APPENDIX 3-F

Public Community Open House #3 Materials

Notice of completion of draft Environmental Study Report and upcoming community open house

North Shore Link project

May 2026

Hydro One has completed the draft Environmental Study Report (ESR). Now, you're invited to provide feedback.

Long-term electricity demand in Ontario is increasing. To meet the increased need, Hydro One will build the proposed North Shore Link project, a new double-circuit, 230-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between Mississagi Transformer Station (TS) located near Wharncliffe, and Third Line TS located in Sault Ste. Marie. The project involves work at the stations to connect the new transmission line, including an expansion at Mississagi TS. In addition, to support the overall operation of the transmission system, an expansion at Algoma TS, located east of Algoma Mills, will be required to accommodate additional station equipment.

The North Shore Link project was identified as part of the Independent Electricity System Operator's plans to address future growth in the region. The project will follow Hydro One's industry-leading First Nation Equity Partnership Model and offer proximate First Nations the opportunity to invest in a 50 per cent equity stake in the transmission line component of the project. Once built, the North Shore Link will strengthen the connection between the northeast and the northwest and improve the overall resiliency of the northern Ontario transmission system.

As part of the Class EA, Hydro One has evaluated route alternatives, selected a preferred route, assessed the potential environmental effects and identified mitigation measures. Engagement with community members and Indigenous communities will continue throughout the lifecycle of the project. For more information on the project and the Class EA process, please visit **HydroOne.com/NSL**.

We want to hear from you

The draft ESR and highlights documents are available for a public review and comment period from Monday, May 11 to Friday, June 12. The report summarizes the Class EA process, which was conducted in accordance with the approved **Class Environmental Assessment for Transmission Facilities** (2024) under Ontario's *Environmental Assessment Act*. The report can be viewed electronically on Hydro One's website at **HydroOne.com/NSL**. Hard copies are also available for sign out and/or pick up at the following locations, pending operating hours:

- James L. McIntyre Centennial Library - 50 East Street, Sault Ste. Marie P6A 3C3
- Searchmont Community Centre - 734 Hwy 532, Searchmont P0S 1J0
- Thessalon Public Library - 187 Main Street, Thessalon P0R 1L0

Written comments or questions on the draft ESR must be received by Hydro One **no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, June 12**, addressed to:

Andrew Roberts, Manager, Environmental Services, Hydro One Networks Inc.,
483 Bay Street, North Tower, 14th Floor, Toronto, ON M5G 2P5
Phone: **1-877-345-6799** (Community Relations hotline)
Email: **Community.Relations@HydroOne.com**

See reverse for map

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Hydro One invites you to attend our community open house sessions to learn more about the draft ESR, share your feedback and discuss any questions with the project team:

Sault Ste. Marie
Wednesday, May 20
from 4 to 7 p.m.
Water Tower Inn,
360 Great Northern Road
P6B 4Z7

Searchmont
Thursday, May 21
from 4 to 7 p.m.
Searchmont Community Centre, 734 Hwy 532
P0S 1J0

Wharncliffe
Thursday, May 21
from 4 to 7 p.m.
Wharncliffe Community Centre, 4847 ON-129
P0R 1L0

HydroOne.com/NSL

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

All personal information included in your request – such as name, address, telephone number and property location – is collected, under the authority of section 30 of the *Environmental Assessment Act* and is collected and maintained for the purpose of creating a record that is available to the general public. As this information is collected for the purpose of a public record, the protection of personal information provided in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) does not apply (s.37). Personal information you submit will become part of the available public record unless you request that your personal information remain confidential.

Hydro One welcomes your feedback. We will review and address all concerns brought to our attention before finalizing and submitting the ESR to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). The project will then be considered acceptable and may proceed as outlined in the ESR.

A request may be made to the MECP for an order requiring a higher level of study (i.e. a Comprehensive EA approval) or that conditions be imposed (e.g., require further studies) before the project can proceed. However, this request can only be made on the grounds that the requested order may prevent, mitigate or remedy adverse impacts on constitutionally protected Indigenous and treaty rights. The MECP will not consider requests on other grounds.

Requests should include the requester's contact information and full name, and specify what kind of order is being requested (request for conditions or Comprehensive EA); how an order may prevent, mitigate or remedy potential adverse impacts on Indigenous and treaty rights; and any information in support of the statements in the request.

Requests should also be copied to Hydro One per contact information provided above. Please visit the Ministry's website for more information on requests for orders under section 16 of the *Environmental Assessment Act* at: **https://www.ontario.ca/page/class-environmental-assessments-section-16-order**

If no Section 16 Order requests are submitted during the comment period, Hydro One will proceed with the project.

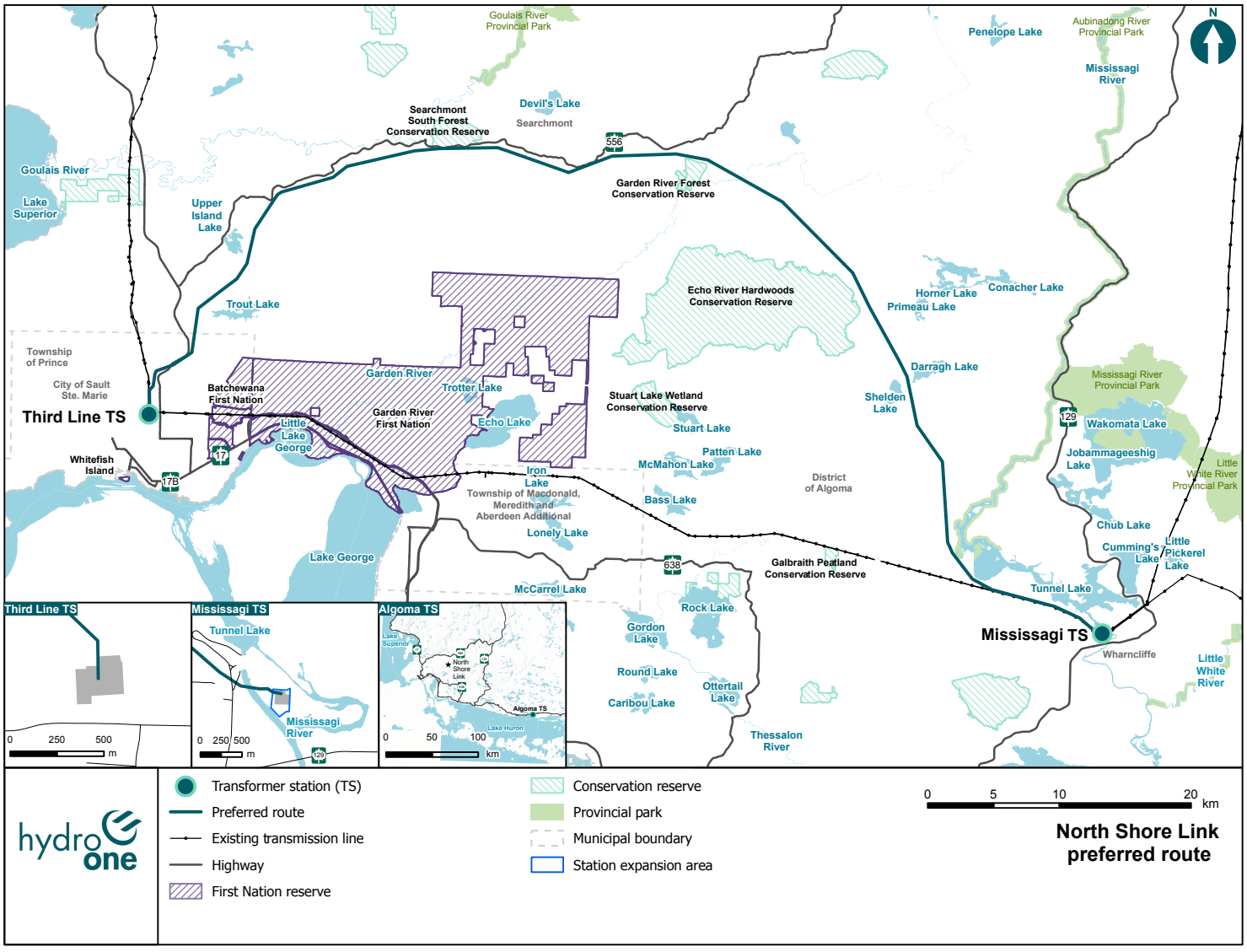
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The request should be sent in writing or by email to:

Minister, Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3
Email: minister.mecp@ontario.ca

Director, Environmental Assessment Branch
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
135 St. Clair Ave. W, 1st Floor
Toronto, ON M4V 1P5
Email: EABDirector@ontario.ca



North Shore Link upcoming community open house

Hydro One is proposing to build the North Shore Link, a new double-circuit, 230-kilovolt transmission line between Mississagi Transformer Station (TS) near Wharncliffe to Third Line TS in Sault Ste. Marie.

Join us at one of our three community open house sessions to learn more about the project, ask questions and share your feedback.

