



Natural Resources  
Canada

Ressources naturelles  
Canada

August 8, 2024

Andy Clarke  
Project Manager, Prairie and Northern Region  
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

**Subject: Natural Resources Canada's Review of the Initial Project Description for the Big Bear Camp Aerodrome Project.**

Dear Colleague,

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) requested that Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) provide input regarding the Initial Project Description for the Big Bear Camp Aerodrome Project.

NRCan has reviewed the document in relation to its mandate and expertise in the areas of forest vegetation and links to biodiversity including Species at Risk (SAR) habitat. This expertise may be provided upon request by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC).

Details of NRCan's response can be found in the appendix below.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact me at [sophia.stlawrence@nrcan-rcan.gc.ca](mailto:sophia.stlawrence@nrcan-rcan.gc.ca)

Sincerely,

Sophia St. Lawrence  
Impact Assessment Officer  
Office of the Chief Scientist  
Natural Resources Canada

cc: Clarisse Fiset – Impact Assessment Officer, Office of the Chief Scientist  
Shelley Ball – Team Lead, Office of the Chief Scientist  
Peter Unger – Director, Office of the Chief Scientist

Canada

**Federal Authority Advice Record (FAAR)****FAAR Response must be submitted by August 12, 2024**

Big Bear Camp Aerodrome Project – Big Bear Contracting Ltd.

Registry File: 88735

Department/Agency	Natural Resources Canada
Lead Contact	Sophia St. Lawrence
Full Address	580 Booth Street, Ottawa, ON K1A 0E8
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Telephone	N/A
Alternate Contact	Clarisse Fiset (clarisse.fiset@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca)

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1. a) Is it probable that your department or agency may be required to exercise a power or perform a duty or function related to the project to enable it to proceed?

If yes, specify the Act of Parliament and that power, duty or function.

Based on the information provided, NRCan is unlikely to exercise a power or perform a duty or function related to the Project.

- b) Please describe any Indigenous or public consultation that will be undertaken in relation to the exercise of that power, duty or function, including when it would take place.

N/A

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2. Is your department or agency in possession of specialist or expert information or knowledge in its area of expertise that may be relevant to the conduct of an impact assessment of the project?

Specify the specialist or expert information or knowledge.

NRCan possesses the following expertise that may be relevant to the conduct of an impact assessment for this project. NRCan can support ECCC in review of the following:

- Forest Vegetation and links to biodiversity including SAR habitat (e.g., Woodland Caribou among others).

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3. Has your department or agency considered the project; exercised a power or performed a duty or function under any Act of Parliament in relation to the project; or taken any course of action that would allow the project to proceed in whole or in part?

Specify.

NRCan does not have an interest in the Project, nor has it taken any course of action (e.g. regulatory decision, funding, etc.) to enable the Project to proceed in whole or in part.

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4. Has your department or agency had previous contact or involvement with the proponent or other party in relation to the project? (for example: an enquiry about methodology, guidance, or data; introduction to the project)

Provide an overview of the information or advice exchanged.

No.

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5. Does your department or agency have additional information or knowledge on the project not specified above, including information on the geographic, environmental, economic or social context of the project? (e.g. location of protected or sensitive areas, previous history between local communities and proponent or similar projects, local or regional social or economic concerns)?

Specify as appropriate.

No.

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6. Based on the mandate and area(s) of expertise of your department or agency, what are the key issues related to the project?

For each key issue:

- Describe the potential effect or the nature of the issue, including any relevant context;
- Provide the rationale and/or evidence for why it is a key issue;
- Provide advice on how to address the issue, including any information or studies that should be required in the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines, potential mitigation measures, and/or regulatory requirements relevant to the issue;
- Provide a concise, plain-language summary of the issue for inclusion in the Summary of Issues.

The information provided will be considered by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) and may be used to inform its decision on whether an impact assessment is required and, where appropriate, for next steps in the impact assessment process including to develop project-specific draft Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines.

Please use Table 1 to respond to this question.

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7. Where possible, identify any additional information the proponent could include in the response to the Summary of Issues and, if IAAC requires it, in their Detailed Project Description, that would:

- Give confidence that minor issues or effects could be addressed and managed by clear measures, existing guidelines, other regulatory processes or other existing tools;
- Inform the decision as to whether an impact assessment is required; or
- Aid in tailoring the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines, if IAAC decides an impact assessment is required.

These clarifications and additional information will be included as specific questions in the Summary of Issues provided to the proponent.

Please use Table 2 to respond to this question.

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Sophia St. Lawrence  
Name of Departmental / Agency  
Responder

Impact Assessment Officer  
Title of Responder

August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Date

**Table 1: Key Issues to inform the impact assessment process**

The IAAC asks that federal authorities align expert advice with IAAC’s approach to tailoring by project, which focuses on key project issues, clearly focused on the prevention of adverse effects within federal jurisdiction. In identifying key issues, federal authorities should be mindful of the project’s context (size, scope, location), Indigenous Knowledge and perspectives, and public concerns. Key issues that may be relevant to the decision include:

- adverse effects within federal jurisdiction and direct or incidental adverse effects that may be to some extent significant, based on federal experts’ knowledge and experience with past projects;
- potential impacts on Indigenous Peoples and their rights, based on Indigenous Knowledge and perspectives or experience with past projects;
- effects on key species or habitats (e.g. at risk, important to Indigenous communities, commercial importance, provide important ecosystem function);
- issues or effects that may result from novel project activities, components or technology;
- effects with large uncertainties, including in the effectiveness of mitigation measures;
- adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or direct or incidental adverse effects where mitigation measures are limited;
- positive effects, including where project may support other governmental priorities, including reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples; and
- key concerns raised by Indigenous groups or local communities.

