NOVA SCOTIA
Environment and Climate Change

Comment Index

EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties

Comment Period End Date: April 5, 2025

Government

Number	Source	Date Received
1	Impact Assessment Agency of Canada	March 4, 2025
2	Health Canada	March 7, 2025
3	Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change – Sustainability and Applied Science Division (Protected Areas)	March 11, 2025
4	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	March 14, 2025
5	Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs	March 25, 2025
6	Transport Canada	March 25, 2025
7	Nova Scotia Department of Public Works	March 26, 2025
8	Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change - Sustainability and Applied Science Division (Air Quality Unit)	March 27, 2025
9	Environment and Climate Change Canada	March 27, 2025
10	Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries & Aquaculture	March 27, 2025
11	Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change – Climate Change Division	March 27, 2025
12	Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture	March 27, 2025
13	Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage	March 27, 2025
14	Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change - Inspection, Compliance and Enforcement Division	March 27, 2025
15	Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change - Sustainability and Applied Science Division (Water Branch)	March 27, 2025
16	Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables & Nova Scotia Department of Energy	March 27, 2025

NOVA SCOTIA
Environment and Climate Change

Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq

Number	Source	Date Received
1	Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council	April 4, 2025
2	Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn (KMK)	April 8, 2025

Public

Number	Source	Date Received
1	Anonymous	April 1, 2025
2	Anonymous	April 1, 2025
3	Anonymous	April 2, 2025
4	Municipality of the District of Guysborough	April 3, 2025
5	Anonymous	April 3, 2025
6	Strait of Canso Superport Corporation	April 3, 2025
7	Melford International Terminal	April 4, 2025
8	Town of Port Hawkesbury	April 4, 2025
9	MacGregor Industrial	April 4, 2025
10	Anonymous	April 5, 2025
11	Strait Supplies	April 7, 2025

Impact Assessment Agency of Canada | Agence d'évaluation d'impact du Canada

Atlantic Region
200–1801 Hollis Street
Halifax NS B3J 3N4

Région de l'Atlantique
200–1801, rue Hollis
Halifax (Nouvelle-Écosse) B3J 3N4

March 4, 2025

Meghan Rafferty
Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change
Environmental Assessment Officer
Meghan.Rafferty@novascotia.ca

SUBJECT : EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project

Dear Meghan Rafferty:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the registration document for the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project (the Project), received on February 27, 2025.

The federal environmental assessment process is set out in the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA). The *Physical Activities Regulations* (the Regulations) set out a list of physical activities considered to be "designated projects" under the IAA.

While it is the responsibility of proponents to determine whether their proposed projects include activities described in the *Physical Activities Regulations* of the IAA (the Regulations), based on the information submitted to the Province of Nova Scotia on the proposed project, the Agency is of the opinion that, as proposed, the project would not have been described in the Regulations of the IAA. As such, the proponent would not be expected to submit an Initial Project Description of a Designated Project. If the project changes from what has been described in its provincial registration, the proponent is advised to contact the Agency if, in their view, any proposed project activities may be described in the Regulations.

The proponent is advised that under section 9(1) of the IAA, the Minister may, on request or on the Minister's own initiative, by order, designate a physical activity that is not prescribed by regulations made under the Regulations if, in the Minister's opinion, the carrying out of that physical activity may cause adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or direct or incidental adverse effects. Should IAAC receive a request for a project to be designated, IAAC would contact the proponent with further information.

Please note that for physical activities not described in the Regulations, should the Project be carried out in whole or in part on federal lands, section 82 of the IAA would apply if any federal authority is required to exercise a power, duty or function under an Act other than IAA in order for the Project to proceed, or if a federal authority is providing financial assistance for the purpose of enabling the Project to be carried out. In that case, that federal authority must ensure that any Project assessment requirements under the applicable sections of the IAA are satisfied.

We also note that in proceeding with the Project, the proponent may still be required to obtain or seek amendment to other federal regulatory permits, authorizations and/or licences.

The proponent is encouraged to contact IAAC at (902) 426-0564 if it has additional information that may be relevant to IAAC or if it has any questions or concerns related to the above matters.

Gardenio Pimentel da Silva

Environmental Assessment Officer, Atlantic Regional Office
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada / Government of Canada
Gardenio.PimenteldaSilva@iaac-aeic.gc.ca / Tel: 782-402-6607

Agent d'évaluation environnementale, Bureau régional de l'Atlantique
Agence d'évaluation d'impact du Canada / Gouvernement du Canada
Gardenio.PimenteldaSilva@iaac-aeic.gc.ca / Tél: 782-402-6607

Health Canada Santé Canada

Human Health Considerations in Impact Assessment

Health Canada (HC) provides the following generic considerations for evaluating human health impacts in environmental/impact assessment (EA/IA). Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of human health concerns that may result from projects, and that issues will vary based on project specifics. Please also note that HC does not approve or issue licenses, permits, or authorizations in relation to the IA. HC's role in Impact Assessment is founded in statutory obligations under the Canadian Impact Assessment Act, and its knowledge and expertise can be called upon by reviewing bodies (e.g., Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, review panels, Indigenous groups and/or other jurisdictions). In the absence of such a request from one of the above noted groups, HC is unable to carry out a comprehensive review of the project. However, HC is able to accommodate specific requests for human health advice and guidance related to provincial environmental assessments within a reasonable timeframe.

HC currently possesses expertise in the following areas related to human health: air quality, recreational and drinking water quality, traditional foods (country foods), noise, and methodological expertise in conducting human health risk assessment. Based on Health Canada's "*Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Impacts in Environmental Assessment*", please consider the following information on these topics to assist in your review.

	Consideration	**Reference Document**
Receptor Location(s)		
Please ensure the registration document clearly identifies the locations of all receptors that may be impacted by the proposed project, including any receptors located along the transportation route, if applicable.	• It is important to clearly describe the location and distance from the proposed site(s) to all potential human receptors (permanent, seasonal or temporary), taking into consideration the different types of land uses (e.g. residential, recreational, industrial, etc.), and identifying all vulnerable populations (e.g. in schools, hospitals, retirement or assisted living communities). Note that the types of residents and visitors in a particular area will depend on land use, and may include members of the general public and/or members of specific population subgroups (Indigenous peoples, campers, hunters, etc.)	*Health Canada. 2023. Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Effects in Impact Assessment: Human Health Risk Assessment. Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.* *https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H129-54-6-2023-eng.pdf*
	• If there is the potential that project-related activities could affect human receptors, impacts to human health should be considered.	

Atmospheric Environment		
Project impacts to the atmospheric environment include changes to air quality and noise, and can occur in both the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the project. Project impacts to air quality are commonly caused by emissions from equipment or vehicles as well as by dust. Noise impacts are commonly caused by equipment as well as by activities such as blasting.	• If there are receptors that could be affected by project-related activities, impacts to the atmospheric environment should be considered. Changes to the atmospheric environment that may impact human health include: ○ impacts to air quality (dust or fumes including $PM_{2.5}$, NO_x, SO_x, PAHs) ○ increased noise from construction or operations	*Health Canada. 2023. Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Impacts in Impact Assessment: Noise. Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario* https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H129-54-3-2023-eng.pdf *Health Canada. 2023. Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Effects in Impact Assessment: Air Quality. Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.* https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H129-54-1-2023-eng.pdf
	• If there are receptors who could be impacted by project-related noise, it may be necessary to inform receptors prior to loud activities, such as blasting.	
	• If there is the potential for impacts to human receptors from noise and/or air quality changes from the project, the proponent should consider establishing mitigation measures. If complaints are received additional mitigation measures may be required.	
Recreational and Drinking Water Quality		
The proponent should consider whether any nearby waterbodies are used for recreational (i.e. swimming, boating, or fishing) or drinking water purposes, as well as whether there are any drinking water wells in the area potentially impacted by the project. Nearby drinking and/or recreational water quality may be impacted by	• If there is the potential for impacts to drinking and/or recreational water quality from the project site, the proponent should consider establishing mitigation measures. If complaints are received additional mitigation measures may be required.	*Health Canada. 2023. Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Effects in Impact Assessment: Drinking and Recreational Water Quality. Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.* https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H129-54-2-2023-eng.pdf

accidents or malfunctions, such as a fuel spill; by dust and increased sediment runoff; and by other chemical discharges to the environment. Additionally, wells in the area potentially impacted by the project may be impacted by activities such as blasting.	• The proponent should consider preparing a response plan in the event of an accident or malfunction with the potential to impact drinking and/or recreational water quality. Response plans should include a spill response kit, adequate spill response training, and a communication plan to notify all recreational and drinking water users in the impacted area as well as all relevant authorities. • In some cases, for projects that are likely to have an impact on drinking and/or recreational water quality, the proponent should consider conducting water monitoring prior to the start of the project (to establish a baseline). Monitoring would continue throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the project (as applicable) to monitor for any changes in water quality or quantity.	
Country Foods		
If there are plants or animals present in the area potentially impacted by the project that are consumed by humans, there may be potential for impacts to country foods. The proponent should consider all country foods that are hunted, harvested or fished from the area potentially impacted by the project. Impacts to country foods may occur from the release of contaminants into soil or water (including from an accident or spill) or from deposition of air borne contaminants.	• If there is the potential for impacts to country foods from the proposed project, the proponent should consider establishing mitigation measures. If complaints are received additional mitigation measures may be required. • The proponent should consider preparing a response plan in the event of an accident or malfunction with the potential to impact country foods. Response plans should include a spill response kit, adequate spill response training, and a communication plan to notify all potential consumers of country foods in the impacted area as well as all relevant authorities.	*Health Canada. 2023. Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Effects in Impact Assessment: Country Foods. Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.* *https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H129-54-5-2023-eng.pdf*

For more information on HC's guidelines for evaluating human health impacts in environmental assessments, please see:

*Health Canada. 2023. Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Impacts in Impact Assessment: **Noise**. Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario*
https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H129-54-3-2023-eng.pdf

Appendix B of this guidance document provides a checklist that may be beneficial in verifying that the main components of a noise environmental assessment are completed.

*Health Canada. 2023. Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Effects in Impact Assessment: **Air Quality**. Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.*
https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H129-54-1-2023-eng.pdf

Appendix A of this guidance document provides a checklist that may be beneficial in verifying that the main components of an air quality environmental assessment are completed.

*Health Canada. 2023. Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Effects in Impact Assessment: **Drinking and Recreational Water Quality**. Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.*
https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H129-54-2-2023-eng.pdf

Appendix A of this guidance document provides a checklist that may be beneficial in verifying that the main components of a water quality environmental assessment are completed.

*Health Canada. 2023. Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Effects in Impact Assessment: **Country Foods**. Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.*
https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H129-54-5-2023-eng.pdf

Appendix A of this guidance document provides a checklist that may be beneficial in verifying that the main components of a country foods environmental assessment are completed.

*Health Canada. 2023. Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Effects in Impact Assessment: **Human Health Risk Assessment**. Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.*
https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/sc-hc/H129-54-6-2023-eng.pdf

Appendix B of this guidance document provides a checklist that may be beneficial in verifying that the main components of a human health risk assessment are completed.

NOVA SCOTIA
Environment and Climate Change

Barrington Place
1903 Barrington Street
Suite 2085
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3J 2P8

Date: March 11 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Protected Areas SAS Janet MacKinnon Executive Director

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia

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Scope of review:
This review focuses on the following mandate: protected areas _____

List of Documents Reviewed:
WAPA and mapping

Details of Technical Review:
No protected areas in vicinity

Key Considerations: (provide in non-technical language)

No comments

Fisheries and Oceans Canada | Pêches et Océans Canada

Bedford Institute of Oceanography
1 Challenger Drive
P.O. Box 1006, Station P500
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2Y 4A2

Date: March 14, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Ashley Robar, Linear Development, Regulatory Review Biologist, Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Richmond County, Nova Scotia

Scope of review:
Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is responsible for administrating the fish and fish habitat protection provisions of the *Fisheries Act* (FA), the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), and the *Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations*.

DFO's review focused on the impacts of the works outlined in the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project Environmental Assessment Registration Document (EARD) to potentially result in:

- the death of fish by means other than fishing and the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat, which are prohibited under subsections 34.4(1) and 35(1) of the *Fisheries Act*;
- effects to listed aquatic species at risk, any part of their critical habitat or the residences of their individuals in a manner which is prohibited under sections 32, 33 and subsection 58(1) of the *Species at Risk Act*; and
- The introduction of aquatic species into regions or bodies of water frequented by fish where they are not indigenous, which is prohibited under section 10 of the *Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations*.

Technical Comments:

Risk Assessment: Wetland Assessment	
Identify Gap/Risk	Direct and indirect impacts to fish and fish habitat from wetland alterations are not clearly described. Section 7.3.2.5 in the Environmental Assessment Registration Document (EARD) identifies 28 wetlands partially or fully within the Study Area, and summarizes the functional assessments for each wetland. Table 7.29 in Section 7.3.2.6 identifies the potential project-wetland interactions, and the area of direct impact, but does not detail the proposed works and residual impacts; indirect impacts to wetlands identified in the Project Area are not clearly described. Appendix F provides general information on wetland characteristics, and delineated area of each wetland. Appendix F lists 2 of 28 wetlands as having a high fish-bearing potential, and identifies 5 wetlands with an associated watercourse, which may provide some form of fish habitat; however, the habitat functions are not characterized and potential impacts to fish and fish habitat are not clear. It remains unclear which wetlands

	provide direct or indirect fish habitat, and how the Project may impact fish and fish habitat through direct and indirect impacts to wetlands.
Can it be addressed in another permit/approval or with a T&C?	The identified gap can be addressed during the NSECC watercourse and/or wetland alteration approval process(es) and DFO regulatory review process. Works, Undertakings or Activities (WUAs) associated with this project in or near water that may result in potential harmful impacts on fish or fish habitat will require DFO regulatory review to avoid, mitigate or offset those impacts.
Define/provide detail	For WUAs that may result in potential harmful impacts on fish or fish habitat, additional information will be required as part of the DFO regulatory review process, including detailed information on the proposed WUAs, a detailed description of the fish and fish habitat found at the location of the proposed WUAs, a detailed description on the likely effects of the proposed WUAs on fish and fish habitat, and a detailed description of the measures and standards that will be implemented to avoid and mitigate potential harmful impacts on fish and fish habitat.
Risk Assessment: Fish Habitat Assessment	
Identify Gap/Risk	Fish habitat assessments reported in the EARD do not provide sufficient detail to determine potential impacts on fish and fish habitat and the conclusions drawn from the assessments do not align with DFO's regulatory approach. Section 7.3.1.6, the EARD details priority fish species. The Department considers all fish species and their habitat that may be impacted by a WUA during regulatory review, and evaluates fish passage based on fish species that are likely to be migrating on a given river. Field assessments described in Section 7.3.1.6 in the EARD identify 13 watercourses within the Study Area, all presumed to be accessible to fish, and Table 7.23 summarizes the characteristics of each watercourse and presents the results from fish habitat data collected and suitable habitat for the 15 species deemed probable to reside within these systems. Appendix E also provides further details on watercourse characteristics. Habitat assessments were conducted in the summer period when water levels are generally low and the assessments do not reflect potential habitat available during higher flow periods. Photographs clearly demonstrate bankfull width of watercourses (defined streambanks and lack of terrestrial vegetation), which is indicative that these watercourses have much higher flows than what was described and observed. Table 7.24 in Section 7.3.1.6 identifies the potential project-surface

	water and fish and fish habitat interactions, and this section expands to detail direct impacts expected to one watercourse (identified as Watercourse 3). It is unclear whether any of the other 12 watercourses may experience indirect impacts from the Project. This information is not sufficient to assess the impacts to fish and fish habitat.
Can it be addressed in another permit/approval or with a T&C?	The identified gap can be addressed during the NSECC watercourse and/or wetland alteration approval process(es) and DFO regulatory review process. WUAs associated with this project in or near water that may result in potential harmful impacts on fish or fish habitat will require DFO regulatory review to avoid, mitigate or offset those impacts.
Define/provide detail	For WUAs that may result in potential harmful impacts on fish or fish habitat, additional information will be required as part of the DFO regulatory review process, including detailed information on the proposed WUAs, a detailed description of the fish and fish habitat found at the location of the proposed WUAs, a detailed description on the likely effects of the proposed WUAs on fish and fish habitat, and a detailed description of the measures and standards that will be implemented to avoid and mitigate potential harmful impacts on fish and fish habitat.
Risk Assessment: Watercourse Crossing Designs	
Identify Gap/Risk	Table 7.24 in Section 7.3.1.6 identifies the potential project-surface water and fish and fish habitat interactions, and this section expands to detail direct impacts expected to one watercourse (identified as Watercourse 3), altering 8.4 m2 of habitat to install this crossing (as identified in Drawings #1.1 and 2.1A), however no information is provided on the proposed watercourse crossing design and no information is provided on what efforts may be implemented to avoid or mitigate impacts to fish and fish habitat.
Can it be addressed in another permit/approval or with a T&C?	The identified gap can be addressed during the NSECC watercourse and/or wetland alteration approval process(es) and DFO regulatory review process. WUAs associated with this project in or near water that may result in potential harmful impacts on fish or fish habitat will require DFO regulatory review to avoid, mitigate or offset those impacts.
Define/provide detail	For WUAs that may result in potential harmful impacts on fish or fish habitat, additional information will be required as part of the DFO regulatory review process, including detailed information on the proposed WUAs, a detailed description of the fish and fish habitat found at the location of the proposed WUAs, a detailed description on the likely effects of the proposed WUAs on fish and fish habitat, and a detailed description of the measures and standards that will be

	implemented to avoid and mitigate potential harmful impacts on fish and fish habitat.

Summary of Recommendations: (provide in non-technical language)

DFO recommends the proponent:

- Submit detailed information on the proposed watercourse crossing and wetland alteration designs, detailed descriptions of the fish and fish habitat found at the location of the proposed WUAs, detailed descriptions on the likely effects of the proposed WUAs on fish and fish habitat (including local and cumulative impacts, potential impacts on species at risk, and direct and indirect impacts on fish habitat), and detailed descriptions of the measures and standards that will be implemented to avoid and mitigate potential harmful impacts on fish and fish habitat.

- Consider open bottom structures, such as clear span bridges and open bottom arch culverts for fish bearing watercourse crossings rather than closed bottom structures, where possible; and

- Refer to DFO's website, https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-ppe/index-eng.html, for further information on DFO's regulatory review process and for further measures to protect fish and fish habitat.

This information can be provided through the NSECC watercourse and/or wetland alteration approval process(es) and/or through submission of a DFO Request for Review application directly to DFO. DFO will then conduct a regulatory review of the proposed project under the *Fisheries Act*, *Species at Risk Act*, and Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations to determine if an authorization under the *Fisheries Act* and/or a *Species at Risk* permit is required.

NOVA SCOTIA
Department of Municipal Affairs

8th Floor North, Maritime Centre
1505 Barrington Street
PO Box 216
Halifax, NS B3J 2M4

DATE: March 25, 2025

TO: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

FROM: Christina Lovitt, Director of Planning

SUBJECT: **EVERWIND STRAIT CROSSING TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT - GUYSBOROUGH AND RICHMOND COUNTIES**

Scope of Review:
This review focuses on the following Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA) mandates: Statements of Provincial Interest and engagement with municipalities.

Document Reviewed:
EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project: EA Registration Document

Details of Technical Review:
The proponent has held 14 Open Houses on the broader EverWind projects in the area and held meetings with municipalities specific to this Project, including five meetings with the Municipality of the County of Richmond, three meetings with the Town of Port Hawkesbury, and one meeting with the Municipality of the District of Guysborough. These engagements focused on crossing location and design, status and timing. Richmond and Port Hawkesbury noted concerns related to the transmission line crossing being a potential barrier to future use within the Strait of Canso. Follow-up meetings were held with municipal representatives to discuss alternatives and mitigation strategies.

