



Marten Falls First Nation Community Access Road Public Information Centre #6 Summary Report May 26 and 29, 2025

This summary report has been prepared to provide an overview of the feedback captured at Public Information Centre (PIC) #6 in Thunder Bay and Geraldton on May 26 and 29, 2025. The first hour of each meeting was reserved for Indigenous community members only.

Timing and Location

Superior Inn & Conference Centre, 555 Arthur St W
Thunder Bay, Ontario
May 26, 2025
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Geraldton Recreation Centre, 200 Wardrope Ave. E
Geraldton, Ontario
May 29, 2025
4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Introduction / Purpose

This was the fourth PIC held during the provincial Environmental Assessment / federal Impact Assessment (EA / IA) phase of the Marten Falls First Nation (MFFN) Community Access Road and the sixth PIC since the beginning of the Project. It focused on the Draft Environmental Assessment / Impact Statement (EA / IS), community well-being and cumulative effects. The purpose of PIC #6 was to provide updates on:

- Draft EA / IS review process, schedule, and ways to review and provide comments;
- How the Preferred Route was selected;
- Understanding potential effects and mitigations;
- The cumulative effects process and results;
- Final projects / activities considered as part of the Cumulative Effects Assessment;
- How the Community Access Road could affect community well-being for Marten Falls and nearby communities;
- Land and resource use; and
- Information on the Country Foods Program.





Notices and Promotion

A formal notice and invitation to PIC #6 was emailed to the project contact list and published on the website (www.martenfallsaccessroad.ca/documents/#notices) on April 22, 2025 and distributed in print, online and on the radio via multiple outlets, as outlined below. The PIC notification was included in the Notice of Publication of the Draft EA / IS. Notices in English, French, Ojibway, Cree (Swampy/ n-dialect) and Oji-Cree were available for download on the website. Copies of the notice, in each language, are provided in **Appendix A**.

Print Advertisements (see Appendix B1)

- The Chronicle Journal: April 26, 2025
- Geraldton Times Star: April 30, 2025 and May 7, 14 & 21, 2025
- Wawatay News: May 23, 2025

Online Advertisements (see Appendix B2)

- MFFN Community Access Road Website (www.martenfallsaccessroad.ca/documents/#notices): April 22, 2025
- Northern Ontario Business: April 22, 2025
- Thunder Bay News Watch: April 22, 2025
- Windspeaker: April 22, 2025
- Wawatay News: April 22, 2025
- Municipality of Greenstone Online Events Calendar (<https://calendar.greenstone.ca/default/Detail/2025-05-29-1600-Marten-Falls-First-Nation-Community-Access-Road-Pu>): April 22, 2025

Radio Advertisements (see Appendix B3)

- Wawatay Radio: April 24 – 26, 2025
- CFNO Radio: April 22 – May 26, 2025

Social Media Advertisements (see Appendix B4)

- Facebook: April 26, May 10 and 26, 2025
- Facebook (MFFN Community Private Page): May 21, 2025 (omitted from appendix as the page is not public)
- Instagram: April 22 and 26, May 10 and 26, 2025
- LinkedIn: April 26 and May 15, 2025

Reminders were also distributed to the electronic mailing list in the April e-Blast on May 8, 2025 and a follow-up notice on May 26, 2025 (see **Appendix B5**).





Format and Attendance

PIC #6 was held in an open house format and featured a series of display boards, large printed maps as well as hand outs related to the Draft EA / IS, the Cumulative Effects Assessment and Community Well-Being studies. MFFN Community Access Road Project Team, including MFFN Senior Community Member Advisors and Consultants, were available to guide attendees through the display boards and answer questions. Attendees were encouraged to review display boards and provide comments and feedback by having one-on-one discussions with the Project Team members and consultants.

The following printed and online materials were made available to attendees:

- Open house display boards;
- Draft EA / IS Frequently Asked Questions;
- Draft EA / IS Executive Summary (English, Oji-Cree and Ojibway);
- 11 plain language summaries (English, Oji-Cree and Ojibway) including:
 - Archeology and Cultural Heritage
 - Climate Change Adaptation
 - Community Well-Being
 - Fish and Fish Habitat
 - Groundwater and Surface Water
 - Acoustics (Noise and Vibration)
 - Peatlands
 - Physiography, Terrain, and Soils and Vegetation
 - Ungulates
 - Visual Environment and Land and Resource Use
 - Wildlife and Birds
- Community Well-Being Economics information sheet;
- Socio-Community Effects and Mitigations information sheet;
- Cumulative Effects Inclusions List information sheet; and
- Maps of: Preferred Route, tourism outfitter locations, Project Inclusions List (cumulative effects) and trapline areas.

