for their high school education (Law, 2023).

Shibogama Education Authority provides support and assistance in developing and delivering the education program and system in the community with a focus on enhancing and furthering traditional language acquisition for the community (Shibogama First Nations Council, 2025).

### **Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

Wunnumin Lake First Nation holds Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 as outlined in **Section 19.1.1.1.1**. Wunnumin Lake First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty Rights include but are not limited to the rights to hunt, trap, fish, and gather materials that are important to Wunnumin Lake First Nation culture. This includes being able to practice their culture and share it with future generations.

### ***Socio-economic, Health and Well-being Conditions***

Further details on existing social environment conditions are provided in Section 14.2. Further details on existing economic conditions are provided in Section 15.2.

### ***Traditional Laws, Roles, Responsibilities, and Governance (Self-Governance)***

The Wunnumin Lake First Nations people follow the Anishnabek Dodemag (The Clan System) and currently have one chief and five councillors, with one being a Deputy Chief (Shibogama First Nations Council, 2025). Chief and council are responsible for delivering various programs, such as health, education, administration and finance, and welfare and housing (Wunnumin Lake First Nation, 2010). Wunnumin Lake First Nation is a member of the Shibogama First Nations Council, and the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Through the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community members have access to departments within Nishnawbe Aski Nation that support finance and governance and treaty implementation (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2020b).

The lands and waters of Wunnumin Lake First Nation are used and preserved by the community as their homeland, where it is understood that rights to culture, language, fishing, gathering, hunting, and trapping were granted by the Creator (Wunnumin Lake First Nation, 2010a).



Wunnumin Lake First Nation in partnership with Shibogama First Nation is developing and implementing a community-led Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP) (O'Brien, 2025). The SWPP allows Wunnumin Lake First Nation to monitor the community's water sources and evaluate potential health risks associated with water quality.

The Wunnumin Lake First Nation's traditional territory also lies downstream from the Musselwhite Mine. This gold mine celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary recently, and Wunnumin Lake First Nation community is a signatory of an agreement with Newmont (NWOnewswatch.com, 2022).

## 19.3 Potential Effects to Indigenous Peoples

This section provides a description of potential effects of the Project on the Indigenous in consideration of the existing conditions (**Section 19.2**), their indicators of change (**Section 19.1.4**), the interactions with Project activities (**Section 19.1.6**) and the pathway of effects (**Section 19.3**).

**Table 19-11** summarizes the potential effect pathways and effect indicators for Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. The descriptions of effect pathways are grouped by their potential effect to avoid repetition, since many of the same effect pathways may occur during different phases of the Project.

As shown through the severe and long-lasting effects of colonization, destabilization of a community's culture and cohesion can affect the identities of its members (Maracle, 2021). Analysis of potential project effects on Indigenous Peoples and their land and culture must be done with acknowledgement of these colonial and historical contexts (Hoogeveen et al., 2021).

**Table 19-11: Summary of Potential Effects, effect Pathways, effect Indicators, Nature of Interaction and Linked Valued Components (VC's) for Indigenous Peoples' Values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

| Potential Effect   | Project Phase                           | Effect Pathway  | Effect Indicators   | Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect) | Linked VCs  |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Change to Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes | Construction phase and Operations phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Availability of lands and resources for traditional harvesting:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Vegetation clearing from activities related to construction and operation activities of the road could result in direct loss or loss of habitat of species of traditional importance, including plants and animals for traditional hunting, trapping and plant harvesting.</li> <li>▫ Sensory disturbance could affect the availability of habitat or the distribution of species of traditional importance.</li> <li>▫ Loss or alteration of fish habitat due to changes to watercourses.</li> <li>▫ Change to the distribution and abundance of traditionally harvested species.</li> <li>▫ Indirect effects on the experience and connection of Indigenous Peoples with the land, including perceived sufficiency of resources.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Change in available terrestrial habitat for and populations of traditionally harvested wildlife and plants;</li> <li>▪ Change in available aquatic habitat for and populations of traditionally harvested fish;</li> <li>▪ Change to the availability of traditionally harvested species; and</li> <li>▪ Identification of change in quality or quality of resources by Indigenous communities.</li> </ul> | Direct or Indirect                                    | The assessment of Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Geology, Terrain, and Soils (Section 6)</li> <li>▪ Surface Water Resources (Section 7)</li> <li>▪ Groundwater Resources (Section 8)</li> <li>▪ Atmospheric Environment (Section 9)</li> <li>▪ Fish and Fish Habitat (Section 10)</li> <li>▪ Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11)</li> <li>▪ Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12)</li> <li>▪ Species at Risk (Section 13)</li> </ul> |
| Change to Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes | Construction phase and Operations phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sites and areas used for traditional harvesting:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Loss or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting, including habitation areas during</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Loss or alteration of sites and areas used for harvesting wildlife, fish and plants; and</li> <li>▪ Loss or alteration of habitation areas (i.e., camp sites, cabins) or</li> </ul>  | Direct and Indirect                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The assessment of Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</li> </ul>  |



| Potential Effect   | Project Phase                           | Effect Pathway  | Effect Indicators   | Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect) | Linked VCs   |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|
|  |   | construction and operation activities.  | observation areas used for traditional activities.  |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Geology, Terrain, and Soils (Section 6)</li> <li>▪ Surface Water Resources (Section 7)</li> <li>▪ Groundwater Resources (Section 8)</li> <li>▪ Atmospheric Environment (Section 9)</li> <li>▪ Fish and Fish Habitat (Section 10)</li> <li>▪ Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11)</li> <li>▪ Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12)</li> <li>▪ Species at Risk (Section 13)</li> </ul>   |
| Change to Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes | Construction phase and Operations phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Construction and operations activities could result in changes to access (such as trails, portage routes and waterways) to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes to accessibility of lands and resources used for traditional harvesting purposes; and</li> <li>▪ Loss or alteration of trails, waterways, and portage routes for access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting.</li> </ul> | Direct and Indirect                                   | <p>The assessment of Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Geology, Terrain, and Soils (Section 6)</li> <li>▪ Surface Water Resources (Section 7)</li> <li>▪ Groundwater Resources (Section 8)</li> <li>▪ Atmospheric Environment (Section 9)</li> <li>▪ Fish and Fish Habitat (Section 10)</li> <li>▪ Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11)</li> <li>▪ Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12)</li> <li>▪ Species at Risk (Section 13)</li> </ul> |



| Potential Effect              | Project Phase                           | Effect Pathway  | Effect Indicators  | Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect) | Linked VCs   |
|-------------------------------|---|---|--|---|--|
| Change to Cultural Continuity | Construction phase and Operations phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Loss or alteration of sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Loss or alteration of cultural and spiritual sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes.</li> </ul>   | Direct and Indirect                                   | <p>The assessment of Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Geology, Terrain, and Soils (Section 6)</li> <li>▪ Surface Water Resources (Section 7)</li> <li>▪ Groundwater Resources (Section 8)</li> <li>▪ Atmospheric Environment (Section 9)</li> <li>▪ Fish and Fish Habitat (Section 10)</li> <li>▪ Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11)</li> <li>▪ Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12)</li> <li>▪ Species at Risk (Section 13)</li> </ul> |
| Change to Cultural Continuity | Construction phase and Operations phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Construction and operations activities could result in changes to access (such as trails, portage routes and waterways) to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes to accessibility of lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes; and</li> <li>▪ Loss or alteration of trails, waterways, and portage routes for access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes.</li> </ul> | Direct and Indirect                                   | <p>The assessment of Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Geology, Terrain, and Soils (Section 6)</li> <li>▪ Surface Water Resources (Section 7)</li> <li>▪ Groundwater Resources (Section 8)</li> <li>▪ Atmospheric Environment (Section 9)</li> <li>▪ Fish and Fish Habitat (Section 10)</li> </ul>   |



| Potential Effect              | Project Phase                           | Effect Pathway   | Effect Indicators   | Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect) | Linked VCs  |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|
|                               |   |  |   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11)</li> <li>▪ Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12)</li> <li>▪ Species at Risk (Section 13)</li> </ul>  |
| Change to Cultural Continuity | Construction phase and Operations phase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Construction and operations activities could reduce the use and preservation of Indigenous languages due to changes in population and demographics.;</li> <li>▫ Construction and operations activities could affect connection with cultural keystone species of plants and wildlife.</li> <li>▫ Construction and operations activities could affect connection with community, lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes.</li> <li>▫ Construction and operations activities could affect traditional stewardship roles and responsibilities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Change to the use and preservation of Indigenous languages;</li> <li>▪ Changes presence to cultural keystone species; and</li> <li>▪ Changes to quality and quantity of experience community and lands and resources of Indigenous Peoples.</li> </ul> | Direct and Indirect                                   | <p>The assessment of Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)</li> </ul> |



Table 19-12 summarizes the potential effect pathways and effect indicators for the Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights

**Table 19-12: Summary of Potential Effects, effect Pathways, effect Indicators, Nature of Interaction and Linked VCs for Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**

| Potential Effect                                   | Project Phase                     | Effect Pathway  | Effect Indicators  | Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect) | Linked VCs   |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Change in Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights | Construction and Operations phase | <p>The Project's construction and operation and maintenance activities are anticipated to have changes to Indigenous Peoples' rights related to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rights related to current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes and activities;</li> <li>▪ Rights related to cultural continuity;</li> <li>▪ Rights related to socio-economic, health and well-being conditions; and</li> <li>▪ Rights related to self-determination and self-governance.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes to rights related to current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes and activities;</li> <li>▪ Changes to rights related to cultural continuity;</li> <li>▪ Changes to rights related to socio-economic, health and well-being conditions; and</li> <li>▪ Changes to rights related to self-determination and self-governance.</li> </ul> | Direct and indirect                                   | <p>The assessment of Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <p><b>Current and historical use of lands and resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Geology, Terrain, and Soils (Section 6)</li> <li>▪ Surface Water Resources (Section 7)</li> <li>▪ Groundwater Resources (Section 8)</li> <li>▪ Atmospheric Environment (Section 9)</li> <li>▪ Fish and Fish Habitat (Section 10)</li> <li>▪ Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11)</li> <li>▪ Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12)</li> <li>▪ Species at Risk (Section 13)</li> </ul> <p><b>Cultural continuity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Geology, Terrain, and Soils (Section 6)</li> <li>▪ Surface Water Resources (Section 7)</li> <li>▪ Groundwater Resources (Section 8)</li> </ul> |



| Potential Effect | Project Phase | Effect Pathway | Effect Indicators | Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect) | Linked VCs   |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------|---|--|
|                  |               |                |                   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Atmospheric Environment (Section 9)</li> <li>▪ Fish and Fish Habitat (Section 10)</li> <li>▪ Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11)</li> <li>▪ Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12)</li> <li>▪ Species at Risk (Section 13)</li> <li>▪ Social Environment (Section 14)</li> <li>▪ Visual Environment (Section 18)</li> <li>▪ Cultural Heritage Resources (Section 20)</li> </ul> <p><b>Socio-economic, health and well-being conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social Environment (Section 14)</li> <li>▪ Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)</li> <li>▪ Human Health (Section 17)</li> </ul> <p><b>Self-determination and self-governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social Environment (Section 14)</li> <li>▪ Regional and Local Economy (Section 15)</li> <li>▪ Non-Traditional Land Use (Section 16)</li> <li>▪ Human Health (Section 17)</li> </ul> |



## 19.3.1 Change to Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes

This section provides an analysis of Project effects on Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes. The potential effects of the Project on Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes were identified as follows:

- Change to availability of lands and resources for traditional harvesting;
- Change to sites and areas used for traditional harvesting; and
- Change to access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting.

The area that defines LSA and RSA for current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes is shown on **Figure 19.3**.

The analysis presented here is based on limited information received to date, and does not reflect a fulsome understanding of community interpretations, concerns, or expressed impacts to their current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes.

### 19.3.1.1 Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

The potential effects of the Project on Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes for Webequie First Nation are based on information provided by the Webequie First Nation for the Project and building on previous planning studies that defined traditional land and resource use of the Webequie community, as well as the EAR/IS results for the assessment on the biophysical environment.

[REDACTED]

#### 19.3.1.1.1 Construction activities → Loss and/or alteration of lands and resources for traditional harvesting → Availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources

The Project has the potential to affect lands and resources available to Indigenous communities for traditional harvesting during the construction phase and operations phase, as outlined in **Table 19-6**. This includes the availability of wildlife, fish, plants, water, which are important for traditional purposes.

#### Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The availability (quality and quantity) of traditionally harvested wildlife may be affected by habitat loss (i.e., vegetation removal, hydrological changes in riparian habitat or aquatic feeding habitat), habitat alteration/degradation (i.e., dust deposition, invasive species). These changes can lead to temporary or permanently altered wildlife movement (i.e., sensory disturbances, barriers such as fencing, avoidance of open spaces) and changes in wildlife distribution across the landscape; injury/death (i.e., greater predation on road, greater access to hunting, collisions, expansion of deer bringing disease). For the full assessment of the potential effects of the Project on wildlife and wildlife habitat in relation to traditionally harvested resources, see Section 12, and for wildlife species at risk (e.g., Caribou) see Section 13 of the EAR/IS.

[REDACTED]

**Moose**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Noise disturbance has been a concern raised by community members. Other sensory disturbances from lighting, odours and human activity assessed in Section 12.3 may also affect moose by reducing suitable habitat around the Project Footprint. As noted in Section 12.7.1, noise and light may degrade moose habitat by reducing the utilization of the area, especially during times of construction activities.

Reduced air quality, including an increase in dust, could affect moose health (Stantec, 2025). The Project will produce emissions and dust from construction activities including the roadbed construction and aggregate pit operations. [REDACTED]

An increase in moose injury or mortality of individuals stemming from vehicular traffic is also a potential effect during the construction of temporary access roads and the WSR. Increased moose injury or mortality would reduce the availability of game and adversely affect traditional hunting activities.

**Caribou**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] These patterns could be altered due to vegetation removal, construction and use of supportive infrastructure (security fencing), vehicle use creating sensory disturbances, predator use of the route, and use of the route by competitors (e.g., moose). Activities such as blasting at quarries/pits, earth hauling and vegetation clearing, and the use of lights around facilities may reduce the ability of caribou to use habitat along the Project ROW and supportive infrastructure. Section 13.6.1 indicates that Caribou are likely to alter their movements as a result of sensory disturbances, which may be experienced 10-15 km from the source, can elicit anti-predator behaviours, and may result in home range sizes increasing or shifting.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Calving sites are most typically in locations that are hard to access by predators and offer a safe environment for cows and nursing calves prior to returning to summer foraging grounds. Calves are most vulnerable to predators within the first 50 days of birth (Ontario, 2020). These locations may also be abundant in high-quality forage, which is necessary during the sensitive calving period, which generally occurs between May and mid-July each year.

Construction activities may result in a loss of suitable caribou habitat that is critical to calving. Habitat loss may occur from vegetation clearing and hydrological changes during construction. These changes resulting from construction could also create easier access for predators to these calving sites. Construction activities could also cause sensory disturbance, such as noise, dust, light, smell and vibration, leading to changes in habitat use and impediments to seasonal migration to calving grounds. As per Section 13.6.1, sensory disturbances generated from the construction and operations phases are likely to impact habitat in the LSA, including Nursery Areas and Seasonal Ranges.

**Bears**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The potential effect of the Project regarding black bears includes creating increased access to the landfill within the LSA. By creating opportunities to access the landfill, there is a potential for the existing bear population to become increasingly reliant on food sources at the landfill. In turn, the health of bears could decrease as a result of a human-influenced diet, thus affecting the quality of the game and a lowered desire by community members to engage in traditional bear harvesting. Additionally, waste streams from

construction activities, such as food scraps and other non-hazardous sources may be transported to the landfill and could contribute to a potential decline in bear health.

**Furbearers**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As per Section 12.3.4 and 12.3.5, the assessment of potential effects on furbearers used two indicator species: the American Marten, representing terrestrial furbearers, and the North American Beaver representing aquatic furbearers. The indicator species were chosen based on their importance to the Indigenous community, ecological importance, and their range of habitat use.

As with assessments on moose and Caribou, the effects pathways identified considered habitat loss, habitat alteration, alteration of movement and death/injury (Section 12.3).

As noted in Section 12.7.3, for beaver, loss and degradation of habitat resulting from the construction phase of the Project is largely expected to be limited in geographic extent to the Project Footprint, apart from hydrological changes which may extend to the LSA. Although net effects on beaver and beaver habitat are expected to occur, the Project's net effects are predicted to be not significant (Section 12.8.3).

As summarized in Section 12.7.3 in terms of habitat alteration, hydrological changes to beaver habitat may occur as part of the roadway construction. Roadways through peatlands have a history of altering hydrology, obstructing surface and sub-surface water flows, these changes were assumed to be probable, and when they occur, they are assumed to be permanent. While the hydrology of some watercourses may be changed during construction, the effects are likely to be temporary. Additionally, hydrology of the Project Footprint may also directly be affected by beavers, which often use ROW as part of their dam construction. Overall, the Project's net effects are predicted to be not significant.

As per Section 12.7.2, for the American marten, its habitat is present throughout the LSA and RSA.

