

Annex A2-4:
Presentation – Berens River First Nation
Community Meeting (Round 4)



EAST SIDE TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE

Berens River to Poplar River FN Road Network



The Environmental Assessment

**Presentation to
Berens River First Nation**

April 30, 2015

Why are we here?

We are here today to:

- Provide information about the road project
- Review the options that have been considered
- Hear from you about what you value, so that it can be considered in the environmental assessment (EA) and addressed in the project design.



EAST SIDE TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE

- Provide alternative transportation to the increasingly unreliable winter road network
- Reduce transportation costs for goods and services
- Improve linkages between isolated and remote communities
- Enhance access to emergency, health & social services
- Construction employment, training & economic opportunities
- Enhanced opportunities for local sustainable economic development



1. Construction of an all-season road from Provincial Road PR 304 to Berens River First Nation

Status: The project has received environmental authorizations and approvals from federal and provincial regulators and construction is underway on the 156 km all-season road from PR 304 to Berens River First Nation.

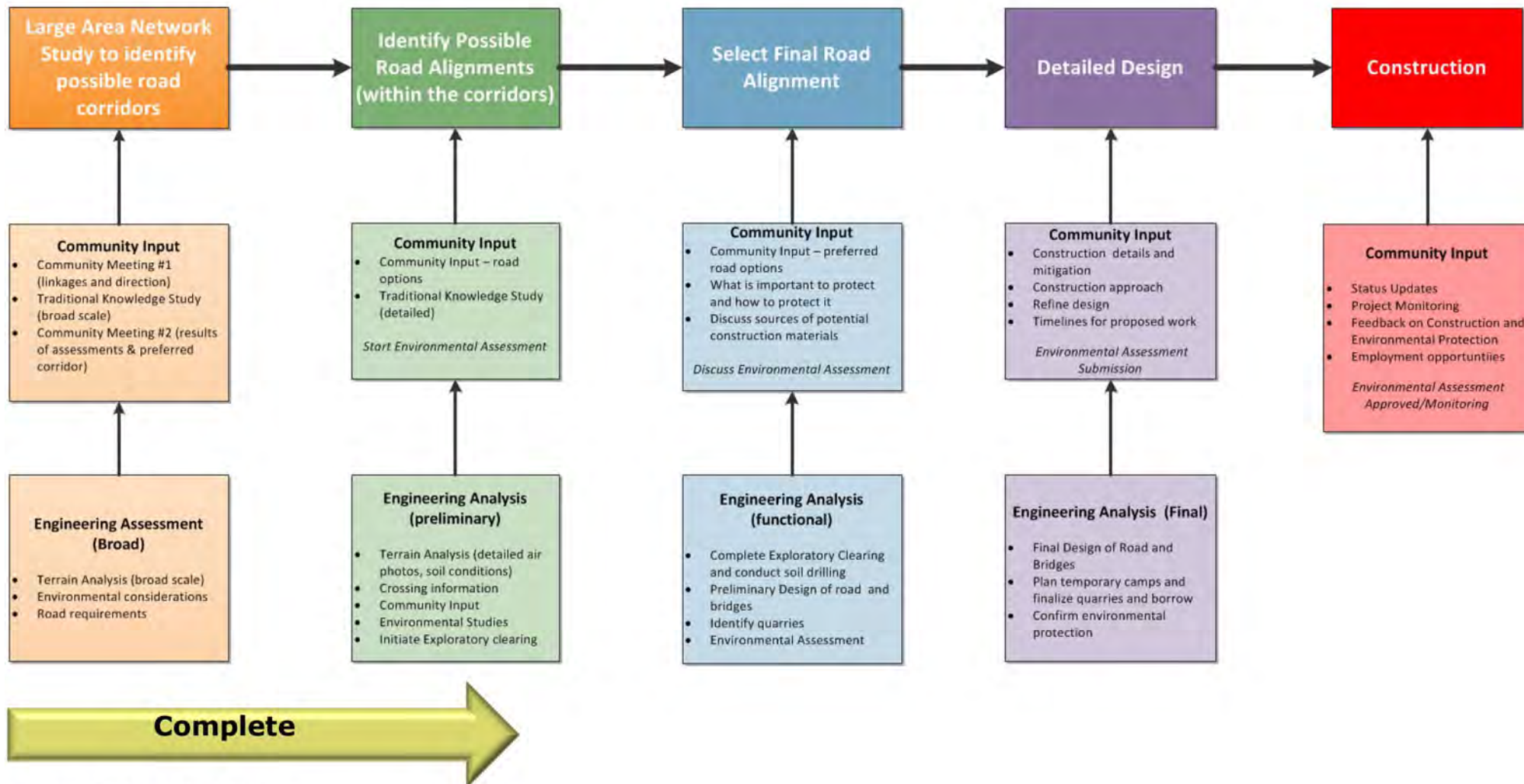
2. East Side Large Area Transportation Network Study

