

**Ministry of the Environment**

Environmental Assessment and  
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**Ministère de l'Environnement**

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ENV1283MC-2010-2021

May 27, 2010

Ms. Kathleen Day  
Director  
Rockcliffe Park Residents Association  
E-mail: [kathyday@hotmail.com](mailto:kathyday@hotmail.com)

Dear Ms. Day:

Thank you for your May 2, 2010 e-mail to the Minister of the Environment regarding the Ottawa River Interprovincial Crossing Study Project (Project) that is being prepared by the National Capital Commission (NCC). I am pleased to reply on behalf of the Minister.

The NCC in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and the Ministère des Transport du Québec (MTQ) developed and consulted on a multi-phased study approach that outlined how the NCC proposed to obtain the necessary approvals for an interprovincial crossing of the Ottawa River between Ottawa, Ontario and Gatineau, Quebec.

During Phase 1 of the study, the study partners consulted with the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and determined that the sole proponent of the project would be the NCC, which is an agency of the federal government. The applicability of the Ontario environmental assessment (EA) process is dependent on the proponent (e.g. provincial ministries and agencies, municipalities, etc.) of the project. Since the NCC is a federal agency, the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* (EAA) does not apply.

A letter from the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) was sent to the NCC confirming the NCC's interpretation that this project was a federal undertaking subject to the requirements of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA) and not the Ontario EAA. Accordingly, the NCC's second study phase will be carried out as a federal EA under the requirements of the CEAA.

The proponent (NCC), funding partners (MTO and MTQ) and other partners (the Cities of Ottawa and Gatineau) have agreed to enhance the federal EA to be undertaken by incorporating key elements of both the Ontario and Quebec EA processes. This has been done to ensure that a more rigorous EA process is completed. As part of the enhanced process agreed to, Ontario will

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remain involved in the federal EA and will be represented on a project steering committee, which will advise on the provincial interests of the project.

As a funding partner, Ontario expects that community values, economic development and transit will be included in Phase 2 of the study. The very purpose of Phase 2 is to engage in a more detailed study that reflects these and other key values. The MOE has heard the concerns of the community and has responded with support for this phased approach.

Citizens of Ontario have been given opportunities to comment and provide feedback on the study through Phases 1 and 2A. Numerous public and community meetings were held in various locations in both Ottawa and in Gatineau to consult with the public.

Building upon this approach, the study design developed for Phase 2B has identified requirements for extensive consultation and engagement opportunities. These requirements are an integral component of the EA process for this study. In the event that there are significant public concerns, the CEAA process provides an opportunity for the project to be referred to a Panel Review.

Given the on-going provincial involvement on the study team, the MOE is confident that the NCC will continue to consult with the public, effectively evaluate any potential project impacts and identify appropriate measures to mitigate those impacts in the federal EA. The MOE intends to continue its involvement in the NCC's study process as a technical participant in an advisory capacity.

Your participation in the NCC's study is encouraged. In accordance with the existing communication protocol for this project, your concerns should be expressed directly to the NCC's consultant at [info@ncrcrossings.ca](mailto:info@ncrcrossings.ca). This will ensure that the issues raised are properly documented and addressed in the NCC's study.

Should you have further questions, please contact Mr. D. Jeffrey Dea, Project Officer of the Environmental Assessment and Approvals Branch, at 416-314-7213 or by e-mail at [jeffrey.dea@ontario.ca](mailto:jeffrey.dea@ontario.ca).

Yours sincerely,



Agatha Garcia-Wright  
Director  
Environmental Assessment and Approvals Branch