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NIAGARA ESCARPMENT COMMISSION

232 Guelph St. Georgetown, ON L7G 4B1 Tel: 905-877-5191

[www.escarpment.org](http://www.escarpment.org/)

November 16, 2022

**STAFF INFORMATION REPORT**

**Update on Policy Guideline Development & Commission Working Groups**

**Introduction / Background**

In October 2017 and 2018, staff presented to the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) on the need for guidance material to support the implementation of the 2017 Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP). The Commission endorsed the staff’s recommendation that guidance material takes the form of either “Policy Guidelines” or “Technical Criteria.” This is in keeping with the direction in the 2017 NEP that the NEC may issue guidance material and technical criteria, in consultation with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), to assist with the implementation of NEP policies.

The purpose of the Guidelines is so that the Commission, applicants, and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the policy objectives and the background information required to support effective NEP policy implementation. Policy Guidelines are used to support the evaluation of all applications against a common set of considerations. They are intended to clarify, inform, and aid in the interpretation of NEP policies, but not modify the current NEP policies (as this would require a NEP amendment). An outcome of the process of developing guidance material could be recommendations for future policy, legislative or regulatory change, but for the purpose of this process, such changes are not in scope. The attached Appendix 1 contains the process for the development of NEP Guidance material that was approved by the Commission in June 2018.

Technical Criteria are intended to assist staff in establishing a recommended and consistent approach to requesting studies and other supporting information to assist in the evaluation of applications. Technical Criteria are more prescriptive in nature and often include instructional information and minimum information requirements necessary to properly evaluate Development Permit or Amendment applications.

Guidelines are being developed to assist in the assessment of Development Permit Applications (DPAs) for the following identified policy topic areas:

* (temporary) dwelling unit(s) accessory to agricultural uses
* accessory facilities and uses to single dwellings (atypical accessory uses)
* on-farm diversified uses; and,
* events

The purpose of this report is to provide a status update and outline the next steps, for guideline development, including updating the Commission on their role on the Commissioner Working Groups and confirming the appointed working group members.

**Commission Working Groups**

Temporary Commission Working Groups were created at the discretion of the Chair, to support the guideline development. The purpose of the working groups was to obtain input related to the background and context for the policy guidance subject areas and provide input regarding the scope and approach being developed by staff. The scope of the working group authority includes the review of information, providing input, and advising NEC staff during the development of the policy guidance material. The working group authority does not include directing staff to take a position or approach. The authority to approve or modify the policy guidance material rests with the NEC, in consultation with the MNRF. The full Terms of Reference for the working groups are attached as Appendix 2.

The Chair approved the following Commissioners to be assigned to the working groups, based on a consideration of areas of interest identified by Commissioners, balancing between municipal and public-at-large appointees, and geographic distribution (i.e., a balance between north, south, and central), where possible.

**Commission Working Groups**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Guideline Policy Topic** | **On-farm diversified uses** | **Dwelling units accessory to agricultural uses & accessory facilities/uses to single dwellings** | **Events** |
| **Commissioners appointed to Working Group** | Barry Burton David Hutcheon Johanna Downey Albert Witteveen | Janet HornerGord DriedgerKen LucyshynDuncan McKinlay | Bruce Mackenzie Ron GibsonPaul McQueen |

The Commissioner Working Group for the topics of temporary dwelling units accessory to agricultural uses and accessory facilities/uses to single dwellings met on April 30, 2021. The working group reviewed the issues and background information presented by staff and engaged in a thorough discussion providing key elements for consideration in drafting guidelines for the respective topic areas.

The Commission Working Group for events met on April 26, 2021, to discuss the development of proposed guidance material. After hearing from staff as to the basis for the proposal to develop guidance material for events and reviewing what was out of scope for the exercise, the working group provided valuable input that will be used in determining the direction for how to proceed with this topic area.

**Progress to Date**

While a Commission Working Group was established for the topic of on-farm diversified uses, it was determined by the Commission in November 2021, as recommended by staff, that guideline development for this policy area would be paused, pending the parallel and ongoing agricultural policy discussions taking place, and until the full scope of a plan amendment respecting NEP agricultural policies had been considered.

Additionally, as the Commission is aware, the NEC has more recently faced significant staffing challenges that resulted in a shift in the direction of policy staff to enable greater support to the processing of Development Permit Applications and overall development control functions and as a result, the progress on the policy guideline development was paused. The NEC has more recently retained a Policy Program Intern (1-year position), who has been directed to supporting policy staff, and will now enable the guideline development to resume, including for OFDUs.