The zoning on the mainland side enables resource use, including transmission lines. The Proponent also referred to the West Richmond Plan Area – Zoning Map when developing their proposal. Currently public or private utilities may be allowed in the Watershed Protection Periphery (W-2) Zone through development agreement, with any development permits requiring an EA. The MCR is considering changing the zoning within the W-2 Zone of the Point Tupper area to allow for heavier industrial uses such as public or private utilities as of right. The amendments are not contemplating changing the requirement that a successful EA is needed before development permits are issued.

Statements of Provincial Interest:

- Drinking Water: Reasonably consistent. Landrie Lake Municipal Water Supply Area is a provincially and municipally protected source of drinking water for the Town of Port Hawkesbury and the community of Point Tupper. It is in proximity to the end point of the transmission line, but not directly abutting. Under the Municipality of the County of Richmond West Richmond Planning Area Land Use By-law a portion of the property at the termination of the transmission line is included in the Watershed Protection Periphery (W-2) Zone. Under the Land Use by-law, within Zone W-2, development agreements for the expansion of pre-existing industrial activities, public and private utilities, or green energy facilities subject to Heavy Industrial Restricted (I-4) zone requirements, may be approved by Council. Any subsequent development permits require that an Environmental Assessment is completed and approved by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.
- Agricultural Land: No anticipated impact. No agriculture identified in the Project area.
- Flood Risk: No anticipated impact. No flood areas identified in the Project area. The closest infrastructure will be placed approximately 50m from the shoreline. The tower foundations will be placed approximately 15m above mean sea level, exceeding expected sea level rise in the area during the lifespan of the Project.

- Infrastructure: No anticipated impact. No identified impact on municipal infrastructure as defined by the SPI.
- Housing: No anticipated impact.

Key Considerations *(provide in non-technical language):*
There is no outstanding information and/or conditions. All components considered under DMA's areas of mandate have been adequately addressed.

Transport Canada Transports Canada

Date: March 25, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Jason Flanagan
Senior Environmental Advisor
Environmental Programs
Transport Canada, Atlantic Region

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project,
Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia

Scope of review:

This review focuses on Transport Canada (TC)'s Mandate with respect to navigation (air and marine) and port property (submerged lands). ***Note:*** some of this information has previously been provided to the Proponent, Everwind.

List of Documents Reviewed:

TC reviewed the Environmental Assessment Registration Document (EARD). Our review also considered information presented in a preliminary meeting with Everwind on November 19, 2024.

Details of Technical Review:

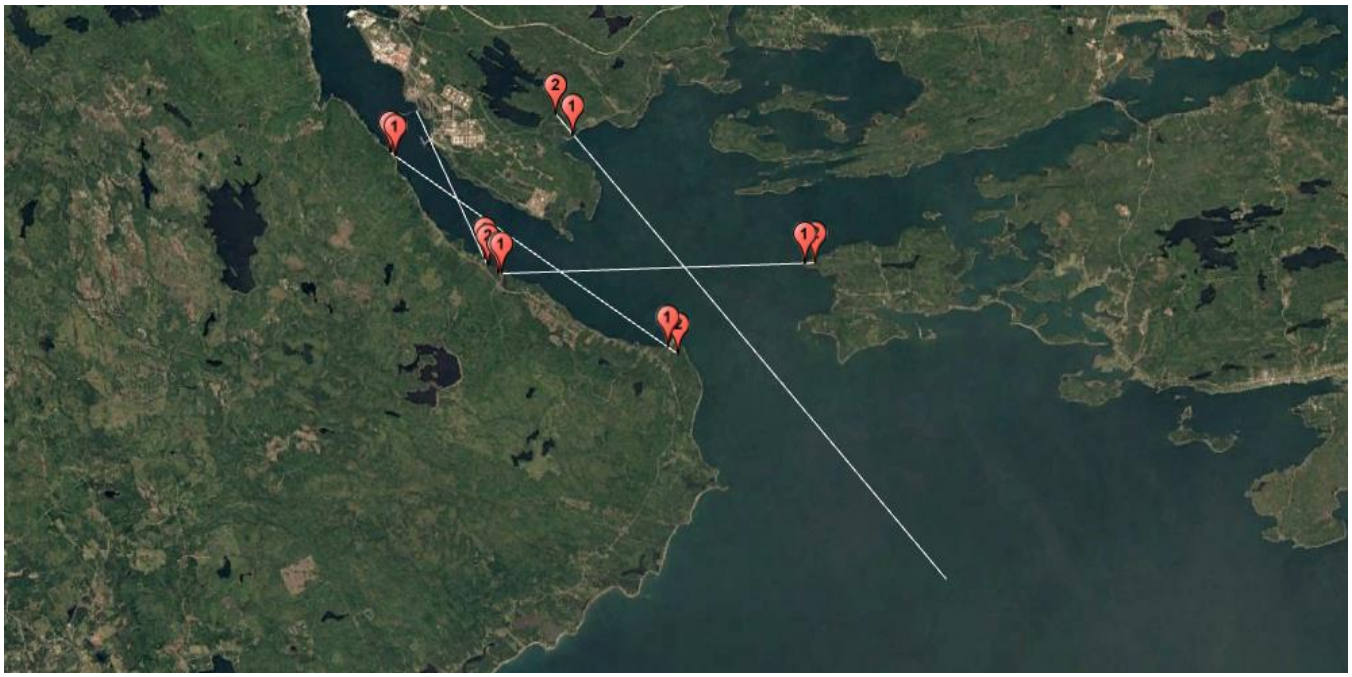
The proposed transmission lines over the Strait will require a *Canadian Navigable Waters Act* (CNWA) approval and Lease/License from Transport Canada. Further information is provided in the next section.

In addition, there are multiple Navigation Aids (range lights) near the entrance of the Strait of Canso that overhead cables could interfere with or have an impact on sight lines (per picture below).

It is recommended that Everwind also reaches out to the Canadian Coast Guard (DFO-CCG) Aids to Navigation group and perhaps the Atlantic Pilotage Authority for any concerns they may have with the proposed transmission line crossing of the Strait and any potential interferences with the fixed aids to navigation (range lights) located in the area.

Any overhead cables that cross any of these lines would need to be cleared by DFO-CCG Aids to Navigation and the Atlantic Pilotage Authority.

Canada



Google Earth image showing multiple Navigation Aids (range lights) near the entrance of the Strait of Canso with which the proposed overhead cables could interfere with or impact sight lines. This image is approximate and is for reference only.

Key Considerations: (provide in non-technical language)

Canadian Navigable Waters Act (CNWA) information:
The application process can be accessed at the following link: External Submission Site for the Navigation Protection Program (create an account first if needed).

Transport Canada has introduced External User Authentication (EUA) on the External Submission Site (ESS) to enhance security and better protect proponents' accounts. This sign-in procedure is part of the Government of Canada's standardization of user authentication.

As of March 1, 2025, ESS users will be required to authenticate using one of two sign-in options:

- Banking information
- GCKey

Registered users can use their existing account credentials and will be prompted to select a sign-in option to connect to their Navigation Protection Program account.

Information on using Banking Information

***take from the "More About…" dropdown tab on the secure sign in page*

- The Interac® sign-in service is a convenient way to access online services.
- Instead of creating and managing a new username and password for accessing online services, you access them by signing in with your online bank or other participating "Sign-In Partner". No passwords or personal information (i.e.: name, address, date of birth, etc.) are exchanged during this process.
- **None of your information (e.g. financial, banking) will be shared with the government service.** Your Sign-In Partner will not know which government service you are using.
- More information: Frequently Asked Questions – Interac

Information on using GCKey

- A GCKey is a unique electronic credential that allows you to communicate securely with online enabled Government programs and services and lets you securely access Government of Canada online services.
- It includes a username and password that you choose. You must also create security questions, and optionally provide an email address. These steps help to keep your data secure and lets you recover your password.
- More information: GCKey - FAQ

Accessing Existing ESS Account or Creating a New Account

From the main page of the ESS, select the "Login" option under "My account"

***There is not a 'create account' option easily accessible on the main page, so new users should also select "Login" and will be prompted for their email to create their account after they complete the secure sign-in*

Additional guidance information and links for the NPP regulatory process can be found here:

Canadian Navigable Waters Act
https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/programs-632.html
https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/canadian-navigable-waters-act.html

Navigation Protection Program, Transport Canada
http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/programs-621.html

NPP Contact coordinates:

Navigation Protection Program | Programme de protection de la navigation
Transport Canada - Atlantic Region / Heritage Court, 6th Floor, 95 Foundry Street, Moncton, NB E1C 5H7 |
Transports Canada - Région de l'Atlantique / Place Héritage, 6e étage - 95 rue Foundry, Moncton, NB E1C 5H7
Tel | Tél. : 506-851-3113 / Fax | Téléc. : 506-851-7542
Email / Courriel : NPPATL-PPNATL@tc.gc.ca

Transport Canada has introduced new fees for services, under the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act,* as part of the Fee Modernization initiative. Find out more at: Canada Gazette, Part 2, Volume 158, Number 14: Canadian Navigable Waters Act Fees Regulations

Transports Canada introduit une nouvelle structure de redevances, en vertu de la *Loi sur les eaux navigables canadiennes,* dans le cadre de l'initiative de modernisation des frais. Plus d'informations ici: La Gazette du Canada, Partie 2, volume 158, numéro 14 : Règlement sur les droits relatifs à la Loi sur les eaux navigables canadiennes

TC Ports Program information:

The proposed project also requires an occupational instrument (Lease or Licence) from Transport Canada. The application form (i.e. Application to Occupy) is included and you can reach out to the following if you have any specific questions related to this (please be sure to include me on any correspondence).

Nicolas Maltais
Ports Officer, Programs Branch
Transport Canada / Government of Canada
Nicolas.Maltais@tc.gc.ca / Tel: 506-863-9054

Agent des ports, Direction des programmes
Transports Canada / Gouvernement du Canada
Nicolas.Maltais@tc.gc.ca / Tél. : 506-863-9054

TC Civil Aviation (CivAv) information:

There are likely lighting and marking requirements under the *Canadian Aviation Regulations (CARs),* https://tc.canada.ca/en/corporate-services/acts-regulations/list-regulations/canadian-aviation-regulations-sor-96-433/standards/standard-621-obstruction-marking-lighting-canadian-aviation-regulations-cars) of the *Aeronautics Act*, for which Transport Canada is the Responsible Authority (not NavCanada; see page 247 of the EARD).

An Aeronautical Assessment Form (AAF) will need to be completed for the proposed towers and submitted to Transport Canada. The AAF is located in *Appendix C - Aeronautical Assessment Form for Obstruction Marking and Lighting* (Form 26-0427E). The completed form can then be forwarded to: aviation.atl@tc.gc.ca.

DFO-CCG contact information:

Shannon T Sellers,
Supervisor, Design and Review, Aids to Navigation and Waterways
Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Canadian Coast Guard
Shannon.Sellers@dfo-mpo.gc.ca / Tel: 902-403-7954

Atlantic Pilotage Authority (APA) contact information:

David Anderson,
Chief Operating Officer
Atlantic Pilotage Authority
danderson@atlanticpilotage.com / Tel.: 709-770-1431 (mobile)

Atlantic Pilotage Authority Operations
Operations@AtlanticPilotage.com
www.atlanticpilotage.com

APPLICATION TO OCCUPY

SECTION 1: PROPONENT

1. Legal Name:	2. Address:	
3. Contact:	4. Telephone No: ( )	5. Email:

SECTION 2: OCCUPANCY

6. Location:	7. Province:	8. Type of Occupancy:

9.Term:
Occupancy date MM/DD/YYYY :____/____/____
☐ Fixed for ____ years
☐ Fixed for ____ years with _____renewal options of ____ length of time

Estimated start date of construction MM/DD/YYYY : ____/____/____
Estimated time of construction:____ months

☐ Lease
☐ Lease renewal
Original Lease#_____
☐ License
☐ License renewal
Original License#_____
☐ Easement or Right-of-Way
☐ MOU

To be completed by a Transport Canada official:

10. Estimated rent amounts: $_____/annually
☐ Gross
☐ Gross – defined costs paid by tenant
☐ Triple net
☐ Triple Net – carefree
☐ Percentage rent
☐ Lump sum rent
☐ Other

Describe methodology used to determine rent rate:
_____
_____

11. Requested Area:
☐ Land
☐ Water Lot
☐ Includes TC owned building or facility
☐ Building to be built by Lessee
☐ Space Lease inside building/facility
☐ Other _____

Total Area _____ m2
Land _____m2
Water lot _____ m2
Building/Facility space _____m2

Plans Attached ☐

12. (***For waterlot leases only***)
Upland Owner: Yes ☐ No ☐ Attach consent of upland owner

13. Lessee obligations or Lessor services paid for as additional rent:

☐ Maintenance and repairs
☐ Building improvements/lease space fit out or improvements
☐ Realty taxes
☐ Electricity
☐ HVAC
☐ Water
☐ Janitorial/Security services
☐ Garbage
☐ Insurance
☐ Administration Fee
☐ Heating (electric/oil/gas)
☐ Other _____

14. Insurance:
☐ Real property
☐ General Commercial liability
☐ Other _____

SECTION 3 – USE

15.Purpose (Please describe):
_____
_____

Please indicate which of the following activities will apply to the operation at the leased site:
☐ Requires a water supply for drinking and/or activities
☐ Requires utilities for lighting, heating and/or power
☐ Fuel will be stored or dispensed
☐ Glycol to be stored and/or dispensed
☐ Use of equipment that contains halocarbons (e.g. air conditioning systems)
☐ Hazardous goods and/or materials will be shipped, stored, handled
☐ Movement or storage of contaminated soils or sediments
☐ Parking
☐ Ship work out of water
☐ Use of heavy machinery or other equipment
☐ Breakwater
☐ Other environmentally sensitive materials or substances_____

16.Operations (Please describe):
_____
_____

Will the Lessee seek financing? Yes ☐ No ☐

☐Additional information attached.

17. Improvements (Lessee construction or alterations plans):

- ☐ Site Plan – drawing plotting land parcel and facility placement in relation to existing facilities.
- ☐ Short Written Description, that includes:
  1. Intended use
  2. Length, width, and height of facility
  3. Clearances from existing structures
  4. Roadway access
  5. Sewage and drainage details, culverts etc.
  6. Type and location of utilities/tanks.
  7. Fencing and landscaping.
  8. Vehicle parking areas
  9. Anticipated construction fees
  10. Other

18. The proposed occupancy will:	Yes	No	Attached Document
A) Include construction	☐	☐	☐
B) Include dredging	☐	☐	☐
C) Affect associated infrastructures	☐	☐	☐
D) Requires transportation, handling ,processing or storage of dangerous goods	☐	☐	☐
E) Involves the transportation, handling, processing or storage of environmentally sensitive products or commodities (other than dangerous goods)	☐	☐	☐
F) Requires review by NAV Canada	☐	☐	☐
G) Requires approvals under the Canadian Navigable Waters Act (CNWA) CNWA Application Made: _____ CNWA Application Received: _____	☐	☐	☐
H) Requires approval under the Fisheries Act Self-Assessment/Request for Review: _____ DFO Project Authorization: _____			

19. Signature:	Name:	Date (YY/MM/DD):
20.Received by (TC official):	Referred to:	Date (YY/MM/DD):

☐ Completed Environmental Screening Form or Completed Environmental Assessment Review Process (Transport)

In order to avoid delays, please complete the application form as fully as possible.

A proposal entailing construction or potential adverse environmental effects may require plans, environmental studies or other additional documentation, in such cases consultation with your local office is required.

If you know that your proposal is complex or may be environmentally sensitive, or if you need assistance in completing this form beyond the information sheet supplied, please contact your local office.

Regional Manager:

Scott Jardine
Transport Canada

Address:

45 Alderney Drive
PO Box 1013
Dartmouth, NS B2Y 4K2

Tel: 902-802-1753
Email: Scott.Jardine@tc.gc.ca

Submit Form

Clear Form

INSTRUCTIONS

SECTION 1: PROPONENT

1. Legal Name:
Provide full legal name(s) of individual(s) or entity(ies) wishing to occupy real property. If the individual is doing business under another name, then provide both the principal's legal name as well as the name doing business under.

2. Address:
Provide the name and address (street name, number, city, province and postal code) to which all notices and correspondence should be sent.

3. Contact:
Provide the name of the person to be contacted in connection with this proposal. For an organization, also give the contact's position title.

4. Telephone:
Provide primary and alternate telephone numbers for the contact person identified in Question 3.

5. Email:
Provide the email address of the contact person identified in Question 3.

SECTION 2 : OCCUPANCY

6. Location:
Provide the name of the site or the public facility that you wish to occupy, if known. Otherwise, enter a legal description, civic address or nearest place name.

7. Province:
Province in which the site or facility is located.

8. Type of Occupancy:
Check the relevant type of occupancy i.e. lease, lease renewal, license, license renewal, easement or right-of-way, or MOU. Provide an estimate of the area you wish to occupy. Should you wish to occupy more than one type of space, indicate the approximate area for each, e.g. land 5000 m2, waterlot 1200 m2.

9. Term:
Indicate when you wish to take up occupancy and for how long. Indicate if you require options to renew, and if so how many? If construction will occur during the term, give an approximate duration.

10. Rent: This will be completed by a Transport Canada official and will be determined based on market value rates supported by an appraisal or other method of determining market rent. Indicate the additional rent that will be paid by the tenant to cover operating costs. Describe the method used to determine rent rates: market value etc.

11. Requested Area:
A description of the requested area. Please check the boxes that best applies to the area that is being requested and fill in the lines regarding the details of the area.

12. Upland Owner:
The owner of land fronting on a body of water has riparian rights which include the right of access to and from navigable water. Land that has been created by infilling a water lot may also be subject to riparian rights. If you are not the owner of the adjoining upland, your occupancy will need the permission of the owner of the adjoining upland, in addition to any other approvals. Check "Yes" if you are the owner of the land adjoining the waterlot you are proposing to occupy. Check "No" if you are NOT the upland owner. If not, attach a copy of the consent of the upland owner.

13. Lessee obligations or Lessor services paid for as additional rent:
Check the boxes for the operating costs and responsibilities which will be assumed or paid for by the Lessee.

14. Insurance:
Consult with your insurance provider to determine the type of insurance required for the purposes described in Section 15.
Check the boxes that apply and note any additional insurance information.

SECTION 3: USE

15. Purpose:
Give a description of the purpose of the proposed occupancy and the activities to be carried out. The purpose is to be clearly defined and you should state the type of operation proposed, as well as giving a breakdown of the activities including the products involved, the type of operating equipment to be used, the type of processing, if any. Also describe any ancillary purposes which are required to enable the main purpose. Indicate if there will be any subleases, sublicenses or other agreements covering all or part of the occupied land. If so, describe the purpose of the sublease/sublicense if different from the head lease. Identify any dangerous goods that will be used, stored or transported, as well as the volume and the source. Contingency and emergency plans are to be described. Dangerous goods are as defined in the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, including the Schedule thereto. Examples of dangerous goods are explosives, compressed gases, flammable liquids, flammable liquids spontaneously combustible when wet, poisonous, infectious or radioactive substances and corrosives. If there is insufficient space, please attach additional Information and check the box. Other materials or commodities such as grain dust/coal dust, alumina, garbage, material for recycling, etc. may have an effect on the environment. Identify any of these commodities which will be used, stored, transported or disposed as well as the volume and source. If there Is insufficient space, please attach additional information and check the box.

