

Broadband for Rural
And Northern Development

Pilot Program

Guidance for Community Champions
on
Environmental Assessment

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Preface

The purpose of this guidance document on environmental assessment is to assist Community Champions in understanding federal environmental assessment requirements for Broadband Pilot Program proposals and the roles and responsibilities of Community Champions in meeting those requirements.

This document is intended to:

- Inform Community Champions on Industry Canada’s environmental assessment obligations attached to its Broadband Pilot Program funding decisions;
- Provide guidance to Community Champions on expectations placed upon them in terms of their roles and responsibilities in working with Industry Canada to fulfill environmental assessment obligations;
- Provide broader contextual information on environmental assessment process and procedures being followed by the Broadband Pilot Program; and,
- Provide guidance to support Community Champions in meeting their responsibilities.

For further information and advice Community Champions are encouraged to contact regional Broadband Pilot Program officers.

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Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms

Introduction

Broadband access is an important component of an innovative economy. The Government of Canada is committed to ensuring that all Canadian communities have access to the benefits of the Broadband revolution and to making Canada the most connected nation in the world by 2005.

While ensuring that communities have access to Broadband is a priority, the Government is also committed to Sustainable Development. A key feature of Canada's strategy to foster sustainable development involves assessing the environmental effects of projects, prior to finalising decisions to approve them for implementation. Prescribed projects, where the Government of Canada has decision-making authority, must be subjected to an environmental assessment pursuant to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA).

Industry Canada is obligated to fulfill its environmental assessment responsibilities associated with any funding decisions in implementing the Broadband Pilot Program. To accomplish this, Industry Canada has retained the services of Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) to determine which projects will have to be subjected to an environmental assessment and to complete required environmental assessments using information provided by Community Champions.

This guidance document is intended to assist project Community Champions in understanding the environmental assessment process under CEAA, Industry Canada's related accountabilities, the tasks being completed by PWGSC, and information that Community Champions may be asked to provide in support of environmental assessment.

Environmental Assessment

Environmental assessment by the Government of Canada is an analysis of the environmental effects, and social and economic effects that result from environmental effects, of a proposed project, completed while the project is still in the planning stages. Environmental assessment examines interactions between a project and the environment, and the effects of those interactions on the environment and people, over time. It is a useful tool for ensuring that a project will have positive benefits without incurring long term environmental costs.

Community Champions should be aware that information that is submitted to Industry Canada in support of environmental assessment is available to the public.

Primer on Federal Environmental Assessment

To balance environmental considerations with economic and social considerations in decision-making on projects, the Government of Canada enacted the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA), in 1995. CEAA places a legal obligation upon federal government departments and specified agencies to ensure that an environmental assessment of projects is completed before irrevocable decisions to proceed are taken.

The purpose of CEAA is to:

- Ensure environmental effects of projects are fully considered before taking action;
- Eliminate or minimize adverse effects;
- Provide an opportunity for public participation; and,
- Promote sustainable development.

Under CEAA, there are four levels of assessment: Screening; Comprehensive Study; Mediation; and, Panel Review. Most Broadband projects requiring environmental assessment will be subject to a screening level assessment only.

Under CEAA, there is a requirement to post information on a Public Registry. This means that details on your project will be made available to the public prior to project approval.

The federal government is currently in the legislative process to revise CEAA. The package of amendments (Bill C-9) has received Royal Assent and is expected to take effect in the fall of 2003. Amendments to CEAA may affect application of environmental assessment to the Broadband Pilot Program; however, it is not expected that these amendments will affect the environmental assessment information that Community Champions may be asked to provide.

Will an Environmental Assessment be Required?

The flowchart depicted in Figure 1 sets out the basic steps in determining whether a proposed project triggers the need for environmental assessment under CEAA. Since PWGSC has been retained to fulfill Industry Canada's responsibilities under CEAA, PWGSC will make this determination and submit its recommendations to the Broadband Pilot Program for approval. Business plan modifications may be possible that could mean your proposal may not require an environmental assessment under CEAA. If applicable, options to modify the proposal should be discussed with your Broadband Pilot Program contact. You will be notified by the Broadband Pilot Program if your accepted proposal triggers the need for an environmental assessment under CEAA. The following text outlines the process PWGSC will follow in making this determination.

Step 1: Is there a federal decision triggering CEAA?

