

PUBLIC NOTICE – RESTRICTIONS TO MINING EXPLORATION

For immediate release - March 20, 2024

This is a public notice that [Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg](#) (NN) and [Biigtigong Nishnaabeg](#) (BN) have identified areas north of Lake Superior that are off-limits to mining exploration and development.

These areas are of high cultural value where mineral exploration and development would be damaging to the communities. This information has been routinely shared with the government of Ontario.

These core cultural areas are located on lands over which both BN and NN have asserted Aboriginal Title. These two First Nations first provided the provincial and federal Crowns with notice of Aboriginal title in 1979, and are in settlement discussions with the Crown. By asserting Aboriginal title, BN and NN have given notice to the Crown that they did not cede their lands, or agree to share their lands, through the signing of a treaty.

On December 16th 2020, Ontario placed a [Notice of Caution](#) in its Mining Lands Administration System (MLAS) which alerted the mining industry to the presence of Aboriginal Title Claims in the region.

Despite this Notice of Caution, Ontario continues to allow mining claims to be registered within the identified Aboriginal title areas at locations Ontario knows to have been deemed by the communities as off-limits to mining activity.

Ontario's policy to not consult with First Nations prior to registration of mining claims, and Ontario's unwillingness to clearly tell the mining industry that there are exclusion areas and to refuse permits in these areas, has resulted in mining companies spending time, money, and effort on projects that will not have First Nations support and that will not advance.

Both BN and NN have good relationships with mining companies and recognize the important role that mining plays in the regional economy. The communities support mining in their territories where it is appropriately located, where environmental impacts have been minimized and mitigated, and where there are direct benefits to the communities.

Both communities hope that this public notice, and its [associated map](#), will help develop clarity and certainty regarding areas that are, and are not, suitable for mineral development.

Shapefiles are available for [download](#) to help locate the exact boundaries of areas that the communities have identified as being “off limits”. Mining claims within these areas should be considered dead-end claims.

For more information, please contact:

Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg
Mr. Jesse Gaudette, Manager
Lands and Resources
jesse.gaudette@picmobert.ca
Tel: 807-822-2134

Biigtigong Nishnaabeg
Ms. Juanita Starr, Manager
Biigtigong Nishnaabeg Sust. Dev.
juanita@picriver.com
Tel: 807-229-8900 x221

Important Note: NN and BN have additional constraints to development in their Title Areas, including the protection of fixed-cultural sites (sacred areas, cabins, gathering places, ceremony sites, etc.), critical species and habitat areas. In addition, the communities have identified [major lakes and waterways](#) to be protected as [Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas](#), to be managed under local authority according to the standards of [IUCN Category II parks](#). We recommend that mining companies connect with the NN and BN land departments directly, to learn more about these constraints, and to work on exploration agreements that support prosperous investments in these Title Areas.

