



5. EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE PURPOSE

This Evaluation of Significance Report was completed to evaluate if natural features found within the project location and adjacent lands within 120 m are significant/provincially significant or, where necessary, need to be treated as significant. This report is consistent with Section 27 of *Ontario Regulation 359/09*, which states that a person who proposes to engage in a renewable energy project shall evaluate any information available to the person relating to natural features, including all information obtained during the records review, site investigation and in consultation with regulatory agencies, stakeholders and other interested and relevant parties. The aim of the Evaluation of Significance Report is to evaluate the natural features shown on the Site Investigation Maps (see **Site Investigation Report** and summarized in **Table 1** above), in accordance with paragraph 3 of subsection 26(3) of *Ontario Regulation 359/09* to determine:

- If a natural feature is significant if it is a woodland, a valleyland or a wildlife habitat; and
- If a natural feature is provincially significant if it is a southern wetland, a northern wetland, a coastal wetland, an area of natural and scientific interest (earth science) or an area of natural and scientific interest (life science).

If a natural feature identified during the site investigation has not been previously evaluated by the MNR, it requires evaluation using criteria and procedures established or accepted by the MNR. Woodlands and valleylands are only assessed for significance if they are south and east of the Canadian Shield as shown in Figure 1 in the *Natural Heritage Assessment Guide for Renewable Energy Projects (MNR 2011a)*. Where appropriate studies to determine the significance of a wildlife habitat have not been conducted. As per Appendix D of the *Natural Heritage Assessment Guide for Renewable Energy Projects (MNR 2011a)*, a wildlife habitat may be treated as significant if a commitments are made to undertake studies prior to construction. Wildlife habitat treated as significant will be clearly identified in this report and the necessary commitments made in the EIS (MNR 2011a).

Species at risk listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* and provincial *Endangered Species Act, 2007*, with the potential to interact with the project location and/or adjacent lands, are being considered in consultation with the appropriate agency. Reporting related to the protection of species at risk is being provided to the appropriate agency under separate cover.



In addition, the MNR is responsible for administering approvals and permits related to certain resources and land uses. The applicability of these resources and land uses within the project location and adjacent areas will be outlined in a separate Approval and Permitting Requirements Document (APRD) being submitted to the MNR for parallel consideration with the NHA documentation. This reporting format meets the NHA requirements, as set out in *Ontario Regulation 359/09*, and is consistent with the direction provided by the MNR.