

January 14, 2021

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submitted electronically via the ERO

Re: ERO 019-2684: Proposed amendments to the Far North Act, 2010

Amy;

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input and advice on the proposed amendments to the *Far North Act*. Unfortunately, the Act has not resulted in new energy partnerships between Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and First Nations. As such, OPG is supportive of the proposal's objectives to better reflect local, Indigenous and provincial priorities, including promoting economic growth in the Far North.

We are committed to building and maintaining long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous communities near our current and future operations. Over the past 15 years, OPG has developed a successful track record of developing projects in collaboration and partnership with Indigenous communities, predominantly in northern Ontario. OPG has four commercial equity partnerships with Indigenous communities related to new generation and redevelopment. Moreover, as a result of these partnerships, OPG's First Nation partners will benefit from long term revenues that will continue to support community priorities and future investments. We know that OPG's approach can work in the Far North as well.

In the Far North, OPG has assessed opportunities associated with undeveloped hydro potential, including sites on the Moose River Basin, Albany River and Attawapiskat River. We will continue to monitor political, economic, regulatory and infrastructure developments in these areas to determine whether there are sufficient catalysts to pursue any of these opportunities.

OPG would like MNRF to consider how amendments to the Act can facilitate the use of innovative technologies in the Far North. Recently, OPG has taken significant steps to advance small modular reactor (SMR) opportunities for Canada. These first-of-a-kind projects are almost the keystones in the federal SMR Action Plan and support the Premiers' 2019 Memorandum of Understanding on SMRs. This includes the development of a Feasibility Study to demonstrate the importance and value of SMRs across Canada. On micro SMRs, which are well suited for remote applications in the Far North, OPG leads industry through our joint venture partnership on the Global First Power Micro Modular Reactor™ Project at Canadian Nuclear Laboratories' Chalk River site. Demonstrating commercial viability on micro SMRs is the first step to being able to have meaningful

conversations with First Nations and prospective mining companies who are looking for safe, sustainable and reliable power to facilitate further economic and community growth in the Far North.

OPG endorses the comments already provided by the Ontario Waterpower Association on the proposal. Additional suggestions are as follows.

General:

- The ERO proposal describes a desired outcome to improve Ontario's competitiveness in the natural resource sector while maintaining critical cultural and environmental protections. OPG requests that the "energy sector" be specifically considered and named in the messaging regarding the amendments to the Act.
- Regarding the proposed changes to section 5 protection objectives of the Act, OPG requests that the term 'ecological systems' be defined (eg in Section 2 Definitions), or alternatively, to ensure that it will be applied consistently with definitions used in other environment legislation that would apply to energy developments in the Far North.
- OPG would like to see the Act amended to provide mechanisms to address uncertainties associated with linear facilities (eg temporary construction access roads and transmission facilities) that span the traditional territory of multiple First Nations. New energy developments cannot proceed without greater certainty on this front.
- OPG supports the proposal to remove the prohibition against development in section 12 in the absence of a completed community land use plan. OPG is of the view that Ontario's existing legislative framework for energy development planning, environmental assessment and permitting requires Indigenous community participation. Furthermore, where appropriate, OPG tailors separate commercial partnership discussions with First Nation(s) to ensure their economic objectives and other priorities in relation to the project are meaningfully addressed.

In closing, OPG is looking forward to seeing how the revisions to the Act will better promote new energy developments in the Far North so that we can continue to build on the successes we have had partnering with First Nations on energy projects elsewhere in the province.

If it would be helpful to review either OPG's past experiences with hydroelectric development in northern Ontario or future opportunities in the Far North, I would be pleased to make ourselves available. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 647-554-6818 or via email at heather.brown@opg.com.

Sincerely,



Heather Brown

c: Paul Norris