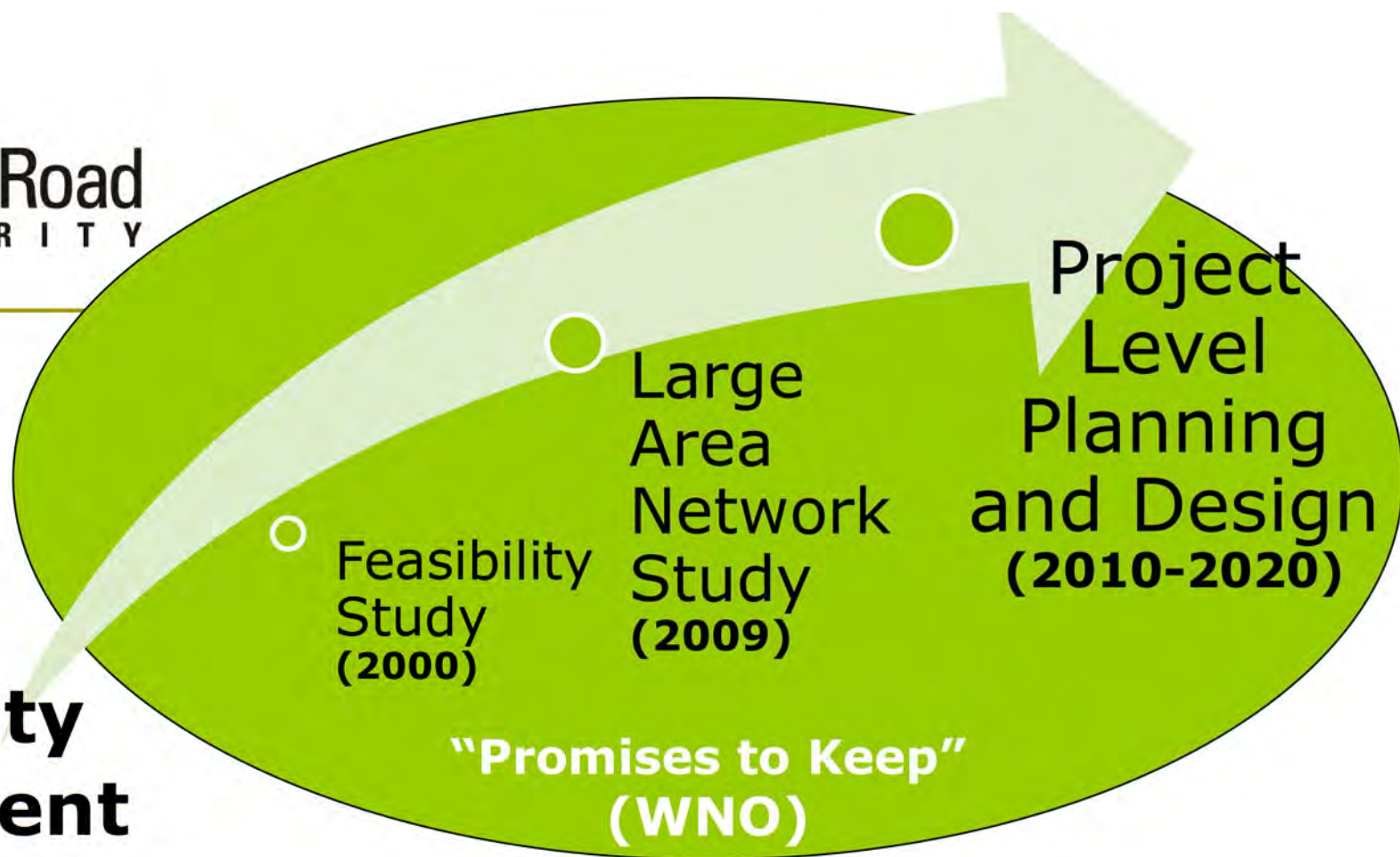
Status: Interim winter road enhancements are underway with planning and environmental assessments to support the construction of pioneer and all season roads occurring in prioritized locations.

3. Community Economic Development

Status: Community benefits agreements are in place with 13 east side communities including Poplar River and Berens River.

Steps to Select, Design & Construct an All Season Road





Community Engagement

- Community input is key to developing a good project
- ESRA will meet and discuss the project:
 - environmental site conditions;
 - potential impacts;
 - measures to avoid, reduce or eliminate impacts; and
 - construction employment and training.

Prior Community Discussions & Agreements

- Since 2008, ESRA has met with the Berens River community and leadership to discuss the project and select the best road location
 - Community Meetings
 - May 5, 2009
 - July 6, 2009
 - June 13, 2010
 - Elders Meeting
 - April 22, 2015
 - Annual project update posters in the community



Prior Community Discussions & Agreements

- ❑ Past discussions resulted in changes in the potential route away from sensitive areas, based on community concerns
- ❑ Memorandum of Understanding Signed June 2, 2009
- ❑ Community Benefits Agreement Signed August 19, 2009 and July 25, 2013



Description of Project

A) 94 km of All Season Road joining
Poplar River to Berens River

Includes:

4 major water crossings:

- Leaf River
- North Etomami River
- Etomami River
- Berens River

6 possible minor crossings or
culverts, and

Equalization culverts



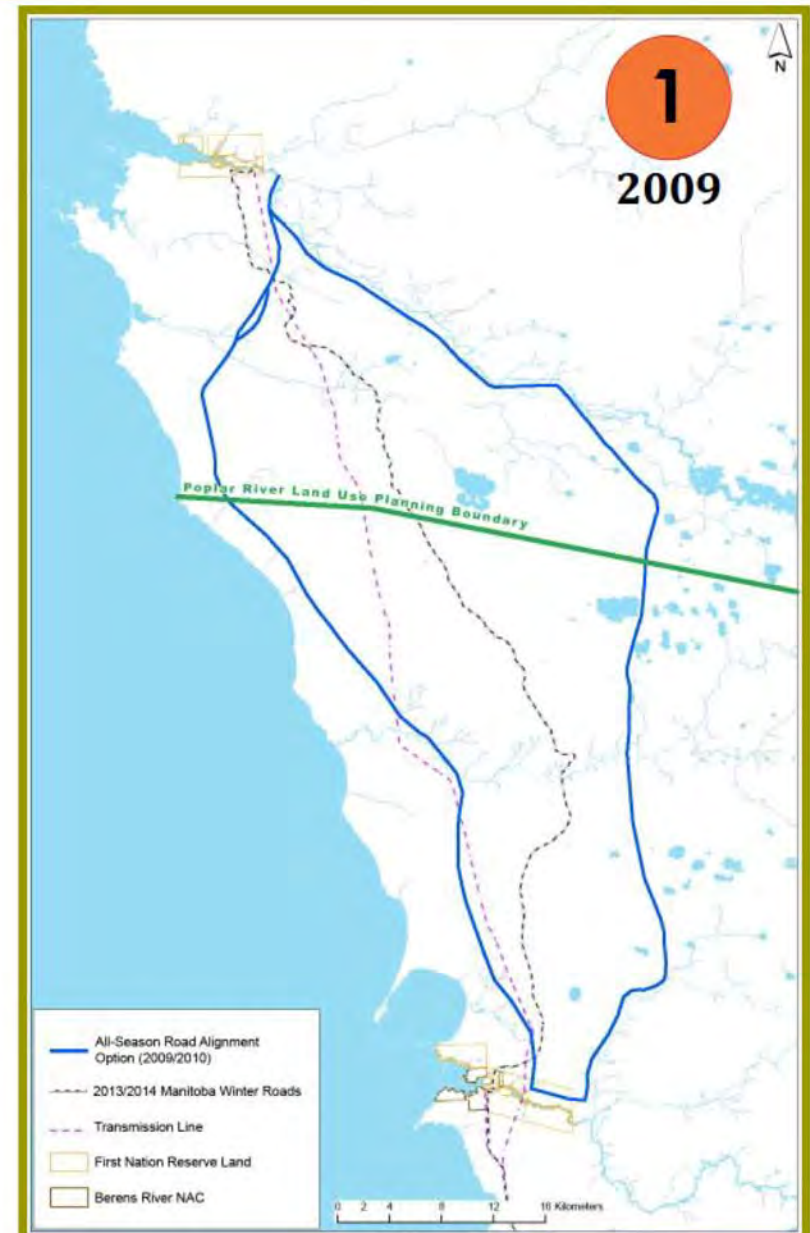
Road Route Refinements (overall)

