

Saltsprings Environmental Assessment Review for Feb 9, 2026

As a citizen of Pictou County, Nova Scotia, I have concerns about the development of the Saltsprings Fast Acting Simple Cycle Natural Gas Generating Project. Although, I am strongly in favor of alternative power solutions as per the Clean Power Plan, I see the timeline of the EA and its transparency as minimal. The following will be my concerns and questions regarding this project and its interrelationship with the IESO and with Nova Scotia's Clean Energy Plan by Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables.

After reviewing the Environmental Assessment for Saltsprings presented November 12 and 13, 2025, in Pictou County, I realized one thing. Although the environmental assessment addressed repercussions and impacts of the projects, the actual details of the fast acting simple cycle Natural Gas Generating Plant requires an understanding of how this plant processes electricity. This requires more information more information about this type of plant and also about alternatives.

These are some of my questions:

- 1. How reliant will Pictou County and Nova Scotia be if natural gas must be imported into Nova Scotia mainly via the Maritimes and Northeast Pipeline from the US?** Nova Scotia relies entirely on *imported Natural Gas* since the closure of the Sable and Panuke offshore in 2018. The Trenton Coal Electrical Generating Plant is to be decommissioned and the proposed Saltspring's Natural Gas is supposed to be peak only.
- 2. What will be the baseload plant and how will it produce electricity if there is a peak natural gas electrical generation facilities at Saltsprings and/or Marshdale?**
- 3. What is the overall electrical power development plan for Pictou County? How does it relate to proposed Saltsprings Natural Gas Generation Plant including the Trenton Coal Electrical Generation Plant, the Trenton Battery Project, and the Marshdale power plant?**
- 4. Why did the IESO not address, in detail at the public presentation, how this type of generating plant (simple cycle natural gas) operates by a description of of all its components in relation to its the EA? Why was a 300 page+ hard copy, in the interest of transparency, not provided to local libraries where individuals and groups could have an open discussion?** This would have helped and aided in the discussion of the socio, economic, and environmental concerns.
- 5. Why is this IRP being asked for when EA is not yet accepted? *The EA deadline for acceptance is Feb 19, 2026. Construction to begin summer of 2026.*** The posting of the IRP for submissions was Oct 15, 2025. IESO Nova Scotia will be creating, engaging stakeholders on, and publishing an Integrated Resource Plan ("IRP"). As a key input to developing its RP process, IESO Nova Scotia is seeking proposals from qualified consultant firms to assess the current Nova Scotia Power Incorporated ("NSPI") IRP development process and assess its effectiveness – drawing from best practices executed by other North American system operators and utilities responsible for long term power system.

6. Have other processes been adequately assessed?

1. Combined Cycle vs Simple Cycle. Combined Cycle Natural Gas Generation plants have less environmental impact (less emissions), use emissions heat to produce more electricity, so are more efficient, and recover water from the process.
2. Propane as back up solution rather than oil in simple cycle. Less pollutants, cleaner emissions, a product of Natural Gas. Oil use and storage is considered the highest environmental threat so other alternatives should be considered.
3. Renewable Natural Gas or biomethane (RNG) as an alternative peak electrical producer
- same chemical make-up as natural gas sourced possibly from the **Pictou County landfill** or other biomass source materials, fast acting, non emitting, low GHG.
4. Hydrogen & Bio Fuel not assessed in the EA as indicated would be converted in near future. What impact do they have on residents and environment? What does the plant look like and require?
5. EA did not include:
 1. Impact on Fish – “compliance with the Fisheries Act is not anticipated at this time” page 4 of EA. **Why, as the settling pond empties in a tributary of 6 Mile Brook?** Department of Fisheries monitoring the West River Salmon Fishery not far from proposed site on the West River.
 2. Onsite sewage disposal not discussed. This approval **will be acquired prior to the** installation of any on-site sewage disposal systems as set out in the On-site Sewage Disposal Systems Regulations. **Where are they located and what type?**
 3. Water approval for withdrawal and storage -Water approvals will be submitted to INSECURE in accordance with the Activities Designation Regulations, N.S. Reg. 47/1995, following EA Approval. **Why is this completed after EA?**
 4. Wetland and Water course alteration - “Wetland alteration applications will be submitted to NSECC in accordance with requirements under the Environment Act, S.N.S. 1994-95, c 1 following EA approval. Watercourse alteration applications are not expected to be required” – **What about the holding pond and the proposed ditching of its water into an existing watercourse? See Freshwater Aquatic Map 9.3.**
 5. Indicated Hydrogen fuel is considered as a future fuel source should it become available in the province. Only a brief description with no information on the physical stamp or EA.
 - The combustion turbine design shall allow for operation on blended hydrogen and natural gas fuel based on blend ratios that have been fully tested and demonstrated for commercially available combustion turbine models and shall allow for a future transition to 100% hydrogen fuel with minimal retrofitting. *Hydrogen, separated from methane using an industrial process called steam methane, which can release greenhouse gas emissions. Decarbonizing technologies help decarbonize like carbon capture or microwave reforming or a process called pyrolysis that uses heat to decompose natural gas, yielding hydrogen and solid carbon. Hydrogen can be split from oxygen in water by using electrolysis with a device called an electrolyser which can be powered by hydro, wind, or non emitting renewable energy – no harmful byproducts. The*

