

**Annex A3-9:**  
Presentation – Poplar River First Nation  
Community Meeting (Round 5)

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# **EAST SIDE TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE**

## **Berens River to Poplar River FN Road Network**



### **The Environmental Assessment**

**Presentation to  
Poplar River First Nation**

April 23, 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.*

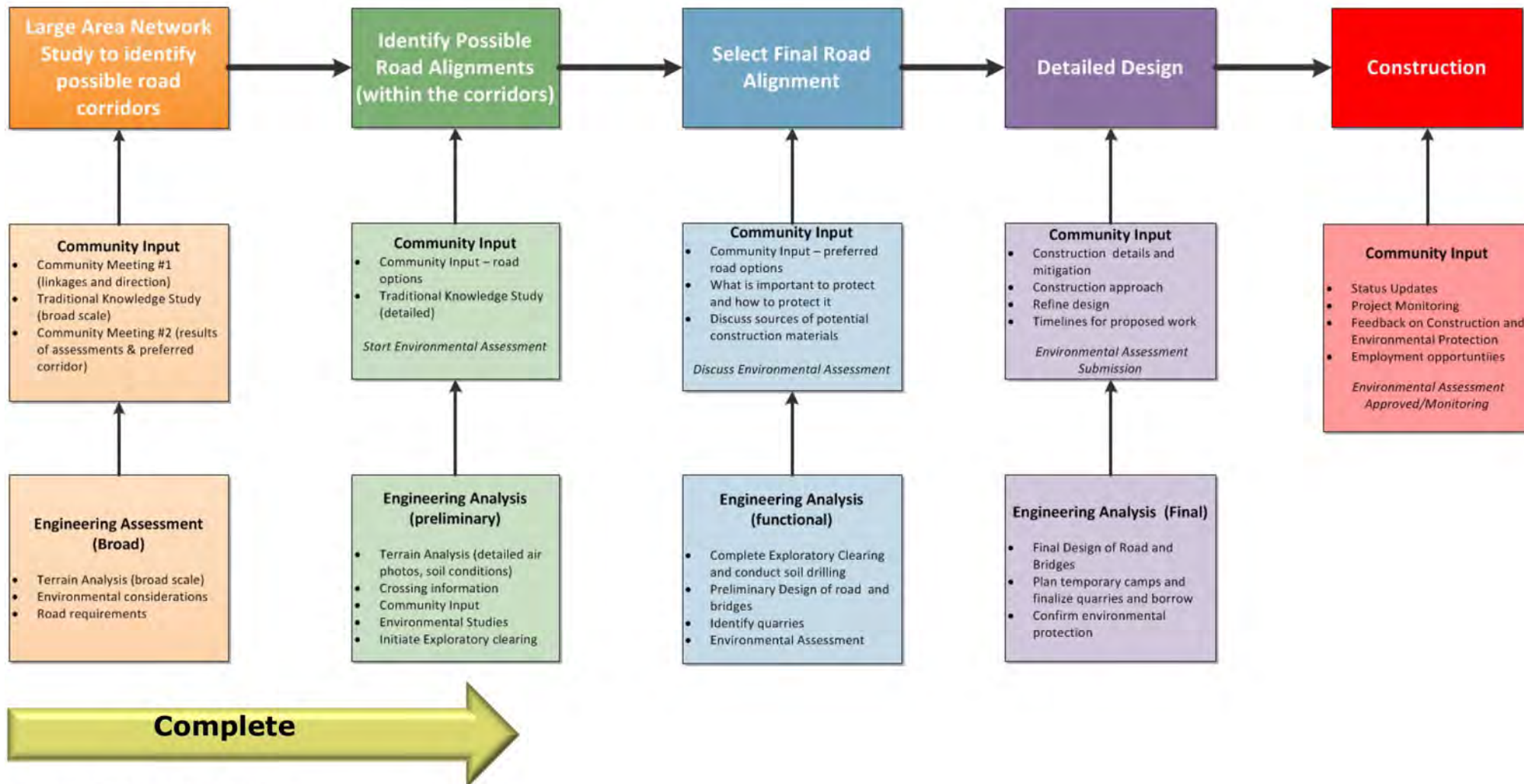
2. East Side Large Area Transportation Network Study