Additionally, staff has recently been informed of the release of the document: *Guidelines on Permitted Uses as a Tool to Achieve Farmland Protection, Farm Diversification, and Economic Benefits: Assessing the effectiveness and identifying best practices*. The Guidelines were created by researchers Dr. Wayne Caldwell, Pam Duesling, and Emily Sousa of the University of Guelph, with the support of the Ontario Agri-Food Alliance.

The Report identifies multiple best practices, tools, and recommendations to ensure OFDUs achieve the common goals of promoting agricultural viability while protecting farmland. Staff will be reviewing this newly released research which may provide valuable input to the NEC guideline development for this policy topic area.

**Next Steps**

Revised and updated work plans for the policy topic areas have been prepared and are attached as Appendix 3. These work plans are intended to be adaptive in nature and may be required to be revised in response to ongoing NEC staffing and workload

priorities as well as changing Commissioner appointments. A work plan for the events policy guideline topic has not been included, as this policy guideline area is still under review and consideration by staff, in terms of the most appropriate path forward.

In addition to the Guideline development, consultation on the draft technical criteria for vegetation protection plans and landscape plans was completed in 2021. In response to feedback received, minor changes will be made to improve clarity and achieve greater consistency with municipal and agency requirements. Staff will return to the Commission with the final technical criteria for approval at a future meeting to be determined. Once approved, the technical criteria will provide helpful information for applicants and their consultants on best management practices and minimum submission requirements.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends that:

1. The Commission receives this report and confirms the Commission working group members as identified, with an understanding that the identified members may be required to be revisited, subject to the Commissioner appointment process.
2. Direct staff to proceed with policy guideline development as per the attached work plans, including further engagement with the Commission working groups.

**Prepared by: Approved by:**

 Original signed by: Original signed by:

**Lisa Grbinicek, RPP, MCIP Kathy Woeller**

**Senior Strategic Advisor Director**

Original signed by:

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**Rameez Sadafal**

**Program and Policy Intern**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix 1 – Process for the Development of NEP Guidance Material (June 21, 2018) Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference Commission Working Groups

Appendix 3 – Proposed Work plans for Guidance Material Development

**Niagara Escarpment Commission**

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**Appendix 1**



**PROCESS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NIAGARA ESCARPMENT PLAN GUIDANCE MATERIAL**

Approved by NEC June 21, 2018

The following process shall apply in the development of Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) guidance material for use in the implementation of NEP.

