

Deepwater barge at dawn.

2026 OFFSHORE GEOTECHNICAL PROGRAM WRAP-UP

Understanding conditions beneath Georgian Bay to support responsible project planning

The Ontario Pumped Storage Project is continuing detailed technical and environmental studies as part of its planning and development. During the summer and fall of 2026, TC Energy completed an offshore geotechnical investigation in Georgian Bay adjacent to Army Training Centre-Central in Meaford.

The program was designed to help us better understand the soil, sediment and bedrock beneath the lakebed. This information is important for ongoing engineering and design and will also help inform the federal Impact Assessment process. The offshore work is one part of a broader program of technical and environmental studies being undertaken as the Project advances.

2026 Program by the Numbers

- **Two** temporary barges created stable platforms for crews and equipment to safely drill boreholes and collect soil and bedrock samples from beneath the lakebed
- The barges operated at **six** different borehole locations throughout the program. The locations were between approximately **100 and 750** metres offshore, within the maritime exclusion zone east of Army Training Centre-Central.
- Up to **28 metres long**: the larger deepwater barge measured approximately **12 by 28 metres**, about the size of a basketball court. The nearshore barge was approximately **12 by 18 metres**, about the size of two squash courts.
- About **three metres** above the water: the barge platforms could be raised approximately three metres above the water after their supporting legs were lowered to the lakebed.
- **500 metres** of core recovered: Soil and bedrock samples collected from beneath Georgian Bay are helping build a detailed understanding of lakebed conditions to inform ongoing Project design.
- About **4.5 months** of in-water activity, from barge installation beginning in June through completion of demobilization activities in October.
- **51 water samples** collected: results adjacent to drilling activities were consistent with background and shoreline reference locations, with no exceedances of applicable Provincial Water Quality Objectives or Ontario Drinking Water Standards identified for the parameters analyzed.
- **Local benefits**: With numerous crew members involved, teams stayed, ate and purchased supplies locally, helping support Meaford-area accommodations, restaurants and businesses. In total, approximately **$250,000** was spent locally during the program this year.

Why was this work important?

Geotechnical investigations help build a detailed understanding of conditions below the lakebed. The information collected through the 2026 program will help the Project team:

- Inform engineering and design using site-specific information about subsurface conditions.
- Support environmental planning and the continued development of measures to avoid or minimize potential effects.
- Inform the federal Impact Assessment process, alongside the Project's broader environmental and technical studies.



One of the transport vessels used to move crews and supplies to and from the barges.

Protecting Georgian Bay is a fundamental priority for the Ontario Pumped Storage Project.

Environmental protection measures were in place throughout the offshore program. Drilling methods included the use of inner and outer casings designed to prevent drilling water and sediment from being released into Georgian Bay. Drilling water and sediment were contained and transferred to shore for disposal at a licensed facility.

Water testing was conducted alongside the offshore geotechnical program to monitor changes in the existing water conditions. Results were compared against the Ontario Drinking Water Standards, Provincial Water Quality Objectives, and the Canadian Water Quality Guidelines and the results indicated that water conditions adjacent to the barges were consistent with background locations elsewhere in Georgian Bay.

What happens next?

With the 2026 offshore field program complete, technical teams will continue to analyze and incorporate the collected information into the ongoing engineering and environmental studies that will inform the federal Impact Assessment process.

As Project planning continues, TC Energy is also assessing what additional field studies may be required in 2027, including whether further offshore geotechnical work will be needed.

The information collected through these studies will help ensure decisions about the Project continue to be informed by detailed, site-specific data and a strong understanding of the local environment.

Stay connected: Visit the Ontario Pumped Storage Project website for Project updates and information, including a link to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada Registry, where you can follow the ongoing federal Impact Assessment process and opportunities to participate: *www.ontariopumpedstorage.com*

Good news story

During the early hours of August 5, our geotechnical crew spotted two individuals in distress on the water. Our crew quickly responded, safely bringing both individuals aboard and transporting them back to their family. We were grateful our team was in the right place at the right time to lend a helping hand.

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