

Appendix C6

Feedback and Response Log - Government Review Team - Ontario Parks



Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
Ontario Parks	1	<p>In addition to being designated for recreational use, crown lands regulated under the PPCRA are part of a system designed (PPCRA Section 2 (1):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 To permanently protect representative ecosystems, biodiversity and provincially significant elements of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage and to manage these areas to ensure that ecological integrity is maintained. 2. To provide opportunities for ecologically sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities and encourage associated economic benefits. 3. To provide opportunities for residents of Ontario and visitors to increase their knowledge and appreciation of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage. 4. To facilitate scientific research and to provide points of reference to support monitoring of ecological change on the broader landscape. 2006, c. 12, s. 2 (1). <p>Furthermore, the PPCRA goes on to define Ecological integrity as:</p> <p>(2) Ecological integrity refers to a condition in which biotic and abiotic components of ecosystems and the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities are characteristic of their natural regions and rates of change and ecosystem processes are unimpeded. 2006, c. 12,</p>	<p>Appendix U Land and Resource Use Technical Support Document will clarify the rationale for evaluating effects to Albany River and Ogoki River Provincial Parks and will acknowledge that the comparison of disturbed area relative to total park size does not fully represent potential ecological, cultural, recreational, or experiential impacts. Appendix U has been updated to consider changes in Park character, potential hydrological and habitat effects, acoustic and visual impacts, and the broader contribution of the Park to ecological integrity, including Little Brown Myotis and Northern Myotis.</p>	Appendix U	1308

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		<p>s. 5 (2).</p> <p>The impacts to Parks and Protected Areas have focused on the factor of impacts to people (Land and Resource Use). Ontario Parks encourages the proponent to add additional factors to evaluate impacts on PPCRA lands based on these additional mandated interests as well, as there is the potential to cause harm to the Albany River Provincial Park and Ogoki River Provincial Park, and the values for which they were protected.</p> <p>Examples of this include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternal roosts for bats were found primarily along Albany and Ogoki River shoreline. Little Brown bat is a Species at Risk (SAR) and clearing of trees along the river crossing would result in loss of maternal roost sites. Habitat degradation would impact bat survival as they have very low reproductive rates. • Forest harvest is considered temporary habitat loss. For the disturbance to be considered “temporary” greatly depends on the species being impacted. For example, caribou habitat and lichen regeneration may take a minimum of 40-60 years. As the Nipigon Caribou range population is considered not sustainable 			

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		<p>at current levels, caribou that use the parks are impacted if ecological integrity is not maintained within their habitat. Restricting further anthropogenic disturbances would improve the state of the Nipigon caribou population.</p> <p>Analysis will also be required for Ontario Parks to fulfill its requirements when issuing Permits under the PPCRA. For reference, the PPCRA Section 2 states:</p> <p>Damage to Crown land 2. (1) No person shall, (a) remove, damage or deface any property of the Crown in a provincial park; or (b) damage or deface any relic, artifact or natural object or damage or deface any site of archaeological or historical interest in a provincial park. O. Reg. 347/07, s. 2 (1). (2) Except with the written authorization of the superintendent, no person shall, (a) disturb, cut, kill, remove or harm any plant, tree or natural object in a provincial park; (b) disturb, kill, remove, harass or harm any animal except in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, any bird except in accordance with the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994</p>			

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		<p>(Canada) or any fish except in accordance with the Fisheries Act (Canada);</p> <p>(c) remove any relic or artifact in a provincial park;</p> <p>(d) disturb any site of archaeological or historical interest in a provincial park;</p> <p>(e) make an excavation for any purpose in a provincial park; or</p> <p>(f) conduct research in a provincial park. O. Reg. 347/07, s. 2 (2).</p> <p>(3) In considering whether or not to grant an authorization under subsection (2), the superintendent shall base his or her decision on the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The potential for the proposed activity to protect or enhance human safety. 2. The degree to which the proposed activity would harm or benefit the environment or wildlife or support or impede the maintenance of ecological integrity. 3. The range and value of scientific benefits that the proposed activity would provide. 4. The extent to which the proposed activity would promote cultural knowledge and understanding. O. Reg. 347/07, s. 2 (3). <p>It is recommended that protected areas are evaluated on the potential impact of</p>			

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		<p>the project on the ecological integrity and cultural heritage values of protected areas in addition to their recreational value.</p>			
Ontario Parks	2	<p>The draft EA/EIS and its appendices reference that discussions with Ontario Parks about specific impacts to PPCRA lands and permitting requirements will occur after the EA/EIS is complete.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>“Marten Falls First Nation to have further discussion with Ontario Parks regarding the Albany and Ogoki river crossings, access issues, and user impacts as well as need for updates to the Ogoki and Albany River Provincial Park.”</p> <p>And</p> <p>“Consult with Ontario Parks at detailed design to determine permitting, mitigation and /or compensation / offsetting expectations for direct impacts to the Albany River Provincial Park. • Consult with Ontario Parks at detailed design to determine permitting, mitigation and / or compensation / offsetting expectations for impacts to Critical Landform /</p>	<p>Section 7.1.2.1 of the Final EA/IS has been updated to clarify that auxiliary project components required for the construction of the Community Access Road (i.e. staging areas, aggregate sites) will not be located on Provincial Park and Conservation Reserve Authority Lands. As such only permits relating to the road right-of-way construction and operation will be required.</p> <p>Additional information on permitting requirements has not been updated in the Final EA/IS as this comment relates to permitting and will be addressed during the permitting stage.</p>	Comment noted; see response for details	1309

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Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		<p>Vegetation Associations.”</p> <p>Section 5.1. of the draft EA/EIS states: “The Community Access Road is aiming to co-ordinate notifications, where possible, for the environmental assessment to meet the requirements of other Class Environmental Assessments.... Including... Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves (2004), as the project requires the disposition of land(s) and permits to build new road(s) and water crossing(s) within provincial park(s), which are managed by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, Ontario Parks Operations.”</p> <p>Please note: While specific project permitting requirements have not yet been identified, Ontario Parks permitting may be triggered. This could include:</p> <p>Work Permits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for road construction, clearing and water crossings within the protected area. <p>Occupational Authority (OA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use Permit, Lease, or Licence of Occupation may be required depending on proponents of the project. 			

