

## **Proposed Soy Energy Storage Project**

# **COMMUNITY AND INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

**Renewable Energy Systems Canada Inc.**

**November 2022**

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## Acronyms, Abbreviations & Definitions

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**BESS**, Battery Energy Storage System

**CEP**, Community Engagement Plan

**Class EA**, the pre-approved environmental assessment planning process under the *Environmental Assessment Act*

**EAA**, *Environmental Assessment Act*

**E-LT1 and LT1 RFP**, refers to the Expedited Long-Term Reliability Request for Proposals (RFP) and Long-Term Reliability RFP, respectively, as administered by the IESO to address electricity needs within Ontario

**IESO**, Independent Electricity System Operator

**Indigenous Community**, means a First Nation Community or Métis Community

**Hydro One**, Ontario's primary electricity transmission and distribution service provider

**MW**, megawatt

**MWh**, megawatt hours

**PIN**, property identification number, see detailed definition in Appendix B of this document

**RES**, the project proponent, Renewable Energy Systems Canada Inc.

**Site**, means the real property upon which the BESS project is to be situated

**Stakeholder**, a person, business, or group with an interest in the project, including but not limited to members of the public, agencies, municipalities, and interest groups

**SCRCA**, St. Clair Region Conservation Authority

# Introduction

The Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) in Ontario has asked proponents of electricity generation and storage projects to submit applications (proposals) for energy contracts. The purpose of this process, referred to as the Expedited Long-Term Reliability Request for Proposals (E-LT1 RFP) process, in addition to any subsequent Long-Term Reliability Request for Proposals (LT1 RFP), is to competitively acquire cost-effective reliability services to meet emerging electricity system needs and increased demand, as well as address the refurbishment of nuclear generating units and expiring contracts for existing generating facilities. Under the E-LT1 RFP, Renewable Energy Systems Canada Inc. (RES) has been identified as a qualified applicant with the experience and capability to successfully develop, construct and operate the facilities or electric services acquired through this process.

RES is undertaking the required activities outlined in the IESO's Draft E-LT1 RFP, including community consultation prior to submitting a proposal. Should RES be awarded an IESO contract for this project, various permitting and approval processes will be required for the project to move ahead, including completion of the Class Environmental Assessment for Minor Transmission Facilities (Class EA) process in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* (EAA).

## Project Description

The proposed project consists of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), referred to as the Soy Energy Storage Project, located on a single parcel of land within the Township of Enniskillen. This parcel is located just east of Oil City between Oil Heritage Road (County Road 21) and Gypsie Flats Road, adjacent to the existing Hydro One Networks Inc. (Hydro One) transmission corridor just north of Courtright Line (County Road 80) (see **Figure 1**).

BESS installations use an array of batteries to store the electricity drawn from an existing power source (i.e., the adjacent Hydro One lines) during off-peak hours and discharge that energy later when it is needed. The battery system itself consists of interconnected modular units, similar in size to shipping containers. The entire system would then interconnect with the adjacent Hydro One lines via a new transformer substation and switching yard.

The BESS facility would be fenced and fully enclosed. Currently, a total area of approximately 8 to 10 hectares (20 to 25 acres) is being considered, with the potential for storage of up to 350 MW (1,400 MWh) of dispatchable electric capacity. More detailed project information will be developed and made public should the project be awarded a contract by the IESO.

## Purpose of this Community Engagement Plan

This Community Engagement Plan (CEP) has been prepared to inform stakeholders of the communication and consultation activities that RES currently intends to undertake for the proposed Soy Energy Storage Project during the E-LT1 RFP process. This CEP also provides a high-level outline of RES' long-term consultation commitments should the project be awarded a contract and be subject to the Class EA process.

