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ATTAWAPISKAT FIRST NATION

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September 11, 2025

SENT BY EMAIL

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Dear Ms. Cox, Ms. Krezel, Ms. Moszynski, and Ms. McLeod,

Re. Comments from Attawapiskat First Nation on the Marten Falls Community Access Road (MFFN CAR) proponent's draft Impact Statement (draft IS), sections on Water, Fish and Fish Habitat, and Peatlands.

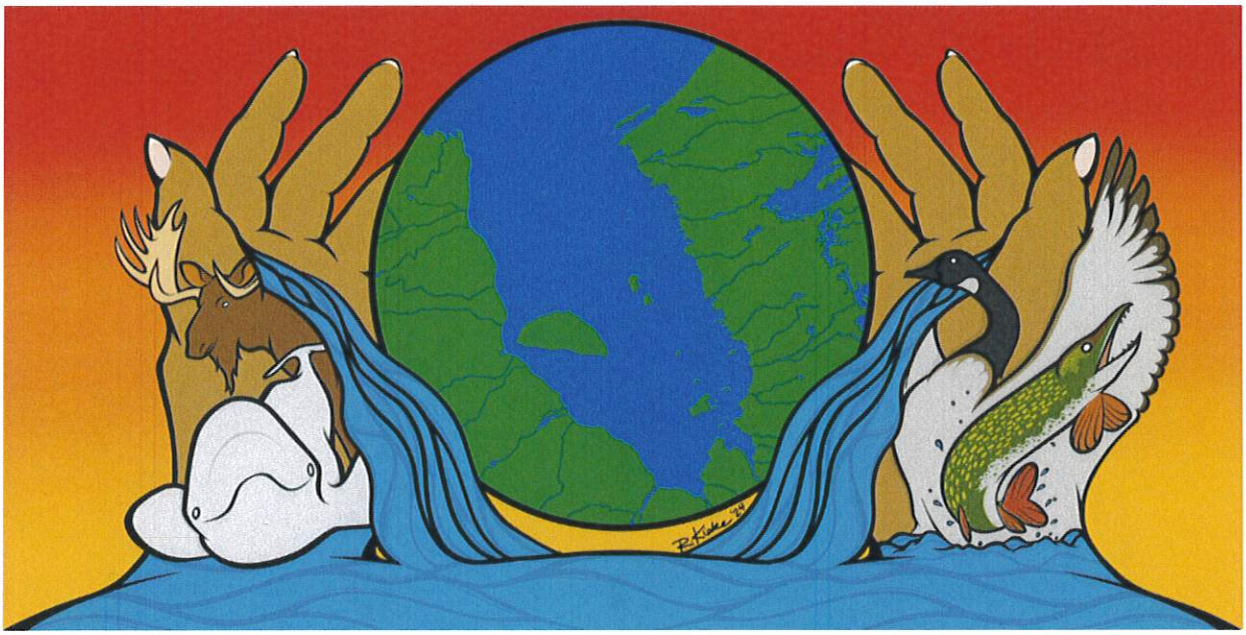
The purpose of this letter is to share Attawapiskat First Nation's deep concerns about the impacts of the proposed MFFN CAR to the aquatic environment.

Our history with you, our Treaty partner, has been brief and highly disruptive. Less than 150 years ago our Kattawapiskak people began to experience periods of great suffering brought on by the demands of the fur trade, a boom-and-bust industry that depleted our homeland of furs and game. Periods of starvation and disease killed many of our people even into the 1940s. Then as now, Treaty promises that the Crown would provide assistance in respect of the necessities of life that had already been diminished by settler encroachment, were broken.

More recently, we experienced the DeBeers mine coming and going in our territory. The mine promised to bring great prosperity to our people, but in the end did nothing but extract wealth for the benefit of people in the south. We are left with a large hole and a legacy of environmental destruction and contamination. Meanwhile, our community still suffers from severe deficits in infrastructure, health care, housing, and education. We do not have access to clean tap water. Our leadership is occupied on a

daily basis with managing crises related to overcrowding, child welfare, and mental health and addictions.