16. Operations:
Describe the anticipated level of activity, the users, and the facilities that will be used or in operation at the site. Check box if Lessee will seek financing. Check box if additional information is attached.

17. Improvements:
In the event the proposal involves any improvements that include construction or alterations, please include a design plan that outlines the placement of any structures or buildings in relation to existing structures or buildings. Provide a written description of the intended use, physical layout, design, method of construction and materials to be used.
Tenant Improvements or fit out: Briefly describe any improvements to be installed by the tenant which are required for the operation.
Landlord Improvements: Further advise if any landlord fittings or equipment is required to be installed.

18. The proposed occupancy will:

Construction:
Refer to the Facility Alternations Permit (FAP) or construction application process for further information.

Dredging:
All dredging works, whether minor, major, as a project on their own, or as part of a larger project described in the proposal, shall be clearly outlined. Method of dredging, frequency, disposal procedures, area of disposal, testing and sampling of sediments prior to dredging, proof of all required permits, and any other relevant information shall be included in the proposal. If there is insufficient space, please attach additional information.

Affected Associated Infrastructures:
Check this box and provide brief details if your proposal may include any land altering activities or activities occurring in or around water which may affect the physical environment or interruptions of alterations to the natural shoreline and hydrographic or hydrologic processes (e.g. river flows, tidal exchange, ice regime, etc.). Please note further and more detailed information will be required as part of the Facilities Alterations Permit (FAP) process.
Also check yes if your proposal will have any measurable effect on local infrastructures, such as the location of new roads and anticipated effects on existing and other transportation facilities. Please include any correspondence or approvals obtained from the local authorities impacted by your project.

Requires transportation, handling, process or storage of dangerous goods.
Identify any dangerous good that will be used, stored or transported, as well as the volume and source. Contingency and emergency plans are to be described. Dangerous goods are as defined in the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act*. Examples of dangerous goods are explosives, compressed gases, flammable liquids, flammable liquids spontaneously combustible when wet, poisonous, infectious or radioactive substances and corrosives. If there is insufficient space, please attach additional information and check the box.

Requires transportation, handling, processing or storage of environmentally sensitive products or commodities (other than dangerous goods):
Please check boxes that apply. Other materials or commodities such as grain dust/coal dust, alumina, garbage, material or recycling, etc. may have an effect on the environment. Identify any of these commodities which will be used, stored, or transported as well as the volume and source. If there is insufficient space, please attach additional information and check the box.

Requires review by NAV Canada:
Any proposal that is in the vicinity of an aeronautical navigation aid operated by NAV Canada requires the approval of their Land Use Committee. Please check box and attach any additional information.

Canadian Navigable Waters Act (CNWA):
Any proposal involving construction or other activities such as dredging in navigable waters needs to be approved (or exempted under Section 5 of the Canadian Navigable Waters Act (CNWA). Should you have reason to believe your proposal may involve navigable waters, please check yes. If you have already applied for CNWA approval, please indicate the date of your application and/or approval.

Fisheries Act:
Any proposed works, undertakings and activities that may affect fish and fish habitat must be compliant with the *Fisheries Act* and the *Species at Risk Act*. There is a three step process. The first is a directed self-assessment to determine if the project can avoid or mitigate impacts to fish. If not then the proponent requests a review by DFO. If the project cannot be planned to avoid serious harm to fish, a *Fisheries Act* authorization will be required. For more information please see: http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-ppe/fpp-ppp/review-revue-eng.html

NOVA SCOTIA
Public Works

J.W. Johnston Building
1672 Granville Street
6th Floor
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3J 2N2

Date: March 24, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Department of Public Works, Environmental Services – Brent MacDonald, P.Eng., Manager

Subject: **EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia**

Scope of review:
This review focuses on the following mandate: Traffic Engineering and Road Safety_____

List of Documents Reviewed:
EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project Environmental Assessment

Details of Technical Review:
The Proponent is proposing to build transmission lines across the Canso Strait. To achieve this, transportation of heavy equipment to build suspension towers will be required at the locations on either side of the Canso Strait, from Steep Creek (near Mulgrave) in Guysbourough County to Port Tupper in Richmond County. Although utilisation of marine vehicles is mentioned in the document, there will be some land transportation required as well.

Section 3.3.1, *Project Phases*, subsection *Transportation of Components, Equipment and Materials*, provides a high-level analysis of the proposed route as well as other considerations such as traffic volumes and identification of permits. Items identified in this section are comprehensive and detail permitting and other requirements and considerations. The Proponent has identified that they are committed to requirements for appropriate traffic control measures working within the Highway Right of Way.

The Nova Scotia Department of Public Works provides the following comments on this EA Registration Document:

1. The Proponent has identified a requirement for a Special Moves Permit in Table 2.2 on Page 10. This will be required for the transportation of the heavy equipment to the project sites, including finalizing the transportation route. The Proponent must contact the Departmental Contact for Special Moves, Darcey MacBain (Darcey.MacBain@novascotia.ca), to assess next steps and requirements.

2. Proposed changes to accesses off Port Malcolm Road are indicated in Section 3.2.2 *Right of Way and Access Roads* on Page 14. Other roads in the project area

are Bear Island Road and Highway 344. Any access modifications or work in the Highway Right of Way will require a Work Within Highway Right of Way Permit. This is available from the local Area Manager and has been identified by the Proponent in Table 2.2 on Page 10.

3. All work areas on or near provincially owned roads will require compliance with the appropriate section of the Nova Scotia Temporary Workplace Traffic Control Manual. The Proponent has identified this requirement in Table 2.2 on Page 10. It should be added that any traffic control plans preparation is the responsibility of the Proponent, and the traffic control plans must be reviewed and approved by the local Area Manager.

4. Table 3.3 *Summary of Minimum Setback and Separation Distances* on page 12 provides minimum setback distances on various categories. There was no setback distance identified for public roads. This has been identified in previous EA registration documents. The Proponent must contact the local NSDPW office to identify and/or confirm any necessary setbacks.

5. The document references blasting activities on Page 89. Any impacts on provincially owned roads must be discussed with the local Area Manager and appropriate mitigating measures must be determined and finalized.

6. The reference to *Transportation Related Incidents* in Section 12.6 on Page 272 is very comprehensive in terms of the action plan and mitigation plans. There is a reference in this section to the *Traffic Management Plan Implementation*, including installing appropriate signage and markings, and implementation of speed limits and enforcing traffic regulations. This must be approved by the local Area Manager for all activities on provincially owned roads.

Key Considerations: (provide in non-technical language)

1. The Proponent shall communicate with the Department Contact for Special Moves to finalize the transportation route.
2. The Proponent shall communicate with the local Area Manager regarding any access modifications and will obtain a Work Within Highway Right of Way Permit.
3. The Proponent shall follow the Nova Scotia Temporary Workplace Traffic Control Manual and will provide the traffic control plans to the local Area Manager for review.
4. The Proponent shall communicate with the local NSDPW office to identify minimum setback and separation distances for public roads.
5. Blasting activities planned for this project will be communicated to the local Area Manager.
6. The Proponent will communicate with the local Area Manager prior to erecting signage and markings.

NOVA SCOTIA
Environment and Climate Change

Barrington Place
1903 Barrington Street
Suite 2085
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3J 2P8

Date: March 27, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Air Quality Unit

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia

Scope of review:
This review focuses on the following mandate: Air Quality

List of Documents Reviewed:

- *EARD to Appendix A*
- *Drawing 1.1 – 7.7*

Details of Technical Review:

EverWind Fuels is proposing to construct and operate the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, a 345-kilovolt overhead transmission line that will span the Strait of Canso from Steep Creek, Guysborough County, to the Point Tupper Hydrogen and Ammonia Production Facility in Richmond County. The Project will allow for the transmission of renewable energy generated from EverWind's Phase 2 wind farms to the Point Tupper Facility.

Impacts on air quality from this project are most likely to occur as a result of clearing/grubbing, wind erosion, and increased vehicle traffic. These activities are most likely to contribute to increases in concentrations of total suspended particles (TSP), while vehicle emissions are likely to contribute to increases in fine particles ($PM_{2.5}$) and nitrogen oxides.

The proponent lists several dust/emissions mitigation measures, including use of water sprays, minimizing disturbed footprint, stabilizing exposed surfaces, cessation of dust generating activities during periods of high winds, minimizing vehicle idling, and maintaining vehicles/equipment in proper working order. These measures are appropriate for dust/emissions control from this type of construction activity.

Key Considerations: (provide in non-technical language)

The Air Quality Unit notes the following key considerations:

- The use of dust management methods, along with best operating practices, would

minimize air quality impacts.

- It is unclear how dust will be mitigated and managed without an effective Dust Management Plan, including clear chains of responsibility for actions, including timely complaint resolution.

NOVA SCOTIA
Environment and Climate Change

Barrington Place
1903 Barrington Street
Suite 2085
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3J 2P8

Date: March 27, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Air Quality Unit

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia

Scope of review:
This review focuses on the following mandate: Noise

List of Documents Reviewed:

- *EARD to Appendix A*
- *Drawing 1.1 – 7.7*

Details of Technical Review:

EverWind Fuels is proposing to construct and operate the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, a 345-kilovolt overhead transmission line that will span the Strait of Canso from Steep Creek, Guysborough County, to the Point Tupper Hydrogen and Ammonia Production Facility in Richmond County. The Project will allow for the transmission of renewable energy generated from EverWind's Phase 2 wind farms to the Point Tupper Facility.

Noise impacts were assessed by Strum Consulting. Receptors included all structures identified in GIS data from the Nova Scotia Geomatics Centre, as well as any additional identifiable structures based on aerial imagery. Five receptors were identified within 500 m of the transmission line right-of-way (ROW), and the nearest non-participating receptor is located approximately 144 m from the nearest point of construction and 230 m from the ROW.

Construction noise was identified as having a potential impact on nearby receptors. Tables 7.15 and 7.16 in the EARD show potential sound levels produced by equipment during the construction phase and the attenuated noise at increasing distances from the source. The median noise presented in Table 7.16 has the potential to exceed the Guidelines for Environmental Noise Measurement and Assessment permissible sound level applicable for the receptor location.

The applicant suggested mitigations to minimize these effects, including the use of noise suppressants on vehicles/equipment, minimizing idling, limiting construction activities to daylight hours, and developing a complaints resolution plan.

Operational noise levels were assessed using the Corona and Field Effects Version 3.1 program, assuming a baseline noise level of 45 dBA. The noise levels from the proposed transmission line at the ROW edge under the normal conditions were calculated to be 31.3 dBA. Therefore, operational sound of the transmission line is not anticipated to exceed the applicable permissible sound levels.

Key Considerations: (provide in non-technical language)

- If approved, the project has the potential to impact receptors during the construction phase.

From:	Zwicker,Stephen (ECCC)
To:	Rafferty, Meghan
Cc:	Hingston,Michael (il | he, him) (ECCC); Aikens,Marley (elle | she, her) (ECCC)
Subject:	RE: EA Registration: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties - EverWind NS Holdings Ltd.
Date:	March 27, 2025 9:44:28 AM

Hi Meghan,

ECCC has reviewed the EA Registration for the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line and offer the comments for consideration. This submission is pursuant to ECCC's mandate, which is set out in legislation described on our web page, including the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA), Section 36(3) of the Fisheries Act (FA), the Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA), and the Species at Risk Act (SARA), as well as other applicable legislation and best management practices. ECCC has also reviewed the Avifauna Assessment Method document sent to us on February 10, 2025.

Please note that in the context of impact assessments, ECCC provides technical, science-based information and knowledge to support decision making authorities in their assessment of the project's effects in the receiving environment. Based on the information provided it does appear that ECCC has any permits or authorizations to issue in relation to the project. Any information or comments received from ECCC in this context does not relieve the Proponent of their obligations to respect all applicable federal acts and regulations.

General Comments

- ECCC advice for birds not protected by the MBCA (e.g., raptors) and terrestrial species at risk (SAR) including bats, reptiles, amphibians, land-mammals, insects, plants, and lichen is derived from federal recovery strategies produced as per the Species at Risk Act and are focused on species recovery. SAR are a shared responsibility between the federal government and the provinces and ECCC comments reflect this.
- ECCC requests that any species at risk sightings be reported to ECCC at ec.scfatldonneesei-cwsatliadata.ec@ec.gc.ca. Additionally, proponents are encouraged to share and store wildlife survey data with the Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Center (http://accdc.com/en/contribute.html) and NABat (acoustic bat data only; https://www.nabatmonitoring.org/.
- As much as possible, the elements of any wildlife protection, mitigation, monitoring and adaptive management plans proposed as part of any approval conditions should be identified and the consultation and review process be made clear for all parties.

Migratory Birds

Survey Methods

- Quote (pg. 177): *"A memo outlining field survey methodology was shared with CWS and NSNR on January 28, 2025."*

ECCC notes that the proponent's avian survey field methodology was provided for review shortly before EARD submission, and after 1-2 years of field surveys had already been completed. Therefore, Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service (ECCC-CWS) did not have the opportunity to complete a thorough and timely review of this document. Our comments on the avian survey methodology are included in the present set of comments.

- It is unclear why both ARUs were deployed on the mainland side of the strait, rather than one (or multiple) units on each side (see Drawing 7.25). ECCC recommends that the proponent provide rationale for this deployment strategy.

- Table 7.47 states that breeding bird surveys were completed on June 14 and July 19, 2024.

Although the nesting period for most migratory birds in this nesting zone (C3) extends from mid-April to late August (see: Nesting periods - Canada.ca), breeding bird point count surveys should be completed between early June and early July to maximize detection of singing passerines. As the season progresses, breeding passerines vocalize much less frequently, and in turn, their detectability decreases (EC 2007b).

The survey completed late in the season (July 19th) was past the optimal survey window and therefore may have led to in false negatives in the dataset.

- Quote (pg. 178): *"Surveys were conducted in July 2024 from dusk until two hours after dusk on clear nights with minimal wind and no precipitation. Nightjar surveys were conducted following the Canadian Nightjar Survey Protocol 2019 (Knight et al., 2019)."*

ECCC notes that the Canadian Nightjar Survey (CNS) protocol is updated annually to reflect the change in the appropriate Eastern Whip-poo-will survey timing, which is tied to the lunar cycle and therefore varies from year to year. ECCC recommends acquiring the most recent survey protocol from Birds Canada for future nightjar surveys. Additional details are available at: https://www.birdscanada.org/bird-science/canadian-nightjar-survey

- In areas to be cleared, ECCC recommends assessing habitat suitability for breeding Pileated Woodpecker, and where suitable habitat is present, complete a Pileated Woodpecker nesting cavity survey to identify whether any cavities are present. Any potential nesting trees should be re-visited in late June to confirm occupancy. By late June, nestlings are large and loud and may be seen and heard from afar.

Since the Pileated Woodpecker is listed on Schedule 1 of the *Migratory Birds Regulations* (2022), the nesting cavities of this species are protected year-round, including when they are not occupied by a migratory bird or viable eggs.

If a Pileated Woodpecker nesting cavity is ultimately abandoned, and a proponent wishes to destroy this unoccupied nest, they must submit a notification through the Abandoned Nest Registry, and if the nest remains unoccupied by Pileated Woodpeckers and other migratory bird species for 36 months, it may at that point be destroyed by cutting down the tree.

A Pileated Woodpecker Cavity Identification Guide is available for reference at: Pileated Woodpecker Cavity Identification Guide .

Further information on the *Migratory Bird Regulations, 2022* is available at:

- Migratory Birds Regulations, 2022 (justice.gc.ca)
- Fact sheet: Nest Protection under the Migratory Birds Regulations, 2022 - Canada.ca
- Frequently Asked Questions: Migratory Birds Regulations, 2022 - Canada.ca

Transmission Lines – Risks to Migratory Birds

- Transmission lines and towers have the potential to harm, injure, or kill migratory birds through increasing risks of collision and electrocution. Specifically, birds can be electrocuted when they contact charged transmission or distribution lines and can collide into lines in areas known to have high bird use. In Canada, collisions with transmission lines are estimated to be one of the top sources of human-related mortality in birds (Calvert et al. 2013), with estimated mortality ranging from 2.5 million to 25.6 million birds killed per year (Roux et al. 2013).

The Strait of Canso is known to have high use by landbirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, sea ducks, and other waterbirds (e.g., terns, gulls). It is also an area highly prone to fog, which can increase collision risk. ECCC-CWS data and public reports indicate that migratory birds are known to collide with existing transmission lines nearby (i.e., Canso Causeway).

ECCC-CWS data collected in 2003 indicate that upwards of 50 bird carcasses have been discovered on a single day on the Canso Causeway, many of which were suspected to be the result of collisions with overhead transmission lines. **Note:** Bird Flight Diverters (BFD) were retroactively installed on the overhead ground wires of these lines in 2016. However, ECCC is not aware of any monitoring post-installation to evaluate whether this mitigation significantly reduced the number of collisions and therefore, it is unclear whether the mitigation was effective.

ECCC recommends the following beneficial management practices to avoid potential harm to migratory birds associated with transmission lines:

- Avoid building transmission or distribution lines over, adjacent, or near areas where birds are known to congregate or move, including:
    - Important breeding, staging, moulting areas;
    - Breeding colonies; and
    - Between breeding and foraging areas.
- Design “avian-safe” configurations to reduce the risk of electrocutions, including:
    - Providing sufficient separation between energized phase conductors and between phases and grounded hardware;
    - Insulating exposed surfaces in high-risk areas;
    - Installing perch-management (e.g., perch guard) devices on poles; and
    - Removing or minimizing vegetation around poles and lines.
- Install measures on lines that reduce the risk of collisions:
    - Provide minimal vertical separation between lines;
    - Use self-supporting structures to reduce the number of guy wires;
    - Use line-marking devices to increase the visibility of the lines;
    - Use bird flight diverters in areas of known risk; and
    - Consider illuminating lines and towers with ultraviolet (UV) lighting to increase the visibility of lines in high-risk areas.
- Consider installing underground transmission lines in high-risk areas for bird collisions.

- Given the location of the proposed project and associated risks to migratory birds, ECCC recommends that the proponent consider installing UV lighting to illuminate the towers and transmission lines. UV lighting has been shown to be effective in reducing avian collisions at transmission lines (see: Baasch et al. 2022, Dwyer et al. 2019). Since some night-flying avifauna may have lower sensitivity to UV light (e.g., owls), this measure should be implemented in addition to (not instead of) line marking devices or bird flight diverters installed along the entire length of the transmission line.

- The proponent indicated they will install “bird diverters/deflectors” (pg. 236) but provide no further details on the size, design, or spacing of the line markers, all of which can impact their effectiveness. ECCC recommends that the proponent develop an Avian Management Plan that discusses mitigation and monitoring plans for avifauna, including specifications and spacing design for bird diverters and other measures to avoid and reduce adverse effects (e.g., UV lighting, perch guards, etc.). The plan should also include details regarding the regular maintenance and monitoring of bird diverters, which can be damaged or destroyed over time. Contingency plans identifying mitigation measures should be prepared to address all scenarios that may impact migratory birds and SAR during all of times of the year and all project phases.

ECCC recommends reviewing available guidance from the Avian Power Line

Interaction Committee (APLIC n.d.; https://www.aplic.org/) and the Renewables Grid Initiative (RGI 2024a,
RGI 2024b) to inform the Avian Management Plan.