The movement of the American marten may be affected in several ways. Physical barriers set up during construction such as fencing may affect the American marten. American marten may be negatively affected in terms of connectivity due to the road as they may avoid the open area. Sensory disturbance as a result of the Project, may lead to avoidance of the Project Footprint.

Further information on the assessment of furbearers is provided in Section 12 of the EAR/IS.

[REDACTED] Construction could affect traplines by disrupting wildlife habitats, displacing animals and altering migration routes, which directly affects the availability of species traditionally trapped. The construction of WSR may make it harder for trappers to locate and access game as well as result in competition from trappers not within the Webequie First Nation community.

### **Birds**

Harvesting of geese and other waterfowl is an important traditional practice for the Webequie community. The Project may result in an adverse effect to birds from habitat loss and alteration; however, Section 12.6 noted that waterfowl are highly mobile, and habitat is not limiting in the RSA. Habitat modelling reported a loss of habitat within the Project Footprint, but no measurable change in the LSA and RSA for waterfowl.

The habitat loss or alteration could affect the ability of birds to utilize habitat within the Project Footprint for migratory stopovers (resting, foraging) or breeding. Construction activities such as vegetation clearing, water diversions, temporary access road building, in addition to accidental spills of deleterious materials, could result in habitat loss or alteration, or a reduced availability of suitable habitat. These changes could, in turn, result in an increased risk of injury/death of birds.

With the introduction of new road access and an increased presence of Project-related personnel (e.g., construction or adjacent sector activities), there is a potential for adverse effects on bird populations and traditional harvesting resulting from:

- Increased bird mortalities due to collisions with vehicles,
- Increased predation risk is directly related to improved access for predator species to suitable bird habitats;
- Greater incidence of illegal harvesting activities on game birds.

### **Fish and Fish Habitat**

[REDACTED]

The Project has the potential to affect fish as a traditionally harvested resource during the construction phase of the Project. Section 10 of the EAR/IS evaluates changes to the quantity and quality of fish habitat and changes to fish populations, including traditionally harvested fish. The potential effects identified include:

- Destruction/loss of fish habitat (i.e., construction of bridges and culverts);
- Harmful alteration and disruption of fish habitat (i.e., placement of materials erosion and sedimentation; accidental spills and air contaminants effects on surface water quality, change in surface water drainage patterns; removal of riparian vegetation; introduction of invasive species);
- Fish access to habitats (i.e., instream construction, culvert visual and debris barriers; potential for beavers to build beaver dams);



- Injury/death of fish (i.e., instream construction, shockwaves from blasting; fish isolation due to dewatering, beaver dam removal; reduced surface water quality due to over-land runoff); and
- Increased fishing activities from public access to fish and fish habitat (i.e., increased access for work crews, public and Webequie community members).

[REDACTED]

While fish habitat is anticipated to be preserved in most locations with arch open bottom culverts spanning the entire bankfull width of the watercourses, some destruction of fish habitat will be unavoidable during construction of bridge pier footings in-water (Section 10.5.2.1.1). These effects on fish habitat are limited to the Project footprint, whereas fish habitat is generally abundant, and the effect of the road is not expected throughout the LSA and RSA.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As noted in Section 7.3.2, methylmercury and other water quality concerns (parameters) have been included in the surface water baseline investigation program. During construction phases of the Project, surface water parameters are proposed to be tested again at up and downstream locations from the road.

**Vegetation and Wetlands**

The Project has the potential to affect plants as a traditionally harvested resource during the construction phase. The potential effects of the Project on the availability, quality and quantity of plants as a traditionally harvested resource is considered in the vegetation and wetlands assessment (Section 11 of the EAR/IS), which evaluates loss or alteration of vegetation communities, species and biodiversity, wetland function, plant species at risk and plant species and communities of concern, and vegetation plant species and communities of traditional importance to Indigenous Peoples.

[REDACTED]

Section 11 reports direct losses and alteration to vegetation communities is limited to the area of the Project Footprint. Due to the nature of the Project, the change will be permanent, and it will result in some fragmentation of vegetation with a number of vegetation patches being encroached upon and/or bisected (Section 11.7.1.1). Similarly, riparian vegetation will be removed during the construction of the roadway and associated watercourse crossings (Section 11.7.1.1). Negative changes to the function of the various wetland vegetation patches within close proximity to the road are expected via potential indirect effects (i.e., potential changes to water regimes, invasive species, sediment deposition, spills etc.). Vegetation that is removed or impacted by construction may hold medicinal, ceremonial, or nutritional value, and their loss can affect cultural practices and knowledge transmission.

**Surface Water and Groundwater**

The Project has the potential to affect drinking water as a traditionally harvested resource during the construction phase. The potential effects on the availability, quality, and quantity of drinking water are considered using the surface water assessment (Section 7 of the EAR/IS). This assessment evaluates changes in surface water quantity and quality, as well as sediment quality. The potential effects identified include change to surface water drainage patterns (i.e., dewatering, water takings; water discharge; alteration of vegetation coverage and runoff rates and volumes; stream discharge, channel flow depth/water level and velocity from waterbody crossings), surface water quality (i.e., elevated sediment levels in discharge water; accidental spills and leaks; generation of airborne particulate matter), sediment quality (i.e., dewatering and disturbance of subsoils; blasting of rocks and introduction of deleterious substances; deposition and transportation of sediment into waterbodies; accidental spills or leaks to sediment).

[REDACTED]

**19.3.1.1.2 Construction activities → Loss of and/or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting**

**Hunting**

A potential effect of the Project is the loss or diminished use of traditional harvesting sites, which may significantly impact Webequie First Nation’s ability to maintain cultural practices tied to hunting and land stewardship. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The road route and associated infrastructure may also alter wildlife movement patterns and increase predation risks, further

disrupting traditional harvesting areas. These effect pathways are considered in the assessment of effects on wildlife and wildlife habitat, which is presented in Section 12 of the EAR/IS.

Loss of and/or alteration of sites used for hunting could lead to a loss of access to culturally significant sites and a shift in harvesting patterns, ultimately impacting the community's connection to the land and the transmission of traditional knowledge.

**Fishing**

[REDACTED]

Waterbodies may be directly or indirectly affected by construction activities such as land clearing, watercourse crossings, and changes to local hydrology. Disturbances can degrade aquatic habitats, increase sedimentation, and introduce contaminants, all of which may negatively impact fish populations and spawning grounds. These environmental changes can reduce the availability and quality of fish species traditionally harvested, affecting food security and cultural practices and affecting areas where Webequie First Nation traditionally harvest fish. These effect pathways are considered in the assessment of effects on fish and fish habitat, which is presented in Section 10 of the EAR/IS. These impacts may disrupt traditional harvesting patterns and reduce the community's ability to maintain a strong connection to culturally significant fishing areas.

**Trapping**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Plant Gathering**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As noted in Section 17.3.3.1 of the EAR/IS, a change in air quality can be a major direct determinant of health. Air emissions and dust from the Project will be largely associated with the combustion of diesel fuel and gasoline from land mobile equipment, heavy duty trucks, light duty vehicles during the construction and operations phases of the Project. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Project health impact assessment (HIA) noted the effects of contamination on traditional food sources by construction and operations phase emissions are an important factor in assessing food security. As part of the HIA, the human health risk assessment (HHRA) identified possible exposure pathways for contaminants of concern to adequately characterize potential biophysical risks to human health (IAAC, 2020.). However, the HHRA concluded that increases in Project-related contaminants to country foods items are not expected to be appreciable.

**Drinking Water**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**19.3.1.1.3 Construction activities → Loss of and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting**

The Project may impact Indigenous traditional use of lands and resources, primarily through the loss or alteration of access to areas used for traditional harvesting. These effects could arise from changes to trails, waterways, and habitation sites, as well as from increased activity in the region.

Access may be disrupted by the destruction or modification of trails, installation of barriers such as gates or fences, and increased noise or visual disturbances from traffic and construction. These changes can affect the ability to engage in traditional practices and alter the experience of being on the land. Additionally, the Project may increase access to traditional harvesting areas for non-resident workers, visitors, and Webequie community members, potentially leading to increased pressure on these resources.

***Trails and Access***

The Project has the potential to reduce the number of trails and access to traditional harvesting sites and areas however, this is expected to be localized to the Project Footprint.

***Waterways***

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Webequie First Nation land users and harvesters may be affected by Project construction activities regarding waterways crossings which may impede access to locations, which were previously travelled by boat/watercrafts during construction phase. During operations phase, due to the limited activities which will involve repairs and maintenance only, there are less effects predicted to occur regarding usage of traditional waterways.

**Habitation Sites**

[REDACTED]

A detailed review of the camp sites located within the Project Footprint is required to determine options to prevent or minimize direct adverse effects of construction.

During the construction phase, potential effects to habitation sites may include vegetation removal, fragmentation of landscape, and disruptions in access. However, WSR during operations phase will provide a convenient mode of access, making travel to the habitation sites easier.

**19.3.1.1.4 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss and/or alteration of lands and resources for traditional harvesting → Availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources**

**Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat**

The Project has the potential to affect wildlife as a traditionally harvested resource during the operations phase of the Project. Similar to the construction phase, effects pathways considered quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources may be affected by habitat loss/destruction (i.e., vegetation removal, hydrological changes in riparian habitat or aquatic feeding habitat), habitat alteration/degradation (i.e., dust deposition, invasive species), alteration of wildlife movement (i.e., sensory disturbances, barriers such as fencing, avoidance of open spaces) and wildlife injury/death (i.e., greater predation on road, greater access to hunting, collisions, expansion of deer bringing disease). For the full assessment of the potential effects of the Project on wildlife and wildlife habitat in relation to traditionally harvested resources, see Section 12, and for wildlife species at risk (i.e., Caribou) see Section 13 of the EAR/IS.

**Moose**

During the operations phase, there will be periodic repairs of the roadway and clearing of the ROW, but these will result in disturbance of the same areas as development areas from construction, and will likely cause no, or negligible additional effects for loss/destruction of moose habitat (Section 12.3.3).

Operations activities could cause sensory disturbance, such as noise, dust, light, smell and vibration, leading to changes in habitat use and migration of moose. Additionally, the road may lead to direct and indirect mortality stemming from vehicular traffic. [REDACTED]



During operations, due to low traffic levels, little change is expected from dust deposition, and moose are expected to habituate to low traffic noise and light levels. The net effects regarding moose movement and injury/death of moose are considered to be low as a result of the Project (Section 12.7.1). As per Section 12.7.1, predation risk for moose may increase due to improved access along the ROW and access roads. However, some of this will be mitigated as access roads will be reclaimed and blocked; and the major predator of moose, grey wolves, avoid areas of active human use. Although net effects on moose and moose habitat are expected to occur, the Project's net effects are predicted to be not significant (Section 12.8.1)

### ***Caribou***

The assessment on Caribou (Section 13.5.2.1) determined that road operations are unlikely to result in additional loss/destruction of Caribou habitat areas, as regular maintenance will involve managing re-growth of vegetation along the ROW. Noise and light from vehicles travelling on the road as a result of operations will impact Caribou. It is predicted that the road will mainly be used during daylight hours, minimizing effects on Caribou habitat between dusk and dawn; however, road noise, scent, and other sensory disturbances generated during daylight hours have the potential to affect Caribou habitats located up to several kilometres from the ROW. The predicted effect of the Project on Caribou habitat alteration and degradation during the operations phase from habitat loss/destruction is expected to be lower in magnitude than the construction phase. However, the effects of alteration in the movement of Caribou are anticipated to be similarly moderate in magnitude during the operations phase, while the effects of injury or death due to collisions with vehicles are anticipated to be low in magnitude (Section 13.5.2.1).

### ***Furbearers***

Alteration and degradation of habitat resulting from the construction and operations phases are likely to extend beyond the Project Footprint to the LSA, including structural change to vegetation (Section 12.8.3). It is anticipated that restoration of laydown areas and access roads will reverse some of the habitat alteration or degradation caused by road construction for beavers; however, maintenance of vegetation during road operations will create periodic disturbances and sustain edge effects along the ROW (Section 12.7.3.2).

Alteration and degradation of American marten habitat resulting from the construction and operations phases are likely to extend beyond the Project Footprint to the LSA, including structural change to vegetation, hydrological changes and sensory disturbances. The net effects of alteration of habitat due to changes in vegetation structure are low in magnitude for the construction and operations phases. While many areas will be scheduled for restoration, regrowth of forests in the boreal is slow and any subsequent anthropogenic disturbance could slow recovery. Mitigations that target keeping the footprints of work areas small and minimizing additional access and temporary laydowns/clearings will reduce conversion to early seral communities (Section 12.8.2)

Although net effects on beaver and beaver habitat and marten and marten habitat are expected to occur, the Project's net effects are predicted to be not significant in the operation phase (Sections 12.8.2 and 12.8.3).

### ***Birds***

The assessment of effects of the Project on birds was conducted, and it was determined that during the operations phase, the magnitude of potential effects will be low or negligible, with the exception of the potential effects of accidental spills and leaks, which could be high. As per Section 12.4.6, mitigation



measures will be implemented to prevent or limit the effects of the Project on birds and other wildlife. This will include routing to avoid habitat such as mixed and deciduous forests, raptors nests, aquatic habitat, including no stopover or staging areas and setbacks near sensitive areas. Although net effects on forest songbirds and their habitat, wetland songbirds habitat, shorebirds habitat, waterfowl habitat and raptors and raptor habitat are expected to occur, the net effects are predicted to be not significant (Section 12.8).

***Fish and Fish Habitat***

As per Section 10.5.2.1.1, destruction of fish habitat is not expected as a result of roadway operations. Repairs to the roadway and water crossing structures may be required over time, but these are not expected to result in destruction of fish habitat. As described in Section 10.4.1, similar to the effects of the construction phase, there could be effects on water quality during the operations phase of the Project from accidental spills and emissions of air contaminants, fugitive dust, and greenhouse gases. The magnitude of the effects of the Project on fish and fish habitat during the operations phase due to changes in water quality are predicted to be low to moderate (Section 10.6.1).

***Vegetation and Wetlands***

As indicated in Section 11.7.1, with respect to loss or alteration of wetland, the anticipated effects on vegetation and wetlands are indirect ones related to operational activities such as repairs to infrastructure and management of snow and vegetation. Potentially no direct loss of vegetation units is expected, and mitigation measures should either completely eliminate or minimize these indirect effects to negligible levels, resulting in no significant alteration of vegetation classes within the study area. During the operations phase of the project, the only effects on locally rare vegetation communities are indirect effects associated with repairs to the roadway and water crossing structures that may be required over time.

***Surface Water and Groundwater***

Changes in surface water quantity can potentially occur due to alterations in surface water drainage patterns and flows during the operations phase of the Project. These effects are largely covered under the construction phase mentioned above and described in detail in Section 7. There are no predicted significant effects on surface water quantity and quality, and sediment quality during the operations phase, with the effects being low in magnitude.

**19.3.1.1.5 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss of and/or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting**

**Operations and maintenance activities → Loss of and/or alteration of access to lands and resources for traditional harvesting**

[REDACTED]



Based on the effects assessed for vegetation and wetlands anticipated for the operations phase, it is anticipated that only indirect effects associated with maintenance and operation of the WSR. There is no anticipated direct loss of vegetation and subsequent to implementation of mitigation measures these effects are anticipated to be minimized to negligible level or prevented. There is no estimated significant alteration of vegetation classes and the net effects is summarized to be negligible (Section 11.7.1.2).

Repairs and maintenance to water crossings may be required over the operation and maintenance phase, which will include repairs to bridges, culverts, ditches, road surfaces, as well as snow and vegetation management.

[REDACTED]

### 19.3.1.2 Local Study Area: Other LSA Communities

The potential effects on Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes on other LSA communities are described below, which considers the following communities:

- Attawapiskat First Nation;
- Eabametoong First Nation;
- Kasabonika Lake First Nation;
- Marten Falls First Nation;
- Neskantaga First Nation;
- Nibinamik First Nation; and
- Weenusk First Nation.

A comprehensive assessment of potential impacts to Indigenous rights has not been completed at this stage. The analysis presented here is based on limited information received to date, and does not reflect a fulsome understanding of community interpretations, concerns, or expressed impacts to rights.

**19.3.1.2.1 Construction activities → Loss and/or alteration of lands and resources for traditional harvesting → Availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources**

The construction phase of the Project—including vegetation clearing, road building, and development of aggregate source areas—may affect the availability, quality, and quantity of traditionally harvested resources such as wildlife, fish, plants, medicinal herbs, and water. While these effects are expected to be most pronounced within the Project Footprint, they may also influence broader ecological patterns that extend into the LSA.

The predicted effects on availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources, based on the effects assessments contained in biophysical effects assessment sections of the EAR/IS, are presented in further detail in **Section 19.3.1.1**.

***Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat***

[Redacted text block]

***Fish and Fish Habitat***

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

***Vegetation and Wetlands***

[Redacted text block]

[REDACTED]

**Surface and Groundwater**

Attawapiskat First Nation members identified concerns that changes to hydrology may alter drainage patterns, which will have implications for soils, vegetation, and wildlife. Attawapiskat First Nation is concerned that “surface water” is one of the environmental components that is being evaluated in isolation, without looking at linkages with other parts of the ecosystem. The community has highlighted concerns such as potential effects to the Ekwan River and Attawapiskat River which are heavily used by Attawapiskat traditional land users, regional effects of the road on water, fish and wildlife and on downstream communities, potential effects to peatlands and disruptions to drainage for fish and wildlife outside of the Project footprint, potential effects on the subsistence economy as this sustains Attawapiskat First Nation culturally, physically, spiritually, and socially, potential effects of contamination of heavy metals including chromium and mercury methylation and cumulative effects (Attawapiskat First Nation, 2020).

As noted in Section 7.3.2, methylmercury and other water quality concerns (parameters) have been included in the surface water baseline investigation program.

**Cumulative Effects and Cultural Impacts**

Kasabonika Lake First Nation expressed concerns regarding the cumulative impacts of development activities in the region, related to the Ring of Fire. Kasabonika Lake First Nation recommended a co-management and environmental monitoring group. They noted that co-management would be an important step to self-determination as they will all be impacted. Social, cultural and economic activities will be affected due to the Project, these could impact asserted or established Section 35(1) rights.

Neskantaga First Nation noted that preliminary research completed by them concluded that there are likely historic trails that intersect the proposed Project (Peerla, 2021a). There could be potential impacts from blasting on fish and aquatic resources, including incubating eggs and resident and migrating fish. Required buffer zones and timing windows will not mitigate all impacts to aquatic resources, including several species of resident fish (Peerla, 2021b). The community indicated that Neskantaga’s land use options will be permanently altered by the Project as the Webequie Supply Road will bisect Neskantaga’s lands and forever change the options for ensuring the continued practice of Neskantaga’s way of life on Neskantaga territory. Neskantaga First Nation noted that the project directly impacts Neskantaga First Nation’s traplines and falls within Neskantaga’s Area of Interest. Neskantaga First Nation has a sacred, legal obligation to protect, defend and steward the water, land, air, and resources of their territory. From Neskantaga’s perspective, they are uniquely vulnerable to the impact of the Supply Road and induced development of the entire Ring of Fire region and will bear the burden of significant risks arising from the roads and mines.

[REDACTED]

**19.3.1.2.2 Construction activities → Loss of and/or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting**

The construction phase of the Project—including vegetation clearing, road building, and development of aggregate source areas—has the potential to result in the loss or alteration of sites and areas traditionally used for harvesting. While these effects are expected to be concentrated within the Project Footprint, they may still impact culturally significant harvesting locations and traditional land use practices. The predicted effects on sites and areas used for traditional harvesting, based on the effects assessments contained in biophysical effects assessment sections of the EAR/IS, are presented in further detail in **Section 19.3.1.1**.

***Disruption of Traditional Harvesting Areas, Overlapping Traditional Territories and Unidentified Harvesting Sites***

Kasabonika Lake First Nation indicated that they share traditional territory with Webequie First Nation and actively use these shared lands for hunting and fishing (ASI, 2021). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] A priority for Neskantaga First Nation is to minimize overlap and impact of the WSR on historic places, trails, portages, travel routes, sacred and burial places and habitations (Peerla, 2021a). At the time of this EAR/IS, these have not been identified to the Project team.

During engagement and consultation phase, Neskantaga First Nation expressed concerns of the Project as it directly impacts Neskantaga traplines and falls within Neskantaga’s Area of Interest (Moonias, 2019). Neskantaga First Nation noted that they have a sacred, legal obligation to protect, defend and steward

the water, land, air, and resources of their territory. They outlined that the Neskantaga First Nation is uniquely vulnerable to the impact of the Project and induced development of the entire Ring of Fire region and will bear the burden of significant risks arising from the roads and mines. Neskantaga First Nation expressed concerns regarding the cumulative impacts of development activities in the region, related to the Ring of Fire and these could impact asserted or established Section 35(1) rights (Peerla, 2021a).

During engagement and consultation with Nibinamik First Nation, it was noted that there is no current baseline environmental information available for Nibinamik First Nation land and stated that a comparison between future benefits or impacts on the land cannot be made without baseline information (AtkinsRéalise Inc., 2023a).

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
|------------|------------|
| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |

[REDACTED]

### 19.3.1.2.3 Construction activities → Loss of and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting

The construction of the Project is expected to alter access to traditional harvesting areas, particularly through the development of roads and waterbody crossings. These changes may influence how Indigenous communities reach and use lands and resources that are vital to their cultural and subsistence practices.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

For Neskantaga First Nation, traplines located within the RSA are an important part of traditional harvesting. Community members have expressed concern that the Project could affect their ability to continue trapping, due to potential changes in the availability, quality, and quantity of resources. Increased access to these areas—by both community members and non-Indigenous users—may also lead to greater pressure on wildlife populations and disrupt traditional practices (Neskantaga First Nation, 2020).

The Project may also increase accessibility to fishing locations, potentially leading to increased fishing pressure. While the effects are predicted to be limited to the Project Footprint and LSA, they may still influence the sustainability of fish populations and the ability of community members to harvest them.

**19.3.1.2.4 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss and/or alteration of lands and resources for traditional harvesting → Availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources**

The operations phase of the Project will involve activities such as road use, operation, maintenance and repair of the road and aggregate pit operation. The operations phase may affect the availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources within the Project Footprint. While the LSA and RSA are not expected to experience a similar level of biophysical changes as the Project Footprint, localized impacts may still influence traditional harvesting practices and resources. The predicted effects on availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources, based on the effects assessments contained in biophysical effects assessment sections of the EAR/IS, are presented in further detail in **Section 19.3.1.1**.

***Environmental Contamination and Resource Quality***

[REDACTED] These include risks of water contamination from industrial dust, litter, chemicals, and oil spills. A particular concern is the potential for fuel spills—such as from a tipped gasoline truck—which could cause irreversible damage to wildlife habitats, aquatic species, and drinking water sources.

Dust generated by heavy truck traffic is another major concern. Community members noted that dust can affect fish species like sturgeon, which are highly sensitive to environmental changes. Increased dust levels may also degrade air and water quality, impacting both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems that support traditional harvesting.

***Sensory Disturbance and Wildlife Displacement***

Noise and vibration from road traffic and maintenance activities may disturb wildlife and disrupt traditional harvesting. As one community member explained, unfamiliar vibrations can create fear and trauma, not only for people but for all living beings. These disturbances may alter animal behaviour, making them more difficult to locate and harvest (Suslop Inc., 2024).



[REDACTED]

Marten Falls First Nation expressed concern that road use could disrupt caribou migration routes. Sensory disturbances, increased predator access (e.g., wolves), and competition from other species (e.g., moose) may alter caribou movement patterns. Additionally, the risk of vehicle collisions with caribou is a concern, although the wildlife assessment (Section 13.6.1) predicted a low likelihood of injury or death after mitigation measures are applied.

Attawapiskat First Nation also voiced concerns about the effects of dust on caribou herds, particularly in the western portion of their territory (ASI, 2021).

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**19.3.1.2.5 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss of and/or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting**

During the operations phase of the Project, ongoing use and maintenance of the road may contribute to the loss or alteration of sites traditionally used by Indigenous communities for harvesting. These impacts are not only physical but also deeply cultural and psychological, affecting how communities' access, experience, and relate to their traditional territories.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[Redacted text block]

**19.3.1.2.6 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss of and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting**

During the operations phase, the Project may alter access to lands and resources traditionally used by Indigenous communities for harvesting. While the Project may facilitate more convenient travel, it also raises concerns about increased external access, competition for resources, and changes to the cultural landscape.

[Redacted text block]



### 19.3.1.3 Regional Study Area

The potential effects on Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes of RSA communities are described below, which considers Indigenous communities as outlined in **Section 19.2.2.3**.

Over the course of the EAR/IS preparation, the proponent invited all LSA and RSA communities to participate in the Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use Program for the Project. In the absence of information from some Indigenous communities to an extent secondary information has been used to provide context for the assessment of potential effects for communities that have not provided information.

Information provided from the Fort Albany First Nation Indigenous Knowledge Study and Kashechewan First Nation Existing Conditions report is summarized in the sections that follow.

A comprehensive assessment of potential impacts to Indigenous rights has not been completed at this stage. The analysis presented here is based on limited information received to date, and does not reflect a fulsome understanding of community interpretations, concerns, or expressed impacts to rights.

#### 19.3.1.3.1 Construction activities → Loss and/or alteration of lands and resources for traditional harvesting → Availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources

The construction phase of the Project will involve activities such as vegetation clearing, road construction and development of aggregate source areas. The construction phase is expected to generate effects on the availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources within the Project Footprint however, the predicted effects are largely not anticipated to extend into the RSAs for the biophysical effects assessments. The predicted effects on availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources, based on the effects assessments contained in biophysical effects assessment sections of the EAR/IS, are presented in further detail in **Section 19.3.1.1**.

During consultation, Aroland First Nation noted that there would be direct impacts to their community and traditional territory that would result from the connection of the Project to the provincial highway system, as well as the potential for cumulative effects that would result from additional road and mining developments in the region. These could impact asserted or established Section 35(1) rights (Towedo, 2020)

During Consultation Round 3, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation shared concerns of the Project's potentially adverse effects to Caribou migration routes. However, the areas estimated to be currently in use are outside of the Project RSA (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d).

During Round 1 Consultation, Ginoogaming First Nation outlined that their rights have the potential to be impacted by the WSR Project and believes that the cumulative effects from other project development in the Ring of Fire region should be considered. While an approximate map of Ginoogaming First Nation traditional territory is shown in **Figure 19.12**, this was not provided in support of the Project, and its



accuracy cannot be confirmed. **Figure 19.12** shows that Ginoogaming First Nation traditional territory is shown to be outside of the LSA and RSA of the Project.

A Kashechewan First Nation Area of Interest in Planning and Traditional Harvesting Area shows their traditional harvesting area to be located outside of the RSA (**Figure 19.13**) (Government of Ontario, 2017). This is also confirmed with a review of their existing conditions report (MNP LLP, 2024).

**Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Noise and Vibration Technical Report indicated that a 165 m buffer around road construction and 300 m buffer around the waterbody crossing would constitute a noise-sensitive area (SLR Consulting, 2024).

**Fish and Fish Habitat**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

While fish habitat is anticipated to be preserved in most locations with arch open bottom culverts spanning the entire bankfull width of the watercourses, some destruction of fish habitat will be unavoidable during construction of bridge pier footings in-water (Section 10.5.2.1.1). These effects on fish habitat are limited to the Project footprint, whereas fish habitat is generally abundant, and the effect of the road is not expected throughout the LSA and RSA.

***Vegetation and Wetlands***

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Section 11 reports direct losses and alteration to vegetation communities is limited to the area of the Project Footprint and LSA. A regional assessment of effect on wetland function was conducted and the results predicted minimal effects on functional values, of less than 1%, for all wetland classes within the LSA and RSA (Section 11).

***Surface and Groundwater***

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Cumulative Effects and Cultural Impacts**

[REDACTED]

The Project activities with regard to construction activities are expected to be limited to the Project Footprint and portions of the LSA only. As such, based on current information, there is negligible effects anticipated during the construction phase with regard to changes in the availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources within the RSA during construction phase.

**19.3.1.3.2 Construction activities → Loss of and/or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting**

Direct effects on access to traditional areas are not anticipated within the RSA based on the current information. Similarly, the areas identified within the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation areas of use (Figure 19.15) (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d), Ginoogaming Traditional Territory (Figure 19.12) (Ginoogaming First Nation, 2025) and the Kashechewan First Nation Area of Interest for Planning and Traditional Harvesting Area (Figure 19.13) (Government of Ontario, 2017) also fall outside the RSA boundaries (based on GIS analysis). As a result, it is anticipated that the Project will have minimal to no direct effects on these communities' sites and areas used for traditional harvesting.

**Disruption of Traditional Harvesting Areas, Overlapping Traditional Territories and Unidentified Harvesting Sites**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

There are negligible effects in the RSA for loss of and/or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting during construction phase.

**19.3.1.3.3 Construction activities → Loss of and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting**

No loss or alteration of access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting is anticipated during the construction phase of the Project in the RSA, based on the approximated information provided in **Figure 19.12, Figure 19.13** and **Figure 19.15** (Ginoogaming First Nation, 2025, Government of Ontario, 2017, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

This assessment is based primarily on the distance between the Project Footprint and the areas traditionally used for harvesting activities in the RSA. The construction activities are confined to a defined Project Footprint and LSA, which are situated at a considerable distance from the RSA communities. As a result, there are no expected physical overlap or encroachment on these culturally and ecologically significant areas. There are negligible effects in the RSA for loss of and/or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting during construction phase.

**19.3.1.3.4 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss and/or alteration of lands and resources for traditional harvesting → Availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources**

***Environmental Contamination and Resource Quality***

[REDACTED]

Adverse effects on the availability, quality, or quantity of traditionally harvested resources are not expected during the operation and maintenance phase of the Project. This conclusion is based on the limited scope of activities during this phase and the spatial separation between the Project and areas traditionally used for harvesting. Operation and maintenance activities are typically low-impact and confined to previously disturbed areas within the established WSR.

As such, there are negligible effects in the RSA for availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources.

**19.3.1.3.5 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss of and/or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting**

There are currently no loss or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting expected as a result of the Project. This conclusion is based on the Project's location, design, and the limited spatial extent of its activities. The operations phase is generally limited in activity and does not involve new land disturbance or expansion beyond the established WSR area.



The Project Footprint and associated activities have been carefully planned to limit and minimize the disturbance of the WSR. As such, within the RSA there is no anticipated overlap between operations and maintenance activities and the lands customarily used for harvesting practices such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering.

Due to this, there are negligible effects in the RSA for loss of and/or alteration of sites and areas used for traditional harvesting.

**19.3.1.3.6 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss of and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting**

Operation and maintenance activities are generally minimal and localized, involving routine inspections, equipment servicing, and minor repairs within the existing WSR. These activities do not require new land disturbance or the creation of barriers that could restrict movement or access. Within the RSA, there are no anticipated road closures, access restrictions, or other impediments that would interfere with Indigenous land users' ability to reach and use traditional areas.

Negligible effects in the RSA are anticipated for loss or alteration of access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting during the operation and maintenance phase of the Project.

## **19.3.2 Change to Cultural Continuity**

This section provides an analysis of Project effects on Cultural Continuity as an Indigenous value/interest.

The pathways of the Project on Cultural Continuity have been identified as follows:

- Change to sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes;
- Change to access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes; and
- Change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages.

Indigenous communities identified within the LSA and RSA for cultural continuity are shown on **Figure 19.3**.

### **19.3.2.1 Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation**

**19.3.2.1.1 Construction activities → Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

**Construction activities → Loss and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas and/or access to sites used for cultural and spiritual purposes during construction may lead to:

- Loss of Cultural Continuity – Many sites hold historical significance, serving as places for ceremonies, teachings, and passing down traditional knowledge. Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas and/or access can disrupt the transmission of cultural practices for the Webequie First Nation community.
- Erosion to Spiritual Practices – These locations are often sacred spaces for prayer, healing, and connection to the land. Loss and/or alteration of a site and areas and/or access may lead to feelings of displacement and spiritual disconnect for the Webequie First Nation community.
- Impact on Rights and Land Stewardship – Webequie First Nation have outlined that they have an inherent right to care for and govern their lands, so they remain protected for future generations. Loss and/or alteration of a site and areas and/or access can weaken their ability to uphold those responsibilities.
- Challenges to Community Well-being –Traditional lands contribute to mental, physical, and social wellness, whether through hunting, gathering medicines, or holding ceremonies. Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas and/or access can affect overall health and resilience.
- Loss of Historical and Environmental Integrity – The construction of WSR could lead to landscape changes, potentially damaging sacred sites, burial grounds, and areas of ecological importance.
- Sensory Disturbance – Construction activities can introduce noise, vibration, dust, artificial lighting, and visual intrusions that disrupt the sensory environment of cultural and spiritual spaces used by Webequie First Nation. This can diminish the site's spiritual ambiance and interfere with ceremonies or practices that rely on areas that are undisturbed.

[REDACTED]

Potential changes to land access patterns as a result of the Project may not only impact land users but can impact who is able to participate in traditional activities, alienating certain subpopulations such as Elders, children, and individuals living with disabilities (Myette & Riva, 2021). Impeding access and adding distance to use other travel routes may have cultural, social, well-being and health implications.

[REDACTED]

Each CHL includes sites and areas that are located within and/or intersect with the LSA, many of which overlap. Net effects are not predicted for the Cultural Heritage Resources VC once mitigation measures are implemented (Section 20.5). See Table 1 in the Cultural Heritage Report: Existing Conditions and Preliminary Impact Assessment (Appendix S of this EAR/IS) for a detailed description of potential cultural heritage value or interest.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

One of the Project's anticipated effects is noise during the construction phase. [REDACTED]

The Noise and Vibration Technical Report identified that this construction noise will exceed 45 dBA by a maximum of 4dBA. The Noise and Vibration Technical Report indicated that a 165 m buffer around road construction and 300 m buffer around the waterbody crossing would constitute a noise-sensitive area (SLR Consulting, 2024). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
|------------|------------|------------|
| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

[REDACTED]

Further details on net effects to surface water and ground water can be reviewed in Section 7 and Section 8.