There are four categories of decisions that trigger the requirement for an environmental assessment under CEAA. The four categories of decisions are:

- Decision to provide **financial support** to a project;
- Decision to **transfer an interest in land** to enable a project;
- Federal authority is the **proponent** of the project; and,
- Federal **regulatory decision** specified in the Law List Regulation (e.g. *Fisheries Act* Authorization to harm fish habitat; *Navigable Waters Protection Act* Permit to interfere with navigation; Industry Canada Communications Tower Licence).

Industry Canada's decision to fund a "project" under the Broadband Program triggers the requirement for an environmental assessment under CEAA.

Other organizations within the federal government may also have a requirement to complete an environmental assessment for your proposed project. These are discussed below.

Industry Canada may have other **funding** programs that could trigger the need for an environmental assessment for your Broadband project. If you are expecting funding from other sources such as:

- Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency: <http://www.acoa.ca/>
- Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions: <http://www.dec-ced.gc.ca/>
- FedNor: <http://fednor.ic.gc.ca/>
- Western Economic Diversification: <http://www.wd.gc.ca/>
- Aboriginal Business Canada: <http://abc-eac.ic.gc.ca/>

Industry Canada may have a **regulatory** decision trigger under the *Radiocommunications Act*. The decision to issue a licence to install and operate a radio transmitter in Canada may trigger CEAA. Contact information may be found at:
Spectrum: http://sitt.ic.gc.ca/sitt/portal/jsp/splash_page.jsp