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OA will be required for the road and watercrossings. Letter of Authorization • May be required for general maintenance, or activities not covered by work permits. Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act • Administered by MNR • May be triggered, depending on the design and scope of structures. <p>In order to meet Class EA requirements and help to prevent any permitting delays, Ontario Parks requests more details on how the project will impact PPCRA lands and its permitting requirements upfront in the EA/EIS document.</p>			
Ontario Parks	3	<p>With respect to Ontario Parks Comment 1., Ontario Parks flags potential impacts to ecological integrity of the Albany River PP which may occur because of the planned sand and gravel extraction areas located immediately adjacent to the park and potential features extending into the park.</p> <p>For example, the rivers are a high use travel corridor for all wildlife, including caribou. This extraction would likely have an impact, based on a recent study, on</p>	<p>The following sentence has been added to Section 7.1.2.1 of the Final EA/IS: "Auxiliary project components required for the construction of the Community Access Road (i.e. staging areas, borrow pits, etc.) will not be located on Provincial Park and Conservation Reserve Authority lands". Disturbance within the Albany Provincial Park will be limited to the Community Access Road right-of-way footprint. Auxiliary components such as borrow pits, staging areas, camps, and stockpiles will be sited outside of PPCRA</p>	Final EA/IS Section 7.1.2.1	1310

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Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		<p>caribou travel routes and water access. There is a large use Category 1 caribou calving area to the west of the crossing and regular winter use in the Category 2 area of the project work area.</p> <p>Additionally, extraction of gravel and sand at the circled (blue) high elevation areas are of special concern. This could alter the elevation of the riverbanks along park boundaries and change the behaviour of park wildlife, in particular ungulates and birds, which therefore would impact park ecological integrity.</p> <p>More information, analyses and mitigation measures are recommended in the EA/EIS to show that aggregate extraction adjacent to protected areas will not have an impact to the ecological integrity of these areas.</p> <p>If possible, Ontario Parks recommends that the proponent obtains sand and gravel from a less impactful area and suggests a buffer of at least 30 m from the park boundary.</p> <p>Please note: Access roads to potential aggregate sources on PPCRA lands is not permitted.</p>	<p>boundaries.</p>		

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Ontario Parks	4	<p>Ontario Parks noted in the Draft EA/EIS that there is the potential for the project to require an undetermined size and number of additional areas for auxiliary project components (i.e. borrow pits, staging areas, etc.) of which locations are currently unknown/ not addressed.</p> <p>Text States:</p> <p>“Additional temporary clearing occurring in certain locations to accommodate construction activities, access, borrow areas, aggregate source areas, aggregate sources, and temporary infrastructure such as staging areas, camps, and debris and / or timber stockpiles will be required.”</p> <p>Ontario Park’s goal is to minimize the impact on PPCRA lands as much as possible, in order to preserve the representative ecosystems, biodiversity and provincially significant elements of Ontario’s natural and cultural heritage (PPCRA Section 2(1)) that these areas were chosen for.</p> <p>Text also states:</p> <p>"All aggregate pits will be located a</p>	<p>The following sentence has been added to Section 7.1.2.1 of the Final EA/IS: "Auxiliary project components required for the construction of the Community Access Road (i.e. staging areas, aggregate sites, etc.) will not be located on Provincial Park and Conservation Reserve Authority lands". The reference to “additional temporary clearing” in the Draft EA / IS pertains to areas within the Project Study Area (Figure 1-1), but not located within Provincial Park boundaries. Disturbance within the Albany Provincial Park will be limited to the Community Access Road right-of-way footprint. Auxiliary components such as borrow pits, staging areas, camps, and stockpiles will be sited outside of PPCRA boundaries.</p> <p>In the statement: “All aggregate pits will be located a minimum of 120 meters away from the ordinary high-water mark of a waterbody, where possible”, waterbody refers to all surface water features, including lakes, rivers and creeks, unless otherwise specified. This definition was clarified in Section 9.3.2 of the Final EA/IS.</p>	Final EA/IS Section 7.1.2.1	1311

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		<p>minimum of 120 meters away from the ordinary high-water mark of a waterbody, where possible."</p> <p>Ontario Parks asks that the EA/EIS clearly state that unknown additional locations of auxiliary project components required for the construction of the road (i.e. staging areas, borrow pits, etc.) will not be located on PPCRA lands.</p> <p>Ontario Parks seeks clarification on what is meant by 'waterbody'. (E.g., all watercourses including streams and creeks; only lakes and ponds).</p>			
Ontario Parks	5	<p>Allowing flexibility in water crossing construction methods will be helpful.</p> <p>Text states: "Bridges and culverts will be required to cross over the creeks and rivers, with the type of crossing determined by the size of the stream. These will be chosen as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culverts will be used for crossings less than 5 metres wide from one bank to the other; • Clear span bridges will be installed for crossings between 5 metres and 30 metres wide. These bridges extend completely over the watercourse; and • Bridges with piers and abutments will 	<p>The type of water crossing to be constructed at each creek and river will be determined during detail design and permitting stages, and will consider bridge structures that do not require the placement of in-water abutments. Discussions will be held with Ontario Parks for water crossings within Albany River and Ogoki River Provincial Parks.</p>	<p>Comment noted; see response for details.</p>	1312

