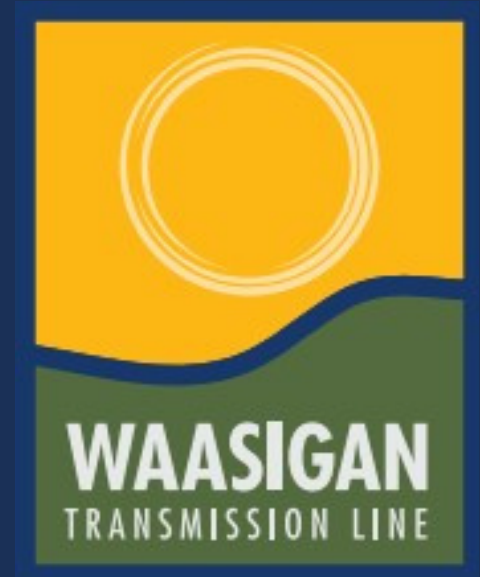


Waasigan Transmission Line

Comprehensive Environmental Assessment
Indigenous Engagement and Partnerships



In partnership with:



Disclaimer

- This presentation is meant to reflect the EA practitioner perspective
- It is not intended to represent the perspectives of Indigenous communities or the Waasigan First Nation partners
- It contemplates challenges and opportunities for large-scale linear infrastructure project development in northern Ontario.

Agenda

- Waasigan Project and Large Northern Ontario Field Programs
- Trust and Authentic Relationship Building
 - A 50/50 First Nation Partnership Model
 - Access to and Sharing Information
 - Listening to Indigenous communities
 - Indigenous Participation in Field Work

Waasigan Project - Large Northern Ontario Field Programs



In partnership with:



About Waasigan

The Waasigan Transmission Line is a proposed new transmission line between the Municipality of Shuniah, near Thunder Bay, and the Town of Atikokan and City of Dryden.

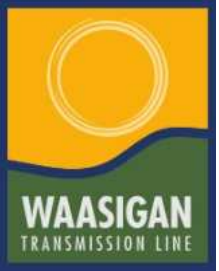
- **Phase 1:** Lakehead TS x Mackenzie TS consisting of a proposed new double-circuit 230 kV transmission line (190 km).
- **Phase 2:** Makenzie TS x Dryden TS consisting of a new single-circuit 230 kV transmission line (170 km).



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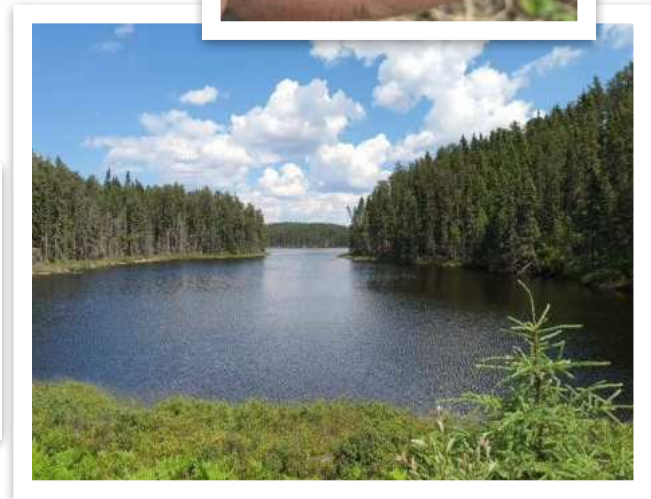
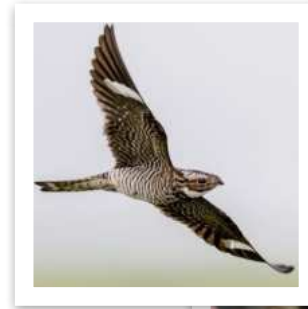


Comprehensive Field Studies & Monitoring Program

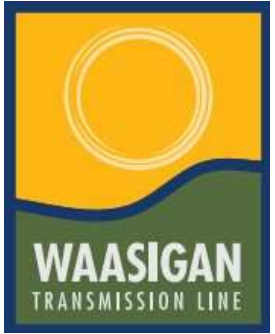


Field studies complete, including more than 1200 survey sites:

- ✓ Amphibian Call Counts
- ✓ Turtle Basking/Nesting
- ✓ Bird Surveys
- ✓ Bat Maternity Roost
- ✓ Bat Hibernacula
- ✓ Gray Fox
- ✓ Ecological Land Classification (ELC)/Botanical Surveys
- ✓ Candidate Significant Wildlife Habitat
- ✓ Aquatic Surveys
- ✓ Built Cultural Heritage
- ✓ Visual Assessment



