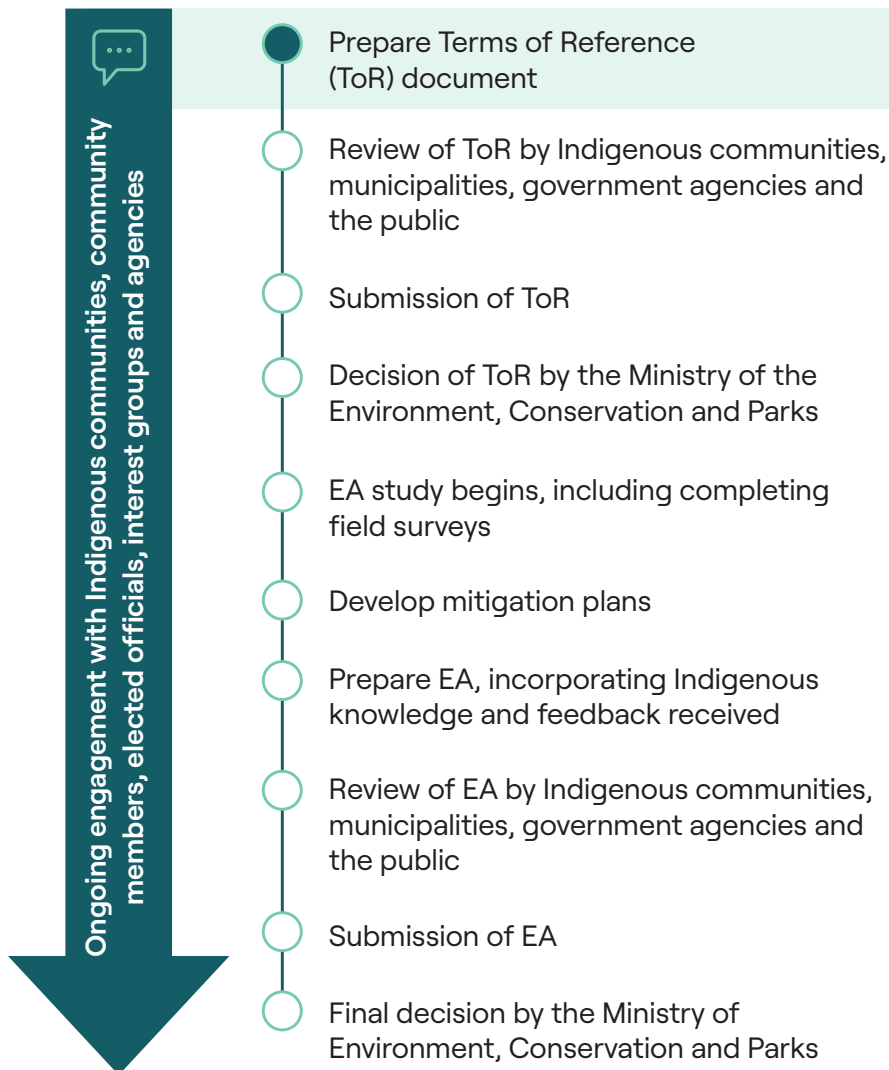


# The Environmental Assessment

## What is it?

In Ontario, the *Environmental Assessment Act* and its regulations ensure environmental effects are taken into consideration for all phases of a project. An Environmental Assessment (EA) includes consultation with Indigenous communities, members of the public, businesses, stakeholder groups, government agencies and other interested parties, consideration and evaluation of alternatives and the mitigation of potential environmental effects. The EA process is designed to assess the existing environment and mitigate potential effects before decisions are made about proceeding with a proposed project. EA's require approval from the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

## Overview of Comprehensive Environmental Assessment Process



### The Environmental Assessment Act defines environment to mean:

- Air, land or water;
- Plant and animal life, including human life;
- The social, economic and cultural conditions that influence the life of humans or a community;
- Any building, structure, machine or other device or thing made by humans;
- Any solid, liquid, gas, odour, heat, sound, vibration or radiation resulting directly or indirectly from human activities; or,
- Any part or combination of the foregoing and the interrelationships between any two or more of them.

# The Terms of Reference

The first step in the Comprehensive (also known as Individual) EA process is the preparation of a Terms of Reference (ToR) which will set out the framework and work plan for the preparation of the EA, including an outline of the studies and consultation activities that will be carried out.

For more information on the ToR process, please refer to the [Ministry's Code of Practice: Preparing and Reviewing Terms of Reference for Environmental Assessments in Ontario](#).



## What's included in the terms of reference?

The ToR will include the following elements:

- Identification of the proponent;
- Indication of how the EA will be prepared;
- Purpose of the study or undertaking;
- Description of and rationale for the undertaking;
- Description of and rationale for alternatives;
- Description of the existing environment and potential effects of the undertaking;
- Assessment and evaluation;
- Commitments and monitoring;
- Consultation plan for the environmental assessment;
- Flexibility to accommodate new circumstances; and
- Other approvals required.

## We're here to help

If you would like any further information or have any questions, please contact Community Relations at:



**1.877.345.6799**



**[Community.Relations@HydroOne.com](mailto:Community.Relations@HydroOne.com)**



**[HydroOne.com](http://HydroOne.com)**