natural gas pipeline system in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick is hydrogen friendly so can be converted. Although indicated not analysed for its impact on Saltsprings development.

6. Gas and new electrical lines were considered incidental. Interconnection to the natural gas pipeline and the installation of new electrical transmission lines are incidental activities required to operate the Facility but excluded from this EARD/IPD. Power lines and gas lines require land expropriation and or purchase and may affect various property owners as well as natural resources. ***If separate why were they not addressed by appropriate company involvement?***

7. **Considering our reliance and vulnerability on imported source especially south of our boarder, in the USA, is there a consideration of reopening the supply from Sable and Penuke in conjunction with the development of more environmentally efficient sources of energy?** Will we have a continuous, cost efficient, and stable supply of natural gas based with current supply and the grid configuration now and in future. Realizing we do get some supply from Muskrat Falls and western Canada, what does the future supply look like?

8. **Who are the partners or owners of the development of various parts of the grid and how does the government of Nova Scotia protect the costs of electricity for the people of Nova Scotia? Is there adequate public transparency of ownership and development of the grid lines and infrastructure? Is there true diversity and fairness of the marketplace or are we putting too many eggs in one basket, meaning one proponent or group of investors allowed too much control the development and function of the grid?**

“Federal authorities are not providing financial support for this project”.

I ask this question as Nova Scotia Power, a subsidiary of Emera currently generates most of Nova Scotia’s electricity and therefore influences power rates based on investor returns. Most Nova Scotians are not happy with how this company is profiting from the grid and rates. I would argue that electricity is a lifeline of our province and control of power rates by Nova Scotians are paramount in the development of projects as consumers transition to renewable and environmentally protective forms of energy as well as continued operation of the various projects. I can say, that there is information on the internet but most of it is scattered and requires study to understand the proposals, plans, and implications. I say this in context of Pictou County electrical power projects and Nova Scotia Power.

Water Resources Usage: Clarification please confirm figures

1. Water on Site: water supply and storage

- Drilled wells to supply raw water to the site. Raw water will be stored on the site.

Freshwater 3.3.2.3

Preliminary desktop investigations estimate a peak raw water consumption of 175 m³/hr, and average *annual consumption of 23 to 31 m³/hr based on the expected power plant operation.*

175 m³/hr peak consumption = 38,494.6 imp gallons or 175,000 litres per hour
or 923,880 imp gallons or 4,200,000 litres per day.

31 m³/hr average annual consumption = 6,819 imp gal/hour or 31,000 litres/hour average annual consumption or 163,656 imp gal/daily or 744,000 litres/daily average annual consumption

Two 1,500 m³ raw water/fire water tanks = 329,954 imp gal x 2 = 650,908 imp gallons supply

Four 750 m³ tanks for demineralize water = 164,977 imp gal per tank x 4 = 659,808 total demineralized water. (*Is this water left from the raw water demineralized?*)

2. Water treatment for emissions and cooling

- Raw water will be demineralized through a water treatment system. Demineralized water will be stored on the site in the 4 tanks as calculated previously then released at the rate below once used in *combustion turbines and for emissions control in stack.*

What is the water treatment system to be used?

