



Aamjiwnaang First Nation **Environment Committee**

Comments and Concerns Regarding Solar Projects

Aamjiwnaang First Nation (AFN) has numerous concerns involving solar farms or solar projects that have been proposed by proponents that would be located within Aamjiwnaang's Traditional Territory. Since this project is one that falls within this category, AFN submits the following for consideration. AFN would like to review the reports or studies related to this project. Aamjiwnaang First Nation reserves the right to submit further comments and concerns as they may relate to this project.

There are concerns around earthworms both during the construction phase and post construction operation as the earthworms may be affected by the transmission of power from the photovoltaic cells to the transformer stations when they are operating. Although the current is not expected to be a large amount, there will be numerous underground lines involved in the transmission phase. Snakes in the affected area may also be adversely affected by both of these occurrences. These are concerns both pre- and post-construction in these areas as well as when solar farms are in operation. There are snakes of the Federal and Ontario Species At Risk listings that may be located in or near the proposed area. AFN would like to ensure precautions are taken to have these habitats remain undisturbed.

There are also concerns with the areas close to the construction area and under the completed area where the cells will be located with regards to vegetation. Nutrient builders are present in the soil to provide nutrients in order for plants and crops to flourish. With the cells blocking most of the direct sunlight for the plants for portions of the daylight hours, the concerns relate to affecting the plants adversely. AFN feels this should be addressed before the construction begins. This would include any reports or studies that have been completed to address this situation.

Normal animal corridors would be affected both construction and operational phases. As an example, any paths presently followed by deer would likely change due to the solar farms construction and the operation. The change in these paths may affect the hunting rights that the First Nations peoples exercise in or near the affected areas.

Plants and wetland areas near the project sites should be appropriately monitored and maintained where ever possible. The locations and underground cable locations are designated away from residential areas and roadways but consideration needs to be given to the pre-construction condition of the proposed areas natural environment. AFN would like to see any changes to the affected areas minimized and certainly restored as close to the original pre-construction condition.

Magnetic fields should be addressed as they may affect both plant life and the animals and birds within the proposed project location. Studies should be conducted to determine if these would be affected adversely as this may disturb their natural environment. These changes could affect the growth or potential growth of plants as well as patterns of animals that would possibly be disturbed by the changes caused by the solar farm.