- Quote (pg. 233): *"A site-specific post-construction monitoring plan will be developed in consultation with NSECC, NSNR, and all other relevant parties. Some preliminary monitoring activities related to avifauna may include post construction mortality monitoring."*

ECCC recommends that the proponent develop and execute a post-construction avifauna monitoring program to verify EA predictions, test the effectiveness of mitigation measures
(e.g., UV lighting, line-marking devices), and assess mortality during all seasons. The post-construction monitoring program should be included in the Avian Management Plan
described above.

Given that a portion of the transmission line spans the strait and carcasses are likely to be lost in the water, carcass searches alone will not be effective for assessing collision
mortality. Therefore, ECCC recommends that alternative techniques, such as radar and visual observation surveys, also be employed at the project site. In addition to assessing direct
mortality, these techniques can be used to assess behavioral responses of avifauna to project infrastructure, including meso-avoidance (e.g., altered flight paths as birds approach
the transmission line) and micro-avoidance (i.e., last-minute evasive movements to avoid collisions). Should post-construction monitoring reveal that mitigation measures are not
effective in reducing collisions, the proponent should discuss additional mitigation options with relevant parties, including ECCC.

Vegetation Clearing – Risks to Migratory Birds

- Quote (pg. 236-237): *"If vegetation and tree clearing activities during the nesting/breeding season cannot be avoided, nest sweeps will be conducted by a qualified avian biologist to search for any confirmed activity which must be avoided (i.e., active nests and recently fledged juveniles)."*

Nests in complex habitats (e.g., forests, wetlands) are difficult to locate, and adult birds avoid approaching their nests in a manner that would attract predators to their eggs or young.
In many circumstances, disturbance and/or harm to migratory birds is still likely to occur even when nest sweeps are conducted prior to vegetation clearing activities.

Therefore, ECCC does not recommend nest sweeps in vegetation prior to clearing or land disturbance activities during the breeding season. Rather, to promote compliance with the
Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA) and its regulations and the *Species at Risk*

Act (SARA), ECCC recommends that activities that may result in incidental take of nests or eggs, such as vegetation clearing and maintenance, occur outside the migratory bird nesting period (mid-April to late August in this region).

For additional information, see "Vegetation Clearing" standard recommendations below.

Species at Risk

Avian SAR

- ECCC notes that Common Nighthawk (SARA-listed Special Concern) was detected during diurnal acoustic monitoring and 20 individuals were observed incidentally in or near the study area. Additionally, Bank Swallow (SARA-listed Threatened) may occur in the study area based on desktop review. These species, as well as other ground or burrow-nesting migratory birds, may be attracted to stockpiles or exposed areas for nesting, particularly if there is a delay between clearing activities and subsequent construction activities.

In such instances, active nest surveys of the cleared areas may be carried out successfully by skilled and experienced observers using appropriate scientific methodology. Should any nests or unfledged chicks be discovered, protection by an appropriate-sized buffer is expected.

The following mitigation measure regarding ground and burrow-nesting birds is listed on page 237:

- *"Avoid disturbance of any ground- or burrow-nesting species should they initiate breeding activities within stockpiles or exposed areas during construction or operations, until chicks can fly, and the nesting areas are no longer being used."*

In addition to the above, ECCC recommends that the proponent develop measures to deter birds from nesting in these areas, such as covering exposed areas or stockpiles when not in use and minimizing the delay between clearing and subsequent construction activities.

ECCC also recommends that the proponent reference the following recovery documents to inform the development of mitigation measures for these species:

- Recovery Strategy for the Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*) in Canada [Final] (2016): https://species-registry.canada.ca/index-en.html#/species/986-668#recovery_strategies
- Recovery Strategy for the Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*) in Canada [Final] (2022): https://species-registry.canada.ca/index-en.html#/species/1233-894#recovery_strategies

- Any areas that include suitable breeding habitat for Bank Swallow (i.e., banks made

of erodible material with a 70 degree or greater slope and a minimum 0.5-meter bank face height) should be surveyed to assess whether any Bank Swallow colonies are present.

The presence of a nesting colony should be confirmed from the bottom of the vertical face, or otherwise in front of the face, as the occurrence and size of the colony can be overlooked from the top of the bank above the colony.

Bank Swallow residences (i.e., occupied nesting burrows) are protected under the SARA. Therefore, any activity that damages or destroys the functions of an occupied burrow would constitute damage or destruction of the residence. The presence of a residence can be confirmed during the breeding season by observing one or more Bank Swallow entering or leaving a burrow or the presence of young at the burrow entrance.

The period when the nests (e.g. the burrow) are considered active includes not only the time when birds are incubating eggs or taking care of flightless chicks, but also a period after chicks have learned to fly, as Bank Swallows return to their colony to roost. A Bank Swallow Residence Description (GoC 2019) is available at: https://species-registry.canada.ca/index- en.html#/documents/3521

A Bank Swallow Residence Description (GoC 2019) is available at: https://species-registry.canada.ca/index-en.html#/documents/3521

Bat SAR

- Any additive mortality on SARA-listed bat species in White-nose Syndrome (WNS) affected areas can be biologically important. Specifically, disturbance or destruction of maternity roosts or hibernacula and mortality of even a small number of individuals, particularly breeding adults, have the potential to negatively impact the survival of local populations, their recovery, and potentially, the development of resistance to the fungus that causes WNS.

ECCC recommends that the Proponent identify mitigation measures to protect bat residences (maternity roosts, hibernacula), should they be suspected or confirmed during project activities. Additionally, the proponent should identify measures to avoid/minimize bat mortality and plans to monitor potential impacts during operation.

The *Recovery Strategy for the Little Brown Myotis (Myotis lucifugus), the Northern Myotis (Myotis septentrionalis), and the Tricolored Bat (Perimyotis subflavus) in Canada* (2018) is available at: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry/recovery-strategies/little-brown-myotis-2018.html.

Quote (pg. 165): "*If clearing is required within this window* [April 15-August 31]*, the Proponent will retain a qualified professional to conduct nest sweeps for birds and searches for bat roosts in advance of clearing activities. If bat maternity roosts are identified during nest sweeps, appropriate setbacks will be maintained.*

It is unclear what methodology the proponent intends to use to complete "searches for bat roosts" ahead of clearing activities. Confirmation of roosting is challenging, particularly

because roosting bats can switch trees within a season and may not be visible from the ground. Visual searches are not sufficient to detect bats in a maternity roosting tree.

ECCC recommends completing all clearing activities outside the maternity roosting period, as this is the most effective measure to avoid impacts on SAR bat maternity roosts.

Cumulative Effects Assessment

- It is unclear why the proponent's cumulative effects assessment (CEA) does not include the transmission line and power line at the nearby Canso Causeway, which is known to cause avian mortalities and cumulatively impact avifauna using the Strait of Canso, particularly for species repeatedly transiting in and out of the strait (e.g., waterbirds on foraging trips) (see ECCC comment #11).

Quote (pg. 279): *"Beyond standard post-construction avian mortality monitoring, no additional mitigations or monitoring is recommended based on cumulative effects."*

Given the known importance of the area for avifauna and existing developments near the Project, including the projects discussed in the CEA and the transmission/power lines at the

Canso Causeway, ECCC is of the view that additional mitigation and monitoring is warranted for this project. See ECCC comments #11-14 for recommended measures and monitoring

approaches.

Applicable Legislation and Standard Recommendations

Migratory Birds Convention Act

The federal *Migratory Birds Convention Act* (MBCA) and its regulations protect migratory birds and their eggs and prohibit the disturbance, damage, destruction or removal of migratory bird nests that contain a live bird or a viable egg. Migratory birds are protected at all times; all migratory bird nests are protected when they contain a live bird or viable egg; and the nests of 18 species listed in Schedule 1 of the MBR 2022 are protected year-round. These general prohibitions apply to all lands and waters in Canada, regardless of ownership. For more information, please visit: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/avoiding-harm-migratory-birds/reduce-risk-migratory-birds.html.

For migratory birds that are listed as Endangered, Threatened or Extirpated on Schedule 1

of the *Species at Risk Act* S.32 (protection of individuals) and S.33 (protection of residences) apply to all land tenure types in Canada. For some migratory bird species listed under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), the residence prohibition will protect nests that are not active but are re-used in subsequent years (please note that the residence of a migratory bird may not necessarily be limited to their nest).

Section 5.1 of the MBCA describes prohibitions related to depositing substances harmful to migratory birds:
"5.1 (1) No person or vessel shall deposit a substance that is harmful to migratory birds, or permit such a substance to be deposited, in waters or an area frequented by migratory birds or in a place from which the substance may enter such waters or such an area.
(2) No person or vessel shall deposit a substance to be deposited in any place if the substance, in combination with one or more substances, result in a substance – in waters or an area frequented by migratory birds or in a place from which it may enter such waters or such an area – that is harmful to migratory birds."

The proponent is responsible for ensuring that activities are managed to ensure compliance with the MBCA and associated regulations.

Vegetation Clearing

Clearing vegetation may cause disturbance to migratory birds and inadvertently destroy their nests and eggs. Many species use trees, as well as brush, deadfalls and other low-lying vegetation for nesting, feeding, shelter and cover. This would apply to songbirds throughout the region and waterfowl in wetland areas. Disturbance of this nature would be most critical during the breeding period. The breeding season for most birds within the project area occurs between mid-April and late August in this region, however some species protected under the MBCA do nest outside of this time period. Please see the webpage "Nesting Periods" (https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/avoiding-harm-migratory-birds/general-nesting-periods/nesting-periods.html) for more specific information concerning the breeding times of migratory birds. This project falls within zone "C3".

ECCC recommends the following:

- The proponent is recommended to avoid certain activities, such as clearing, during the regional nesting period for migratory birds. The breeding season for most birds within the project area occurs between **mid-April and late August** in this region (see above website for more specific time periods by zone).
- Active nests can be discovered during project activities outside of the regional nesting period. To reduce the risk of impacting nests or birds caring for pre-fledged chicks at those times, ECCC recommends implementation of measures such as the establishment of vegetated buffer zones around nests, and minimization of activities, in the immediate area until nesting is complete, and chicks have naturally migrated from the area. It is incumbent on the proponent to identify the best approach, based on the circumstances, to comply with the MBCA.
- The proponent should be cognizant that while most migratory bird species construct nests in trees (sometimes in tree cavities) and shrubs, mitigations should be appropriate for migratory birds with different strategies. For example, several species

nest at ground level (e.g. Common Nighthawk, Killdeer, sandpipers), in hay fields, pastures or in burrows. Some bird species may nest on cliffs or in stockpiles of overburden material from mines or the banks of quarries. Some migratory birds (including certain waterfowl species) may nest in head ponds created by beaver dams. Some migratory birds (e.g. Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Eastern Phoebe) may build their nests on structures such as bridges, ledges, or gutters.

- The proponent should develop and implement a management plan that includes appropriate preventative measures to minimize the risk of impacts on migratory birds (Please see 'Guidelines to reduce risk to migratory birds' at https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/avoiding-harm-migratory-birds/reduce-risk-migratory-birds.html). For beneficial management practices regarding how to avoid the incidental take of migratory bird nests and eggs, please refer to the Avoidance Guidelines (Website: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/avoiding-harm-migratory-birds/guidelines.html). The management plan should include processes to follow should an active nest be found at any time of the year.

Working near Waterbodies or Riparian Environments

ECCC recommends the following beneficial management practices for working on/near waterbodies or riparian environments:

- Project staff should not approach concentrations of migratory birds (e.g. seabirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, etc.).
- Project staff should use the main navigation channels or access roads to get to and from the site; and should have well muffled vessels and machinery.
- Project staff should undertake any measures that may minimize or eliminate discharge of oily waste into the marine or riparian environment.
- Food scraps and other garbage left near waterbodies or riparian environments can artificially enhance the populations of avian and mammalian predators of eggs and chicks. The proponent should ensure that no litter (including food waste) is left in coastal areas by their staff and/or contractors
- If there is any noticeable change in migratory bird numbers or distribution at the location during operations, ECCC should be notified.

Fuel Leaks

The proponent must ensure that all precautions are taken by the contractors to prevent fuel leaks from equipment, and that a contingency plan in case of oil spills is prepared. Furthermore, the proponent should ensure that contractors are aware that under the MBCA, "*no person shall deposit or permit to be deposited oil, oil wastes or any substance harmful to migratory birds in any waters or any area frequented by migratory birds*." Biodegradable alternatives to petroleum-based chainsaw bar oil and hydraulic for heavy machinery are commonly available from major manufacturers. Such biodegradable fluids should be considered for use in place of petroleum products whenever possible, as a standard for best practices. Fueling and servicing of equipment should not take place within 30 meters of environmentally sensitive areas, including shorelines and wetlands.

ECCC recommends incorporating a Wildlife Emergency Response Plan into emergency response contingency plans for scenarios that may impact avifauna directly (injury or mortality e.g. polluting incident) or indirectly (collisions causing mortality, stranding due to light attraction).

For consideration in emergency response and contingency planning related to accidents and malfunctions, ECCC has prepared *Guidelines for Effective Wildlife Response Plans* (ECCC 2022) available online at: https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/wildlife-plants-species/national-wildlife-emergency-framework.html. Plans should include:

- Measures to deter migratory birds from coming into contact with the oil or polluting substance;
- Measures undertaken if individuals of migratory birds and/or sensitive habitat become contaminated; and,
- The type, extent of monitoring, and reporting in relation to various spill events.

The proponent is responsible for ensuring that all precautions are taken by the contractors to prevent fuel leaks from equipment, and that a contingency plan is prepared in the case of spills. Furthermore, the proponent should ensure that contractors are aware of s.5.1 MBCA prohibitions.

Stockpiles

Certain species of migratory birds (e.g., Bank Swallows) may nest in large piles of soil left unattended/unvegetated during the most critical period of the breeding season (mid-April to mid-August). To discourage this, the proponent should consider measures to cover or deter birds from these large piles of unattended soil during the breeding season. If migratory birds take up occupancy of these piles, any industrial activities (including hydroseeding) will cause disturbance to these migratory birds and inadvertently cause the destruction of nests and eggs. Alternate measures will then need to be taken to reduce potential erosion, and to ensure that nests are protected until chicks have fledged and left the area. For a species such as Bank Swallow, the period when the nests would be considered active would include not only the time when birds are incubating eggs or taking care of flightless chicks, but also a period of time after chicks have learned to fly, because Bank Swallows return to their colony to roost.

See also for example the attached guidance concerning beneficial management practices that should be considered for implementation when designing mitigation measures for Bank Swallows, as well as guidance provided at Bank Swallow (Riparia riparia): in sandpits and quarries - Canada.ca.

Revegetation

A variety of plants native to the general project area should be used in revegetation efforts. Should seed mixes for herbaceous native species for the area not be available, it should be ensured that plants used in revegetation efforts are not known to be invasive.

Invasive Species

Measures to diminish the risk of introducing invasive species should be developed and implemented during all project phases. These measures could include:

- Cleaning and inspecting construction equipment prior to transport from elsewhere to ensure that no vegetative matter is attached to the machinery (e.g., use of pressure water hose to clean vehicles prior to transport).
- Regularly inspecting equipment prior to, during and immediately following construction in areas found to support invasive species to ensure that vegetative matter is not transported from one construction area to another.

Noise Disturbance

Anthropogenic noise produced by construction and human activity can have multiple impacts on birds, including causing stress responses, avoidance of certain important habitats, changes in foraging behaviour and reproductive success, and interference with songs, calls, and communications. Activities that introduce loud and/or random noise into habitats with previously no to little levels of anthropogenic noise are particularly disruptive.

ECCC recommends the following best management practices:

- The proponent should develop mitigations for programs that introduce very loud random noise disturbance (e.g., blasting programs) during the migratory bird breeding season for their region.
- The proponent should, where possible, prioritize construction works in areas away from natural vegetation while working during the migratory bird breeding season. Conducting loud construction works adjacent to natural vegetation should be completed outside the migratory bird breeding season.
- The proponent should keep all construction equipment and vehicles in good working order and loud machinery should be muffled if possible.

Light Attraction and Migratory Birds

Attraction to light at night or in poor visibility conditions during the day may result in collision with lit structures or their support structures, or with other migratory birds. Disoriented migratory birds are prone to circling light sources and may deplete their energy reserves and either die of exhaustion or be forced to land where they are at risk of depredation.

To reduce the risk of disturbance to migratory birds related to human-induced light, ECCC recommends implementation of the following beneficial management practices:

- The fewest number of site-illuminating light possible should be used in the project area. Only strobe lights should be used at night, at the lowest intensity and smallest number of flashes per minute allowable by Transport Canada.
- Lighting for the safety of the employees should be shielded down and only to where it is needed.
- LED lights should be used instead of other types of light where possible. LED light fixtures are less prone to light trespass (i.e., are better at directing light where it needs to be, and do not bleed light into the surrounding area), and this property reduces the incidence of migratory bird attraction.

Infrastructure, Buildings and Bridges

Certain species of migratory birds may nest on the sides of buildings, bridges or other pieces of infrastructure. Additionally, some species may nest on equipment, if they are left unattended/idle for long periods of time.

ECCC recommends the following beneficial management practices:

- The proponent should ensure that project staff are aware of the potential of migratory bird bests on infrastructure, buildings, and bridges, if applicable.
- If a nest is discovered, the proponent should conduct no activities around the nest that cause the nest to be abandoned or destroyed. Activities should be suspended until the chicks have fledged and left the area.
- If the proponent anticipates that birds may nest on infrastructure, the proponent should install anti-perching and nesting exclusion devices (e.g. mesh netting, chicken wire fencing, etc.) before any nest attempts are made.

Species at Risk

The Species at Risk Act (SARA) “General prohibitions” apply to this project. In applying the general prohibitions, the proponent, staff and contractors, should be aware that no person shall:

- kill, harm, harass, capture or take an individual;
- possess, collect, buy, sell or trade an individual, or any part or derivative;
- damage or destroy the residence of one or more individuals.

General prohibitions only apply automatically:

- on all federal lands in a province,
- to aquatic species anywhere they occur,
- to migratory birds protected under the Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA) 1994 anywhere they occur.

Section 33 of SARA prohibits damaging or destroying the residence of a listed threatened, endangered, or extirpated species. For migratory bird species at risk (SAR), this prohibition immediately applies on all lands or waters (federal, provincial, territorial and private) in which the species occurs.

ECCC-CWS notes that all comments it provides concerning species at risk that are not migratory birds derive from federal recovery/management plans as posted on the Species at Risk Registry (https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/species-risk-public-registry.html), and thus comments may not be comprehensive to the body of knowledge for the species.

For species which are not listed under SARA but are listed under provincial legislation only or that have been assessed and designated by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), it is best practice to consider these species in EA as though they were listed under SARA.

Avian SAR

ECCC notes that the following avian species at risk (SAR) listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) have been recorded in or near the study area: Bank Swallow (Threatened), Barn Swallow (Threatened), Bobolink (Threatened), Barrow's Goldeneye (Special Concern), Canada Warbler (Threatened), Chimney Swift (Threatened), Common Nighthawk (Special Concern), Evening Grosbeak (Special Concern), Harlequin Duck (Special Concern), Olive-sided Flycatcher (Special Concern), Rusty Blackbird (Special Concern).

Note that this list is not exhaustive; there is potential for additional avian SAR (and other species of conservation concern) to occur in the study area.

Wetlands

To promote wetland conservation, which is vital to many migratory birds and species at risk, ECCC recommends the following general beneficial management practices:

- Developments on wetlands should be avoided.
- Where development does occur in the vicinity of wetlands, a minimum vegetation buffer zone of 30 metres should be maintained around existing wetland areas.
- Hydrological function of the wetland should be maintained.
- Runoff from development should be directed away from wetlands.
- The use of a 30-metre buffer from the high-water mark of any water body (1:100 Flood Zone) in order to maintain movement corridors for migratory birds. Please see https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/avoiding-harm-migratory-birds/reduce-risk-migratory-birds.html for further information concerning buffer zones.