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		<p>be used for water crossing longer than 30 metres.”</p> <p>And</p> <p>“Short-span bridges, typically used for crossings with spans under 40 meters, can generally avoid in-water work, which is a key distinguisher from long-span bridge construction.”</p> <p>Impacts to fish, fish spawning, and habitat are highly variable depending on the crossing location and the type of crossing used (i.e. culvert or bridge). Ontario Parks requests edits to the above statements to allow for flexibility of the type of crossing to be used. The type of crossing should be determined at the detail design stage and dependent on the values present – not the width of the watercourse in question. Edits should also include timing windows for in-water work that would reduce or eliminate impacts to brook trout and sturgeon.</p> <p>Furthermore, given the significant value of Ogoki and Albany Rivers, Ontario Parks requests more information on whether or not the proponent has considered using bridge structures that do not require the placement of in-water</p>			

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		<p>abutments.</p> <p>Finally, analysis of options on the type of water crossings to be used will be required during the permitting stage. Therefore, it is key that the EA/EIS allows this.</p> <p>Edits are requested to the EA/EIS to allow for flexibility in the detailed design stage for the type of crossing to be used at each location. This would allow for site-specific discussions and potential collaboration with Ontario Parks to be made dependent in part on the values present.</p>			
Ontario Parks	6	<p>Ontario Parks does not allow the sale of merchantable timber collected from PPCRA lands.</p> <p>The text states: “Where possible, usable, merchantable timber will be segregated and collected for reuse.”</p> <p>The PPCRA prevents the sale of timber collected from Ontario Parks under Section 16(1). Please amend text to include the provided language (next column titled “proposed action/solution”) regarding timber cleared in Ontario</p>	<p>As outlined in Section 7.3.1 and Table 10-1 of Appendix J Vegetation Technical Support Document, consultation with Ontario Parks will take place during detail design to consider timber for reuse, and disposal by burning within Provincial Parks.</p>	<p>Comment noted; see response for details.</p>	1313

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		<p>Parks.</p> <p>All merchantable timber cleared in Provincial Parks must either be reused on site, left where felled, or disposed of by burning.</p>			
Ontario Parks	7	<p>Under O. Reg 347/07, s. 7 of the PPCRA, “no person shall introduce into a provincial park, or possess in a provincial park, any plant, animal, or other living thing, or any object, material or other substance, that may carry non-native or invasive pests or species, as determined by the Ministry.”</p> <p>Please ensure that native seed mix is used, and that no non-native or invasive pests or species are introduced while reseeded. Ontario Parks requires that native seed mixtures, or the replanting of native species is used.</p>	<p>Sections 2.2 and 7.3.1, and Tables 7-15 and 10-1 of Appendix J Vegetation Technical Support Document include commitments to use native species and seed mixes for seeding and restoration works.</p>	<p>Comment noted; see response for details.</p>	1314
Ontario Parks	8	<p>Ontario Parks flags the location and disposal process of the proposed construction camps.</p> <p>Text States: “... the use of temporary construction camps will be required to support construction activities. Vegetation will be cleared in areas designated for the</p>	<p>The final location of construction camps will be determined during detail design. However, construction camps will not be located within Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act lands. Section 7.2.3.6 of the Final EA/IS has been updated with the following sentence: "Construction camps will not be located in or within 500 meters from</p>	<p>Final EA/IS Section 7.2.3.6</p>	1315

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		<p>camps. Grubbing, grading, and the placement of aggregate will be required to establish a solid foundation for the camps.”</p> <p>And</p> <p>“It is anticipated that all domestic sewage generated during construction will be temporarily contained onsite in approved holding system until it can be disposed of at an off-site, approved waste facility...”</p> <p>For example, Ontario Parks is concerned that a 200-person camp located south of the Albany River crossing along a tributary creek has the potential for untreated sewage runoff to contaminate the river at sites where there is poorly drained clay/ organic soils. There is also potential for leeching and disturbance to the Riparian wildlife travel corridor. This would negatively impact park water quality and ecology integrity (EI). Maintaining EI is a legislative objective for these parks (refer to Comment #1).</p> <p>Please include the location of these work camps and ensure that none are located on or near PPCRA lands.</p>	<p>Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act lands”.</p>		
Ontario Parks	9	Multiple places within the Draft EA/EIS	Appendix U Land and Resource Use	Appendix V	1316

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		<p>and its appendices speak to how the impacts of the project to the Albany River Provincial Park are not significant due to the size of the area being directly disturbed, relative to the overall size of the park. There are multiple factors for consideration.</p> <p>Example text from Appendix V:</p> <p>“The construction phase will involve clearing 5.7 ha of the Albany River Provincial Park and building a bridge over the Albany River, causing some visual effect at the crossing locations and from the river. These effects are considered minor due to the limited effects area relative to the Park’s total size”</p> <p>Example text from Appendix AA:</p> <p>“Direct removal of 5.7 hectares of Albany River Provincial Park land, representing 0.006 percent of the park's total areas.... Mitigation not applicable”.</p> <p>This comparison may underestimate the impact that the project has on the park for several reasons:</p> <p>1) The principle that not all park lands</p>	<p>Technical Support Document evaluates potential Community Access Road effects on provincial parks (Section 6.5.2). This section acknowledges pathways of effects beyond area of direct disturbance; however, disturbance is a quantifiable measure used to help inform magnitude. The valued components identified by Ontario Parks (i.e., vegetation, ungulates, acoustics, visual) are not necessarily limited or unique to provincial park areas. Therefore, the assessment of effects to these valued components is conducted for their discipline-specific assessments (various EA/IS appendices) within their entire established study areas.</p> <p>The Visual Environment effects assessment does not rely on the proportion of Park area disturbed as the basis for its significance conclusion. As described in the revised Sections 4.2.3 and 5.4 of Appendix V Visual Environment Technical Support Document, the Albany River (and Ogoki River) Provincial Park is treated as a high-sensitivity receptor because of its wilderness character and river corridor views are valued in their own right. Section 7 in Appendix V recognizes that the permanent structures represent</p>		

