

FORM 1

THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ACT, 1975

SUMMARY FORM FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SUBMISSION

Re: An Environmental Assessment received from the Ministry of Transportation and Communications for the Highway 89 Extension to be located in the Township of West Gwillimbury in the County of Simcoe, the Town of East Gwillimbury and the Township of Georgina in the Regional Municipality of York and the Townships of Uxbridge and Brock in the Regional Municipality of Durham.

Environmental Assessment Number _____

RESUME:

Purpose of the Undertaking

The distance between Highway 7, north of Toronto, and Cook Bay, the southern most point of Lake Simcoe, is 25 miles (40 km). In this area there is no continuous east-west highway linking Highway 400 in the west to Highway 12 in the east. This results in major out of way traffic movements for both local and long distance traffic.

The lack of a good east-west roadway system, south of Lake Simcoe, has been recognized as a problem at the local level for a number of years. In the mid 1960's the Counties of Simcoe, York and Ontario identified the need to construct a new crossing of the Holland River as part of a continuous east-west roadway south of Lake Simcoe. The construction of this new crossing had not occurred by the mid 1970's although the populations of the municipalities in the area had continued to grow.

The problem created by the lack of a continuous east-west connection south of Lake Simcoe became more obvious at the provincial level during the mid 1970's. At this time many highway users started to become more aware of the time and energy costs associated with unnecessary out of way travel.

In order to improve this situation, the Minister of Transportation and Communications, in consultation with the County of Simcoe and the Regional Municipalities of York and Durham, agreed to proceed with the implementation of a program leading to the construction of a continuous highway south of Lake Simcoe that would link Highway 400 in the west and Highway 12 in the east.

The Highway 89 Environmental Assessment documents the study that was carried out between May 1977 and June 1978 to determine the best means and location for this improvement to the roadway system.

Description of the Undertaking

The outcome of the study was the recommendation to construct a new 30.5 mile (50 km) long highway south of Lake Simcoe.

The selected highway route is shown on the attached key map.

The recommended design criteria for the proposed highway call for the development of a 2 lane highway within a basic right-of-way of 120 ft. (36.5 m) and with a posted speed limit of 50 mph (80 km/h).

At the time of completion of the study, it was recommended that the construction of the highway be staged.

- 1st Stage - Highway 11 to York Reg. Rd. 12 (including Holland River crossing)
- 2nd Stage - Highway 48 to Highway 12 (including Udora by-pass)
- 3rd Stage - Highway 400 to Highway 11 (including new interchange at Hwy. 400)

The section of roadway between York Regional Road 12 and Highway 48 will be resurfaced as required.

The selected highway route is illustrated at a scale of 1" = 1 mile on figure 11, page 63 of the Environmental Assessment.

Alternatives to the Undertaking

The nature of the problem that the proposed roadway will resolve is such as to preclude the development of an alternative other than a new highway. This is discussed on page 37 of the Environmental Assessment.

A number of alternative locations for the proposed highway were reviewed during the study. These alternatives and the evaluation of them, is documented on pages 37 to 62 of the Environmental Assessment.

Environment Affected by the Undertaking

The selected alternative crosses an area that is predominantly agricultural in nature. Agricultural activities include organic "muck" soil farming in the Keswick Marsh at the mouth of the Holland River and a mixture of cash crop and livestock farming throughout the remaining study area. The agricultural aspects of the corridor are discussed on pages 27 and 28 of the Environmental Assessment.

Adverse impacts on the agricultural community are minimized by using existing roadways over 80% of the length of the project and by following property lines between farms and fields wherever possible, over the balance of the project.

Although the predominant land use within the corridor is agricultural, there are a number of single family homes that have been constructed adjacent to township roads throughout the study area.

A number of area residents expressed concern at the change in character that the development of the selected route would have on the roadways presently servicing their properties.