[REDACTED]

The loss and/or alteration of sites and areas and/or access to sites used for cultural and spiritual purposes can cause loss of cultural continuity through a loss of connection to the land and a loss of identity, which can negatively impact physical and mental health and well-being (InterGroup, 2024; Ninomiya et al., 2023). This can have disproportionate effects on community members who are more vulnerable to changes. Youth were identified by Webequie First Nation as a population of concern due to the several challenges they face while living on-reserve, such as social isolation, boredom, lack of education and employment opportunities, overcrowded homes, poor mental health, and addictions (InterGroup, 2024; AtkinsRéal, 2022). Changes to the ability to practice one’s culture could have negative impacts on the physical and mental well-being of Webequie youth (InterGroup, 2024).

[REDACTED]

**19.3.2.1.2 Construction activities → Expenditures and employment → Change to population and demographics → Change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages**

The construction of WSR can lead to the following effects on change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages:

- Changes in land-based cultural activities – Traditional activities like hunting, trapping, and harvesting may be affected by land fragmentation, environmental disruption, or increased competition from non-Indigenous groups and non-members of Webequie First Nation during construction.

- Changes in language – The increased labour force into Webequie during construction may encourage cultural exchange and language revitalization efforts but could also pressure younger generations to prioritize English over Indigenous languages.
- Economic and social shifts – The construction phase will bring job opportunities that support Indigenous-led cultural initiatives, including language education programs. However, this could shift priorities away from traditional lifestyles.
- Risk of Cultural Dilution – With an influx of non-Indigenous People into Webequie, this could potentially impact the social and cultural dynamics in these communities. This could potentially influence Indigenous traditions and reducing the use of Indigenous languages within daily life.

Development and subsequent in-migration of non-Indigenous People nearby the community has the potential to exacerbate the erosion of Webequie language and culture, particularly amongst youth, who already face challenges in the loss of their cultural identity (Heid et al., 2022 as cited in Intergroup, 2024). The Project may impact Webequie members' ability to access their lands and engage in traditional activities due to environmental disturbances.

Over the assumed five-year construction period, the population could rise by an average of 47 individuals during the winter season and 75 individuals in the summer season. Population increases are likely to peak during the summer season as construction activities increase. The largest increases in population are projected to occur during the second and third years of construction and will peak during the summer months. Project-related employment that is located on-site will require workers from LSA communities to commute and/or stay in temporary accommodations provided by the Project. Project-related employment will affect changes to populations and demographics in Webequie First Nation due to the workforce that is required. The Project will prioritize opportunities for Indigenous community members in the LSA and RSA. The changes in population and demographics may result in reduced out-migration, increased in-migration of Webequie First Nation community members, and/or an in-migration of temporary workers from outside the community (Section 14.3.1.1 LSA: Webequie First Nation). With the implementation of the Community Readiness Plan (CRP), the Proponent anticipates a positive increase in the member population within the Webequie community. The approach of the CRP is intended to be holistic and inclusive of the views shared by subgroups of the population of Webequie First Nation and the other LSA communities.

An adverse effect on traditional learning programming was identified in Section 14.5.2.4.3 as the potential increased demand for educational and training programming related to the Project could result in decreased interest in learning traditional land-based skills and reduced capacity for the Webequie community to offer traditional learning programming. The focus on Project-related skills could also require individuals to be away from their home community more often to attend courses only offered off-reserve. This represent a small change after mitigation measures are applied, including ongoing monitoring and adaptive management through the CRP.

[REDACTED]

Negative interactions between the construction workforce and the Webequie community population may still occur despite best efforts to keep them separate. As a result, community cohesion may decrease during the construction phase of the WSR depending on the extent and nature of the interactions between the construction workforce and members of Webequie First Nation and any conflicts that may arise. The net effects to health due to decreased community cohesion and cultural continuity are predicted to be limited as outlined in Section 17.5.2.2 once mitigation measures are in place.

[REDACTED]

**19.3.2.1.3 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

**Operations and maintenance activities → Loss and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

With the operation and maintenance of WSR, the loss and/or alteration of sites and areas and or access to lands used for cultural and spiritual purposes by Webequie First Nation could be impacted and include the following effects:

- Increased access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes – Road use by the Webequie First Nation community members may create opportunities to make their own trails off the WSR and towards the culturally and spiritually important sites and areas. This is considered to be a beneficial effect of the Project, as the WSR may provide convenient or alternate mode of travel to important sites across the territory. Improved access to previously difficult-to-reach locations and areas will provide community members with more opportunities to visit and spend time on land
- Restricted access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes – Some sites may become harder to reach due to land fragmentation or other restrictions imposed by WSR.
- Impact on cultural identity and continuity – When access to cultural and/or sacred areas is lost or altered, it can weaken intergenerational knowledge transfer, making it harder for younger generations to engage with traditional practices and teachings.
- Increased risk of external interference – Once WSR is operational, there is a possibility of encroachment by, tourism, future development or non-members of Webequie First Nation into the cultural and sacred sites that may not respect the cultural significance of the sites.

The change in noise that was predicted with noise traffic did exceed provincial guidelines at seven identified Noise-Sensitive Areas (NSA) and indicated that “sound levels are highly dependent on the exact location of the noise-sensitive receptor” (SLR Consulting, 2024). NSAs including CHL-7, CHL-8, CHL-13, CHL-14, CHL-15 CHL-17, and CHL-25 are predicted to exceed the 5 dB change outlined in the MECP/MTO Joint Noise Protocol. Operations of the Project will result in noise emissions; however, the magnitude of the releases will be limited and well managed with the implementation of best management practices and noise effects to culturally sensitive areas are anticipated to be low.



Section 20.3 identified potential effects to CHL and once mitigation measures are implemented, potential effects on the Cultural Heritage Resources VC will be effectively avoided or mitigated as noted in Table 20-8. Based on the effects assessed for vegetation and wetlands anticipated for the operations phase, it is anticipated that only indirect effects associated with maintenance and operation of the WSR, and water crossings may be required over the operation and maintenance phase, which will include repairs to bridges, culverts, ditches, road surfaces, as well as snow and vegetation management.

The use of the road can provide an alternate or convenient mode of travel to access the traditional territory. The WSR will provide year-round transportation access which can link Webequie First Nation community members to cultural, sacred and language sites and areas. The use of the road may provide convenient or alternative access to these sites that have been identified in the LSA and potentially within and outside the RSA. Road use is expected to serve commercial and personal vehicles as well. Road use will provide personal vehicle access across the greater geography of the traditional lands. Typical modes of travel are by foot, boat, snowmobile or ATV. This may be a benefit for Webequie community members to get out onto the land for cultural and traditional purposes. Travel routes that access culturally and spiritually important places close to the WSR may be more convenient to access. This may be a positive effect and can reduce the time needed to access distant locations, increase the frequency of trips or reduce the cost of supplies. This benefit may be especially positive for youths who participate in programs and trip opportunities.

Operation of the WSR could open new areas or expand access to a broader range of sites, both on and adjacent to WSR. This could have a positive impact, such as increased access to cultural and sacred sites along the Project Footprint or could be considered negative if the increased access results in impacts to the land and destruction or loss of cultural and sacred sites as well as increased access to these sites by non-members of Webequie First Nation.

#### **19.3.2.1.4 Operations and maintenance activities → Expenditures and employment → Change to population and demographics → Change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages**

The operation and maintenance of WSR can lead to the same effects from changes to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages as identified in **Section 19.3.2.1.2**, as follows:

- Changes in land-based cultural activities;
- Changes in language;
- Economic and social shifts; and
- Risk of Cultural Dilution.

Changes in land-based cultural activities and effects to current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes are assessed in **Section 19.3.1**. Culture and language knowledge transfer is an important focus for the Webequie community, and no net effects were identified for the Population and Demographics VC which included a loss of Indigenous identity and a loss of language as indicators (Section 14.5.2.1). Net effects to health due to decreased community cohesion are predicted to be limited as outlined in Section 17.5.2.2. During the operations and maintenance phase, there are three direct, and one induced employment opportunity predicted for Webequie First Nation (Section 15.3.1.1). As there are a limited number of employment opportunities projected and in turn exposure to non-local workers, it is anticipated that there will be negligible impacts to change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages in Webequie First Nation during this phase.



### 19.3.2.2 Local Study Area: Other LSA Communities

The potential effects on Cultural Continuity of other LSA communities are described below, which considers the following communities:

- Attawapiskat First Nation;
- Eabametoong First Nation;
- Kasabonika Lake First Nation;
- Marten Falls First Nation;
- Neskantaga First Nation;
- Nibinamik First Nation; and
- Weenusk First Nation.

The Marten Falls First Nation IKLRU Study and Weenusk First Nation IK Study were submitted to the Proponent for consideration as part of the preparation of the EAR/IS, and these documents are integrated in the following assessment.

#### 19.3.2.2.1 Construction activities → Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes

##### **Construction activities → Loss and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

The construction phase of the Project will involve activities such as vegetation clearing, road construction and development of aggregate source areas. Cultural and sacred sites, historical and current travel routes and cultural traditions and practices were identified for Marten Falls First Nation and Weenusk First Nation. The right to access traditional lands and water is reliant on access to their travel routes, access to preferred harvesting sites and access to ceremonial and spiritual sites. Access to traditional resources or culturally important sites and areas can be affected through the direct loss or alteration of trails or travelways, restrictions on the ability to navigate to and through harvesting areas and culturally important areas, or limitations on the ability to exercise Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in proximity to the Project.

Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas and access to sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes during construction may lead to:

- Loss of Cultural Continuity – Many sites hold historical significance, serving as places for ceremonies, teachings, and passing down traditional knowledge. Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas or access to sites and areas can disrupt the transmission of cultural practices for the LSA communities.
- Erosion to Spiritual Practices – These locations are often sacred spaces for prayer, healing, and connection to the land. Loss and/or alteration of a site or access to a site may lead to feelings of displacement and spiritual disconnect for the LSA communities.
- Impact on Rights and Land Stewardship – Marten Falls First Nation and Weenusk First Nation have outlined that they have an inherent right to care for and govern their lands, so they remain protected for future generations. Loss and/or alteration of a site or access to sites can weaken their ability to uphold those responsibilities.



- Challenges to Community Well-being –Traditional lands contribute to mental, physical, and social wellness, whether through hunting, gathering medicines, or holding ceremonies. Loss and/or alteration or access to a cultural or sacred site can affect overall health and resilience.
- Loss of Historical and Environmental Integrity – The construction of WSR could lead to landscape changes, potentially damaging sacred sites, burial grounds, and areas of ecological importance.
- Sensory Disturbance – Construction activities can introduce noise, vibration, dust, artificial lighting, and visual intrusions that disrupt the sensory environment of cultural and spiritual spaces used by LSA communities. This can diminish the site's spiritual ambiance and interfere with ceremonies or practices that rely on areas that are undisturbed.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Section 8 of the EAR/IS presents the assessment of effects of the Project on groundwater resources (Table 8-20). Further details on net effects to surface water and ground water can be reviewed in Section 7 and Section 8.

The construction phase of WSR could also result in an influx of other Indigenous users who could hunt, trap, fish and gather resources within the areas. Increased active use resulting from expanded access could further reduce the availability of resources to harvest, as well as the remote character and values of the traditional land and resource use for the construction stage.

**19.3.2.2.2 Construction activities → Expenditures and employment → Change to population and demographics → Change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages**

The construction of WSR may lead to the following effects on change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages:

- Changes in land-based cultural activities;
- Economic and social shifts; and
- Changes in language.

Approximately 23 to 26 FTE workers per construction phase season from Other Local Study Area communities will be working on-site for the Project, which will be on a 14-days in and seven-days out schedule (Table 14-34). The effect of the Project on population and demographics is “expected to be minimal and temporary during the construction phase” (Section 14.3.1.2 Local Study Area: Other Communities). Project-related employment that is located on-site will require workers from LSA communities to commute and/or stay in temporary accommodations provided by the Project (Section 14.3.1.2 Local Study Area: Other Communities).

Section 14.2.2.1 Population and Demographics for Other Local Study Area Communities noted that 74% of households in the LSA (excluding Webequie First Nation) spoke English with another 26% who speak Indigenous languages (0.3% speak French).

[REDACTED]

It is estimated that a change in population and demographics due to the Project will correspond to the effects assessed in Section 14.5.2 and the effects on LSA communities is assumed as relatively immaterial for population and demographics, which included an indicator on language.

**19.3.2.2.3 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

**Operations and maintenance activities → Loss and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

With the operation and maintenance of WSR, the loss and/or alteration of sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes by LSA communities could be impacted and include the following effects:

- Increased access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes – Road use by the LSA community members may create opportunities to make their own trails off the WSR and towards the culturally and spiritually important sites and areas. This is considered to be a beneficial effect of the Project, as the WSR may provide convenient or alternate mode of travel to important sites across the territory. Improved access to previously difficult-to-reach locations and areas will provide community members with more opportunities to visit and spend time on land.
- Restricted access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes – Some sites may become harder to reach due to land fragmentation or other restrictions imposed by WSR.
- Impact on cultural identity and continuity – When access to cultural and/or sacred areas is lost or altered, it can weaken intergenerational knowledge transfer, making it harder for younger generations to engage with traditional practices and teachings.
- Increased risk of external interference – Once WSR is operational, there is a possibility of encroachment by, tourism, future development or non-members of LSA community members into the cultural and sacred sites that may not respect the cultural significance of the sites.

[REDACTED]

Non-Indigenous People may have access to the territory and the wildlife resources if they are able to use the WSR. This WSR may provide a link to the remote traditional territories from this new transportation access route. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

During the operations and maintenance phase, potential effects to loss and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes are not anticipated, based on current available information. All activities, including routine inspections, repairs, and maintenance tasks, will be confined strictly to the existing WSR. These activities will utilize established access routes and infrastructure, ensuring that there is no encroachment beyond the designated operational area.

#### **19.3.2.2.4 Operations and maintenance activities → Expenditures and employment → Change to population and demographics → Change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages**

The operation and maintenance of WSR can lead to the same effects on change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages as identified in **Section 19.3.2.2.2**.

- Changes in land-based cultural activities;
- Changes in language; and
- Economic and social shifts.

Changes in land-based cultural activities and effects to current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes are assessed in **Section 19.3.2.2.1**. Culture and language knowledge transfer is an important focus for the Webequie community, and no net effects were identified for the Population and Demographics VC which included a loss of Indigenous identity and a loss of language as indicators (Section 14.5.2.1). The net effects to health due to decreased community cohesion are predicted to be limited. The net effect's magnitude is predicted to be negligible to low as identified in Section 17.5.2.2. During operations and maintenance phase, there are 13 direct, and 3 induced employment opportunities anticipated for other LSA communities (Section 15.3.1.2- Economic Environment). As there are a limited number of employment opportunities projected and in turn exposure to non-local workers, it is anticipated that there will be negligible impacts to change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages in other LSA communities during this phase.

#### **19.3.2.3 Regional Study Area**

The potential effects on Cultural Continuity of other RSA communities are described below, which considers the following communities:

- Aroland First Nation;
- Constance Lake First Nation;
- Fort Albany First Nation;
- Ginoogaming First Nation;
- Kashechewan First Nation;
- Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation;
- Kingfisher Lake First Nation;
- Long Lake #58 First Nation;
- Métis Nation of Ontario Region 2;
- Mishkeegogamang First Nation;
- North Caribou Lake First Nation;
- Wunnumin Lake First Nation.
- Wapekeka First Nation; and
- Wawakapewin First Nation.



The Fort Albany Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Land Used Study and Kashechewan First Nation Existing Conditions Report were submitted to the Proponent for consideration as part of the preparation of the EAR/IS, and these documents are integrated in the following assessment. The analysis presented here is based on limited information received to date, and does not reflect a fulsome understanding of community interpretations, concerns, or expressed impacts to rights.

**19.3.2.3.1 Construction activities → Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

**Construction activities → Loss and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

Access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes supports the traditional land use activities discussed in **Section 19.2.2.3** and are important for cultural continuity. Although the specific location and sites, areas and travel routes cannot be directly confirmed for some of the RSA communities, it is understood from information obtained through published sources that the identified sites, areas and travel routes that have historically been used for traditional cultural and spiritual practices remain an integral part of the community's well-being. Mapping that has been included in this EAR/IS for **Section 19** for the RSA communities is from secondary sources and was not provided to the Project team from the RSA communities.

Constance Lake First Nation emphasized that the Project's development must adhere to a to a respectful process to ensure that special and spiritual areas remain unaffected.

Based on the information in the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation Traditional Land and Resource Use area, (**Figure 19.15**), known occupancy and fixed cultural sites of the community are estimated to be located outside the Project LSA and RSA (Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation, n.d).

Based on Ginoogaming Traditional Territory (**Figure 19.12**) (Ginoogaming First Nation, 2025), and Kashechewan First Nation Area of Interest for Planning and Traditional Harvesting Area (**Figure 19.13**). (Government of Ontario, 2017), the cultural and spiritual site and areas for these two communities are presumed to be located outside the Project LSA and RSA.