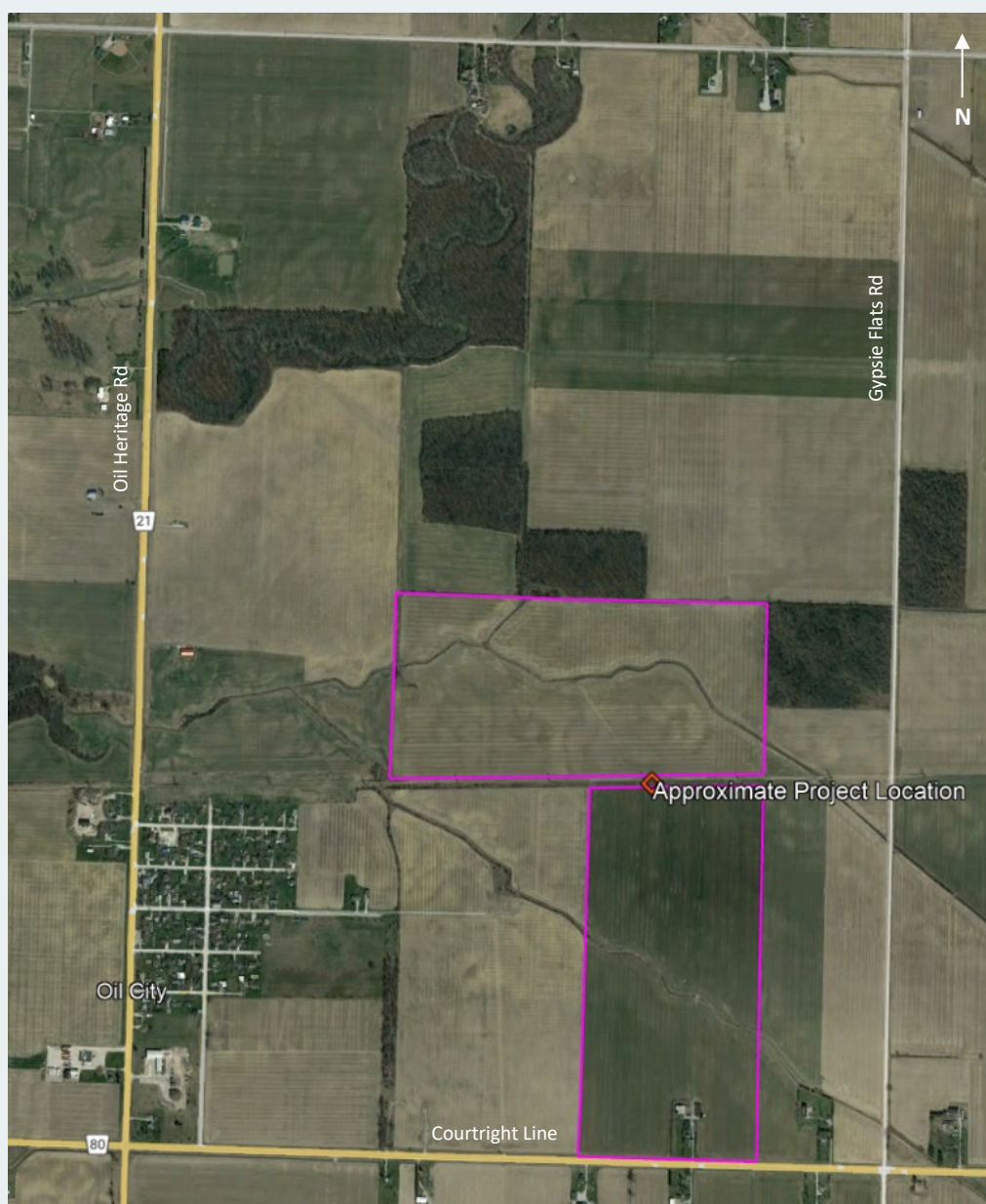
The goal of this engagement plan is to ensure that a high level of transparency is maintained with the public and stakeholders as the project progresses. We understand that different communities have different expectations regarding the form, frequency, and nature of communications, consultation, and engagement. As such, this CEP is intended to be a "living document" that

outlines a communications and engagement process that could change subject to the requirements and expectations of the local community. A copy of the CEP will be made available on the project website.

### **The Proponent**

Renewable Energy Systems Canada Inc. (RES) is the project proponent and will submit the project proposal to the IESO. RES is an industry leader having developed or built more than 25 large-scale renewable energy projects across Canada. Within Ontario alone, RES has developed or constructed 17 projects totaling over 700 MW of wind, solar, and energy storage capacity. RES brings a breadth of experience in project development that guides its planning and this CEP. More about RES and its experience, values and sustainable mission statement can be found at [www.res-group.com](http://www.res-group.com).

**FIGURE 1: GENERAL PROJECT LOCATION**



## 2.0

## Consultation Principles

RES understands that effective stakeholder consultation and community engagement is important to the success of our projects. Keeping the community informed, giving stakeholders the opportunity to provide input, creating opportunities for discussion, and responding to stakeholders in a timely manner are key objectives of effective consultation. Stakeholder input is highly valued by the RES team. We see it as a critical component of project planning and development. We understand that we need to gain the trust of communities that we are new to and providing various opportunities for dialogue is one way of developing that trust.