References

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Factors & Effectiveness of Wire Markers [Brochure]. https://renewables-grid.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Nature/Wire_Marker_Brochure_Digital.pdf

- RGI [Renewables Grid Initiative] (2024b). Avian-Power Line Collision: Overview of Risk Factors & Effectiveness of Wire Markers [Methodology Report]. https://renewables-grid.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Nature/Wire_Marker_Brochure_Digital.pdf

WATER QUALITY

Pollution prevention and control provisions of the *Fisheries Act* are administered and enforced by ECCC. Subsection 36(3) of the *Fisheries Act* prohibits "anyone from depositing or permitting the deposit of a deleterious substance of any type in water frequented by fish, or in any place under any conditions where the deleterious substance, or any other deleterious substance that results from the deposit of the deleterious substance, may enter such water".

It is the responsibility of the proponent to ensure that activities are managed so as to prevent the release of substances deleterious to fish. In general, compliance is determined at the last point of control of the substance before it enters waters frequented by fish, or, in any place under any conditions where a substance may enter such waters. Additional information on what constitutes a deposit under the *Fisheries Act* can be found here: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/managing-pollution/effluent-regulations-fisheries-act/frequently-asked-questions.html

ACCIDENTS AND MALFUNCTIONS

Hazardous materials (e.g. fuels, lubricants, hydraulic oil) and wastes (e.g. waste oil) should be managed so as to minimize the risk of chronic and/or accidental releases. For example, the proponent should encourage contractors and staff to undertake refueling and maintenance activities on level terrain, at a suitable distance from environmentally sensitive areas including watercourses, and on a prepared impermeable surface with a collection system.

All spills or leaks, such as those from machinery or storage tanks, should be promptly contained and cleaned up (sorbents and booms should be available for quick containment and recovery), and reported to the 24-hour environmental emergencies reporting system (Maritime Provinces 1-800-565-1633).

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you.

Stephen Zwicker

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NOVA SCOTIA
Fisheries and Aquaculture

Armoyan Centre
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Date: March 27, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Lesley O'Brien Latham, Executive Director, Policy and Strategic Advisory Services, Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia

Scope of review:
The scope of this review follows the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture's (DFA) legislated mandate to develop, promote and support the fisheries, aquaculture, seafood processing and sportfishing sectors in Nova Scotia.

List of Documents Reviewed:
- Everwind Strait Crossing Transmission Line PROJECT Environmental Assessment Registration Document (with Appendices)
- Concordance Table
- Public Notice
- EW Strait Data Submission
- EW Strait Drawings

Details of Technical Review:
Aquaculture:
There are a total of zero rockweed leases within 25km of the proposed project. There are 19 aquaculture sites within 25km of the proposed project:
- 17 are marine shellfish and plants sites;
- 2 are marine finfish sites; and
- 0 are land-based aquaculture facilities.

Sedimentation
Settling sediment, associated with road construction and maintenance, can obstruct feeding and destroy habitat by covering benthic substrates, smothering the benthic habitat/organisms, and impacting the nutrients available to shellfish bottom culture farms. High turbidity levels can also affect the ability of fish gills to absorb dissolved oxygen. Sediment can house pathogens and undesired microorganisms, increasing the risk of disease outbreaks among aquatic species. The results can range from reduced growth to morbidity.

Strategies put forward by the proponent in the submitted Environmental Assessment Registration Document (EARD) to mitigate sedimentation, reduce direct runoff and encourage filtration, if implemented correctly should reduce risks to nearby aquaculture sites.

The proponent should be made aware of the aquaculture operations within the area and ensure mitigations are implemented appropriately.

Power Supply
There is no mention of power supply disruption in the EARD submitted by the proponent. If a power disruption is required during this project, outages should be planned whenever possible and adequate notice should be given to aquaculturists to allow back-up power sources to be utilized to prevent equipment disruptions.

Aquaculture facilities can be negatively affected by unexpected power outages. These implications can vary depending on the species, the scale of the operation, the duration of the power outage, and the specific technologies used. Power disruptions to equipment can be detrimental to aquatic animal health through inability to maintain water flow, monitor and maintain water conditions, or feeding system operations. Fluctuations in environmental conditions caused by power outages can generate cumulative stress and weaken the immune systems of aquatic animals, making them more susceptible to disease. Interruptions in power can also affect data logging and record-keeping systems, making it challenging to track daily production and feeding data.

Water Discharge
As there is no inclusion of water withdrawal in the EARD submitted by the proponent, there is subsequently no mention of water discharge. Water discharge can contain excess nutrients and potential pollutants, and can result in nutrient enrichment, eutrophication, algal blooms, dissolved oxygen depletion, habitat degradation, and altered water quality in the receiving waters. Such impacts can disrupt aquatic ecosystems, harm aquatic species, and threaten the sustainability of aquaculture practices. Excess of nutrient load can stimulate the growth of algae and aquatic plants, resulting in harmful algal blooms. These blooms can deplete dissolved oxygen when they decay, causing hypoxia and anoxia in the water.

If water is discharged as part of this project, mitigations should be taken to ensure water is not discharged at a rate that would impact water amounts and quality at land-based facilities. Additional steps could include implementing water treatment systems, regular monitoring and transparent reporting, the development of comprehensive effluent management plans, meticulous discharge site selection, and active engagement with local communities.

<u>Marine Fisheries:</u>
The EARD submitted by the proponent summarizes potential direct impact on fish habitat.

The project is subject to environmental guidelines and the company has the mitigation measures in place. If the proponent adheres to these policies and guidelines as outlined in the EARD, it should result in negligible risk to marine fisheries and seafood buying/processing activities in the project area.

There are several licensed NS Seafood Buyers/Processors located in Richmond and Guysborough Counties which could be considered “nearby” to the proposed site:

- On the mainland side (Guysborough County), the closest NS buyer, BST Lobster Sales Inc is located 16.0 km, in a North by northwesterly direction (via land) in Aulds Cove.
- DSM Nutritional Products is located north by Northwesterly, 9.0 km away in Mulgrave.
- In Point Tupper, Richmond County, Premium Seafoods (NS Buyer/Processor) is located 42.2 km southeast of the proposed project site in Point Tupper.
- Lobster ‘R’ us, a lobster buyer/processor, is in lower L’Adoise, approximately 60 km to the east.

The main commercial fishery in the Strait of Canso, south side of the causeway, is Lobster, which is managed as Lobster Fishing Area 29. The fishery runs from late-April to mid-July for commercial lobster fishers and First Nations Communal fishers and various times of the years for the First

Nations Food, Social, and ceremonial fishery. There are a couple of Mackerel traps operated by commercial fishers from Steep Creek area. They usually operate in summer/fall.

The nearest commercial wharfs on the mainland side are in:

- Mulgrave is 9.0 km to Northwest of Steep Creek. Clearwater Fine Foods use the facility for their offshore factory freezer trawlers (unloading/Docking/Maintenance).
- Eddie Point Marine Park community wharf, located three km to the southwest in Melford area, and is used by commercial lobster fishermen.
- In Point Tupper area, commercial fishing vessels often use the Port Hawkesbury marina for docking and unloading purposes. The nearest Harbour Authority wharf is located fifty km to the southeast in Petit De Grat.

Inland Fisheries:

The only potential issue identified by the proponent in the submitted EARD that may have an impact on local sportfishing and fish habitat involves constructing a standard road crossing over or near a watercourse.

If the proponent proceeds through NSECC permitting under the watercourse alteration/notification process (NSECC, 2015b) and if Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) reviews the application to determine whether this road crossing will result in harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat (HADD), then impacts on local sportfishing, fish and fish habitat should be minimal.

Key Considerations:

Risks to aquaculture sites from sediments need to be mitigated and monitored appropriately. If this is done, the risk to aquaculture sites should be low.

If water withdrawal, water discharge, and/or power disruptions are going to occur, the applicant needs to update their plans and provide appropriate mitigations for review. There are potential negative impacts to aquaculture sites in the area resulting from these occurrences.

Proposed Project impacts on fish and fish habitat will be minimal as long as NSECC Watercourse alteration regulations are followed.

Engagement with aquaculturists and seafood buyers/processors within proximity to the project site is recommended.

Project proponent should be made aware of:

- the Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act,
- Provincial Aquaculture License and Lease Regulations,
- Provincial Aquaculture Management Regulations,
- the Nova Scotia Rock Weed Harvesting Regulations, and
- the Department's Site Mapping Tool for more information on the location of aquaculture sites and leases in the area of their proposed project.

NOVA SCOTIA
Environment and Climate Change

Barrington Place
1903 Barrington Street
Suite 2085
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3J 2P8

Date: March 27, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Climate Change Division – Lori Skaine

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia

Scope of review:
This review focuses on the following mandate: Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

List of Documents Reviewed:
EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project EA Registration Document

Details of Technical Review:

Adaptation:

- The proponent has partially described the historical climate based on relevant to the location (Port Hawkesbury Meteorological Station). Section 7.1.1.4 of the EA Registration document includes data for 2010-2023, less than the recommended 30 years of data to identify climate variability and trends.
- The Biophysical Environment section of the EA registration document does not describe how the climate is changing at the site relative to the climate normal for the location, such as projected climate averages and extremes for temperature, precipitation, etc.
- Under sections 11.1 and 11.2 of the EA registration documents, the proponent generally describes some potential climate impacts on the project and proposes some adaptation measures. However, the proponent does not specifically identify the adverse impacts of climate change on the site and assess possible mitigation measures based on the risk management framework as recommended in the "Guide to Considering Climate Change in Project Development in Nova Scotia."
- The EA registration document does not describe how climate change projections data may be used in the design of infrastructure to accommodate climatic changes.

Mitigation:

- The primary sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the project as described in section 7.1.2.4 of the EA registration document are all associated with the construction phase of the project. These include cement production and transportation, fuel combustion from heavy machinery, light-duty vehicles, and equipment, and land clearing.

- Per Appendix B of the EA registration document, the total expected GHG emissions from the construction phase amount to 15,483.16 tCO_2e, of which 15,192 tCO_2e, or a little more than 98% of total construction phase emissions for the project, are attributable to concrete production.
- The operational phase of the project is expected to produce negligible emissions, as described in section 7.1.2.7 of the registration document.

Key Considerations: (provide in non-technical language)

Adaptation:

- We suggest the proponent consider using 30-years of historical climate averages and extremes and climate data over the lifetime of the project to understand how the climate is changing and identify relevant climate hazards to the undertaking.
- We suggest the proponent consider including how the climate change projections data could inform different phases of the project, e.g., guidelines for adjusting IDF curves based on climate change (available at climatedata.ca).
- We suggest the proponent consider using a risk assessment framework to assess risks and plan adaptation measures to reduce risks.

Mitigation:

- The proposed mitigation steps identified in Section 7.1.2.7 of the EA registration document are appropriate and include the reduction of exhaust emissions from equipment and vehicles through routine maintenance to keep vehicles in good working order, and to utilize a no-idling policy.
- We suggest the proponent investigate whether the cement used in their concrete is sourced from a supplier where the associated emissions have been subject to carbon pricing, and if so, we suggest the proponent declare those details.
- We suggest the proponent explore possible technologies that allow CO_2 to be embedded into concrete, including biochar amendments or mineralization.

NOVA SCOTIA

Agriculture

60 Research Drive
Suite A
Bible Hill, Nova Scotia
B6L 2R2

Date: March 21, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Heather Hughes, Executive Director, Policy and Corporate Services, Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project
Strait of Canso, Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia

Thank you for the opportunity to review the documents for the above-noted project.

No agricultural impacts are anticipated given that:

- The project is situated primarily on Class 7 soils, defined by Canadian Land Inventory as having “no capacity for arable culture or permanent pasture”. A small section of the project footprint overlaps Class 2 soils which have “moderate” limitations for agriculture. However, the size and location of Class 2 soils within the proposed site limit potential for agricultural use.
- There are no agricultural lands within a 2 km buffer surrounding the proposed site. Within the buffered area 72% of lands are Class 7, 19% are Class 2 and 9% are Class 3. Class 3 soil has “moderately severe” limitations for arable agriculture or permanent pasture.
- The nearest agricultural lands are:
    - an inactive 4.2 acre crop field, 560 m outside the 2 km buffer,
    - a 3.5 acre crop field, 1.3 km from the buffer,
    - a 2.7 acre crop field, 1.3 km from the buffer.

NOVA SCOTIA
Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage
Special Places Protection

1747 Summer Street, 2nd Floor
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3H 3A6
902-424-6450 T
SPP@novascotia.ca E

Date: March 2, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Beth Lewis, Director of Special Places Protection

Subject: **EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia**

Scope of review:
This review focuses on the following mandate: ***Archaeology and Geology***

List of Documents Reviewed:
EA Document

Details of Technical Review (Archaeology):

Section 9.0 of the EA document for the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project has been reviewed and have no archaeological concerns at this time. The recommendations of the archaeology consultants are included in the EA.

Please note: The ARIA report approval letter issued by CCTH that lists the approved recommendations going forward, should be appended at the end of the report. (A2024NS173)

Key Considerations: (provide in non-technical language):

There are no archaeological concerns at this time.

Details of Technical Review (Geology):

The project document is correct in identifying the Horton Group, Mabou Group and Cumberland Group bedrock geology occurring in the project area. However, no mention is given to the potential presence of fossils. The most common fossils likely to be encountered during excavation of bedrock in these areas would be plant fossils; however, the bedrock may also include footprints and other trace fossils, as well as rare and significant fossils of Devonian and Carboniferous aged vertebrates, including early tetrapods and fish. During excavation of bedrock that may contain significant vertebrate fossils, it would be desirable to have a site assessment by a palaeontologist and documentation of any significant fossils encountered. The exposure of significant amounts of bedrock provides a unique opportunity to document important and valuable fossil occurrences.

Key Considerations:
We would encourage to have the site assessed by a palaeontologist to document any significant fossils encountered.

NOVA SCOTIA
Environment and Climate Change

Barrington Place
1903 Barrington Street
Suite 2085
Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3J 2P8

Date: March 27, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Adrian Fuller, Inspection Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) Division – Executive Director

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia

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Scope of review:
This review focuses on the following mandate: additional triggers and impacts that may require an approval from Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change ICE Division.

List of Documents Reviewed:
EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project EARD

Details of Technical Review:

NSECC ICE Division has reviewed the EARD provided by EverWind and offer the following comments:

Material Removal (Western portion of Project – Steep Creek area)
The Western portion of the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, proximal to Steep Creek, obtains a steep elevation loss (~190 metres) from most Western portion of the project area to the Strait of Canso (Drawing 7.5). Dependant on the necessary requirements for the removal of vegetation, overburden, bedrock including blasting, etc. for the success of the project, the following environmental and human health risks may occur.

Should minimal material removal be required for the project's success, the following concerns would be very low and can be mitigated through industry standard protocols for Erosion and Sedimentation controls.

Karst (GUDI) – Groundwater Under Direct Influence (GUDI) (Drawing 7.8).
Due to the Karst conditions in the Steep Creek area (Cavernous/Voided Bedrock), surficial oxygenated water could infiltrate groundwater and heavily and rapidly influence numerous groundwater parameters e.g. pH levels (acidity/alkalinity), Metal Leaching, TDS, TSS, Siltation, etc.

The acidification of the groundwater, from the introduction of oxygen, would be of a higher concern, as it could have a direct effect on metal leaching. The region of Steep Rock is noted to have very high levels of naturally occurring Arsenic in the bedrock

(Drawing 7.1). Should pH levels be altered in the area, natural arsenic release may also occur.

The proponent noted the concern for the potential conditions above. “If geologic hazards (**ARD**, etc.) are identified within the Project Area during geotechnical investigations, a site-specific mitigation plan will be developed.” (Page 90 of 307 of Report)

Key Considerations: (provide in non-technical language)

On the Steep Creek side of the Project, a single Groundwater Monitoring Well is present and owned under Everwind (Figure 7.9). Dependant on the amount and type of material removal, additional groundwater monitoring wells, strategically placed, would be beneficial to monitor the natural aquifer in this region and any adverse impacts to the region from the project.

Siltation may occur from surficial runoff, especially during storm events, increasing TDS, TSS and Turbidity, but can be mitigated through industry standard protocols for Erosion and Sedimentation controls.

The consultant has provided sufficient supporting information associated with possible watercourse / wetland alterations. The consultant has indicated in the EARD that watercourse and wetland alteration applications will be submitted to NSECC in accordance with the Activities Designation Regulations following EA approval, as required. (locations requiring alteration are described in Sections 7.3.1-7.3.3)

The review noted no Operating Approvals trigger in the Activities Designation Regulations for this activity (Power Transmission Corridor). If during construction the company or the company’s contractors wish to bring on a temporary Ready Mix Concrete Batch Plant to the Site, that Batch Plant must have a valid Operating Approval**.**

NOVA SCOTIA
Environment and Climate Change

Barrington Place
1903 Barrington Street
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Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canada B3J 2P8

Date: March 26, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Water Resource Management Branch

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties

Scope of review:
This review focuses on the following mandate: surface water quantity and quality, groundwater quantity and quality, and wetlands.

List of Documents Reviewed:
Environmental Assessment Registration Document (EARD), including Drawings, Appendices, and GIS data

Details of Technical Review:

Surface Water

The project proposes to construct a transmission line across the Northumberland Strait, with approximately 1.3 km stretching over the watercourse and the remainder over the areas for the Western and Eastern terminuses, at Steep Creek and Point Tupper, respectively. It is proposed that a transmission line will extend from the future EverWind Phase 2 wind power substation to the Western (Steep Creek) terminus, which will be proposed in a subsequent EARD. As a result, it is understood that the construction of transmission lines from power sources to the western dead-end landing structure is not within the scope of this project.

The proposal identifies 2.649 km of access roads as a project component, including 2.272 km of existing roads. Newly constructed roads represent 0.377 km of the 2.649 km total. Upgrades will be required for 0.550 km of existing roads.

The EARD stated that indirect impacts due to sedimentation and erosion would be mitigated with best management practices and committed to developing a site-specific Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) plan. To further mitigate risks to water bodies and watercourses, the ESC plan should include measures to capture any material eroded from disturbed areas before it reaches watercourses in addition to targeting stream banks and minimizing exposed disturbed areas.

The proposal identifies the presence of 13 watercourses within the study area and proposes to alter one watercourse (WC 3) through the construction of a watercourse

crossing. The proposal indicates that the impacts of this alteration will be mitigated through maintaining the natural grade of the watercourse, fitting the crossing with appropriately sized infrastructure, and that concrete used in the crossing infrastructure, if any, will be pre-cast, and cured for at least one week prior to use.

The EARD notes that "there are no sulfide-bearing slates or formations recorded within the Study Area" and indicates that "the presence/absence of sulfide bearing minerals and likelihood of ARD will be confirmed following the results of the geotechnical evaluation" to be performed prior to the submission of an application for Industrial Approval.

Groundwater

The EARD reports 21 wells within 2 km of the project area and 4 wells within 800 m. They note that likely only 1 well is present (within 4 m of project area) that is not on land owned by proponent. A field survey of actual locations and ownership should be conducted for verification.

Prior to any blasting, the EARD recommends a pre-blast survey for any water wells within 800 m of the point of blast. This should include documentation of well condition, well construction, water quality (at minimum general chemistry, metals and bacteria) and water levels. The EARD states:

> "*Conduct pre-blast surveys for wells within 800 m of blasting activities, which may include ground-truthing for nearby well locations.*
>
> - *If demonstrable changes in groundwater quantity or quality to a well are detected due to Project activities, an alternative water supply, of equal or better quantity/quality than that impacted, will be provided to landowner."*

For the well within 4 m of the project area a water well survey should also be conducted prior to construction, independent of blasting activities.