1. Guidance material issued by the Commission will take the form of either technical criteria or policy guidelines. Technical criteria include instructions for the standardized collection and presentation of information needed to properly evaluate a proposal. Policy guidelines include considerations, principles, or factors that should be taken into account when applying a NEP policy.
2. Technical criteria are to be developed when it is expected that applicants provide information in a certain format, or must follow a specific process or methodology.
3. Policy guidelines may be developed to support the interpretation of NEP policies, and to provide clarity, transparency, and consistency in decision-makingking. Policy guidelines include the kinds of considerations that guide NEC decision-making on permitted uses and the application of NEP development criteria.
4. The development of technical criteria and policy guidelines must be endorsed by the Commission.
5. To initiate the development of guidance material, staff shall prepare a report to the Commission, detailing the issue(s), the reason for the need for guidance material (e.g., application-related trends, a matter of provincial interest requiring attention, multiple possible interpretations), and recommendation on how the NEC should address the issue (i.e., policy guidelines or technical criteria).
6. Upon Commission approval to proceed, staff, shall prepare a report on the issue(s), which should include:
	* Identification and analysis of any existing NEP guidance material, provincial legislation, or direction on the subject matter, contained in any act, plan, technical guideline, regulation,n or other. Examples include, but are not limitedto: *Conservation Authorities Act, Municipal Act*, municipal policies and/or by-laws, Provincial Policy Statement, oand ther provincial plans or acts (i.e. Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan).
	* Identification and assessment of the relationship and potential implications with above identified existing provincial legislation or municipal direction on the issue(s).
	* Analysis and justification on the ability of the proposed guidance material to assist in meeting the Purpose and Objectives of the NEPDA and the NEP.
	* Identification of potential Indigenous communities, stakeholders, public interest groups, planning authorities, ministries, and members of the public who may have an interest in the proposed matter.
	* Review of recent related decisions by the Commission, the Niagara Escarpment Hearing Office, and other decision-making bodies, as necessary.
7. Staff shall consult with NEC legal counsel on the issue(s) being addressed by the proposed guidance material.
8. Staff shall consult with staff in the Natural Resources Conservation Policy Branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF).
9. Staff shall present the findings and analysis with final recommendations on the draft guidance material within a staff report to the Commission for consideration. Recommendations shall include a proposed circulation list and recommendations on the length of the commenting period and include consideration of the necessity of posting the proposal on the Environmental Registry. The Commission shall then decide if additional consultation is necessary; if so, the Commission will direct staff to circulate the draft guidance material for comment. The Commission may also, return it to staff for further consideration, or abandon the draft guidance material.
10. If the Commission endorses the staff’s recommendation to circulate the draft guidance material, it shall be circulated to the approved list, providing a commenting period of no less than 30 days in length.
11. NEC staff will receive and consider all comments and submissions made on the draft guidance material in consultation with MNRF. Comments will be analyzed and summarized in, and appended to a final staff report, with recommendations on the final guidance material submitted to the Commission for approval. Delegations at a Commission meeting shall be permitted, upon request, by those parties and individuals who submitted comments. Advance notice of the Commission meeting shall be provided to commenting parties, and they will be informed of the opportunity to make a delegation.
12. The finalized guidance material will be circulated to the consultation list, as well as to anyone who submitted comments, and will be posted on the NEC website. The guidance material will be made available to the public when an NEC Development Permit or Application for Plan Amendment or other Niagara Escarpment Plan related issue is filed or considered, that may be impacted by the guidance material.
13. The Chair shall share the new guidance material with the Minister.
14. Performance Monitoring: The effectiveness of the guidance material in meeting desired outcomes shall be monitored and an assessment made no later than one year after the guidance material has been operational, subject to the adequate application of the guidance material in Development Permit Applications, NEP Amendments, or other approvals within that year. The need for additional operational time shall be determined by staff. A follow-up report shall be provided to the Commission, providing a summary of the monitoring findings and any recommendations on the need for the guidance material to be revised to better achieve its intended purpose.

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**Appendix 2**



**Terms of Reference for Commissioner Working Groups Associated with**

**Preparation of Policy Guidance Material**

*Updated April 9, 2021*

1. Type

Ad hoc, temporary Working Group created at the discretion of the Chair of the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

1. Purpose

The three (3) Working Groups have been created to:

* + obtain input related to the background and context for the Policy Guidance subject areas
	+ provide input regarding the scope and approach being developed by staff
1. Scope

Working Groups have been created for the following policy areas:

* + On-Farm Diversified Uses
	+ Events
	+ Dwelling Units

The scope of Policy Guidance is restricted to the application of the current Niagara Escarpment Plan policies - to inform Plan implementation. Information and approaches contained in Guidance Material are meant to support but not add to or detract from the policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan. It is recognized that discussion may include areas of legislative, regulatory, or policy change.

1. Authority

The Working Groups’ authority includes the review of information, providing input, and advising NEC staff during the development of Policy Guidance Material. The Working Groups do not have the authority to direct staff to take a particular position or approach. The authority to approve or modify the Policy Guidance Material rests with the Niagara Escarpment Commission as a whole, in consultation with MNRF.

Membership

Working Group members were selected from a volunteer list of candidates and appointed by the Chair. Any changes in composition will be decided by the Chair.

1. Meeting Arrangements

Meetings will be coordinated by the NEC staff person responsible for a particular topic and will be held through videoconferencing (e.g.; Microsoft Teams or WebEx) or in person if the opportunity permits. NEC staff will record the discussions from the meetings.