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		<p>hold the same ecological, cultural, or recreational value. According to Ontario Parks' guidelines, every parcel of parkland contributes uniquely to the system's goal of preserving biodiversity, ecological integrity, and cultural heritage.</p> <p>2) The change this increased access will have on the character of the area (i.e. isolation and remoteness) well beyond the direct footprint of the works to occur.</p> <p>3) The drainage effect that the road could have on the park and species that use the park. Since soils and vegetations are primarily very poorly drained with clay and organic substrates and there is such a high percentage of Fens with water flow, there is potential for a 184 km dam effect. The EA states a high degree of soil compaction, adding to this effect, which could drastically alter natural water flow and change/alter the vegetation wetland community on both sides of the road, as well as alter wildlife habitat for species such a Woodland Caribou or spawning sturgeon and potentially create a barrier to wildlife.</p> <p>a. Further, what happens on the broader landscape directly and/or indirectly affects the ecological integrity of the park. For example, caribou in the Nipigon Caribou Range use several of the parks, including Wabakimi PP, Albany PP, and</p>	<p>continuous and irreversible visual effects, and provides mitigation measures to minimize those effects. Table 7-2 identifies these effects as medium in magnitude at the closest viewpoints, while Not Significant at the Park scale because the affected viewshed is narrowly confined and residual magnitude is low in typical views.</p> <p>The Visual Environment assessment addresses changes to views and visual aesthetics, and within that scope it acknowledges that the Community Access Road affects the scenic character but does not affect the broader park landscape to a degree that elevates residual effects to Significant.</p>		

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		<p>Ogoki as they are still relatively undisturbed. Increasing cumulative disturbances within the range puts more pressure on parks and the caribou population as a whole. Currently, the disturbance level of the Nipigon Range is 43% and the threshold for a sustainable caribou population is 35%. Physical barriers such as roads not only impacts connectivity of travel and genetic flow but also creates linear corridors for easy wolf travel and increased predation.</p> <p>4) The acoustic impacts – while construction noise will be temporary, traffic noise will occur in perpetuity and be heard upstream and downstream of the crossing location.</p> <p>5) The visual impacts – the bridge is a permanent structure that will be seen upstream and downstream of the crossing location.</p> <p>Ontario Parks asks for removal and/or reframing of comments which suggest the impact to the Albany River Provincial Park is minor or insignificant based on the total size of the park relevant to the size of the construction footprint. The impacts to the park go well beyond the construction footprint and consideration of this should be included in the EA/EIS accordingly.</p>			

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Ontario Parks	10	<p>Ontario Parks noted that several important considerations of the impacts and/or process requirements of this project related to the PPCRA are limited in the Draft EA/EIS.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <p>1) The need for Amendments to Park Management Plans, which are required under Section 10(1) of the PPCRA, to allow crossing of the Albany River PP to occur.</p> <p>Text states: “Predicted Residual Effect: ...Through discussion with Ontario Parks, it is understood that the crossing of the Albany River Provincial Park may require an amendment to the Park management plan which Ontario Parks will oversee if deemed required.”</p> <p>And</p> <p>2) That this project will impact the character of the parks, causing negative impacts to some of values for which the park was established (i.e. the wilderness experience, which includes remoteness and isolation).</p>	<p>The inclusion of a standalone section speaking to the project impacts on PPCRA lands has not been added to the Final EA/IS as this comment is considered recommended.</p>	<p>Comment noted; see response for details</p>	1317

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		<p>Text states: “Albany River Provincial Park is recognized for its ‘wilderness and remote character’ and is valued for remote backcountry wilderness experiences. The road crossing of the Albany River Provincial Park, a distance of 0.6 kilometers, could contribute to a reduction of the remote character of the park and impact park user enjoyment levels.”</p> <p>These considerations of the impacts of the project on PPCRA lands are very important to Ontario Parks and, not only a consideration of ‘the acoustic environment’. These comments should be placed more prominently in the EA/EIS document in order to provide clarity and transparency to the public.</p> <p>Please note: The current Management Plan for the Albany River Provincial Park does not allow the creation of new roads or water crossing at or near this location and therefore will need to be amended as part of this project.</p> <p>Ontario Parks requests that the proponent moves text that speaks to the impacts to PPCRA lands out of the “Summary of Residual Effects for</p>			

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		Acoustic Environment Table” and places it more prominently in the EA/EIS document, ideally in a stand-alone section that speaks to the projects impacts to PPCRA lands.			
Ontario Parks	11	<p>Ontario Parks noted that in several places of the draft EA/EIS and its appendices the proponent notes that the increased access to provincial parks is a ‘benefit’ of this project as it will allow more users, and more park infrastructure could be built as a result of this new access.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>“Improved access during operations might increase park usage, enhancing recreational opportunities but potentially affecting wilderness experiences.”</p> <p>And</p> <p>“The road would result in new access points to the Albany River and Ogoki River Provincial Parks which is generally considered to be a positive effect offering users a new opportunity to experience the parks (subject to Ontario Parks support new access points).”</p>	<p>We understand that increased recreational access is not consistent with the management direction for the Ogoki and Albany River Provincial Parks, and we acknowledge the importance of maintaining the remote wilderness character of these non-operating waterway parks. However, improved access could offer benefits to some Indigenous communities and support traditional land and resource use—such access to harvesting areas, access to traditional activity sites and improve access for elders and knowledge holders to readily teach and transfer knowledge among others benefits.</p> <p>However, Appendix U Land and Resource Use Technical Support Document and the list of mitigation measures in Appendix AA-1 Summary and Recommendations note that any potential access considerations will be explored further through ongoing consultation with Ontario Parks to align future decisions with Parks management</p>	Appendix AA-1 Appendix U	1319