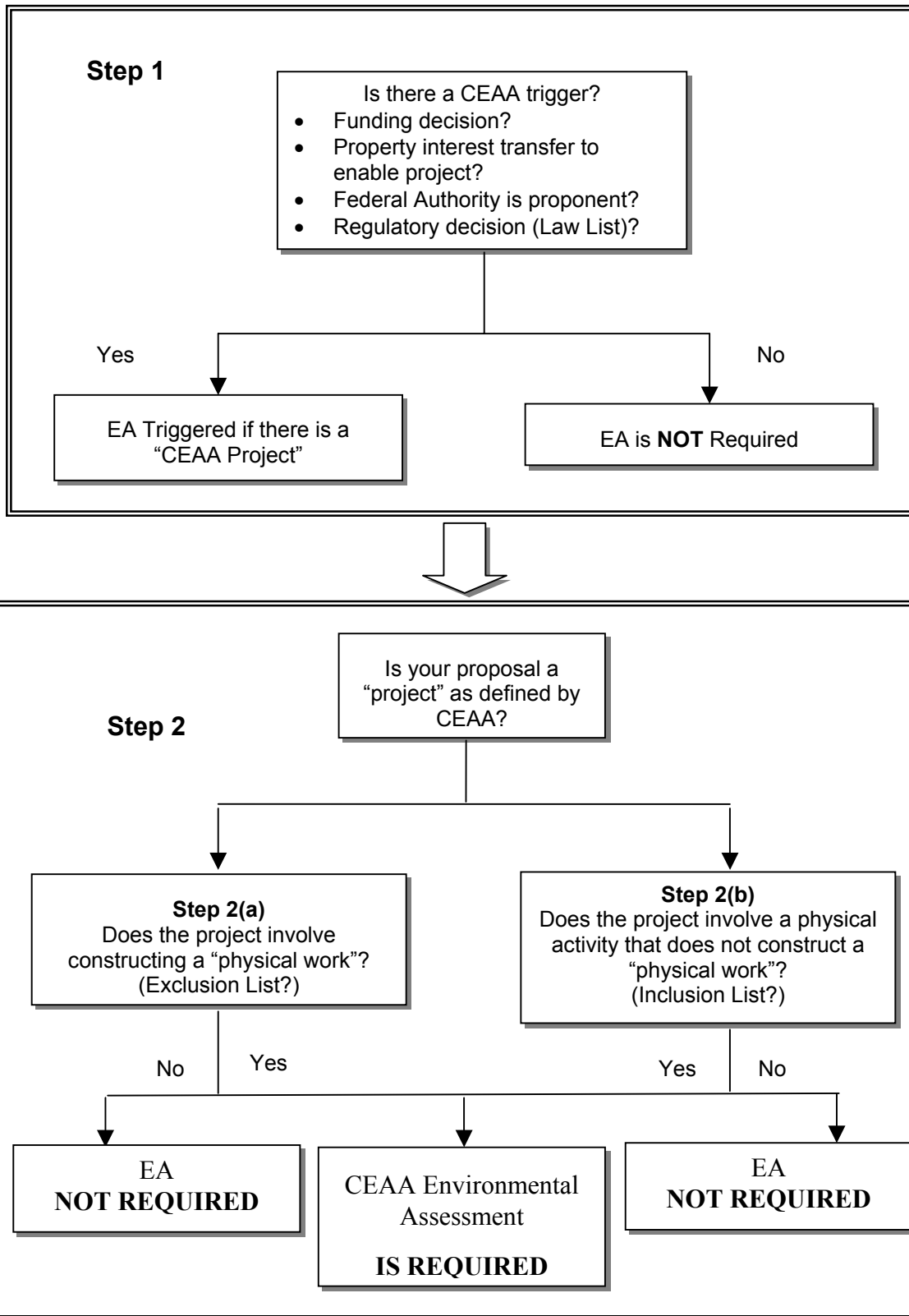


Figure 1. Determining Whether an Environmental Assessment is Required

Federal Coordination

Other federal government departments may also have to take a decision on your project and that decision could also trigger the need for an environmental assessment. Other departments may be taking funding decisions. Certain federal regulatory decisions (cited on the CEAA Law List Regulation) also trigger the need for an environmental assessment (e.g. *Fisheries Act* – authorization to harm fish habitat; *Navigable Waters Protection Act* – permit to interfere with navigability of a waterway). Each federal department must ensure that an environmental assessment is completed; however, only one assessment is to be completed for each project. PWGSC will be responsible for ensuring that federal coordination obligations are met; however, Community Champions may be required to provide information on the project, environment and other approvals being sought, to facilitate identification of implicated departments and coordination. Your Broadband Pilot Program contact can provide a list of relevant federal contacts and will facilitate discussions with them if necessary.

The Federal Coordination Regulations exist to facilitate managing situations where one or more departments may have a role to play in an environmental assessment. The regulations apply to federal departments only, and require them to consult and coordinate with other federal departments. Community Champions should be aware of the potential involvement of other federal departments and should take this into account in planning for a Broadband project.

Note: There can be more than one federal department required to complete an environmental assessment for your project. Other federal departments may also be Responsible Authorities. PWGSC will ensure coordination of environmental assessments and conclusions.

Some federal departments that could become involved are listed below.

Environment Canada: information on migratory birds, air quality, climate and the aquatic environment. Regulatory decisions under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* (CEPA) to issue Ocean Disposal Permits trigger CEAA.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO): possible regulatory triggers and information on fish, fish habitat and the aquatic environment. If fish habitat is to be harmed then a *Fisheries Act* Authorization is required and the decision to Authorize triggers CEAA. Decision to issue a *Navigable Waters Protection Act* Permit also triggers CEAA.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC): possible funding triggers, environmental assessment responsibilities for Reserve Lands or in the territories, regulatory triggers in the north including decisions to issue Land Use Permits on federal Crown Lands.

Step 2: Do you have a “Project” as defined by CEAA?

Environmental assessments are required for “projects” as defined by CEAA. A “CEAA project” may be:

Step 2
Is your proposal a “project” as defined by CEAA?

- An undertaking in relation to a “physical work” that is not excluded (Exclusion List Regulation); or,
- A “physical activity” not relating to a physical work that is named in the Inclusion List Regulation.

Few Broadband projects are expected to fall into the Physical Activity category and be named on the Inclusion List.

Physical Works and Exclusion Examples

All “physical works” are subject to environmental assessment unless they are so small and innocuous that they have been listed in the Exclusion List Regulation pursuant to CEAA.

Examples of projects relevant to the Broadband Pilot Program that could be excluded are set out below:

Step 2 (a)
Is the “physical work” so small and/or innocuous that it is excluded?
(CEAA Exclusion List Regulation)

- proposed construction, installation, expansion or modification of a radio communication antenna and supporting structure that:
 - is not carried out within 30 metres of a water body
 - would not involve the release of a polluting substance into a water body
 - has the following:
 - antenna attached to an existing building
 - antenna situated less than 15 metres from an existing building
 - neither the antenna nor its supporting structure has a footprint greater than 25 m²
- operation of a physical work that has been previously subjected to a federal environmental assessment and the effects have been determined to be not significant, and mitigation and follow-up has been implemented;
- construction of a building with a footprint of less than 100 m² that is not within 30 metres of a water body and is not likely to release a polluting substance into a water body;

- footprint of physical work is less than 25 m² and the physical work is not within 30 metres of a water body and is not likely to release a polluting substance into a water body;
- expansion or modification of an existing road carried out on existing right of way that would not lengthen the road, widen the road by more than 15%, be carried out within 30 metres of a water body, or involve release of a polluting substance into a water body;
- proposed expansion of an existing building that would not increase the footprint or height by more than 10%, be carried out within 30 metres of a water body, and is not likely to release a polluting substance into a water body.