Contact us:

1-877 345-6799

Community.Relations@HydroOne.com

HydroOne.com/NSL

Sault Ste. Marie

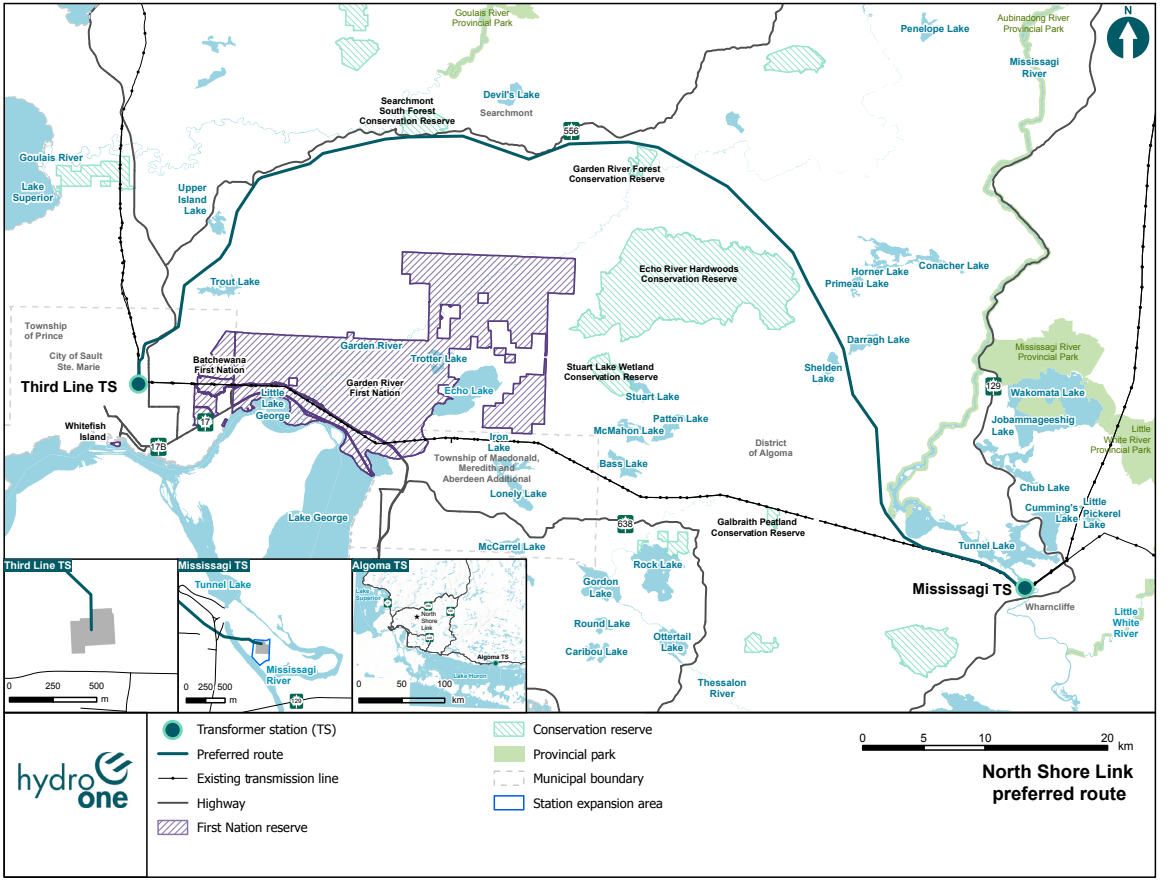
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4 to 7 p.m.
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Centre, 734 Hwy 532
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Wharncliffe

Thursday, May 21
4 to 7 p.m.
Wharncliffe Community
Centre, 4847 ON-129
P0R 1L0


Goulais River Provincial Park
Penelope Lake
Aubinadong River Provincial Park
Mississagi River
N
Searchmont South Forest Conservation Reserve
Devil's Lake
Searchmont
556
Goulais River
Lake Superior
Upper Island Lake
Garden River Forest Conservation Reserve
Trout Lake
Echo River Hardwoods Conservation Reserve
Horner Lake
Primeau Lake
Conacher Lake
Township of Prince
City of Sault Ste. Marie
Batchewana First Nation
Garden River
Trotter Lake
Garden River First Nation
Stuart Lake Wetland Conservation Reserve
Darragh Lake
Shelden Lake
Mississagi River Provincial Park
Third Line TS
Little Lake George
Echo Lake
Stuart Lake
129
Wakomata Lake
Whitefish Island
17
17B
Patten Lake
McMahon Lake
Jobammageeshig Lake
Little White River Provincial Park
Iron Lake
District of Algoma
Township of Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional
Bass Lake
Chub Lake
Lonely Lake
Cumming's Lake
Little Pickerel Lake
Lake George
638
Galbraith Peatland Conservation Reserve
McCarrel Lake
Tunnel Lake
Rock Lake
Mississagi TS
Gordon Lake
Wharncliffe
Round Lake
Ottertail Lake
Little White River
Caribou Lake
Thessalon River
Third Line TS
0 250 500 m
Mississagi TS
Tunnel Lake
Mississagi River
0 250 500 m
Algoma TS
North Shore Link
Algoma TS
Lake Huron
0 50 100 km
Transformer station (TS)
Preferred route
Existing transmission line
Highway
First Nation reserve
Conservation reserve
Provincial park
Municipal boundary
Station expansion area
0 5 10 20 km
North Shore Link preferred route
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Welcome

North Shore Link

Community open house 3
May 2026

We're here to:

- Provide an update on the Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) process
- Present findings from the draft Environmental Study Report (ESR)
- Answer your questions and collect feedback on the draft ESR
- Share project milestones and overview of next steps
- Listen and continue our ongoing conversation with local community members



HydroOne.com/NSL

Land acknowledgement

Hydro One acknowledges that the projects in the northeast are situated upon the Robinson Huron Treaty Territory, signed with the Anishinaabe Nation and is now home to many diverse Indigenous people.

Hydro One understands that Indigenous Nations have been here since time immemorial and are stewards to what many refer to as Turtle Island.

We are all Treaty People and with a commitment to friendship and our pursuit of reconciliation, we are thankful to be welcomed on these lands as partners in our shared future so we can improve on our past and energize our combined path forward.



How the system works

Across the province, Hydro One builds, owns, operates and maintains the electricity transmission and distribution network that brings power to homes and businesses.

Builds, owns, operates and maintains electricity transmission and distribution facilities across Ontario.

Oversees planning to ensure electricity needs are met both now and in the future.

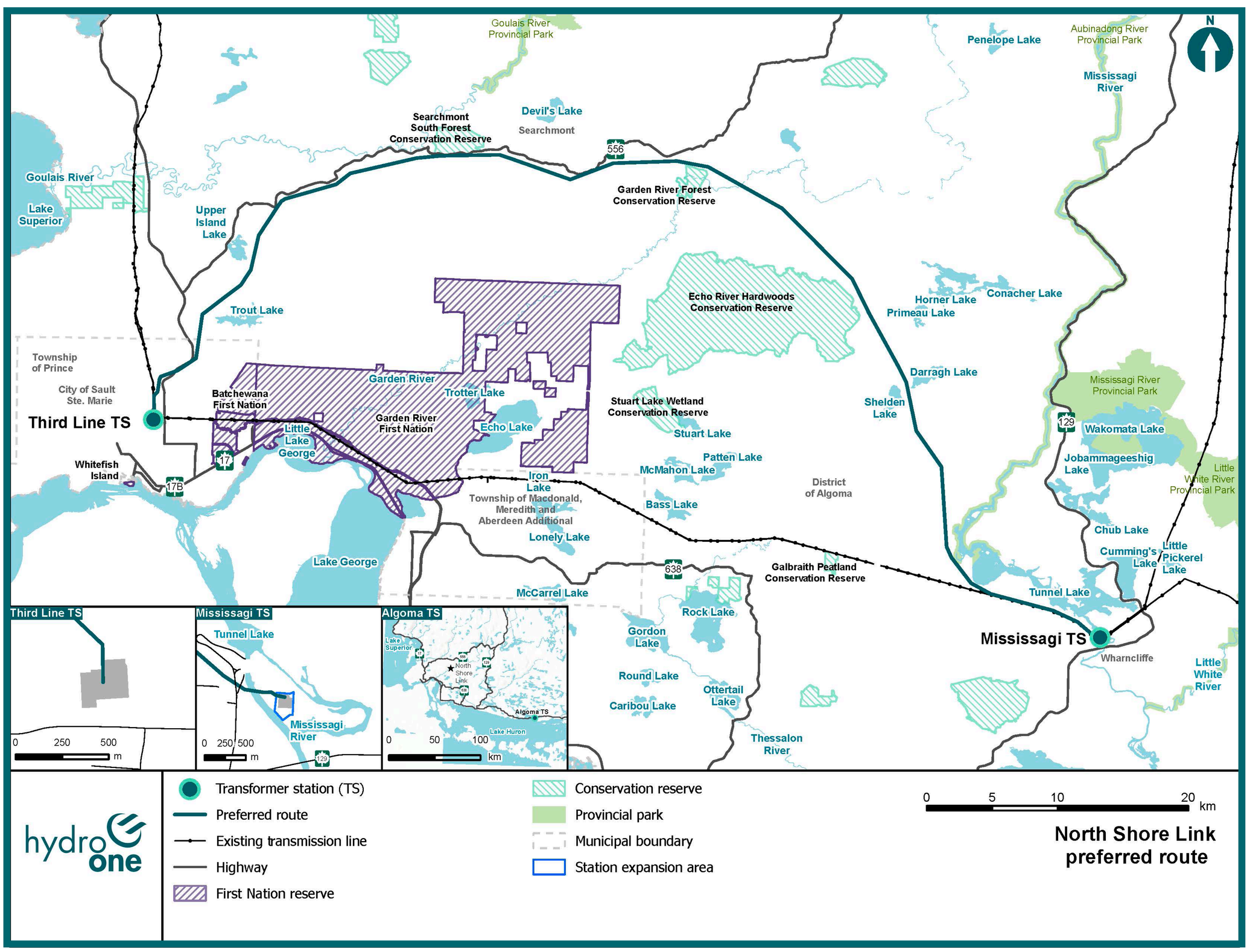
Regulates the electricity market in Ontario, including electricity rates.