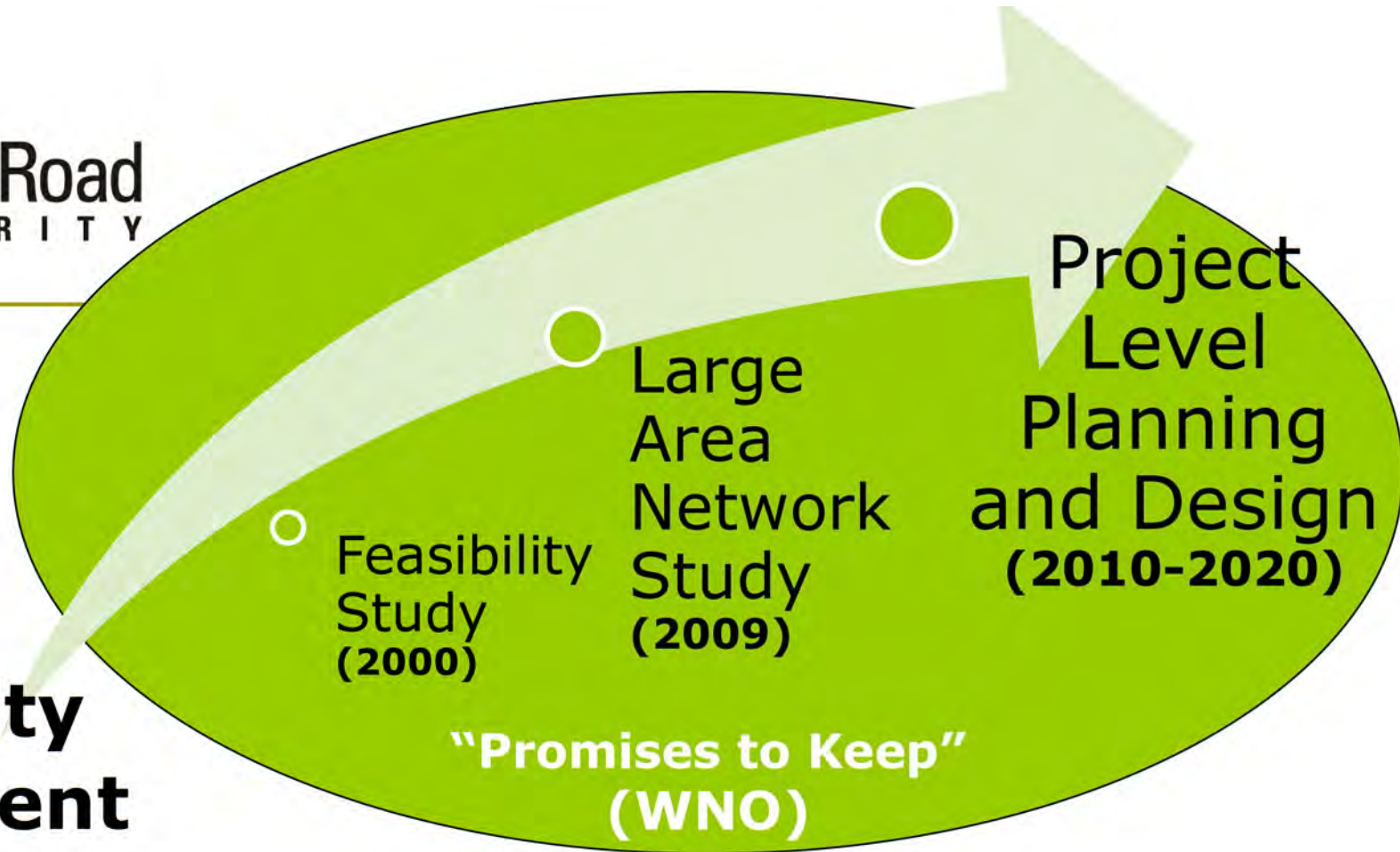
*Status: Interim winter road enhancements are underway with planning and environmental assessments to support the construction of pioneer and all season roads occurring in prioritized locations.*

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 2009, ESRA has met with the Poplar River community to discuss the project and select the best road location
  - Community Meetings
    - February 9, 2012
    - December 2, 2009
    - April 2, 2009
  - Asatiswisipe Aki Ma Ma Wichitowin Mutual Land Relationship Board & elders
    - February 25, 2014
    - November 26, 2012
    - September 24, 2012 (Elders)
    - March 12, 2012





## Prior Community Discussions & Agreements

- ❑ Past discussions resulted in changes in the potential route away from sensitive areas, based on community concerns
- ❑ Memorandum of Understanding and Community Benefits Agreement Signed in 2010



## Description of Project P4

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

B) On Reserve Access Road

- 430m on Poplar River First Nation



# 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 –
  - Coastal Route
  - 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