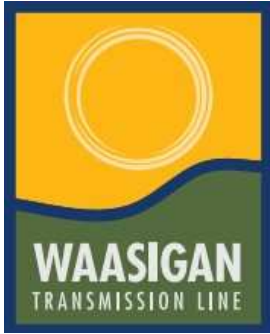
Large Northern Ontario Field Programs



- Field work completed as planned – overcame multiple logistical hurdles
 - Field work occurred during pandemic
 - Availability of equipment – ATVs/UTVs and trucks
 - Identify survey locations and coordinate access for 1,200 sites
- Survey site identification focused on best value locations (less surveyed waterbodies); supported building a dataset in this area where there is limited data
- Support and collaboration with agencies:
 - Review of field work plans by Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
 - MNR permitting – 100's of crossings to permit – 3 districts
 - Developed webviewer to digitally access information and facilitate review
 - MNR worked through permits quickly, allowing early field season start
 - Ministry of Transportation encroachment permits to park and work on roadsides

Large and Remote Field Programs

- Use of in field tools (e.g., tablets) and data collection
 - Review land access information and other data in the field over large areas
 - See data live and active QA/QC
- Keeping Health and Safety at the Forefront
 - Large teams (25 aquatics field crews in 2021) – keep it as a priority
 - Working or travelling through remote areas – satellite phone, inReach, etc.
 - Mindful of fatigue and long days
 - Managing dehydration risk – could not carry enough water into the bush – procured LifeStraw water bottles (in-field water filtration)
 - Close communication with Sustainable Forest Licence holders on active forestry roads



Trust and Authentic Relationship Building



In partnership with:



A 50/50 First Nation Partnership Model

- In 2022, Hydro One announced an industry leading Equity Partnership Model that offers First Nations a 50 per cent equity stake in all new, future large-scale capital transmission line projects with a value exceeding \$100 million.
- Waasigan is a 50/50 partnership with nine First Nations in northwestern Ontario.
 - 8 First Nations are represented through Gwayakocchigewin LP (GLP)
 - Eagle Lake First Nation (Migisi Sahgaigan)
 - Fort William First Nation (Anemki Wajiw)
 - Gakijiwanong Anishinaabe Nation (Lac La Croix First Nation)
 - Lac Seul First Nation (Obishikokaang)
 - Nigigoonsiminikaaning First Nation
 - Ojibway Nation of Saugeen
 - Seine River First Nation (Chima'aganing)
 - Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation (Waabigonii Zaaga'igan).
 - Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation (Nezaadikaang) participating independent of GLP

In partnership with:




A True Working Partnership

- Processes for joint planning and decision-making
- Project Partner's Committee
- First Nation Project Managers
- Capacity Funding Agreements
- Environmental Commitments
- Incorporation of Indigenous/Traditional Knowledge
- Training, employment and business commitments



Access to and Sharing Information

- Accessible information builds better understanding & trust
- Long linear projects – difficult to see site specific detail on PDF maps without large number of maps
- Separate mapping products to share information
 - Field survey location webviewer
 - Digital EA a way to increase access and transparency
 - Tailored mapping to meet community needs



Waasigan Transmission Line Project

Environmental Assessment Digital Hub


Hydro One has developed a web-based Environmental Assessment (EA) platform to provide Indigenous communities and stakeholders with a streamlined approach to review the Project with overlapping data without the use of large volume discipline specific figure sets. Viewers will easily be able to target specific areas and information that may be of interest to inform their review. The web-based EA platform includes mapping of Project components, baseline field data collected for the Project, as well as host publicly available datasets.

Access EA Mapping Information


Please select from the four maps below. Data can be viewed by clicking the "Map Layers" icon in the top right corner and selecting layers to turn on.




