

GUIDELINES

for

ENVIRONMENTAL PREVIEW REPORT

for the

Great Coastal Trail – Parson’s Pond to Daniel’s Harbour

Registration No. 2284

Honourable Bernard Davis
Minister
Environment and Climate Change

April 26, 2024



ENVIRONMENTAL PREVIEW REPORT GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are intended to assist the Central Development Association (the Proponent) with the preparation of the Environmental Preview Report (EPR) for the Great Coastal Trail – Parson’s Pond to Daniel’s Harbour (the Project). The EPR is a report that presents the results of an investigation based on readily available information that supplements the information provided by the Proponent upon registration of the undertaking. The purpose of the information in the EPR is to assist the Minister of the Department of Environment and Climate Change (ECC) in making a determination as to the potential for significant environmental effects from the proposed undertaking and whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be required. The EPR is expected to be concise while presenting the comprehensive information necessary to enable the Minister to make an informed decision.

The EPR should include and update the information provided in the registration document and focus on the information gaps identified during the government and public review.

The contents of the EPR should be organized according to the following format:

1. NAME OF UNDERTAKING:

The undertaking has been assigned the Name “***Great Coastal Trail – Parson’s Pond to Daniel’s Harbour.***”

2. PROPONENT:

- a. Name of the Proponent and the corporate body, if any.
- b. Name of the chief executive officer, if a corporate body.
- c. Name the principal contact person for purposes of environmental assessment and state the official title.

3. THE UNDERTAKING:

- a. State the nature of the Project.
- b. State the purpose/rationale/need for the Project. If the proposal is in response to an established need, this should be clearly stated. Identify needs that are immediate as well as potential future needs.
- c. Provide the justification and need for the trail in the proposed Project area.
- d. Provide an explanation as to why sections of the proposed trail route must be altered from the original route plan.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE UNDERTAKING:

Provide a complete overview of the Project in the following subsections, including information about the preferred choice of the gateway location and trail route, design, construction, operation and maintenance standards, etc.

4.1 Geographical Location/Physical Components/Existing Environment:

- a. Provide an accurate description of the proposed trail components, including GPS coordinates (e.g., digital GIS files and maps). Attach an original base map (e.g., 1:25,000 scale) and/or the most recent available air photos/aerial imagery of the proposed trail components, and the existing environment in/near the Project area. The description should include, at a minimum:
 - i. The revised location of Project components including the gateway (pedestrian area and parking lot) and the demonstration trail route prepared in consultation with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (TI) and the Wildlife and Crown Lands Divisions of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (FFA);
 - ii. Topography;
 - iii. Flood and erosion-prone areas;
 - iv. All waterbody and wetland crossings and proposed bridges/culverts;
 - v. Overlap of the revised Project with dunes at Portland Creek and Clifty Point;
 - vi. Overlap of the revised Project with TI property and infrastructure including roads, rights of way and bridges;
 - vii. Overlap of the Project with municipal development plans, local service districts (LSDs), sensitive wildlife habitat (e.g., dunes and known bird colonies); provincial parks (including the Arches Provincial Park), UNESCO World Heritage Sites, the Crown Land Wind Land Reserve Order, private land, Protected Public Water Supply Areas (PPWSAs) and other land use;
 - viii. Health facilities;
 - ix. Telecommunication including cell coverage; and
 - x. Local economy.
- b. Provide information regarding ownership/land use/land use zoning of the land upon which the Project is proposed to be located, and describe, at a minimum:
 - i. Restrictions inherent upon the Project or imposed by municipal development plans, LSDs, the Arches Provincial Park, the UNESCO World Heritage Site, TI, the Crown Land Wind Land Reserve Order (FFA), PPWSAs (ECC), private land owners and other land users;

- ii. Support provided by municipalities, LSDs, the Arches Provincial Park, the UNESCO World Heritage Site, TI, the Crown Land Wind Land Reserve Order (FFA), PPWSAs (ECC), private land owners and other land users for the construction, operation and maintenance, decommissioning and rehabilitation of the Project;
- iii. Commitment that municipalities, LSDs, the Arches Provincial Park, the UNESCO World Heritage Site owners/operators, TI, the Crown Land Wind Land Reserve Order (FFA), PPWSAs (ECC), private land owners and other land users will be consulted to meet their requirements;
- iv. Commitment that the proposed development shall not interfere with agricultural activities, and in particular with existing agriculture leases in close proximity to the proposed trail; and
- v. Acknowledgement that there may be future agricultural activities in the Project vicinity that may include, but would not be limited to manure spreading, heavy equipment use, fertilizer spreading, presence of animals, odour, etc.