50m³/hour demineralized water release - 10,999 imp gal /hour or 263,976 imp gal/day

3. Residual Process water treatment

- Concentrated water with elevated mineral content will be residual to the water treatment process. The concentrated water will be neutralized, tested for quality, **and stored in a settling pond for a controlled release.**

- *Oil/water separator system to process rainwater drainage from the fuel storage tank containment.*
- *Oil/water separator system to process drainage from other areas where oil and fuel products are handled and there is the potential for spillage to the drainage system.*
- *Neutralization system and wastewater property monitoring system for demineralized water treatment plant wastewater.*
- *Settling pond to receive stormwater and wastewater and manage release rates.*

Water release rates must be controlled to ensure there are no adverse impacts to receiving points or watercourses such as erosion or effects on aquatic life. Who is responsible for this after this?

4. Stormwater retention ponds

- Site drainage water will be collected and tested prior to controlled release.

Wastewater and stormwater management systems will ensure water discharge and runoff from the site meet Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) Guidelines.

During operations, stormwater will be managed by directed runoff into a settling pond through

diversion and collection ditches, roadside drainage channels, and/or vegetated swales. Wastewater will also be released into the settling pond after going through a neutralization system. Stormwater will be treated to ensure CCME FWAL guidelines and NS Tier I EQS are met, then released at a controlled rate.

The effluent pipe line or drainage line goes from the holding pond and then flows into tributary of 6 Mile Brook. This effluent should be monitored by the Department of Fisheries should have input into this part of the design and management. As stated previously “compliance with the Fisheries Act is not anticipated at this time”.

At what point are the Department of Fisheries Involved?

Public Water use vs Water use by Plant

The public presentation information indicates that the water usage for natural gas generating plant is equivalent to 750 homes. This is an arbitrary comparison as we do not know what you are basing this on. Let's estimate 4 person family and normal water use per day (showers, laundry, toilet flushing, based on 2021 Canadian usage as per internet).

Family Use:

223 litres per day per person or 892 litres per day for 4 persons per day
x 750 households = **669,000 litres per day**
49.05 imp gal per day per person or 196 imp gallons for 4 persons per day
x 750 households = **147,000 imp gal per day**

Peak daily water usage approx raw water

923,880 imp gallons or 4,200,000 litres per day.

Average annual consumption usage based on 31 m3/hr

163,656 imp gal/daily or 744,000 litres/daily average annual consumption

Two storage tanks on site (total)

650,908 imp gallons supply or

Four demineralized water storage tanks (total)

659,808 imp gal total demineralize

Peak water use has been indicated to be in the summer months which could adversely affect local residence and their supply. 12 wells are to be dug to confirm adequate water supply. This of great concern to local residence. *Who will be monitoring this? Are residents compensated for water supply issues?*