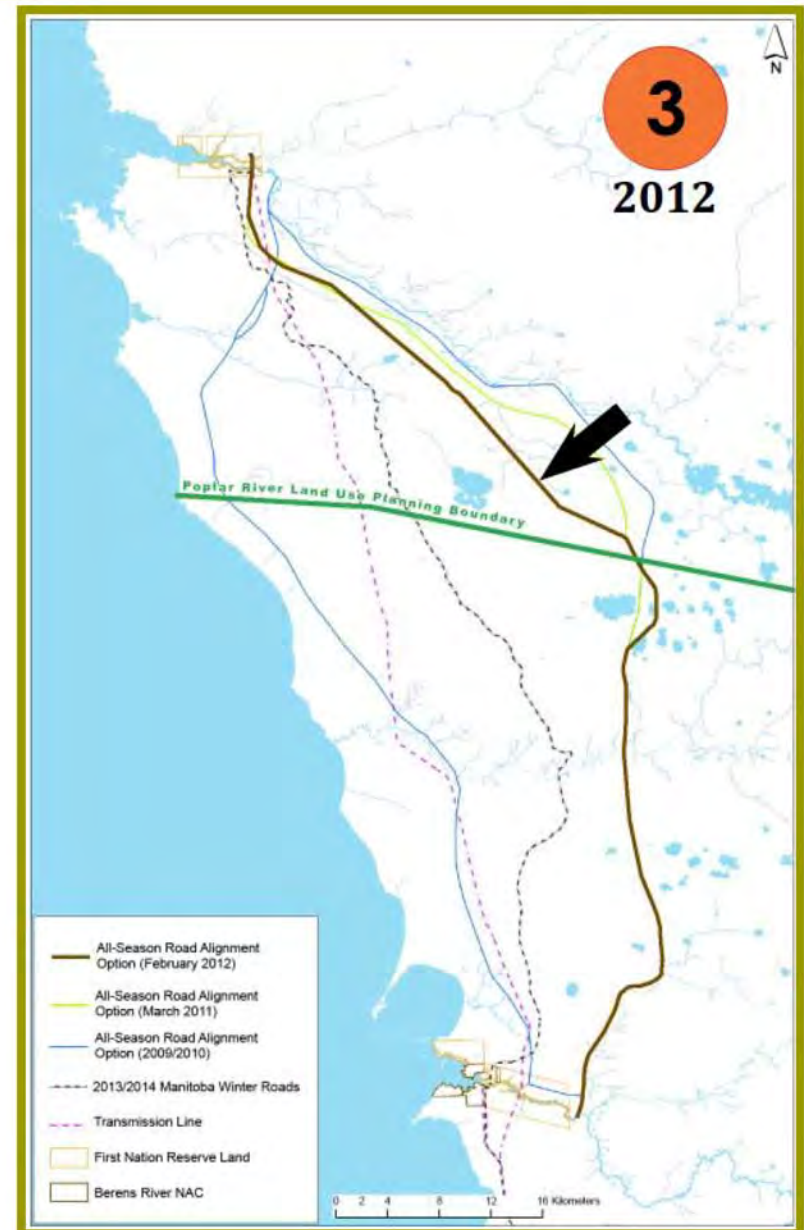
# Evolution of Road Route Refinements

- ❑ 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
- ❑ Moved portion of route to east away from sensitive habitat and traditional use areas near Etomami River



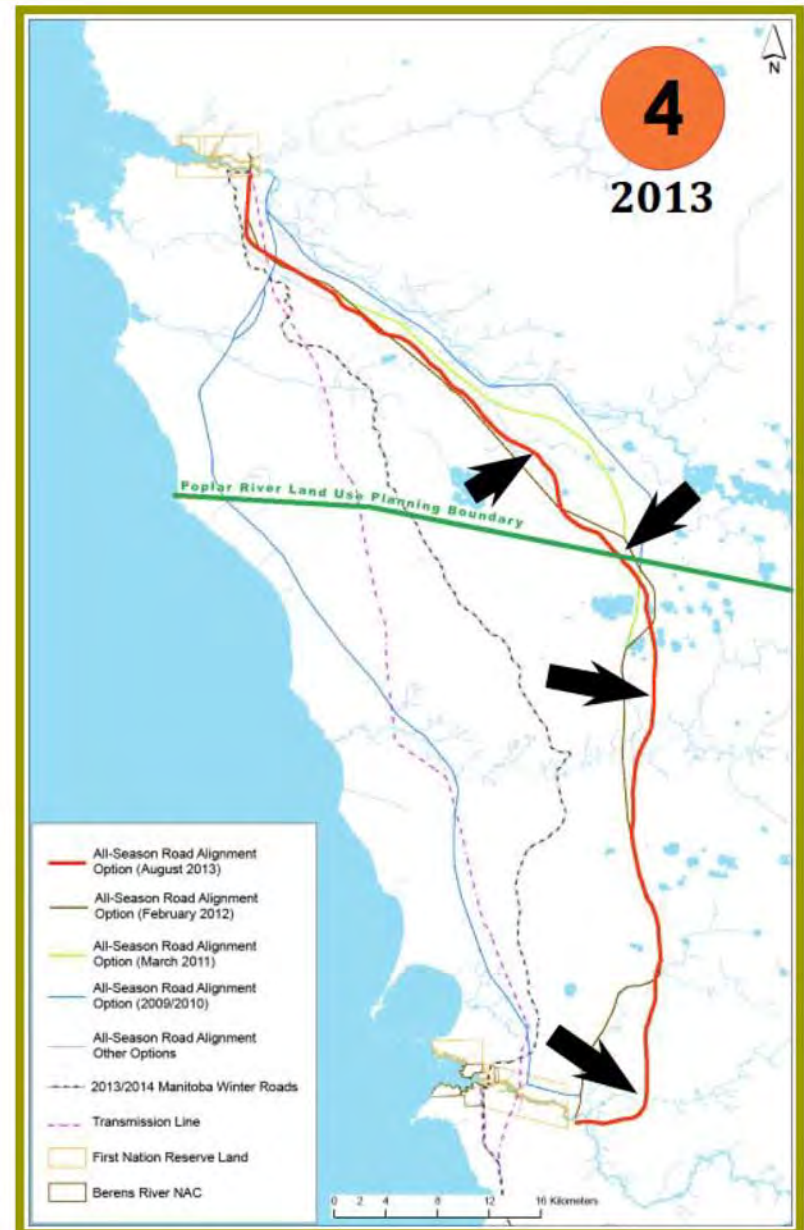
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- ❑ Moved route from muskeg areas near Lake Winnipeg further inland for constructability
- ❑ Moved portion of route to west away from Poplar River traditional use areas
- ❑ **Moved route further to the west to avoid sensitive sites**