The CEAA Exclusion List Regulation may be found at:
http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/0011/excllist_e.htm

Physical Activities and Inclusion List Examples

Physical activities that are not related to a physical work are not subject to environmental assessment unless they are listed in the Inclusion List Regulation pursuant to CEAA.

Examples of projects relevant to the Broadband Pilot Program that could be on the Inclusion List are set out below:

Step 2(b)

Is the “physical activity” one that requires an environmental assessment?

(CEAA Inclusion List Regulation)

- alteration of a shoreline, stabilization of a slope and/or erosion control in a national park;
- physical activities relating to establishment or relocation of a winter road;
- harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat by means of:
 - dredge or fill operations
 - erosion control measures adjacent to a water body;
 - removal of vegetation in or adjacent to a water body;
- physical activities outside a national park that threaten the continued existence of a biological population;
- deposit of oil, oil wastes or any other substance harmful to migratory birds that requires authorization under paragraph 35(2)(b) of the *Migratory Birds Regulations* (i.e., no person shall deposit or permit to be deposited oil, oil wastes or any other substance harmful to migratory birds in any waters or any area frequented by migratory birds unless authorized by a regulation or by the Minister for scientific purposes).
- physical activities that require a licence under paragraph 4(2) of the *Federal Real Property Regulations* to use or occupy federal lands (i.e., Minister may provide utilities and other

services on or from federal real property that is under the Minister's administration and may impose fees, charges and rates for those services.).

The CEAA Inclusion List Regulation may be found at:
http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/0011/incllist_e.htm

Broadband Pilot Program Approach to Environmental Assessment

The Broadband Pilot Program is taking decisions on whether to provide financial support to projects. The projects are proposed by “Community Champions” that know the details of the project proposal as well as the relevant environmental considerations.

The Broadband Pilot Program has retained PWGSC to complete environmental assessments that will fulfill Industry Canada’s responsibilities under CEAA. In order to facilitate completion of environmental assessments, the Community Champion is expected to provide relevant project and environment information to PWGSC / Broadband Pilot Program to facilitate completion of environmental assessments.

The PWGSC environmental assessments must be completed such that the Industry Canada Broadband Pilot Program will be able to concur with conclusions on the significance of predicted environmental effects. Industry Canada cannot legally delegate this responsibility and will review the analysis submitted by PWGSC and draw its own conclusions on significance of effects before deciding to finalise funding arrangements. Other CEAA Responsible Authorities, if there are any, must also draw their own conclusions on significance of effects and PWGSC will coordinate to ensure that compatible and timely conclusions are arrived at.

