

# Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire Area

## Public Call for Information and Data

As part of the Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire Area, the Working Group leading the assessment is seeking information and data to support the meaningful conduct of the Regional Assessment. This work will focus on scenario development and community studies to better understand current and potential future effects of development in the Ring of Fire area.

## Context

In February 2020, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada (Minister) announced a regional assessment (RA) is to be completed, centered on the “Ring of Fire” area. An RA process was launched in January 2023, co-led by 15 First Nation Partners and the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC). For more information, please see: [Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire Area](#).

The Regional Assessment will:

- gather information and data on the region;
- understand potential effects from past, existing and future development in the Ring of Fire area, including cumulative and interactive effects;
- inform future impact assessments; and
- identify and provide recommendations on how the potential effects may best be managed to avoid adverse consequences, enhance positive ones and how this should happen.

## Assessment Priorities

Assessment Priorities were identified by the Regional Assessment Working Group (RAWG) and represent key environmental, health, social, cultural and economic conditions that may be affected due to development activities and interacting cumulative effects.

They reflect the priorities and values of First Nation Partners and the jurisdictions of the federal government, and include social, environmental, health, cultural and economic conditions, as well as impacts on Indigenous Peoples and their Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

The Assessment Priorities are:

- To be well together (Community wellbeing)
- Cultural and spiritual wellbeing
- Social and Economic Equity
- Healthy Environment Relationships

## Call for information and data

An essential component of the conduct phase of the Regional Assessment is the gathering of existing knowledge, information and studies. The Working Group is reaching out to invite individuals, organisations, and other knowledge holders to contribute to an inventory of information pertaining to the Ring of Fire area.

- Please use the following tables to identify any **studies, data sets, or other sources of information** that you hold or know of that may be relevant to the four Assessment Priorities, and the specific topics identified within each Priority area. Add additional space as necessary!
- Keep in mind that the list of potential topics listed for each Priority is not exhaustive. These have been listed in order of priority, as identified by the RAWG, with topics of specific interest underlined.
- Please note any relevant details about the study (including subject, scope, etc.) as well as **where/ how it can be accessed** (including hyperlinks, web addresses, etc. as possible). Please feel free to submit multiple tables if additional space is required.
- Please also identify **your contact information**, and additional notes, in particular if you have **ongoing or future projects** associated with each topic, and/ or **funding** that could support information gathering.

### Next Steps

The RAWG will compile all responses received and follow up with the individuals and organizations that are seen to have relevant information and data.

Please note that data and information utilized in this Regional Assessment will generally be made publicly accessible through the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry according to IAAC's principles of openness and transparency.

Exceptions apply for information that is considered private, confidential, or subject to legitimate restrictions (e.g. proprietary journal articles, CSA standards, Traditional or Indigenous Knowledge). Where there are concerns related to privacy and confidentiality, please provide a brief explanation of the concern without disclosing the information, and include how you would like this information handled. The Working Group will follow up to discuss proper procedures for the use and management of the information.

Please send the completed table(s) by email to [regionalrof-cdfregionale@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto:regionalrof-cdfregionale@iaac-aeic.gc.ca) (generic inbox administered by IAAC on behalf of the Working Group) by **September 30, 2025**.

**NOTE for community members of First Nation Partners:** If there is information you would like to submit, but feel is of a sensitive or confidential nature (Indigenous Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, etc.) feel free to share your concerns and contact directly either the Mushkegowuk or Matawa Tribal Councils.

## Assessment Priority: To be well together (Community wellbeing)

- **Community Safety:** Policing of roads; Drug trafficking; Safety supports/ programs; Safety issues around mining/ work camps (ex: substance use, violence, MMIWG2S); Human trafficking; Environmental hazards & areas of concern; Evacuation plans
- **Family, Youth and Children:** Poverty and Homelessness; Elder care; Impacts on the family unit; Services and supports for children and families
- **Housing and Infrastructure:** Overall housing picture; Infrastructure development and maintenance; Community infrastructure deficit; Land base expansion; Transportation infrastructure; Waste management and recycling
- **Education:** Special needs within communities; Distance education opportunities; Education levels within communities
- **Food security:** Food shipping and storage; Potential for growing food locally; Food insecurity, costs and subsidies
- **Economic development and livelihoods:** Cost of living; Power supply ownership opportunities; Renewable energies; Employment and jobs availability; Building community economic development; Potential for members to fill project jobs
- **Community Health:** Mental wellness; Health issues (incl. rare and chronic conditions)

<b>Description</b> Provide a general description of this information (title, topic, timeframe, geographic extent, purpose, etc.)	<b>Holder and Availability</b> Who is/are the author(s) or owner(s)? To whom/ how is the information available?	<b>Format</b> e.g.: databases, reports, shapefiles, oral communications, print (i.e. not digitized), etc.	<b>Limitations or Restrictions</b> Is the information or data already public? Are there access or costs restrictions? Is it confidential? Is it Indigenous Knowledge?