Yet we have survived as a people, protecting our language and the way of life that our ancestors passed on to us. Our most deeply held cultural values and spiritual beliefs require that we ask ourselves how we can be good ancestors to future generations. Protecting the life of the water is at the heart of this responsibility. Water (*nibiy*) signifies our total relationship with the land as Kattawapiskak people. It is the sacred element of life that circulates throughout all living beings. Women are considered the keepers of the water.



Art by Robin Kioke, member of Attawapiskat First Nation.[1]

Our children and great-grandchildren, 50 to 100 years from now, will experience the loss of healthy water, wetlands, and fish populations, all in one fell swoop. They will not have the luxury of experiencing only the MFFN CAR and the handful of other projects the proponent chose to include in their cumulative effects analysis in 2025. No, the faces yet to come will experience all of the mining exploration, mines, and other industries that have set up shop in our territory, and all of the roads, hydro dams, transmission lines, small modular nuclear reactors, and infrastructure that have been built to support the extraction of wealth from our territory.

To truly assess the impact of the proposed industrial access road to the Ring of Fire to our inherent and Treaty rights, the Crown must understand that our inter-generational outlook and our thresholds for damage to fish, water, and wetlands differ greatly from yours. We also have a strong commitment to evidence-based decision-making. Unfortunately, the proponent has presented us with a draft IS that

[1] Attawapiskat First Nation thanks Robin Kioke for permission to use this piece. This art contribution was facilitated by Mushkegowuk Council's program Oshichikesiwuk Nanipek. https://nanipek.ca/

contains major gaps and inaccuracies, and gives no attention to the interactive effect of road development and climate change.

The below is a summary of our concerns.

1. The proponent's analysis of impacts to fish and fish habitat considers only direct impacts at water crossings. This approach does not match the reality of fish movement and habitat use. It does not allow us to assess impacts to rights and must be corrected.

It is highly simplistic and not scientifically defensible to consider the cumulative impact of a project only from the perspective of the points where it crosses water bodies, and not the potential of the proposed MFFN CAR, along with clearly foreseeable outcomes of the road, to transmit impacts upstream and downstream.

In the cumulative effects analysis for fish and fish habitat the proponent discusses the impacts of four projects (MFFN CAR and three other linear infrastructure projects) in terms of the direct impacts at waterbody crossings and increased angling pressure at waterbody crossings. The only indirect impacts considered in the cumulative effects analysis are "Changes to fish habitat quantity and quality due to changes in hydrology or groundwater that may alter drainage patterns and increase or decrease drainage flows and surface water levels" and "Changes to fish survival and reproduction from improved public access to recreational angling areas," but even these impacts are dismissed without any analysis of effects to the entire river system, and without an explanation of the "negligible," "local," and "not significant" labels the proponent assigns in their chart of residual impacts (Table 10-4, p. 834-835).

The sources of impacts considered by the proponent include such things as clearing of riparian vegetation, placement of structures below the high water mark, changes to water quality due to release of sediment, death of fish from blasting or spills during construction, and other direct impacts at proposed bridges and culverts. The proponent wants us to believe that mitigation measures involving standard construction practices for working in fish habitat, provincial regulations, and federal fisheries permitting requirements will be sufficient to deal with the cumulative impacts of the MFFN CAR and the handful of other linear infrastructure projects they considered.

Focusing on waterbody crossings only is an unacceptable approach to impact assessment. It does not reflect ecological reality, nor our Omushkegowuk way of thinking about water and the life cycles of fish. In fact, fish biologists have pointed out that drawing scientific conclusions based on observations made on short sections of a river is like looking at a landscape painting through small holes in a curtain draped over it. As they state: "a continuous view of the river is needed to understand how processes interacting among scales set the context for stream fishes and their habitat." [2]

We require an impact assessment that reflects the ecological processes occurring in rivers at multiple spatial scales. If the impact assessment does not match what our people know about the land, it will not be meaningful to us. Our people know that many fish species need entire river systems to develop, disperse, overwinter, and reproduce. Our people also know that there are unique habitat features that have population-level impacts if they are disturbed in rivers. The proponent must provide much more detail on the scales at which a particular population of fish in a particular river carries out its life stages,

[2] Fausch, Kurt D., et al. 2002. "Landscapes to Riverscapes: Bridging the Gap between Research and Conservation of Stream Fishes." BioScience 52(6): 483-498. P. 483.

and the spatial arrangement and connectivity of habitats in the relevant rivers and streams. We expect this information to be applied in a properly scoped cumulative effects analysis (not limited to just a few linear infrastructure projects), as described below.

