

| FACTOR GROUP | SECTION 2 : SUMMARY/RATIONALE |
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| Natural | <p>B2 is strongly preferred over B3 and preferred over B1 with regard to the natural environment, for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B1 requires a new crossing of the Shawanaga River, whereas B3 requires a new crossing of Rock Island Lake, which has substantial Type 1 fish habitat. While all three alternatives cross various watercourses and open water wetlands/beaver ponds/small waterbodies, for B2 these are essentially extensions of existing crossings. Therefore B2 is preferred with regard to fisheries and watercourse impacts, followed by B1. B3 is least preferred. B3 significantly fragments the Shawanaga Deer Yard at its core (which is the largest deer wintering area in MNR Parry Sound District), impacts an area of moderate potential for EMR habitat (species at risk), and encroaches upon an area containing stick nests for Red Shouldered Hawk (species of special concern). The edge of the deer yard is impacted by B2, however the encroachment into this area is minimal compared with the significant impact of B3. B2 does not significantly impact sensitive wildlife habitat. B1 does not impact the deer yard, but does cross high potential EMR habitat (species at risk). Overall, B2 is preferred, as additional impact is contained to the area already disturbed by the existing highway. B3 is therefore least preferred, followed by B1. There is no significant difference with regard to wetland impacts– B2 is slightly preferred because disturbance is contained to the area immediately adjacent to the existing highway. B1 and B2 do not impact designated or policy areas, whereas B3 fragments a large section of Enhanced Management Area E119r, a large, remote access EMA containing sensitive features such as Rock Island Lake and the Shawanaga Deer Yard. B1 and B2 are strongly preferred over B3 with regard to designated/policy areas. |
| Social | <p>B2 is preferred over B1 and B3 with regard to noise and community impacts, for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B1 and B3 potentially increase noise levels (on permanent residences on the Shawanaga First Nation with B1, and on seasonal residences on Rock Island Lake on B3). In particular, cottages on Rock Island Lake, which currently enjoy a relatively undisturbed and serene natural environment, would potentially experience a significant change in ambient noise conditions with B3. Noise impacts on residences in close proximity to B1 would be less significant as they currently front onto Shebeshekong Road, whereas residents on Rock Island Lake primarily front onto a low volume access road or have boat access. B2 would have relatively low noise impact, potentially affecting residences already experiencing traffic noise from the existing highway. B2 is preferred over B1, and B3 is least preferred with regard to noise. None of the alternatives is anticipated to displace residences, and although B2 directly impacts more residential accesses (for residences along the existing highway), this can be mitigated by interchange and/or service road crossing locations. In addition, although B1 and B2 results in greater community severance within the Shawanaga First Nation compared to B3 (by separating the residential area on the east side of the existing highway from the residences and community facilities in the western part of the First Nation lands), B3 significantly impacts recreational/hunting areas and traditional use areas. In this case, B3 is least preferred because of the significant encroachment into ESA west of the existing highway, which has very high quality natural and recreational values. Overall, the higher impact on recreational and traditional land use areas associated with B1 and B3 outweigh the residential access and community severance issues associated with B2, as these can be mitigated in part by service roads and interchange/crossing locations. B2 is preferred over B1, followed by B3. |
| Economic | <p>Each alternative has advantages and disadvantages with regard to the economic environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B1 and B2 have the highest potential for economic benefit to the Shawanaga First Nation by providing opportunities for commercial development adjacent to the highway on First Nation lands, and improving access to the community. Where B2 likely displaces the existing First Nation business located on Shebeshekong Road at existing Highway 69, B1 results in a loss of visibility for this business from the new route. Both alternatives provide similar opportunities for new or relocated commercial ventures adjacent to the new highway. B3 is not located on First Nation lands, and therefore offers limited (or no) commercial opportunities for the First Nation. Business opportunities are significantly limited along B3 due to the sensitive natural environment features and restrictions on development within the EMA. While B2 impacts a greater number of forestry access compared to B1 and B3, alternate access could likely be provided, either from a service road in the vicinity of Shebeshekong Road, or from Shebeshekong Road itself. B1 impacts fewer forestry access roads because there are fewer forest resources on the west side of the existing highway in this area. The likely displacement of the existing gas station at Highway 69/Shebeshekong Road with B2 results in a higher potential for waste/contamination problems compared with B1 and B3, which do not impact lands with known or suspected contamination issues. B3 is least preferred with regard to the economic environment, as it provides no commercial/business opportunities. B2 and B1 provide more opportunities for economic development in proximity to the highway, with no significant differences in this regard. The impacts associated with displacement of the existing Shawanaga First Nation business with B2 or loss of visibility and additional out of way travel to the business with B1 likely make these alternatives somewhat equal. Therefore, B1 and B2 are both strongly preferred over B3, and are considered similar in terms of overall preference. |
| Transportation | <p>B2 is slightly preferred over B1, and strongly preferred over B3 for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no significant difference in terms of physical features for the two alternatives, with B2 requiring more watercourse crossings (although these are extensions or twinning of existing crossings), and B1 requiring one additional road crossing. It is anticipated that the cost of B3 is significantly higher than B1 and B2, due to the encroachment on Rock Island Lake and constructing a new alignment through a highly sensitive natural environment. Therefore, B2 is preferred, followed by B1. Although B2 has a higher risk of temporary impacts during construction (due to potential delays and disruption during construction of the twinned lanes and interchanges while maintaining traffic), it provides significantly higher flexibility in establishing contract limits by not requiring temporary connections from new alignment sections to the existing highway. B1 and B2 both provide good connectivity to the Shawanaga First Nation community, whereas B3 provides less connectivity because the new highway is moved away from the community. B2 is preferred. Although it has very slightly greater extent of major swamp/soft ground and slightly poorer drainage potential, B2 has more open topography and fewer potential unknown or deep foundations. B1 has slightly greater extent of major swamp/soft ground compared to B3, but has a larger proportion of area with no swamp/soft ground, and better foundation potential. Overall, B2 is preferred for geotechnical factors, followed by B1. B3 is least preferred. |