1. Reporting

Input of the Working Group will be brought forward by Commission staff as part of the report to the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

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**Appendix 3**

**Work Plan for Policy Guidance: Accessory Uses/Facilities to Single Dwellings**

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Target Timing** |
| Phase 1: Scoping, Background Work and Information Gathering | **On-going**, leading up to November 2022 Policy Meeting |
| 1. Work Plan | * Work Plan Created
 | Oct. 4/22 (Completed) |
| 2. Background Research | * Scan of prominent Development Permits related to topic (2018-2023)
 | Week of Dec. 5/22 (On-going) |
| * Tracking Spreadsheet Created for Internal Use and analysis, Updates are on-going
 | Week of Dec. 5/22 (On-going) |
| * Jurisdictional scan – Policies applied in Municipalities
 | Week of Dec. 12/22 (On-going) |
| * Information gathering regarding application of policies and issues
 | Week of Dec. 12/22 (On-going) |
| 3. External discussion and information gathering | * Identification of key stakeholders, Municipalities, other Ministries, Indigenous communities, and other interested parties for the purposes of information gathering
* Informal discussions with the above noted groups (not a formal consultation)
* List of external contacts to be produced
* Management and Director to review approach and external contacts
 | TBD - varying meeting dates are expectedDates are dependent on staff and stakeholder availability |

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Target Timing** |
| 4. Commission Meeting | * Present work plan to the Commission
* Establish Commissioner Working Group
 | Nov. 16-17/22 |
| 5. Engage with Commissioner Working Group | * Engage with the established Commissioner Working Group to obtain information (e.g., the nature of concerns, information from NEC municipalities, and information from other jurisdictions)
 | TBD after the November 2022 Policy Meeting |
| 6. Engage with NEC Staff | * Identify touch discussion points with NEC staff, which could include the following:
	+ Issues emerging from application of NEP policies
	+ Input to scope policy guidance
	+ Review and input to draft documents
* Gather information through Integrated Teams and/or Planners Meetings
 | On-going – Engagement with NEC Staff could be ongoing, as staff process related DPAsTBD – Formal meetings with NEC staff to discuss atypical uses/facilities in Planner meetings and/or cross-team meetings |
| Phase 2: Preparing Draft Policy Guidance | Towards May 2023 Policy Meeting**Note:** Completion of external discussions and information gathering may influence target time ranges. |
| 1. Update Work Plan | * Update work plan to reflect completed stages in phase 2
 | January 2023 |
| 2. Management Review | * Template format for guidance document to be established and provided from Management
* Template for report to be provided
 | January 2023 |

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Target Timing** |
| 3. Prepare draft Policy Guidance | * Prepare draft guidance document
* Preparation of overarching report regarding process to date and next steps.
 | February / March 2023 |
| 4. Internal Input and Review | * Pre-circulate guidance document and report to MNRF Policy Division and Legal Services for input and review
 | March 2023 |
| 2. Commission Working Group Review | * Submit draft guidance criteria document to Commission Working Group
* Gather input before going to Commission
 | April 2021 (complete)April 2023 |
| 3. Commission Review and Approval of Draft Guidance | * Seeking Commission input and approval to proceed with formal consultation
 | Spring Commission Meeting (May 2023) |
| Phase 3: Formal Consultation and Engagement |  |
| 1. Update Work Plan | * Update work plan based to reflect completed stages in phase 2
 | June 2023 |
| 1. Formal Consultation Initiated | * Conduct formal consultation regarding draft Guidelines
	+ Notifications to be sent out to Stakeholders, Indigenous communities. Municipalities,

Ministries* + Establish a commenting period (e.g., 60 days)
	+ Posting on the Environmental Registry (if required)
	+ Posting on the NEC website
	+ Use of other communications if needed and applicable
 | June 2023 |

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Target Timing** |
| 2. Formal Consultation Complete | * Review and consideration of comments received.
 | 30-60 days post consultation |
| Phase 4: Finalize Policy Guidance; Implementation | Towards **November 2023** Policy Meeting |
| 1. Update Work Plan | * Update work plan to reflect completed stages in

Phase 3 | August – September 2023 |
| 1. Prepare Final Proposed Guideline | * Revise draft Guidelines to reflect input and comments received, as appropriate.
* Internal review with NEC staff and MNRF (Policy and Legal)
* Obtain Manager and Director approval to Return Document to Commission
 | August – September 2023 |
| 2. Return to Commission | * Report to Commission, containing summary of consultation and changes (if appropriate/applicable) to Policy Guidance
* Seek Commission decision and authorization of use of Policy Guidance
 | November 2023 Commission Meeting |
| 3. Final Implementation and Publication | * Guideline to be finalized and published on the NEC website
* Implementation Monitoring
 | November 2023ongoing |
| 4. Notification | * Notify Municipalities, Ministries, Agencies, Indigenous Communities, Stakeholders, and Members of the Public
 | November 2023 |