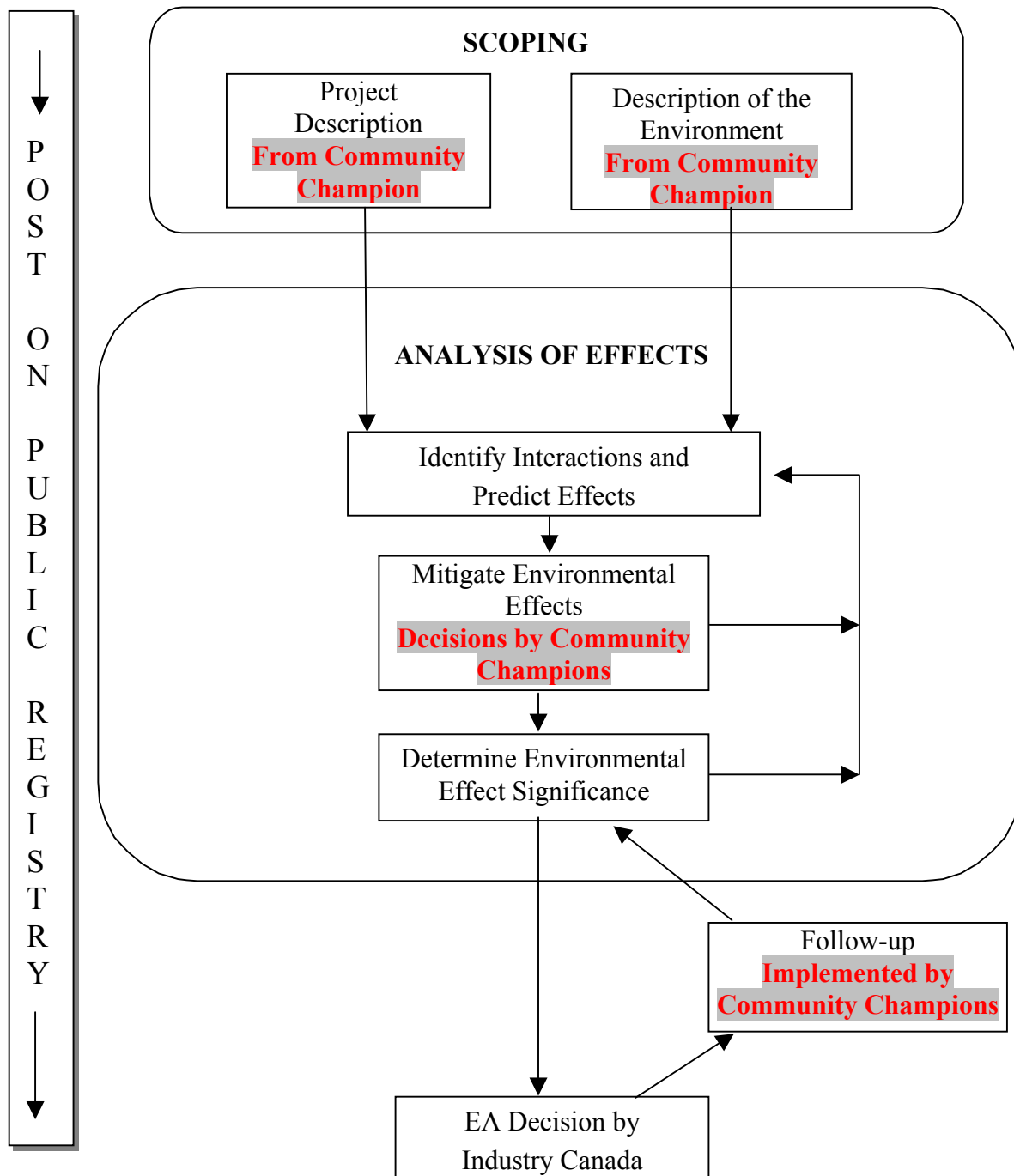
Information for the Environmental Assessment

Community Champions are responsible for providing information needed by PWGSC to complete the environmental assessments. This document explains the environmental assessment process to show how the information will be used and provides guidance for Community Champions to facilitate this requirement.

It is important for Community Champions to recognize that the information they provide for the environmental assessment, will become publicly available.

A flowchart depicting the major steps in the environmental assessment process is presented below. The text that follows the flow chart outlines the general process PWGSC will follow in completing an environmental assessment, and points in the process where information will be needed from Community Champions.

MAJOR STEPS IN A SCREENING LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



Completing an Environmental Assessment

The major steps in completing an environmental assessment under CEAA are set out below. Areas where Community Champions will be required to provide input to PWGSC are identified.

Scoping

Scoping is conducted at the outset, and defines the aspects of the Project and the Environment that are "in" or "out" of the assessment. The scope may be adjusted iteratively as new information or changes to the project arise. PWGSC will request the information necessary for scoping. The information should be readily available to Community Champions from the Business Plan and their familiarity with the existing environment in the project area.

At this early stage, it is important to identify to PWGSC all the potential stakeholders that may be involved / affected by your business plan proposal. Stakeholders may include, but not be limited to:

- other federal government departments;
- provincial / territorial governments;
- municipal governments;
- First Nations and Inuit people; and,
- the public.

Some of these stakeholders may be involved because they:

- have their own environmental assessment processes to be followed;
- can provide information relevant to your proposal; or,
- have concerns with what is being proposed.

The need for broader public consultation on a given project will be made by the Broadband Pilot Program based upon recommendations from PWGSC and consultation with Community Champions.