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		<p>In this case, both the Albany River and Ogoki River PP are classified as non-operating waterway parks. Section 8(6) of the PPCRA: defines the term as follows: Objectives: waterway class parks (6) The objectives of waterway class parks are to protect recreational water routes and representative and significant terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and associated natural and cultural features and to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences. 2006, c. 12, s. 8 (6)</p> <p>Ontario Parks recommends that the proponent update the text to remove references to increasing park usage as a benefit within the EA/EIS and its appendices. The construction and existence of the road conflicts with the classification of these parks as non-operating waterway class parks with a goal to protect a remote wilderness experience.</p>	<p>objectives and protection priorities.</p>		
Ontario Parks	12	<p>Ontario Parks noted that in several places draft EA/EIS and its appendices that the proponent feels that mitigation to project impacts to the Albany River and Ogoki River PPs are not required/applicable. Ontario Parks</p>	<p>Appendix U Land and Resource Use Technical Support Document has been updated to include mitigations for unauthorized access within the Albany River Provincial Park.</p>	Appendix U	1320

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		<p>disagrees with this assessment.</p> <p>Text States:</p> <p>“Improved access to Albany River and Ogoki River PP, potentially increasing user volumes and changing the wilderness character of these parks... Mitigation N/A”</p> <p>As per Ontario Parks Comment #6, given the classification of these parks as non-operational, waterway class parks Ontario Parks would like to see mitigation measures in place (i.e. placement of boulders or fencing), to prevent unauthorized access and land use (i.e. camping, trail creation, etc.) at any crossing locations.</p> <p>Ontario Parks requests that the proponent add in mitigation measures to prevent unauthorized access to the Albany River Provincial Park from the proposed road and crossing of the river to all the relevant sections of the EA/EIS and its appendices.</p>			
Ontario Parks	13	Ontario Parks has noted that the Draft EA/EIS assessment of the visual impacts of the project is incomplete. Text states:	The updated text was not sent to Ontario Parks prior to the submission of the Final EA/IS as the comment was considered recommended not required. The missing	Final EA/IS Sections 8.3.10, 9.5.8 and 10.4.9.	1321

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		<p>“At the time of writing the Draft Environmental Assessment / Impact Statement, information from visual was not available to summarize. The full Visual Environment Technical Support Document can be found in Appendix V. A summary will be provided in the Final Environmental Assessment / Impact Statement.”</p> <p>And</p> <p>“At the time of writing the Draft Environmental Assessment / Impact Statement, the Visual Environment cumulative effects assessment information was not available to summarize. The full Visual Environment Technical Support Document can be found in Appendix V. A summary will be provided in the Final Environmental Assessment / Impact Statement.”</p> <p>Given Ontario Parks’s concerns about the lasting visual impacts to the Albany River Provincial Park to the proposed for a new permanent bridge, this omission from the Draft EA/EIS is misleading and undermines the potential impacts.</p> <p>Ontario Parks requests the opportunity to review these Draft EA/EIS texts prior to</p>	<p>information has been added to the Final EA/IS.</p>		

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		<p>the submission of the Final EA/EIS to ensure accuracy due to Ontario Parks' concerns about the lasting visual impacts to PPCRA lands as a result of this project.</p>			
Ontario Parks	14	<p>Ontario Parks is concerned that the range of visual and noise impacts the bridge across the Albany River will have on the park is underestimated in the Draft EA/EIS.</p> <p>Text States:</p> <p>“The presence of a new bridge across the river would result in a visual impact with the bridge being visible about 900 meters upstream and 700 meters downstream.”</p> <p>And</p> <p>“During the operations phase, users of Albany River Provincial Park may experience greater than 35 A weighted decibels within 1 kilometer of the bridge location. Noise levels would be higher closer to the bridge crossing location. Baseline noise levels are about 35 to 40 A-weighted decibels and levels over 5 A weighted decibels are considered to be noticeable.”</p>	<p>Appendix V Visual Environment Technical Support Document has been updated to remove the estimated viewing distance of the Albany River Crossing until further detail design is complete, and local topography and vegetation of the site is fully understood through further ground truthing, it is unknown exactly how far the Albany River Crossing will be seen. The report has also updated the effects assessment significance conclusion (Table 7-2) for the Albany River Crossing Viewshed as Possibly Significant adverse effect to the Parks and Protected Areas and Recreation and Tourism VC's.</p> <p>Appendix V has not been updated to include more information on how acoustics impacts were estimated at the Albany River Provincial Park as this comment is considered recommended.</p>	Appendix V	1322

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		<p>It is the experience of relevant Ontario Parks staff's that visual impacts can be seen further upstream and downstream; therefore, we ask for clarification if these visual impacts ranges (900 m upstream and 700 m downstream) were determined from mid channel, or water's edge.</p> <p>It is also staff's experience that acoustic impacts can be heard much further than 1 kilometer from a bridge's location and is dependent on the weight of the vehicle (i.e. transport truck vs. dump truck full of ore) and the number of spacers used for the construction of bridge.</p> <p>Ontario Parks requests more information on how the proponent calculated the estimated visual and acoustic impacts of the bridge across the Albany River.</p>			
Ontario Parks	15	<p>Ontario Parks has noted that the only residual effect from the Land and Resource Use Valued Component that the proponent has brought forward to the cumulative effect assessment is trapping.</p> <p>Text States:</p> <p>"Residual effects are the effects</p>	Appendix U Land and Resource Use Technical Support Document has been updated to include impacts on Park Lands and access.	Appendix U	1323

