

APRIL 2025

# ENVIRONMENT NEWSLETTER

## NWAC's Impact Assessment Project

2024-2025

The Impact Assessment Act (IAA), first enacted in 1995, has been subject to mandatory reviews every five years since 1999. A significant development occurred during the 2019 revision, when consultation with Indigenous communities became a required component of the impact assessment process.

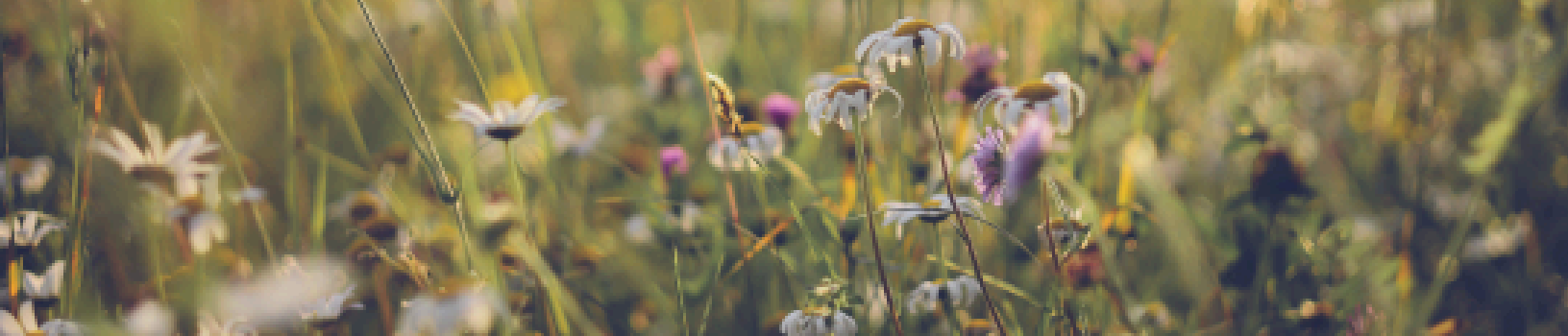
In the fall of 2024, the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) partnered with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) to host five engagement sessions—four virtual and one in-person—focused on proposed revisions to the IAA.

A total of 95 Indigenous women in all their gender diversity, representing diverse identities and perspectives, participated in the roundtable sessions to learn about the impact assessment process, ask questions, and provide feedback. Their input—grounded in environmental expertise, Traditional Knowledge, and lived experience—was captured in detailed feedback reports prepared by NWAC. These reports were submitted to the IAAC for consideration in order to improve the formulation of the IAA.



**“ I THINK [AS] INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, WE SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY. WHEN WE LOOK AT AGREEMENTS, WHEN WE LOOK AT THE LAND, WHEN WE LOOK AT THE WATER, WE SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY. HAVING THESE CONVERSATIONS IS REALLY IMPORTANT. THAT YOU BRING THESE THOUGHTS TO WHOEVER IS MAKING THOSE DECISIONS SO THAT THEY CAN START INCORPORATING THIS MINDSET MORE INTO PROCEDURES...IT IS NOT SO TO THE BOOK, BUT WE CAN ACTUALLY ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF NOT ONLY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND COMMUNITIES BUT [OF] THE LANDS.**

— Roundtable participant  
(Sept. 20, 2024)



# Education Outreach

MARCH 2025

At the end of March, Kenzie Tyler, Senior Policy Advisor in the Environment Unit and project lead for NWAC's Impact Assessment Project, was invited to deliver a presentation to a third/fourth year Environmental Impact Assessment class in the Department of Geography, Environment and Geomatics at the University of Guelph. The invitation stemmed from previous discussions related to Indigenous Health Impact Assessments between NWAC and the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health.



The presentation titled, *Indigenous Gendered Perspective of Canada's Environmental Impact Assessment*, focused on the lived experiences and feedback from the Indigenous women, in all their gender diversity, that attended the engagement sessions in the fall of 2024.

While the IAA explicitly emphasizes the importance of engaging with Indigenous women on multiple occasions, over the past six years, many of these individuals, still feel there is a significant lack of proper and meaningful engagement throughout the process.

Ensuring the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous women, in all their gender diversity, in the consultation process leads to more accurate and holistic assessments. As primary caretakers and stewards of the land, water, and natural resources, Indigenous women hold invaluable knowledge and deep-rooted connections to these ecosystems. Many identify as Indigenous scientists—individuals who observe, understand, and intuitively feel when Mother Earth is unwell. She is more than the planet we live on—she is our relative, our guide, and the source of our life.

“There is no human health without biodiversity.”

- Anonymous



Photo: Athabasca, AB, Canada  
Before & After

(Sourced from: [http://earth.org/data\\_visualizations/the-future-of-canadas-oil-sands/](http://earth.org/data_visualizations/the-future-of-canadas-oil-sands/))