



ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE PLAIN LANGUAGE GUIDE



The Community Access Road could affect both archaeological and cultural heritage resources in the area. Archaeological assessments find and study artifacts (e.g., ceramics and stone tools) and sites (e.g., fishing camps, and trading posts), while cultural heritage assessments look at the broader historical and cultural context, including landscapes and buildings. By considering these areas together, we can better understand and protect the region's rich cultural and historical legacy.

Existing Conditions

Archaeology

Archaeological assessments are conducted in multiple stages to explore and record the history and current conditions of a given study area.

Stage 1

Assessments involve background research to analyze the potential for archaeological resources within a study area.

Stage 2

Assessments include fieldwork to identify if there are artifacts or archaeological sites within a study area.

Stage 3

Assessments involve site-specific investigations, including excavation, to establish the size of the site and any additional information on cultural affiliation or time of occupation.

Stage 4

Assessments are broken into two approaches, excavation and avoidance and protection. Stage 4 excavation involves the full excavation and removal of the parts of or the entire archaeological site. Stage 4 avoidance and protection establishes long term solutions to keep archaeological sites intact in the ground. These stages help make recommendations about cultural affiliation and time of occupation, assessment and mitigation measures, and suggest ways to protect identified archaeological sites. They are conducted prior to land-clearing activities and the start of construction.

The Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment looked at the history of northern Ontario over the past 11,000 years, focusing on the Paleo, Archaic and Woodland periods through the 19th and early 20th centuries. This assessment showed that northern Ontario was home to several Indigenous cultures before European contact. During the Paleo period (8,000 – 4,500 BC), people lived in settlements north of the Great Lakes. The Archaic period (5,400 – 250 BC) saw a warmer climate, population growth, smaller territories, longer stays at camps and more trade. In the Woodland periods (700 BC – 1650 AD), people began making pottery and ceramics. As the climate warmed, the growth and trade of fruits and vegetables increased, although farming did not expand as much as in the south due to the Canadian Shield's climate and landscape. People continued to rely on fishing and hunting for food during this period.

The original study area was widened to include areas that may be disturbed for aggregate extraction and an additional Stage 1 assessment took place in these areas. The assessment showed a high potential for identifying archaeological resources due to the Community Access Road's proximity to water and food sources, and areas of community interest. Among these sites is Marten Falls House, a Hudson's Bay Company Trading Post. Marten Falls House was studied in 1980 and found to contain artifacts, including ceramics, glass, metal hardware, household and personal items, faunal material, and Indigenous material. In addition, surveys in the Albany River System have discovered many pre-contact Indigenous sites and historic camps, indicating a rich history of Anishinaabe activity. High archaeological potential was also found near waterways and historical routes, further highlighting the area's significance.

In the fall of 2019, a Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment was conducted, focusing on river crossings over the Ogoki and Albany rivers. Five areas of interest were identified, with three containing culturally significant materials. Location 1 at the Albany River crossing was found to have a single piece of chipping detritus (the byproduct of stone tool making) made from Hudson's Bay Lowland **chert**. Location 2, an old campsite near the Albany River crossing known as the Caviar site was recommended for a Stage 3 investigation due to its cultural significance. It contained remains of a can and bottle dump, an outhouse, cooking areas and tent structures, indicating its use throughout the 20th century and possibly earlier. Location 3, near the Ogoki River crossing, was found evidence of tool-making activities, but no further cultural heritage value was determined.



What is...

The Local Study Area is a 5 kilometre area around the Community Access Road route. The area is home to many animals, birds and insects in the Boreal Forest, with open and treed wetlands, mixed forests and water sources used for travel, drinking and fishing. These conditions supported both temporary and permanent settlements throughout history. Rivers acted as historical highways and were used for travel, although, between 1943 and 1950, hydroelectric projects changed the Albany and Ogoki river systems by building dams at Rat Rapids and Waboose Rapids, respectively.



What is...

