

August 9, 2023

Greetings,

Today, I am writing to provide you with an update on recent decisions made by the province to modernize Ontario's environmental assessment (EA) program.

Moving to a Project List under the *Environmental Assessment Act*

A key element of the EA modernization initiative is identifying projects that should be subject to EA requirements in a regulation. The move to a project list approach is a shift from the current framework where environmental assessment requirements are based mainly on who is undertaking the project.

In November 2021, the ministry began consultation on a proposal for the projects that would require a comprehensive EA and related actions, and the ministry is now proceeding with certain policy elements from the 2021 proposal. Specifically, the ministry has made amendments to three regulations and updated two related guides, as further described below. The changes will simplify processes and provide new exemptions. The remaining elements of comprehensive EA projects regulation proposal and related actions are under consideration.

In March 2023, the ministry updated the Moving to a Project List Environmental Registry posting with a revised proposal. The revisions to the proposal do not relate to the policy elements discussed within this update.

Amendments to Certain Regulations under the *Environmental Assessment Act*

Amendments to three regulations under the *Environmental Assessment Act* have been approved, and related actions have been taken, implementing certain policy elements of the proposal [Moving to a project list approach under the Environmental Assessment Act](#):

- The Waste Management Projects Regulation (Ontario Regulation 101/07) was amended to change the environmental assessment requirements for certain landfill expansion projects and to make the minister the decision-maker for a request to elevate a waste management project following the streamlined environmental assessment process to an individual environmental assessment

- The Transit Projects and Metrolinx Undertakings (Ontario Regulation 231/08) was amended to authorize the minister to amend or revoke conditions previously imposed in a notice given by the minister to allow the proponent to proceed with a transit project.
- The General Regulation (Ontario Regulation 334) was amended to expand the current exemption for Crown undertakings (activities) related to land claim settlements to include those Crown undertakings related to any settlement of the Algonquins of Ontario Land Claim.
 - The Algonquin Land Claim Declaration Order was also amended to align with the exemption in the regulation.

Updated Guide to Environmental Assessment Requirements for Waste Management Projects

The Guide to Environmental Assessment Requirements for Waste Management Projects ([Waste Guide](#)) has been updated to reflect amendments to the environmental assessment requirements set out in Ontario Regulation 101/07, and to make other administrative updates. The changes include:

- Updating the EA requirements for certain landfill expansion projects.
- Making the minister the decision-maker in relation to elevation requests.
- Updating the regulatory terminology and description of EA requirements in light of recent amendments to the Regulation related to thermal treatment, to include advanced recycling and the resulting recovery of materials, and identifying information to be included when undertaking the Environmental Screening Process for an advanced recycling (thermal treatment) project.
- Administrative updates recognizing the Guide was last updated in 2007.

Updated Guide to Environmental Assessment Requirements for Electricity Projects

The Guide to Environmental Assessment Requirements for Electricity Projects ([Electricity Guide](#)) has been updated to change the decision-making authority for elevation requests for electricity projects and make other administrative updates to reflect changes since the guide was last updated. The changes include:

- Adding information to Section A.6.2.3 (Consultation with Indigenous Communities) of the guide to align with the Waste Guide, including in relation to the Crown's duty to consult, contacting the ministry for a list of Indigenous communities for consultation, and documenting the consultation process.
- Updating the ministry's name to "Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks".
- Updating the thresholds for transmission line projects that determine the type of environmental assessment process required.

The regulations were filed and came into force on August 8, 2023 and the updated guides are in effect (posted to the Environmental Registry website on August 8, 2023).

Further details of the amendments to the three regulations and related actions and copies of the updated guides are available on the Environmental Registry of Ontario ([ERO 019-4219](#)). Details about the regulatory amendments made with respect to advanced recycling are available here ([ERO 019-4867](#)). More information on our other efforts to modernize the EA program can also be found at: [Modernizing Ontario's environmental assessment program](#).

Please do not hesitate to contact my team at EAModernization.mecp@ontario.ca if you have any comments or questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Cross". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Annamaria Cross
Director, Environmental Assessment Modernization
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks