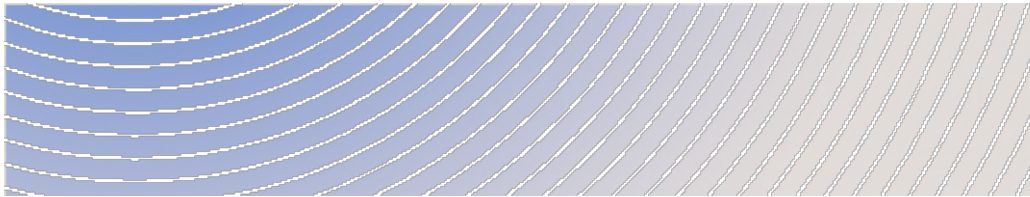


Cooperation Plan



GREAT BEAR GOLD PROJECT

AUGUST 1, 2024



Impact Assessment
Agency of Canada

Agence d'évaluation
d'impact du Canada

Canada



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1. Introduction

On August 1, 2024, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) issued a Notice of Commencement for an impact assessment for the Great Bear Gold Project (the Project).

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

This Plan was developed by the Agency with input from Ontario ministries to set out intentions and plans for a cooperative assessment process for the Project. The provincial ministries participating in the impact assessment are included in Appendix 1.

This Plan is intended to be flexible and does not preclude the Agency and participating ministries from modifying the cooperative approach described in this Plan in order to accommodate changes that may occur during the assessment process.

2. Project scope

The proponent is proposing the construction, operation, decommissioning and abandonment of a new open-pit and underground gold mine with an on-site metal mill, located 23 kilometres southeast of Red Lake, Ontario. As proposed, the Great Bear Gold Project would include two open-pits and produce up to 60,000 tonnes of ore per day, while the metal mill would process up to 15,000 tonnes of ore per day. The project would operate for about 20 years.

For more information on the impact assessment of the Project or to view the information and comments received, visit the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (the Registry) at <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/85832>.

3. Approach to cooperation

Through cooperation, the Agency and participating ministries will strive to increase efficiency and certainty for all participants, including the proponent, the public, and Indigenous communities, by sharing information and expertise, coordinating activities, and harmonizing timelines where possible.

The following table outlines potential opportunities for cooperation, subject to proponent timelines for planning and design decisions, and sequencing of approvals.



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

Responsible Entity	Mandate and Expertise	Regulatory Mechanism ¹	Potential Opportunities for Cooperation
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry	Resource stewardship and development projects	Class EA for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sharing Sequencing to streamline Class EA, <u>or</u> Coordinated technical reports, government review, and comment period
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry	Crown land and resource use	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest resource license Work permit Land use permit Aggregate permit Approvals for dams and other works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sharing Joint technical working groups Consultation on federal Decision Statement conditions
Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks	Emissions, water, and species at risk	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental compliance approvals Permit-to-take water Overall benefit permits for species at risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sharing Joint technical working groups Consultation on federal Decision Statement conditions
Ontario Ministry of Mines	Mine closure and rehabilitation	Mine Closure Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sharing
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism	Cultural heritage resources, including archaeological resources, cultural heritage landscapes	Cultural heritage studies, including archaeological assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sharing Review of studies

4. Gathering and review of proponent information

¹ References for provincial regulatory mechanisms are listed in Appendix 1.



The following table identifies the factors to be considered by both the Agency and participating ministries where there exist opportunities for cooperation to facilitate the exchange of information and expert advice and reduce duplication.

Table 2 – Preliminary list of common factors reviewed by the Agency and participating ministries

Common Factors related to the Assessment	Common Areas of Federal & Provincial Review
Changes to the natural and physical environment	Atmospheric, acoustic and visual environment Riparian, wetland and terrestrial environments Groundwater and surface water Fish and fish habitat Terrestrial wildlife and their habitat Species at risk ²
Changes to health, social and economic conditions	Land, water and resource use for recreation, tourism and commercial operations
Impacts on Indigenous Peoples and the exercise of rights	Physical and cultural heritage Navigation Traditional use of lands and resources Structures/sites/things of significance Aboriginal and treaty rights
Other factors	Effects of the environment on the Project, including climate change resiliency

The Agency has prepared Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines that set out the information required of the proponent in the Impact Statement.

General information requirements for the provincial Class EA and provincial permitting and approvals are available at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/environment-and-energy> (see Table 1 of this document).