2. **The cumulative effects analyses for water, fish, and fish habitat presented by the proponent do not include clearly foreseeable hydroelectric developments and mines. This goes against the Impact Assessment Agency's own guidance on cumulative effects, does not respond to our people's enormous concern for the impact of the MFFN CAR on water, and is completely unacceptable.**

The cumulative effects analysis for fish and fish habitat considers only three other linear infrastructure projects (Northern Road Link, the upgraded forestry access road at the start of the proposed MFFN CAR, and the Rapid Lynx Broadband project). This extremely narrow scope does not respect our people's concern for what is at stake if the Crown governments, Ontario and Canada, were to approve this road.

The Impact Assessment Agency (IAAC) *Policy Framework for Assessing Cumulative Effects under the Impact Assessment Act* ("Cumulative Effects Policy Framework") states that "The approach and level of effort applied to assessing cumulative effects in an impact assessment is established on a case-by-case basis," and that "the risks and uncertainties associated with the potential cumulative effects" must be taken into consideration, along with "the level of concern expressed by Indigenous communities or the public." The Cumulative Effects Policy Framework also makes clear that "the input of Indigenous communities should inform all parts of the cumulative effects assessment."[3] Despite this policy guidance, our input on the risks and our deep level of concern over the cumulative effects of the MFFN CAR are being ignored.

In deciding on the proper scooping for the cumulative effects assessment IAAC must not hide behind its working definition of "reasonably foreseeable," which is that the proponent has announced its intention to apply for regulatory approval for a project. This narrow approach is not consistent with IAAC's own policy guidance on the issue,[4] and clearly does not work in the case of the Ring of Fire mines in Ontario, which will be not be subject to environmental assessment at either provincial or federal levels, and which may require provincial and federal permits only once construction begins, or not at all.[5] Nor should IAAC hide behind the Regional Assessment, which has barely entered the conduct phase and will

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[3] https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/practitioners-guide-impact-assessment-act/policy-framework-assessing-cumulative-effects-under-impact-assessment-act.html

[4] In the *Policy Framework for Assessing Cumulative Effects under the Impact Assessment Act*, the definition of "reasonably foreseeable" given is that "the physical activity is expected to proceed, e.g. the proponent has publicly disclosed its intention to seek the necessary impact assessment or other authorizations required to proceed." In that definition, the proponent's intention to seek authorizations is an example ("e.g."), and not an exhaustive list of the types of projects that could be expected to proceed.

[5] As Mining Watch reported in its comments on the Terms of Reference for the Regional Assessment: "In the Ring of Fire, in 2011, Noront volunteered its Eagle's Nest project to undergo provincial environmental assessment as it would have required a federal EA anyway, and a provincial EA would exempt the mine from separate assessments for its water and transportation permits. However, when the criteria to include mines on the project list was raised to 5000 tpd from 2500 tpd under the new Impact Assessment Act, Noront withdrew its federal application." At the provincial level, "a comprehensive environmental assessment is no longer required for the project [the Eagle's Nest Mine]. The voluntary agreement has been terminated and the Terms of Reference approval revoked by the Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025, effective June 5, 2025." (See: https://www.ontario.ca/page/eagles-nest-multi-metal-mine)

not produce usable information in the time frame that Canada and Ontario have set for the approval of MFFN CAR.

We remind Ontario and Canada that cumulative effects assessment is a required part of project-level impact/environmental assessments, and that it is especially important to consider cumulative effects in the case of a frontier development such as the MFFN CAR.

Ontario's premier and ministers have been enthusiastic boosters for road access as the key to pushing the mining frontier into the far north of Ontario. As Minister Pirie said in a 2024 interview with NetNewsLedger in Thunder Bay, "permanent roads will have to be developed, so we've been focusing on one road, or three roads, but there'll be lots of roads that have to be developed … and when that happens you're going to see an incredible boom in mining."[6] In that interview, he also referred to our Omushkegowuk territory as "largely empty and begging for exploration drillholes."