The EARD does not recommend any groundwater monitoring.

> "*No monitoring programs are recommended at this time in relation to the geophysical environment."*

The conclusions in the EARD regarding residual effects are:

> *"After mitigations, residual effects on the geophysical environment are characterized as follows:*
>
> - *Magnitude – Moderate magnitude as there is one privately-owned water well within 800 m of the Project Area."*

Wetlands

The Proponent did a sufficient job at delineating and assessing wetlands within the Assessment Area. Micro-siting to avoid wetlands was completed during the project planning phases. The EARD identified the potential for the partial alteration of one wetland (Wetland 9) to facilitate Project developments with a total impact area of approximately 808 m^2. Additionally, five other wetlands (WL2, WL5, WL6, WL7, and WL14) will require clearing where the proponent stated that clearing is not considered an alteration as per the Nova Scotia Wetland Compensation Policy. The Nova Scotia Wetland Policy states, "an approval is not required for harvesting trees or mowing

agricultural fields in a wetland (best management practices should always be used to minimize damage)". It is recommended that clearing be done by hand within these wetlands and if ground disturbance such as grubbing is anticipated a wetland alteration approval would be required.

Key Considerations: (provide in non-technical language)

Surface Water

Mitigative measures proposed in the EARD including erosion and sediment control and measures to minimize impacts of altered hydrology would reduce risks to surface waters posed by site activities. These measures could be integrated into a holistic site-specific ESC and Surface Water Management plans before construction begins.

The main NSECC regulatory touchpoint for the construction of the transmission line will be on the watercourse crossing for WC3.

To ensure adequate mitigative measures are taken if sulphide bearing material is encountered, the proponent should consider developing a plan that outlines how the material will be identified and evaluated.

Groundwater

A water well survey (one nearby water well) and pre-blast surveys of water wells (number to be field determined) should be undertaken for water quality, water quantity and well construction conditions.

The EARD commits to providing alternate water supply for affected well owners if necessary.

Wetlands

The proponent is required to submit a Wetland Alteration Approval Application for review and approval for any wetlands to be directly or indirectly altered and complete any necessary compensation and monitoring. The proponent should utilize Nova Scotia's Wetland Alteration Application's Guided Template for the permit applications. Flagging of the wetland boundaries adjacent to construction areas should occur to prevent un-intended wetland alterations.

NOVA SCOTIA
Natural Resources and Renewables
Energy

1701 Hollis St.
PO Box 698
Halifax, NS B3J 2T9

Date: March 27, 2025

To: Meghan Rafferty, Environmental Assessment Officer

From: Department of Natural Resources, Department of Energy

Subject: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties, Nova Scotia (Revised)

Scope of review:
This review focuses on the following mandate: Authorities and approvals required from the Land Services Branch, wildlife, Species at Risk, habitat conservation, geoscience health and safety, mineral exploration, mineral development, abandoned mines openings, and energy sector development.

List of Documents Reviewed:

Geoscience and Mines Branch:
- Environmental Assessment Registration Document (Appendices/Drawings)
- Nova Scotia's Registry of Claims (NovaROC)
- Mineral Occurrence Database
- Open File Map ME 2017-009, Bedrock geology map of the Port Hawkesbury area, NTS 11F/11.

Land Services Branch:
- EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line - EA Registration Document
- Drawing no. 1.1
- Drawing no. 7.19
- Drawing no. 7.31
- Drawing no. 7.8
- GIS shape file

Wildlife Branch:
EA Registration Document

Details of Technical Review:

Business Investment & Export Development (Energy) Branch:
There is concern regarding an overhead line potentially negatively impacting future renewable Energy projects in that region. For instance, the Orion vessel - which has been active in marshalling OSW in the US from NS Ports - is 80 meters high. The proposed overhead transmission line would be 75 meters at midspan.

Geoscience and Mines Branch:
It is noted that the geological characterization of the proposed site identifies and proposes mitigation measures should geohazards (ARD, arsenic and karst topography bedrock) be encountered. Geological maps included in application display relative location to planned project footprint.

One item of note, the bedrock characterization was established using the provincial 2000 mapping. ME 2017-009 shows a more detailed geological bedrock map more appropriate for site specific projects. This comprehensive mapping shows more extensive faulting in the area coupled with known Windsor outcrops, which is the primary trigger for the areas subject to higher Karst risk.

A preliminary review of both study areas using provincial LiDAR did not identify any subsidence structures or karst features however, the possibility of karst features still exists. The Proponent should document and report any instances of subsidence or sinkholes found during the construction and production phases to the Department of Natural Resources' Geoscience and Mines Branch.

Mineral Occurrences
The Richmond County study area is located within a Historic Coal Mining area and is situated approximately 1.5 km east of Seacoal Cove Coal Deposit with several AMO. No documented AMO or historic coal workings known in study area. The nearest exploration license is approximately 1.5 km northeast of the Richmond County study area.

The Guysborough County study area is located approximately 1.5 km northwest of two gypsum occurrences.

It is not anticipated that the proposed project will result in any negative impacts to the nearby mineral exploration licenses. The proposed project area is considered to be a low to medium level for mineral potential, specifically for coal, copper and gypsum.

Land Services Branch:
Based on the information provided, the Project is located on privately owned land (PIDs 35015809, 35015791, 35015817, 35078138, 35164573, 75035709, 75151050, 75193805, 75151035, 75006593, 75125450, and 75125377) and it does not include Crown lands. The Project crosses the Canso Strait which is a federal harbour. The Project adjoins Crown lands (PID 35048917). No authorities or approvals are required

from the Land Services Branch unless the scope of the Project changes to include Crown lands. Should the proponent require expansion or modification of the Project which includes any adjoining Crown lands, DNR approvals will be required.

Wildlife Branch:

- As reviewed, the project consists of two features each comprising different risks to SAR and wildlife: 1. Upland habitat alteration and loss and 2. Over-water transmission lines.
- The overall area of upland disturbance footprint is small, and the eastern portion is immediately adjacent to pre-disturbed areas.
- Wildlife surveys were conducted for this project, however further investigation is needed to inform appropriate mitigation measures.
- The main issue to wildlife for this project is the over-water transmission lines and impacts to birds.
    - There are two other instances of overhead lines across the Strait of Canso; both known to have bird mortality. These lines are 11 km and 13 km away.
    - Options were put forward to have transmission lines sub-surface, but they were not presented as viable options in the registration document.

Key Considerations: (provide in non-technical language)

Business Investment & Export Development (Energy) Branch:

EverWind Fuels is one of three active developers pursuing the production of green hydrogen and ammonia primarily for export. Their project is enhancing Nova Scotia's economy by creating jobs in construction, operations, and maintenance, while supporting local businesses throughout the supply chain. This project supports the goals of Nova Scotia's Green Hydrogen Action Plan.

While the Department of Energy agrees that this proposed transmission line is critical for delivering wind energy to EverWind's green hydrogen production site, we have significant concerns regarding the preferred method chosen of constructing an overhead transmission line with design criteria that specifies a water clearance of 75 m above the high-water mark at midspan.

An overhead transmission line may negatively impact other users further up the Strait by limiting vessels due to height restrictions. Of particular concern are the potential negative impacts on future offshore wind development. The Province plans to offer leases for 5 gigawatts of offshore wind energy by 2030, with a first call for bids by 2025. There are ports within the Strait of Canso that could play a key role in supporting the development and build out of offshore wind.

Ports play key roles at all development phases of an offshore wind project's lifespan. Their roles and their required characteristics vary depending on the type of offshore wind turbine – floating or fixed.

The proponent did acknowledge these potential impacts but did not provide sufficient evidence that the 75-meter clearance would be adequate to accommodate other users and mitigate impacts on other sectors.

Globally, a minimum clearance of 100 meters is currently required for fixed-bottom turbines, with a requirement of more than 250 meters for floating turbines. As the industry develops, similar to onshore wind, turbines will increase in height for greater efficiency.

Jack-up installation vessels that support various industries, including offshore oil and gas, could also be prohibited from accessing the Ports and facilities within the Strait of Canso if this transmission line was installed as proposed.

In conclusion, the Department agrees that a transmission line across the Strait is necessary to support EverWind's development of their green hydrogen production facilities. As there are significant concerns that the proposed overhead line may negatively impact other key sectors (in particular Offshore Wind) and existing users of the Strait, it would be beneficial if the proponent considered an alternative method (or route) be used instead of an overhead line.

Geoscience and Mines Branch:
The proponent should document and report any instances of subsidence or sinkholes encountered during the lifetime of the project to the Department of Natural Resources' Geoscience and Mines Branch.

Land Services Branch:
No further comments.

Wildlife Branch:
Options contained in the EA to submerge these lines should be considered. The risk of overhead lines to many species of birds is well known. The Canso Causeway, approximately 11 km away, is a known area where transmission lines crossing the Strait of Canso causes mortality to eagles, gulls, cormorants and other birds.

Monitoring the impact will be very difficult as the lines are above the Strait of Canso and the birds that collide with transmission lines will fall into the water (at the Canso Causeway they fall onto the Causeway). The proponent has identified mitigation measures to reduce avian collisions with transmission lines, however post construction monitoring of these mitigations may be of limited value, for the same reasons as above. It will be difficult to determine whether additional mitigations are required after construction, making it very important to ensure that strong mitigations are designed prior to construction. If approved, it is recommended that a detailed plan regarding bird strike mitigation and monitoring be required. This document should be reviewed by DNR and Environment and Climate Change Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service to ensure mitigation is adequate.

It is recommended that the installation of the overhead lines be constructed upon completion, or near completion, of other green hydrogen infrastructure (i.e. turbines and associated infrastructure). This will temporarily reduce mortality for birds.

One year of breeding bird surveys were completed by the proponent, using appropriate methods. Two years of bird surveys (e.g. radar surveys) are the current DNR standard for environmental assessments. An additional year should be completed prior to the project commencing, particularly given how difficult it will be to identify the need for additional mitigations post-construction. All results should be submitted to DNR.

Species at Risk birds were observed near the study area and suitable habitat exists within the project area. Land-based activities should not occur during the breeding bird season from April 10th to August 31st to ensure compliance with the *Endangered Species Act* 13(1) and the *Migratory Bird Convention Act*. Species at Risk birds observed in the area are olive-sided flycatcher, common nighthawk, and Canada warbler. As per the registration document, there is suitable breeding and foraging habitat within the study area.

Maritime Aboriginal Peoples Council

The Maritime Regional Aboriginal Leaders
Intergovernmental Council of Aboriginal Peoples
Continuing to Reside on Traditional Ancestral Homelands

Forums

- Leaders Congress
- MAPC Commissions/Projects
- MAARS Secretariate
- IKANAWTIKET SARA
- MAPC Administration

MAPC Regional
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Governmental
APRO Councils

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Truro, Nova Scotia
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New Brunswick Aboriginal
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Native Council of
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April 4th, 2025

EverWind Fuels

2101 - 1969 Upper Water Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 3R7

RE: EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project

On behalf of the Native Council of Nova Scotia (NCNS), the Maritime Aboriginal Aquatic Resources Secretariate (MAARS) would like to thank EverWind Fuels and Strum Consulting for taking the time to discuss the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project with us virtually on March 21st, 2025. We would like to summarize the discussion to ensure our comments are captured for the Environmental Assessment Review.

As part of the Effects Assessment (Section 7.2.5) relating to project-geophysical interactions, we raise concern that while the area is of low-risk for sulfide-bearing slates or formations the presence/absence of these materials was not confirmed during the other field testing prior to the Environmental Assessment Registration Document (EARD). EverWind stated that the areas are likely to be backfilled, and minimal aggregate is expected to be extracted. We would request further details on the volume of aggregate removal, to ensure compliance with the *Sulfide Bearing Material Disposal Regulations*.

As well, within Section 7.2.5, it is noted that based on the risk mapping, the Steep Creek side of the development is within a 'Medium Risk' for arsenic in bedrock water wells, and that there is a private well located within 800 metres of the potential development. Given the proximity of this development to a private well, and the potential for blasting to be required, we would request that the proponent complete more fulsome groundwater quality monitoring before, during, and after construction to ensure that the groundwater quality is maintained throughout the lifetime of the project.

Additionally, while EverWind has met with the nearby landowner in Steep Creek, they have also stated that there has been "no specific engagement" with the landowner relating to potential impacts to wells from blasting activities. Any blasting that is to occur within 800 metres of the foundation or base of a structure would require written consent of all nearby landowners[1]. By not explicitly engaging with nearby landowners on this aspect of the project, EverWind is flouting their obligation to effectively engage with the nearby landowner about the potential impacts to their well water because of potential blasting. In the vein of transparency, MAARS would emphasize it is critical to ensure any impacts of this project on nearby landowners should be communicated well in advance of construction.

Section 7.3.2.6 of the Effects Assessment, relating to project-wetland interactions, it is stated that there will be a loss of 808m^2 of wetland habitat. Wetland habitats are known to provide important ecosystem functions, as well as habitat for numerous aquatic, terrestrial, and plant species. As such, any impact to the functions of these habitats can have significant effects on the ecosystem. With the importance of these habitats, MAARS requests to review any wetland compensation plans when they are available.

MAARS also raised concerns over the impacts to wetlands and the watershed water balance from development. EverWind stated that they have not completed any water balance analysis to assess changes in surface hydrology or surface water flow from the proposed destruction of 18% of Wetland 9. We believe that any project impacting wetlands and/or watercourses should be required to complete this type of analysis, in additional to wetland functionality monitoring. Without an in-depth analysis of the impacts to the watershed, we find it difficult to accept that the proponent has concluded that impacts to the wetlands and watercourses are 'not significant', as stated in Section 7.3.2.6 of the EARD.

Despite the elevated potential for Mainland Moose to occur in this area, and the overlap of the project footprint on Mainland Moose Core Habitat, no targeted terrestrial surveys were completed. The EARD also refers to this area not being suitable for Mainland Moose; however, there is no mention of any Habitat Suitability Modelling (HSM) being completed for this project. While we can appreciate the use of the Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre (ACCDC) reports and the HSM completed for the Goose Harbour Lake Wind Project, we do not find it a fitting one-to-one substitute for a ground survey. We understand most of the study area is not composed of high-quality habitat; however, given that much of the ACCDC data is outdated, the HSM from Goose Harbour Lake Wind does not directly overlap with the project footprint, we feel it is important the proponent completes on-the-ground surveys to determine habitat suitability for Mainland Moose. This is especially important given that the Mainland Moose Recovery Plan lists utility lines as a high impact activity, with serious impacts due to habitat fragmentation and population fragmentation/isolation.

Given these factors, MAARS requests that the proponent complete habitat suitability monitoring, as well as targeted terrestrial surveys to confirm potential interactions of this project with Mainland Moose. We also request that a Wildlife Management Plan be developed, including provisions for continuous Mainland Moose monitoring throughout the construction and early operational phase of the Transmission Line Project. MAARS has concerns over continued development across

[1] NSEL (Nova Scotia Environment and Labour), "Pit and Quarry Guidelines."

Mainland Moose core habitat, as we continue to shrink the area acceptable to an already at-risk species that is also culturally significant to the Mi'kmaq people. It is not acceptable to continually decimate or fragment the habitat available to Mainland Moose.

While the bird and bat (avifauna) surveys conducted were thorough, it is important to emphasize the need to educate employees on the nesting and migrating avifauna species that have been found within and around the study area. While ensuring that "the Proponent will retain a qualified professional to conduct nest sweeps for birds and searches for bat roosts in advance of clearing activities", there is an equally important need to ensure employees are educated on what to look for as well. Not only that, but studies completed on roost-site selection for Eastern Red Bats, one of the three migratory bat species in Nova Scotia, indicates that visual observation from the ground is often unreliable, and roosts are much more successfully located using telemetry[2]. This work indicates that a robust pre-construction monitoring plan must be implemented if construction is to occur within the roosting season for migratory bats.

Additionally, as noted in Section 7.4.4.5, there has been very little research conducted around transmission lines and bat mortality. Given our limited knowledge of how migratory bats are impacted by transmission lines, there is a need for robust post-construction monitoring. Mitigation measures for all avifauna must also include consideration for the timing of construction activities outside of key migration and nesting periods for both birds and bats. The timing of vegetation management and herbicide spraying are also key factors in protecting migratory bats, and these activities as well as removals of potential roosting habitat must be done outside the key season for these species.

Given the number of high-potential areas and the proximity to a significant transportation corridor, any ground disturbing activities should require shovel testing. This is of particular importance at this site since minimal shovel pit testing was completed during the EA process. We feel the consideration of the potential loss of culturally significant artifacts are greatly underestimated, especially given the sheer number of archaeological sites in the area. The EARD claims these effects are 'not significant'; however, as previously mentioned, given the proximity to sites which have been discovered close to this undertaking, the effects of disturbing artifacts could be quite significant. We feel that the proponent needs to conduct further archaeological investigations in this area, considering the above-mentioned proximity to sites with significant discoveries and the impacts of continuing to disturb historic Mi'kmaq resources.

Lastly, we would draw attention to the potential cumulative effects that would be associated with approval of this proposed project, particularly since this project will connect the Point Tupper site to three additional future onshore wind projects. While this project alone may not encompass a large footprint, the anticipation of future works will continue to exacerbate existing impacts to several species mentioned above. This includes continued shrinking of Mainland Moose Core Habitat, increased impacts to migratory birds and bats, and additional potential impacts to wetlands and/or watercourses. While stated in Section 2.2 that this project will support provincial and federal goals of decarbonization, the energy produced from the future wind energy projects will not be distributed to the Nova Scotia power grid and will be used solely to produce green hydrogen energy in Point Tupper. It is unclear how this project will directly contribute to the goals of

[2] Mager and Nelson, "Roost-Site Selection by Eastern Red Bats (Lasiurus Borealis)."

decarbonization if the energy produced will be solely owned and used by the proponent, EverWind.

We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that it is important for all proponents of projects to understand that the Off-Reserve Aboriginal Community represented by the NCNS is included within the definition of the word "Indian" of Section 91(24) of the *Constitution Act,* 1982. The Supreme Court of Canada in a landmark decision in *Daniels v. Canada (Indian Affairs and Northern Development)*, 2016 SCC 12. declared that "the exclusive Legislative Authority of the Parliament of Canada extends to all Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians" and that the word "Indians" in s.91(24) includes the Métis and non-Status Indians[3]. Since 2004, in multiple decisions passed by the Supreme Court of Canada: *Haida Nation*[4]*, Taku River Tlingit First Nation*[5]*, and Mikisew Cree First Nation*[6], has established that,

> Where accommodation is required in decision making that may adversely affect as yet unproven Aboriginal Rights and title claims, the Crown must balance Aboriginal concerns reasonably with the potential impact of the decision on the asserted right or title and with other societal interests.

Further, both the Government of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada are aware that the "Made in Nova Scotia Process" and the *Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Consultation Terms of Reference* does not circumvent the Provincial Government's responsibility to hold consultations with other organizations in Nova Scotia that represent Indigenous Peoples of Nova Scotia. While the proponent may have to engage with the thirteen Mi'kmaq First Nations through the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs, represented by the Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO), the KMKNO does not represent the Off-Reserve Aboriginal Community who have elected to be represented by the NCNS since 1974.

We assert that the Off-Reserve Aboriginal Communities, as 91(24) Indians, are undeniably heirs to Treaty Rights and beneficiaries of Aboriginal Rights as substantiated by Canada's own Supreme Court jurisprudence. As such, there is absolutely an obligation to consult with the Off-Reserve Community through their elected representative body of the NCNS. The Crown's duty is to consult with all Indians, not only the Indian Act Bands.