***Last Updated:*** *October 31, 2022* 14

***Note: Revisions may be needed based on potential increase in NEC workload, staffing changes and Commissioner***

**Work Plan for Policy Guidance: (Temporary) Dwelling Unit(s) Accessory to Agricultural Uses**

Ontario)

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Completed Tasks** | **Target Timing** |
| Phase 1: Scoping, Background Work and Information Gathering **Completed** leading up to May 2021 Policy Meeting → Revisited leading up to November 2022 Policy Meeting (Oct 4/22)* Initial discussion Occurred with Commission Work Group (April 30/21)
* Background and scoping information provided to the Commission in Staff Report dated May 19, 2011 (May 19/21)
 | Completed | N/A |
| Phase 2: Preparing Draft Policy Guidance |  |  |
| 1. Update Work Plan | * Work Plan Updated
 | July 27, 2021 | October 4, 2022 |
| 2. Targeted outreach and informal consultation | * Ministries (OMAAFRA, MAH, MNRF)
 |  | Winter 2023 |
| * Select Municipalities (Grey, Caledon, Niagara)
 |  | Winter 2023 |
| * Stakeholders (including but not limited to: OFA, Ontario Craft Wineries Council, Ontario Beef Farmers, Christian Farmers of Ont.
 |  | Winter 2023 |
| 3. Commission Meeting | * Present updated work plan to the Commission
 |  | November 2022 |
| 4. Engage with Commissioner Working Group | * Initial engagement with Commissioner Working Group
 | April 30, 2021 | N/A |
| * Re-engage with the Commissioner Working Group to obtain information (e.g., the nature of concerns, information from NEC municipalities, and information from other jurisdictions)
 |  | Winter 2023 |

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Completed Tasks** | **Target Timing** |
| 5. Engage with NEC Staff | * Input of issues, policy gaps and general feedback on scope
* Identify discussion points with NEC staff, which could include the following:
	+ Issues emerging from application of NEP policies
	+ Input to scope policy guidance
	+ Review and input to draft rough guidance document
* Gather information through integrated Teams and/or Planners Meetings
 |  | On-going - Engagement with NEC staff could be ongoing, as staff process related DPAsTBD - Formal meetings with NEC staff to discuss the guideline topic in planner meetings and/or cross-team meetings |
| 6. Reports due to management for review | * Template for report and draft policy

Guideline developed* Draft policy Guideline document to be drafted
 |  | December 2022 |
| 7. Pre-circulation | * Pre-circulate to applicable parties; MNRF Legal Services review of draft guidelines
 |  | January 2022 |

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Completed Tasks** | **Target Timing** |
| 8. Commission meeting | * Commission Review & approval of draft

Guideline*Note: Potential need to return to Commission if changes recommended, or if additional issues identified that warrant staff analysis* |  | February 2023 |
| Phase 3: Formal Consultation and Engagement |  |  |
| 1. Formal Consultation Initiated | * Conduct formal consultation regarding draft guidance document
	+ Notifications to be sent out to appropriate Stakeholders, Indigenous communities.

Municipalities, Ministries* + Establish a commenting period (e.g., 60 days)
	+ Posting on the Environmental Registry if required (TBD)
	+ Posting on the NEC website
	+ Use of other communication tactics if needed and applicable
 | TBD | March 2023 |
| 2. Formal Consultation Complete | * Review and consider comments recieved
 | TBD | TBD; to occur after the applicable commenting period has ended |

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Completed Tasks** | **Target Timing** |
| Phase 4: Finalize Policy Guidance; Implementation |  |  |
| 1. Prepare Final Proposed Guideline | * Revise documents to reflect input and comments received
* Internal review with NEC staff and MNRF (Policy and Legal)
* Obtain Manager and Director Approval to return draft document to Commission
 | N/A | June 2023 |
| 2. Return to Commission | * Report to Commission, containing summary of consultation and changes (if appropriate/applicable) to Policy Guidelines
* Seek Commission decision and authorization of use of Policy Guidelines
 | N/A | July 2023, towards July Commission Meeting |
| 3. Final Implementation and Publication | * Guideline to be finalized and published on the NEC website
* Implementation Monitoring
 | N/A | July 2023ongoing |
| 4. Notification | * Notify Municipalities, Ministries, Agencies, Indigenous Communities, Stakeholders, and Public
 | N/A | July 2023 |