## Assessment Priority: Cultural and Spiritual wellbeing

- **Physical and cultural heritage:** Sites of archaeological significance; Historical trade routes and ecological corridors; Identification of routes, corridors, and cultural sites linked to routes and corridors
- **Cultural vitality and traditional practices:** Loss of cultural practices, ceremonies, etc.
- **Continued way of life, Aboriginal and Treaty rights:** Enacting and protecting rights, way of life; Treaty rights education
- **Community- based teachings:** Oral history vs. Crown info
- **Language maintenance and revival:** Use of traditional languages
- **Traditional processes for decision- making:** Potential for new governance structures
- **Exercise of natural law**

<b>Description</b> Provide a general description of this information (title, topic, timeframe, geographic extent, purpose, etc.)	<b>Holder and Availability</b> Who is/are the author(s) or owner(s)? To whom/ how is the information available?	<b>Format</b> e.g.: databases, reports, shapefiles, oral communications, print (i.e. not digitized), etc.	<b>Limitations or Restrictions</b> Is the information or data already public? Are there access or costs restrictions? Is it confidential? Is it Indigenous Knowledge?
Tawich is Where I Belong- draft feasibility for the Proposed Mushkegowuk National Marine Conservation Area in western Weeneebeg an southwestern Washaybeyoh	Mushkegowuk Council	Pdf <a href="https://marine.wildlandsleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/24-02-06-Mushkegowuk-FA-SCREEN.pdf">https://marine.wildlandsleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/24-02-06-Mushkegowuk-FA-SCREEN.pdf</a> plus data from Cree Geomatics	The information in the report is public. The data in the report is public and includes Indigenous knowledge. Additional data is available at Cree Geomatics within Mushkegowuk Council but requires permission.

## Assessment Priority: Social and Economic Equity

- **Intra- and inter-generational values:** Income distribution within communities
- **Social and Economic conditions, incl. immediate and long-term benefits:** Potential partnerships with developers; Industry investment in communities; Regional collective approaches to Ec. Dev.; Capturing economic benefits of projects; Economic leakage
- **Diverse economies and livelihoods:** Land-based economy; Workforce participation
- **Indigenous Women, girls and 2S individuals:** Economic barriers and benefits for women; Childcare; Violence and harassment
- **Current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes:** On-the- land activities; Harvesting
- **Access to skill development and economic opportunities:** Successes and challenges re: education/ employment; Indigenous employment at projects

<b>Description</b> Provide a general description of this information (title, topic, timeframe, geographic extent, purpose, etc.)	<b>Holder and Availability</b> Who is/are the author(s) or owner(s)? To whom/ how is the information available?	<b>Format</b> e.g.: databases, reports, shapefiles, oral communications, print (i.e. not digitized), etc.	<b>Limitations or Restrictions</b> Is the information or data already public? Are there access or costs restrictions? Is it confidential? Is it Indigenous Knowledge?
<p>Tawich is Where I Belong- draft feasibility for the Proposed Mushkegowuk National Marine Conservation Area in western Weeneebeg an southwestern Washaybeyoh</p> <p>There is a whole section on communities' priorities within this report that may be of interest</p>	<p>Mushkegowuk Council</p>	<p>Pdf <a href="https://marine.wildlandsleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/24-02-06-Mushkegowuk-FA-SCREEN.pdf">https://marine.wildlandsleague.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/24-02-06-Mushkegowuk-FA-SCREEN.pdf</a> plus data from Cree Geomatics</p>	<p>The information in the report is public. The data in the report is public and includes Indigenous knowledge. Additional data is available at Cree Geomatics within Mushkegowuk Council but requires permission.</p>
<p>Economics of the Ring of Fire</p>	<p>RedDot3D</p>	<p>Briefing note, news articles</p>	<p>The information in the briefing note is based on publicly available information.</p>



## Assessment Priority: Healthy environment relationships

- **Water and river systems, incl. flows:** Groundwater effects; Water usage (processing); Changes to flow (dams)
- **Wildlife and habitat, incl. SAR, birds, fish:** Effects on harvest species; Impacts on ecological corridors; Effects to spiritual beings; New species making use of road corridors; Higher risk of roadkills; Impacts to breeding and migratory areas
- **Peatlands and other unique environments:** Effects of disrupting peatlands; Permafrost;
- **Forest ecosystems, incl. plants:** ITK, 2- eyed seeing in Forest Management Plans; Impacts due to clear cutting
- **Climate change adaptation:** Use of fossil fuels for electricity; Change in species
- **Biodiversity:** Change in biodiversity