The following key ideas form the basis for our proposed engagement process:

### Transparent Project Information

Providing accurate, specific information in the proper context is key to allowing stakeholders to understand the project and the development process. RES aims to be open and transparent about the project and the associated timelines for approvals, construction, and ultimately operation of the facility.

### Wide-ranging Consultation

RES wishes to collaborate with a broad range of stakeholders and present opportunities for groups and individuals to provide feedback. If you have an interest in the project or have questions, we want to hear from you. Meaningful and open dialogue can lead to improved decision-making, problem solving, issue resolution, and the mitigation of impacts. RES will arrange for additional consultation activities as needed.

### Meaningful and Timely Responses

Responses to stakeholders will answer any questions being asked as directly as possible. RES aims to promptly return phone calls and confirm receipt of emails, and as needed, provide detailed responses or information within a reasonable timeframe. All communications will be documented and taken into consideration in developing the proposed project.

## 3.0

## Consultation During the E-LT1 RFP Process

Consultation required as part of the IESO's E-LT1 RFP process includes providing notification of a public meeting, releasing information on the project via a website, and meeting with the local community to introduce the project and gather feedback. Information on these activities is provided below, including a preliminary schedule for the activities to be undertaken during the E-LT1 RFP process.

Consultation under the E-LT1 RFP process is just a first step. Following this, should the project receive a contract from the IESO, RES will begin a comprehensive consultation and engagement program as part of the Class EA process (see **Section 4**). During this time, detailed project information will be published for public review and additional engagement opportunities will be made available. Consultation with the community will be ongoing and collaborative.

## 3.1

**Key Project Stakeholders and Interested Parties**

RES understands that a variety of individuals and groups may be interested in this project. An initial mailing list has been developed and will be updated throughout the consultation process as new stakeholders and interested parties are identified. Individuals on the mailing list will receive a copy of the upcoming Notice of Public Community Meeting for the E-LT1 RFP process and all future project notices should the project receive a contract from the IESO. The initial mailing list currently includes the following individuals or groups:

- Property owners located within approximately 1km of the proposed project site (please see below for an explanation of how this information was obtained);
- Indigenous communities that, in the judgment of RES, may be affected by or otherwise interested in the project (please see below for an explanation of how these groups were identified);
- Township of Enniskillen;
- County of Lambton; and
- St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA).

As part of the future Class EA process, other groups such as government review agencies and additional Indigenous communities will be added to the mailing list, as applicable. RES will also consult with the local municipality to identify any special interest groups which may have an interest in the project. These groups will be contacted to determine their level of interest and, if applicable, will be added to the mailing list.

## 3.1.1

**Identifying Landowners**

A significant attempt was made to accurately identify applicable landowners. RES took the following steps:

1. Properties immediately adjacent to and within approximately 1 km of the project site were mapped and their Property Identification Numbers (PINs) were recorded.
2. RES staff visited the local land registry offices and matched the PINs with records of ownership. Any recent transfers of property were captured in this way.
3. The records of ownership were then compared to information on the municipal tax roll assessments. This captured any revised information from the time a property was purchased to the current tax year so that if someone were living elsewhere (e.g., renting their property) their revised address could be obtained. If, however, a landowner had recently moved but had not yet updated the municipality with their new address (for property tax purposes), RES would be unable to obtain a current address. If this situation applies to you, please contact RES directly.

## 3.1.2

**Identifying Indigenous Communities**

To identify Indigenous communities that may be affected by or have an interest in the project, a preliminary search was completed using the online “Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Information System” (ATRIS) to identify communities located within 100 km of the project site. These included:



- Aamjiwnaang\*
- Caldwell First Nation
- Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point\*
- Chippewas of the Thames First Nation\*
- Mississaugas of the Credit
- Métis Nation of Ontario
- Moravian of the Thames\*
- Munsee-Delaware Nation\*
- Oneida Nation of the Thames\*
- Walpole Island First Nation

Those communities affiliated with the Southern First Nations Secretariat are marked with an asterisk (\*).

Preliminary outreach will include project notification letters sent to the identified Indigenous communities via Canada Post. It is recognized that the traditional Indigenous engagement process is completed separately from local community engagement. The opportunity for meetings will also be offered to Indigenous communities via in-person or virtual meetings as part of the future Class EA process, if applicable.