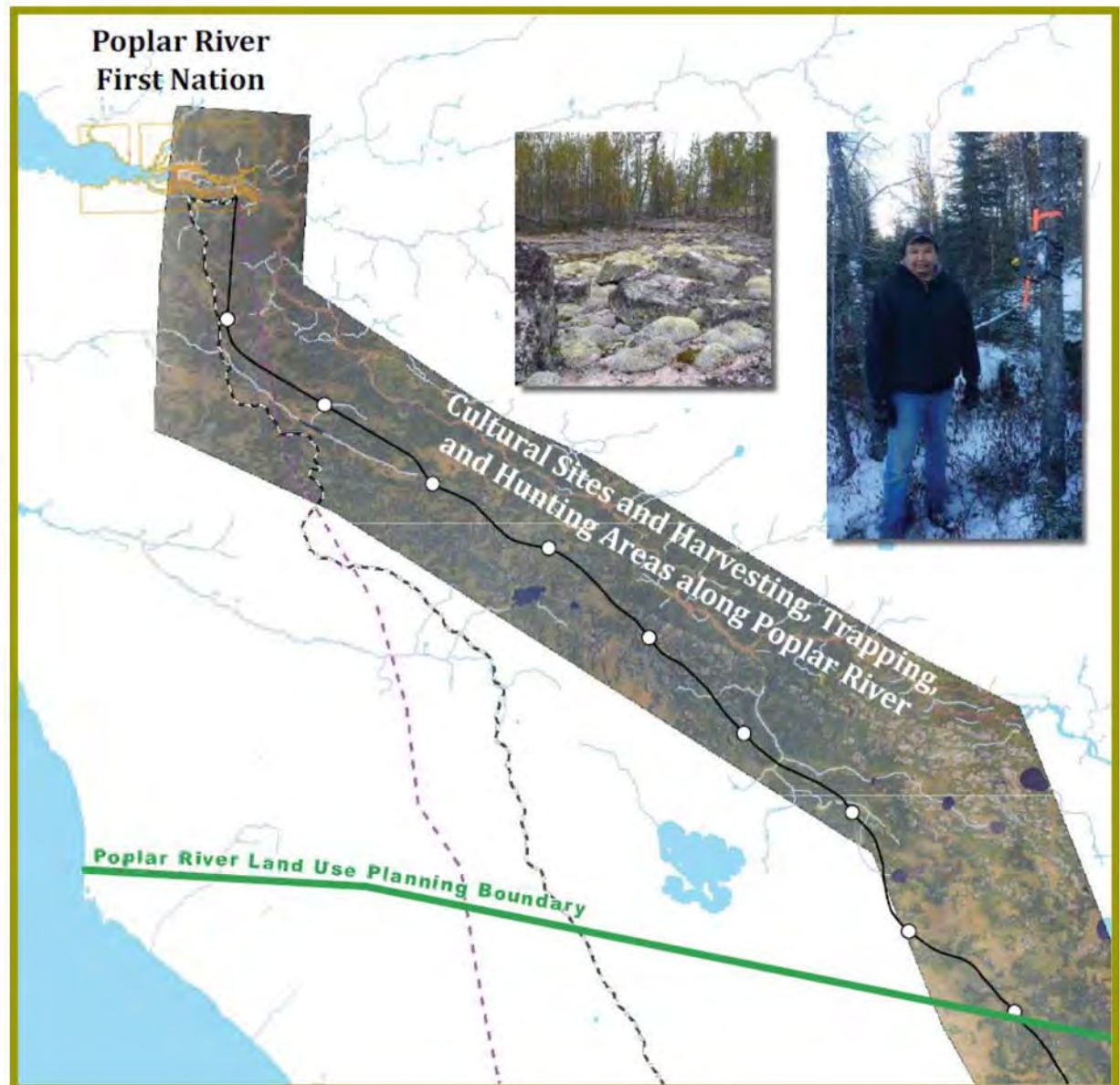
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## Summary of Road Route Refinements – Poplar River