Project overview

The North Shore Link project was identified as part of the Independent Electricity System Operator's (IESO) electricity plans to address future growth in the region.

- The proposed North Shore Link project involves building a new double-circuit, 230-kilovolt transmission line connecting to Mississagi Transformer Station (TS) near Wharncliffe and Third Line TS in Sault Ste. Marie.
- To accommodate the new line, both stations will require expansions.
- To support the transmission system in the northeast when this line is energized, an expansion to accommodate new station equipment will be required at Algoma TS, located east of Algoma Mills.
- The Environmental Study Report is the culminating report of Ontario's *Class Environmental Assessment for Transmission Facilities* process.



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Regional benefits

Once built, the North Shore Link is expected to:

- Improve the overall resiliency of the northern Ontario transmission network.
- Support economic growth in northeast Ontario.
- Increase opportunities for collaboration, capacity building and partnerships with local Indigenous communities.
- Build stronger partnerships through local community investment.



Example of Hydro One transmission structure

Steps of a Class Environmental Assessment (EA)

Ongoing Engagement

Steps of a Class EA:

- Identify route alternatives
- Engage and consult with the public, Indigenous communities, municipalities, interest groups and government agencies
- Collect environmental information
- Assess and evaluate route alternatives
- Select a preferred route
- Identify potential environmental effects and mitigation measures
- Prepare a draft Environmental Study Report (ESR) that will be made available for a 30-day public review and comment period

The ESR is now available for a 30-day public review and comment period until Friday, June 12. Please submit a comment form or speak to a member of the project team if you'd like to submit feedback.

- Submit the final ESR

The Draft Environmental Study Report (ESR)

The draft ESR is available for a public review and comment period from Monday, May 11 to Friday, June 12.

The draft ESR is a document that outlines all activities and findings of the North Shore Link project Class EA process. The draft ESR includes (but not limited to):

- Project need and scope
- Study area
- Consultation and engagement summary
- An environmental inventory
- Evaluation of route alternatives and how preferred route was selected
- Potential environmental effects and mitigations

In addition to the report's executive summary, to help summarize the draft ESR document, Hydro One has also prepared a draft ESR Highlights document. The full report and highlights documents are available at this meeting and can also be viewed electronically on Hydro One's website at **www.HydroOne.com/NSL**.

Hard copies are also available for sign out and/or pick up at the following locations, pending operating hours (please call ahead):

James L. McIntyre Centennial Library – 50 East St., Sault Ste. Marie, P6A 3C3

Searchmont Community Centre – 734 Hwy 532, Searchmont, P0S 1J0

Thessalon Public Library – 187 Main St, Thessalon, ON P0R 1L0

Engagement to date and next steps

Communication outreach:

- In-person consultation
- Ongoing calls and emails
- Interactive map
- Notices, newspaper and social media ads
- Meetings with Indigenous communities

Next steps:

Over the next several months, we’re onboarding our construction contractor and will complete more detailed design of the new line and continue to identify mitigation measures for construction.

Once this design is complete, we will host additional community open houses before construction begins. We’ll continue working with local community members and directly impacted landowners throughout this process.



Project milestones

July 2024 Notice of Commencement of Class EA

September 2024 Community open house 1

Spring–fall 2024 Environmental field studies and research to support the Class EA

June/July 2025 Announcement of the preferred route and community open house 2

Spring – fall 2025 Additional environmental field studies and research to support the Class EA

Spring 2026 Release of draft Environmental Study Report (ESR) for public review and community open house 3

We're here

Fall 2026 Finalize ESR to complete the Class EA

2026 Completion of detailed design and other permits and approvals

Early-2027 Anticipated Section 92 approval from the Ontario Energy Board

2027 Construction start

2029 Line in-service

**all dates subject to change*

Ongoing engagement

The project commenced in 2024 and Hydro One continues to engage with local communities. This includes hosting several community open houses, mailing thousands of project notices, ongoing calls, emails and meetings with those interested in the project.

We will continue to work with Indigenous communities in the spirit of cooperation and shared responsibility. We have formed an environmental committee, made up of Indigenous community members and Hydro One employees, to share and discuss updates to the project throughout the planning and development process.

Through the First Nation Equity Partnership Model,
Hydro One takes a community-led, collaborative approach to building transmission infrastructure with First Nation partners. This includes full collaboration on planning, design and environmental processes, including engagement through the environmental committee.

In addition to working closely with First Nation partners, we have collaborated and consulted with the Michipicoten First Nation, and the Huron-Superior Regional Métis (Métis Nation of Ontario [MNO] Region 4), Mattawa/Ottawa River Métis (MNO Region 5), Killarney Métis (currently represented through MNO Region 5) and Bar River Métis communities.



Key actions Hydro One will continue to take

- **Work with property owners to understand unique features:** We will continue to engage directly with landowners to identify and learn about the unique characteristics of their properties, including cultural features.
- **Enhance community benefits through collaboration:** We will continue to explore partnerships and community-led initiatives with Indigenous communities, municipalities and interest groups to identify opportunities for local economic development, employment and cultural recognition that align with project goals.
- **Conduct ongoing monitoring:** We will conduct monitoring throughout construction to confirm mitigation measures are functioning as expected.
- **Implement a biodiversity initiative:** We will invest in local projects or activities aimed at habitat enhancement or restoration.
- **Maintain transparency and accountability:** We will provide updates to communities and partners through public reporting, meetings and digital platforms and will gather and document feedback.



Highlights: Indigenous community values

What we found

The project study area is located within the traditional territories of Indigenous Nations. These areas hold special cultural value for local Indigenous communities. Cultural values, the land and local wildlife must be protected. Members of First Nation partner communities were invited to participate in environmental field studies and other investigations as field monitors. Following the field studies, Hydro One's First Nation partners received draft field summary reports for review and comment.

What we'll do

- Work with communities to identify and avoid areas of traditional use, including harvesting and sacred sites.
- Include Indigenous communities in archaeological investigations and environmental field surveys as field monitors.
- Respect community confidentiality and mapping of traditional land use areas.

Key takeaway

We respect Indigenous rights, culture and land use. Ongoing engagement will ensure that traditional knowledge and values are meaningfully integrated into project planning, effects assessment and mitigation.



Highlights: Socio-economic environment

Forestry resources

What we found

About one-third of the project study area is used for forestry operations and activities to support it. The construction of the project may reduce or limit access temporarily to certain portions of existing areas for identified landowners, leaseholders and license holders.

What we'll do

- Work with rights-holders and/or external partners to avoid conflict with harvest areas and forestry roads.
- Limit tree removal to what is necessary for construction, maintenance and operation.
- Restore cleared areas using revegetation methods such as planting and natural regrowth where possible.
- Ensure all construction on government-managed forest lands complies with the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act* and applicable forestry management plans.

Key takeaways

Hydro One and our contractor will work with Indigenous communities, municipalities, provincial agencies, landowners and infrastructure operators to ensure the project respects existing land use plans, protects cultural values and minimizes disturbances. Where possible, the project will use existing corridors and access routes to limit new land disturbances. The project will follow all required permitting and safety protocols.



Trapping

What we found

The project study area overlaps with 13 registered traplines. Construction activities have the potential to disrupt wildlife habitats, displace animals and alter migration routes, which could reduce the availability of species traditionally harvested through trapping. During construction, trappers may face temporary restrictions in accessing their lines.

What we'll do

- Engage with Indigenous communities, government, trapline holders, land users and local organizations about preferred hunting areas and traplines and plans to avoid them, where feasible.
- Incorporate location and seasonal information into the construction schedule to avoid and minimize potential effects to traplines as much as possible.

Key takeaways

With the appropriate mitigation measures in place, we expect to limit impacts to trapping activity in the project study area. No significant effects are projected.

Mineral resources

What we found

Once built, the new transmission line will support economic development and industry in northeast Ontario. Currently, there are no active mines within the project study area. Any limit or reduction in access to certain portions of existing areas for identified landowners, leaseholders, license holders and claims holders as a result of construction activities is expected to be temporary.