Chert: A fine grain sedimentary rock that is often found in marine, lake or land settings

Cultural Heritage

The Cultural Heritage Assessment looked at cultural heritage features within a 5 kilometre buffer of the proposed route options, known as the Local Study Area. Cultural heritage features include human-made or natural features significant to the community, reflecting Indigenous and / or European history. Based on background research, mapping and community feedback, the study identified 288 significant cultural heritage locations. These include:

- 149 harvest areas (106 for animals, 25 for fish and 18 for plants);
- 49 cultural, spiritual and sacred areas;
- 90 habitation areas; and
- 23 travel routes.

These features are important in understanding the history of the place, events and people, and they contribute to the community's cultural identity.



Potential Effects and Mitigations

Archaeology

Potential effects on archaeological resources were analyzed by looking at the construction and long-term use of the Community Access Road. Activities such as equipment mobilization, land clearing, drilling, blasting, road construction, and bridge and culvert installations could disturb the ground and damage archaeological resources. Temporary staging areas, access roads, construction camps and pits could also cause ground disturbances and affect archaeological sites during construction and closure of temporary sites. Long-term use and maintenance of the road could lead to wear and tear on the surrounding environment, potentially impacting nearby archaeological resources.

To reduce these potential effects, additional Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment will be completed for areas of high archaeological potential within the study area to be impacted by construction. Additional fieldwork planning will be done in consultation with Indigenous communities to ensure their involvement and input during the design phase, in the coming years. If it can't be avoided, the Caviar site will require a Stage 3 field investigation.

The Preferred mitigation measures for archaeological sites are avoiding and protecting the site, and conducting detailed documentation if avoidance is not possible. If the site is avoided, measures will include setting up a temporary barrier with a 20-metre buffer, monitoring by a licensed archaeologist, and issuing 'no-go' instructions within the buffer zone. If avoidance is not possible, site excavation is required with detailed documentation and recording to preserve the site's cultural significance.

Potential Effects and Mitigations

Cultural Heritage

This assessment looked at how the Community Access Road might affect heritage sites and landscapes in the area, identifying both direct and indirect impacts that could harm these heritage features. Permanent negative impacts include removing or demolishing buildings, adding new physical features and disturbing the land, which can harm the heritage value of the properties. Indirect impacts include shadows changing how heritage features look, vibrations from construction causing ground disturbances, isolating heritage features from their surroundings and blocking important views with new infrastructure.

Construction activities such as building new access roads and bridges, clearing trees and vegetation, drilling and blasting, setting up temporary construction camps and managing traffic could also impact heritage sites.

To protect cultural heritage landscapes in the study area, several mitigation measures are recommended. These include designing the Project to avoid direct impacts on cultural heritage landscapes, careful planning and construction to avoid impacts, informing construction crews about the locations of cultural heritage landscapes and setting up a monitoring process with rules and no-go zones to protect important areas. If the route changes, a qualified expert should check if these changes affect heritage sites and update recommendations as needed.

There are possible negative impacts to the two potential cultural heritage landscapes, the Ogoki River and the Albany River. Before starting construction, experts will study these rivers to determine if they have cultural heritage value using Ontario Regulation 9/06 or Ontario Regulation 10/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act. If the Ogoki and/or Albany rivers are found to have cultural heritage value, Heritage Impact Assessments should be prepared to understand the impacts and recommend ways to protect them.

Residual Effects

Through the proper use of mitigation measures, the potential effects on Cultural Heritage resources from the construction and long-term use of the Community Access Road are expected to be effectively managed, minimized or mitigated.

The Community Access Road has the potential of direct and indirect impacts on harvest areas, cultural spiritual and sacred areas, and habitation areas. Evaluations for cultural heritage landscapes will occur prior to construction to determine mitigation measures and design alternatives, as required.

Residual effects were not studied for Archaeology as reporting followed standards from the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism.

Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects were not studied for Archaeology or Cultural Heritage as reporting followed standards from the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism.





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 Final 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.

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