[REDACTED]

The Project activities with regard to construction activities are expected to be limited to the Project Footprint and portions of the LSA only. As such, based on current information, there is negligible effects anticipated during the construction phase with regard to loss and/or alteration of sites and areas and access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes in the RSA.

**19.3.2.3.2 Construction activities → Expenditures and employment → Change to population and demographics → Change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages**

As per Section 15 (Economic environment), there are employment projections for WSR developed for the RSA which includes 133 labour opportunities in 2028, 164 labour opportunities in 2029, 133 labour opportunities in 2030, 64 labour opportunities in 2031, and 53 labour opportunities in 2032. RSA communities will be working on-site for the Project, with a planned 14-days in and seven-days out schedule (Table 14-22).



With the RSA communities supporting employment during construction, it is estimated that a change in population and demographics due to the Project will correspond to the effects assessed in Section 14.5.2 and the effects on RSA communities is assumed as relatively immaterial for population and demographics, which included an indicator on language.

Changes to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages during construction are not anticipated for RSA communities.

**19.3.2.3.3 Operations and maintenance activities → Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

**Operations and maintenance activities → Loss and/or alteration of access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes**

**Operations and maintenance activities → Expenditures and employment → Change to population and demographics → Change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages**

Based on currently available information regarding communities in the RSA, it is anticipated that operations and maintenance activities will result in minimal to no effects to sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes, access to the sites used for cultural and spiritual purposes changes to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages within the RSA communities. Operation and maintenance activities are typically low in intensity, short in duration, and confined to previously disturbed or developed areas. Routine tasks such as inspections, minor repairs, and clean ups are generally conducted using existing infrastructure and access routes, thereby avoiding new disturbances to the surrounding environment or community resources.

## 19.4 Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

This section describes the proposed measures to mitigate the predicted adverse effects of the Project, as well as proposed enhancements on the interests and rights of Indigenous Peoples. This includes a description of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures for Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights:

- Current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes;
- Cultural continuity;



- Socio-economic and well-being rights; and
- Self-governance and self-determination rights.

The proposed mitigations require further engagement with the Proponent and stakeholders to be finalized. A Webequie Community Readiness Plan (CRP) has been developed for the Project (Appendix N). The CRP is a high level, dynamic plan that will require further engagement with the Proponent and stakeholders to be finalized. Mitigation measures described in the CRP are in consideration of the community strategies developed by Webequie First Nation and reflect the values and principles of the community.

Further related measures will be provided in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and the Operation Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) that will be developed for the Project. Refer to **Section 19.4.1** for details of the proposed framework for the development of the CEMP and OEMP.

Key mitigation and enhancement measures are outlined below.

## 19.4.1 Change to Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes

The potential effects to current and historical use of lands and resources for traditional purposes will be mitigated through measures designed to reduce changes to:

- Availability of lands and resources for traditional harvesting,
- Sites and areas used for traditional harvesting, and
- Access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting.

The predicted effects of the Project on the biophysical environment are presented in the EAR/IS, in the following sections:

- Geology, Terrain, and Soils (see Section 6 of the EAR/IS);
- Surface Water Resources (see Section 7 of the EAR/IS);
- Groundwater Resources (see Section 8 of the EAR/IS);
- Atmospheric Environment (see Section 9 of the EAR/IS);
- Fish and Fish Habitat (see Section 10 of the EAR/IS);
- Vegetation and Wetlands (see Section 11 of the EAR/IS);
- Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (see Section 12 of the EAR/IS); and
- Species at Risk (see Section 13 of the EAR/IS).

Each biophysical environment discipline effects assessment section of the EAR/IS includes a mitigation and enhancement measures section, which is complemented with EAR/IS Section 22 Follow-up and monitoring, Section 23 Accidents and Malfunctions, Section 26 Contributions to Sustainability, and Appendix E Mitigation Measures.

The Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (Section 4 and Appendix E of the EAR/IS) covers predicted biophysical environment effects and associated mitigation measures and monitoring requirements. The CEMP is a document that outlines how environmental effects will be managed during the construction phase of the Project. The Operation Environmental Management Plan Framework (OEMP) (Section 4 and Appendix E of the EAR/IS) provides specific guidance for managing biophysical



effects during the operations and maintenance phase of the Project. The OEMP will also include component management plans as required for the operation phase.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

#### **19.4.1.1 Availability of Lands and Resources for Traditional Harvesting**

This section provides measures for mitigating the effects to a potential reduction in the availability of lands and resources essential for traditional harvesting practices. By engaging with local communities, incorporating TEK, and adopting environmentally sensitive planning and construction methods, we can minimize disruptions and protect traditional harvesting activities so they can continue with minimal to no interruptions during the Project construction and operation and maintenance phase.

##### **19.4.1.1.1 Preferred and Culturally Important Species**

Existing conditions of preferred and culturally important species along with identified effects are provided under **Sections 19.2.2** and **19.3.1** respectively.

Caribou may be considered a cultural keystone species for Marten Falls First Nation, Weenusk First Nation and Webequie First Nation, based on their IKLRU reports, since it is a species of high importance to the culture of these First Nations. Mitigation measures to reduce impacts on Caribou are presented in Section 13 (Species at Risk).

The following recommendations and suggestions were identified in Section 13.4.3 Caribou, Appendix E Mitigation Measures and in the IKLRU studies shared by Weenusk First Nation, Webequie First Nation, and Marten Falls First Nation related to reducing impacts to Caribou. The information in **Section 19.4.1.1.1** should not be interpreted as a comprehensive or exhaustive catalogue of all potential mitigation measures for preferred and culturally important species.

- Installing signage and wildlife crossings along the road to alert traffic of Caribou migration areas and seasons (Suslop Inc., 2024);
- Appropriate routing of Project to minimize impacts to cultural keystone species (move the roads to areas away from sensitive habitats) (Suslop Inc., 2024);
- Physical deterrents to road access such as road tolls or fencing and signage to limit overhunting (road tolls are pending ongoing discussions and agreements between the First Nation and the province) (Suslop Inc., 2024);
- Follow Best Management Practices for Aggregate Activities and Forest Dwelling Woodland Caribou in Ontario (MECP, 2026):
  - Minimize habitat change and fragmentation;
  - Minimize the density of linear features to avoid an increase in predator efficiency;
  - Minimize activities that would increase mortality;
  - Minimize disturbances and sensory disturbances to the habitat;
- Aquatic feeding, calving and winter habitat with Late Winter Cover identified during baseline to be avoided as much as possible by the Project location (Section 13.4.3);
- Aquatic feeding and calving areas to be flagged during construction monitoring and to schedule the activities outside of those timing windows. For example, construction work in riparian areas would be removed in winter when Caribou are less likely to be feeding (Section 13.4.3);
- Caribou monitoring program prior to and throughout construction and operations phases which can also be used as baseline information for other development projects in the area (MNP LLP., 2024);
- Scouting areas prior to construction for Caribou use (MNP LLP, N.D.);
- Installation of equipment or strategies to buffer sensory disturbances (Stantec, 2024); Cleaning vehicles and equipment, strategic use of tarps and other materials to capture dust before entering waterbodies (Stantec, 2024); Tracking and monitoring water quality prior to and throughout construction and the operations and maintenance phases (MNP LLP, N.D.; Stantec, 2024); and
- Continue consultation and engagement with First Nations prior to initiation of construction work at habitats of culturally sensitive species (MNP LLP, N.D; Stantec, 2024).

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12.4, 13.4, and Appendix E of the EAR/IS) describes mitigation measures for potential effects to wildlife due to Project which might create challenges to traditional ways of life such as hunting, trapping and gathering. Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11.4 and Appendix E of

the EAR/IS) describes mitigations measures for potential effects to vegetation and wetlands. Fish and Fish Habitat (Section 10.4) provides mitigations proposed for potential effects to fish and their habitats.

#### 19.4.1.1.2 Timing/seasonality for Harvested Preferred Species

The following suggestions are provided as mitigations with regard to timing/seasonality harvested species and distance to harvested species:

- Providing access and making accommodations for harvesters and/or wildlife observation and land users throughout the construction phase;
- Maintaining line of site for land users and keeping construction activities and equipment safely away from community members;
- Engage with First Nations communities early in the planning process to understand their harvesting schedules and cultural practices. This incorporates their needs and concerns into the construction schedule;
- Advanced notification to land users and planned trips to refine or modify the schedule of work in locations of use;
- Scheduling or planning timing of construction activities to avoid peak harvesting periods as much as possible;
- Prohibition from fishing for construction workers;
- Restricted access to public to Project area during construction phase;
- Employment provisions for community member participation in traditional activities without negatively affecting employment security;
- Ensure that access routes to traditional harvesting areas remain open and unobstructed. Temporary access roads or detours can be created to facilitate continued harvesting; and
- Provide environmental and cultural awareness training to all Project personnel. With the training to be developed with input from Indigenous Knowledge holders and be considered a part of the Project CEMP.

#### 19.4.1.2 Sites and Areas Used for Traditional Harvesting

The following section provides mitigations for effects to sites and areas utilized for traditional harvesting, in view of effects identified under **Section 19.3.1** and the existing condition identified in **Section 19.2.2**.

##### 19.4.1.2.1 Stewardship and Environmental Management Strategy

A Stewardship and Environmental Management Strategy that integrates Indigenous knowledge and stewardship principles to encourage and support Webequie First Nation and other potentially affected communities to play an active role in protecting the environment, managing natural resources and monitoring potential project impacts is suggested to be developed and implemented (Appendix N - CRP). This strategy will recognize the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples to oversee their lands and resources and aims to implement the following mitigation and enhancement measures that will allow Indigenous communities to participate in environmental stewardship, and monitoring to actively engage and protect the land and its resources.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Surface Water and Storm Water Management and Monitoring (Section 7.4, Appendix E of the EAR/IS) describes mitigation measures for potential effects to surface water resources due to Project.

**19.4.1.3 Access to Lands and Resources used for Traditional Harvesting**

The following section provides mitigations for effects to the access of sites and areas for traditional harvesting, taking into account the effects identified under **Section 19.3.1** along with existing conditions identified in **Section 19.2.2**.

**19.4.1.3.1 Preferred harvesting methods and Routes to harvested species including navigable waterways**

Mitigation measures for preferred harvesting methods requires further engagement and consultation with First Nations, as there is a lack of sufficient information provided as mitigation measures may be unique to each First Nation. Enhancements for the potential benefits of getting out onto the land and use of employment income on fuel, for example, can improve the duration, distance or frequency of wildlife observation. This benefit of WSR is further explained in Sections 14 and 15.

Potential mitigations to predicted effects on preferred harvesting methods and routes to harvesting species can include the following (please refer to **Section 19.4.1** for further mitigations for wildlife and vegetation):

- Timing of construction activities that may cause sensory disturbances outside of the wildlife movement patterns;
- Utilizing on-site controls to buffer the effect of sensory disturbances;
- Installing monitoring devices for sensory effects such as noise, to track and alert construction workforce when above a set threshold;

- Vegetation Management Plan in CEMP to take into consideration location of camp sites; and
- Establishment of road controls from control or access points to tolls, and enforcement (road tolls are pending ongoing discussions and agreements between the First Nation and the province).

The following mitigations and recommendations were suggested by First Nations that provided IK studies for the WSR:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

#### 19.4.1.3.2 Distance to Harvesting Preferred Species

As mentioned under **Section 19.3.1**, adverse effects on the distance to harvesting preferred species are not expected to be numerous, and instead WSR will provide easier access and reduce the inconvenience of travelling the distance for traditional activities. The following mitigations are proposed in addition to measures proposed under above section and under **Sections 19.4.1.1** and **19.4.1.2**:

- Establish buffer zones around key harvesting areas to the extent possible for protection against any direct effects; and
- Establish seasonal restrictions on construction activities to avoid critical periods for wildlife, such as breeding or migration seasons (please refer to **Section 19.4.1.1** for further details).

#### 19.4.1.4 Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights with Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes

A Stewardship and Environmental Management Strategy will be implemented for the Project in consideration of effects on cultural and traditional land and resources, and effects on exercise rights; please refer to **Section 19.4.1.2** and CRP (Appendix N) for further details on this strategy. Key comments received from the Indigenous Nations that provided IK studies and participated in the consultation focused on impacts on fish, wildlife resources and habitats, and the loss of areas used for the exercise of rights. Increased pressure on resources, and the potential for reduced access to hunting, trapping, fishing, and plant harvesting areas within the Project area, and effects on cultural areas of importance were also identified concerns.

The following recommendations were made by Webequie First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation and Weenusk First Nation to limit potential effects on their exercise of rights within their IK studies:

- To keep an open and honest dialogue by the government and detailed information to be shared with the community regarding the Project (Stantec, 2024);
- Work with Webequie First Nation land users to mitigate changes to accessing traditional lands and waters through timing of Project activities, scheduling of construction, signage, and identification of potential alternate routes of access (Stantec, 2025);



- Implementation of measures or security by Webequie First Nation monitors that would allow the community to know who is using the road and for what purposes (Stantec, 2025);
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- Possibility of searching individuals who are accessing the community by road for drugs and alcohol (Stantec, 2024; Suslop Inc., 2024);
- To receive equitable compensation, potentially through a 50/50 revenue sharing model with development corporations or companies operating in traditional territory (Suslop Inc., 2024);
- Land to not be sold for development as it is considered invaluable for living, raising families, and preserving wisdom and survival skills (Suslop Inc., 2024);
- Revenue generated from roads or related development projects should be directed towards acquiring equipment necessary for Marten Falls First Nation members to live off the land, thereby promoting cultural preservation and lifestyle maintenance (Suslop Inc., 2024);
- Prohibition of Project workers bringing firearms or fishing gear to Project site while working (Stantec, 2025);
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- For construction activities to be staggered so that effects are felt in one location at a time rather than all throughout a particular area or zone (Stantec, 2025);
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- Demarcate segments of traditional trails that will be disrupted by the Project (Stantec, 2025);
- Communicate the schedule of Project activities throughout site preparation, construction and operation to Webequie First Nation land users (Stantec, 2025); and

The mitigation measures identified in the following sections will also serve as measures to minimize or avoid potential impacts on potential or established Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. Discipline specific mitigation measures are outlined in the relevant sections of the EAR/IS.

WSR CEMP and OEMP that will be developed prior to construction phase provides information regarding identified environmental (vegetation, wildlife, nuisances, etc.) impacts, mitigation measures, and monitoring requirements. CEMP document outlines how environmental impacts are to be managed during the construction phase and includes mitigations for impacts to traditional hunting, fishing, gathering, air and noise and vibration and similar. The WSR CEMP will include, at a minimum, the project description, project roles and responsibilities, project contacts, environmental awareness and education, health and safety, environmental protection and controls, component management plans, along with the following plans and measures. Further information regarding measures provided for cultural and traditional land and resource use effects are described in the CRP (Appendix N).



The IK studies provided for the Project also suggested mitigations and recommendations for the construction and operation and maintenance phase of the Project. The following suggestions were provided within the Webequie First Nation rights assessment study (Stantec, 2025):

- Usage of dust suppressors to reduce effects on air quality and airborne dust contaminants entering the water or landing on nearby vegetation.
- Design of culverts and bridges to mitigate impacts on water quality. Further information provided under **Section 19.3.1.1** and Project Description (Section 04) regarding design measures taken for waterbody crossings.
- The gravel which is located close to the community to be left for Webequie First Nation's use.
- WSR to be designed to minimize impacts on fish and fish habitat. Further information provided under **Section 19.3.1.1**, Surface Water (Section 07), and Fish and Fish Habitat (Section 10).
- WSR to be designed to mitigate impacts to surface water and ground water. Further information provided under **Section 19.3.1.1**, Surface Water (Section 07), and Groundwater (Section 08).
- Restrict site preparation, construction and operation activities to the Project footprint as much as possible to reduce disturbances to adjacent forest land.
- Any timber and brush cleared for construction of the WSR to be cleaned up.
- Establish and utilize checkpoints to clean equipment and monitor for invasive species that are carried on boat motors and snowmobiles.
- Establish signage for reduced speed limits (seasonally or permanent) to reduce wildlife collisions and make drivers aware of important calving habitats.
- For construction activities to avoid any possible waterbody contamination during fish spawning times. Recommended to use best available technologies and materials to prevent this. Further information provided under **Section 19.3.1.1**, Surface Water (Section 07), and Fish and Fish Habitat (Section 10).
- Reduce the idling of heavy fleet vehicles when not operating. Further information provided under Air Quality Impact Assessment (Appendix G).
- Limit all clearing and environmental impacts to the greatest extent possible.
- Provide measures to reduce sensory disturbances caused by construction, road maintenance, and traffic conditions. Please refer to mitigations provided in Section 14 (Social Environment) and Section 17 (Human Health).

## 19.4.2 Changes in Cultural Continuity

The IKLRU program compiled and analyzed activities across the territory overlapping with the LSA and RSA. These activities include both Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and Traditional Land and Resource Use (TLRU) such as harvesting, habitation, cultural and spiritual areas, areas of important habitat and environmental changes. **Section 19.3.2** analyzed the effects pathways the project has on cultural continuity based on the information that has been shared by some first nations. Further engagement is required to address all potential concerns of nations in both the LSA and RSA for the project.