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		<p>remaining after the application of mitigation measures and include both direct and indirect effects.”</p> <p>and</p> <p>“Where residual effects identified in Section 9 were negligible magnitude, unlikely or possible to occur, or positive in direction, the effect was not carried forward into the cumulative effects assessment.”</p> <p>and</p> <p>“The only valued components carried forward into the Cumulative Effects Assessment for the Land and Resource Use Discipline is Valued Component #7: Trapping”</p> <p>Given these definitions, and our above comments (e.g. Ontario Parks Comment #1,9,11) Ontario Parks feels that direct and indirect impacts of this project to PPCRA lands will exist after the application of mitigation measures and therefore it too should be moved forward and be part of the cumulative effect assessment.</p> <p>Ontario Parks requests that the</p>			

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		<p>proponent move the 'Protected Areas' valued component and assessment in the cumulative effective assessment portion of this EA/EIS forward, given the level of residual impacts this project will have on PPCRA lands.</p>			
Ontario Parks	16	<p>“The magnitude of the predicted residual effects on moose and moose habitat are of moderate magnitude. Overall, moose populations are expected to remain to be self-sustaining and ecologically effective, and therefore, the predicted residual effects on moose and moose habitat are assessed as not significant.”</p> <p>Ontario Parks is concerned with this comment; the loss of habitat and less browsing opportunity with herbicide use, as well as increased access for hunting, disturbance to calving areas, road mortalities, and increased disturbance from noise and traffic are also of concern to moose. Increased access would also increase hunting activities. Rivers and lakes are common moose calving areas and travel corridors, so this road will have direct impact on populations and impact the park’s ecological integrity.</p> <p>As per comment #1, the PPCRA's objectives, under section 2(1) states that</p>	<p>MFFN notes that Section 10.3.5.4.2 in the Final EA/IS and Appendix M Ungulates Technical Support Document has been revised related to the cumulative effects significance determination for moose. Given the uncertainty in the potential increases in non-Indigenous and Indigenous moose harvest and the limited data on current Indigenous harvest levels, it is precautionarily assumed that the effects of increases in public access from past, present and reasonably foreseeable activities (including the Community Access Road) could reach unsustainable levels and lead to decreased resilience and maintenance of the self-sustaining and ecologically effective regional moose population. As such, cumulative residual effects on moose from increase in public access are now considered significant.</p> <p>Impacts to moose are evaluated without consideration to herbicides, as herbicide use is not planned. The Final EA/IS has</p>	Final EA/IS, Section 10.3.5.4.2 Appendix M	1324

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		<p>the first objective for establishing and managing provincial parks is "To permanently protect representative ecosystems, biodiversity and provincially significant features of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage and to manage these areas to ensure that ecological integrity is maintained." 2006, c. 12, s. 2 (1).</p> <p>Ontario Parks requests consideration of the PPCRA's first objective under Section 2(1) when describing residual effects on moose and moose habitat in the Albany River Provincial Park.</p>	<p>been updated for clarity around use of herbicides.</p> <p>Appendix U Land and Resource Use Technical Support Document evaluates potential Community Access Road effects on provincial parks (Section 6.5.2); the assessment considers how the Community Access Road may influence the availability of species harvested for recreational purposes, including moose, through localized habitat removal and changes in access to lands and waterways used for hunting.</p>		
Ontario Parks	17	<p>"In the local study area, 40% of the land is important for Caribou calving (Cat 1) and caribou winter use (Cat 1). There are no known Cat 1 travel corridors in study area"</p> <p>Ontario Parks and Nipigon-Geraldton MNR district have evidence of a travel corridor between the Ogoki River PP and the Little Current River PP, where caribou migrate from their wintering areas SE of Kayedon Lake (Ogoki PP) to calve on Percy Lake (LCR PP). Also, the river acts as a travel corridor. With road crossing mortality risks are increased. Overall disturbance on the range/study area</p>	<p>Safety will be a top priority in all implementation and design phases of the Community Access Road. For example the road leading to and from the bridges will be designed to be tangential for at least 150 metres in both directions. That will result in drivers having at least 300 metres of clear view ahead to see other vehicles or wildlife. In the event that standard sight distances cannot be achieved, roadway signage will be installed to warn the travelling public of advisory reductions in travelling speed. Currently there are no plans to reduce the posted speed limit of the Community Access Road to 40km/hr as suggested.</p>	Comment noted; see response for details.	1326

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		<p>affects overall Park EI, as per comment #1 which references our PPCRA legislative requirement to preserve ecological integrity. This could impact caribou population.</p> <p>Mid Road segment overlaps caribou calving and winter use areas so it is more likely that caribou would cross the road. Ontario Parks suggests posting a slower speed limit through these areas - i.e. 40km vs 80km.</p> <p>This comment builds on comment #1 that Ecological Integrity is an additional factor to consider when discussing impacts to Parks.</p> <p>Request consideration of a lower speeds limit in high use caribou areas within PPCRA lands to reduce road mortalities from traffic collisions.</p>			
Ontario Parks	18	<p>"Parts of the river are protected by Wabakimi Wilderness Park and Ogoki River Waterway Park. Wabakimi Wilderness Park covers about 2,000 square kilometers of lake and river routes, including Wabakimi Lake, Whitewater Lake, and Whiteclay Lake (Ontario Parks, 2024b)."</p>	<p>Section 8.3.6.3.2 of the Final EA/IS has been updated to include Mojikit Lake Conservation Reserve as a protected area along the Ogoki River.</p>	<p>Final EA/IS Section 8.3.6.3.2</p>	1327