The proponent has not considered this "boom in mining" in the cumulative effects assessment of the aquatic "valued components," let alone the Eagle's Nest or the chromite mines that have already been named and announced by Wyloo to proceed. We require that a cumulative effects assessment consider the impact of these mines, including the routine release of mining wastewater and the routine, unavoidable leaching of soluble toxic compounds from wastes such as mine tailings, waste rock, dust and slag piles.

The record of Indigenous input included in the draft IS shows that concern about contamination from foreseeable mines in the Ring of Fire has been was raised by other First Nations, but that these concerns were deemed to be "outside of the scope of the Community Access Road" by the proponent (Table 11-9, p. 951-954). This attitude on the part of the proponent is unacceptable. We wish to make it clear that it is not just "spills" we are concerned about, but also the everyday, slowly accumulating nature of mining contamination that is seen in places to the south of Omushkegowuk territory, where mining is widespread. Our Anishinabek brothers and sisters living in the Sudbury basin area or the Abitibi will have to live with soil and water contamination in their homeland until the end of time. Our Kattawapiskak people are not willing to accept that as an outcome of this road.

The proponent must consider the obvious link between the road, the mining industry that is waiting for the road to be built, and the supporting infrastructure, including transmission lines and hydroelectric generating stations, that both the mining industry and Ontario expect to be developed. Just as Wyloo is waiting for the road to be built in order to develop the Eagle's Nest mine, it also considers a transmission line to bring power to the mine as "essential for the development of the Eagle's Nest project."[7]

This transmission line, in the words of Ontario's Independent Electricity Operator, "enables connection of new resources including hydro-electric resources (Little Jack Fish and Upper Albany-Attawapiskat river area) through reduced connection costs and providing transfer capability of power to the main

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[6] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CynB8CxEgys

[7] Wyloo's May 2025 feedback on the Northern Ontario Connection Study is available here: https://www.ieso.ca/Sector-Participants/Engagement-Initiatives/Engagements/Northern-Ontario-Connection-Study

transmission network."[8] Hydroelectric development on the Attawapiskat River would therefore be enabled and supported by the existing right-of-way and transportation corridor provided by the MFFN CAR and its connector, the Northern Road Link. Therefore, there is no question that potential new hydroelectric dams on the upper Attawapiskat River must be included in the analysis of the cumulative effects of the MFFN CAR to water, peatlands, fish, and fish habitat.

For our people, it is unthinkable that a dam would be built on our river. It would devastate our people and their relationship with the land if river diversions and/or dams, of the type that have already been built on the Albany and Moose river systems, were to be built. The impact to future generations would be unacceptable to our Kattawapiskak people. There would be very significant downstream impacts to water flows and water quality, and possibly changes in circulation in the estuary – an incredibly rich and biodiverse environment with extensive coastal wetlands, inhabited by many different animals including beluga, seal, ocean-run whitefish, migratory waterfowl, and shorebirds. Among the myriad of impacts to our non-human relatives and the water, we must also consider the sturgeon (*namew*), who is highly sensitive to river fragmentation and requires the entire length of the river to live.

As we have already described in detail in our letter of June 11, 2025, the road is likely to bring on the expansion of forestry, mining exploration and outfitting camps as part of the induced development stemming from the road.[9] With road access, commercial outfitters and their customers would acquire permanent access to what are now considered remote lakes and rivers. The expansion of the sport fishing industry could cause significant declines in species valued by our people and would interfere with the ways we use the land. This is a serious impact that has been brushed off by the proponent as "residual" and "not significant" without any explanation or analysis.

3. **The vulnerability of fish, waters, and peatlands to the interactive effect of development and climate change is not considered in the proponent's cumulative effects assessment. The resulting cumulative effects assessment does not meaningfully address impacts to the water "valued components."**

The cumulative developments that are the intended outcome of the MFFN CAR would occur alongside catastrophic climate change in our Omushkegowuk homelands.

