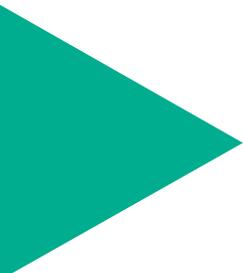




# Fact Sheet



5.0 Environmental  
Assessment Methodology



# Fact Sheet:

## 5.0 Environmental Assessment Methodology

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### Key Facts

- ▶ Conduct science-based assessment of Project effects on environmental, social, economic, health, and heritage aspects.
- ▶ Develop mitigation and avoidance strategies for identified potential effects.
- ▶ Provide conclusions on residual and cumulative effects that could result from the Project.

A common *Environmental Assessment Methodology* was used by scientists to identify, assess, and characterize potential effects on water, soil, air, plants, animals, and humans that may result from the Project. Using a common methodology allows technical and scientific experts to understand how interaction between the Project, environment, and community may result in negative effects, and how these potential effects relate to one another.

A transparent and thorough evaluation of Project effects is critical to having regulators, Aboriginal groups, and community members understand the Ajax Project, and aid the technical experts and scientists involved in Project design to avoid or minimize potential impacts of the Project.

### ▶ What is Studied

The environmental assessment process in B.C. is based on five “pillars,” or broad categories, of effects: environmental, social, economic,

health, and heritage. For each pillar, a number of “valued components” (VCs) are identified and form the basic foundation for the assessment. VCs typically depend on the type of project and its activities, on the surrounding environment, and on particular issues of concern to government, stakeholders, and Aboriginal groups.

The selection of VCs differs for every project and is partially based on what is important and unique to the community and area. The VCs to be covered in this assessment were chosen based on:

- Concerns raised by Aboriginal groups;
- Feedback from the public and stakeholders;
- Scientific knowledge and experience from other projects;
- Input from local, provincial and federal governments;
- Official community plans and other regional planning documents;

- Legislative requirements; and
- Feedback provided by community groups established for this process, including a Community Advisory Group and Working Group representing all stakeholder groups.

## ► Methodology

The following table describes the steps involved in the environmental assessment. A detailed discussion of each of these steps, along with examples, can be found in Chapter 5 of the Ajax Application/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Understanding the Pre-Project Conditions	Experts collect data to understand the natural environment and social setting in their current conditions. Knowing the “baseline” conditions gives experts and scientists a foundation against which changes can be predicted, and actual changes monitored.
Establishing Assessment Boundaries	Define boundaries of time, geography, and applicable regulations or laws that encompass the scope of the assessment and are drawn, sometimes differently, for each VC.
Predict Potential Effects of the Project	Experts use baseline conditions and an understanding of Project components and activities to predict how the Project will interact with and affect the natural and human environment.
Identify Mitigation Measures	KGHM Ajax Mining Inc. (KAM) works with the technical experts and scientists to identify practical and achievable ways to avoid or minimize the potential effects of the Project.
Assess the Residual Effects of the Project	After mitigation measures are considered, technical experts and scientists re-examine the interaction between the Project and VCs to see if potential effects remain.
Identify Potential Cumulative Effects	Experts examine the residual effects of the Project in combination with the effects of other developments or activities in the area that either exist today or are planned.
Identify Mitigation Measures for Cumulative Effects	KAM works with the technical experts and scientists to find ways to avoid, reduce, or manage potential cumulative effects.
Residual Cumulative Effects	Experts re-examine the potential cumulative effects and assess their significance, then declare them “significant” or not and provide the reasons for their conclusions.

# Questions & Answers

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► **Does the Assessment Methodology Take into Account What is Most Important to Kamloops?**

Yes. The assessment process ensures that feedback from the community is carefully gathered to understand precisely what local people are concerned about and what they want to see addressed in the assessment. These considerations factor into the topics studied in the assessment.

► **Will All the Potential Effects Identified by the Assessment Occur?**

No. The purpose of the assessment is to look broadly and conservatively at the Project to predict any and all potential effects, no matter how unlikely, then to find ways to avoid or mitigate them through Project design and planning.

► **Is the Assessment a Transparent Process?**

Yes. All the data collected is available for public review. Additionally, government officials, community members, and Aboriginal groups were closely involved with KAM's team of scientists and technical experts throughout the assessment process.

► **Did KAM Have to do This?**

Yes. An environmental assessment is required for major industrial projects such as the Ajax Project.



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