For contextual purposes, for over forty years, the three Native Council partners of the Maritime Aboriginal People's Council (MAPC) have continued to be the Aboriginal Peoples Representative Organizations representing and advocating for the Rights and issues of the Mi 'kmaq/Wolastoqiyik/Peskotomuhkati/Section 91 (24) Indians, both Status and non-Status, continuing to reside on their unceded Traditional Ancestral Homelands. In the early 1970s, the communities recognized the need for representation and advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the off-Reserve community of Aboriginal Peoples, "the forgotten Indian". Women and men self-organized themselves to be the "voice to the councils of government" for tens of thousands of community members left unrepresented by Indian Act-created Band Councils and Chiefs. Based

[3] Daniels v. Canada (Indian Affairs and Northern Development), 2016 SCC 12, [2016] 1 S.C.R. 99
[4] Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Minister of Forests), (2004), 2 S.C.R. 511
[5] Taku River Tlingit First Nation v. British Columbia (Project Assessment Director), (2004), 3 S.C.R. 550
[6] Mikisew Cree First Nations v. Canada (Minister of Canadian Heritage), (2005), 3 S.C.R. 388

on the Aboriginal Identity question, Statistics Canada (2021 Census - 25% sample) enumerate 25,415 off-Reserve Aboriginal Persons in New Brunswick, 42,580 in Nova Scotia, and 2,865 in Prince Edward Island.

Each Native Council in their respective province asserts Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Rights, with Interest in Other Rights confirmed in court decisions, recognized as existing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada in Part II of the Constitution Act of Canada, 1982. Each Native Council has established and maintains Natural Harvesting Regimes, and each have a co-management arrangement with DFO for Food, Social, and Ceremonial use of aquatic species, through the: Najiwsgetaq Nomehs (NBAPC), the Netukulimkewe'l Commission (NCNS), and the Kelewatl Commission (NCPEI).

The Native Council of Nova Scotia was organized in 1974 and represents the interests, needs, and rights of Off-Reserve Status and Non-Status Section 91(24) Indians/Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal Peoples continuing on our Traditional Ancestral Homelands throughout Nova Scotia as Heirs to Treaty Rights, Beneficiaries of Aboriginal Rights, with Interests to Other Rights, including Land Claim Rights.

The Native Council of Nova Scotia (NCNS) Community of Off-Reserve Status and Non-Status Indians/Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal Peoples supports projects, works, activities and undertakings which do not significantly alter, destroy, impact, or affect the sustainable natural life ecosystems or natural eco-scapes formed as hills, mountains, wetlands, meadows, woodlands, shores, beaches, coasts, brooks, streams, rivers, lakes, bays, inland waters, and the near-shore, mid-shore and off-shore waters, to list a few, with their multitude of in-situ biodiversity. Our NCNS Community has continued to access and use the natural life within those ecosystems and eco-scapes where the equitable sharing of benefits arising from projects and undertakings serve a beneficial purpose towards progress in general and demonstrate the sustainable use of the natural wealth of Mother Earth, with respect for the Constitutional Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Rights, and Other Rights of the Native Council of Nova Scotia Community continuing throughout our Traditional Ancestral Homeland in the part of Mi'kma'ki now known as Nova Scotia.

We appreciate the opportunity to engage with EverWind Fuels directly to discuss the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project. Now that we have made this important connection, we look forward to further dialogue as we continue to advocate for the rights of Off-Reserve Status and Section 91(24) Indians/Mi’kmaq/Aboriginal Peoples of Nova Scotia.

Advancing Aboriginal Fisheries and Oceans Entities
Best Practices, Management, and Decision-making

Habitat Impact Advisor, MAARS Executive Director, MAARS & MAPC Projects

CC: , Chief & President, NCNS
Netukulimkewe’l Commission, NCNS

Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office
Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative
Our Rights. Our Future.

75 Treaty Trail
Truro, NS B6L 1W3

Tel (902) 843 3880 **Fax** (902) 843 3882
Toll Free 1 888 803 3880
Email info@mikmaqrights.com
www.mikmaqrights.com

April 8, 2025

Meghan Rafferty
Environmental Assessment Officer
Environmental Assessment Branch
Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change
meghan.rafferty@novascotia.ca

RE: Consultation with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia on EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project, Guysborough and Richmond Counties

Ms. Rafferty,

I write in response to your letter dated March 5, 2025 under the *Terms of Reference for a Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Consultation Process* (ToR) as ratified on August 31, 2010, on the above noted project. We wish to proceed with Consultation.

The Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn (KMK) would like to acknowledge Paq'tnkek, Potlotek, and Membertou First Nations as partners on this project.

While it is encouraging that the proponent has identified sources of Wisqoq (Black Ash) within the Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge Study (MEKS) area, there is minimal information regarding this species of significance in the Environmental Assessment Registration Document (EARD). Our office requests clarification on the location of this species. Should this project be approved by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, we recommend that a Wisqoq Management Plan be developed with our office as a condition of the approval to ensure the species is handled with respect and care.

Further, with respect to any forestry activity and preparation for cable laying and forestry clearing, regardless of present-day activities, including development, agriculture, energy, mining, and forestry, our values are still present on the land today. Herbicide spraying presents many risks which result in direct impacts to Mi'kmaq rights by poisoning the landscape and thereby reducing access to important Mi'kmaq cultural sites and eliminating our ability to harvest and forage. It also raises challenges to an already sensitive and critical habitat (Such as the potential for Mainland Moose in the Project Area) by applying pressure on both terrestrial and aquatic

species. Fish passage, species at risk, and rare species not yet under consideration for provincial or federal listing are all at risk.

KMK's Archaeological and Research Department (ARD) has reviewed the EverWind Environmental Assessment (EA) Registration document, particularly Section 9.0 and the Archaeological Resource Impact Assessment (HRP# A2024NS173) prepared by the Cultural Resources Management Group Ltd. (CRM Group).

The ARIA evaluated the archaeological potential within the Project Boundary identifying eight high potential areas (HPAs), two of which are located near a watercourse. EverWind has acknowledged that their Project will maintain avoidance of sites of high potential for archaeological resources, where possible, in the detail design (EARD. 2025: 259). KMK is satisfied with the recommendations in the ARIA and the EARD but offers the following comments.

Waterways, regardless of size, continue to be important features in Mi'kmaw cultural landscapes. Whether for navigation, by boat or foot, drinking water, or harvesting areas, these features are significant in Mi'kmaw cultural landscapes. The Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs expects a high level of archaeological diligence with evidence-based decisions grounded in an understanding of the subsurface environmental data. The Maw-lukutijik Saqmaq (Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs) expects subsurface data, adequate to eliminate concern for presence, protection, and management of Mi'kmaw archaeological and cultural heritage as part of assessment of potential in advance of any development. Without subsurface testing, the *evidence* of a lack of concern in impact areas does not exist. Disturbance is defined, for archaeological purposes, as the dislocation of soils and/or sediments, such as that by heavily treaded or tracked vehicles, as well as purposeful excavation by heavy equipment.

We do not support clearances without subsurface testing. Mi'kmaw archaeological sites have developed since time immemorial and may not be identified from the surface character of the current landscape, one cannot conclusively eliminate potential for Mi'kmaw archaeological heritage. We strongly recommend subsurface data, adequate to eliminate concern for presence, protection, and management of Mi'kmaw archaeological and cultural heritage as part of assessment of potential in advance of any development.

KMK does not represent the communities of Millbrook and Sipekne'katik First Nations. We do encourage engagement and consultation with these communities.

Contact Senior Mi'kmaq Energy & Mines Advisor at KMK, with any questions.

Yours in Recognition of Mi'kmaw Rights and Title,

Director of Consultation
Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn

C.C.:
Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn
Kwilmu'kw Maw'klusuaqn
Candace Quinn, Nova Scotia Office of L'nu Affairs
Malcolm MacNeil, NSECC ICE Division
Dave Fougere, NSECC ICE Division
Beth Lewis, Communities Culture, Tourism and Heritage

From:
To: Environment Assessment Web Account
Subject: Proposed Project Comments
Date: April 1, 2025 11:56:24 AM

Project: everwind-strait-crossing-transmission-line Comments: 1. Nova Scotia should received a predetermined of energy produced for rebates to tax paying citizens for power and heating bills. 2. There needs to be enough clean-up funds held prior to energy developments, so after a project has collapsed, investors go bankrupt, or lifespan is spent, the area can be returned back to natural state or communities compensated. Name: Email: Address: Municipality: PORTERS LAKE email_message: Privacy-Statement: agree x: 76 y: 18

From: _____gmail.com
To: Environment Assessment Web Account
Subject: Proposed Project Comments
Date: April 1, 2025 2:09:17 PM

Project: everwind-strait-crossing-transmission-line Comments: Are the lines going to interfere with ships coming into port. Lines may be too low for ship access. Itâ?Ts my understanding that they will infere with ship activity and accesssibilty Lines should be higher Name: Email: @gmail.com Address: Municipality: Mulgrave email_message: Privacy-Statement: agree x: 50 y: 30

From: @gmail.com
To: Environment Assessment Web Account
Subject: Proposed Project Comments
Date: April 2, 2025 10:01:56 PM

Project: everwind-strait-crossing-transmission-line Comments: In my 60 years this session was one of the more informative that I have attended , any increase in the capacity to transfer green or efficient energy is a long term positive for our environment and economy. Name: Email: gmail.com Address: Municipality: Havre Boucher email_message: Privacy-Statement: agree x: 64 y: 22

Municipality of the District of Guysborough

Office of the Warden

April 2, 2025

Engagement Coordinator
EverWind Fuels

t@res-group.com

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT – EVERWIND STRAIT CROSSING TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

On behalf of the Municipality of the District of Guysborough (MODG), it is my pleasure to write a letter of support for the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project.

EverWind Fuel's onshore wind developments planned in MODG will provide significant socio-economic benefits for the Municipality and surrounding areas, including direct and indirect jobs, community benefit agreements, growing the GDP in Nova Scotia, and provide long-term Municipal Taxation revenues.

MODG recognizes that the onshore wind development planned by EverWind in MODG may not be grid-connected and needs to be transmitted across the Strait of Canso to the Point Tupper hydrogen/ammonia production facility and that the Environment Assessment for the above-noted project was recently submitted and is being considered for approval by the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide this letter of support for EverWind Fuels. If you require further information, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Warden

33 Pleasant Street, PO Box 79, Guysborough, Nova Scotia, Canada B0H 1N0
tel: 902.533.3705/3508 fax: 902.533.2749 www.modg.ca

From:
To: Environment Assessment Web Account
Subject: Everwinds Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project
Date: April 3, 2025 10:35:37 AM

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To Whom it may concern

I would like to make comment on the Everwinds Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project. First of all I would like to be clear that I am not opposed to the overall green hydrogen project proposed by Everwinds, nor any subsequent projects by competing companies. I believe in the global reduction of reliance on fossil fuels and fully support the potential economic impact this project may have in the area.
I am currently employed in the marine sector in The Strait of Canso and have had an active career here for the past 25 years. I have been directly involved in various Port development projects over this span of time and feel I can give an educated, non bias opinion on these transmission lines.

The Strait of Canso is one of the deepest ice free ports in the world. We have low tide water depths that exceed 28m and can currently accommodate the worlds deepest draft vessels into an ice free sheltered harbour. This feature makes us envious to most ports in the world. In addition to being able to accommodate vessels of any currently exercised draft, we are also blessed with having no overhead obstructions that limits vessels air draft. This proposed project would now place an air draft limit on vessels that is below 75m. Over the course of my career, I have seen many vessels call here whose air draft exceeds this limit. Most oil field and construction type vesssels being used today have greater air drafts than 75m. In fact, many modern jack up rigs are being built with leg lengths exceeding 150m. Many of the large drill ships today have Derrick heights that exceed 100m. Large construction barges used in offshore wind development projects would also have very large air drafts. I feel these transmission lines could seriously hamper future Port development initiatives and have the potential to impose barriers on one of the great attributes the Port currently has.

In the “Everwinds Strait Crossing Transmission line Project” Enviormental Assessment Registration Document prepared for Everwinds Fuels by Strum Consulting, other options besides overhead transmission cables were explored. All other options were discarded in favour of overhead transmission lines because of savings in costs and ease of maintenance advantages. There are a couple of other options that were not explored in this report that I believe should have been.

1) They explored the use of the existing abandoned “NGL” pipeline owned by Exxon Mobile and determined its size to be too small to accommodate the required conductors. They did not explore the option of laying the required size pipeline alongside and in the existing corridor that could either act on its own or accompany the existing abandoned pipeline.
2) submarine cables were disqualified because of long lead times in procurement (3-5yrs). The windmills proposed to provide this powers are for the most part current non-existent and would most likely have equally long lead times.
3) There is currently high voltage overhead transmission lines that cross the Strait of Canso just to the north of the Canso Canal. These lines are located outside the ice free deep water port and have no real or potential future impact on Port development and growth. Could the required lines be added to these existing towers? If not, Could additional towers be erected in the same area to bring this power across the Strait?

I would also like to ask the regulator to consider another point. If overhead transmission cables are ultimately approved, could considerations be given to tie their approval to the successful creation of this project. Ultimately, like many before it projects and ideas do not always get completed. If these overhead cables get approval based on the fact that the project was deemed more beneficial than its potential negative impacts and the project does not get

completed, the potential is always there for others to take advantage of such approvals without providing the benefits that justify these potential negative impacts.

In conclusion, I acknowledge and understand the desire for cost saving associated with any project but am concerned that such cost savings could have the potential to hamper other developments in this port. Developments that could bring an equal or greater level of economic growth in the future and also contribute greatly to the reduction of our impacts on the enviorment.

Thank You for considering my concerns

Sent from my iPad

Strait of Canso Superport Corporation

The Strait of Canso Port is one of the finest deep water, ice free and air draft free ports on the east coast of North America. As such the Port is poised to play in important role in future global marine traffic.

As the world diversifies its global trading partners, the Strait of Canso Port, in its present state, can offer the flexibility to accommodate virtually any future shipping scenario.

The Everwind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project would impose an air draft restriction that would restrict future business in the Port.

The Strait of Canso Superport Corporation owns and operates the Mulgrave Marine Terminal and periodically accommodates business activity that take advantage of the non-existent air draft in the Port.

Below are a few photos of vessels/jack-up rigs taking advantage of the attributes of the port.

STRAIT SUPERPORT

The installation of the Everwind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project would negatively impact the Corporation's ability to accommodate this business in the future, and limit the Port's participation in offshore wind opportunities off Nova Scotia's coast.

While the Strait of Canso Superport Corporation is supportive of Everwind Fuels development of a Hydrogen Plant at Point Tupper, we feel that their development plans can be achieved without imposing air draft restrictions on the Port.

The Corporation recommends that the transmission line go along the seabed at the proposed location of the crossing or a land transmission line be constructed and connected to the existing transmission line crossing North of the Canso Causeway.

STRAIT SUPERPORT

From:
To: Environment Assessment Web Account
Subject: Proposed Project Comments
Date: April 3, 2025 4:27:12 PM

** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE **
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Project: everwind-strait-crossing-transmission-line Comments: On behalf of Melford International Terminal, a large-scale marine terminal and rail infrastructure project located on the Strait of Canso, Iâ?Tm writing to express my support for the EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project. EverWind has been a strong supporter of the Strait area and a catalyst for economic development. The transmission line will enable EverWind to further develop their hydrogen project to create clean energy. This development will transform the Strait area with some of the benefits being: â?¢ Opportunities for local businesses to collaborate with or benefit from the project, both directly and indirectly. â?¢ Job creation to strengthen the local economy, attract skilled labor back from the west coast, and retain local talent. â?¢ Environmental impact, both locally and globally, by reducing dependence on fossil fuels and fostering a new industry through pairing wind farms with green hydrogen production. Based on my experience, EverWind is a strong supporter of the community, collaborative in business dealings and a strong steward of the environment. Name:

Halifax, Nova Scotia. B3J 3K8 Municipality: Halifax email_message: Privacy-Statement: agree x: 74 y: 24

Town of Port Hawkesbury Comments on the proposed Overhead Transmission Line by EverWind Fuels

Abstract

The Town of Port Hawkesbury wants to thank and acknowledge EverWind Fuels for its investments in the Strait Region, in Nova Scotia and in Atlantic Canada. EverWind Fuels is the leading independent green hydrogen developer in North America and will develop Atlantic Canada's first green ammonia production facility at Point Tupper, Nova Scotia. Our Town Council understands based on open-houses and information provided by EverWind Fuels that "In order to connect the energy produced by land-based wind farms south of the Strait of Canso to the production facility north of the Strait of Canso, EverWind proposes to install a new high-voltage overhead transmission line linking Steep Creek in Guysborough County to Point Tupper in Richmond County, Cape Breton. The transmission line will be a minimum of 75m (246 ft.) above high-water level" (Point Tupper Offshore Wind Air Draft Study 2025). Our Town Council appreciates the time, effort and investment by EverWind Fuels to commission COWI to study the impact of the overhead transmission line crossing the Strait of Canso in its proposed location, and the potential in the Strait of Canso to participate in the emerging Offshore Wind sector. The Town of Port Hawkesbury supports all efforts to ensure the Strait of Canso and the communities in the Strait Region, including Port Hawkesbury, will be able to contribute to and benefit from the emerging Offshore Wind (OSW) Sector, while continuing to support EverWind Fuels and their efforts to successfully establish their green ammonia production facility in Point Tupper. We believe that is imperative to plan for and achieve viable integration of the Green Hydrogen/Ammonia and OSW sectors for the Strait of Canso so that we can unlock our full potential for communities in the Strait region and beyond.

Background

The Town of Port Hawkesbury serves as the major service center for the Strait region and is proud to work closely with neighboring First Nation Communities and Municipalities on strategic regional growth. The Town has a keen interest in the emerging OSW sector, like other First Nation Communities and Municipalities in the Strait Region. The Town of Port Hawkesbury and the Municipality of the County of Richmond were both early founding participants in the Strait of Canso Offshore Wind Task force, and leaders in both municipalities continue to collaborate with other members of that group (See: Strait of Canso Offshore Wind Task Force 2024).

Additionally, the Town has partnered with the Municipality of the County of Richmond on joint initiatives related to the emerging OSW sector, which includes the hiring of a Manager of Energy Sector Development. This Manager of Energy Sector Development is responsible for the oversight of the strategic development of a *Local Port and Infrastructure Strategy* and for a strategic plan to establish an *Offshore Wind Centre of Excellence*. The role of the Centre will be to engage existing and emerging industry partners and stakeholders to optimize local benefits in relation to the green energy sector (especially green hydrogen/ammonia production and offshore wind sector development in the Strait of Canso).

The Strait region has substantial economic development potential, part of which can be realized by enhancing the inter-industry links of existing companies that are based in the area. The development opportunities are in strategic sectors with growth potential, including manufacturing, technology, transportation/distribution, energy, and ocean-based industries.

Leading Edge Manufacturing and Processing: Pulp and paper manufacturing, seafood processing and steel fabricating also have a long history in the Strait Area and continue to be major sources of high-quality jobs and income for the region, with incremental growth potential.

Energy Sector: The Strait Area has a long history in the energy sector, going back many decades. It has been a center for refining, storage and shipping of petroleum products since the 1970s and continues this role in the conventional energy sector, as well as new roles as a center for bioenergy, offshore oil and gas servicing, and emerging Green Hydrogen/Ammonia production. The Strait of Canso is also a potential hub for OSW development opportunities as the sector continues to emerge.