- Original route concept has been refined several times based on:
 - community feedback and knowledge of the land
 - results of traditional knowledge, archeology, soils and wildlife investigations



Evolution of Road Route Refinements

- Two route options originally identified –
 1. Coastal Route
 2. Inland Route
- Considered topographic, physiographic, geological, social-economic and natural environmental information
- Moved route from muskeg areas near Lake Winnipeg further inland to suitable terrain for constructability



Evolution of Road Route Refinements

- Moved route from muskeg areas near Lake Winnipeg further inland for constructability
- Moved portion of route to west away from Poplar River traditional use areas



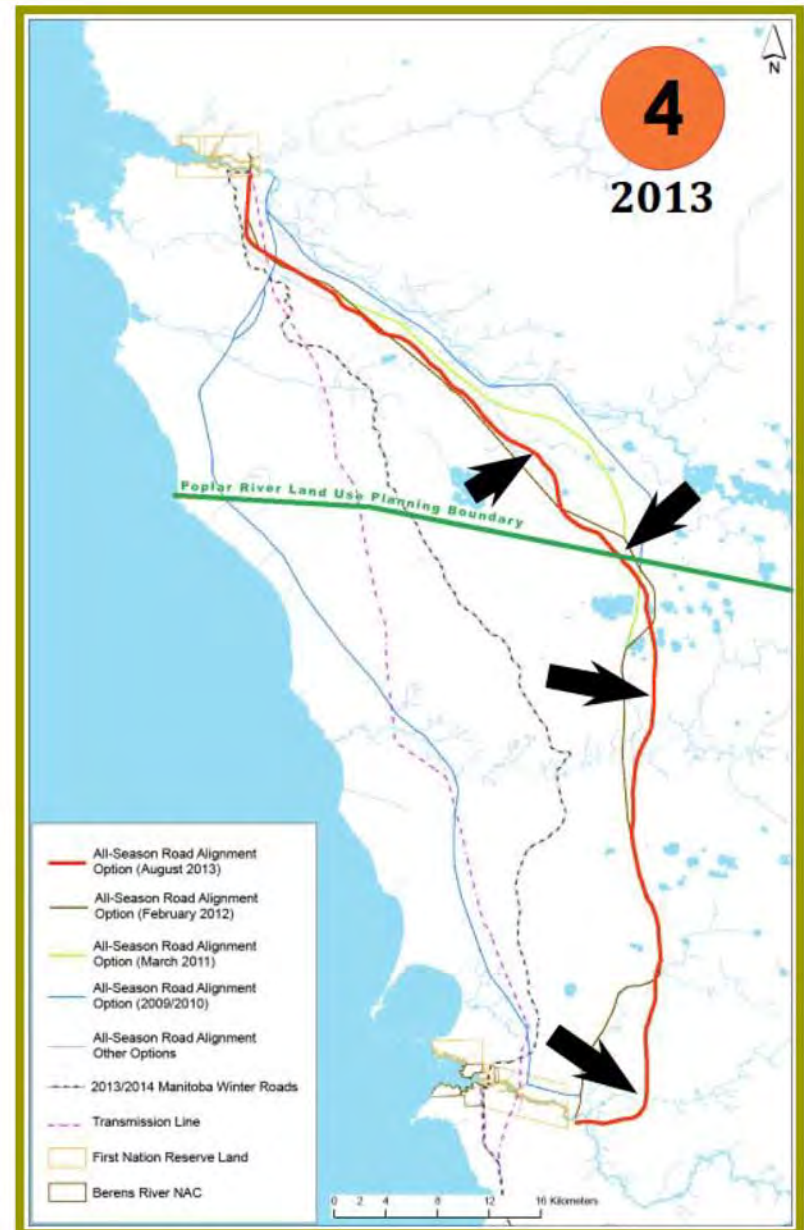
Evolution of Road Route Refinements

- ❑ Moved route from muskeg areas near Lake Winnipeg further inland for constructability
- ❑ Moved portion of route to west away from Poplar River traditional use areas
- ❑ **Moved route further to the west to avoid sensitive sites**