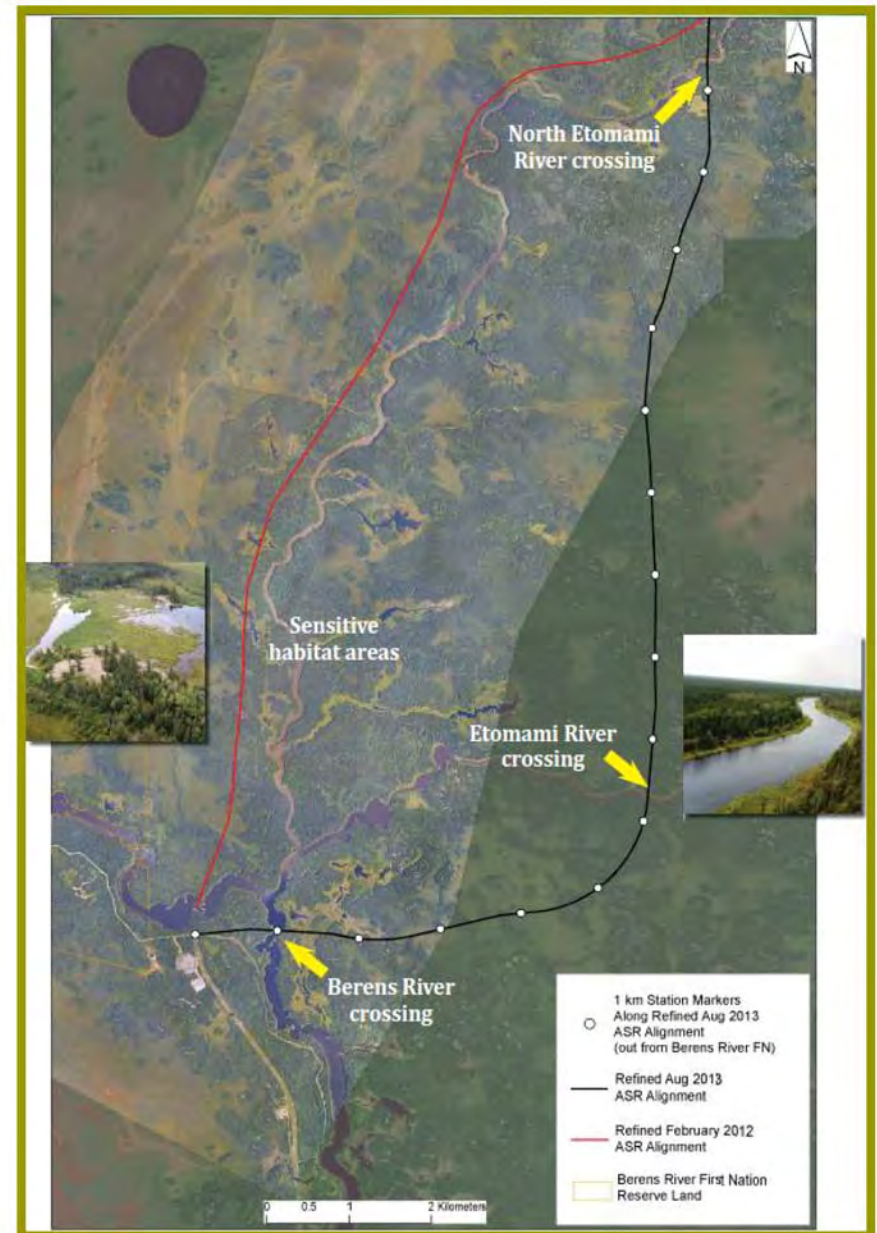
- Moved portion of route west to avoid Poplar River
  - Harvested plants
  - Cultural /sacred sites
  - Traditional land use
- Moved portion of route further west to avoid sensitive sites identified during baseline studies and discussions with elders
- Avoids muskeg and wetlands along shoreline route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