Project Description

The main steps in developing a Project Description are:

- Describe all project components and associated activities that were identified as being within the scope of the assessment, particularly those that may interact with the environment;
- Describe the life-cycle aspects of the project, including but not limited to: site preparation, construction, operation, modification, decommissioning and abandonment; and,
- Adjust the scope and project description as new information becomes available during the assessment.

PWGSC will need this information from Community Champions. The information should be readily available from the Business Plan proposal, although there will likely be a need to focus more on the technical aspects (i.e. site plans, drawings, construction plans, schedule, operating plans, project lifespan, etc.).

The information required will include:

- General information (project name, proponent name and contact information, location, type of project, project contacts, federal involvement, authorizations required, etc.);
- Project information
 - project components
 - structures
 - activities
 - material resources needed to construct and operate
 - wastes generated and plans for disposal
 - project site information (project location, terrain characteristics, land use, etc.); and,
 - requirements related to approvals and permits.

The level of detail required in a project description is often a function of the potential for environmental effects. The appropriate level of detail will be determined during the scoping process and can be iterative in nature, so more than one request for project information may be needed to effectively describe it for the environmental assessment.

Description of the Environment

A description of the environment involves describing relevant elements of the physical and biological environment within the zone of influence of the project and the scope. The description of the environment should also include elements of the socio-economic and cultural environment that could be affected by changes to the physical and biological environment resulting from the project. The environmental components included in an environment description vary depending upon the characteristics of the local environment and the nature of the project.

Components of the physical and biological environment that are normally included in an environmental assessment include, but may not be limited to:

- atmosphere;
- soils and soil conditions;
- vegetation;
- surface water (wetlands, swamps, drainage patterns, etc.);
- groundwater;
- watercourses (rivers, lakes, streams, etc.);
- fish and fish habitat;
- wildlife;
- endangered species, species of concern; and,
- protected and / or environmentally sensitive areas.

Components of the socio-economic and cultural environments that are normally included in an environmental assessment include, but may not be limited to:

- local land / resource use;
- recreation in the area;
- economics associated with the use or harvesting of resources that could be affected by the project;
- aesthetics;
- human health;
- physical and cultural heritage;
- current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes by Aboriginal people; and,
- features that are of historical, archaeological, paleontological or architectural significance.

To obtain information needed for preparing the environment description, a site visit by the Community Champion or its representative may be necessary. In the information provided to PWGSC, it will be important to situate the project area on a topographical map in relation to key features of the environment.

The information to support preparation of the environment description should focus on the most relevant components of the environment. Additional information on the natural environment and related socio-economic and cultural environments is generally available from government agencies at the local, provincial/territorial and federal levels through their websites or contacts, and from other stakeholders (i.e., First Nations and Inuit people, interest groups). The need for additional expertise, should it be warranted, to obtain information for the environment description will be determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with your Broadband Pilot Program contact and PWGSC.

The extent to which detailed information is needed to support an environmental assessment is often dependent upon the potential of the project to cause adverse effects. As a Community Champion, it will be important to ensure the reliability of the information being provided to PWGSC. The sources of information (i.e., field studies, published documents, literature, etc.) will need to be identified and the reliability of the information confirmed. Existing information sources are the most cost-effective; however, it is important to verify their quality and accuracy. When the need arises to obtain new information, the design, management and collection of new information should be conducted by a person/group with the necessary expertise.

Analysis and Prediction of Effects

Identify and describe environmental effects by:

- Identifying interactions between the Project and the Environment.
- Describing the environmental effects arising from those interactions, using quantitative, factual information to the greatest extent possible.

At this step, the information that is provided by the Community Champion to describe the Project and the relevant Environment will be used by PWGSC to identify the interactions and describe environmental effects. The description of environmental effects will be based upon predictions of the timing, duration, magnitude, geographical extent, reversibility, ecological context and social context of the effect.

Mitigation

Identify and describe measures to avoid, eliminate or minimize potential adverse environmental effects with emphasis on avoiding effects that could be considered significant.

It will become the responsibility of Community Champions to implement any mitigation measures that are identified in the environmental assessment, particularly those effects that may avoid or minimize adverse effects considered significant. Responsibility to implement mitigation measures may be identified as a condition of the funding agreement between Industry Canada and the Community Champion.

Determine Significance of Effects

Describe the “residual environmental effects” that are predicted to remain after the effective application of mitigation measures.