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		<p>Ontario Parks would like it to be noted that part of the river/watershed is also protected by Mojikit Lake Conservation Reserve.</p> <p>Ontario Parks suggests including Mojikit Lake Conservation Reserve as a protected area along the river.</p>			
Ontario Parks	19	<p>Ontario Parks is concerned with the assessment of residual effects that changes to surface water quality will have on Caribou and Moose.</p> <p>Text States: "Surface water quality— Alteration of surface water drainage patterns, flows, and levels that can cause changes to soils and vegetation, which can affect ungulate habitat availability and distribution." On this row, the proponents suggest there is "no residual effect".</p> <p>However, based on Ontario Parks staff knowledge, changes to surface water may affect travel corridors and where caribou nurse. There are known caribou nursing areas near the road corridor south of the Albany River, which as per the PPCRA, should be protected, along with their habitats. Therefore, changes to surface water can potentially have a</p>	<p>The assessment of potential residual effects of the Community Access Road to surface water is detailed in Appendix F Surface Water Technical Support Document, and the assessment of potential residual effects to vegetation is detailed in Appendix J Vegetation Technical Support Document. Information provided in those discipline assessments was used to inform the ungulates assessment, and rationale to support the determination of no residual effects to caribou and moose habitat availability and distribution from changes to surface water quality are provided in Appendix M Ungulates Technical Support Document.</p>	Comment noted; see response for details.	1328

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		<p>negative residual effect.</p> <p>Ontario Parks requests additional rationale and evidence to support the conclusion that changes to surface water quality will not have a residual effect to Caribou and Moose.</p>			
Ontario Parks	20	<p>Text States for the Project Activities of Road usage and Maintenance that "Herbicide use will be restricted around sensitive areas (for example, wetlands)".</p> <p>The Ontario Parks Operational Directive 25.01 "Use of Pesticides and Herbicide in Provincial Park" states that non-pesticide measures (mechanical or otherwise) should be considered whenever possible. Therefore, Ontario Parks asks that the proponent include PPCRA lands as a type of 'sensitive area' where herbicide use will also be restricted. Ontario Parks requests that the proponent include PPCRA lands as a type of 'sensitive area' where herbicide use will also be restricted.</p> <p>Please include timing windows and requirements for vegetation management, fish, and birds as Ontario Parks permits mirror federal regulations such as the Migratory Birds Act and the</p>	<p>The Final EA/IS and Appendix J Vegetation Technical Support Document have been updated to include consideration of provincial parks and areas protected under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act as "sensitive areas" related to herbicide use restriction. Herbicides use is not planned.</p> <p>Timing windows will be integrated into detail design, and all permits and authorizations during design phases.</p>	Final EA/IS Appendix J	1330

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		Fisheries Act.			
Ontario Parks	21	<p>“Changes to fish survival, reproduction, and distribution from the placement of waterbody crossing structures, affecting fish access to habitats.”</p> <p>And</p> <p>“Changes to fish survival and reproduction from spills of fuel or other materials.”</p> <p>It is Ontario Parks’ experience that impacts from construction activities (i.e. fuel spills) can also impair growth rate for some fish species, not just survival or reproduction (as texts currently state).</p> <p>Ontario Parks requests that the proponent include ‘growth rate’ to the descriptions of the potential impacts and predicted residual effects for fish in addition to ‘survival and reproduction’.</p>	<p>The Final EA/IS has been updated to clearly state growth rate was inherently considered within the survival and reproduction indicator.</p> <p>Survival and reproduction is an indicator for fish and fish health as described in the Fish and Fish Habitat Technical Support Document. Survival and reproduction considers the ability of fish to survive and produce viable offspring and was completed as a qualitative assessment based on direct (i.e., mortality of individuals resulting from physical activities or Project infrastructure) or indirect (i.e., changes to habitat availability [quality, quantity], distribution [connectivity] changes to the population such that survival and reproduction are affected). Changes to growth rate that could affect fish survival and reproduction are considered within the survival and reproduction indicator.</p>	Final EA/IS Appendix G, Section 4.2.2	1331
Ontario Parks	22	Ontario Parks flags that the Draft EA/EIS is incomplete when it comes to Table 10-7 Summary of Predicted Cumulative Effects for Land Disciplines for Woodland Caribou and Moose. All rows in the table are blank and states [Placeholder] at this	Table 10.3-3 in the Final EA/IS has been updated with the complete summary of predicted cumulative effects for all land discipline valued components. The updated text was not sent to Ontario Parks prior to the submission of the Final	Final EA/IS; Table 10.3-3	1332

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		<p>time.</p> <p>Ontario Parks would like to review this text when it is added to the Draft EA/EIS prior to the submission of the Final EA/EIS</p>	<p>EA/IS as the comment was considered recommended not required.</p>		
Ontario Parks	23	<p>Ontario Parks flags that the Draft EA/EIS is incomplete when it comes to Table 10-8: Valued Components Carried Forward and Corresponding Spatial and Temporal Boundaries for People Discipline. Rows in the table are blank and states [Placeholder] at this time for the following Disciplines: “Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Interests, Atmospheric, Community Well-Being and Visual.”</p> <p>Ontario Parks would like to review this text once it is added to the Draft EA/EIS prior to the submission of the Final EA/EIS</p>	<p>The missing information has been added to the Final EA/IS. The updated text was not sent to Ontario Parks prior to the submission of the Final EA/IS as the comment was considered recommended not required.</p>	Final EA/IS Section 10	1333
Ontario Parks	24	<p>Ontario Parks requests to be added as a “Concerned Agency” to the Valued Components under the Fish and Fish Habitat section as some water crossings will occur on PPCRA lands</p> <p>Request Ontario Parks be added as a “Concerned Agency” for potential future permitting needs.</p>	<p>The Final EA/IS (Appendix AA Summary and Recommendation Tables) has been updated to include Ontario Parks as a "Concerned Agency" to the Fish and Fish Habitat valued components for potential future permitting needs.</p>	Appendix AA	1334

