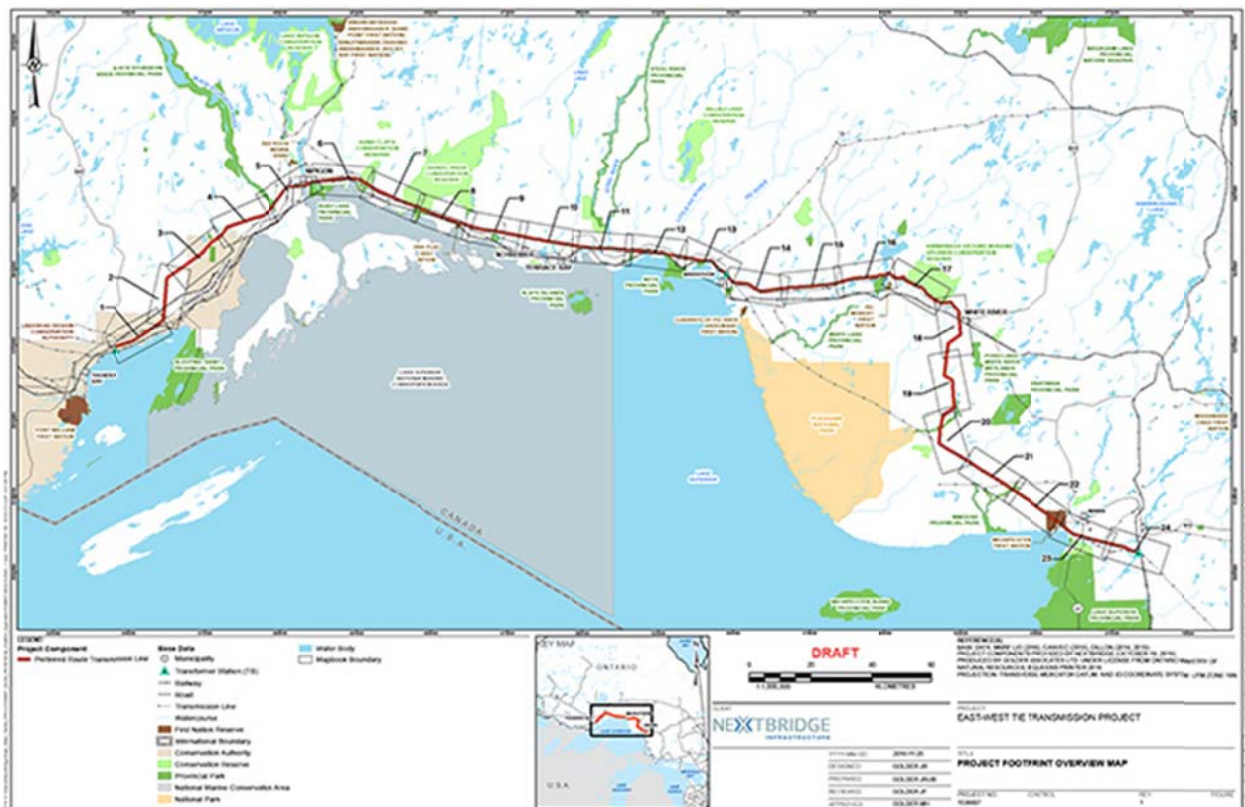


# MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO BACKGROUND

## The East West Tie Electrical Transmission Project

In 2010, in anticipation of increased mining and other industrial activities in Northwestern Ontario, the Ontario Government included, in their Long Term Energy Plan, the development of an approximately 447 kilometre (km.) transmission line north of Lake Superior. In 2013, the Ontario Energy Board selected NextBridge Infrastructure to develop and construct this transmission line.

The project, known as “East West Tie”, involves the installation of a double-circuit, 230 kilovolt (kV.) transmission line between Wawa and Thunder Bay, and the construction of a transformer station approximately mid-way, in Marathon, Ontario. While a portion of the transmission line will run parallel to the existing 230 kV. transmission corridor, sections of the line will follow other routes to avoid sensitive features crossed by the existing line.



Following the OEB's designation, Nextbridge approached the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) to consult on the project and in 2014, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with Nextbridge to enable MNO citizens in the project area to learn about the project and study any potential impacts that the project would have on the environment, Métis rights, interests and way of life. The Calliou Group (experts in Aboriginal consultation) was retained by the MNO to coordinate a Traditional Land Use Study of the project area and interviews were subsequently conducted with Métis knowledge holders.

At the time, the proposed route for the transmission line included a section through the Pukaskwa National Park. However, in June, 2015, Nextbridge was notified by Parks Canada that this would not be permitted. As such, Nextbridge explored other potential routes for the transmission line.

After the finalization of the new, preferred route for the transmission line, the MNO entered into a second agreement with NextBridge to explore the impacts of the (altered) project on Métis rights, interests and way of life.

In February 2017, the Calliou Group and the MNO's Lands, Resources and Consultations Branch held focus group sessions in Thunder Bay and Marathon, Ontario, to learn more about MNO citizens' use of the land in the project area. These focus groups were followed up with data verification meetings in March 2017. Altogether, twenty-four (24) MNO citizens attended the focus group sessions and completed the surveys for the Land Use Study Report which was submitted to NextBridge for inclusion in their Environmental Assessment of the East West Tie project.

NextBridge is planning on submitting the Environmental Assessment for the project to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change in July, 2017 for their review. The MNO will have the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Assessment before the Ministry makes a decision whether or not to approve the project.

More information about the project is available on the project website at:

[http://www.nextbridge.ca/project\\_info.htm](http://www.nextbridge.ca/project_info.htm)