Subject to IESO contract award and initiation of the Class EA process, a formal request will be made to the Ministry of Energy for any additional Indigenous communities to be contacted. At that time, formal consultation and engagement will be initiated with Indigenous communities based on community-specific protocols and preferred methods of engagement.

## 3.2

### Project Website

The project website is [www.SoyEnergyStorage.com](http://www.SoyEnergyStorage.com). Here you will find the following:

- **Community Engagement Plan** – This CEP will be posted on the project website at least 15 days prior to the first Public Community Meeting.
- **Project Information** – Mapping of the project area as well as other key information will be provided. This will be posted on the project website at least 15 days prior to the public meeting.
- **Notice of Public Community Meeting** – A copy of the notice will be posted on the project website.
- **Meeting Summary Report** – This report will summarize the public meeting, including the information presented at the meeting and comments or questions received and how they were answered.
- **Project Updates** – As the project evolves or changes are made to the IESO E-LT1 or LT-1 RFP schedule, we will issue updates through the project website to ensure that the public remains properly informed.

As the project proceeds, the project website will be regularly updated and additional materials posted, including but not limited to, formal Class EA notices, reports, technical studies, and presentation materials.

## 3.3

**Notification**

Project information and notification of key consultation activities will be distributed by the following means:

- **Direct Mailings** – a notice will be mailed to everyone on the mailing list, including all property owners located within approximately 1 km of the project site.
- **Project Website** – the project website will provide updates and information on consultation activities as well as information on the project.

A copy of the notice will also be provided to the Clerk of both the Township of Enniskillen and the County of Lambton.

## 3.4

**Public Community Meeting**

The public meeting will be held in the project community at a convenient location. The meeting will be an open house to share information with the public and consult with stakeholders about issues of importance to them. The meeting will be held in the early evening, mid-week, to allow for maximum attendance. The format of the meeting will be casual, with attendees able to drop-in at any point throughout the meeting to view a series of information panels on the project and to ask questions and discuss the project directly with RES staff. Project staff will be on hand to speak with everyone who wishes to be engaged.

We hope that participants will take the time to communicate and express any comments or concerns they might have with the project.

The meeting will provide members of the public with an opportunity to:

- Meet RES staff face-to-face;
- Obtain information about the project;
- Share thoughts, opinions, concerns and/or support for the project;
- Discuss the project with other stakeholders; and
- Have their questions answered.

At the meeting RES will provide preliminary project information, including:

- Information about RES;
- Details about the IESO's E-LT1 RFP process and associated timelines;
- General overview of the project study area;
- Preliminary environmental and social considerations; and
- An overview of the Class EA process.

A Meeting Summary Report will be prepared after the meeting to document the information presented, the number of people who attended, the comments/questions received, and other relevant information. A copy of the report will be posted on the project website within two weeks of the public meeting.

## 3.5

**Additional Engagement Opportunities**

If needed or specifically requested, additional public meetings, group meetings, or individual meetings may be scheduled to address feedback from the public, Indigenous communities, or review agencies.