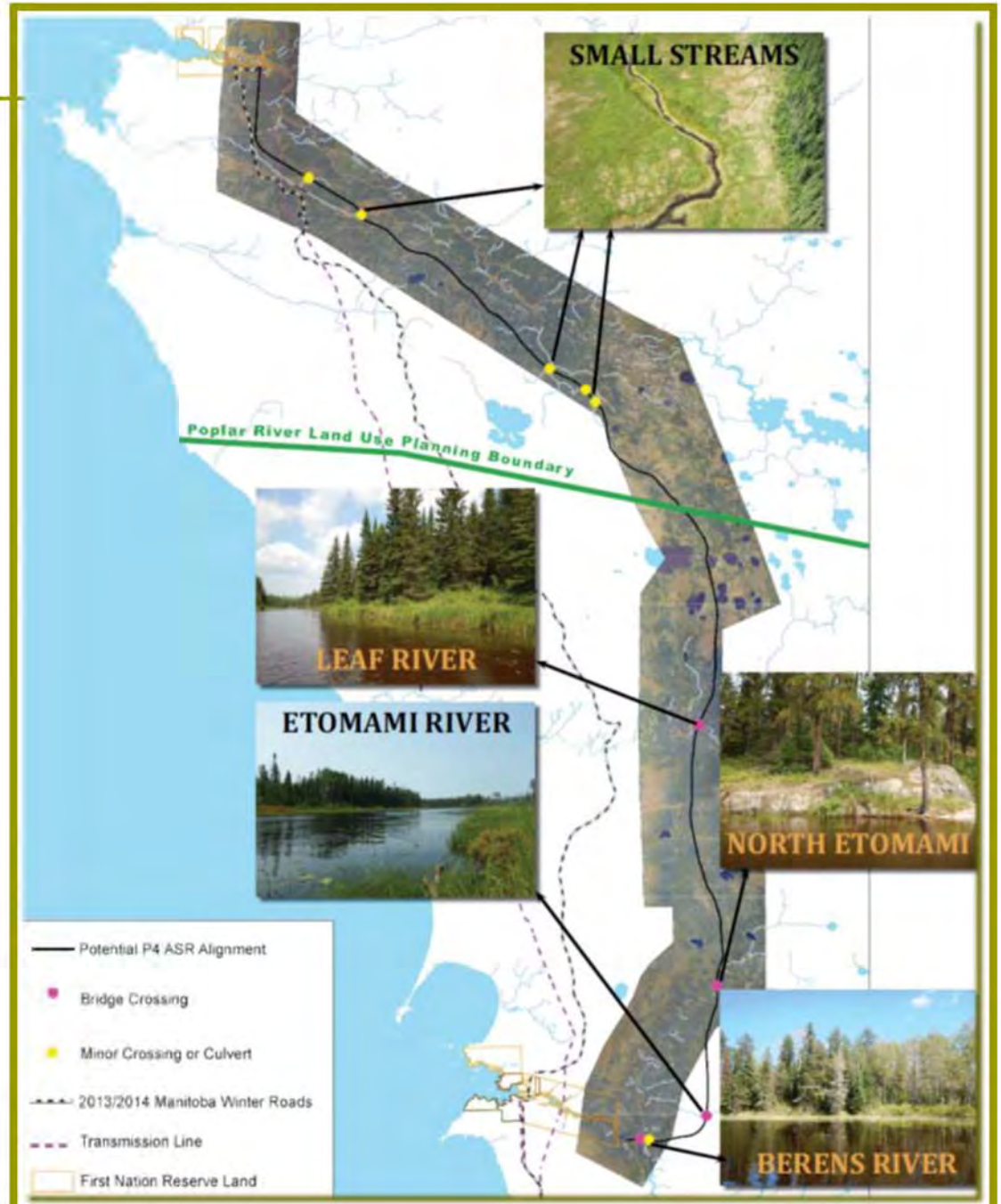
# Summary of Road Route Refinements - Berens River