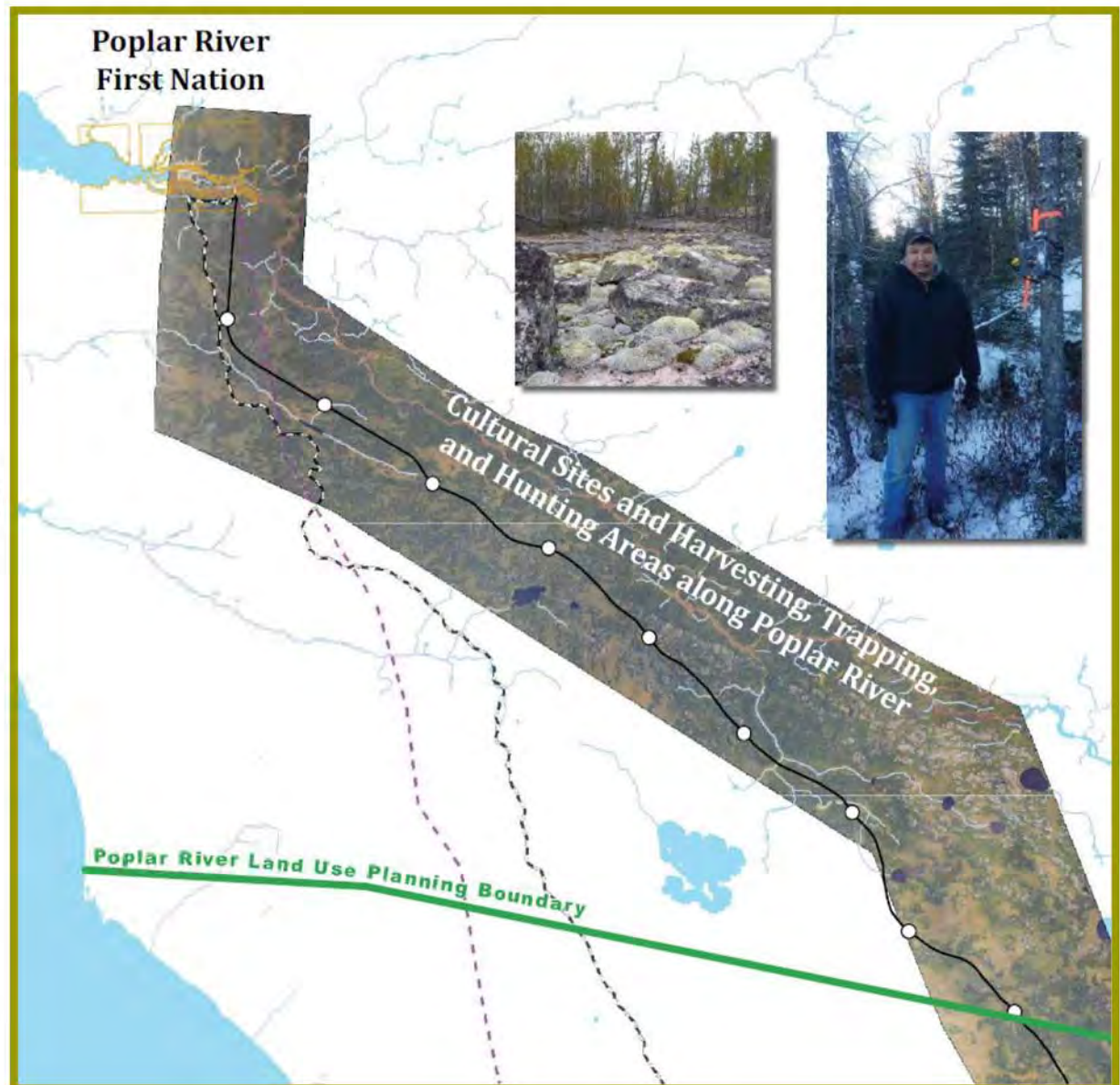
Evolution of Road Route Refinements

- ❑ Moved route from muskeg areas near Lake Winnipeg further inland for constructability
- ❑ Moved portion of route to west away from Poplar River traditional use areas
- ❑ Moved route further to the west to avoid sensitive sites
- ❑ **Moved portion of route to east away from sensitive habitat and traditional use areas near Etomami River**



Summary of Road Route Refinements – Poplar River

- Moved portion of route west to avoid Poplar River
 - Harvested plants
 - Cultural /sacred sites
 - Traditional land use
- Moved portion of route further west to avoid sensitive sites identified during baseline studies and discussions with Elders
- Avoids muskeg and wetlands along shoreline route and winter road



