

**Pilon, Janet**

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**Subject:** EA Modernization: Clarifying the authority to change the classes of projects that follow a class environmental assessment process

**From:** EA Modernization (MECP) <[EAModernization.MECP@ontario.ca](mailto:EAModernization.MECP@ontario.ca)>

**Sent:** Friday, October 8, 2021 4:55 PM

**To:** EA Modernization (MECP) <[EAModernization.MECP@ontario.ca](mailto:EAModernization.MECP@ontario.ca)>

**Cc:** Lashbrook, Ross (MECP) <[Ross.Lashbrook@ontario.ca](mailto:Ross.Lashbrook@ontario.ca)>; Cross, Annamaria (MECP) <[Annamaria.Cross@ontario.ca](mailto:Annamaria.Cross@ontario.ca)>; Cross, Annamaria (MECP) <[Annamaria.Cross@ontario.ca](mailto:Annamaria.Cross@ontario.ca)>

**Subject:** EA Modernization: Clarifying the authority to change the classes of projects that follow a class environmental assessment process

Hello:

I am writing to let you know about a minor amendment that is being proposed to the *Environmental Assessment Act* to support the ministry's environmental assessment modernization initiative.

The *Environmental Assessment Act* includes authority to amend a class environmental assessment (Class EA) by Minister's amendment or by regulation. As part of our ongoing work to modernize the environmental assessment program, the ministry is proposing a minor amendment to the *Environmental Assessment Act* to clarify the authority to make changes to the types of projects that can follow a Class EA.

Projects that follow the Class EA process will still require consultation with Indigenous communities, stakeholders and the public, developing mitigation measures and documenting the findings in a report to protect and safeguard the environment.

***What is a class environmental assessment?***

A class environmental assessment is a document that sets out a standardized planning process for classes or groups of activities that are carried out routinely and have predictable environmental effects that can be readily managed. This process generally requires proponents to identify the problem or opportunity, consider alternative solutions and designs, consult with Indigenous communities and stakeholders, develop mitigation measures, and document the findings through a report.

***Why is this change being proposed?***

As part of our ongoing modernization efforts we are currently developing the regulation to set out the projects that would be subject to the comprehensive environmental assessment process (see ERO notice [019-2377](#)). In July 2021 we initiated consultation on a proposal that, if approved, would allow some electricity transmission lines that currently require an individual environmental assessment to follow a Class EA process (see ERO notice [019-3937](#)). There may be other projects that do not warrant an individual/comprehensive environmental assessment, which is the largest and most significant assessment, but should instead be subject to a Class EA. The proposed legislative amendment would clarify the authority to change the classes of projects that can follow a Class EA.

The proposed legislative amendment clarifies the existing broad authority that enables amendments to Class EAs. The amendment itself will not have any effect on the existing Class EAs. In the event that the authority is used to move a project type from an individual/comprehensive EA to a Class EA process, that proposed change would be consulted upon with Indigenous communities, the public and other impacted stakeholders.

Projects that follow the Class EA process will still require consultation with the public, stakeholders and Indigenous communities, developing mitigation measures and documenting the findings in a report to protect and safeguard the environment.

***How can I learn more and comment on this proposal?***

We are committed to seeking input from the public, stakeholders and Indigenous communities before allowing other project types to begin following the streamlined or Class EA process.

Please review the proposal and submit your comments via the Environmental Registry of Ontario ([019-4189](tel:019-4189)) or directly by e-mail to [EAmmodernization.mecp@ontario.ca](mailto:EAmmodernization.mecp@ontario.ca) by November 21, 2021.

Please do not hesitate to contact the ministry at [EAmmodernization.mecp@ontario.ca](mailto:EAmmodernization.mecp@ontario.ca) with any questions you may have at any time.

Thank you,

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