- 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

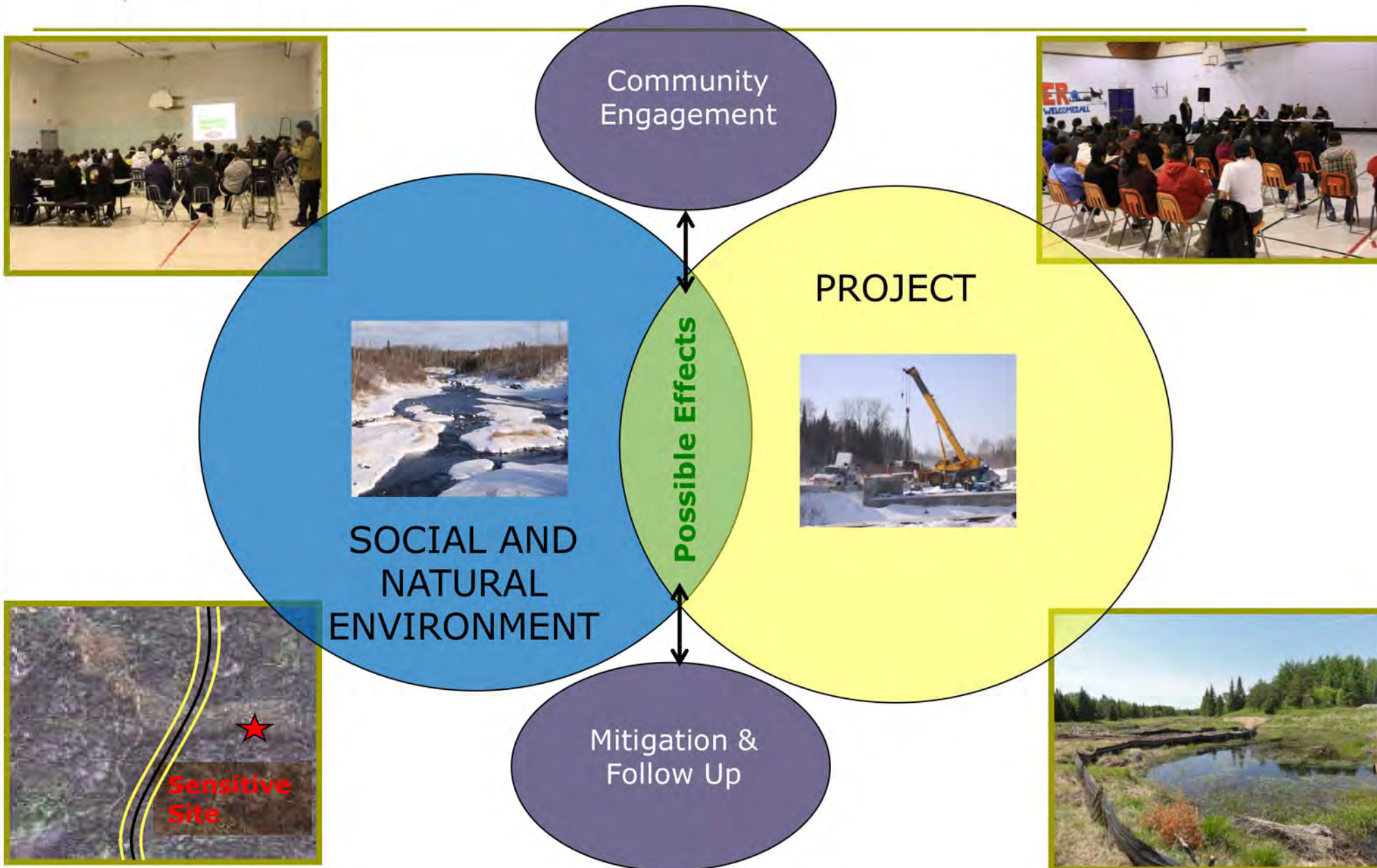


# River Crossings

- 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

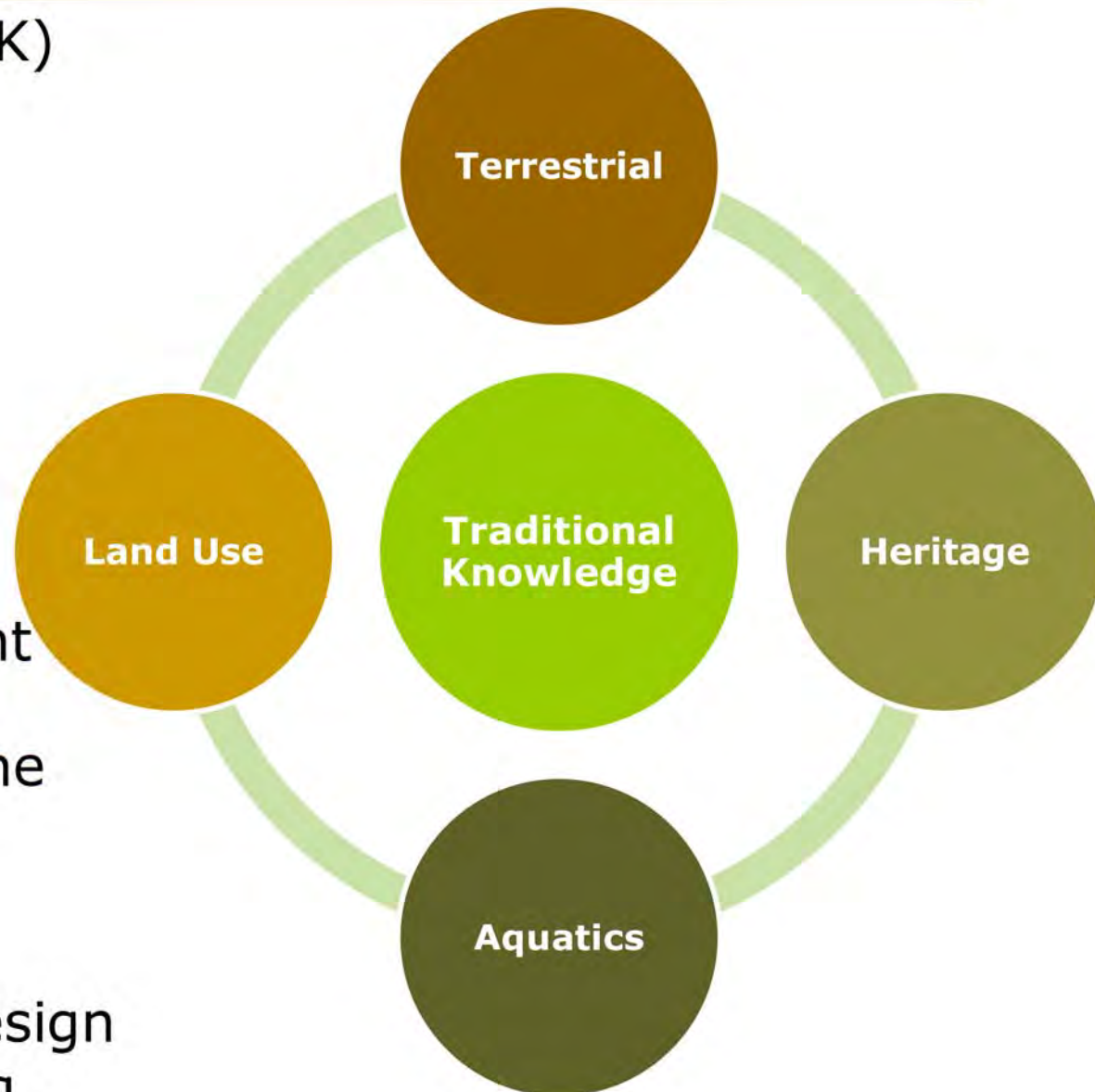


# What is Environmental Assessment?



# 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

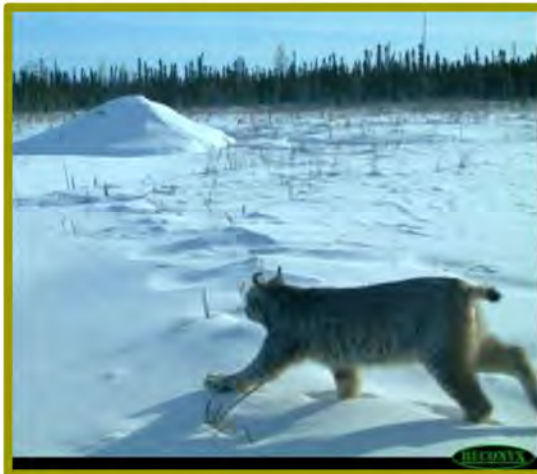


