



VISUAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND AND RESOURCE USE PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Issued February 2025



The Community Access Road could lead to changes in the way land is used and experienced by those living or working near the road. The study of Land and Resource Use, along with the Visual Environment, offers a perspective on how the road may impact the region's landscape, as well as its cultural, recreational and economic significance.

These areas of study are closely interconnected because land use—whether for traditional practices, recreation or resource development—shapes the visual character of the environment. For instance, increased accessibility due to the road may present new opportunities for tourism and resource extraction, but it could also alter the undisturbed wilderness valued by local communities and visitors. Visual changes, like new infrastructure or changes to natural landscapes, can influence how people use the land and engage in cultural or recreational activities.

Existing Conditions

Land and Resource Use

Parks and protected areas within the study area include provincial parks, conservation reserves, and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest. The Local Study Area overlaps with three provincial parks: Ogoki River, Albany River and Little Current River Provincial Parks. These parks offer limited recreation activities due to their remote locations. There are no national parks, municipal parks, non-government organization nature reserves or Crown game preserves in the area.

Recreation and tourism in the area are provincially regulated for their natural, cultural and recreational values. Key activities include hunting and fishing, managed by the Ministry of Natural Resources through wildlife management units and fisheries management zones. There are nine remote tourism outfitter operations identified in the Local Study Area that offer fly-in / fly-out hunting and fishing expeditions.

Trapping is a traditional activity in the area, with most traplines held and used by Indigenous communities. Seven traplines intersect the Community Access Road. While trapping has declined due to lower fur prices and higher costs, it remains an important cultural practice.

Extractive resources, including mining and aggregate processes, are regulated provincially by the Mining Act and Aggregate Resources Act. There are active mining operations and exploration activities in the Regional Study Area, including Wabassi Resources, with the Greenstone Gold Mine being a notable project in the Local Study Area.

Visual Environment

Any changes to the visual environment may affect the appeal of the region for recreational activities, and disturbances to natural conditions could negatively impact tourism operators.

Traditional land uses—trapping, hunting, fishing and gathering—are significant cultural and spiritual activities. Sensitive locations include places of habitat and traditional pathways, identified through Indigenous Knowledge and Consultation Programs.

The Ogoki River Provincial Park and Albany River Provincial Park are particularly sensitive to visual effects, as these areas are regulated for their natural, cultural and recreational values. Visual disturbances in these parks and protected areas could affect their integrity and the experiences of visitors who value their pristine conditions.

Potential Effects and Mitigation Measures

The construction and long-term use of the Community Access Road have the potential to affect the land and resource use and visual environment in the area. The below highlights the potential effects and mitigation measures that may be put in place to lessen possible negative effects of the Community Access Road.

Land and Resource Use

Topic	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
<p>Land Use Compatibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Construction Disturbance Area overlaps with 1,257.1 ha of Designated Protected Area under Marten Falls First Nation’s Community Based Land Use Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve Marten Falls First Nation in land and resource use planning activities to manage new development resulting from the Project; and Ongoing engagement with Aroland First Nation regarding the southern part of the road will help identify any further measures needed.

Topic	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
<p>Parks and Protected Areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Construction Disturbance Area crosses through Albany River Provincial Park, affecting 5.7 ha of park land; and • Potential to effect noise levels, air quality and wilderness experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit clearing and use of land within parks as much as possible, and locate temporary work areas outside of parks; • Limit development of side trails and roads; and • Marten Falls First Nation to discuss access control measures with Ontario Parks.
<p>Recreation, Tourism and Outfitters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access to remote lands and water resources, creating new recreation opportunities; and • Potential to effect noise levels, air quality, and animal habitat, reducing the attraction of tourism to the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properly design and install water crossing structures to accommodate flow, drainage and fish passage; • Minimize vegetation clearing, and reclaim disturbed areas following construction; • Provide notice of construction to remote outfitters one year in advance; • Community Access Road Team to meet with the Ministry of Natural Resources to discuss hunting restrictions and signage to educate those who may interact with recreation users while on the road; and • Ongoing engagement with impacted outfitters and camp owners.

