

Hello,

The Ontario government is updating the almost 50-year-old environmental assessment (EA) program to support building safer and stronger communities, while maintaining strong environmental oversight.

That's why, over the past two years, the government has been working to build a strong environmental assessment program that considers the input of local communities and focuses on projects that have the highest impact to the environment. As part of this plan, we are developing sensible, practical changes that would ensure environmental protection while reducing delays on infrastructure projects that matter most to Ontario communities.

As you may be aware, the ministry has been consulting on a proposed list of projects which would be subject to the comprehensive environmental assessment requirements in Part II.3 of the *Environmental Assessment Act* (to be proclaimed). The notice can be found at: <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-2377>.

I am writing today to share some information with you on the ministry's new proposal to update the environmental assessment requirements for establishing electricity transmission line projects. These proposed changes, if approved, will update EA requirements for critical transmission infrastructure to support expanded access to lower carbon energy sources from Ontario's electricity grid, promote regional economic development and shorten-times for building critical infrastructure projects across the province.

The proposed changes, if made, would update the thresholds that determine which projects are required to undergo an individual (comprehensive) EA process. This would align the thresholds with those used by the federal government for international electrical transmission lines to help streamline the approvals process for critical transmission infrastructure.

We are proposing that transmission lines 75 km or more in length and 345 kV or greater in voltage would be required to complete an individual environmental assessment. We are also proposing that establishing other transmission lines that are more than 2 km in length and with a nominal voltage of 115 kV or more would follow the Class Environmental Assessment for Minor Transmission Facilities (Class EA), as amended from time to time.

Details of our policy proposal, including the proposed thresholds for transmission line projects are available on the Environmental Registry of Ontario here: <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-3937>.

### **How you can provide input**

The ministry is looking for your feedback on our proposal to update the environmental assessment requirements for transmission line projects.

Please review the proposal and submit your comments via the Environmental Registry of Ontario here or directly by e-mail to [EAmmodernization.mecp@ontario.ca](mailto:EAmmodernization.mecp@ontario.ca) by **September 3, 2021**.

Please do not hesitate to contact the ministry at [EAmmodernization.mecp@ontario.ca](mailto:EAmmodernization.mecp@ontario.ca) with any questions you may have at any time.

Sincerely,

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