PWGSC will draw conclusions on the significance of those residual environmental effects. The Broadband Pilot Program will then be required to review and approve / endorse the conclusions of PWGSC.

The analysis of effects is an iterative process and there may be a requirement for additional information or clarification from the Community Champion, if PWGSC requires the information during its analysis. The timely submission of requested information by Community Champions will aid in the effective completion of the environmental assessment.

Why a Significance Determination is Required

“Significance” is an important term in Environmental Assessment. If the environmental effects of a project are determined to be “significant”, then more in-depth environmental assessment is required, through Mediation or a Public Panel Review. In some cases, the project might not proceed at all if the significant environmental effects cannot be justified. The term “significant” is generally not defined in environmental assessment legislation, particularly the federal legislation in CEAA. It is up to the environmental assessment team to define “significant environmental effects” in the context of the EA, and then determine whether the project will cause those environmental effects. Mediation and Public Panel Review occur relatively infrequently, and are not generally expected to arise for projects funded from the Broadband Pilot Program.

Follow-up

Follow-up involves plans for monitoring to ensure that mitigation measures are implemented effectively and environmental assessment predictions are accurate. The conclusions of an environmental assessment may identify the need for follow-up, particularly if there is some uncertainty about the effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures. Should the need for follow-up be identified, responsibility for implementation will fall to the Community Champion. Details regarding follow-up requirements should be discussed with your Broadband Pilot Program contact to determine the appropriate steps to be followed.

Environmental Assessment Sign-off

The environmental assessments completed by PWGSC must be completed such that the Industry Canada Broadband Pilot Program will be able to sign-off on the conclusions regarding significance of predicted environmental effects. Industry Canada cannot legally delegate its responsibility to draw these conclusions on significance of environmental effects. The Industry Canada Broadband Pilot Program will review the analysis submitted by PWGSC and draw its own conclusions on the significance of effects before finalising funding arrangements.

Summary

In order for Industry Canada to fulfill its environmental assessment responsibilities associated with Broadband Pilot Program funding decisions, it has retained the services of PWGSC to determine which projects will have to be subjected to an environmental assessment and to complete the required environmental assessments using information provided by Community Champions.

Ultimately, the Industry Canada Broadband Pilot Program, in its review of the business plan proposal, and based on the recommendation of PWGSC, will make the final determination on whether an environmental assessment is required.

Business plan modifications may be possible that could result in your proposal being excluded from the requirement to have an environmental assessment completed under CEAA. If applicable, these options to modify the proposal should be discussed with your Broadband Pilot Program contact.

You will be notified by the Broadband Pilot Program if your accepted proposal triggers the need for an environmental assessment under CEAA.

If the environmental assessment process is triggered, the information provided by the Community Champion will be critical and essential to the timely and effective completion of the assessment by PWGSC. Information on the Project, Environment, Key Stakeholders and any other relevant matter may be incorporated during any/all stages of the environmental assessment process will be needed. The timely receipt of accurate, reliable information will ensure that an effective assessment is undertaken, and that mitigation measures are identified to protect the environment from potential adverse environmental effects arising from the project. Community Champions need to be aware that, because environmental assessment is a public process, information provided will be made available to the public on the CEAA Public Registry.

The Industry Canada Broadband Pilot Program will review the analysis submitted by PWGSC and draw its own conclusions on the significance of adverse environmental effects before deciding to finalise funding arrangements. Conditions of funding may include but not be limited to commitments to implement mitigation measures and, if necessary, follow-up.

APPENDIX 1

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

Act. The *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

Agency. The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency.

Biodiversity. Refers to the variety of life on earth: the number of plants and animals and other organisms that exist on our planet and the variety within these species and the ecosystems they inhabit.

Boundary. A limitation conferred by space, time, or ecology as well as political, social and economic factors.

Cumulative Effects. The incremental effect of an action when added to other past, present or reasonably foreseeable actions.

Direct Effect. An effect which follows as a direct cause-effect consequence of a project activity.

Ecosystem. A community of interdependent plants, animals and other living organisms (including humans) together with the environment with supports them and with which they interact.

Environment. There is no generally agreed definition of environment in Environmental Assessment. For the purposes of the Act, it is defined as the components of the Earth, and includes:

- a) land, water and air, including all layers of the atmosphere;
- b) all organic and inorganic matter and living organisms; and
- c) the interacting natural systems that include components referred to in paragraphs a) and b).