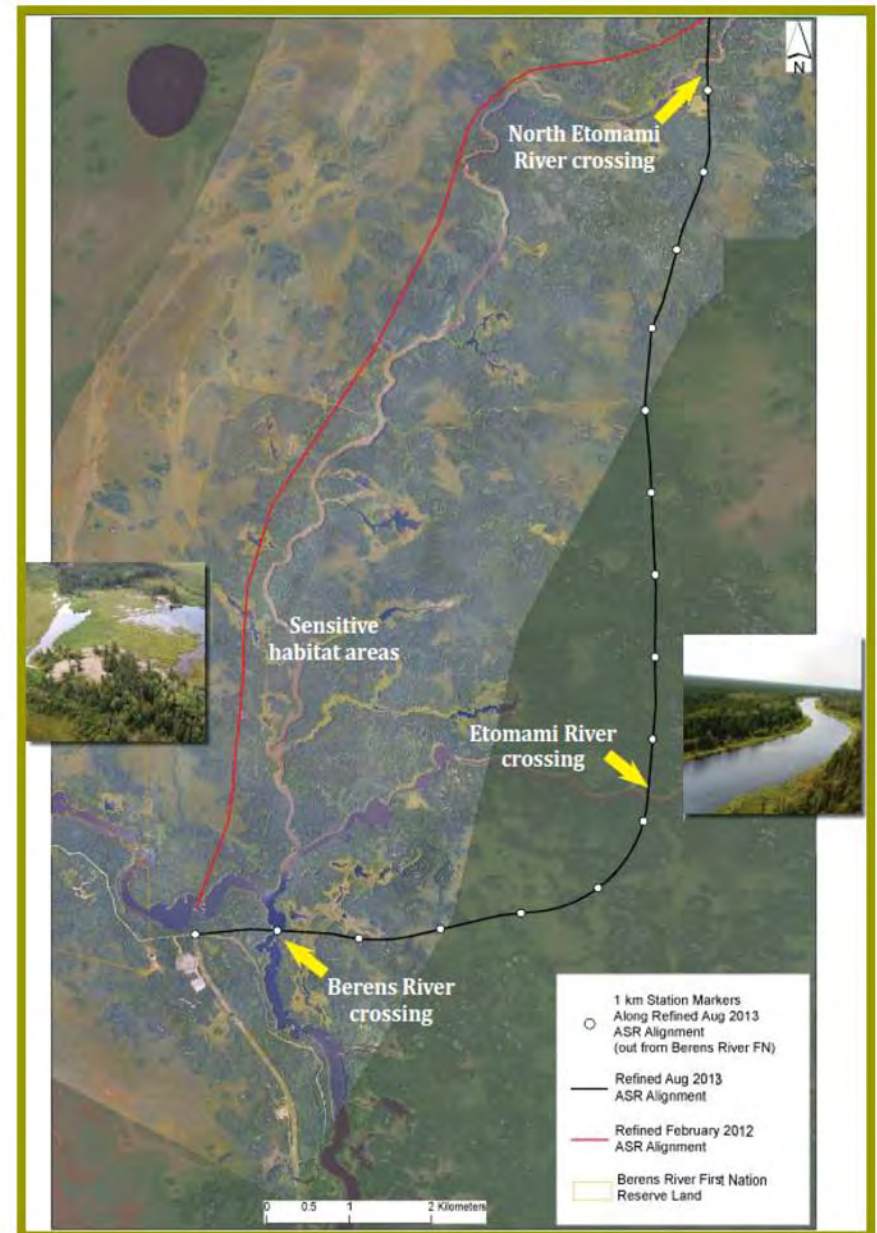
Summary of Road Route Refinements - Berens River