What we'll do

- Engage with mining claims holders and inactive mine owners and operators prior to construction.
- If unexpected mine features are found, we will stop work, secure the area and notify the mining claims holder and the Ministry of Energy and Mines.



Recreational resources

What we found

Outdoor recreation and adventure are key benefits to life in northeast Ontario. The project area includes the Mississagi River Provincial Park, the Searchmont South Forest Conservation Reserve and a wide variety of trails, lakes and rivers. The area is ideal for hiking, canoeing, snowmobiling, hunting, fishing and camping, and there are facilities for golf and shooting. Based on community feedback and additional field studies, we avoided impacts to Hiawatha Highlands and Wishart Park. During construction, these areas may be closed temporarily to trail users to maintain public safety. Nearby open areas may experience noise from construction activities.

What we'll do

- Engage with trail authorities and recreational groups to identify ways to mitigate site-specific environmental impacts.
- Provide advance notice of trail closures and coordinate timing to reduce disruption, especially during peak seasons.
- Provide property/business owners with advance notice of activities occurring near their property/business.
- Implement public safety measures, including signage, barriers, lighting and trail surface reinforcement where necessary.
- Engage with Indigenous communities to identify hunting areas and seasonal schedules so that, where feasible, construction timelines can be coordinated to avoid peak harvest season.

Key takeaways

We anticipate no direct or long-term impacts to snowmobile trails, hiking trails or recreational paths.

Hydro One and our contractor will provide advance notice to recreational clubs and organizations to make them aware of any restrictions and the work schedule. We will prioritize public safety and clear communication throughout the project.



Highlights: Natural environment

Water quality

What we found

The project study area contains dozens of rivers, streams, lakes and ponds. Regional water quality is sensitive in some areas. Construction and certain maintenance activities may temporarily impact the quantity or quality of surface water. Vulnerable aquifers and groundwater recharge zones that overlap with the preferred route, and which may be sensitive to changes from land use and excavation, will also be monitored as required.

What we'll do

- Maintain an Emergency Response Plan to react quickly and effectively in the event of spills or contamination, in collaboration with local experts and officials.
- Engage with conservation authorities and Indigenous communities on water protection strategies.
- Avoid sensitive water features and use existing crossings where possible.
- Use erosion sediment control measures to keep soil in place, prevent sedimentation and avoid contamination.
- Minimize vegetation removal and restore areas post-construction.
- Coordinate with relevant authorities and nearby well owners to address site-specific concerns, where required.
- Minimize underground disturbance and plan work carefully near these features.

Protecting Mississagi River Provincial Park

As it bends north around Tunnel Lake, the preferred route overlaps slightly with Mississagi River Provincial Park. We will obtain all necessary permits from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for all work done within the park. We will also restore any areas that might be disturbed by construction activities.



Wildlife and habitat features

What we found

Areas surrounding the preferred route include diverse forests, wildlife, wetlands and aquatic habitats. The area is home to several species at risk, including the Eastern Whip-poor-will, silver-haired bat and Midland painted turtle.

What we'll do

- Flag and protect wildlife habitats, including nesting and denning sites.
- Maintain animal movement corridors to support habitat connectivity.
- Safeguard sensitive habitat with protective barriers and erosion control measures.
- Limit vegetation removal and retain compatible species where possible.
- Restore disturbed areas with native vegetation and habitat features.
- Prevent invasive species spread through equipment cleaning, proper handling and disposal of plant material, and use native species in restoration.

Key takeaways

Impacts on forests, water resources, wildlife habitat and species at risk are expected to be temporary and localized. We will continue to collaborate with Indigenous communities to safeguard the long-term health of these lands,waters and species who inhabit them.



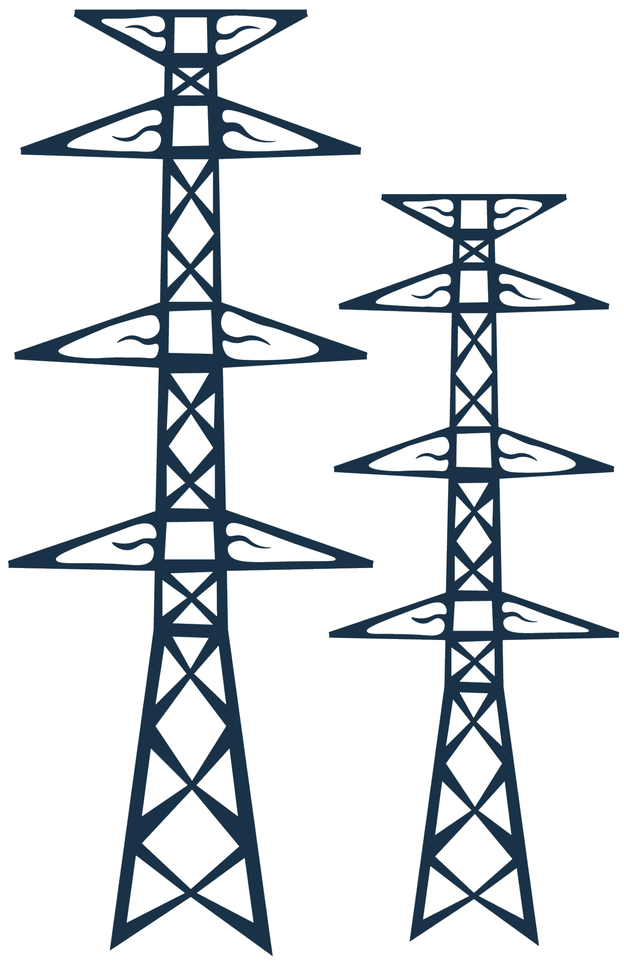
Highlights: Technical and cost

What we found

The proposed route for the North Shore Link provides easier access for construction activities, as well as operational and maintenance needs. It limits the need to parallel or cross known pipelines, reducing the chances of damage during construction and induction (potentially causing corrosion). The route also requires the fewest angle structures, which are transmission towers used where the line changes direction. This lowers the overall costs and supports completion within the planned schedule.

What we'll do

- Continue to consider effects of the transmission line on residences and businesses.
- Make informed decisions about the type, location, height and clearance of individual transmission towers.



Key takeaway

The northern route offers competitive advantages and is the ideal option for access and constructability.

Partnership in action, building together

- In 2022, Hydro One launched the First Nation Equity Partnership Model that committed to 50-50 equity ownership in all future transmission line projects with a value of more than $100 million.

- Hydro One will continue to work in partnership with nine First Nation governments, who have the opportunity to become 50 percent owners in the North Shore Link project.

- We value the rights, interests and perspectives of Indigenous governments and communities engaged on the North Shore Link and will continue to work in collaboration to build the project.

