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To whom it may concern:

**RE: Regional Electricity Planning – Northeastern Ontario**

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the regional electricity planning cycle for the Northeastern Region of Ontario. This area, along with Northwestern Ontario, has growing electricity needs as a result of economic growth, electrification, potential new hydroelectric generation, critical minerals and mining electrification.

As highlighted during the webinar on April 26, reliability is fundamentally important to communities in the region. However, communities also want to ensure the transmission grid is ready not just to accommodate anticipated electricity load, but to enable economic growth.

To support the electricity needs in the region, substantial, coordinated transmission upgrades are required. Hydro One is committed to continuing to work closely with the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), generators, local distribution companies and customers in the area to identify and address the local electricity needs.

Hydro One recommends proceeding with a strategically sequenced investment in transmission:

**Stage 1: New 500 kV single circuit (Hanmer x Mississagi) plus an additional 230 kV single circuit (Mississagi x Third Line).**

- This will require upgrades to stations.
- It will be more reasonable and feasible to expand an existing right-of-way than to build a new right-of-way between Timmins and Wawa as outlined in the IESO's webinar.
- This upgrade will meet the immediate needs of the customers in the area and leverage already existing EA approvals, as well as reduce impact on outages in the area.
- Starting with this investment will reduce the timing required to complete the reinforcement and can be done in parallel with the line recommended by IESO which will require site and route options analysis as part of a new Environmental Assessment, adding considerable amount of time to the project.

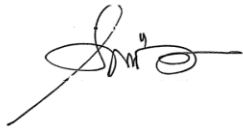
**Stage 2: Convert existing 230 kV circuit to 500 kV circuit (Hanmer x Mississagi) or build a new 230 kv double circuit transmission line (Porcupine x Wawa).**

- This decision should be made in conjunction with future plans for the Porcupine x Hanmer 500kV corridor. If the plan is to incorporate existing generation resources from the North, requiring a second 500kV line from Pinard x Porcupine x Hanmer, reinforcing the 500kV backbone provides a much better solution.
- If the decision is to leave the North-South path unchanged with a single 500kV existing line, then a tie point to Wawa may be useful to secure the area load for the loss of the 500kV.
- The 230kV solution does not provide immediate capacity to the area of growth in the Sault Ste. Marie area and as a result, HONI believes that focusing on getting the power through Hanmer x Mississagi x Third Line should be prioritized first

Creating a clear, transparent transmission strategy in Northeastern Ontario is essential to drawing investment, supporting Indigenous partnership and facilitating economic growth.

Hydro One is ready to continue to work with the IESO, Indigenous communities, industries and stakeholders to build critical infrastructure in the Northeast to support investments in renewable generation, economic growth, as well as the minerals and mining sector. Coordinated and accelerated development of the reinforcements in the area is critical to delivering safe and reliable supply in a timely manner to support local industry and communities.

Best Regards,



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