

ABORIGINAL TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

FACT SHEET



The Enbridge Northern Gateway Project will cross or be adjacent to the traditional lands of over 60 Aboriginal communities. The project team has extended opportunities to these Aboriginal groups to undertake Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) studies along the proposed pipeline corridor. ATK studies will help Aboriginal groups and Enbridge gain an understanding of, and document, anticipated project effects on traditional lands, waters, resources and activities, and to identify possible mitigation strategies.

Regulatory Context

Consideration of ATK is required by the National Energy Board (NEB) as well as the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

The NEB Filing Manual provides that if “the project will be located on, or traverse, Crown land or the traditional territory, reserve land or settlement area of an Aboriginal group,” detailed information on traditional land and resource use is required, including:

- a description of current land use by Aboriginal groups for traditional purposes in the study area
- identification of potentially affected Aboriginal groups, the spatial and temporal extent of their current use, and how the Project would affect that use
- a description of the methodology used to collect traditional use information and a listing of the Aboriginal groups contacted
- evidence that the Aboriginal groups that participated in the collection of traditional use information had the opportunity to review the information collected and the proposed mitigation, including any comments from the Aboriginal participants on the information and proposed mitigation

The Joint Review Panel¹ Agreement for Northern Gateway also requires that ATK be obtained and incorporated in the project application.

ATK Program Overview

The ATK program is an important component of Northern Gateway’s overall Aboriginal engagement activities. The ATK program focus has been on Aboriginal groups with communities within 80 km of the proposed right-of-way (ROW), as well as Coastal Aboriginal groups with interests in the area of the Kitimat Terminal and the confined channel assessment area.

Each aboriginal group has the option of preparing an independent community report or working collaboratively with Northern Gateway’s ATK team. Depending on the Aboriginal group and its familiarity with ATK studies, Northern Gateway offers training and support, as required.

¹ The Joint Review Panel is a three member panel appointed by the Minister of the Environment and the National Energy Board to lead the public review of the Project.

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The ATK community reports serve to:

- provide the Aboriginal group's perspective of potential effects of the Project on traditional lands and activities (including cultural, social and economic effects)
- provide information about the potential effects of the Project, including biophysical, cultural and socio-economic
- provide mitigation recommendations for potential effects on traditional uses
- provide information to aid in project planning and design, and reduce potential conflict between an Aboriginal community's goals, use and well-being, and development plans for the Project
- support long-term relationship building between Northern Gateway and Aboriginal communities potentially affected by the Project
- contribute to building ATK program capacity within Aboriginal communities

ATK Program Status

Northern Gateway's ATK program stages along the proposed corridor, ranges from initial engagement and discussions about program scope to ATK study completion and release of results to Northern Gateway. Most of the more than 60 Aboriginal groups identified for engagement have been offered the opportunity to participate in the ATK program. Of the more than 60 Aboriginal communities and groups in proximity to the pipeline corridor, more than half are currently involved in scoping or undertaking a study, or have completed an ATK community report for the Project. As of August 2010, 18 ATK studies were complete and another 15 were underway.

Overall Findings

ATK community reports available to date indicate the following potential project effects:

- potential economic opportunities associated with the Project
- disturbance to specific traditional use sites and areas along the right-of-way, including harvesting areas for food, ceremonies and traditional activities
- potential effects of spills on the environment and on traditional use areas
- access management (providing continued access to Aboriginal community members while preventing increased access to recreational users)
- potential effects on key ecological features, such as wetlands, lakes and streams and the associated effects on wildlife and fish habitat and species
- potential effects on vegetation (disturbance of medicinal plants, ROW clearing, maintenance and use of herbicides, reclamation practices)