

Ministry of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks

Environmental Assessment
Modernization Branch

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Ministère de l'Environnement, de
la Protection de la nature et des Parcs

Direction de la modernisation des processus
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April 20, 2026

TO: Stakeholder Distribution List

RE: Proposed *Environmental Assessment Act* (EAA) amendments to improve the comprehensive environmental assessment (EA) process

Today, Ontario introduced the [Protecting Ontario's Workers and Economic Resilience Act, 2026 \(POWER Act\)](#) in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. If made, the changes would support a more efficient comprehensive EA process and make it easier to navigate by removing certain steps while maintaining strong environmental protections and other consultation opportunities.

The proposed legislation would, if passed, amend the *Environmental Assessment Act* (EAA) to make three key changes to the comprehensive EA process:

- Remove the requirement to publish and consult on a Ministry Review
- Remove the opportunity for the public to request a hearing before the Ontario Land Tribunal (Tribunal) while maintaining the Minister's authority to refer an application or matter related to an application to the Tribunal for a hearing and decision on their own initiative
- Remove the requirement for Cabinet approval of the Minister's decision, while providing the Minister discretion to refer an application to Cabinet for a decision

In addition, we also proposed minor updates to improve clarity and flexibility in the EAA.

If the proposed EAA amendments are made, the regulation that sets out deadlines for certain steps in the comprehensive EA process (Ontario Regulation 616/98 (Deadlines)) would be adjusted to align with the changes.

The proposal has been posted on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) for public comment. More information is available [here](#). Input is being accepted until **May 20, 2026**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at EAModernization.MECP@ontario.ca. Any comments on the proposal can be submitted through the ERO posting via the link above, or by email to us.

We are committed to keeping you apprised about EA modernization and working with you to build a strong EA program for Ontario. We value your perspectives on the EA program and look forward to your further participation. More information on our other efforts to modernize the EA program can also be found [here](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Cross". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Annamaria Cross
Director, Environmental Assessment Modernization Branch
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks