



MARTEN FALLS FIRST NATION ALL SEASON COMMUNITY ACCESS ROAD

Terms of Reference Fact Sheet

What is a Terms of Reference?

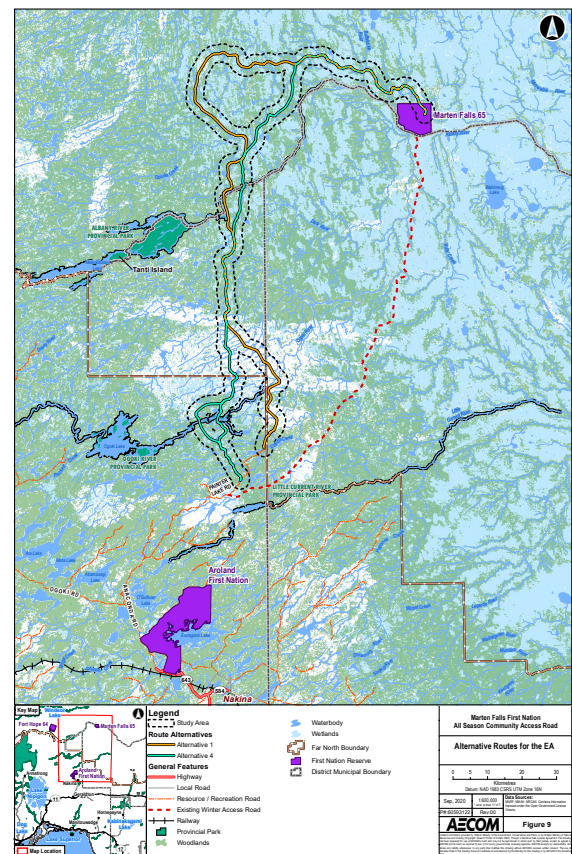
A Terms of Reference (ToR) is the first step in the provincial environmental assessment (EA) process and is a roadmap for planning and decision-making. It outlines how an EA will be prepared, including what studies will be conducted, the process to identify and assess effects of a proposed project and how people will be consulted.

A ToR is a document prepared by a project Proponent—in this case Marten Falls First Nation (MFFN)—and submitted to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). MFFN's ToR for the Proposed Community Access Road was prepared in accordance with the *Environmental Assessment Act* (EAA) and the Code of Practice for *Preparing and Reviewing Terms of Reference for the Environmental Assessments in Ontario* (MECP 2020).

What is the Project?

MFFN is a remote First Nation community in northern Ontario, located at the junction of the Albany and Ogoki rivers. MFFN has a winter access road but it isn't reliable and makes transportation of goods and people difficult. A multi-purpose, all season road access connecting MFFN to the existing provincial highway network is needed to improve the well-being of the community and builds on decades of previous planning work.

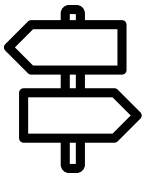
The proposed Community Access Road will be a two-lane gravel road, stretching approximately 190 to 230 km, with a planned speed limit of 80 km an hour. The road will be multi-purpose to support both community needs and current and future industry. Permanent features will include bridges for river and stream crossings, culverts—engineered ditches—for water flow connections and to balance water levels and quarries, borrow areas and aggregate source areas. Temporary features through construction will include temporary construction access roads, work areas and camps.



Where Will the Community Access Road be Built?

A key step in the ToR process was to identify alternative routes for the proposed Community Access Road to be studied further in the EA. Alternative routes were identified by MFFN using information gathered through studies, consultation and comments received on the Draft ToR. MFFN made a community decision to continue to assess and evaluate Alternative 1 and Alternative 4 in the EA. A newly identified Ogoki River crossing option for Alternative 4 has also been added in response to new information. Both alternative routes start at Painter Lake Road and run north before turning eastward toward the MFFN community; roughly following the west / north side of the Albany River.

Highlight of Key Feedback Themes and How They've Been Incorporated:



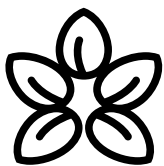
New Alternative Route Option

- A newly identified Ogoki River crossing option for Alternative 4 has been added in response to new information. This new Ogoki River crossing is routed further west at a location that would provide a shorter bridge crossing of this Provincial Park waterway. A shorter river crossing may also result in fewer effects to the environment, and savings in schedule and budget.



Indigenous Communities and IK

- A critical component of the EA is integrating IK into the planning and design process. IK and information on Indigenous land and resource use will: inform the proposed criteria and factors to consider when evaluating issues; inform the existing environment conditions; identify and predict potential effects; and help determine appropriate ways to monitor and manage potential effects of the Community Access Road.
- The ToR now includes more information on the importance of IK in all parts of the EA process. More information on how MFFN plans to collaborate with Indigenous communities on IK and land and resource use has also been clarified.



Sensitive Wildlife and Habitats

- Central to the EA process is figuring out how the environment could be directly or indirectly affected by the Community Access Road. We have been and will continue to conduct field studies to better understand potential environmental effects. To properly examine the potential effects on sensitive wildlife in the area, like bats and birds, a preliminary review of background information and an assessment of suitable habitats was completed and is now available in more detail within the ToR.



Consultation Activities

- The feedback received from consultation activities that have taken place since the Draft ToR was released has been documented in the updated ToR. The ToR more clearly summarizes consultation during development of the ToR by identifying issues raised, responses given and how these issues may have been considered in the ToR or will be addressed in the EA.
- The go-forward Consultation Plan now reflects a coordinated provincial and federal assessment process. Considering the comments received, consultation milestones were also revised to include more information on the planned activities, targeted input and anticipated timing of planned consultation. Additional details were also added to assess the effectiveness of the consultation and engagement efforts.



Community Benefits and Road Details

- The potential benefits the road may provide and the needs of the community have been focused and emphasized. More clarity around the multi-purpose nature of the Community Access Road has also been added. Details on the development of the alternative routes and the rationale for not assessing alternatives other than Alternative 1 and Alternative 4 has been expanded upon and adjusted.



What We Heard and how Feedback was Considered

With feedback received during the Draft ToR review, changes have been made to the ToR (where applicable); some of the issues raised will be addressed in the future during preparation of the EA. Key concerns most frequently raised during preparation of the ToR included consultation, Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in the planning and design process, purpose and description of the Community Access Road and methods to assess the effects of alternatives.

Twenty-three Indigenous communities are being consulted, along with government agencies and interested persons. The Draft ToR was available for review and comment for 63 days, and feedback was received. The ToR has been shaped to reflect the input received and can be found on our website (www.martenfallsaccessroad.ca/tor). We encourage you to review the ToR and provide your input.

Next Steps

The Proposed ToR will be submitted to the MECP for review and a decision by the Minister, which is expected to happen in fall 2020. If the Minister approves or approves with conditions, an EA for the Community Access Road can begin.

We encourage Indigenous communities, government agencies and interested persons to review and provide comments on the ToR (www.martenfallsaccessroad.ca/tor). If an EA begins, the route alternatives identified in the ToR will continue to be evaluated with the goal of identifying the preferred route, including temporary infrastructure and aggregate source areas.

Meetings with 23 Indigenous communities, government agencies and interested persons will continue.

Get Involved

The MFFN Project Team welcomes your feedback. Please contact us at any time with questions or comments, or to schedule a meeting.

We want to hear what you have to say.

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