All engagement materials shared at PIC #6 are included in **Appendix C**, maps are included in **Appendix D**.

Attendance

Approximately **27 individuals** attended PIC #6 (11 attendees in Thunder Bay on May 26, 2025, and 16 attendees in Geraldton on May 29, 2025). Attendees included Indigenous community members,





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provincial and federal agencies, members of the public / local residents, environmental groups and industry representatives. Attendees included:

- Marten Falls First Nation;
- Thunder Bay residents;
- Geraldton residents;
- Far North Resources Group;
- Four Rivers Environmental Services Group;
- Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR);
- Long Lake 58 First Nation;
- Mushkegowuk Council;
- Municipality of Greenstone; and
- Longlac-Greenstone Council.

Paul MacInnis and Lauri Cunningham from the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM) were present at the Thunder Bay event to provide a brief update and assist in answering questions from attendees. Paul MacInnis also attended the Geraldton event.

Local Media

One journalist from Thunder Bay News Watch attended PIC #6 in Thunder Bay, and conducted an interview with Lawrence Baxter, MFFN Senior Community Member Advisor and Jennifer Bruin, Project Technical Advisor. The interview was not published or featured on news outlets.

Highlights of Participant Feedback

Attendees were encouraged to share their feedback, concerns and pose questions throughout the events. Key items of interest raised by the public are included below. Note that all questions are labeled with a 'Q', comments with a 'C' and answers with an 'A'. Questions were answered by MFFN Community Advisors, Project Team members and Consultants (Project Team).

Access / Safety

Q: Will the Community Access Road be publicly accessible or have restricted access?

A: At this time, the ownership and long-term maintenance of the Community Access Road has not been determined. It was noted that there are ongoing conversations between MFFN and the province on how to control access on the Community Access Road.

C: An attendee suggested toll road with check points be included on the Community Access Road to address concerns with human trafficking. They also inquired what types of vehicles will use the Community Access Road, stating concerns for safety risks with all-terrain vehicle use. They also noted that many community members do not have driver's license.





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A: The Project Team member noted that decisions regarding access are not within the scope of work of the EA / IA and that there are ongoing conversations between MFFN and the province on how to control access on the road. The attendee's other comments were noted by the Project Team.

C: Multiple attendees flagged potential road safety concerns once the Community Access Road is built such as whether there will be lighting and trail radios.

A: The Project Team member noted that decisions regarding these types of safety features will be determined at the Detailed Design phase.

Community Well-being

C: Multiple attendees expressed support and interest in the Country Foods Program.

A: The Project Team member noted that additional details on the Country Foods Program will be available in the Final EA / IS.

C: An MFFN community member noted how the Community Access Road will positively impact the community. They noted that the housing needed for the construction camps could later be repurposed for Marten Falls housing. Concerns about addictions in MFFN, and the need for mitigations to support people's transition into the workforce were noted. The community member proposed having an Elder / healer in the construction camps to help facilitate the transition. They discussed having flexible schedules to help encourage people to participate. They noted the need to start healing initiatives early, so that people can apply for positions when the time comes. Additionally, it was noted that there are often vacant positions in the community.

C: An attendee noted that the Community Access Road could be beneficial in potential evacuations due to climate disasters such as flooding or forest fires. It would be less costly compared to flying out the communities.

C: Multiple attendees flagged potential safety concerns once the Community Access Road is built including an increase in drug and alcohol use.

C: An attendee and MFFN community member was hopeful about the possibility of growing food in community and possibly selling food to the work camps.

C: A number of attendees were interested in job opportunities related to the Community Access Road.

A: The Project Team member noted the Community Access Road will create a number of direct and indirect employment opportunities. Once available, information on employment opportunities will be provided to Marten Falls First Nation and Aroland First Nation, as well as other Indigenous communities, in advance to provide time to obtain the necessary training.

C: An attendee inquired about the Community Access Road timeline and if there would be procurement opportunities for Indigenous businesses during the construction phase.





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A: The Project Team member noted that the Community Access Road is still in the early planning stages. It was noted that MFFN is in on-going discussions about the next phases (i.e., construction) of the Community Access Road.