The Cultural Heritage Resources Management Plan (Section 6 of Appendix S and Appendix E of the EAR/IS) describes mitigation measures for cultural heritage and archaeological resources, including:

- General procedures to identify, report, and manage heritage and archaeological resources during construction;



- Construction activities and staging to be carefully planned and executed to prevent impacts on identified Cultural Heritage Landscape areas;
- General procedures and protocol for encountering unexpected heritage or archaeological resources during ground disturbance;
- Information to identify heritage or archaeological materials if encountered in the construction area, procedures for notification and reporting the find, and actions to follow to protect the site from impacts;
- Advanced detailed site visits with community members to identify specific locations of burials during the detailed design phase to determine changes to the Project to avoid impacts;
- Development of protocols to respect and protect burial and other cultural artefacts and/or to handle appropriately; and
- Recruiting of First Nation construction monitors during construction activities to oversee implementation of mitigations during construction.

Heritage consultants (ASI, 2024) have also identified cultural sensitivity training for construction workforce, consultation based on Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002, Truth and Reconciliation and UNDA, Canada. The Cultural Heritage Report (ASI, 2024) recommendations may also be considered here:

- Further consultation to identify sites and areas of significance;
- Determine mitigation measures or the appropriate use of the following:
  - Avoidance;
  - Alternative design or construction approaches;
  - Monitor;
  - Protect;
  - Relocation;
  - Remedial landscaping; and
  - Documentation.
- Training and involvement of spiritual monitors;
- Determine the need for Cultural Heritage Evaluation Reports and/or Feature-Specific Heritage Impact Assessment Report; and
- Staging and construction activities to be “suitably planned and undertaken to avoid impacts to identified CHLs” (Cultural Heritage Landscape).

Cultural, sacred, spiritual or ceremonial, named and language places and areas may also be affected by construction activities and require further engagement on these locations, the ways they are used to develop appropriate mitigations that are culturally relevant to these specific locations.

Access from non-Indigenous Peoples may access these cultural and spiritually important areas and sites as the WSR and other proposed transportation routes may connect to the provincial highway network. This can be mitigated by limiting access to non-Indigenous People, and enforcement of vehicle use.



### 19.4.2.1 Change/Loss to Quantity (number or ha) or Quality of Culturally and Spiritually Important Sites and Areas (e.g., Ceremonial, sacred, teaching)

Based on this analysis of effects in **Section 19.3.1**, this section provides recommendations and mitigations to minimize and/or prevent adverse effects to quantity (number or ha) or quality of culturally and spiritually important sites and areas.

The Cultural Heritage Report (ASI, 2024) summarized a number of mitigation measures or approaches with regard to this aspect, including the following:

- Further research and engagement with Indigenous communities to discuss significance and potential cultural heritage values for the purpose of obtaining further insights on the adverse impacts which can better inform appropriate mitigation measures.
- Consider mitigation framework or hierarchy to identify whether they require avoidance (of construction effects), alternative design or construction approaches, monitoring, other forms of protection, relocation, landscape remediation, documentation or a combination thereof.
- Implement mitigation measures suggested by the IK studies of Webequie First Nation, Weenusk First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation:
  - Establish checkpoints for equipment and vehicles (during construction and operations phases) including boats for invasive species and micro-organisms (Stantec, 2025);
  - Sacred areas to be monitored and protected by spiritual monitors trained and guided by Elders of the community (Stantec, 2025);
  - Cultural programs and activities in place so culture, traditions and language are not lost (Suslop Inc., 2024); and

[REDACTED]

The report for noise assessment (SLR Consulting Ltd., 2024), included the following mitigations (Appendix J):

- Consultation and engagement with the community when “noise levels during long-term construction result in a greater than 6.5% increase in %HA” for construction activities that are longer than 1 year per Health Canada guidelines;
- Construction to be limited to daytime period, especially near residences;
- Equipment to be kept properly maintained to limit noise emissions and utilize with muffling devices;
- Verify equipment to comply with MOE NPC-115 guidelines when handling complaints;
- Field investigations to better determine alternative noise measures; and
- The effects of noise and vibration from blasting at the aggregate sites did not predict extents of effects from the source of the blasts. Mitigation included controls in blast design which can be confirmed through monitoring.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

### 19.4.2.2 Change to Access/Routes to Culturally and Spiritually Important Sites and Areas Including Use of Navigable Waterways

Waterbody crossings that are part of existing travel routes may be affected by construction. These locations may impede access to cultural and spiritually important areas. Waterbody crossings that have not been designed for navigation may benefit from further engagement with community members to incorporate clearance for small watercrafts.

Community members may benefit from the WSR and use it for convenient and/or alternate mode of transportation to access the cultural and spiritually important sites and areas in the LSA and also in the RSA if it is combined with other modes of travel.

Section 7.4.4 (Mitigations for permanent waterbody crossings) provides details on mitigations for waterbody crossings. For potential changes to water quantity (flow/discharge, water levels), waterbody crossings are to be designed with single-span elements (bridges or culverts) where possible, to limit the encroachment of structures into stream channels and thereby minimize the effect on discharge under variable flow conditions. Three of the waterbody crossings require multiple spans (WB-1, WC-3, and WC-27), and 28 crossings were designed with single-span elements. Hydrology estimates were used to size waterbody crossing structures based on 100-year return period peak flood events and included an increase adjustment, or up-sizing, to account for climate change. From a hydraulic perspective, the structures have been designed to pass frequent floods or precipitation events (two-year return period) with minimal effect on stream discharge, accommodate fish passage requirements (Ontario Ministry Transportation [MTO], Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada [DFO]) and where navigable waterways were identified the design of culverts and bridges has made allowance for a minimum navigational clearance, or opening, for small motorized and unmotorized watercraft passage.

### 19.4.2.3 Change in Distance to Culturally and Spiritually Important Sites and Areas

The construction activities may impede the use of existing water-based and land-based routes during the construction phase. Advanced notification for planned events and engagement with land users to identify time periods in the workforce that may affect travel routes is proposed.

The following mitigations are proposed in addition to measures mentioned under **Section 19.4.2** and mitigations for reclamation and restoration under **Section 19.4.1.1.1**:

- Consultation with First Nations to establish and communicate temporary alternative routes to culturally and spiritually important sites and areas during construction phase;



- Demarcation of areas and sites of cultural and traditional importance to the First Nations during construction phase; and
- Setup of protocols and schedules for working around culturally and traditionally important sites and areas.

#### 19.4.2.4 Change to Sufficiency of Lands and Resources for Cultural Practices

Webequie First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation, along with other First Nations, have concerns related to stewardship regarding sufficiency of lands and resources. The communities have requested to be involved and have authority to make decisions that allow them to protect their resources, not only for harvesting wildlife but also waterbodies as a source of drinking water. Road use may provide access into the territory for non-Indigenous People which may affect over-harvesting and trapping, as well as invasive plant species. The WSR can consider limitations or restrictions to access by non-Indigenous community members and visitors. Restricted access points can include security checks which can also have vehicle cleaning areas to prevent occurrences. The Ontario Invasive Plant Council includes a “Clean Equipment Protocol for Industry” (Halloran, 2013) for further consideration.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Based on input received from Indigenous communities, the following measures are proposed in addition to the above:

- Identify and demarcate areas of cultural significance to protect these areas and develop measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for effects on cultural practices to the extent possible;
- Engage with local communities which are affected to understand their cultural practices and needs and develop mitigations are necessary;
- Adopt a landscape-scale approach to assess and manage cultural resources by considering the broader cultural and historical context of the area and implementing mitigation measures that preserve the integrity of cultural landscapes;
- Implement adaptive management practices that allow for ongoing monitoring and adjustment of mitigation measures based on feedback from affected communities and changes in environmental conditions (please refer to Appendix N on monitoring and adaptive management); and
- Cultural awareness training be provided to the Project workers to provide comprehensive information about the importance of cultural practices and the need to protect cultural resources.

#### **19.4.2.5 Change to Cultural Traditions or Practices**

Webequie First Nation has general or non-specific concerns about Project-related effects on traditional land use, traditional values, language and teachings. Baseline information, including community well-being, of community members can be used for tracking and monitoring the social and cultural effects across subpopulations including youth, community members who leave or return to the reserve, Elders to understand any differences and determine appropriate options. The following measures can be considered:

- Opportunities for Elders and youth land use to get out onto the land and teach/learn stewardship and promote connection to land;
- Use of timber from removed vegetation for traditional or cultural purposes such as cabin-building, which also requires upgrades to a sawmill and potential professionally stamped lumber;
- Community members to be recruited as spiritual monitors and liaison with the community regarding any construction activities around culturally and spiritually important sites and areas;
- Developing opportunities to harmonize traditional knowledge and modern culture to protect and improve culture, as provided in CCP;
- Initiatives that support language, cultural practices, and land-based learning identified in the baseline e.g., elder–youth land camps, winter travel support, portage maintenance, story-work programs; and
- Targeted programs for youth involvement and interest in cultural values, practices and activities.

Marten Falls First Nation members expressed two primary concerns regarding drug and alcohol use:

- (1) Negative impacts on health and safety; and
- (2) Negative impacts on land use and traditional activities.

To address these concerns, members recommended limiting road access to outsiders and providing security along roads, which could include tolls and/or inspection areas (road tolls are pending ongoing discussions and agreements between the First Nation and the province). They also suggested enforcement measures to prevent impaired driving and improve overall safety, such as establishing a First Nation or Tribal police presence (NAPS).





- Incorporation of traditional learning and cultural teachings into training and develop education, skills and training approach for community members to align with Project opportunities;
- Creation of policies that offer flexible work schedules and leave options for Indigenous employees, enabling them to participate in vital cultural practices such as harvesting, traditional learning, and healing activities;
- Enhancement of access and reduce obstacles for community members to engage in cultural activities; and
- Implementation of environmental training and awareness program for employees.

The following recommendations have been made by Webequie First Nation for mitigating effects on cultural continuity rights:

- Provide funding to support language revitalization efforts and the preservation of the community's dialect;
- Provide funding to support the long-term success of the Choose Life program; and
- Protect sacred areas through the use of spiritual monitors that are trained by Elders in the community.

### 19.4.3 Socio-economic, Health and Well-being

Socio-economy, health and well-being mitigations are explored in detail in the following sections:

- Section 14 (Social Environment);
- Section 17 (Human Health);
- Appendix M (Gender Based Analysis+);
- Appendix N (CRP);
- Appendix P (HHRA); and
- Appendix Q (Health Impact Assessment).

The following recommendations were made by Webequie First Nation to limit potential Project-related effects on their exercise of Indigenous and Treaty Rights associated with socio-economic and well-being (Stantec, 2025):

- Implementation of measures or security by Webequie First Nation monitors that would allow the community to know who is using the road and for what purposes. Additionally, the possibility of searching individuals who are accessing the community by road for drugs and alcohol.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



**Table 19-16: Summary of Potential Effects, Mitigation Measures and Predicted Net Effects for Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes and Cultural Continuity**

| Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights                | Indicators  | Project Phase (C, O)* | Project Component or Activity  | Potential Effect  | Mitigation and Enhancement Measures  | Predicted Net Effect |
|--|---|-----------------------|--|---|--|----------------------|
| Current and Historical Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes to availability of lands and resources for traditional purposes.</li> <li>▪ Loss of or change to sites and areas (ha) used for traditional activities (hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering).</li> <li>▪ Changes in preferred harvested species.</li> <li>▪ Changes to, or restrictions on, preferred harvesting methods.</li> <li>▪ Changes to access/routes to harvested species, including use of navigable waterways.</li> <li>▪ Changes to distance for harvesting preferred species.</li> <li>▪ Changes to timing/seasonality for harvesting preferred species.</li> <li>▪ Location/number/type of cultural keystone species affected.</li> <li>▪ Changes to experience of place and being on the land (sensory, aesthetics, connections).</li> </ul> | C, O                  | Construction and use of supportive infrastructure.<br>Operation and Maintenance of Road. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alterations to availability of lands and resources for traditional purposes.</li> <li>▪ Alteration or loss of sites and areas utilized for traditional activities.</li> <li>▪ Alterations or limitations in the species preferred for harvesting.</li> <li>▪ Alterations to access/routes to harvested species, including use of navigable waterways.</li> <li>▪ Alterations on distance to harvesting preferred species.</li> <li>▪ Alterations to timing/seasonality for harvesting preferred species.</li> <li>▪ Change to location/number/type of cultural keystone species.</li> <li>▪ Alterations to experience of place and being on the land.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mitigations provided via other sections of EAR/IS on the biophysical environment of the Project area.</li> <li>▪ Implementation of the CEMP and OEMP.</li> <li>▪ Implementation of the CRP.</li> <li>▪ Implementation of mitigation measures suggested via IK Studies.</li> </ul> <p>Availability of lands and resources for traditional harvesting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Providing access and adaptive management for harvesters throughout the construction phase.</li> <li>▪ Maintaining line of site for land users during construction activities.</li> <li>▪ Engage with First Nations communities periodically to understand their harvesting schedules and cultural practices.</li> </ul> | Yes                  |



| Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights | Indicators | Project Phase (C, O)* | Project Component or Activity | Potential Effect | Mitigation and Enhancement Measures   | Predicted Net Effect |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---|----------------------|
|   |            |                       |                               |                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scheduling or planning timing of construction activities to avoid peak harvesting periods.</li> <li>▪ Temporary access roads or detours to facilitate continued harvesting.</li> </ul> <p>Sites and areas used for traditional harvesting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Protection of waterways and access and community-led water monitoring.</li> <li>▪ Minimization of disruptions to traditional land and water use.</li> <li>▪ Providing accessible and available communication materials, in plain language, and translated as needed to community's Indigenous language.</li> <li>▪ Establishing partnerships with organizations for Indigenous-led environmental justice and stewardship initiatives.</li> </ul> |                      |



| Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights | Indicators | Project Phase (C, O)* | Project Component or Activity | Potential Effect | Mitigation and Enhancement Measures   | Predicted Net Effect |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---|----------------------|
|   |            |                       |                               |                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishment of hunting database.</li> <li>▪ Establish buffer zones around key harvesting areas to the extent possible for protection against any direct effects.</li> </ul> <p>Access to lands and resources used for traditional harvesting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Timing of construction activities that may cause sensory disturbances outside of the wildlife movement patterns.</li> <li>▪ Utilizing on-site controls to buffer the effect of sensory disturbances.</li> <li>▪ Installing monitoring devices for sensory effects to track and alert construction workforce when above a set threshold.</li> <li>▪ Establish seasonal restrictions on construction activities to avoid critical periods for wildlife, such as breeding or migration seasons.</li> </ul> |                      |



| Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights | Indicators  | Project Phase (C, O)* | Project Component or Activity  | Potential Effect  | Mitigation and Enhancement Measures  | Predicted Net Effect |
|---|---|-----------------------|--|---|--|----------------------|
| Cultural Continuity   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Loss of or change to quantity (number or ha) or quality of culturally and spiritually important sites and areas (e.g., ceremonial sites, sacred areas, teaching sites).</li> <li>▪ Changes to access/routes to culturally and spiritually important sites and areas including use of navigable waterways.</li> <li>▪ Changes to distance to culturally and spiritually important sites and areas.</li> <li>▪ Sufficiency of lands and resources for cultural practices.</li> <li>▪ Changes to cultural traditions or practices.</li> </ul> | C, O                  | Construction and use of supportive infrastructure.<br>Operation and Maintenance of Road. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alteration or loss of quantity or quality of culturally and spiritually important sites and areas.</li> <li>▪ Alterations in access/routes to culturally and spiritually important sites and areas including use of navigable waterways.</li> <li>▪ Alterations in distance to culturally and spiritually important sites and areas.</li> <li>▪ Adequacy of lands and resources for cultural practices.</li> <li>▪ Alterations in cultural traditions or practices.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mitigations provided via other sections of EAR/IS on the cultural environment of the Project area.</li> <li>▪ Implementation of the CEMP and OEMP.</li> <li>▪ Implementation of the CRP.</li> <li>▪ Implementation of mitigation measures suggested via IK Studies.</li> <li>▪ Implementation on relevant mitigations provided via the Section 4.2 Cultural Protection Guidelines of the Webequie On-Reserve Land Use Plan.</li> <li>▪ Change in distance to culturally and spiritually important sites and areas.</li> <li>▪ Consultation with First Nations to establish temporary alternative routes.</li> <li>▪ Demarcation of areas and sites of cultural and traditional importance.</li> </ul> | Yes                  |



| Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights | Indicators | Project Phase (C, O)* | Project Component or Activity | Potential Effect | Mitigation and Enhancement Measures   | Predicted Net Effect |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---|----------------------|
|   |            |                       |                               |                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Setup of protocols and schedules for working around culturally and traditionally important sites and areas.</li> <li>▪ Change to sufficiency of lands and resources for cultural practices</li> <li>▪ Adopt a landscape-scale approach to assess and manage cultural resources.</li> <li>▪ Implement adaptive management practices that allow for ongoing monitoring and adjustment of mitigation measures.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that cultural awareness training is provided to all Project workers.</li> <li>▪ Change cultural traditions or practices.</li> <li>▪ Opportunities for Elders and youth land use to get out onto the land and teach/learn stewardship.</li> </ul> |                      |



| Indigenous Peoples' values and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights | Indicators | Project Phase (C, O)* | Project Component or Activity | Potential Effect | Mitigation and Enhancement Measures   | Predicted Net Effect |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---|----------------------|
|   |            |                       |                               |                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use of timber from removed vegetation for traditional or cultural purposes.</li> <li>▪ Community members to be recruited as spiritual monitors.</li> <li>▪ Developing opportunities to harmonize traditional knowledge and modern culture to protect and improve culture.</li> <li>▪ Targeted programs for youth involvement and interest in cultural values, practices and activities.</li> </ul> |                      |

\*C = Construction Phase; O = Operations Phase



## 19.5 Impacts on the Exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights

The following section provides identified potential effects of the Project that could lead to the infringement of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA. The information is based on **Section 19.3**, as well as other sections of the EAR/IS that described predicted effects on the social environment (Section 14), economic environment (Section 15) and human health (Section 17).