Oceans and Marine Sector: This sector has historically dominated the economy of the Strait Area and continues to be a key economic driver in the 21st century, with substantial growth potential. Port Hawkesbury is home to the Nova Scotia Community College Nautical Institute, which trains seafarers working globally. Our marine and port capacity, due to our deep ice-free harbor, can accommodate the emerging marine renewables and OSW sector. Maximum permissible draught 26m, no vessel size restrictions.

Transportation And Supply Chain Hub: The Strait Area has been an international trans-shipment hub for petroleum products and other bulk commodities for decades. The presence of the Strait of Canso, along with adjacent rail and highway connectivity provide the base infrastructure for further development in this role. The Allan J. MacEachen Regional Airport in Port Hastings also compliments this critical transportation hub that supports emergency, tourism, business and industrial needs.

The Strait Area is unique in several respects, not the least of which is its mix of business and service providers. In combination, these enterprises continue to shape a dynamic economy. Some of the key attributes of the area that make for a strategic location for investment include multimodal transportation, a dedicated and committed workforce, the deepest ice-free port in North America, safety conscious industry partners, training facilities/opportunities (NSCC, St. F.X., CBU, Universite de Sainte Anne) and an overall higher quality of life.

As the key service center on the Cape Breton side of the Strait Region, the Town of Port Hawkesbury feels it is important to provide feedback on the proposed EverWind Fuels overhead transmission line as it pertains to our existing and future development. Port Hawkesbury has anticipatory planning to accommodate new growth and industrial expansion and has done so in the past during the several industrial booms in the1960s with the establishment of the Pulp and Paper

industry, Gulf Oil refinery, Heavy Water plant, Aggregate Quarry Mining, and more. Today the Town has an infrastructure capacity by way of sewer, water, and municipally and privately owned property for development to accommodate significant population growth. We've done so in the past, and we are ready for future growth.

General Comments

1. Offshore Wind (OSW) and Green Hydrogen Integration

Strait of Canso OSW connectivity to the emerging green hydrogen sector in the Strait region is an **essential** consideration. Sector coupling for green hydrogen and OSW will be critical to the creation of a strong sustainable green energy sector and our ability to meet net zero/decarbonization targets for both Nova Scotia and for Canada.

It is incumbent on us all (locally, provincially, federally) to ensure we pursue all opportunities to explore sector coupling of Green Hydrogen in Point Tupper and future OSW development in and also in proximity to the Strait of Canso. EverWind Fuels plans for green ammonia production in Point Tupper on the Strait of Canso (with key on-land wind parks located in the Strait and in central Nova Scotia) lend well to an Offshore Wind and Green Hydrogen Integration model.

See: chart from **Hydrogen Ports Initiative – Techo-Economic Analysis**, produced by *ILF Consultants Inc (Calgary Alberta)* for Natural Resources Canada (2023) that outlines the most significant key strategic port for green hydrogen production east of Montreal is the Strait of Canso (**Point Tupper**). The Criteria of Evaluation of Port Evaluation focused on the following:

- Available Water Depth
- Vessel Approach Restrictions
- Suitable Terminals – Existing or Future Conversion
- Hinterland Pipeline/Rail Connection
- High Voltage Grid Connection
- Existing Bulk Liquid Capabilities
- Land Availability
- New Export/Import Terminal Projects in Planning
- Future Bunkering Plans

Table 11: Hydrogen Readiness Evaluation of Canadian Ports

CRITERIA	Port Name	Montreal	Quebec City	Saguenay	Baie-Comeau	Sept-Iles	Belledune	Saint John	Halifax	Point Tupper	Sydney	Stephenville	Argentia	St. John's
	Province	QC	QC	QC	QC	QC	NB	NB	NS	NS	NS	NL	NL	NL
Water Depth for Vessels	LH_2 (>11.4 m)													
	NH_3 (>12.6 m)													
	LOHC (>16.6 m)													
Vessel Approach	Vessel approach restrictions													
Existing port infrastructure	Suitable terminal(s)													
	Hinterland connection													
	High Voltage Connection													
Existing bulk liquid capabilities	LNG													
	Ammonia													
	Methanol													
	Others (e.g. hydrocarbons)													
Land availability	Within or adjacent to port													
New export terminal project(s) in planning	Ammonia													
	Methanol													
	LOHC													
	H_2 pressurised													
	H_2 liquified													
Bunkering e-fuels	Future bunkering plans													

Green = Ready, Orange = Potential, Red = Not Ready

15418-ILF-Final Report_NRCAN_H2 Ports Initative_TEA_A1 | Revision 0 | © Page 98/198

With the Strait of Canso being the best location for Green Hydrogen production east of Montreal, and the competitive and economic advantages of sector coupling for green hydrogen and OSW, we would ask for full consideration be given to the Strait of Canso and how we can support enabling both Offshore Wind and Green Hydrogen Integration in the Strait of Canso. (See paper, "Offshore wind & hydrogen integration: How sector coupling can support a resilient decarbonization of Europe" https://www.adlittle.com/en/insights/report/offshore-wind-hydrogen-integration).

With this in mind, we would urge for full consideration be given to the proposed overhead transmission line crossing the Strait of Canso as it pertains to the pursual of growth and development of OSW. Should the proposed overhead transmission line in the indicated location serve to create barriers for development of OSW (in varying forms) we would implore the Province to ensure that the areas outside this overhead air draft in the Strait of Canso be earmarked for OSW development activity, as to not disadvantage our region's potential for participation in this emerging industry. We truly believe that sector integration for Green Hydrogen/Ammonia and OSW is critical for success for both our region and for the Province and Canada.

1. Strait of Canso Port Development: OSW and Beyond

The Strait of Canso is identified as a critical hub for port development due to its deep-water port and proximity to major trade routes. DMDE includes the Strait of Canso in its scenarios for offshore wind, emphasizing the need for purpose-built facilities. As will be outlined below, some data is relating to the potential for port development is included in the DMDE plan in terms of port assets, and similar and other data and sites are included in the Strait of Canso Port Master Plan. Both plans highlight the economic opportunities and potential that will result from upgrades to port facilities. Some of the potential outcomes include job creation, regional development, and increased capacity for handling high-value cargo like wind turbine components or energy-related goods (DMDE, 2024; Strait of Canso Superport Master Development Plan, 2010).

More recently, the Town has partnered with the Municipality of the County of Richmond on joint initiatives related to the emerging OSW sector, which includes the hiring of a Manager of Energy Sector Development – Martin Thompson – who is responsible for the oversight of the strategic development of a *Local Port and Infrastructure Strategy* now published, as well as for a strategic plan to establish an *Offshore Wind Centre of Excellence*. According to recommendations based on the *Local Port and Infrastructure Strategy* (pp. 91):

> *1. In the near term, the Strait should concentrate efforts on the onshore wind and hydrogen/ ammonia markets. Recent announcements from wind Developers and the Federal and Provincial governments indicate support to push the market forward. There is great potential and available lands to support new wind farms and initiate a green hydrogen and ammonia production industry.*
>
> *For the Strait, this opportunity involves:*
>
> *• For the mainland side, optimize logistics for wind turbine component receiving via Mulgrave Marine Terminal*
>
> *• Providing storage area and road enhancements for components to support movement away from Mulgrave Terminal*
>
> *2. For longer term strategy for the Strait, investment opportunity includes:*
>
> *• Construction of Melford Terminal with a design that should support fixed bottom and floating wind. The design should anticipate the ability for Melford to transition from fixed to floating wind and be future proof - to maintain status as a strategic location for offshore wind support.*
>
> *• Develop a common user port on Point Tupper to be available for other industrial users.*
>
> *• Examine the opportunity to extend a Point Tupper common user port to include adjacent lands where available. This could be suitable for marshalling or storage of wind components for both fixed bottom and floating wind, or a potential manufacturing location with ready access to water. Manufacturing could be related*

to wind energy projects, or another industry who may be seeking renewable energy and / or hydrogen for their operations.
• Attracting an OEM to the Strait

It is interesting to note that at the time this study was commissioned, it was assessed based on current assets/geographic features/factors and comparative advantages, including an unrestricted air draft in the harbor in the Strait of Canso. This unincumbered air draft – as one of the key characteristics for our deep-water ice-free harbor - provides a huge advantage to future port development opportunities in OSW and other current and future sector development. The proposed overhead transmission line crossing the Strait of Canso limits this current advantage (in particular, the portion of the harbor to the north of the proposed transmission line location).

Concluding Thoughts

There is currently an overhead cable corridor for transmission lines running from Auld's Cove to the Cape Breton shoreline north of the Strait of Canso Causeway. Our question is whether this corridor was fully considered by EverWind as a location for the proposed transmission line?

Alternately, as indicated in the COWI Point Tupper Offshore Wind Air Draft Study (2025), OSW port development activities are more plausible (regardless of the installation of the proposed transmission line) in the southernmost region of Strait of Canso (on the south side of the proposed transmission line location). Melford was highlighted as a prime location, and interestingly, sites owned by the Province of Nova Scotia were not included by COWI, which are sites very well suited for the kind of OSW port development outlined in the *Local Port and Infrastructure Strategy*.

The Provincially owned sites (including Melford and potentially others) will become unequivocally fundamental to OSW development in the Strait of Canso, especially if the proposed EverWind transmission line is approved. As outlined in the strategy (funded in partnership by the Town of Port Hawkesbury, Richmond County, the Province of Nova Scotia, and the Federal Government of Canada), a "common user port" facility is a critical recommendation, "suitable for marshalling or storage of wind components for both fixed bottom and floating wind, or a potential manufacturing location with ready access to water. Manufacturing could be related to wind energy projects, or another industry who may be seeking renewable energy and / or hydrogen for their operations… *(as well*) Attracting an OEM to the Strait." Further, the Town of Port Hawkesbury and the Municipality of the County of Richmond have partnered to ensure we are contributing to this sector by way of water resource provision (via Landrie Lake Water Utility) and will continue to partner with the Province of Nova Scotia to expand this watershed to enable this emerging Green Hydrogen/Ammonia sector, but also for other port and related developments requiring this important resource.

We implore the Province of Nova Scotia to give full consideration to the future integration of this emerging Green Hydrogen/Ammonia Sector and the emerging OSW sector to unlock the full

potential of these sectors in the Strait of Canso for the benefit of the entire Province. All ports in the Province will be able to take advantage of these emerging industries, however, we would not want the Strait of Canso Port to be disadvantaged in such a way that it would not be able to realize its potential for BOTH Green Hydrogen and OSW Port Development. So let's work together to ensure success in the Strait of Canso for both sectors.

A Note on Submission:

This submission is to provide feedback on the proposed overhead transmission line by EverWind Fuels in the air draft over the Strait of Canso. The submission is a collaboration based on general observations from the authors, with input from our Chief Administrative Officer, Terry Doyle. The key contributing authors of this submission are Mayor Brenda Chisholm-Beaton and Deputy Mayor Iaian Langley. Both Chisholm-Beaton and Langley serve as elected officials for the Town of Port Hawkesbury. In addition to serving as Deputy Mayor of the Town of Port Hawkesbury, Captain Iaian Langley is a Master Mariner. Prior career experience includes 25 years at sea primarily in support of offshore energy projects globally. In addition to serving as Mayor of Port Hawkesbury, Brenda Chisholm-Beaton has a Master's Degree (Community Economic Development) and has 22 years of business experience, 12 years of Municipal experience, and has served on national, provincial and regional boards including past-President of the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities and board member on the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. *(Note: Both Chisholm-Beaton and Langley are founding members of the Strait of Canso Offshore Wind Task Force, and both sit as current members).*

Reference List Used for Feedback Submission

Floating Offshore Wind Outlook (2024) International Renewable Energy Agency.

Hydrogen Ports Initiative – Techno-Economic Analysis (May 2023). ILF Consulting Engineers. Prepared for Natural Resources Canada as a Techno-Economic Feasibility Study.

Impact of excluding waters in proximity of the Strait of Canso (January 2024). Submission by the Strait Area Chamber of Commerce to the RA Committee. 241219_SACC_RA_OffWind_Submission.pdf

Offshore wind & hydrogen integration: How sector coupling can support a resilient decarbonization of Europe. (Authors) Florence Carlot, Amaury Klossa, Julien Pluchet, Sam Clauwaert, Philippe Viel, Laurent Blondeau, Yoran Van Houdt. https://www.adlittle.com/en/insights/report/offshore-wind-hydrogen-integration

Point Tupper Offshore Wind Air Draft Study. COWI (March 2025).

Socio-economic Report Port Development and Port Usage for Regional Assessment Committee Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia (September 2024) DMDE Engineering Limited. Prepared for the Regional Assessment Committee for Offshore Wind Development in Nova Scotia.

Strait of Canso Offshore Wind Task Force (January 2024). Website: https://capebretonpartnership.com/initiatives-services/strait-of-canso-offshore-wind-task-force/

Strait of Canso Sustainable Infrastructure Strategy (January 2025) Waterford Energy Services Inc., Prepared for the Municipality of the County of Richmond and the Town of Port Hawkesbury.

Strait of Canso Superport Master Development Plan (December 2010) AECOM. Prepared for the Strait of Canso Superport Corporation Limited.

The Strait: Progress Runs Deep. https://thestraitofcanso.ca/

The Town of Port Hawkesbury: Invest in Port Hawkesbury. https://townofporthawkesbury.ca/business/invest-in-port-hawkesbury/

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05 April 2025

Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change
Honorable Mr. Tim Halman

Re: Letter of Support for EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project

Minister Halman,

The proposed transmission line upgrade project in front of the Province of Nova Scotia for assessment and review currently, as proposed by EverWind Fuels, has the potential to be a catalyst for generational opportunity in the Strait area.

It is no secret that the areas of Guysborough and Richmond counties have seen many industrial mega projects come and go without ever getting off the ground. Hydrogen development has the potential to be the sector that breaks this trend, but we must rally behind it as a Province for it to be successful.

Our limited engagements to date with the EverWind team has shown us that there are no attempts to cut corners or cause any harm to the environment. We have full confidence that all required environmental safeguards will be in place to ensure the proposed Strait Crossing Transmission Line project will be a safe, responsible, healthy addition to our provincial infrastructure.

I ask for your department to take an unbiased, educated approach to this review and utilize necessary industry expertise where required to make the right decision.

Regards,

MacGregors Industrial Group

From:
To: Environment Assessment Web Account
Subject: Public feedback for EverWind Strait Crossing Transmission Line Project EA
Date: April 5, 2025 10:15:48 PM

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinions about the EverWind Strait Crossing Environmental Assessment.

According to the Proponent's Guide to Environmental Assessment (section 5.1, pages 16-17): "*the proponent must publish an advertisement notifying the public of the registration and inviting the public to submit written comments ….the notice must be published in two newspapers, one in the vicinity of the of the undertaking, and one with province-wide circulation...**proponent must provide the EA branch with the full newspaper page with the notice, date and name of newspaper".***

The Strait Crossing is located in both Guysborough County and across the Strait of Canso in Richmond County. The Guysborough Journal is the only local newspaper in Guysborough County. The proponent has advertised open houses, given interviews for articles, and has submitted paid advertisements to this newspaper for almost two years.

However, the proponent did NOT place the EA registration notice in the Guysborough Journal. Instead, the proponent placed a paid sponsored content/ad about green energy in the Guysborough Journal, during the public consultation period. There were also two featured articles about the proponent during this period. Notifying Guysborough County residents about the EA registration and inviting the public to submit comments was not a priority for the proponent. It is unknown if failing to follow the NSECC guidelines in section 5.1 has any consequences. The proponent managed to place the EA registration notice in the Chronicle Herald on March 6th, satisfying the requirement for a province-wide notice.

The Strait Crossing EA included information about the entire Guysborough County projects. That makes sense—what would be the point of a transmission line without the Guysborough wind turbines? Actually, what

would be the point of wind projects without a hydrogen/ammonia plant? What would be the point of Phase 2 in Guysborough when Phase 1 construction has not even started? What would be the point of Phase 1 or Phase 2 projects without any binding off take agreements?

On page six: “Atlantic Canada to export green hydrogen to Europe where it is sought to meet decarbonization goals in sectors such as transportation and heavy industry". It is not feasible to export green hydrogen to Europe. It needs to be changed into ammonia for shipping overseas for efficient and safe transport.

The EA omits discussing the "elephant in the room" which is that every step in the production stages has losses: harvesting wind, making hydrogen, mitigating leaks, converting it to ammonia, shipping overseas, and end users likely changing the ammonia back to hydrogen. This results in only a 20-30% efficient product or a 70-80% inefficient project. This means on average 75% of wind turbines built will sacrifice all their energy due to overall project inefficiencies. Using wind energy to connect to the local grid is 5x more efficient than using the same wind power for hydrogen-ammonia projects.

Why should Nova Scotians care if this proponent’s project is inefficient? First, it matters because inefficiency means more wind energy is needed to make enough ammonia to be profitable. Building more wind turbines will only increase the damage to forests, flora, wetlands, waterways, and wildlife. It also impacts human health, tourism, and overall quality of life. The Guysborough wind projects are spread over 64004 hectares of Crown land. Crown land should be scrutinized more because it belongs to all Nova Scotians. Crown land is supposed to be balanced between Nova Scotians (i.e. for recreational purposes) and industry. Second, massive amounts of federal tax payer funds will be needed to compensate for the project’s inefficiencies to make Atlantic Canada ammonia even slightly competitive on the world market.

The proponent also fails to identify their "experts" in the EA so Nova Scotians can't review this information and come to their own conclusions. Nova Scotians also need to be reassured that provincial decisions are based on independent, evidence based scientific research, and not just relying on data and statements from the proponent. The proponent claims

that making hydrogen and changing it to ammonia has zero emissions. However, there are other scientists that confirm that these projects can actually create more emissions.

The province's position: "Nova Scotia is on the verge of becoming a world-wide hydrogen house…with completely greenhouse gas free energy" (Premier Houston's letter to caucus Jan 21). Nova Scotians deserve better than slogans. It has been extremely challenging to get answers and clarification about hydrogen and ammonia projects being "completely gas free" from different provincial departments. To date, provincial departments were unable to provide answers that support the province's position on green hydrogen and ammonia.

The sound bites from both proponents and provincial government: everything can be mitigated. Nova Scotians live in the real world. Nova Scotians must live next to the "unchecked industries" scattered across the province, long after those EA's are approved. The Minister of Environment and Climate Change now also manages the Office of Service Efficiency—which helps to fast track and cut red tape. This will likely put Nova Scotians and the environment at further risk. Fast tracking the "Green Hydrogen Action Plan" without any public consultation has definitely not benefited Nova Scotians.

It is understandable that the province got swept up in the "green hydrogen hype"-- other provinces and countries around the world did too! Some provinces and countries have had their wake-up call or reality check and started cancelling projects. However, the Nova Scotia provincial government continues to be stuck in the hydrogen boondoggle loop.

Guysborough County

From: @straitsupplies.com
To: Environment Assessment Web Account
Subject: Proposed Project Comments
Date: April 7, 2025 11:44:59 AM

** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE **
Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking on links / Faites preuve de prudence si vous ouvrez une pièce jointe ou cliquez sur un lien

Project: everwind-strait-crossing-transmission-line Comments: Strait Supplies supports EverWinds proposed project to bring green/renewable energy to the region. It is imperative in these times of economic uncertainty to explore all available at home resources not to mention the environmental benefits of a project of this kind. Also, the economic boost to the area from such a project would be significant. Name: Email: @straitsupplies.com Address: Municipality: RIVER BOURGEOIS email_message: Privacy-Statement: agree x: 57 y: 26