Cumulative Effects

C: A member of Four Rivers Environmental Services Group noted that information about how cumulative effects are deemed as “significant” is not always clear. Display boards noted that it was due to professional judgement, applicable standards and guidelines.

C: Attendees were interested in the projects included in the Project Inclusion List. It was noted that the KWG Railway Project into the Ring of Fire with Spider Resources was missing from the Project Inclusions List.

A: The Project Team member thanked attendees for the response and the suggestion to include the KWG Railway Project in the Project Inclusions List. It was noted that the MFFN CAR Project Team is considering the KWG Railway Project and it will be included on the Project Inclusions List in the Final EA / IS.

Draft Environmental Assessment / Impact Assessment Process and Reports

C: The representative from MEM noted the Draft EA / IS was a well laid out and easy to read and comprehend document.

C: An attendee inquired about the impact of the proposed Bill 5 on the Community Access Road. The individual inquired what would change if Bill 5 is passed.

A: The Project Team member noted that the Community Access Road is a joint federal Impact Assessment and provincial Environmental Assessment process which are not influenced by the changes proposed in Bill 5. It was also noted that the commitments to mitigations, design elements, and monitoring in the Draft EA / IS will remain commitments for the Community Access Road.

Engineering and Road Design

Q: Are the construction camp locations shown on the maps confirmed?

A: The camp locations are best estimates and based on where the Engineering Team estimates they make sense (i.e., close to aggregate sites). However, the locations are not final and will be further refined during detailed design.

C: A representative from Four Rivers Environmental Services Group was interested in the graphics and maps showing the water crossings. They requested copies to assist with outreach on the Community Access Road. Electronic versions were sent to them.

C: A member of Mushkegowuk Council flagged that the number of crossings noted in the Draft EA / IS do not seem to be enough to accommodate appropriate drainage for the Community Access Road.





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A: It was noted that the number of crossings in the Draft EA / IS was a preliminary estimate and that the number of crossings will be determined during detailed design.

Q: A member of Mushkegowuk Council asked about the design of the Community Access Road including the expected life span and long-term traffic estimates.

A: The Community Access Road is designed to last 70 years and the traffic estimates are projected based on Ministry of Transportation data.

C: A member of Mushkegowuk Council raised concerns about the potential environmental impacts associated with the Community Access Road and noted concerns about peatlands in the region.

A: The Project Team member discussed the technical specifications of the Community Access Road and how the Preferred Route was selected. They noted that two of the four Route Alternatives were not advanced in part due to the amount of peatlands or muskeg that would have been disturbed.

Q: A meeting attendee noted concerns with dust and inquired if tar would be used to control dust on the Community Access Road.

A: Dust suppressants are part of the mitigation measures proposed to control dust and include environmentally friendly options free of chlorides.

Land and Resources Use

Q: Will access be limited for hunting (resident / non-resident hunters)? How will this impact Treaty Rights for hunting?

A: At this time, we do not know the authority or restrictions associated with the Community Access Road. It is not anticipated that the Community Access Road will impact Treaty Rights for hunting. Tourism operators have been utilizing this area for quite some time and work closely with community members to reduce overlap or impacts to traditional harvesting.

Q: Will the tag allocations change? Will the MNR add more remote tourist outfitter camps?

A: The number of hunting tag allocations is out of the scope of the EA / IA. The MNR regulates these items.

Wildlife

Q: A member of Mushkegowuk Council discussed mitigation for impacts to road ecology specifically amphibians and reptiles and inquired if there were crossing considerations for smaller amphibians.

A: Practical and locally informed alternatives are being explored. One approach is to install wildlife warning signs in areas where our data shows higher animal movement. This is similar to signage used on other forested highways to alert drivers to species like moose, deer, and elk.

Additionally, we are looking at low-impact solutions, where a simple barrier—similar to a silt fence—helps prevent snakes from crossing the road near their dens. This kind of targeted mitigation can be effective for smaller species without requiring major infrastructure. This will be looked at further in Detail Design.





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C: An attendee noted that in previous visits to the Washi Lake and Goulais River area they had seen many beavers. When visiting the Albany River Area they observed several bears.

Next Steps

The Draft EA / IS is available online. The Indigenous community members and the public had the opportunity to review the Draft EA / IS related to the Community Access Road. Feedback was welcomed until the end of the review period on June 23, 2025. Feedback during the review period will help shape the Final EA / IS, targeted for release in 2026.