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
Ontario Parks	25	<p>Ontario Parks requests to be added as a “Concerned Agency’ to the Valued Components under the Wildlife section as the Crossing of the Albany River Provincial Park and potentially the Ogoki River Provincial Park will occur on PPCRA lands</p> <p>Request Ontario Parks be added as a “Concerned Agency’ for potential future permitting needs.</p>	<p>Ontario Parks has been added as a Concerned Agency to Table 10-1 of Appendix K Wildlife Technical Support Document.</p>	Appendix K Table 10-1	1335
Ontario Parks	26	<p>Ontario Parks requests to be added as a “Concerned Agency’ to the Valued Components under the Birds section as the Crossing of the Albany River Provincial will occur on PPCRA lands</p> <p>Request Ontario Parks be added as a “Concerned Agency’ for potential future permitting needs.</p>	<p>The Final EA/IS (Appendix AA Summary and Recommendations Table) has been updated to include Ontario Parks as a "Concerned Agency" to the Birds valued components for potential future permitting needs.</p>	Appendix AA	1349
Ontario Parks	27	<p>Ontario Parks requests to be added as a “Concerned Agency’ to the Valued Components under the Ungulates section as the Crossing of the Albany River Provincial and potentially the Ogoki River Provincial Park will occur on PPCRA lands</p> <p>Request Ontario Parks be added as a “Concerned Agency’ for potential future</p>	<p>The Final EA/IS (Appendix AA Summary and Recommendations Table) has been updated to include Ontario Parks as a "Concerned Agency" to the Ungulates valued components for potential future permitting needs.</p>	Appendix AA	1350

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		permitting needs.			
Ontario Parks	28	<p>Ontario Parks requests to be added as a “Concerned Agency” to this valued component as changes to the surface water of Albany River within the Albany River PP due to Aggregate extraction are of interest to Ontario Parks/MECP</p> <p>Request Ontario Parks be added as a “Concerned Agency” for potential future permitting needs.</p>	<p>The Final EA/IS (Appendix AA Summary and Recommendations Table) has been updated to include Ontario Parks as a "Concerned Agency" to the Surface Water valued components for potential future permitting needs.</p>	Appendix AA	1352
Ontario Parks	29	<p>Ontario Parks requests to be added as a “Concerned Agency” to this valued component as changes to groundwater levels within the Albany River PP due to Aggregate extraction are of interest to Ontario Parks/MECP</p> <p>Request Ontario Parks be added as a “Concerned Agency” for potential future permitting needs.</p>	<p>The Final EA/IS (Appendix AA Summary and Recommendations Table) has been updated to include Ontario Parks as a "Concerned Agency" to the Groundwater valued components for potential future permitting needs.</p>	Appendix AA	1353
Ontario Parks	30	<p>Ontario Parks requests to be added as a “Concerned Agency” to this valued component as changes to terrain quantity and distributions (esker landforms) within the Albany River PP due to adjacent aggregate extraction are of interest to Ontario Parks/MECP</p>	<p>The Final EA/IS (Appendix AA Summary and Recommendations Table) has been updated to include Ontario Parks as a "Concerned Agency" to the Soils, Terrain, and Physiography valued components for potential future permitting needs.</p>	Appendix AA	1355

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
		Request Ontario Parks be added as a "Concerned Agency" for potential future permitting needs.			
Ontario Parks	31	<p>Ontario Parks noted that the proponent changed within the study plans how the valued component (VC) for Parks and Protected Areas would be measured from what was mentioned in the ToR.</p> <p>Text States: (Attached image)</p> <p>As per Ontario Parks Comment #1 Crown lands regulated under the PPCRA are not solely areas designated for recreational use. By making this change and removing reference to 'natural and cultural values' this VC no longer serves to meet the objectives of the PPCRA.</p> <p>Ontario Parks requests that new indicators for the VC Parks and Protected Areas be created and studied in order to account for potential project impacts all aspects of the PPCRA</p>	<p>Section 4.2.3 of Appendix V Visual Environment Technical Support Document has been updated to establish the Parks and Protected Areas Valued Component specifically to reflect the full intent of the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act (PPCRA), including protection of natural and cultural values, wilderness character, and remoteness. The indicators for this Values Component (VC) already extend beyond recreation and include the intrinsic visual character of park landscapes themselves (Table 4-2 of Appendix V), consistent with the PPCRA requirement to conserve scenic integrity and natural heritage values. There is also a stand alone Valued Component for Recreation and Tourism</p> <p>Section 5.4 of Appendix V describes existing conditions in the Albany and Ogoki River Provincial Parks with explicit reference to their protected natural and cultural roles under the PPCRA, and Section 7 (Table 7-4) of Appendix V evaluates potential effects on the scenic integrity and wilderness character of</p>	Appendix V Section 4.2.3	1356

Table: Summary of Feedback Received and Response / Action – Ontario Parks

Group Name	Comment ID from source	Comment Raised	Response	Addressed in the EA / IS	Internal ID
			these parks rather than on recreational use alone.		