Topic	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
Trapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Construction Disturbance Area overlaps with seven trapline tenures and will potentially disrupt furbearing species' habitat and trapping activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify trapline tenure holders about construction timelines, and access through the Construction Disturbance Area, when safe.
Extractive Resource Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to mineral resource areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing engagement with mineral and land claim holders to help minimize impacts to any mineral deposits.
Forestry Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Community Access Road has the potential to increase access to lands with merchantable timber stands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compensate for commercial forest trees felled within the Ogoki Forest Management area for the Community Access Road based on the value of the timber.
Energy and Linear Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for increased opportunity to develop new energy facilities along the road route. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific mitigations are recommended at this time.

Visual Environment

Topic	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
Parks and Protected Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of the Community Access Road, and associated infrastructure, could alter their visual character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design bridges to blend with the natural landscape as much as possible; and Maintain vegetation around bridge abutments and piers, and preserve existing vegetation along the riverbanks.

Topic	Potential Effects	Mitigation Measures
<p>Recreation, Tourism and Outfitters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May alter the tourism appeal by increasing accessibility, which could decrease the remote appeal of the parks; • Potential to effect noise levels, air quality and animal habitat, reducing the attraction of tourism to the area; • Natural areas will be altered by the introduction of the road including bridges over the Ogoki, Albany and other larger rivers; and • Tourism and recreation outfitters' sites may also observe new views towards aggregate sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain tree cover and add additional screenings around sensitive areas and receptors (i.e., hunt camp, tourism outfitter location); • Keep temporary work areas, like staging zones, outside of park boundaries to avoid changing the landscape; • Reduce and monitor the creation of new trails or roads that might extend into the parks and affect the landscape; and • Limit construction activities to the designated right-of-way.
<p>Cultural Heritage Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction activities and associated infrastructure could disturb these culturally significant landscapes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid construction near highly sensitive cultural sites, maintaining tree cover and adding screenings to protect these areas; and • Collaborate with local governing agencies and Indigenous communities to identify and protect significant cultural heritage sites.
<p>Permanent Settlements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent settlements, including buildings currently occupied or used by individuals and communities, may experience changes to the visual environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain tree cover and add visual screenings around the road and associated infrastructure.

Residual Effects

Through the proper use of mitigation measures, the potential effects on Land and Resource Use and Visual Environment from the construction and long-term use of the Community Access Road are expected to be effectively managed, minimized or mitigated.

Land and Resource

The Community Access Road will cause changes to the Albany River Provincial Park through a minor removal of 5.7 ha of park land, noise from construction and reduction of the remote character due to visibility of construction. The construction of the road will also limit the remote character of the area for visitors to the remote outfitting camps and operation may cause some traffic noise at nearby camp sites, effecting the experience of remoteness.

Visual Environment

Adverse residual effects on the visual environment are not anticipated as a result of the construction or long-term use of the Community Access Road.

Cumulative Effects

Land and Resource

The Cumulative Effects Assessment for Land and Resource Use identified potential effects on trapping in three areas resulting from the Community Access Road and other activities in the area, like the Northern Road Link and forestry activities in the Ogoki Forest Management Plan. For a map including the three trapping areas, see Figure 5-2 of the Draft Land and Resource Use Technical Support Document: Existing Conditions & Effects Assessment. Potential effects include loss of habitat for furbearing species, improved access to land for trapping and other disturbances during construction and long-term use of the Community Access Road. The total area affected is small compared to the size of the trapping areas, and the combined effects are considered low to moderate in magnitude.

Visual Environment

At the time of preparing this document, the Cumulative Effects Assessment for Visual Environment was not available to summarize. This information may be found in the appendix of the draft Environmental Assessment / Impact Statement Report.



Want to learn more?

If you are interested in learning more about this topic, please review the technical report available in the appendix of the Draft Environmental Assessment / Impact Statement.

Contact Info

You are welcome to contact the Marten Falls First Nation Community Access Road Project Team at any time with questions or comments.

Email: eaisinput@martenfallsaccessroad.ca

Phone: 1-800-764-9114

Website: eais.martenfallsaccessroad.ca