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Guide to eating fish—provides information on contaminants in the fish. Fish in the study are already at the limits for consumption for certain segments of society. It’s important to understand this baseline and then anticipate how development in the region may	Ontario government	<a href="https://www.ontario.ca/page/guide-eating-ontario-fish">https://www.ontario.ca/page/guide-eating-ontario-fish</a>	There is an interactive, public website

exacerbate this problem			
<p>Nothing To See Here-Failures of self-monitoring and reporting at the Victor Diamond Mine in Canada. This special report delved into mercury and the company's monitoring. The mine's activities triggered adverse impacts on the environment by stimulating mercury conversion to methylmercury. Methylmercury, a neurotoxin, is a dangerous threat to aquatic life as it biomagnifies up the food chain into top predator fish. It's important for the working group to consider how regional development will impact the environment by stimulating mercury conversion to methyl mercury.</p>	Wildlands League	<p><a href="https://wildlandsleague.org/media/REPORT-WL-20151220-FINAL-Special-Report-Victor-Mine.pdf">https://wildlandsleague.org/media/REPORT-WL-20151220-FINAL-Special-Report-Victor-Mine.pdf</a></p>	Report is public
<p>Information on mining claims and land uses in the region. Wildlands League routinely produce maps showing this information from data from government sources.</p>	<p>Ontario government holds and shares this information. Land Information Ontario (LIO)</p>	<p><a href="https://wildlandsleague.org/media/Map3_HBLLMay13_2025-scaled.jpg">https://wildlandsleague.org/media/Map3_HBLLMay13_2025-scaled.jpg</a> This map is from May 2025.</p> <p>Additional data on claims and holders can be found here <a href="https://wildlandsleague.org/media/Clean-ROFArea_Claims_May11_2025.pdf">https://wildlandsleague.org/media/Clean-ROFArea_Claims_May11_2025.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="https://wildlandsleague.org/news/mining-claims-have-skyrocketed-in-ring-of-fire-fords-bill-5-if-passed-will-make-things-much-worse/">https://wildlandsleague.org/news/mining-claims-have-skyrocketed-in-ring-of-fire-fords-bill-5-if-passed-will-make-things-much-worse/</a></p>	Data is public

		<a href="https://www.geologyontario.mndm.gov.on.ca/ogsearch.html#mining-claims">https://www.geologyontario.mndm.gov.on.ca/ogsearch.html#mining-claims</a>	
Existing Indigenous protected areas in the region	First Nations and Wildlands League	<a href="https://wildlandsleague.org/media/Map3_HBLLMay13_2025-scaled.jpg">https://wildlandsleague.org/media/Map3_HBLLMay13_2025-scaled.jpg</a> This map is from May 2025 and shows three Indigenous Protected Areas (2 by Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug and Wapekeka) and one by Moose Cree First Nation	public
Boreal caribou ranges and status, anthropogenic disturbance	Canada, University of Guelph, Ontario	<p><i>Caribou (Rangifer tarandus) Boreal population: Report on the progress of the recovery strategy implementation (period 2017 to 2022) and the action plan implementation (period 2018 to 2023)</i></p> <p><a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/report-progress-recovery-document/caribou-rangifer-tarandus-boreal-report-progress-recovery-strategy-2017-2022-action-plan-2018-2023.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/report-progress-recovery-document/caribou-rangifer-tarandus-boreal-report-progress-recovery-strategy-2017-2022-action-plan-2018-2023.html</a></p> <p>Anthropogenic Disturbance and Population Viability of Woodland Caribou in Ontario</p> <p><a href="https://wildlife.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/jwmq.21829">https://wildlife.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/jwmq.21829</a></p> <p>State of Caribou Ranges-Cumulative Impacts Monitoring 2018 Estimates</p> <p>Disturbance Models and Simulated Ranges of Natural Variation A slide presentation titled: State of Caribou Ranges, Cumulative Impacts Monitoring, 2018 Estimates. Disturbance Models and Simulated Ranges of Natural Variation are presented. The slide presentation was created by Phil Elkie and Kevin Green of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.</p> <p><i>There is more. Recovery strategies and literature.</i></p>	Public

Peatlands and carbon	Scientists, international orgs	<p><i>This is just a sample:</i></p> <p><i>Hugelius et al. 2020</i></p> <p>Abraham et al. 2011 Hudson Plains Ecozone+ Status and Trends Assessment</p> <p>Global Peatlands Assessment 2022</p> <p><a href="https://www.unep.org/resources/global-peatlands-assessment-2022">https://www.unep.org/resources/global-peatlands-assessment-2022</a></p> <p>Soto Navarro et al. 2020</p> <p>Noon et al. 2022 Mapping irrecoverable carbon stores</p>	public
Logging Scars- new evidence showing widespread deforestation due to clearcutting practices	Wildlands League	<p><a href="https://loggingcars.ca/report/">https://loggingcars.ca/report/</a></p> <p><a href="https://loggingcars.ca/interactive-google-map/">https://loggingcars.ca/interactive-google-map/</a></p>	Public

