

Environment, Conservation and Climate Change

September 15, 2026

Environmental Assessment Bulletin

The Honourable Andrea Barbour, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Climate Change, has announced the following relative to Environmental Assessment - Part 10 - of the **Environmental Protection Act**.

Undertaking Registered:

Port aux Basques Navigation Improvement Project

(Reg. 2434)

Proponent: Marine Atlantic Inc.

The proponent is proposing to undertake navigation improvements in Port aux Basques Harbour to support Marine Atlantic ferry operations. The proposed improvements are intended to enhance access to berths within the harbour by addressing existing navigational constraints that affect docking and undocking operations, particularly during adverse weather conditions.

The primary component of the project involves the removal of Vardy's Rock (also known as Vardy's Island) to improve navigability. Additional work includes widening and deepening the approach channel and turning basin through the removal of rock south and southwest of Vardy's Rock, as well as a portion of Baldwin Rock. Dredged rock would be reused to repair and upgrade the existing Pikes Island Breakwater and create an infill area at Pikes Island, which may support the development of new fish habitat in the outer harbour. Construction is anticipated to take approximately 12 months and is not expected to disrupt existing ferry operations.

A description of the project can be found on the Department of Environment, Conservation and Climate Change website at: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/eccc/env-assessment/projects-list/>.

The undertaking was registered on September 15, 2026. The deadline for public comment is October 20, 2026, and the minister's decision is due by October 30, 2026.

Learn more

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Environmental assessment information is available at:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/env-assessment/>

https://www.gov.nl.ca/eccc/files/EA-Guide-to-the-Process_Mar-2026.pdf

Follow us on X: [@GovNL](#) and [@ECCC GovNL](#)

Project comments may be sent to: EAProjectComments@gov.nl.ca.

Anyone submitting comments on a project under environmental assessment should notify the Department of Environment, Conservation and Climate Change if they DO NOT wish to have their comments shared with the project proponent.

Media contact

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