# Wildlife – Trapper Program

- ❑ 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)



# 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



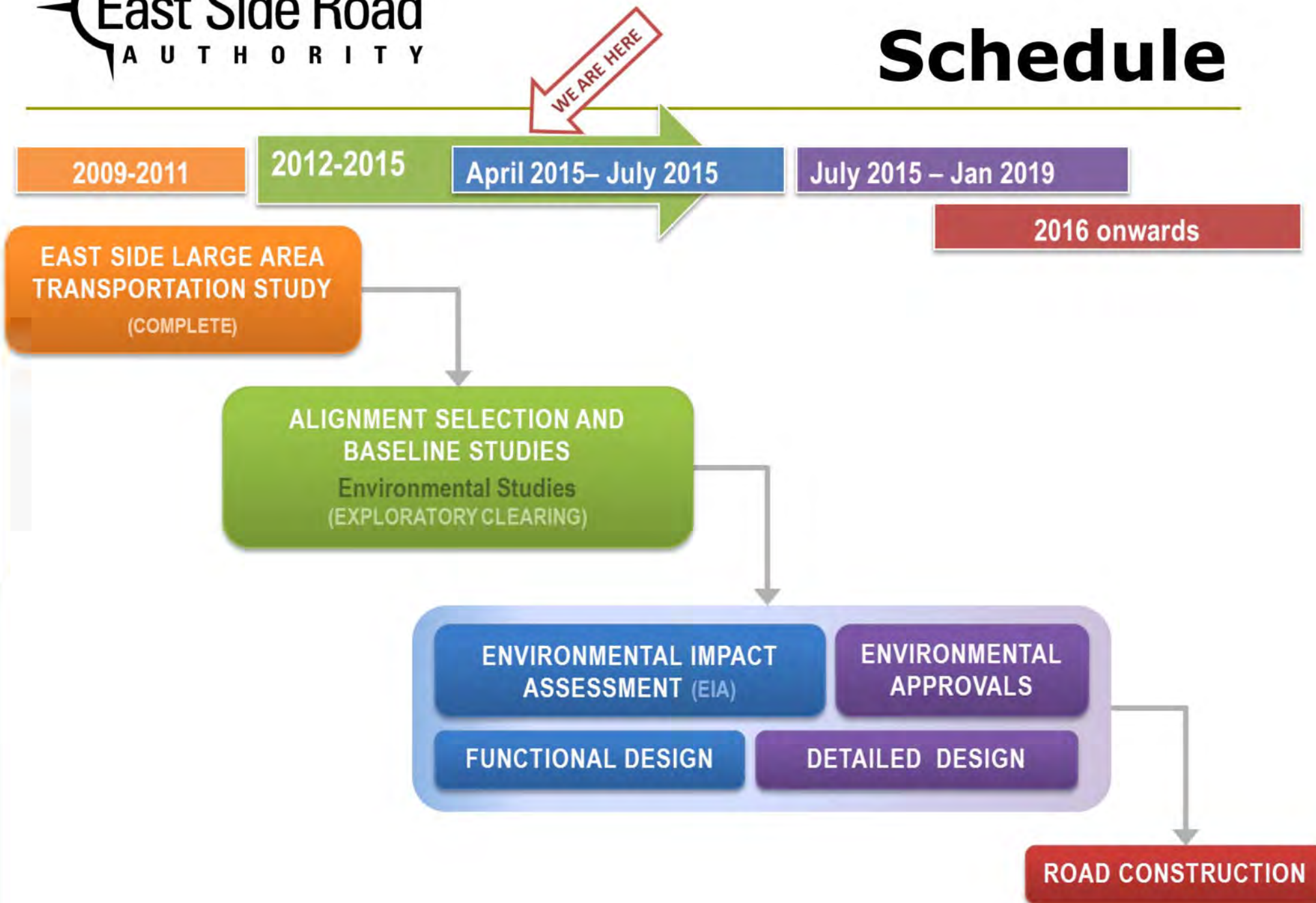


# Cultural - Valued Components

- 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!***



***Thank you for your participation!***

**Contact Information**

**The East Side Road Authority**

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