4.2 Construction:

State the time period in which the proposed construction will proceed (if staged, list each stage and its approximate duration) and the proposed date of the first physical construction-related activity.

The details, materials, methods, schedule, and location of all planned construction activities must be presented.

The EPR shall describe/include the following:

- a. Scaled mapping/imagery that identifies the revised Project location including gateway (parking lot and pedestrian area), pedestrian bridges, trail route, tread, corridors and buffer zones;
- b. Vegetation clearing and pruning locations and methods;
- c. Dimensions, materials, and methods of construction and placement of all proposed water body/wetland crossings such as bridges, culverts or bog matting, including the locations where this activity will take place;
- d. Conceptual design/drawing of the gateway, trail cross section and pedestrian bridges/culverts.
- e. The type and amount of fill required for the trail bed, as well as the source for obtaining these materials;
- f. A construction schedule that considers actions to mitigate adverse effects;
- g. Demonstration that the finished grade of the trail crest near the town of Parsons Pond will be below the 20-year flood elevation to avoid

- interference with the flow of water or displacement of water that could create a worse flooding situation for other locations;
- h. Transportation of construction materials to the site and any heavy equipment to be used in trail construction;
 - i. Areas reserved for future lookout developments and any other trail components; and
 - j. Measures that will be undertaken to ensure appropriate trail construction.

4.3 Operation and Maintenance:

All aspects of the operation and maintenance of the proposed development should be presented in detail.

- a. Describe signage and wayfinding for the gateway and trail (i.e., access points, parking, kiosk, safety signs, public education, etc.) and how the trail route will be marked for users and local people to follow.
- b. A commitment to undertaking measures to ensure that the trail will be maintained and used appropriately, which shall include, at a minimum:
 - i. A schedule of inspection and maintenance of trails, gateway facilities and bridges;
 - ii. Identification of personnel responsible for inspection and maintenance of components outlined in 4.3(b)(i);
 - iii. Response to damage to trails, private property, Provincial Park, World Heritage Site and TI property;
 - iv. Funding for regular trail maintenance and repairs to damaged property;
 - v. Collection of waste from waste receptacles provided along the trail route; and
 - vi. Safety of trail users and public; and
 - vii. Methods for preventing unauthorized motor vehicle access and use of trail.
- c. If the trail is intended to promote tourism in the area, the EPR should demonstrate how the aforementioned signage and maintenance requirements can meet market readiness standards and expectations of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation (TCAR).

5. ALTERNATIVES

The EPR must identify and describe alternative means and locations of carrying out the Project that are technically and economically feasible. The following steps for addressing alternative means and locations are recommended:

- a. Identify any alternative means and locations to carry out the Project;
- b. Identify the environmental effects of each alternative means and location;
- c. Identify the preferred means and location and provide rationale for selection; and,
- d. Provide reasons for the rejection of alternative sites.

Include information from previous Project-related studies describing alternate locations that were considered, including the expansion of existing sites, reasons for rejection, and reasons supporting the proposed site as the preferred location.

Alternative locations and expansion should be clearly outlined on maps of a suitable scale (i.e. 1:50,000, 1:25,000, plus GIS compatible geospatial data) and aerial imagery.

6. POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND MITIGATION:

Provide detailed information regarding the potential effects of the Project on the environment and the proposed measures to mitigate potential adverse environmental effects. This section should include, but is not limited to the following:

- a. Identification of how the Project will avoid and/or manage (when avoidance is not feasible) any overlap of the trail with TI property, including rights-of-way and other land ownership/use, such as municipal development plans, LSDs, private lands, the Crown Land Wind Land Reserve Order, the Arches Provincial Park, PPWSAs, etc., and provide mitigation measures to address potential land use conflicts.
- b. Acknowledgement that the proposed Project will comply with TI's requirements, including the following:
 1. TI's legislation, specifications and policies, including the **Works, Services and Transportation Act**, the Building Near Highways Regulations as well as TI's access policy.
 2. Commitment that the proposed Project must comply with the Building Near Highways Regulations, specifically, Section 3(c) of the Regulations which states that "A person shall not erect, repair, alter or structurally improve a fence, building or other structure, nor shall he or she plant trees, shrubs or hedges without the prior permission of the minister within (c) 20 metres from the centreline of the proposed or existing highway (Route 430) described in Schedule C of the Building Near Highways Regulations.
 3. Acknowledgement that any requests for access (temporary or permanent) to TI's roadways would have to be submitted