Climate change does not add to the cumulative impact of the road: it will multiply the impacts we experience from development. For example, the combined effect of impacts from development (mining, road construction, etc.) and climate change has the potential to irreversibly destabilize the hydrological functions of peatland ecosystems. This in turn has implications for wildfire frequency and severity, the stability of subsistence fisheries, and the efficacy of carbon sequestration of bogs and fens.[10] Nowhere is this mentioned by the proponent in their discussion of cumulative effects to water components.

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[8] Northern Ontario Connection Study, Webinar #1 - Technical and Economic Option Analysis. May 7, 2025. Available at: https://www.ieso.ca/Sector-Participants/Engagement-Initiatives/Engagements/Northern-Ontario-Connection-Study

[9] Nibinimik community members are already observing the impacts of guiding resorts for fishing and hunting. See: *Nibinamik First Nation Review and Recommendations on the draft Environmental Assessment/Impact Statement for the Marten Falls Community Access Road*. Available at: https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/80184/contributions/id/63379

[10] Sutton, O. F., Balliston, N. E., & Price, J. S. 2024. Mining and climate change alters water storage and streamflow dynamics of northern peatland-dominated catchments. Water Resources Research 60 (12), e2024WR0373 I 0. P. 16.

The proponent's technical appendices on Fish/Fish Habitat and Surface Water, despite each being more than 800 pages in length, barely mention climate change. Appendix G (Fish and Fish Habitat) contains no discussion of how climate change interacts with the cumulative impacts of the project to fish; and Appendix H (Surface Water) mentions climate change only on p. 76, in relation to reduced ice cover.

Appendix I (Peatlands) briefly mentions climate change on p. 222-223, but concludes that "the magnitude of climate change effects on peatland ecosystems is difficult to predict." In the Assessment of Significance section for cumulative effects on p. 230-231, the proponent claims that

> …climate change is not expected to significantly influence the availability and distribution of peatland ecosystems relative to existing conditions and does not alter the assessment of no significant cumulative residual effects from the Project and other reasonably foreseeable development as climate change effects are expected to occur regardless of whether the Project and other reasonably foreseeable projects are constructed.

This statement from the proponent is shocking in its disregard for the interactive effects we outline above. It also sidesteps the fact that reducing non-climate stressors and limiting development in watersheds is understood to be the primary way in which climate-related impacts can be mitigated.

The point of a cumulative effects analysis is not to dismiss certain impacts because they "are expected to occur regardless of whether the Project and other reasonably foreseeable projects are constructed" (Appendix I, p. 231). Instead, the analysis should examine whether the Project, in combination with climate change and other foreseeable projects, may cause impacts that exceed environmental, social, and cultural thresholds.

Our territory is warming at between two and three times the rate of the planet as a whole.[11] Our Kattawapiskak people are already seeing dramatic changes in the timing of seasonal freeze-up and thaw events, drought conditions on our rivers, changes in animal behaviours, and new species in our territory. The proponent ignores the fact that many of our cold-water fish species are threatened by climate change in the next 50 years.[12]

Climate change-induced shifts in the ranges of warmer-water species, such as walleye and smallmouth bass, will change the distribution and abundance of fish we are able to harvest. There are already indications that smallmouth bass, for example, are moving into the river systems of Omushkegowuk territory. The spread of invasive species is another consequence of climate change that must be considered. Again, as just one example, Eurasian watermilfoil was found this summer in the Albany River near Kashechewan.

It is unacceptable for the proponent to avoid any serious analysis of the impacts of climate change to fish and fish habitat, water, and peatlands, with the excuse that these effects are "unpredictable," or that they would "occur anyways." The proponent's cumulative effects predictions for these components are fundamentally flawed and must not be relied upon by Canada and Ontario in making regulatory decisions about the MFFN CAR.

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[11] https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/climate-change-international-court-united-nations-1.7593323

[12] Chetkiewicz, C-L B., Carlson, M., O'Connor, C.M., Edwards, B., Southee, F.M., and Sullivan, M. *Assessing the Potential Cumulative Impacts of Land Use and Climate Change on Freshwater Fish in Northern Ontario*. Wildlife Conservation Society Canada Conservation Report No. 11. Toronto, Ontario, Canada. 150pp. p. 78.