## Contact Information Form

<b>Name of individual(s) or organization</b>	Wildlands League
<b>Point of contact</b>	Anna Baggio
<b>Full address</b>	Suite 371 401 Richmond St. West Toronto Ontario M5V 3A8
<b>Email</b>	anna@wildlandsleague.org
<b>Telephone</b>	4164533285
<b>Alternate contact</b>	
<p>Please provide a brief overview of your organization and its activities and interests relevant to the Regional Assessment</p> <p>Wildlands League is one of Canada’s pre-eminent conservation organizations with over 30,000 supporters. We are policy experts standing up for wildlife and standing with communities. We have been working in the public interest since 1968.</p> <p>Wildlands League has been monitoring impacts from early exploration activities, land use and environmental assessments in the area known as the ‘Ring of Fire’ in northern Ontario since 2008 and has advocated for implementation of a regional assessment for the area since 2011. We have flown over the globally significant peatlands and watersheds (that contain the referenced mineral deposits) with Indigenous leaders many times. We have visited Noront’s Esker Camp and other areas affected by mineral exploration in the homelands of Indigenous Peoples, and documented the long-lasting footprint of mining claims, trails, drill holes and drill pads and camps in this carbon-rich sensitive ecosystem.</p> <p>Wildlands League has a longstanding interest in land use and environmental planning in this part of the province. Our team were ministerially-appointed members of the Ontario Far North Planning Advisory Panel (2008-2009) and the Ontario Minister’s Mining Act Advisory Committee (2008-2018). We have also participated in various environmental assessments including the Cliffs Chromite Project, Noront’s Eagle’s Nest, De Beers’ Victor Diamond Mine and Wataynikaneyap Power. We concluded a <a href="#">private prosecution</a> of De Beers in 2021 for failing to provide mercury monitoring data relating to the operation of its Victor Diamond Mine.</p> <p>We are currently working in support of two Indigenous Protected Areas in northern Ontario (the North French Watershed with Moose Cree First Nation and in Fawn River Watershed with Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninwug) and with Mushekgowuk Council on the proposed Mushkegowuk National Marine Conservation Area in western James Bay and southwestern Hudson Bay.</p> <p>An example of how we work: we hosted a 90 minute panel at COP15 in the Canada Pavilion and brought together Indigenous leaders, scientists and conservation experts from Canada’s Hudson Bay Lowland and surrounding sea. You can see the video from the panel here <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sO4rrMJ20dE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sO4rrMJ20dE</a>. We also produce maps of public interest and track mining claims see <a href="https://wildlandsleague.org/news/mining-claims-in-the-ring-of-fire-jump-by-30-since-2022/">https://wildlandsleague.org/news/mining-claims-in-the-ring-of-fire-jump-by-30-since-2022/</a> as an example.</p>	

**The Regional Assessment Working Group also invites you to comment on:**

1. Whether you know of information or data on topics that are not listed above, but that you believe would be relevant to this Regional Assessment.

Contaminants appear to be a blindspot for the regional assessment so far: ongoing methylmercury and other contaminants like hexavalent chromium are a concern and need to be examined as mining and other proposed activities would stimulate their release. And how changes may impact consumption of country foods fish and other animals up the food chain.

Economics of the proposed developments especially mining seem to be a major gap. Publicly available data are needed to inform decisions. Data that can be verified. There isn't a feasibility study for a mine. A study by Noront was published in 2012 and is now out of date. We've attached the briefing note by RedDot3D on this matter. Others have weighed in on this including Niall McGee of the Globe and Mail. We look forward to seeing how the agency and working group handles this.

On boreal caribou. Ontario has not publicly updated its cumulative disturbance mapping for caribou ranges since 2018. This is a major gap. Wildlands will see if it can do some mapping with publicly available data to fill this gap and provide it to the working group for two of the caribou ranges that overlap with the infrastructure and mine developments.

Eastern migratory caribou. We know they are found in the area and will be impacted by developments here. Hopefully with the involvement of caribou experts (both scientists and Indigenous knowledge holders) this can be addressed but right now looks like a gap.

2. Any economic, technical, linguistic or other obstacles that may restrict or prevent you, your community or your organization from participating in this call for information.
3. Any other notes or comments you would like to bring to the attention of the Working Group.

We look forward to participating and see progress.


**Thank you for your contribution to the Regional Assessment process.**

If you have any questions, please contact the Working Group via the generic inbox administered by IAAC at [regionalrof-cdfregionale@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto:regionalrof-cdfregionale@iaac-aeic.gc.ca).