- individually for consideration. Approved access locations would be subject to the formal application process and any subsequent fees required.
4. A commitment that the development shall not utilize TI roadway infrastructure as part of the trail routing including shoulders, bridges, etc. and should not be located in the road right of way as prescribed in the Building Near Highways Regulations, unless otherwise approved by TI.
 5. A commitment that the development/construction shall not negatively affect TI roadway maintenance and operations including roadside drainage and culvert systems.
 6. A commitment that any design submission to TI would have to be sealed by a Professional Engineer licensed to practice in the province.
- c. Identification of potential effects of the environment on the Project, such as flooding, erosion and storm surges and measures that will be implemented to mitigate effects of the gateway and trail on flooding near Parson's Pond.
 - d. Demonstration of how the Project will address concerns related to the proximity of existing quarry operations in close proximity to the trail (e.g., blasting, dust, noise, etc.).
 - e. A commitment for completion of a Short-eared Owl survey, to be conducted by a qualified independent third party, during the nesting season and prior to any ground disturbance for trail construction and future ongoing maintenance.
 - f. Include the following plans in the body of the EPR or as Appendices:
 1. Plans to engage the Wildlife and the Crown Lands Divisions of FFA, and TI in discussions on the design of future phases of the Great Coastal Trail.
 2. A Public Engagement Plan that provides readily accessible opportunities for interested members of the public (e.g., local residents, fish harvesters, business owners, etc.) to meet with the Proponent by telephone, virtually, or at a place adjacent to or in the geographical area of the Project to discuss Project information and share related concerns as they arise. The Proponent will commit to complaints resolution in the Public Engagement Plan.
 3. A Mitigation Plan that includes appropriate preventative measures to minimize the risk of adverse effects on migratory birds (e.g., Bank Swallow) and their habitats.
 4. An Environmental Protection Plan that describes measures that will be undertaken to:
 - i. Prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species into waters from machinery and equipment working in/near water;
 - ii. Maintain a minimum 30-metre undisturbed buffer along all waterbodies (except coastline and water crossings) and

- wetlands (including bogs and marshes) that appear on 1:50,000 National Topographical Survey maps for any proposed land clearing and infilling activities;
- iii. Avoid valued and critical environmental components, including wildlife, wildlife habitat, species at risk, and dunes along the trail;
 - iv. Avoid Bank Swallow nesting colonies and critical habitat along/near the trail, particularly near areas with known breeding colonies at Parson's Pond and Portland Creek;
 - v. Protect Parson's Pond estuary (a scheduled salmon river) and local fishing stages located near or adjacent to the trail;
5. A Trail Management Plan that describes measures that will be undertaken to:
 - i. Prohibit and prevent motorized vehicle access on the trail;
 - ii. Keep hikers on the trail and prevent people from encroaching/camping on private/restricted property; and
 - iii. Monitor and maintain trail construction and operation by implementing a Trail Monitoring and Maintenance Program that commits to overseeing appropriate trail construction, maintenance and use;
 6. A Waste Management Plan for the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases of the Project;
 7. A Contingency Plan that considers potential accidents and malfunctions and site-specific conditions and sensitivities, and facilitates a quick and effective response; and
 8. A Historic Resources Impact Assessment.

7. DECOMMISSIONING AND REHABILITATION:

Describe decommissioning and rehabilitation plans for the Project, assuming the eventual need to rehabilitate the entire or portions of the Project footprint. Include details on the materials that will be used and plans for the progressive rehabilitation of the trail. Use a map to depict the phases of progressive rehabilitation and the expected timing for each phase of development.

Describe efforts to reduce the introduction of aquatic invasive species and to rehabilitate the area in a timely manner.

8. PROJECT- RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Provide a bibliography of all Project-related documents already generated by or for the Proponent (e.g., engineering design, harbour study as mentioned in the registration document, etc.).

9. APPROVAL OF THE UNDERTAKING:

List the main permits, licences, approvals, and other forms of authorization required for the undertaking, together with the names of the authorities responsible for issuing them (e.g., federal government department, provincial government department, municipal council, etc.).

You are required to submit one paper copy and an electronic version of the EPR, for posting to the Environmental Assessment Division's website, together with a cover letter to the following address:

Minister
Environment and Climate Change
PO Box 8700
St. John's NL A1B 4J6

Attention: Joanne Sweeney
Director of Environmental Assessment Division