Increasingly, it means the complex web of inter-relationships between abiotic and biotic components which sustain all life on earth, including the social/health aspects of human group existence.

Environmental Assessment (EA)/Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The systematic, reproducible and interdisciplinary identification, prediction and evaluation, mitigation and management of effects from a proposed development and its reasonable alternatives.

Environmental Component. Any of the various aspects of the physical or social environment, at any scale, that has been identified as being relevant to the assessment process.

Environmental Effect. Any change that the project may cause in the environment, including any effect of such change on health and socioeconomic conditions, on physical

and cultural heritage, on the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes by aboriginal persons, or on any structure, site, or thing that is of historical, archaeological, paleontological or architectural significance, and any change to the project that may be caused by the environment, whether any such change occurs within or outside Canada.

Exclusion List. A list of projects or classes of projects that have been prescribed pursuant to the regulations made under CEAA paragraph 59 (c); the regulation describes those undertakings in relation to physical works that do not require an environmental assessment because the environmental effects of the project are insignificant.

Federal Authority. A federal Minister of the Crown; an agency or other body of the federal government ultimately accountable to Parliament through a federal Minister of the Crown; any federal department or departmental corporations set out in Schedule I or II to the *Financial Administration Act*; and any other body prescribed in the Act's regulations.

Follow Up. Accuracy of the environmental assessment is verified and effectiveness of mitigation measures is determined.

Follow Up Program. Follow Up Programs have specific meaning under the CEAA. They are recommended where long term mitigation measures have been identified, or if new mitigation measures or technologies are to be used.

Inclusion List. A regulation pursuant to CEAA that lists physical activities not relating to physical works for which an environmental assessment is required.

Indirect Effect. An environmental effect that is at least one step removed from a project activity in terms of cause-effect linkages.

Interaction. A process by which a change in the condition of one component of the environment causes a change in another.

Harmonization. A process by which a single EA of a project that has triggered multiple EA processes from different levels of government is completed. This process will ensure that the requirements of the specific EA processes are met within the single EA. Harmonization agreements between provinces and the Federal Government exist that describe this relationship.

Law List. A regulation pursuant to CEAA that lists the statutory and regulatory decisions that trigger the requirement for an environmental assessment.

Mitigation. The elimination, reduction or control of the adverse environmental effects of a project, and includes restitution for any damage to the environment caused by such effects through replacement, restoration, compensation or other means.

Monitoring. The collection and analysis of relevant data for the purpose of evaluating the adequacy of project effect predictions and mitigation measures, improving project management methods, and developing capability for future environmental assessments.

Physical Activity. Any proposed activity not relating to a physical work (a permanent, constructed thing) that is listed in the CEAA Inclusion List Regulation and triggers the requirement for an assessment.

Physical Work. Any proposed construction, operation, modification, decommissioning, abandonment or other undertaking in relation to a physical structure (when something is a fixed, physical thing which has been or will be constructed; it must have a permanent location).

Project. Means,

- a) in relation to a physical work, any proposed construction, operation, modification, decommissioning, abandonment or other undertaking in relation to that physical work, or
- b) any proposed physical activity not relating to a physical work that is prescribed or is within a class of physical activities that is prescribed pursuant to regulations made under paragraph 59 (b) (i.e. CEAA Inclusion List Regulation).

Proponent. Organization (private or public sector) or individual intending to implement a development project.

Public Registry. A database system established by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency in order to facilitate public access to documentation relating to federal environmental assessments. Industry Canada is responsible for inputting and updating information.

Residual environmental effects. Adverse predicted environmental effects that remain after mitigation measures have been applied.

Responsible Authority. The federal department, agency, or Minister whose actions or authority trigger environmental assessment of a particular project.

Scoping. A process by which all relevant issues and concerns related to the proposed project or activity and assessment are identified and prioritized.

Screening. An environmental assessment that is conducted pursuant to CEAA Section 18 and that includes a consideration of the factors set out in Subsection 16(1).

Significance. The relative importance of an issue, concern or environmental effect, as measured by prevailing standards, regulatory requirements and social values.

Sustainable Development. Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge. A body of knowledge built up by a group of people through generations of living in close contact with nature.

Valued Ecosystem Component (VEC). The environmental attributes or elements that are identified as having scientific, social, cultural, economic, historical, archaeological or aesthetic significance or work.