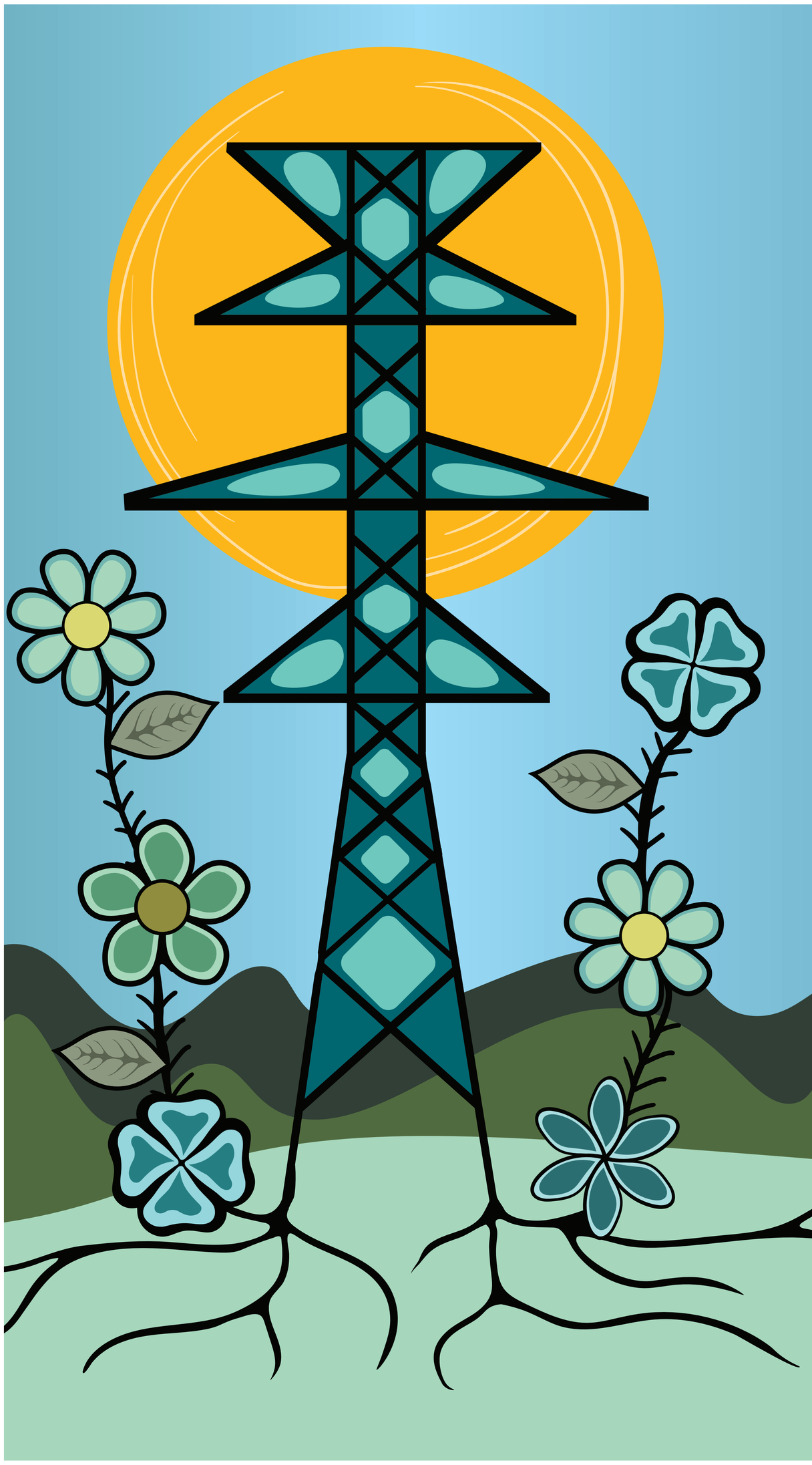


Illustration by Storm Angeconeb

HydroOne.com/NSL

Have your say

Hydro One welcomes feedback from Indigenous communities, stakeholders and the public.

The draft ESR is available for a public review and comment period from Monday, May 11 to Friday, June 12.

The full report and Highlights documents are available at this meeting and can also be viewed electronically on Hydro One's website at www.HydroOne.com/NSL.

How to provide comments

Written comments or questions on the draft ESR must be received by Hydro One **no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, June 12**, addressed to:

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1.877.345.6799 (Community Relations hotline)

Community.Relations@HydroOne.com

Your input matters

We will review and address all concerns brought to our attention before finalizing and submitting the final ESR to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). The project will then be considered acceptable and may proceed as outlined in the ESR.

Health & Safety

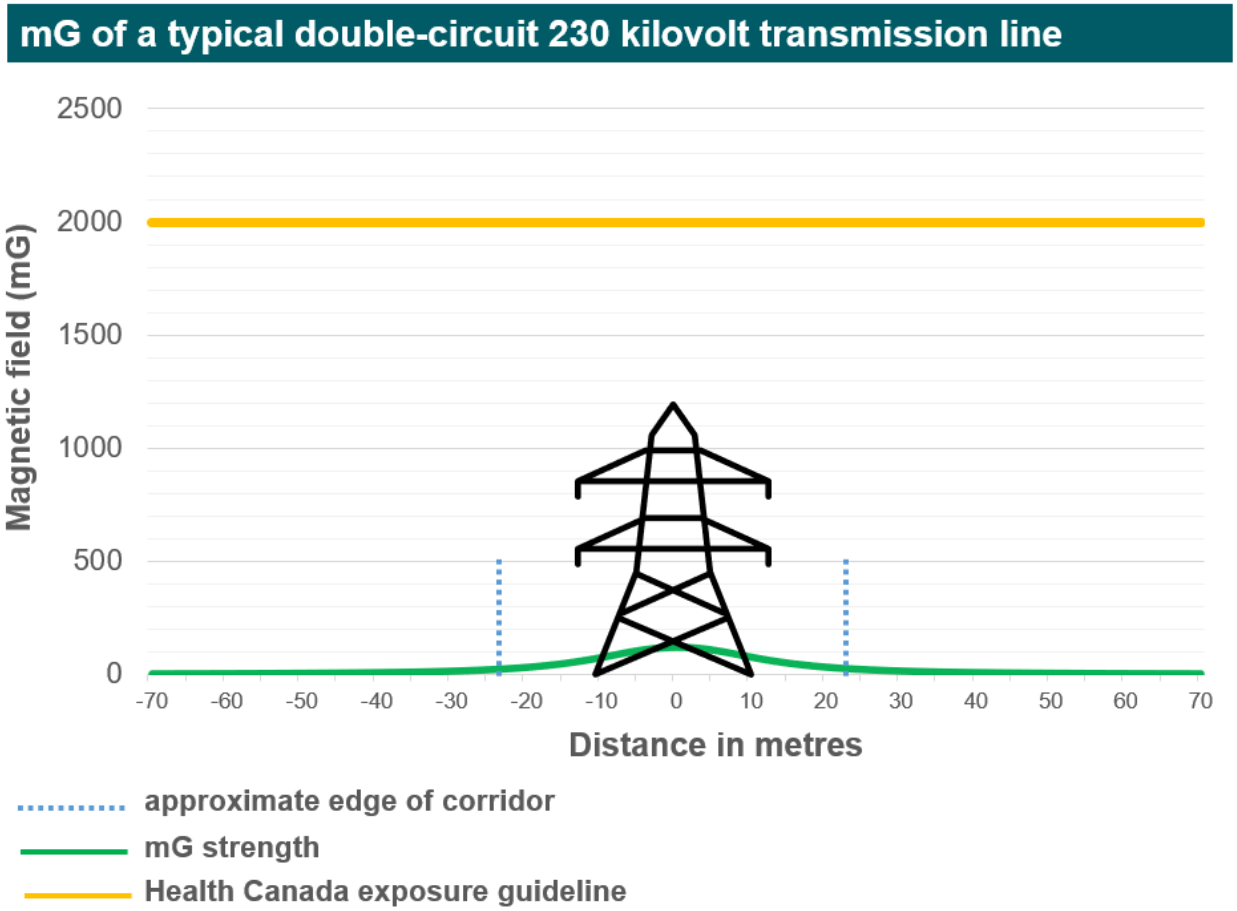
Health & safety background

- Everything is rooted in safety at Hydro One.
- Hydro One has a dedicated team that regularly monitors global studies around electric and magnetic fields (EMF) and ensures that our infrastructure is built and maintained following best practices and industry standards.
- We look to **Health Canada**, the **World Health Organization** and the **International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection** (ICNIRP), for guidance on EMF and our approach.
- Based on global studies which have and continue to be regularly monitored, these organizations indicate that members of the public do not need to take precautions to protect from fields produced by extremely low frequencies such as transmission lines.

Key facts

- Electricity produces fields which are referred to as EMFs. **EMFs are invisible forces found everywhere electricity is used** including household appliances, power cords, and wires.
- They are strongest when close to their source. As you move away from the source, the **strength of the fields fades rapidly**.
- In North America, all electricity including transmission lines, operate at 60 hertz, which is considered to be extremely low frequency.
- World Health Organization (WHO) states that “despite extensive research, to date there is **no evidence** to conclude that exposure to low level electromagnetic fields is harmful to human health.”
- Health Canada states that members of the public do not need to take precautions to protect from fields produced by electricity (extremely low frequency) because exposures are far below the limits recommended by the ICNIRP guidelines (The International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection)
- ICNIRP’s guidelines indicate that general exposure at low frequency, such as transmission lines, should **not exceed a level of 2000 milligauss** (mG).
- To help further put this into context, household appliances such as a **vacuum operates at 300 mG**, a microwave at 200 mG and a washing machine at 20 mG.

Below is an example chart that shows a double-circuit 230kV transmission line. The green line represents magnetic field modelling as it extends from under the wires and to the edge of the right-of-way. This modelling is compared against Health Canada's recommended limit of 2000 mG (yellow horizontal line). The tower represents the middle of the transmission line.



Common household sources of magnetic fields

Appliance	Median mG
Electric Ovens	9 mG at 6 inches
Coffee Makers	7 mG at 6 inches
Refrigerators	2 mG at 6 inches
Vacuum Cleaner	300 mG at 6 inches
Microwave	200 mG at 6 inches
Portable Heater	100 mG at 6 inches
Washing Machines	20 mG at 6 inches

EMF and the Natural Environment

The World Health Organization has studied EMF effects on species and the natural environment.

Their findings include:

- **little or no evidence** of significant environmental impact to aquatic ecosystems
- **no effects** to plants at the levels normally found in the environment, nor even at field levels directly under power lines up to 765 kV
- **no adverse effects** found on cattle grazing below power lines

Additional resources

- https://www.hydroone.com/power-outages-and-safety/corporate-health-and-safety/electric-and-magnetic-fields
- https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-risks-safety/radiation/everyday-things-emit-radiation/power-lines-electrical-appliances.html
- https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/radiation-electromagnetic-fields
- https://www.jeic-emf.jp/assets/files/Fact%20Sheets/facrt_sheet_Effects%20of%20EMF%20on%20the%20environment.pdf
- https://www.icnirp.org/cms/upload/publications/ICNIRPLFgdl.pdf

We are committed to understanding and addressing any health concerns individuals may have. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact Hydro One's Community Relation's team:

1-877-345-6799
Community.Relations@HydroOne.com



North Shore Link

Draft Environmental Study Report highlights
May 2026

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Land acknowledgement

Hydro One acknowledges that the North Shore Link project is situated upon the traditional territory of Indigenous Nations. We recognize that these Nations have been stewards of this land since time immemorial and that their sovereignty over these territories was never ceded. We also acknowledge that this land is part of the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory. We are thankful to be welcomed on these lands as partners in our shared future among the diverse Indigenous people who call these lands home today.