PROJECT FOOTPRINT



TERRESTRIAL



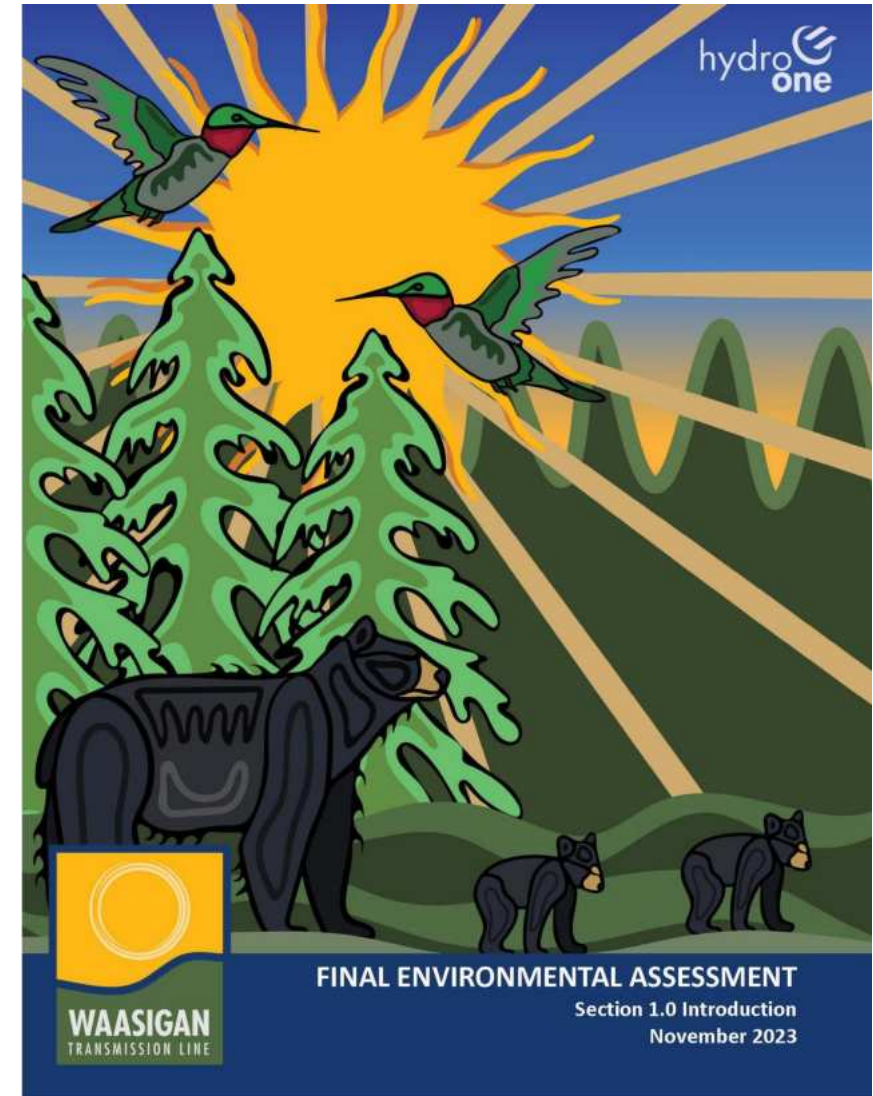
AQUATICS



ALL ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

Listening to Indigenous Nations

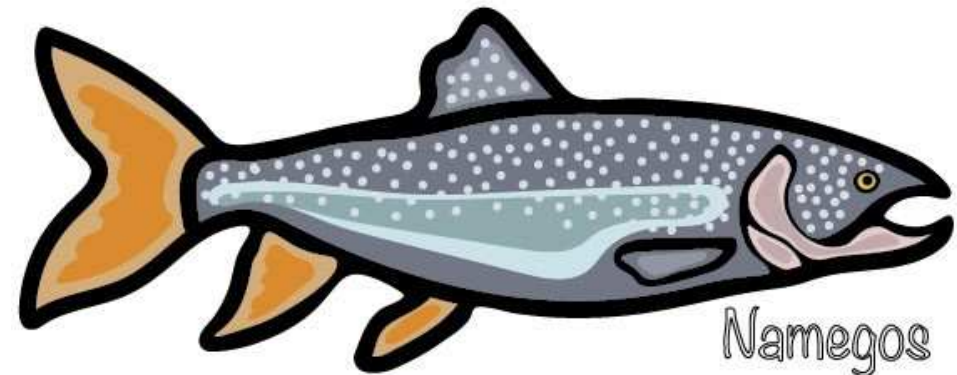
- Hydro One and First Nation partners jointly released the Final EA Report
- Establishing meaningful engagement and collaboration was a priority for the project
- Significant effort and time by Indigenous communities to support and improve the project
- Nearly 800 commitments included in the EA
- Strong collaboration throughout EA process
- Enabled the EA to better reflect the concerns and needs of Indigenous communities