4. **Our Kattawapiskak peoples' thresholds for decline of the species we harvest, and for loss of water quality, are much more sensitive than the thresholds used by the proponent. The proponent's view of the magnitude and significance of impacts to the water "valued components" does not reflect our Kattawapiskak peoples' understanding of these impacts.**

In their analysis of significance of impacts to the water "valued components," the proponent relies on definitions of "magnitude" that do not accord with our Kattawapiskak people's cultural values, our ways of using the land, or our governance and stewardship rights.

Subsistence harvesting requires a sufficient quantity of resources, i.e., high population levels of fish and game. Unlike in market economies, where rarity increases the value of a resource, our people are concerned with having sufficiently abundant resources, the ability to share widely within the community, and the security of having "back up" species and harvesting locations during times of scarcity. We do not fully utilize the "harvestable surplus," as is commonly done in non-indigenous fisheries and wildlife management. Maintaining high population levels is part of our conservation ethic and it is a harvest management strategy used to sustain our resources for seven generations into the future.

In order for subsistence harvesting to remain viable, including the transmission of knowledge to younger generations, a range of resources must be reliably available for harvest throughout the territory. This requirement has not changed over time. Even as our ancestors experienced periodic downturns in particular animal populations, a variety of species and harvesting spots produced enough for harvesters' families and to share with the wider community. In fact, having large quantities of fish available to us is important to compensate for the periodic lack of larger game.

The requirement for a high quantity of resources is not reflected in the proponent's magnitude definition for fish and fish habitat, which defines "low impact" as "habitat of valued components remains suitable and functional but decrease in productivity." The proponent defines "medium impact" as meaning that "local productivity" is impacted but "overall population dynamics" are not likely to be disrupted (p. 453). Not only do these definitions not make sense in view of what we shared above in point 1, regarding the need for a holistic view of rivers and fish populations, they do not speak to the high abundance of resources our harvesters require and the fact that even small downturns in abundance would have very discernable impacts to our harvesters.

Subsistence harvesting also requires sufficient quality of resources. The harvested resources must be of high nutritional quality, meaning that they are sourced from healthy plants and animals and are free of contamination. The variety of species we are able to harvest is also important, as it allows for temporary pivoting away from more heavily utilized species, especially during times of scarcity.

The health risks of contaminants are understood by harvesters, and this damages their confidence in the ability of the lands and waters to provide for them, endangering harvesting as cultural practice. Even the risk of contamination can cause harvesters to abandon large areas, when they know that industrial activity is in the area, or they see the remains of industrial equipment left behind. Our people often say that if something were to contaminate the headwaters of the Attawapiskat River, "there's no going back." Our people have a very sophisticated understanding of how water moves through the peatlands at both micro and macro levels. This in turn informs our thresholds for changes to hydrology and contamination.

The requirement of our people for water quality is not reflected in the proponent's magnitude definitions for surface water quality and hydrology, which assumes a "low" magnitude of impact even when up to 20 percent of a contributing drainage area is disturbed (p. 432). A 20 percent disturbance of the drainage area of the Attawapiskat River would result in an extremely high impact on our people.

Our people's thresholds for water quality are also not reflected in the proponent's use of federal and provincial water quality guidelines (p. 433), which are arrived at using chronic toxicity tests on laboratory animals, and which do not consider the multiple, intersecting, and non-linear pathways that keep the land alive over an extended period of time.

The definition of water quality adopted by the proponent therefore bears no resemblance to how our Kattawapiskak people view our responsibilities to the water. Our people also know that the proponent has no basis for claiming that the Crown's water quality standards will be respected once the cumulative effects of the MFFN CAR are brought to bear on our territory. It is important for the Crown to understand that even if governmental water quality standards were to be respected in future development, those standards do not always consider the things that matter to our people, such as effects that occur slowly, that occur from the interaction of multiple stressors, and that are not observable in laboratory settings.