Cover and land acknowledgement illustrations courtesy of Storm Angeconeb.



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Introduction

Hydro One is pleased to share this summary of the key findings and next steps presented in the draft Environmental Study Report (ESR) for the North Shore Link project. The draft ESR details the potential environmental effects and planned mitigation measures of this project and is the culminating report of Ontario's *Class Environmental Assessment for Transmission Facilities* process. It was informed by technical experts and through consultation with Indigenous communities, local and regional community members, and elected officials.

The draft ESR is available for a 30-day public comment period from **Monday, May 11 to Friday, June 12, 2026.** Comments received during this period and Hydro One's responses will be documented in the final ESR. Details on how to share your feedback can be found at the end of this highlights document.

Have your say

We welcome comments on the draft ESR during the 30-day review period. View the full draft report and provide your input today. **HydroOne.com/NSL**



Investing in northeast Ontario

Long-term electricity demand in northeast Ontario is increasing. The North Shore Link project will reinforce the transmission system in northeast Ontario and, once built, strengthen reliability and support economic growth. The proposed North Shore Link is expected to deliver lasting benefits to Indigenous and local communities and industries in the region.

Economic growth

The transmission line is expected to support economic growth and community expansion by enabling new investment and regional infrastructure.

Reliable and resilient supply

Once built, this project will improve reliability for homes, businesses and industry in northeast Ontario.

Strengthening the grid

The line will help strengthen and improve efficiency across the province's electricity grid and supply power where it is needed.

First Nation partnerships

Partnerships with First Nations will allow us to better understand traditional knowledge, areas of significance and cultural values and incorporate those values into project planning, impact assessment and mitigation.

Fast facts

105 kilometres
The approximate length of the proposed route.

End-to-end
The line will extend from Wharncliffe to Sault Ste. Marie.

230 kilovolt
The new transmission line will support growing electricity demand in the region.



About the North Shore Link project

The North Shore Link project is a proposed new transmission line that, once built, will support growing electricity needs in northern Ontario and strengthen the connection between the northeast and northwest to improve overall resiliency. The double-circuit, 230-kV line will be approximately 105 km long and extend from Mississagi Transformer Station (TS) near Wharncliffe in Algoma to Third Line TS in Sault Ste. Marie.

Connecting the line will require upgrades and expansions at both transformer stations, as well as at Algoma TS, located east of Algoma Mills in the Township of the North Shore. This is needed to accommodate additional station equipment that will support the overall operation of the transmission system.

Planned timeline

Anticipated completion of EA:
Fall 2026

Construction begins:
2027

Planned line in-service:
2029

Selecting the preferred route

Through collaboration with Indigenous communities and the public, we identified and evaluated route segments to connect the Mississagi TS and Third Line TS. We evaluated route segments using four criteria:

Indigenous community values

Socio-economic environment

Natural environment

Technical and cost considerations

We combined the top-scoring segments to develop three possible routes: the northern route, the central route and the southern route. Based on overall scoring and feedback from First Nation and Indigenous communities and the public, the northern route emerged as the preferred route.

Specifically, it:

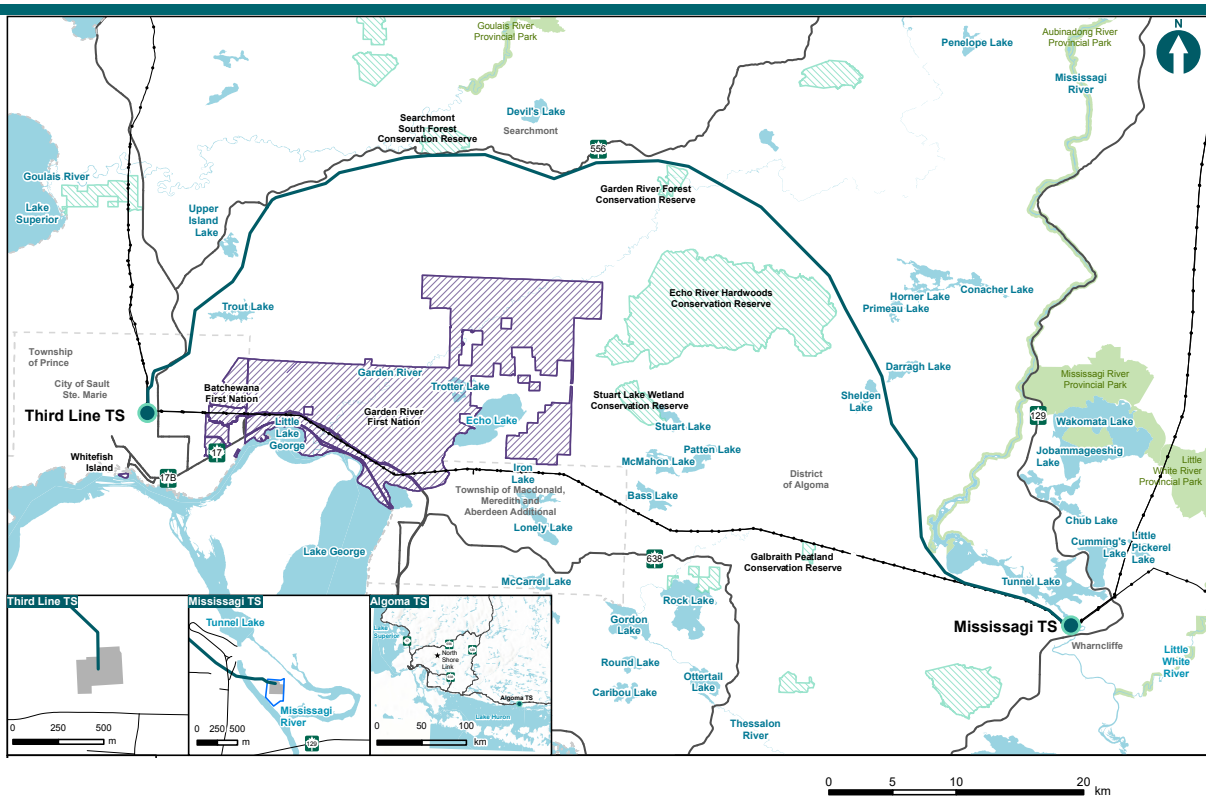
- Provides opportunities for improved access during construction, operation and maintenance.
- Minimizes the need to parallel or cross pipelines.
- Avoids known areas of Indigenous cultural significance.
- Avoids reserve lands.
- Avoids Hiawatha Highlands and conservation areas including:
  - Garden River Forest Conservation Reserve
  - Echo River Hardwoods Conservation Reserve
  - Stuart Lake Wetland Conservation Reserve

hydro one

North Shore Link preferred route

Map Legend

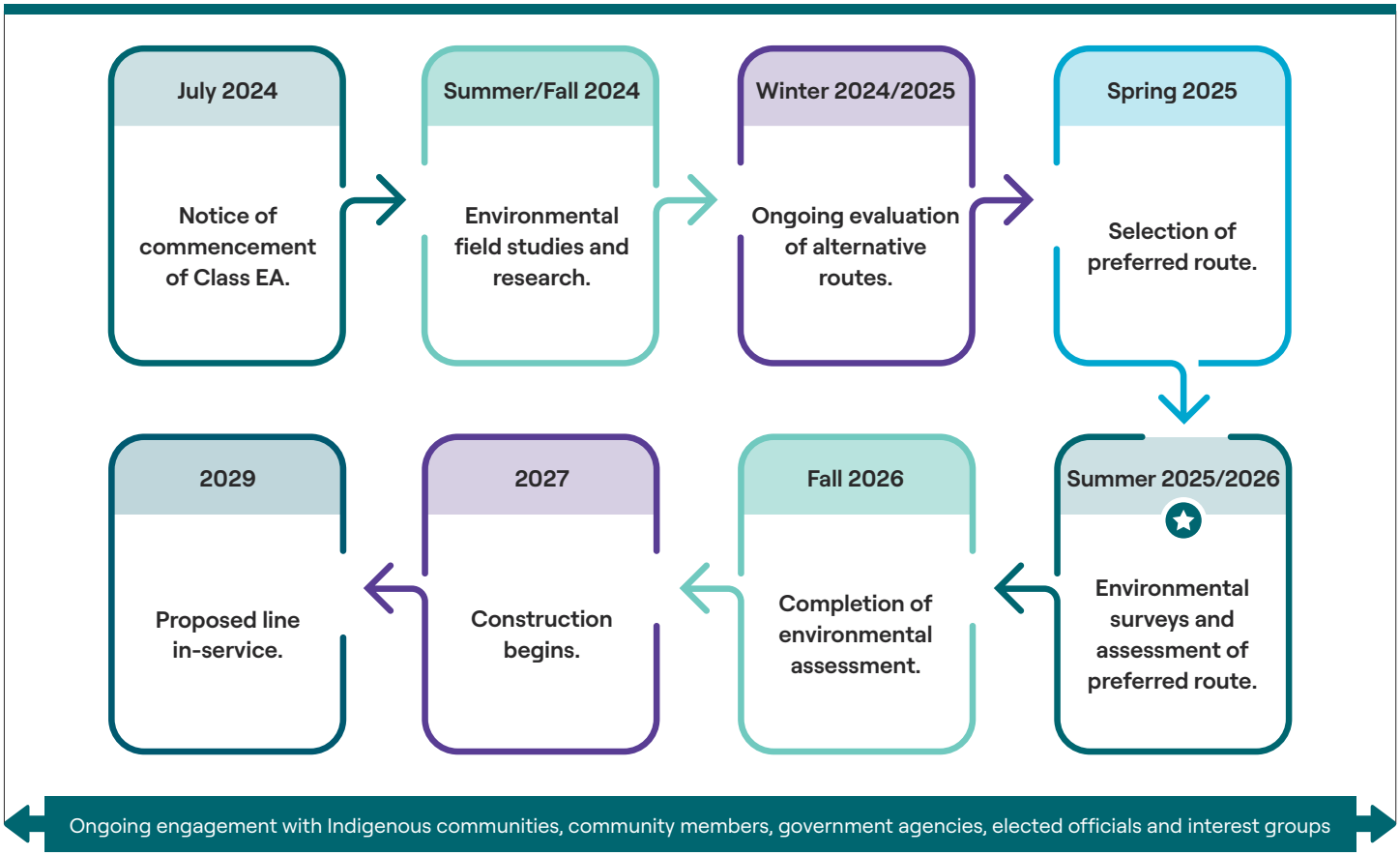
- Transformer station (TS)
- Preferred route
- Existing transmission line
- Highway
- First nation reserve
- Conservation reserve
- Provincial park
- Municipal boundary
- Station expansion area