- Realigned road to avoid:
 - Habitat
 - Traditional land use areas

- Moved portion of route further east to avoid Etomami valley

- Requires additional river crossing sites

- Avoids muskeg and wetlands along shoreline route and winter road

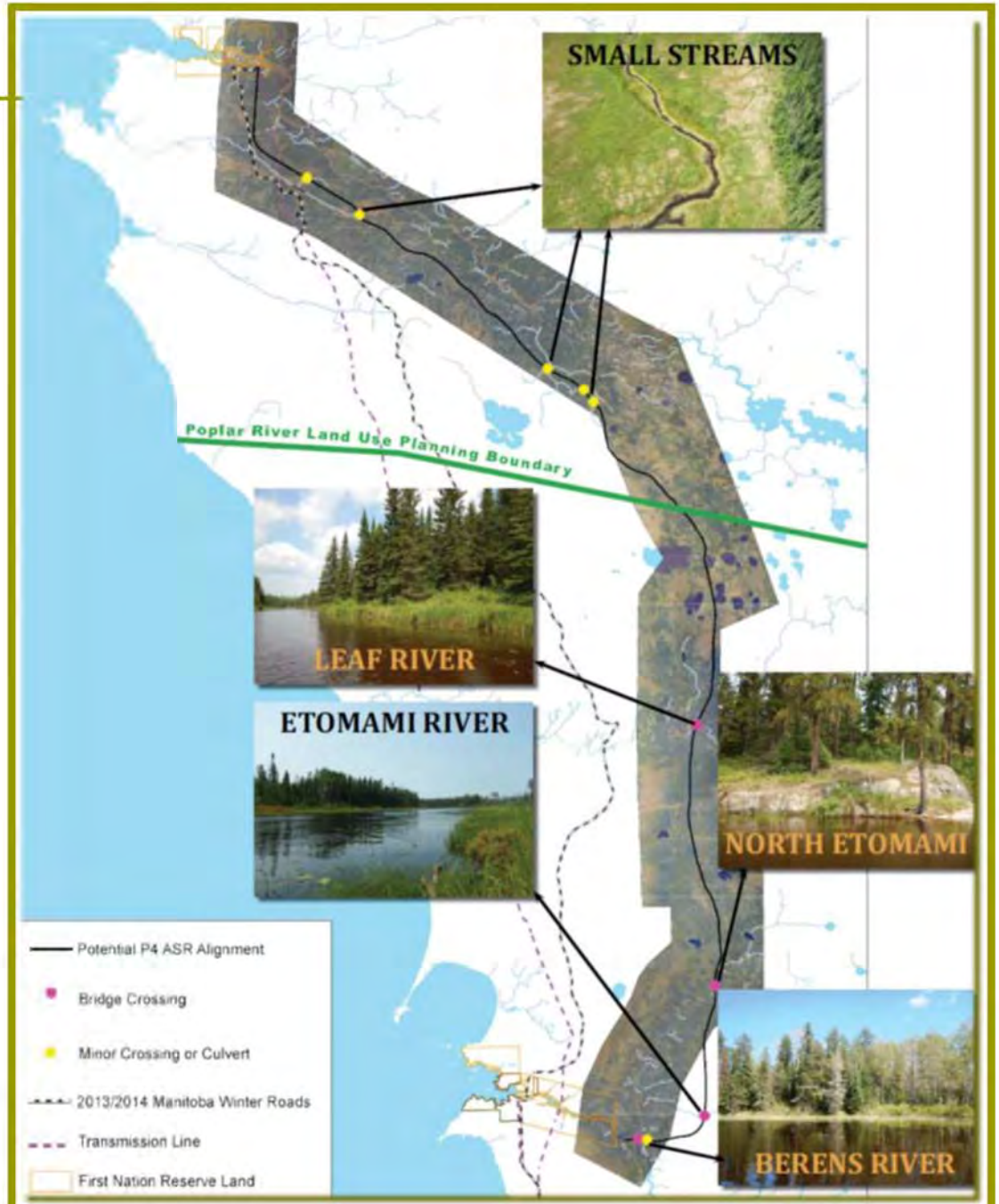


River Crossings

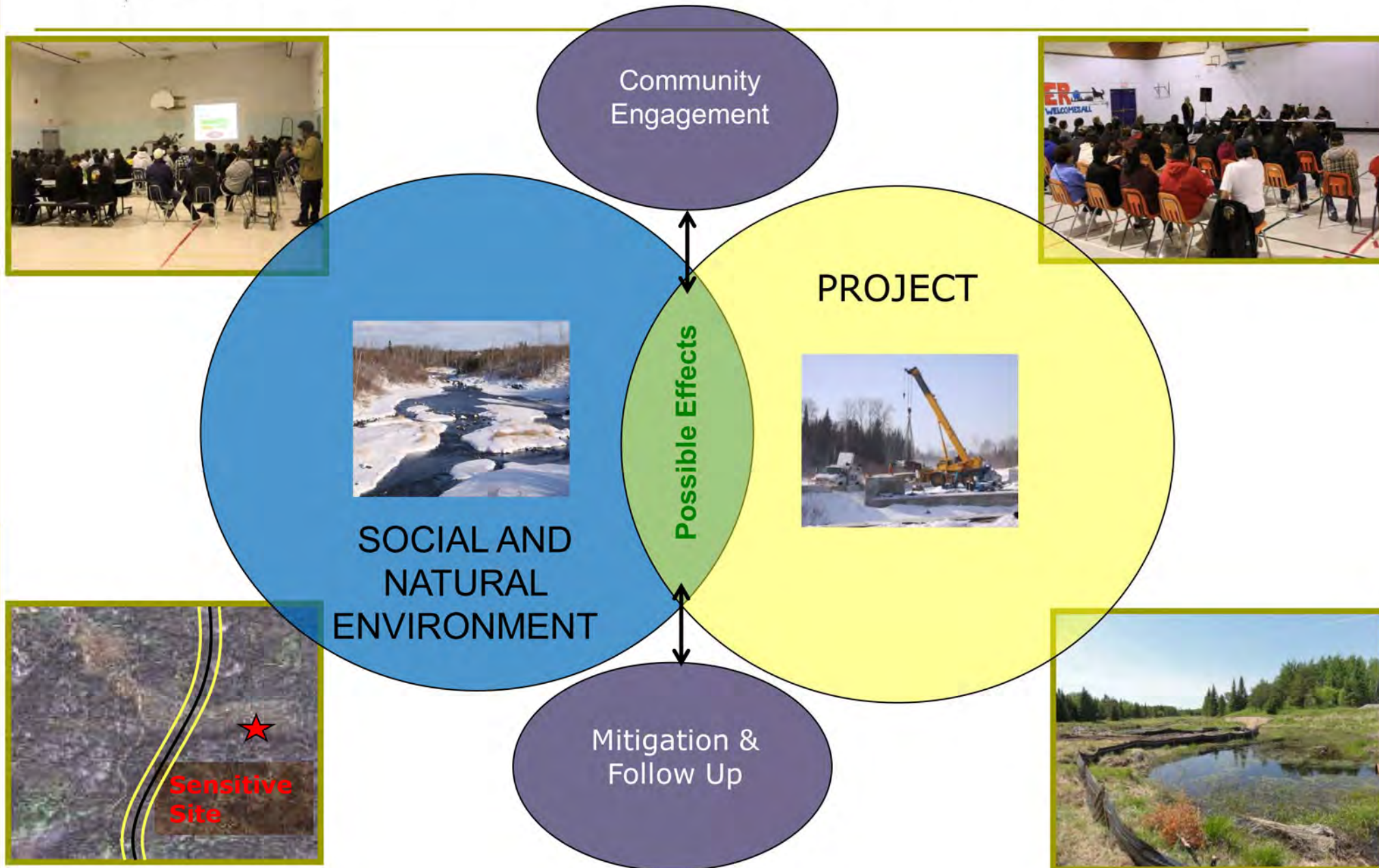
- Revised route will require additional river crossing sites
 - More crossings, but away from sensitive community areas

- Four bridge crossings:
 - Berens River
 - Etomami River
 - North Etomami River
 - Leaf River

- Six minor crossings or culverts

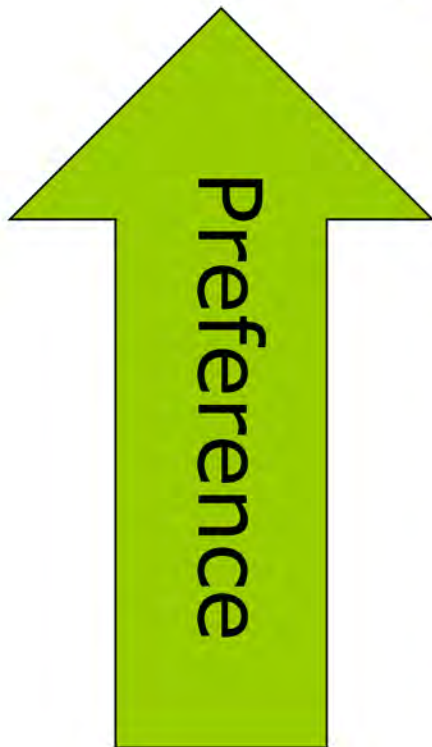


What is Environmental Impact Assessment?



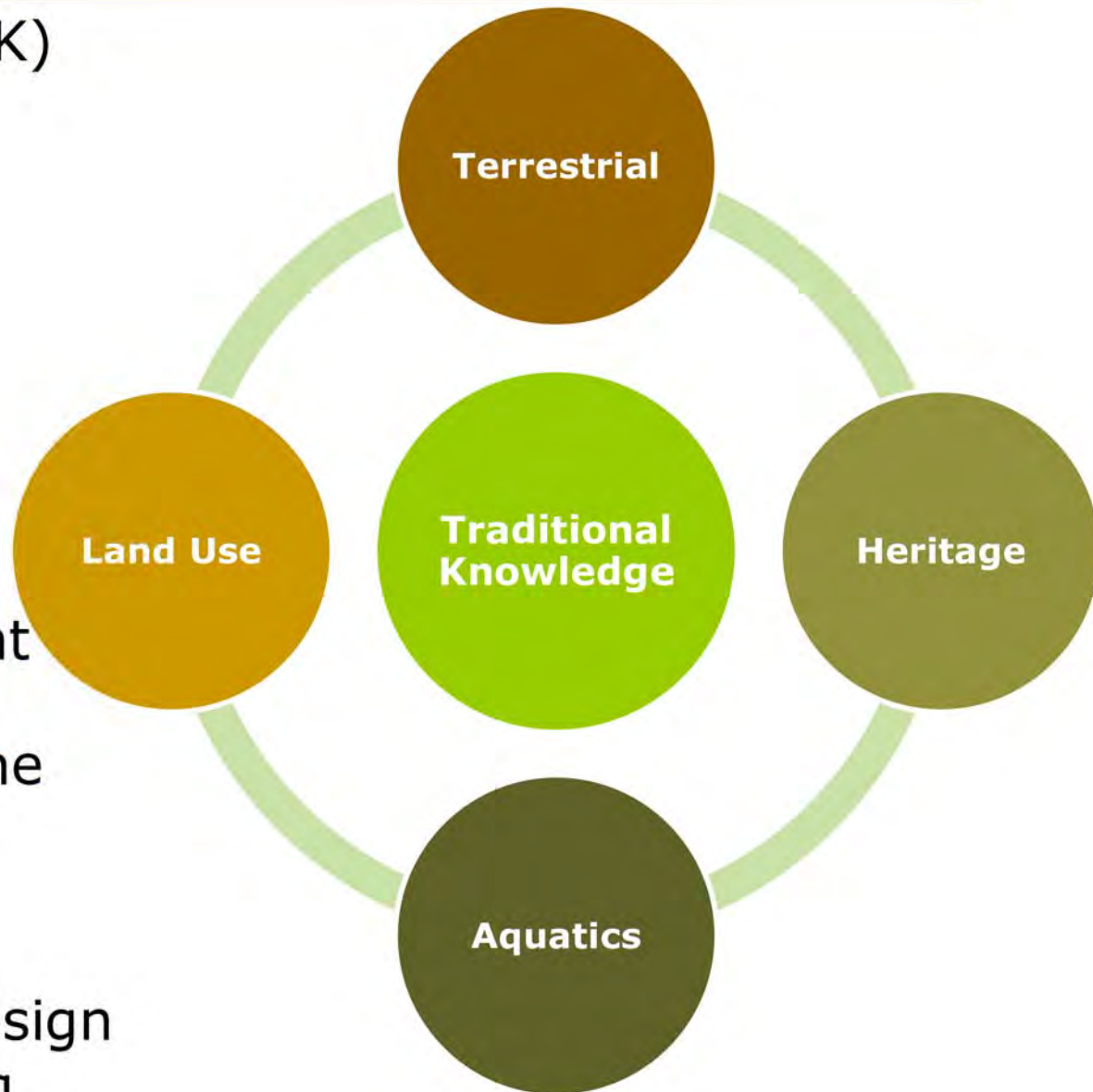
What is Environmental Impact Assessment?

- "Spectrum of Preference":
 - **Avoid**
 - **Minimize**
 - **Restore**
 - **Reduce or Eliminate**
 - **Offset**
 - **Monitor**



Baseline Data

- ❑ Traditional Knowledge (TK)
- ❑ Biophysical studies to augment TK studies
 - Vegetation
 - Wildlife surveys
 - Archaeological studies
 - Fisheries and habitat
- ❑ Used to confirm alignment
- ❑ Provide information for the Environmental Impact Assessment
- ❑ Referenced for project design and construction planning

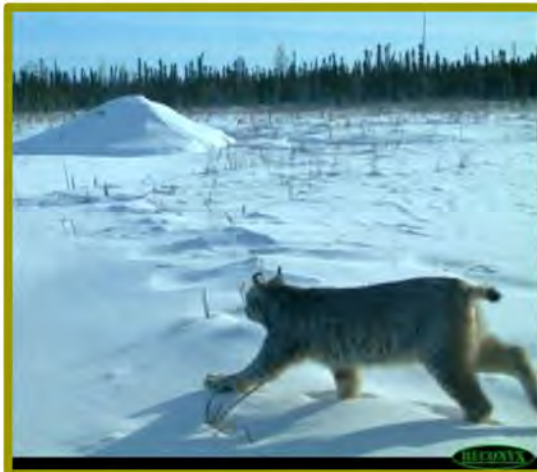


Wildlife – Trapper Program

- ❑ Program started winter 2013/2014
- ❑ 3 trappers from Poplar River
- ❑ Trappers are recording:
 - Fur harvest information
 - Weather conditions
 - Animal tracks and sign
 - Collecting samples



- ❑ Identify important habitat
- ❑ Identify presence of protected species
- ❑ Incorporate local knowledge
- ❑ Evaluate movement relative to existing roads, transmission lines, cut lines, etc.
- ❑ Predator/prey relationships
- ❑ Focus on caribou with additional species data collected, including:
 - Furbearers (trapped species)
 - Moose
 - Wolves



Wildlife – Valued Components

- **Important for local community cultural, traditional, and economic activities & values**

- **Big Game:**

- Caribou & Moose

- **Fur-bearing species:**

- Marten
- Lynx
- Wolf
- Beaver

- **Birds:**

- Raptors / Birds of Prey (eagles, osprey, hawks, owls)
- Waterfowl (geese, ducks)
- Migratory birds (e.g. songbirds)
- Game birds (grouse, partridge)



Terrestrial - Valued Components

□ Vegetation

- Aerial imagery studies to document plant communities
- Field visits to document individual species
- Species at risk, edible plants, medicines