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

5. Timelines and time management

The proponent will work with MNRF to determine if any technical reports are required for the Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Class EA(s). If technical reports are required, the proponent

² Several species listed on Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act* receive protections under Ontario's *Endangered Species Act*.



may choose to coordinate them with the Impact Statement. If the technical reports are coordinated, the Agency and MNRF can coordinate the government review and comment period on the technical reports.

Where suitable, the proponent and participating ministries are also encouraged to align early government review and engagement for permits and approvals with the Agency's comment period on the Impact Statement or draft Impact Assessment Report and potential conditions.

This Plan recognizes that the alignment of respective timelines may be subject to obligations prescribed in applicable legislation, as well as the completeness of any information submitted by the proponent.

The Agency will provide the participating ministries listed in Appendix 1 with advanced notice of opportunities for cooperation. The Agency will also ensure that timely and effective communication occurs with participating ministries throughout the impact assessment process.

6. Sharing of information

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

- expert advice received;
- existing studies and information;
- comments from Indigenous communities, when not prevented due to confidentiality;
- information received from the proponent (e.g. technical submissions, responses to deficiency reports); and
- provincial regulatory, policy or other instruments and measures that could manage potential adverse effects of the Project (i.e. complementary measures), and regulatory decision criteria.

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

7. Public participation

If the province or proponent identify any comment periods for the Class EA or for permits and approval applications that can be aligned with comment periods for the federal impact assessment, the Agency will collaborate with participating ministries to include links to each others' websites, coordinate public notices, and share comments received, where appropriate.

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



8. Indigenous consultation and engagement

The Agency will lead Crown Consultation on behalf of the Government of Canada for this federal impact assessment, while the proponent and participating ministries will be responsible for Crown consultation for provincial decisions. For further information on the Agency's Indigenous consultation and engagement activities, please see the Project's [Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan](#).

9. Decision Statement

The Agency will consult with participating ministries regarding proposed conditions for the Decision Statement and any relevant complementary measures to improve regulatory efficiency.

10. Interpretation

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

11. Contact information

The Agency office designated for administering the impact assessment of the Project is:

Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, Ontario Regional Office
600-55 York Street
Toronto ON M5J 1R7
Tel.: 416-952-1576
Email: greatbear@iaac-aeic.gc.ca

Contact information for Ontario ministries participating in the impact assessment:

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
135 St Clair Ave W, 1st Floor
Toronto ON M4V 1P5
Tel.: 647-961-4850
Email: Andrew.Evers@ontario.ca or Nick.Colella@ontario.ca

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
227 Howey St, PO Box 5003
Red Lake, ON P0V 2M0



Tel: 807-728-0901

Email: Jennifer.Smikalow@ontario.ca

Ministry of Mines
Willet Green Miller Ctr Level B6 Unit
933 Ramsey Lake Rd
Sudbury, ON P3E 6B5
Tel: 705-561-6042
Email: Marc.Stewart@ontario.ca

Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism
5th Floor, 400 University Ave,
Toronto, ON
Email: heritage@ontario.ca

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
447 McKeown Ave, Suite 203
North Bay, ON P1B 9S9
Tel: 705-493-0880
Email: Josh.Wilson@ontario.ca

Appendix 1 – Provincial Regulatory Mechanisms

The following is a preliminary list of provincial regulatory mechanisms that may apply if the Project would be permitted to proceed.

Provincial Ministry	Regulatory Mechanism and Reference
Ministry of Mines	Mine Closure Plan under the <i>Mining Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/page/mining-sequence-closure
Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks	Environmental Compliance Approval for Air, Noise and Sewage works under the <i>Environmental Protection Act</i> and <i>Ontario Water Resources Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/page/environmental-compliance-approval
	Permit to Take Water or Environmental Activity and Sector Registration under the <i>Ontario Water Resources Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/page/permits-take-water
	Overall benefit permit for species at risk under the <i>Endangered Species Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/07e06
Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry	Work Permits and Land Use Permits under the <i>Public Lands Act (1990)</i> https://www.ontario.ca/page/crown-land-work-permits
	Approval for dams and other works under the <i>Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/page/lakes-and-rivers-improvement-act-administrative-guide
	Aggregate Permit under the <i>Aggregate Resources Act (1990)</i> https://www.ontario.ca/page/aggregate-resources
	Forest Resource License and Authority to Haul under the <i>Crown Forest Sustainability Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/94c25/v3#BK25
	License to collect fish for scientific purposes under the <i>Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/97f41



Provincial Ministry	Regulatory Mechanism and Reference
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism	Cultural heritage study and archaeological assessment under the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o18
	Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties https://www.ontario.ca/page/standards-and-guidelines-conservation-provincial-heritage-properties