

Study Description

An **Environmental Impact Study** is an assessment of a development proposal in, or adjacent to, a natural heritage feature, function and/or system and identifies what impact the proposed development will have on the area, feature and/or function, and any mitigation or offset measures to be taken to enhance or protect the feature.

Purpose

- To outline potential impacts on natural heritage features, functions and/or systems
- To propose mitigations to offset impacts
- To determine compliance with relevant sustainability and land use policies

Who should prepare this?

A qualified environmental professional with expertise in species identification, biological, ecological and/or environmental functions and processes. All reports and drawings must be stamped and/or signed and dated by a qualified professional, licensed in the Province of Ontario.

When is this required?

To support a development proposed within or adjacent to a natural area, system and/or feature, or is reasonably expected to have adverse effects on the area, system, feature or function.

Applications which may require an **Environmental Impact Study** include:

- Official Plan Amendment
- Zoning By-law Amendment
- Plan of Subdivision/Condominium
- Consent to Sever
- Site Plan

Required Contents

- Describe the development proposal in relation to the existing natural features and functions on the subject lands and adjacent lands
- Determine if natural features of the subject lands function or contribute to the functioning of core and/or corridor habitat
- Describe the surrounding environment including biophysical inventory, specifically indicating species at risk (including vulnerable, threatened and endangered species)
- Examine the functions of the natural features, their sensitivity and significance
- Identify and map the location and extent of sensitive or significant features
- Identify and map the proposed areas of direct and/or indirect impact on the natural features and their ecological functions, or the impact of development on the function of the land as core or corridor habitat
- Identify any lands to be preserved in their natural state or enhanced
- Identify alternative mitigating measures to address the negative effects of development on the natural features and their ecological functions, including measures for avoidance and setbacks for development
- Review requirements for natural heritage feature offsetting/compensation
- Identify the potential for restoration and/or creation of wildlife habitat

- Include a monitoring program to measure the impacts of development over time, which should include consideration for potential long-term induced impacts and post-construction adaptive management strategies to address such potential impacts
- Examine the cumulative impact of the existing proposed and potential development, including the impact on groundwater function and quality
- Recommend how the proposal will maintain, restore, protect or enhance the natural features and ecological function of the area
- A description of potential impacts to the features and functions identified as part of the study (note that negative impacts may result in a denial recommendation without mitigation or offsetting)

What else should we know?

An ***Environmental Impact Study*** should begin early in the development process when there is the greatest opportunity to design in harmony with the natural environment.

Pre-consultation with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (for Species at Risk) is strongly recommended to ensure that all requirements are incorporated into the first draft of the study.

What other resources are available?

Section 3.5 Natural Heritage, Natural Hazards and Resources and Schedule H Natural Heritage Resources of the Official Plan:

<https://www.barrie.ca/City%20Hall/Planning-and-Development/Pages/Official-Plan.aspx>

Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority planning resources:

<https://www.lsrca.on.ca/permits>

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority planning resources:

<https://www.nvca.on.ca/planning-permits/planning-guidelines>

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Natural Heritage Planning Resources for Municipal Planning:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/natural-heritage-planning-resources-municipal-planning>

Notes

If the proposed development is revised, the study/report shall reflect the revisions by an updated report or letter from the author indicating the recommendations and conclusions are the same.

Please note that a peer review may be required. The cost of the peer review will be borne by the applicant.

Please note that the requirements of this study may vary depending on the nature of the proposal. This will be determined through the pre-consultation process and in consultation with any applicable external agencies.

If the submitted study is incomplete, is authored by an unqualified individual, or does not contain adequate analysis, the application will be considered incomplete and returned to the applicant.