Cover Page and Wildlife Art: Storm Angeconeb, Lac Seul First Nation in Treaty #3

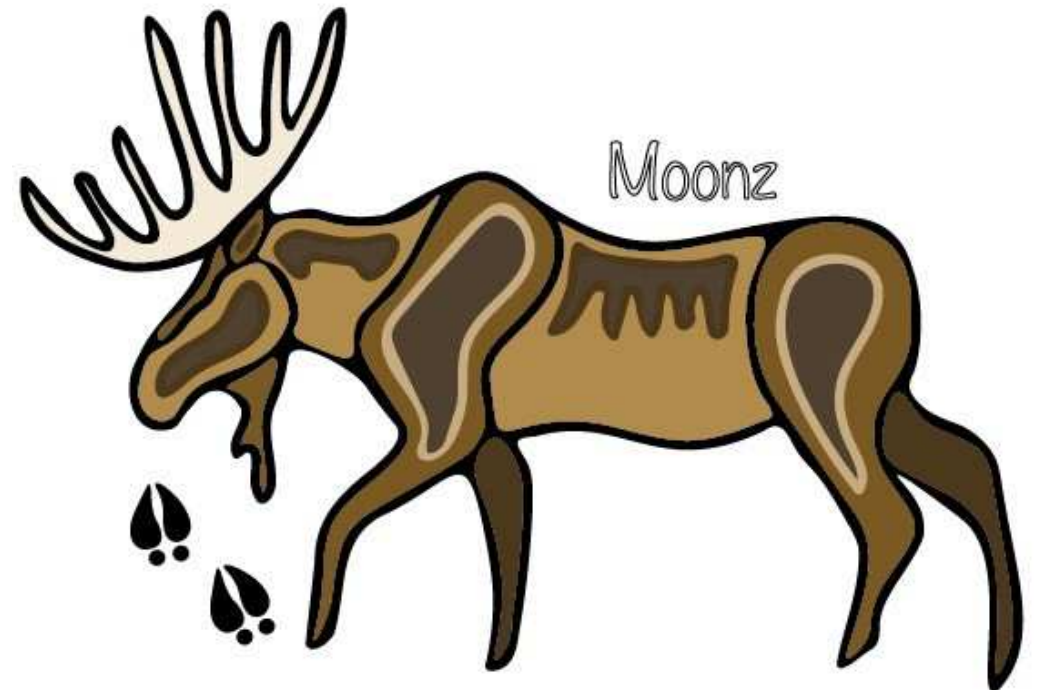
Listening to Indigenous Nations

- Flexibility by Hydro One on field work
 - Expanded detailed field work to include alternative routes
 - Engagement on field work plans – added additional turtle survey work
- Early review of critical EA sections
- Collaborative workshops on EA content
- Incorporation of Indigenous knowledge throughout the EA with permission and direction of Indigenous communities
- Incorporation of Indigenous art
- Co-develop Environmental Protection Plan, Traditional Land Use and Resource Management Plan, Monitoring Plans



Listening to Indigenous Nations

- Incorporation of mitigation required and/or developed by communities such as:
 - Expanded buffers for protection of waterbodies
 - Additional mitigation to protect waterways supporting wild rice
 - Commitment to collaborate on mitigation and monitoring within moose habitat
- Engagement allowed for some plans/mitigation to be further developed/refined outside the EA



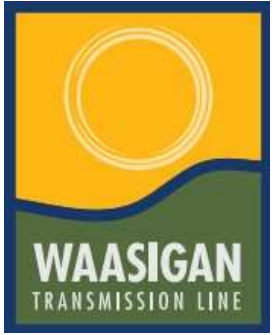
Indigenous Participation in Field Work

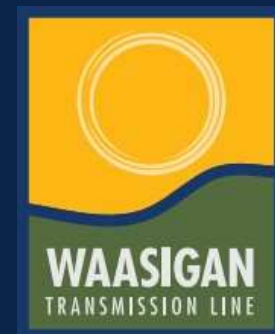
- Long linear project with many Indigenous communities to engage
 - Early engagement – Identify individual community needs
 - Understand level and type of involvement
 - Monitoring versus environmental capacity building
 - Community requirement for monitors to be present for all field work
 - Community protocols
- Iterative planning and engagement - Provide high level planning as early as possible to support communities in identifying resourcing needs for the project
 - Approximate number of field crews
 - Potential for overlapping field crews
 - Approximate timing/area of overlapping traditional territories



Supporting Indigenous Participation in Field Work

- Work with Indigenous communities to understand barriers to participation. Examples heard on Waasigan include:
 - Duration of field work – string together field dates as much as possible to create longer opportunities for meaningful employment
 - Consider directly hiring Indigenous staff from affected communities – can work on other projects
 - Access to a vehicle and equipment – note that transport and required equipment can be provided by the Project team in the job posting





Thank you!