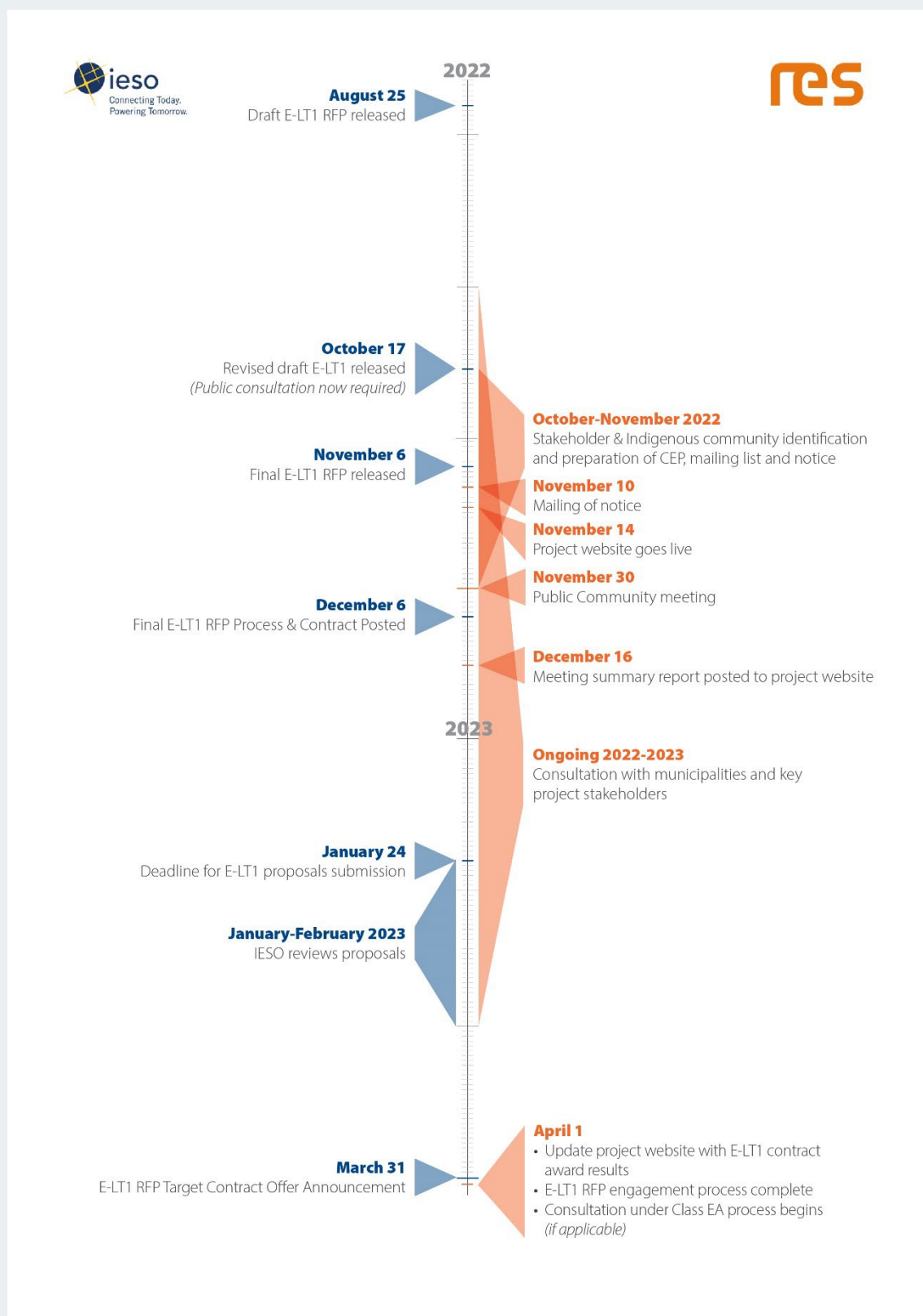
Depending on the feedback received from stakeholders through the E-LT1 RFP process, additional consultation opportunities during the Class EA process may include other methods or consultation tools (e.g., online meetings, social media, etc.).

## 3.6

**E-LT1 RFP Process Consultation Schedule**

**Figure 2** provides an overview of the timeline for the consultation activities during the E-LT1 RFP process in the context of the IESO submission timeline. The dates for consultation and engagement activities are subject to change pending further project development, feedback from stakeholders, and other factors such as changes in the IESO process schedule.

FIGURE 2: E-LT1 RFP CONSULTATION SCHEDULE



## 4.0

## Consultation During the Class EA Process

If the project is awarded a contract from the IESO, completion of the Class EA for Minor Transmission Facilities (2022) process will be required. A Class EA is a document that sets out a standardized planning process for classes or groups of activities in order to meet the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act* (EAA). Class EA processes apply to projects that are carried out routinely and have predictable environmental effects that can be readily managed.

The Class EA process includes the completion of various technical baseline studies, evaluation of the potential environmental effects of the project, development of mitigation measures to minimize or avoid adverse environmental effects before they occur, and identification of future commitments and environmental monitoring requirements.

The consultation started under the E-LT1 RFP process will be expanded upon under the Class EA process. If a contract with the IESO is received for the project, RES will share new project information with the public at key milestones (e.g., Class EA commencement, release of the draft report for public comment, etc.) and provide additional engagement opportunities to assist in refining the design, mitigation measures, and future commitments.

RES will approach stakeholder consultation under the Class EA process with the principles of transparent and meaningful engagement with all relevant stakeholders and the public.

## 5.0

## How You Can Get Involved

Community feedback is encouraged now and over the course of the project. If you have comments, require further information, or would like to be added to the project mailing list, please contact:

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Montreal, QC H2T 2A4  
Email: [Soy.EnergyStorage@res-group.com](mailto:Soy.EnergyStorage@res-group.com)

**Please contact us at any time.**

If you have accessibility requirements to participate in this project, please contact us.