### 19.5.1 Rights Related to Current and Historic Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes

#### 19.5.1.1 Webequie First Nation

Webequie First Nation requires availability of sufficient quality and quantity of harvested resources and the ability to harvest preferred species at preferred locations using preferred methods as noted in the Webequie First Nation IK Study report. These traditional use resources such as wildlife, fish, plants and water are currently available in the LSA and RSA. The availability of these resources enables traditional activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and food and medicinal plant harvesting.

[REDACTED]

Loss of and/or alteration of sites used for hunting could lead to a loss of access to culturally significant sites and a shift in harvesting patterns, ultimately impacting the community's connection to the land and the transmission of traditional knowledge.

While fish habitat is anticipated to be preserved in most locations with arch open bottom culverts spanning the entire bankfull width of the watercourses, some destruction of fish habitat will be unavoidable during construction of bridge pier footings in-water.

[REDACTED]

The construction of the proposed road has the potential to result in the loss or alteration of traditional fishing sites that are essential to Webequie First Nation for subsistence, cultural continuity, and intergenerational knowledge transfer.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



The Project will cross eskers and some eskers may be used as a source of aggregate for road construction and operation and maintenance. This is a concern to the Webequie community since the esker formations can be important habitat for wildlife, especially small animals and migrating birds, as well as plants used for food and medicinal purposes. In particular, the disturbance of plants in these areas were identified as a concern, and it was emphasized that the Webequie community must be involved in finalizing exact locations of eskers and aggregate source areas.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Access may be disrupted by the destruction or modification of trails, installation of barriers such as gates or fences, and increased noise or visual disturbances from traffic and construction. These changes can affect the ability to engage in traditional practices and alter the experience of being on the land.

[REDACTED]

Webequie First Nation land users and harvesters may be affected by Project construction activities regarding waterways crossings which may impede access to locations which were previously travelled by boat/watercrafts during the construction phase.

The Project will provide year-round road access to areas of Webequie First Nation's traditional territory from the Webequie community. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The effects of road use on hunting preferred species include:

- Improved access to hunting areas;
- Potential improvements in the number of households and/or household members participating in hunting;
- Improved access and connection to the land;

[REDACTED]

- Potential improvement to community health and well-being it provides connection to the landscape and helps maintain community and kinship ties and values.



The potential adverse effects during operation and maintenance of the road may alter the harvesting practices in the following ways:

- Changes in the Webequie community's practice to observe wildlife and adapt their hunting tactics;
- Increased conflict, tension, misunderstandings with enforcement and/or non-Indigenous harvesters;
- Imposition of new government and enforcement rules;
- Reduced quality and/or quantity of harvested wildlife and plant resources or concerns related to increased competition for wildlife resources;
- Reduced preparing, utilizing or teaching practices to identify and use different parts of the animal for sustenance, such as making *nokihaygun* (a type of pemmican), well-being, healing, health aids; and
- Introduction of invasive or non-native species.

Webequie First Nation community may be confronted with changes or conflicts in the new ways of experiencing place and being on the land when they are actively working to maintain the Project over the course of the operations phase.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The experience and connection to land relates to teachings and the Creator and the related principles may also be drawn into the new experience of operation and maintenance activities. It may change the relationship of well-being and healing journeys and cultural traditions and practices at cultural and spiritual locations.

### 19.5.1.2 Other LSA Communities

Community members from Marten Falls First Nation expressed concern that the Project could negatively impact moose and caribou populations – species that are not only vital for sustenance but also central to cultural identity.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Members also raised broader concerns about how development could restrict access to traditional lands and activities. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] This feedback comes directly from Marten Falls First Nation and reflects their perspective on cultural impacts and land access.

The potential for perceived undesirable change to Caribou migration and calving is presented in Weenusk First Nation IK Study. [REDACTED]

Harvested food sustains the community members. These foods are “generally more preferred” and are harvested year-round.

Changes that may alter or impact Caribou migration routes (shown in Traditional Ecological Knowledge map of Weenusk First Nation IK Study) may also lead to changes in the Weenusk First Nation harvesting, experience, availability, and quantity and/or quality of the species. The Caribou migration may shift as a result of development, potential over-harvesting by non-Indigenous or non-Weenusk community members and other factors external to the Project.

Attawapiskat First Nation members identified concerns that changes to hydrology may alter drainage patterns, which will have implications for soils, vegetation, and wildlife. Attawapiskat First Nation is concerned that “surface water” is one of the environmental components that is being evaluated in isolation, without looking at linkages with other parts of the ecosystem (Nakogee, 2020). The community has highlighted concerns such as potential effects to the Ekwon River and Attawapiskat River which are heavily used by Attawapiskat traditional land users, regional effects of the road on water, fish and wildlife and on downstream communities, potential effects to peatlands and disruptions to drainage for fish and wildlife outside of the Project footprint, potential effects on the subsistence economy as this sustains Attawapiskat First Nation culturally, physically, spiritually, and socially, potential effects of contamination of heavy metals including chromium and mercury methylation and cumulative effects (Nakogee, 2020).

Neskantaga First Nation noted that preliminary research completed by them concluded that there are likely historic trails that intersect the proposed Project (Peerla, 2021a). There could be potential impacts from blasting to fish and aquatic resources, including incubating eggs and resident and migrating fish. Required buffer zones and timing windows will not mitigate all impacts to aquatic resources, including several species of resident fish (Peerla, 2021b). The community indicated that Neskantaga’s land use options will be permanently altered by the Project as the Webequie Supply Road will bisect Neskantaga’s lands and forever change the options for ensuring the continued practice of Neskantaga’s way of life on Neskantaga territory. Neskantaga First Nation noted that the project directly impacts Neskantaga First Nation’s traplines and falls within Neskantaga’s Area of Interest.

Neskantaga First Nation has a sacred, legal obligation to protect, defend and steward the water, land, air, and resources of our territory. From Neskantaga’s perspective, they are uniquely vulnerable to the impact of the Supply Road and induced development of the entire Ring of Fire region and will bear the burden of significant risks arising from the roads and mines.

For Weenusk First Nation and the community of Peawanuck, the Winisk River watershed—including Winisk Lake and other waterbodies crossed by the Project—is central to traditional harvesting.

[REDACTED]

Any disruption to these water systems could affect both the physical access to harvesting areas and the cultural and spiritual connection to the land.



“Freedom” was also another term that ties into the experience and connection with land. It is a core aspect of traditional harvesting. Concern that the development will incur more regulations and controls, that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This tradition supports not only physical sustenance but also social cohesion and intergenerational connection – within the community, with other families, extended family members, and Elders. It not only supports human consumption but also ties people together and is a common practice, as one Weenusk First Nation IK Study participant stated, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### 19.5.1.3 RSA Communities

The predicted effects are largely not anticipated to extend into the RSAs for the biophysical effects assessments. The predicted effects on availability, quality and quantity of traditionally harvested resources, based on the effects assessments contained in biophysical effects assessment sections of the EAR/IS, are presented in further detail in **Section 19.3.1**.

## 19.5.2 Rights Related to Cultural Continuity

### 19.5.2.1 Webequie First Nation

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas and/or access to sites used for cultural and spiritual purposes during construction may lead to:

- Loss of Cultural Continuity – Many sites hold historical significance, serving as places for ceremonies, teachings, and passing down traditional knowledge. Loss and/or alteration of sites and areas can disrupt the transmission of cultural practices for the Webequie First Nation community.

- Erosion to Spiritual Practices – These locations are often sacred spaces for prayer, healing, and connection to the land. Loss and/or alteration of a site may lead to feelings of displacement and spiritual disconnect for the Webequie First Nation community.
- Impact on Rights and Land Stewardship – Webequie First Nation has outlined that it has the inherent right to care for and govern their lands, so they remain protected for future generations. Loss and/or alteration of a site can weaken their ability to uphold those responsibilities.
- Challenges to Community Well-being – Traditional lands contribute to mental, physical, and social wellness, whether through hunting, gathering medicines, or holding ceremonies. Loss and/or alteration of a cultural or sacred site can affect overall health and resilience.
- Loss of Historical and Environmental Integrity – The construction of WSR could lead to landscape changes, potentially damaging sacred sites, burial grounds, and areas of ecological importance.
- Sensory Disturbance – Construction activities can introduce noise, vibration, dust, artificial lighting, and visual intrusions that disrupt the sensory environment of cultural and spiritual spaces used by Webequie First Nation. This can diminish the site's spiritual ambiance and interfere with ceremonies or practices that rely on areas that are undisturbed.

Webequie First Nation's ability to preserve and maintain a distinct Webequie First Nation cultural identity, is contingent on meaningful opportunities for intergenerational teaching and cultural transmission. Without these locations, Webequie First Nation's cultural and experiential rights would be impacted (Stantec, 2025).

Waterbodies are highly spiritually important places that the Webequie community is responsible to protect. Changes to water quality and quantity of water may also change the ability of Webequie First Nation to practice ceremonies and connect with their culture.

The construction of WSR can lead to the following effects on change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages:

- Changes in land-based cultural activities – Traditional activities like hunting, trapping, and harvesting may be affected by land fragmentation, environmental disruption, or increased competition from non-Indigenous groups and non-members of Webequie First Nation during construction.
- Changes in language – The increased labour force into Webequie during construction may encourage cultural exchange and language revitalization efforts but could also pressure younger generations to prioritize English over Indigenous languages.
- Economic and social shifts – The construction phase will bring job opportunities that support Indigenous-led cultural initiatives, including language education programs. However, this could shift priorities away from traditional lifestyles.
- Risk of Cultural Dilution – With an influx of non-Indigenous People into Webequie, this could potentially impact the social and cultural dynamics in these communities. This could potentially influence Indigenous traditions and reducing the use of Indigenous languages within daily life.

Development and subsequent in-migration of non-Indigenous People nearby the community has the potential to exacerbate the erosion of Webequie language and culture, particularly amongst youth, who already face challenges in the loss of their cultural identity (Heid et al., 2022 as cited in Intergroup, 2024).

Outsiders" may disrupt or devalue traditional practices and teachings; more technology or digital communications access may amplify the "disruptions" on youth and use of Indigenous language. It may reduce participation in traditional activity and continue to the decreasing time spent on the land, and



practices traditional activities. There could be a reduced interest by community members in traditional-based skills and programs in favour of skills training and education aimed at Project job opportunities. A reduced availability or offering of traditional programs could occur due to a lack of interest leading to potential changes to cultural traditions and practices.

Effects to language sites and areas during construction through vegetation removal and ground disturbance could lead to an erosion of cultural identity and heritage. The potential effects of these concerns may negatively affect cultural identity, way of life, community values, spiritual laws (Creator's laws of relationships with Creator, lands and animals and other people) and seven ancestral teachings about how to treat the environment (truth, humility, respect, love, honesty, courage and wisdom). With the potential degradation of essential practices of Webequie First Nation, it may contribute to the broader context of concerns related to cultural continuity or knowledge transfer to future generations.

The operation of WSR can lead to the following effects on change to cultural traditions and practices, including use and preservation of Indigenous languages:

- Access to previously difficult-to-reach locations and areas will provide community members with more opportunities to visit and spend time on land.
- Restricted access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes – Some sites may become harder to reach due to land fragmentation or other restrictions imposed by WSR.
- Impact on cultural identity and continuity – When access to cultural and/or sacred areas is lost or altered, it can weaken intergenerational knowledge transfer, making it harder for younger generations to engage with traditional practices and teachings.
- Increased risk of external interference – Once WSR is operational, there is a possibility of encroachment by, tourism, future development or non-members of Webequie First Nation into the cultural and sacred sites that may not respect the cultural significance of the sites.

The use of the road can provide an alternate or convenient mode of travel to access the traditional territory. The WSR will provide year-round transportation access which can link Webequie First Nation community members to cultural, sacred and language sites and areas. The use of the road may provide convenient or alternative access to these sites that have been identified in the LSA and potentially within and outside the RSA. Road use is expected to serve commercial and personal vehicles as well. Road use will provide personal vehicle access across the greater geography of the traditional lands. Typical modes of travel are by foot, boat, snowmobile or ATV. This may be a benefit for Webequie community members to get out onto the land for cultural and traditional purposes. Travel routes that access culturally and spiritually important places close to the WSR may be more convenient to access. This may be a positive effect and can reduce the time needed to access distant locations, increase the frequency of trips or reduce the cost of supplies. This benefit may be especially positive for youths who participate in programs and trip opportunities.

### 19.5.2.2 Other LSA Communities

The Marten Falls First Nation IKLRU Study notes that the ecological integrity of Marten Falls First Nation's traditional territory must be ensured for future generations to have the option and opportunity to engage in the use of lands and resources. The risk of losing the ability to maintain traditional practices and harvest resources from the traditional territory can affect cultural identity and relationship with the land, as well as amongst other community members.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

With the operation and maintenance of WSR, the loss and/or alteration of sites and areas used for cultural and spiritual purposes by LSA communities could be impacted and include the following effects:

- Increased access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes – Road use by the LSA community members may create opportunities to make their own trails off the WSR and towards the culturally and spiritually important sites and areas. This is considered to be a beneficial effect of the Project, as the WSR may provide convenient or alternate mode of travel to important sites across the territory. Improved access to previously difficult-to-reach locations and areas will provide community members with more opportunities to visit and spend time on land.
- Restricted access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes – Some sites may become harder to reach due to land fragmentation or other restrictions imposed by WSR.
- Impact on cultural identity and continuity – When access to cultural and/or sacred areas is lost or altered, it can weaken intergenerational knowledge transfer, making it harder for younger generations to engage with traditional practices and teachings.
- Increased risk of external interference – Once WSR is operational, there is a possibility of encroachment by, tourism, future development or non-members of LSA community members into the cultural and sacred sites that may not respect the cultural significance of the sites.

Non-Indigenous People may have access to the territory and the wildlife resources if they are able to use the WSR. This WSR may provide a link to the remote traditional territories from this new transportation access route. The preferred and meaningful manner that Weenusk First Nation harvesters prefer to hunt in is with many animals nearby, where it is quiet and where there are other Weenusk hunters. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Project could potentially impact Marten Falls First Nation’s cultural continuity, with easier access to lands and resources used for cultural and spiritual purposes. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### 19.5.2.3 RSA Communities

The predicted effects are largely not anticipated to extend into the RSAs for the biophysical effects assessments. The predicted effects on cultural continuity, based on the effects assessments contained in biophysical effects assessment sections of the EAR/IS, are presented in further detail in **Section 19.3.2.3**.

## 19.5.3 Rights Related to Socio-Economic, Health and Well—Being

[REDACTED]

Predicted effects that could cause the infringement of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of Webequie First Nation include:

- Alteration or deterrence of the harvest and consumption of traditional foods by changing the value or perceived quality of traditional foods;
- Community health impacts from Project-related emissions, mental health and substance use;
- Quality of life, impacts from nuisances (i.e., noise, light, and visual disturbances);
- Community cohesion impacts from changes in demographics;
- Community safety of vulnerable groups;
- Economic development;
- Housing and infrastructure improvements; and
- Education and training improvements.

[REDACTED] Any

changes or the inability to practice traditional and treaty land rights could impact overall physical and mental health of Indigenous communities.

The Project has the potential to revive the commercial fishing and trapping industries by lowering transportation costs and increasing profit margins for Webequie commercial fishers and trappers. This revival would benefit both Elders and youth by facilitating intergenerational knowledge transfer and preserving traditional economic activities. Additionally, improved access to the community is expected to boost outsider traffic and enhance employment opportunities in the tourism sector, attracting visitors for guided hunting, trapping, and fishing experiences. These developments would support Webequie First Nation's socio-economic and well-being rights by providing more opportunities to sustain traditional economies.

The Webequie Supply Road is anticipated to enhance affordability, potentially lowering the cost of living and improving food security by reducing expenses for store bought foods and goods. Additionally, it will increase access to harvesting areas for sourcing traditional foods. Webequie First Nation has noted that



community members currently rely on the existing winter road to reach harvesting areas and city centres for goods and supplies. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The WSR Project has the potential to improve employment and economic opportunities for Webequie First Nation members. However, certain subpopulations of Webequie face additional barriers to taking advantage of such opportunities, including women and youth. Many direct and indirect employment opportunities related to the Project will require education, training, and/or experience. Education and training attainment for Webequie members, particularly women and youth, is a challenge. While Project-related employment is anticipated to increase household income, a sudden change in discretionary income may also result in changes in spending decisions that could cause adverse social outcomes between individuals, families, or certain segments of the population, such as women and men.