Effects that are anticipated to be minor or which can be managed using well understood mitigation, existing guidance, and/or other regulatory processes may have simplified information requirements or may be removed entirely. Measured advice from federal authorities on key issues and solutions—and on the scope and detail of any required information and studies—will enable IAAC to focus assessments on issues that are important to participants and to decision-makers.

Comment ID	Relevant section of the Initial Project Description	Valued Component or Factor to Consider	Description of Key Issue (Context and Rationale)	Advice	Plain language summary for inclusion in Summary of Issues
<p><i>Please identify comments by organization and comment number.</i></p> <p><i>e.g.: IAAC-01</i></p>	<p><i>If the comment is related to a specific section of the Initial Project Description, please include that reference.</i></p>	<p><i>Identify valued component(s) or factor to consider—within the mandate of your department or agency—to which the potential effect or issue applies.</i></p>	<p><i>Provide a brief description of the issue and rationale for being a key issue.</i></p> <p><i>Include, where relevant,:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>the pathway of effects;</i></li> <li>• <i>relevant context on why it is a key issue;</i></li> <li>• <i>key uncertainties that should be addressed in the impact assessment;</i></li> <li>• <i>Indigenous or public concerns or perspective;</i></li> <li>• <i>potential for differential effects among diverse subgroups;</i></li> <li>• <i>scientific evidence or Indigenous Knowledge, including from past project experience, which supports inclusion as a key issue.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Where applicable, briefly provide solutions on how to address the potential issue or effects including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Information or studies required to describe and characterize the potential effect; including any guidance for data collection and/or analysis or existing data sources to inform the assessment;</i></li> <li>• <i>Any means, including any powers, duties or functions, that your department or agency has that may mitigate, manage, or set conditions related to the issue or effect;</i></li> <li>• <i>Guidance or policies for mitigating effects or any standard and well-understood mitigation measures that would address the effect, including follow-up monitoring activities; and/or</i></li> <li>• <i>Commitments the proponent could make to respond to the issue.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Where available, please refer to existing text in the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines template.</i></p>	<p><i>For issues to be included in the Summary of Issues, provide a concise, plain language synopsis of the key issue and any questions or directions for the proponent.</i></p>

*Please insert additional rows as necessary.*

Table 2. Clarifications or additional information the Proponent could include in the response to Summary of Issues

Comment ID	Relevant section of the Initial Project Description	Description of Issue, Concern or Uncertainty	Clarification or additional information	Plain language summary for inclusion in Summary of Issues
<p><i>Please identify comments by organization and comment number.</i></p> <p><i>e.g.: IAAC-01</i></p>	<p><i>If the comment is related to a specific section of the Initial Project Description, please provide a reference.</i></p> <p><i>You may also choose to copy the relevant text here.</i></p>	<p><i>Provide a description of the issue, concern or uncertainty the proponent could address in their response to Summary of Issues and, if IAAC requires it, in their Detailed Project Description that would give confidence that the issue will be addressed and managed, by clear measures, existing guidelines, regulatory processes or other existing tools, and thus be the subject of simplified information requests in the guidelines, or simply be removed.</i></p>	<p><i>Provide recommended clarification or additional information to be included in their response to the Summary of Issues and, if IAAC requires it, in their Detailed Project Description to address the issue, concern or uncertainty, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• Clarifications to elements of the project description (e.g. components, activities, locations or alternatives);</i></li> <li><i>• Proposed project design changes that could avoid effects;</i></li> <li><i>• Evidence that could be presented to demonstrate there is no effect, pathway of effect or that effects would be negligible;</i></li> <li><i>• Evidence that standard mitigations will address potential effects</i></li> <li><i>• Commitments the proponent could make to respond to the issue, including the implementation of federal operational policies or guidance documents.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>For issues to be included in the Summary of Issues, provide a concise, plain language synopsis of the issue and of the question or direction for the proponent.</i></p>
<p>NRCan-01</p>	<p>Forestry / Terrestrial Environment</p>	<p>Details of potential impacts of the proposed project on biodiversity and Species at Risk (SAR) habitat and recovery of forested land.</p>	<p>NRCan holds expertise to assist in the assessment of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Potential local impacts on biodiversity and SAR habitat (including Woodland Caribou) from project development;                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Potential changes in predator movements due to habitat alterations, and where needed, description of proposed mitigation measures.</li> </ol> </li> <li>b) Potential impacts on forest land-use change and proposed mitigation measures</li> </ol>	<p>Effects on forested land / terrestrial environment from proposed project activities, including potential effects to the habitat of SAR.</p>

Please insert additional rows as necessary.