

Ontario Pumped Storage Project

Community Update
Winter 2024

A Message from the Project Director

As we begin a new year, it's a good time to look back on the busy and productive year that 2023 was for the Ontario Pumped Storage Project. It's also a good time to express our gratitude to Meaford and area residents for their continued involvement in our Project.

The year began on an promising note - in February, Meaford Council passed a resolution of conditional support for the Project. We were encouraged by this decision – a signal that our presence in the community over the last four years is having a positive impact on Meaford residents. Since that time, we've been working with the Municipality to make progress on the five conditions which the resolution is contingent upon. We are particularly eager to advance work with the municipality to develop a Community Benefits Agreement that ensures Meaford sees the benefits of having us in the community.

Our field work and data collection programs have continued throughout the year. We are continuously learning about the local environment and making changes to our Project design based on our findings. We look forward to sharing our results with you later this year when we commence the federal Impact Assessment process.

Now open for more than a year and a half, our office on Sykes Street continues to welcome community members at our weekly coffee chats or on a drop-in basis. We will be launching a new series of coffee chats and look forward to continuing our discussions with the community.

Although we've been at work developing this project in Meaford since 2019, we have a long road ahead of us and these are still early days. We appreciate your ongoing interest and engagement with our Project - your feedback is invaluable, and we look forward to continuing our discussions with you this year.

John Mikkelsen,
on behalf of the Ontario Pumped Storage Team



Letter from Ministry of Energy regarding next steps

On January 11, 2024, TC Energy issued a [media release](#) announcing that it will continue to advance planning for the Ontario Pumped Storage Project (Project) with its prospective partner Saugeen Ojibway Nation.

This decision follows [direction from Ontario's Minister of Energy](#) to the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), outlining next steps related to the Project.

As we continue critical work on the Project, TC Energy will advance the following:

- Immediate work with the Ministry of Energy and the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) to establish a potential long-term revenue framework for the Project, culminating in a report to the Minister by July 31, 2024.

- Work with the Ministry of Energy and the IESO towards a potential cost recovery agreement to recover eligible, prudently incurred expenses associated with pre-development work.
- Work with the Ministry of Energy to assist with the Government's assessment of the Project's societal and economic benefits.

TC Energy is encouraged by the Ministry of Energy's direction and we continue to believe in the important role that the Ontario Pumped Storage Project will have in growing the clean economy and building a sustainable, reliable and secure electricity system.

In the Field

Field studies have been underway since 2020. The information gathered allows us to understand the environment in its current condition and learn about seasonal change. Field data is critical to ongoing planning so that we take all measures needed to protect the ecosystem, Georgian Bay and the local environment.

We are collecting data on the aquatic environment, including fish, fish habitat and water quality, and on land for vegetation, wetlands, wildlife and wildlife habitat, as well as for archaeology and cultural heritage.

The data gathered, along with information and feedback provided by local residents, Indigenous Nations, and environmental agencies, has been and will continue to be used to refine our design and will be the basis for the federal and provincial regulatory assessment processes.

The following provides a summary of the field studies conducted in 2023:

Aquatics: we are continuing a full suite of studies in the waters near Canadian Division Training Centre (4 CDTC) and near Wasaga Beach. Studies include

acoustic detection and netting of fish, habitat mapping, water quality and sediment sampling and the deployment. Studies were conducted in spring (April – May), summer (June-July), fall (September) and early winter (November). Fish habitat assessments were also conducted for a stream originating within the 4CDTC.

Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat: winter wildlife surveys were undertaken early in the year. We continued with amphibian surveys (including Western Chorus Frogs) and bat habitat assessment, followed by reptile emergence and breeding bird surveys. Cameras and acoustic recording devices were used throughout the seasons to record various wildlife presence.

Vegetation and Wetlands: ecological land classification mapping that has been developed for the project continues to be validated; butternut tree presence and health was also assessed.

Archaeological: Field investigations continued in 2023, within the proposed project area; cultural heritage observations were recorded for ongoing assessment.

Local Partnerships

Working in the community, we look to identify areas where we can contribute to strong, safe and vibrant communities through local partnerships and initiatives. Investing in and giving back to the communities where we operate are important parts of being a good neighbour, a trusted partner and an employer of choice.

In 2023, the Ontario Pumped Storage Project team was pleased to participate in a number of important local initiatives – here are some highlights:

- In May, Project team members planted 125 trees with **Tree Canada** just outside of Meaford. Through our partnership with Tree Canada, TC Energy has supported the planting of more than 30,000 trees since the start of 2020.
- Over the summer, the **Great Lakes Plastic Cleanup (GLPC)** and local community partners, **the Rotary Club of Meaford, Cliff Richardson Boats Ltd.** and collaborative sponsor TC Energy, hosted a community event to highlight the importance of protecting Georgian Bay from plastic pollution. Members of the community actively participated in the sorting and characterizing of debris collected in Georgian Bay by an innovative plastic capture technology, the **Seabin**. Following this event, a second Seabin was installed as part of TC Energy's ongoing partnership with GLPC.



Coffee Chats By The Numbers

Since the commencement of community coffee chats in June 2022, we have offered **over 130 sessions**, with **more than 125 people attending**.

Have you joined us yet?

Learn more at:
poweredbymeaford.com/events





- In partnership with **Wounded Warriors Canada**, TC Energy hosted the Ride for Mental Health in Meaford in August. The community gathered 30 people, including 16 riders, and nearly as many first responders and volunteers, to pedal for a purpose, raising over \$9,000 which was matched by TC Energy, for a total donation amount exceeding \$18,000.
- In November, Project team members participated in a **Habitat for Humanity** build initiative in Saugeen First Nation. Team members painted, built stairways and installed trim in three different homes.
- We were also pleased to support a number of local charities and social initiatives including: Christmas On The Bay, Meaford Dragons, Meaford Scarecrow Invasion, OSHaRE (Owen Sound Hunger and Relief Effort), The Salmon Spectacular, Meaford Knights Hockey Team, The Meaford Food Bank and Meaford Curling Club.

We encourage any charitable organization based or operating in Meaford area to apply for cash grants, in-kind donations or sponsorship through TC Energy's **Build Strong website**. It takes only minutes to fill out the online application form.

Get in Touch

We're here to answer your questions. Please contact us by phone or email:

(519) 538-7941
energy_storage@tcenergy.com

ontariopumpedstorage.com or
poweredbymeaford.com