**Work Plan for Policy Guidance: On-Farm Diversified Uses (OFDUs)**

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Target Timing** |
| Phase 1: Scoping, Background Work and Information Gathering | **On-going**, leading up to November 2022 Policy Meeting |
| 1. Work Plan | * Work Plan Created
 | Oct. 4/22 (Completed) |
| 2. Background Research | * Scan of Development Permits related to OFDUs (2018-2023)
 | Oct. 20/22 (Completed) |
| * OFDU Tracking Spreadsheet Created for Internal Use, Updates are on-going
 | Oct. 20/22 (Completed) |
| * Jurisdictional scan – Policies applied in Municipalities
 | November/December 2022 |
| * Information gathering regarding application of policies and issues
 | November / December 2022 |
| 3. External discussion and information gathering | * Identification of key stakeholders, Municipalities, other Ministries, Indigenous communities, and other interested parties for the purposes of information gathering
* Informal discussions with the above noted groups (not a formal consultation)
* List of external contacts to be produced
* Management and Director to review approach and external contacts
 | January /February 2023Dates are dependent on staff and stakeholder availability |

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Target Timing** |
| 4. Commission Meeting | * Present work plan to the Commission
* Confirm Commissioner Working Group
 | November 2022 |
| 5. Engage with Commissioner Working Group | * Engage with the established Commission Working Group to obtain information (e.g., the nature of concerns, information from NEC municipalities, and information from other jurisdictions)
 | January/February 2023 |
| 6. Engage with NEC Staff | * Identify touch discussion points with NEC staff, which could include the following:
	+ Issues emerging from application of NEP policies
	+ Input to scope policy guidance
	+ Review and input to draft documents
* Gather information through Integrated Teams and/or Planners Meetings
 | On-goingTBD – Formal meetings with NEC staff to discuss OFDUs in Planner meetings and/orcross-team meetings |
| Phase 2: Preparing Draft Policy Guidance | **Note:** Completion of external discussions and information gathering may influence target time frames |
| 1. Update Work Plan | * Update work plan to reflect completed stages in Phase 2
 | January 2023 |
| 2. Management Review | * Template format for guidance document to be

developed | January 2023 |

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Target Timing** |
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| 3. Prepare draft Policy Guidance | * Prepare draft guidance document
* Preparation of overarching report regarding process to date and next steps
 | February 2023 |
| 4. Internal Input and Review | * Pre-circulate Guideline and report to MNRF Policy Division and Legal Services for input and review
 | March 2023 |
| 2. Commission Working Group Review | * Submit draft Guideline document to Commission Working Group
* Gather input before going to Commission
 | April 2023 |
| 3. Commission Review and Approval of Draft Guidance | * Commission input and approval to proceed with formal consultation on draft Guidelines
 | Spring Commission Meeting (May 2023) |
| Phase 3: Formal Consultation and Engagement |  |
| 1. Update Work Plan | * Update work plan based to reflect the completed stages in Phase 2
 | June 2023 |
| 1. Formal Consultation Initiated | * Conduct formal consultation on draft Guideline

document* + Notifications to be sent out to Stakeholders,

Municipalities, Ministries* + Establish a commenting period (e.g., 60 days)
	+ Posting on the Environmental Registry if required (TBD)
	+ Posting on the NEC website
	+ Use of other communications if needed and applicable
 | June 2023 |

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| **Activity** | **Task** | **Target Timing** |
| 2. Formal Consultation Complete | * Review and consider comments recieved
 | July 2023 |
| Phase 4: Finalize Policy Guidance; Implementation | Towards **November 2023**Policy Meeting |
| 1. Update Work Plan | * Update work plan to reflect completed stages in Phase 3
 | August – September 2023 |
| 1. Prepare Final Proposed Guideline | * Revise documents to reflect input and comments received
* Internal review with NEC staff and MNRF (Policy and Legal)
* Obtain Manager and Director Approval to Return Document to Commission
 | August – September 2023 |
| 2. Return to Commission | * Report to Commission, containing summary of consultation and changes (if appropriate/applicable) to Policy Guidance
* Seek Commission decision and authorization of use of Policy Guidance
 | November 2023 |
| 3. Final Implementation and Publication | * Guideline to be finalized and published on the NEC website
* Implementation Monitoring
 | November 2023ongoing |
| 4. Notification | * Notify Municipalities, Ministries, Agencies, Indigenous Communities, Stakeholders, and Members of the Public
 | November 2023 |