5. **We are alarmed by the lack of information in the draft IS on road construction methodologies, given the potential serious impact on peatlands of building a road perpendicular to the direction of water flow. Attawapiskat First Nation requires credible and comprehensive information on this issue. We request that Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) provide further comments once the proponent has provided the missing information.**

One claim the proponent has repeated in all kinds of consultation forums, including webinars and in-person conferences, and now in the draft IS, is that the road will "float" on the muskeg. We are told that thanks to a unique floating road construction technique there would be insignificant impacts to water flows from one side of the road to the other. As the proponent states:

> The construction of the Community Access Road may cause alteration to drainage patterns and increased/decreased drainage flows and surface water levels, thereby affecting associated peatland communities. However with the effective implementation of the mitigation measures (detailed in Section 7.3.1 and Table 7-4) and the use of best management practices, it is anticipated that residual changes to peatland ecosystems from changes to hydrology will be reduced or moderated, as well as regulated through permitting. (Appendix I, p. 196).

Building a road perpendicular to the direction of water flow disrupts water flows – a fact that is well understood by our people who lived all their lives in peatland environments. Their concerns over the impact of roads on the hydrology of peatlands are shared by professional hydrologists, including those at Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). When asked by IAAC to "describe your department's views and any uncertainty regarding how much noticeable loss in key functions of peatland ecosystems in the LSA and RSA over the long-term could occur," ECCC responded by warning that:

> While mitigation measures and effects on valued components are independently discussed in each Appendix, the lack of clarity about which construction method will be used creates

> significant uncertainty for predicting long-term hydrological impacts on peatlands. Since each construction method can affect peatland hydrology differently, an accurate assessment of potential changes is not possible without consistency between assumed construction methods used to complete the effect assessment for different valued components. There is additional uncertainty regarding the long-term viability when using a floating road as a mitigation measure, given the potential for high vehicle traffic and heavy payloads. Appendix F anticipates peak traffic levels of 100 to 700 vehicles in 2046, which may compromise the effectiveness of a floating road over time. [underlining added] [13]

The level of uncertainty flagged by ECCC is alarming to Attawapiskat First Nation, because even small changes to the water table can have major impacts on carbon cycling, carbon storage, the frequency and magnitude of flooding, water quality, and upstream and downstream wildlife habitats. The potential impacts to peatland hydrology may translate into serious impacts to the exercise of our inherent and Treaty rights.

When our environment advisor flagged this issue in a meeting with IAAC on August 7, 2025, IAAC stated that it would not be asking the proponent to provide the missing information. To dismiss our concerns in this way, and to instead rely on the proponent's half-baked construction plans, references to "best practices," future permitting decisions, and discussions with provincial authorities on "mitigation measures," is completely unacceptable. The Crown must work with us to ensure we are provided with comprehensive, credible information on the potential impacts of the project.

Finally, we remind Canada that IAAC's commitments under Canada's UNDRIP Action Plan include "mandatory consideration of Indigenous knowledge," and "maximizing Indigenous collaboration and partnership." These commitments mean respecting the information and the time we require to exercise our free, prior, and informed consent.[14]

Yet information and time are precisely what are being sacrificed, in the Crown governments' rush to push forward with unilateral approval of an industrial access road to the Ring of Fire. Bill C-5, the *Building Canada Act* allows Canada to dispense with certain statutory requirements in the Impact Assessment Act, and also to dispense with the need for proponents to obtain regulatory approvals. Bill 5, the *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act*, allows Ontario to declare special economic zones where major projects can be approved without meaningful or any engagement with First Nations. This is a path toward expedited, unilateral approval of projects without the possibility for meaningful consultation, and without seeking our free, prior, and informed consent. Unless this path is changed, the Crown will fail to uphold the honour of the Crown and seriously damage the project of reconciliation.

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[13] From Environment and Climate Change Canada to Impact Assessment Agency of Canada re: Response to Targeted Questions. Response to question PIF-02. Available at: https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/80184/contributions/id/63251

[14] Information and time are key themes in the 2016 United Nations' manual on good practices for implementing FPIC, entitled: *Free Prior and Informed Consent – An Indigenous Peoples' right and a good practice for local communities – FAO*. Available at: https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/publications/2016/10/free-prior-and-informed-consent-an-indigenous-peoples-right-and-a-good-practice-for-local-communities-fao/

Regarding our above-stated concerns, please respond to us, and those copied here, as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

Chief Sylvia Koostachin-Metatawabin

Attawapiskat First Nation

<Original signed by>

Deputy Chief Kara Fireman

Attawapiskat First Nation

cc.

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