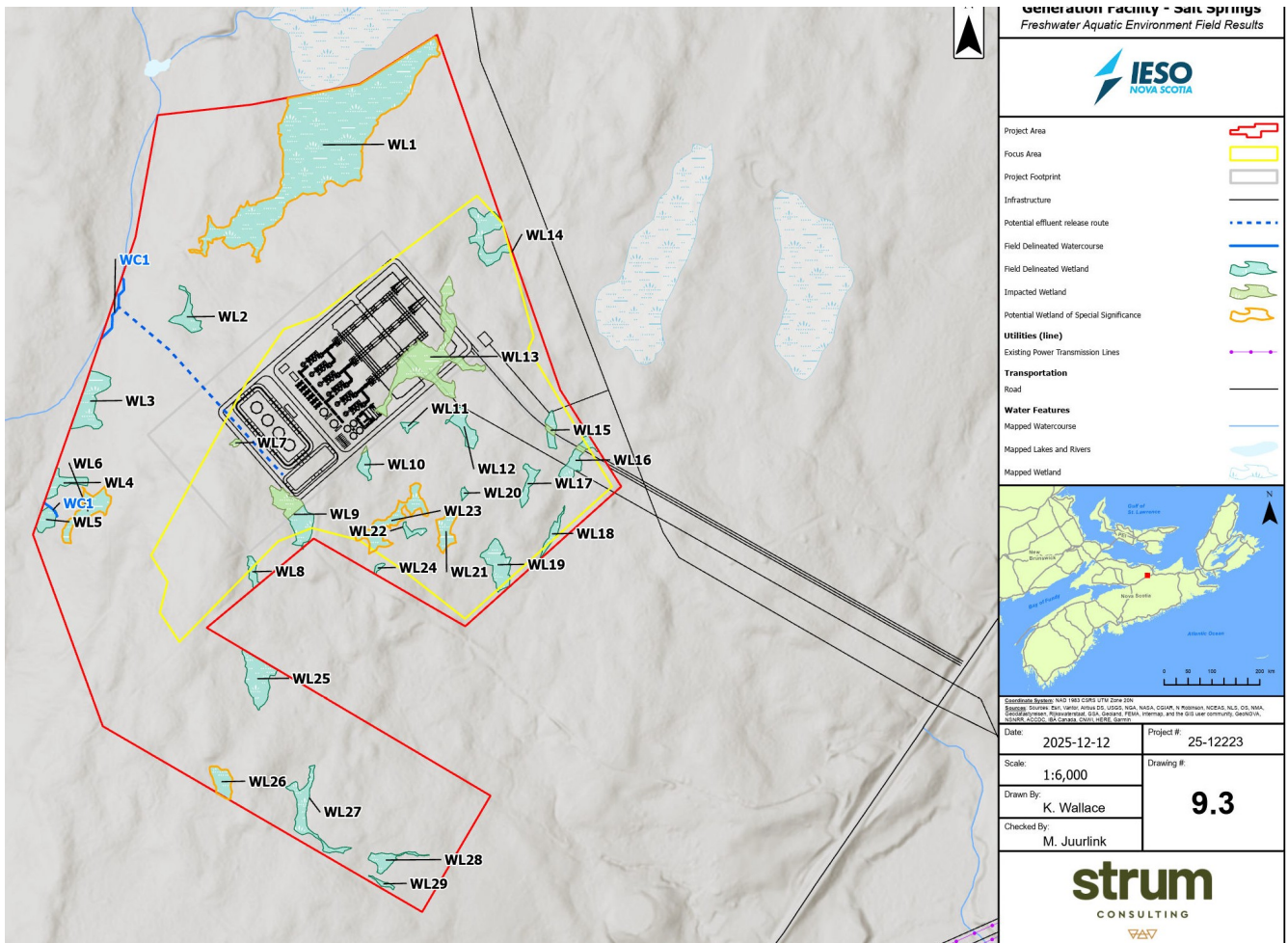
Suggestions:

I would suggest water use is increased with the use of oil. Since this fuel source creates the highest environmental risk, I strongly suggest to remove oil from the process. This would reduce the risk of oil storage, oil tank maintenance, spills, emissions, and treatment. Propane, Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) or other alternative clean sources of energy should be investigated. The combined cycle natural gas generating plant which uses hot exhaust gas emissions to generate more electricity and recaptures and recycles water back into the system creating a closed loop process. Emissions are minimal. Although the initial costs are higher, the reduction in risk, monitoring, and greater efficiency should out-way the use of oil.

We have a bio gas supply at our local Pictou County Solid Waste Treatment Plant which should have been assessed for its usage as a development llocation for a “PEAK” electrical plant. The landfill is positioned strategically and seems ideal for this type of plant. The Middle River is a great water supply, major electrical transmission lines and the Michelin Natural Gas supply line are close by, and a major Trans Canada Highway 106 can provide an access corridor to the site. Already an industrial area, this site may present a reduced imprint on the environment or the surrounding residents. Why create havoc in another area, if you can see a symbiotic relationship with existing industries and their technologies? There may be reduced costs assoiciated with this relationship. Was this considered? I would suggest that Saltsprings, location may be out of sight from the road but not out of mind.

Please answer questions as they relate in this document.

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Wetlands Identified