□ Soils & Topography

- Geotechnical studies
- Evaluation of potential change



Aquatic – Valued Components

- ❑ **Important for local community cultural, traditional, and economic activities & values**
- ❑ **Aquatic habitat**
- ❑ **Harvested fish species:**
 - Walleye / Pickerel
 - Northern Pike / Jackfish
 - White Sucker
 - Lake Whitefish
 - Lake Sturgeon



Cultural - Valued Components

- Input from
 - Communities
 - Elders
 - Archeological studies

- Cultural and archeological sites

- Areas important for community health and well-being

- Harvesting of edible, medicinal, and cultural plants

- Trapping & hunting



Schedule

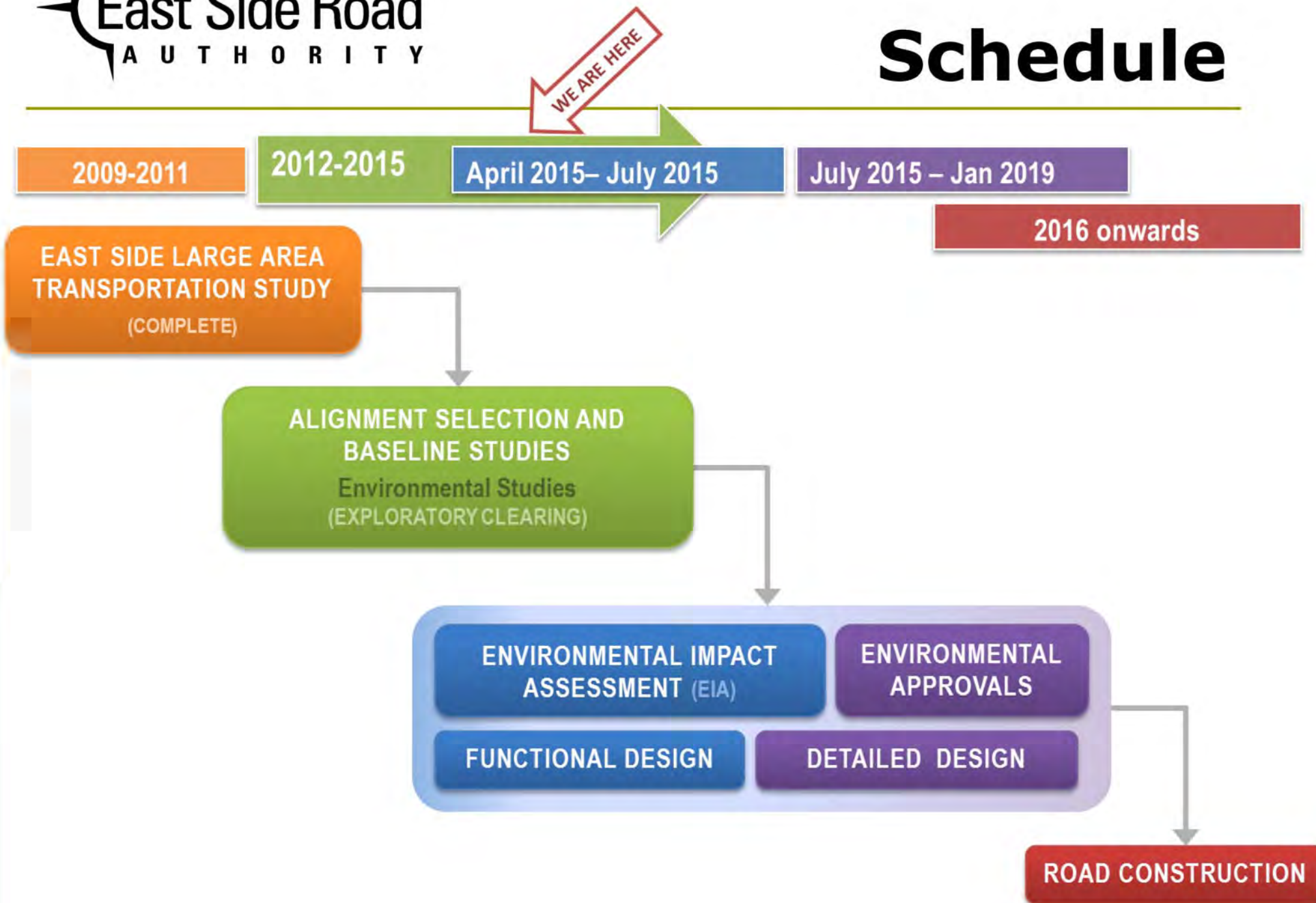


Table Talks!

- We want to hear and learn from you
- Write on boards what is important to you, and what should be considered

We will be back to meet with you to discuss the following:

- **Late Spring 2015:** To review potential effects of the project and identify how these effects may be addressed
- **Early Summer 2015:** To confirm findings of the environmental assessment with the community

Please stay and talk with us!



Next Steps

Berens River to Poplar River All Season Road Environmental Assessment
Tentative Schedule of Engagement Events



Date	Meeting / Event	Location	Purpose
23-Apr-15	In-Community #1	Poplar River	Project Information, Baseline, Valued Components
30 April (TBC)	In-Community #1	Berens River	Project Information, Baseline, Valued Components
+ 2 weeks after In-Community Meetings	Other Stakeholders #1	Winnipeg	Project Information, Baseline, Valued Components, what we heard from Berens River & Poplar River communities
Weeks of 19 May / 25 May (TBC)	In-Community #2	Berens River & Poplar River	Communicate the results of environmental studies to date, Alternative Identification, and Analysis
+ 2 weeks after In-Community Meetings	Other Stakeholders #2	Winnipeg	Communicate the results of environmental studies to date, Alternative Identification, and Analysis, what we heard from Berens River & Poplar River communities
Weeks of 15 June / 22 June (TBC)	In-Community #3	Berens River & Poplar River	Communicate the results of environmental studies, Preferred Alternative for Road Alignment, Mitigation of Potential Impacts

Thank you for your participation!

Contact Information

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