

Ministry of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks

Environmental Assessment and
Permissions Division

135 St. Clair Avenue West
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Toronto ON M4V 1P5

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

Division des évaluations et des permissions
environnementales

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357-2020-1845

October 6, 2020

Ms. Linda Heron
Chair, Ontario Rivers Alliance
Ontario Rivers Alliance
379 Ronka Road
Worthington ON P0M 3H0
Email: lindah@ontarioriversalliance.ca

Dear Ms. Heron:

I am writing with regard to the Part II Order requests received by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for the Trout Lake River Hydroelectric Project (Project), that is proposed to proceed pursuant to the Ontario Waterpower Association's Class Environmental Assessment for Waterpower Projects by Horizon Hydro Operations Limited. In your request, you raised concerns related to Indigenous consultation carried out to date on the proposed Project, and impacts of the Project on fish and fish habitat, including concerns regarding methyl mercury.

As part of our government's efforts to boost Ontario's economic recovery after COVID-19, we have passed the *COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020*, including amendments to the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

The changes to the *Environmental Assessment Act* will allow us to build a strong environmental assessment program that effectively considers the input of local communities and focuses on projects that have the highest impact to the environment. The Act will continue to consider "the protection, conservation and wise management in Ontario of the environment". A key change made to the *Environmental Assessment Act* was to limit Part II Order requests to potential adverse impacts of projects to constitutionally protected Aboriginal or treaty rights. All Part II Order requests that were under review which do not pertain to potential adverse impacts on constitutionally protected Aboriginal or treaty rights have been terminated by the amendments.

As concerns raised in your Part II Order request pertain to potential impacts on constitutionally protected Aboriginal or treaty rights, your Part II Order request has not been terminated by the amendments. The ministry will continue to consider those aspects of your request.

Should you have any questions about the information provided in this letter, please contact Devon Wills, directly at 416-270-4457 and devon.wills@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,



Sarah Paul
Assistant Deputy Minister
Environment Assessment and Permissions Division

c: Mr. Frank Belerique, Vice President, Horizon Hydro Operations Limited
EA File No. 13037 – Trout Lake River Hydroelectric Project