About the Class Environmental Assessment

A Class EA is required under the Environmental Assessment Act for critical infrastructure projects. It identifies the potential impacts of the project through field studies and engagement with Indigenous communities, experts, local organizations and environmental partners.

HOW THE PROCESS WORKS



The draft ESR describes:

- The existing conditions in the area surrounding the project.
- The engagements we have undertaken with Indigenous communities, the public, local communities and government.
- The process to evaluate route options and select the preferred one.
- The potential effects identified and assessed.
- The actions we will take to avoid and minimize potential negative project effects.



Working in partnership with Indigenous communities

Hydro One will continue to meet Ontario's long-term electricity demands in partnership with First Nations as we develop the North Shore Link project. Hydro One closely collaborates with nine First Nation partners, including Garden River First Nation, as well as the eight communities represented by the Waasmoowin Opportunities and Consultation Council: Batchewana First Nation, Thessalon First Nation, Mississauga First Nation, Serpent River First Nation, Sagamok Anishnawbek, Whitefish River First Nation, Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and Wahnapitae First Nation.

We understand there will be impacts to Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and we will work with communities to mitigate impacts where possible. Our continued work with the nine First Nation communities will allow us to better understand traditional knowledge, areas of cultural significance and cultural values.

Partnership with Indigenous communities includes feedback and direct engagement through in-person Indigenous community open house sessions. These sessions are especially important for building trust, sharing clear information, and providing community members with an opportunity to ask questions and be heard.

The project also follows Hydro One's industry-leading First Nation Equity Partnership Model and will offer proximate First Nations 50 per cent of equity on the transmission line component of the line.

What we've heard

- Respect Indigenous land use and cultural values.
- Maintain clear communication and ongoing engagement.
- Minimize overlap with known archaeological resources.
- Safeguard water resources and the natural environment.
- Protect species at risk and sensitive areas.

Ongoing engagement

The project commenced in 2024 and Hydro One continues to engage with local communities. This includes hosting several community open houses, mailing thousands of project notices, ongoing calls, emails and meetings with those interested in the project.

We will continue to work with Indigenous communities in the spirit of cooperation and shared responsibility. We have formed an environmental committee, made up of Indigenous community members and Hydro One employees, to share and discuss updates to the project throughout the planning and development process.

Through the First Nation Equity Partnership Model, Hydro One takes a community-led, collaborative approach to building transmission infrastructure with First Nation partners. This includes full collaboration on planning, design and environmental processes, including engagement through the environmental committee.

In addition to working closely with First Nation partners, we have collaborated and consulted with the Michipicoten First Nation, and the Huron-Superior Regional Métis (Métis Nation of Ontario [MNO] Region 4), Mattawa/Ottawa River Métis (MNO Region 5), Killarney Métis (currently represented through MNO Region 5) and Bar River Métis communities.



Key actions Hydro One will continue to take

- **Work with property owners to understand unique features:** We will continue to engage directly with landowners to identify and learn about the unique characteristics of their properties, including cultural features.
- **Enhance community benefits through collaboration:** We will continue to explore partnerships and community-led initiatives with Indigenous communities, municipalities and interest groups to identify opportunities for local economic development, employment and cultural recognition that align with project goals.
- **Conduct ongoing monitoring:** We will conduct monitoring throughout construction to confirm mitigation measures are functioning as expected.
- **Implement a biodiversity initiative:** We will invest in local projects or activities aimed at habitat enhancement or restoration.
- **Maintain transparency and accountability:** We will provide updates to communities and partners through public reporting, meetings and digital platforms and will gather and document feedback.



Highlights: Indigenous community values

What we found

The project study area lies within the traditional territories of Indigenous Nations. Protecting cultural values, the land and wildlife remains a key priority.

Hydro One works closely with Indigenous communities to incorporate traditional knowledge, land use values and areas of cultural importance into project planning, with the goal of avoiding and protecting sensitive sites wherever possible.

Community members have participated in environmental field studies as field monitors, providing both meaningful involvement and training opportunities. Field work has also been planned with respect for seasonal ceremonies and cultural practices.

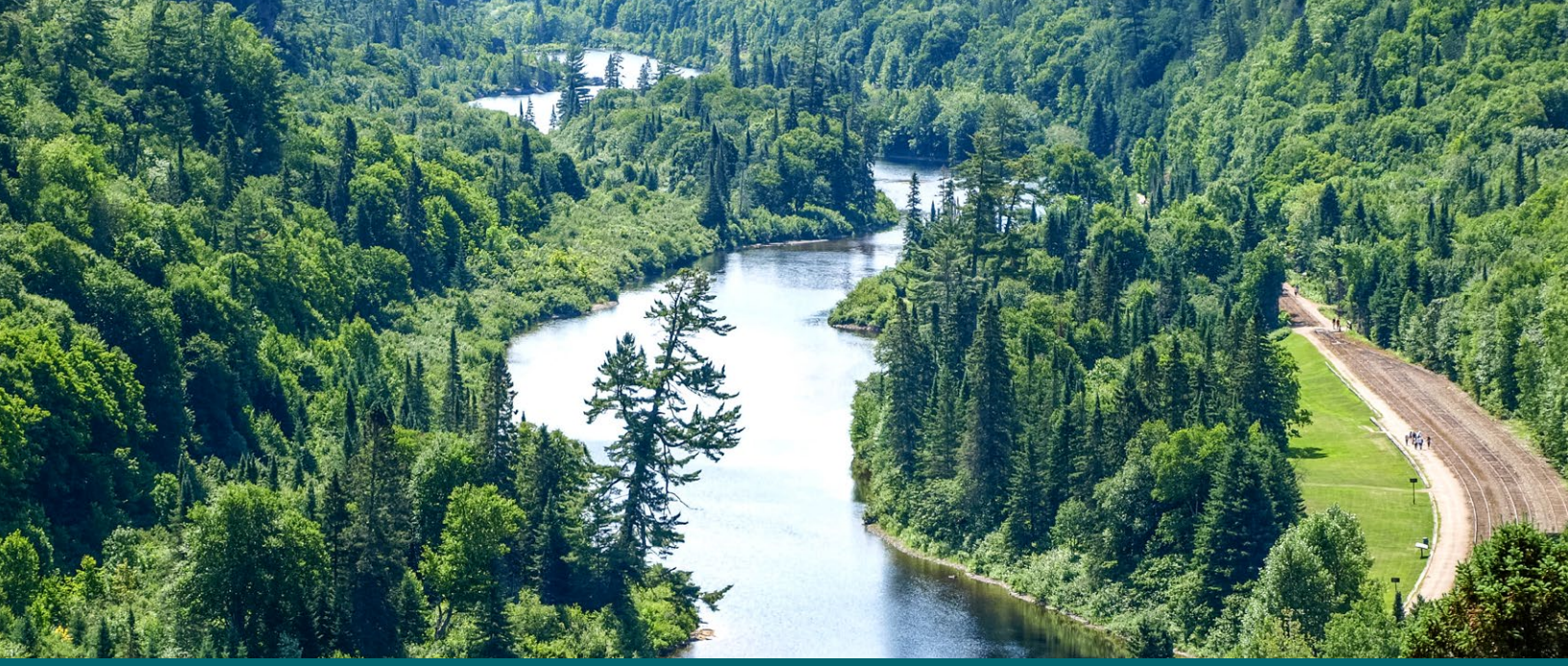
Following the studies, draft field summary reports were shared with Indigenous communities for review and input, ensuring their knowledge is considered in project decisions.

What we'll do

- Work with communities to identify and avoid areas of traditional use, including harvesting and sacred sites.
- Include Indigenous communities in archaeological investigations and environmental field surveys as field monitors.
- Respect community confidentiality and mapping of traditional land use areas.

Key takeaway

We respect Indigenous rights, culture and land use. Ongoing engagement will ensure that traditional knowledge and values are meaningfully integrated into project planning, effects assessment and mitigation.



Highlights: Socio-economic environment

Forestry resources

What we found

About one-third of the project study area is used for forestry operations and activities to support it. The construction of the project may reduce or limit access temporarily to certain portions of existing areas for identified landowners, leaseholders and license holders.

What we'll do

- Work with rights-holders and/or external partners to avoid conflict with harvest areas and forestry roads.
- Limit tree removal to what is necessary for construction, maintenance and operation.
- Restore cleared areas using revegetation methods such as planting and natural regrowth where possible.
- Ensure all construction on government-managed forest lands complies with the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act* and applicable forestry management plans.

Key takeaways

Hydro One and our contractor will work with Indigenous communities, municipalities, provincial agencies, landowners and infrastructure operators to ensure the project respects existing land use plans, protects cultural values and minimizes disturbances. Where possible, the project will use existing corridors and access routes to limit new land disturbances. The project will follow all required permitting and safety protocols.



Trapping

What we found

The project study area overlaps with 13 registered traplines. Construction activities have the potential to disrupt wildlife habitats, displace animals and alter migration routes, which could reduce the availability of species traditionally harvested through trapping. During construction, trappers may face temporary restrictions in accessing their lines.

What we'll do

- Engage with Indigenous communities, government, trapline holders, land users and local organizations about preferred hunting areas and traplines and plans to avoid them, where feasible.
- Incorporate location and seasonal information into the construction schedule to avoid and minimize potential effects to traplines as much as possible.

Key takeaways

With the appropriate mitigation measures in place, we expect to limit impacts to trapping activity in the project study area. No significant effects are projected.

Mineral resources

What we found

Once built, the new transmission line will support economic development and industry in northeast Ontario. Currently, there are no active mines within the project study area. Any limit or reduction in access to certain portions of existing areas for identified landowners, leaseholders, license holders and claims holders as a result of construction activities is expected to be temporary.

What we'll do

- Engage with mining claims holders and inactive mine owners and operators prior to construction.
- If unexpected mine features are found, we will stop work, secure the area and notify the mining claims holder and the Ministry of Energy and Mines.



Recreational resources

What we found

Outdoor recreation and adventure are key benefits to life in northeast Ontario. The project area includes the Mississagi River Provincial Park, the Searchmont South Forest Conservation Reserve and a wide variety of trails, lakes and rivers. The area is ideal for hiking, canoeing, snowmobiling, hunting, fishing and camping, and there are facilities for golf and shooting. Based on community feedback and additional field studies, we avoided impacts to Hiawatha Highlands and Wishart Park. During construction, these areas may be closed temporarily to trail users to maintain public safety. Nearby open areas may experience noise from construction activities.

What we'll do

- Engage with trail authorities and recreational groups to identify ways to mitigate site-specific environmental impacts.
- Provide advance notice of trail closures and coordinate timing to reduce disruption, especially during peak seasons.
- Provide property/business owners with advance notice of activities occurring near their property/business.
- Implement public safety measures, including signage, barriers, lighting and trail surface reinforcement where necessary.
- Engage with Indigenous communities to identify hunting areas and seasonal schedules so that, where feasible, construction timelines can be coordinated to avoid peak harvest season.

Key takeaways

We anticipate no direct or long-term impacts to snowmobile trails, hiking trails or recreational paths. Hydro One and our contractor will provide advance notice to recreational clubs and organizations to make them aware of any restrictions and the work schedule. We will prioritize public safety and clear communication throughout the project.



Highlights: Natural environment

Water quality

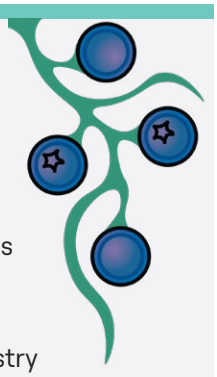
What we found

The project study area contains dozens of rivers, streams, lakes and ponds. Regional water quality is sensitive in some areas. Construction and certain maintenance activities may temporarily impact the quantity or quality of surface water. Vulnerable aquifers and groundwater recharge zones that overlap with the preferred route, and which may be sensitive to changes from land use and excavation, will also be monitored as required.

What we'll do

- Maintain an Emergency Response Plan to react quickly and effectively in the event of spills or contamination, in collaboration with local experts and officials.
- Engage with conservation authorities and Indigenous communities on water protection strategies.
- Avoid sensitive water features and use existing crossings where possible.
- Use erosion sediment control measures to keep soil in place, prevent sedimentation and avoid contamination.
- Minimize vegetation removal and restore areas post-construction.
- Coordinate with relevant authorities and nearby well owners to address site-specific concerns, where required.
- Minimize underground disturbance and plan work carefully near these features.

Protecting Mississagi River Provincial Park



As it bends north around Tunnel Lake, the preferred route overlaps slightly with Mississagi River Provincial Park. We will obtain all necessary permits from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for all work done within the park. We will also restore any areas that might be disturbed by construction activities.



Wildlife and habitat features

What we found

Areas surrounding the preferred route include diverse forests, wildlife, wetlands and aquatic habitats. The area is home to several species at risk, including the Eastern Whip-poor-will, silver-haired bat and Midland painted turtle.

What we'll do

- Flag and protect wildlife habitats, including nesting and denning sites.
- Maintain animal movement corridors to support habitat connectivity.
- Safeguard sensitive habitat with protective barriers and erosion control measures.
- Limit vegetation removal and retain compatible species where possible.
- Restore disturbed areas with native vegetation and habitat features.
- Prevent invasive species spread through equipment cleaning, proper handling and disposal of plant material, and use native species in restoration.

Key takeaways

Impacts on forests, water resources, wildlife habitat and species at risk are expected to be temporary and localized. We will continue to collaborate with Indigenous communities to safeguard the long-term health of these lands, waters and species who inhabit them.



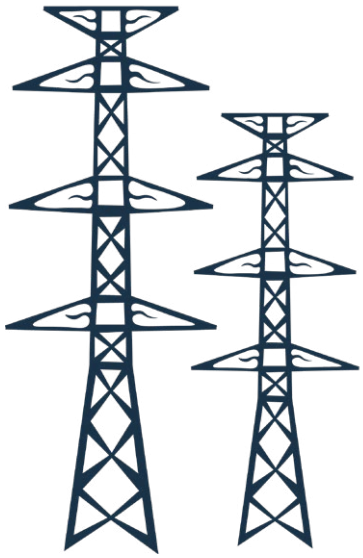
Highlights: Technical and cost

What we found

The proposed route for the North Shore Link provides easier access for construction activities, as well as operational and maintenance needs. It limits the need to parallel or cross known pipelines, reducing the chances of damage during construction and induction (potentially causing corrosion). The route also requires the fewest angle structures, which are transmission towers used where the line changes direction. This lowers the overall costs and supports completion within the planned schedule.

What we'll do

- Continue to consider effects of the transmission line on residences and businesses.
- Make informed decisions about the type, location, height and clearance of individual transmission towers.



Key takeaway

The northern route offers competitive advantages and is the ideal option for access and constructability.

Share your feedback

Hydro One encourages and welcomes feedback from Indigenous communities, residents, interested parties and the public.



We want to know

- Do you have additional suggestions for avoiding or minimizing environmental impacts that you would like us to consider?
- Do you have questions about the overall assessment or specific parts of the assessment?
- Do you have any other comments about the draft ESR that you would like us to consider?

How to provide comments

The draft ESR is available for a 30-day period from **Monday, May 11 to Friday, June 12, 2026.** The draft ESR will be available electronically on Hydro One's dedicated project website: **HydroOne.com/NSL**

Written comments regarding the draft ESR must be submitted to Hydro One no later than **4:30 p.m. EDT on Friday, June 12, 2026.** They must be addressed to:

Andrew Roberts
Manager, Environmental Services
483 Bay St., 14th Floor
Toronto, ON
M5G 2P5

Comments can also be submitted to **1-877-345-6799** or via email: **Community.Relations@HydroOne.com**

In the event of disruption to mail delivery, please also provide comments by phone or email.

For the most up-to-date project information and project updates, visit our project website: **HydroOne.com/NSL**

Where to find the draft ESR

Online

HydroOne.com/NSL

In person

Hard copies are available at:

James L. McIntyre Centennial Library
50 East St.
Sault Ste. Marie, ON
705-759-5230

Searchmont Community Centre
734 Highway 532
Searchmont, ON
705-781-3160

Thessalon Public Library
187 Main St.
Thessalon, ON
705-842-2306

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Connecting power and possibility™

We welcome your feedback.
View the full draft ESR and provide your input today. **HydroOne.com/NSL**

If you have any questions or need further information about this project, contact **Community.Relations@HydroOne.com** or **1-877-345-6799**