The selected alternative crosses a number of watercourses including the Holland River immediately south of Cook Bay. The significance of the various watercourses is discussed on pages 18 to 22 of the Environmental Assessment.

The 1,265 acre (512 ha) Holland Marsh Wildlife Management Area is located on the west bank of the Holland River. The Wildlife Management Area is discussed on pages 23, 24, 51 and 52. The selected alternative will separate approximately 165 acres (67 ha) of the Holland Marsh Wildlife Management Area to the north from the remaining 1,100 acres (445 ha) to the south.

Associated Studies

During the course of the study an inventory of available natural environmental base data was carried out. In addition this was supplemented with field reviews. The inventory is included as Appendix C of the Environmental Assessment.

A complete listing of background reports is included in Appendix A of the Environmental Assessment.

Technical and Public Involvement

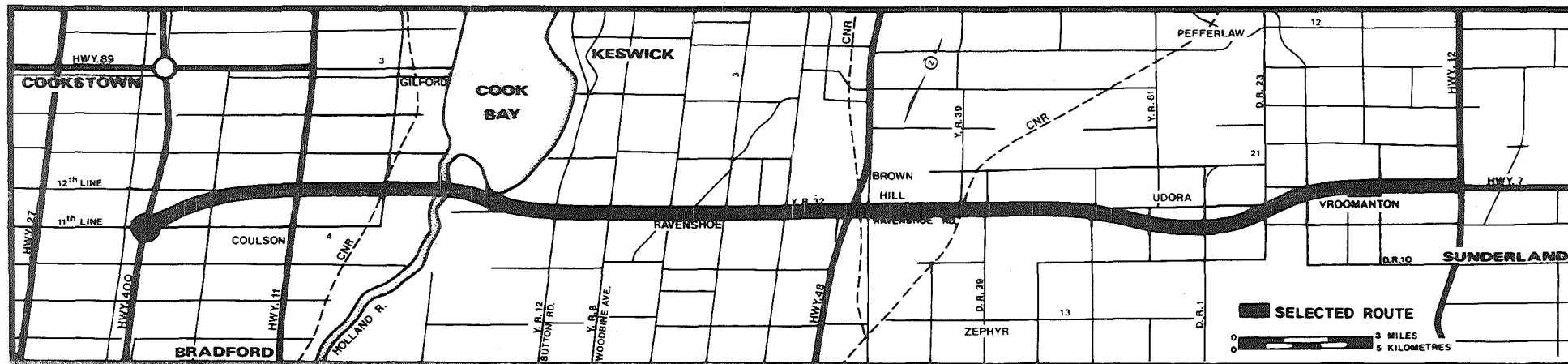
Technical representatives from all potentially affected agencies were involved throughout the study. The specific representatives from each agency are listed on pages 10 to 13 of the Environmental Assessment. A number of these representatives participated in a detailed evaluation of the alternatives as documented in Appendix E of the Environmental Assessment.

Municipal Council reviews were held twice during the course of the study. On each occasion separate meetings were held with the nine affected Councils. The comments of all the Municipal Councils are documented on pages 52 and 53 of the Environmental Assessment.

An extensive list of interest groups were contacted during the study and meetings were held with a number of these groups to discuss any areas of concern. A complete list of the groups that were contacted is shown on page 16 of the Environmental Assessment.

Two rounds of public information centres were held during the course of the study, one in December 1977 and one in April 1978. On each occasion the centres were held at the Honourable Earl Rowe School north of Bradford, St. Paul's Anglican Church in Keswick and the Community Centre in Udora. The first series of centres was attended by approximately 500 people and the second by approximately 350 people. Both series of information centres were advertised in local newspapers and by means of mailed brochures. Approximately 2,500 brochures were mailed to area residents on each occasion.

The public participation program is detailed on pages 14 and 15 of the Environmental Assessment and a listing of interest groups and area resident comments are included on pages 53 to 58 of the Environmental Assessment.



HIGHWAY 89 SELECTED ROUTE