The Project could also adversely impact commercial hunting, trapping and guiding by reducing opportunities for Webequie commercial guides or introducing competition from non-Indigenous outfitters. The traditional economy is another important aspect of the overall economy within the LSA communities.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### 19.5.3.1 Local Study Area: Other LSA Communities

[REDACTED]

### 19.5.3.2 Regional Study Area

During the construction and operations phases of the Project, changes in population in the RSA communities are expected to be negligible. It is assumed that it will not be feasible to commute from the RSA communities, where workers from these communities will have to travel to the Webequie community and Project site and stay at temporary accommodations. The Project is not anticipated to cause a change in demand for Community Infrastructure in the RSA. The assessment of potential effects of the Project on the social environment of RSA communities identified no anticipated adverse effects to housing or temporary accommodations. Due to the distance of the RSA communities from the Project location and the fact that the road will not connect to these communities, the effects of the Project are assessed to be concentrated within the LSA communities, especially the Webequie First Nation during construction and operations.

### 19.5.4 Rights to Self-Determination and Self-Governance

It is recognized that there is a critical importance for the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' inherent right to self-determination, including self-government, which pre-existed European colonial settlement. The right of self-determination, including the right to self-government, is reflected in UNDRIP and Canada's UNDA, which is now part of Canada's domestic law and is being upheld in the Supreme Court of Canada rulings (Government of Canada, 2024).

Indigenous Peoples have an inherent right to self-government under Section 35. "Aboriginal peoples of Canada have the right to govern themselves in relation to matters that are internal to their communities, integral to their unique cultures, identities, traditions, languages and institutions, and with respect to their special relationship to their land and their resources" (CIRNAC, 2023). Governance over environmental stewardship, such as the protection and preservation of cultural keystone species population and habitat, is crucial for the continued exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

Indigenous communities hold governance responsibilities towards their members, including future generations, in areas such as strategic planning, management, and stewardship of their traditional lands and resources. This governance and decision-making authority is outlined through the community's specific laws, norms, language, and accountability mechanisms. Governance is intrinsically linked to concepts of self-determination, jurisdiction, stewardship, and nationhood. Indigenous communities possess the right to determine their own governance structures and leadership, in accordance with their unique laws, customs, organizational frameworks, and other pertinent factors as identified by the community through its own processes and traditions.

Governance over resources within First Nations traditional territories is supported under Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. Governance over environmental stewardship is crucial for the continued exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. "Supporting self-determination and governance in First Nations communities means providing support to build and maintain culturally relevant governance structures in communities. Self-governance in First Nation's communities is an important factor for the health and well-being of community members (Halseth & Murdock, 2020). Culturally relevant governance structures increase feelings of empowerment, and confirmation of identity which is associated with positive physical and mental health outcomes (Halseth & Murdock, 2020)." (Intrinsik, 2025).

Rights related to customs, protocols, and laws inform First Nation rights to manage lands and resources within their traditional territory and to participate in decision-making for sustainable land use for future generations. Governance over resources within their traditional territories is integral to the exercise of these rights. Governance over environmental stewardship, such as the protection and preservation of boreal Caribou populations and habitat, is vital to the continued exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.



### 19.5.4.1 Webequie First Nation

As reflected in UNDRIP article 23, “Indigenous Peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development.” [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As part of Treaty No. 9, the Indigenous Peoples that make up Webequie First Nation hold Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1), including those related to the right of self-determination and self-government. One important aspect of self-determination and self-government is Indigenous community land use planning stewardship of lands and waters. Webequie First Nation indicates it has inherent right to self-governance and self-determination (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] These and other existing concerns regarding the influence of technology and “outside influences” on the community may be exacerbated by the proposed Project during operation due to the influx of non-Indigenous Peoples and goods into the community. For example, there is the possibility that the road could result in an increased transport of drugs and alcohol, which has the potential to worsen existing substance abuse concerns and prevent cultural and experiential on-the-land healing.

[REDACTED]

The Project is also predicted to have positive impacts on Webequie First Nation’s rights related to customs, protocols, and laws. As the Proponent of the Project, Webequie First Nation is directly involved in the in decision-making process for the Project. By leading the regulatory application for the Project, Webequie First Nation is meaningfully involved in the Project’s design, impact assessment, and overall approval. The Project will afford Webequie First Nation the ability to participate in the decision-making process for the Project in a manner consistent with Webequie priorities and values. A community exercising its Indigenous rights and sovereignty leads to positive health outcomes for the community. As the Proponent for the Webequie Supply Road Project, Webequie First Nation demonstrates the community’s need for the Project. Building the Webequie Supply Road would be a positive step towards Webequie First Nation increasing their self- determination and self-governance (Intrinsik, 2024).

### 19.5.4.2 Other LSA Communities

It is recognized there is a critical importance for the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' inherent right to self-determination, including self-government, which pre-existed European colonial settlement. The LSA communities, as part of Treaty No. 9, hold Aboriginal and Treaty Rights under Section 35(1), including those related to the right of self-determination, and self-government. The Project could impact the exercise of Indigenous rights of communities within the study areas assessed as part of the EAR/IS and the nature and extent varies depending on proximity and pathways of effects of individual Indigenous communities. One important aspect of self-determination and self-government is Indigenous community land use planning stewardship of lands and waters.

Marten Falls First Nation is currently exercising its right to self-determination and self-governance as they are the Proponent of the Marten Falls Community Access Road. The Marten Falls Community Access Road will connect the community to Northern Road Link (NRL), which links to the WSR. This proposed integrated transportation network has the potential to enhance economic development, create employment opportunities, and support the delivery of social, health, and community programming within the region. The Marten Falls First Nation provided an IK report for the Project team to consider for the EAR/IS and they have been to meaningfully participate in the EAR/IS for WSR.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Weenusk First Nation provided a report for the Project team to consider for the EAR/IS and they have been to meaningfully participate in the EAR/IS for WSR.

### 19.5.4.3 Regional Study Area

One important aspect of self-determination and self-government is Indigenous community land use planning and stewardship of lands and waters. No RSA communities provided land use planning documents, such as CBLUP documents for review by the Project team during the preparation of the EAR/IS. The assessment of potential effects of the Project on land use planning and stewardship as outlined in Section 16 of the EAR/IS included Kingfisher Lake First Nation and did not identify any net effects to Kingfisher Lake First Nation (Section 16.5.1). Other communities in the RSA are understood to be outside of areas with predicted net effects to land use planning and stewardship.

The potential biophysical changes to the environment, social, and economic changes due to the construction and operation of WSR may affect existing social, economic, and health conditions, and could impact the ability of RSA communities to exercise their Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, particularly those related to self-determination and self-governance.



## 19.6 Approach for Determining Severity of Impact on the Rights of Indigenous People

IAAC provides guidance and identifies criteria that may be used to evaluate the severity of potential adverse effects on Aboriginal and Treat Rights. The assessment of the severity of impacts should be done collaboratively with each Indigenous community, recognizing that the criteria provided is a starting point for dialogue (IAAC, 2024). Evaluating the severity of a project's potential adverse effects is essential to support informed decision-making by regulatory authorities and the public. The assessment should clearly describe how the project may affect both the biophysical environment and the socio-cultural context, including Indigenous rights and interests.

Effects may relate to multiple environmental or cultural criteria, and the assessment should take a holistic approach. Ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities is essential to and to ensure that Indigenous knowledge and perspectives are meaningfully integrated throughout the EA process. To rate the overall severity of impacts on rights, the highest degree of severity is used. If one adverse impact is determined to be high in severity, then the overall impact of the project on rights is determined to be high in severity (IAAC, 2024).

**Table 19-17** outlines the definition for low, moderate and high severity of impacts on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. **Table 19-18** presents definitions to measure the severity of impacts on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. These criteria are considered together in the assessment, along with context derived from existing conditions (**Section 19.2**) description of effects (**Section 19.3**), and proposed mitigation measures (**Section 19.4**) to provide the severity of impacts on Rights.

**Table 19-17: Degree of severity for adverse impacts on rights of Indigenous Peoples**

| Severity          | Definition   |
|-------------------|--|
| Low severity      | Impacts are likely to be minor in scale, short duration, infrequent, small in spatial extent, reversible or readily avoided or reduced; cultural well-being is minimally disrupted; no or few effects to health and/or country foods; few (or no) existing or proposed developments or historic impacts in group's territory; project and activities in alignment with group's development, land or water use plans; subgroups of the population are resilient enough to sustain impacts and maintain exercise of rights; mitigation should allow for the practice of the right to continue in the same of similar manner as before any impact.  |
| Moderate severity | Impacts are likely to be medium in scale, moderate duration, occasionally frequent, possibly/partially reversible, spatial extent affects preferred use areas or disrupts interconnectedness and/or knowledge transfer; cultural well-being is impeded or altered; impacts to individual and/or community holistic health, including perceptions of impacts; project interacts with a few preferred areas where rights can be practiced, and some historic, existing or proposed development and/or disturbance; project may not be compatible with aspects of land use plans or application of traditional laws and governance; vulnerable subgroups are likely to experience higher impact on ability to exercise rights; mitigation may not fully ameliorate impact but should enable the Indigenous group to continue exercising its rights as before, or in a modified way. |
| High severity     | Impacts are likely to be major in scale, permanent/long-term, frequent, possibly irreversible and over a large spatial extent or within an area of exclusive/preferred use; cultural well-being is disrupted, impeded or removed; project interacts with only area where a right may be exercised and many historic, existing or proposed developments and/or disturbance; decision-making associated with governance and title adversely affected; subgroups will be disproportionately impacted by the project and experience no to little benefit; mitigation is unable to fully address impacts such that the practice of the right is substantively diminished or lost.   |

**Table 19-18: Criteria for Characterization of Predicted Severity on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights\***

| Characterization Criteria             | Description   | Quantitative Measure or Definition of Qualitative Categories*   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Likelihood                            | The likelihood of an impact on rights occurring can be based on knowledge and experience with similar past impacts. The full lifecycle of a project, including its various stages and lifespan, should be considered in determining the likelihood of an effect occurring.  | <p><b>Low</b> – A potential impact is unlikely, but could occur</p> <p><b>Moderate</b> – A potential impact is likely but may not occur</p> <p><b>High</b> – An impact is highly likely to occur</p>  |
| Geographic Extent                     | Geographic extent refers to the spatial area over which the impact is predicted to occur.   | <p><b>Low</b> – The impact could occur over a small spatial extent relating to the exercise of rights. Impacts not expected within areas of preferred or exclusive use</p> <p><b>Moderate</b> – The impact could occur over a moderate spatial extent relating to the exercise of rights. Impacts may occur within areas of preferred use.</p> <p><b>High</b> – The impact could occur over a large spatial extent relating to the exercise of rights. Impacts expected within areas of preferred use.</p>  |
| Frequency, Duration and Reversibility | Frequency describes how often an impact could occur within a given time period (e.g., alteration of aquatic habitat will occur twice per year). Duration refers to the length of time that an impact on a right is discernible (e.g., day, month, year, decade, or permanent). A reversible impact is one where the exercise of rights is expected to recover from the impact caused by the project. This would correspond to a return to baseline conditions, or other target, through mitigation or natural recovery within a reasonable time scale as defined by the Indigenous community. | <p><b>Low</b> – The impact lasts less than 5 years (i.e. approximate duration of construction phase). The impact would be confined to one discrete period during the life of the project. The impact may be reversed in the short term.</p> <p><b>Moderate</b> – The impact may last up to one generation. The impact would occur at sporadic, intermittent intervals and throughout the operation and decommissioning of the project. The impact may be reversed within one generation.</p> <p><b>High</b> – The impact is likely to persist over multiple generations. The impact would occur constantly during, and potentially beyond, the life of the project. The impact cannot be reversed either in whole or in part.</p> |
| Cultural Well-being                   | Impacts of the project on the ability of a group to continue customs, traditions and practices that are integral to the group's distinct culture.   | <p><b>Low</b> – No or little indication that there would be an impact on areas of cultural importance. The impact is not likely to impede peaceful access to practice cultural activities. The Indigenous group has only minor concerns about impacts from the project or activity on health or integrity of the resources and/or places used to practice rights.</p> <p><b>Moderate</b> – There may be an impact on areas and/or practices of cultural importance. The impact may impede or alter access to practice cultural activities. There may be a loss of habitat or availability of culturally important species. The disturbance may be of a physical or sensory nature (i.e., noise, dust, visual quality).</p>        |

| Characterization Criteria | Description  | Quantitative Measure or Definition of Qualitative Categories*  |
|---------------------------|--|--|
|                           |  | <p><b>High</b> – There would likely be an impact on areas and/or practices of cultural importance. Multiple impacts could occur in one area of high importance. There would likely be loss of habitat or availability and quality of culturally important species. Access to areas required to practice cultural activities would likely be obstructed or limited. The disturbance may be of a physical or sensory nature (i.e., noise, dust, visual quality) or may affect laws, knowledge, customs and/or spiritual and cultural practices.</p>  |
| Health                    | Considerations of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health, including Indigenous views of health.                                  | <p><b>Low</b> – The Indigenous community has minor to no concerns about impacts from the project or activity on health. The project is not likely to pose environmental effects to health, including effects to country foods.</p> <p><b>Moderate</b> – There may be an impact on physical, mental, emotional and/or spiritual aspects of health on an individual and/or broader community basis. The environmental effects from the project are related to food or cultural species important to traditional diets, and socio-economic effects related to food security. The exercise of rights is altered due to quantifiable and/or perceived effects from the project.</p> <p><b>High</b> – There are significant environmental effects from the project tied to food or cultural species, and related socio-economic considerations. The group has serious concerns about impacts to holistic and/or traditional models of health. Perception of effects on health interferes with, alters, and/or stops the exercise of Aboriginal rights. The project is likely to impact health on a community-wide level.</p>   |
| Cumulative effects        | Cumulative impacts on a right may result from a project in combination with impacts of past, existing and future projects or activities. C | <p><b>Low</b> – The project or activity would be in an area with few existing impacts and there is little development in the community's territory. The project is not likely to have cumulative effects.</p> <p><b>Moderate</b> – The project may interact with one of only a few preferred areas where rights can still be practiced. There are other land uses, including proposed or existing projects, in the community's territory that impact the practice of rights. The project may cause environmental effects on a species that is culturally important that is also a federally or provincially listed species at risk.</p> <p><b>High</b> – The project may interact with the only area where a particular right can be practiced. The project may cause significant effects on a species that is culturally important that is also a federally or provincially listed species at risk. The rights which may be impacted by the project are not currently practiced in the preferred manner because of conservation issues, lack of access or government policies or programs. There are many historic, current or proposed projects in the area, and a high level of existing disturbance.</p> |

| Characterization Criteria | Description   | Quantitative Measure or Definition of Qualitative Categories*   |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Governance                | Planning and management or stewardship of traditional lands and resources. Indigenous governance and decision-making authority may be expressed through a specific laws, norms, power, and language.  | <p><b>Low</b> – There is a high level of cooperation between the proponent and Indigenous community. The community has formally indicated to the Crown that risks from the project are acceptable or have been accommodated. The project and activities take place in areas designated by the community for development and align with land or water use plans.</p> <p><b>Moderate</b> – Indigenous community has expressed concern about impacts of the project. The community has stated that some impacts remain after mitigation and/or accommodation. The community has indicated that the project may not be compatible with certain aspects of their land use plans or application of traditional laws and governance.</p> <p><b>High</b> – The project would likely prevent or restrict use of areas or title. The project may cause interference in traditional land management and governance regime. The community has indicated that the project is not compatible with their land use plans, application of traditional laws or future aspirations, and that no mitigation or accommodation would be able to offset the impacts. Impacts would be such that the community has stated their culture would not withstand the impact.</p> |
| Impact Inequity           | Impacts on subpopulations of a community (including women, Elders, youth, Two-Spirit individuals, and others) with consideration of risks and benefits for members of the sub-population, and likely resiliency of the sub-population to negative impacts | <p><b>Low</b> – Subgroups of the population are resilient enough to sustain impacts of the project and maintain the exercise of their rights. The impacts would be temporary and would allow for sustained transfer of knowledge and exercise of right to continue into the future. Potential benefits resulting from the project would allow for development at all segments of the community.</p> <p><b>Moderate</b> – Transfer of knowledge between generations may be interrupted for a moderate period of time by the project. Vulnerable subgroups of the population are likely to experience a higher impact on their ability to exercise rights. Impacts may be reversed within one generation. Some benefits may accrue to subgroups.</p> <p><b>High</b> – Subgroups of the population will be disproportionately impacted by the project and experience little to no benefit. Intergenerational transfer of knowledge would be interrupted for an extended time period and may not be reversed in whole or part.</p>  |

\*Characterization criteria were developed in view of the 'Guidance: Assessment of Potential Impacts on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' by IAAC (IAAC, 2024).

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