



TEMAGAMI FIRST NATION/ TEME-AUGAMA ANISHNABAI

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 11, 2023

TEMAGAMI FIRST NATION AND THE TEME-AUGAMA ANISHNABAI OPPOSE PROPOSED MNO SELF-GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

Bear Island, Lake Temagami, May 11, 2023: The leadership of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai and the Temagami First Nation are calling upon the Federal Government to halt its plan to proceed with implementing the *Metis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement*, citing numerous concerns related to the flawed research and an opaque process that led to the eventual 2017 recognition of six (6) new “historic metis” communities in the Province of Ontario.

“Teme-Augama Anishnabai people have and will continue to exercise our inherent jurisdiction and stewardship over the land, waters and life throughout N’dakimenan,” said Teme-Augama Anishnabai Ogimaa (Chief) Leanna Farr. “We have learned that the Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is recognizing Metis citizens based on claims that historic and contemporary metis communities have existed and continue to exist within N’dakimenan (Our Homeland). They are also asserting that their member citizens are now entitled to specific Aboriginal rights within our territory. This is concerning given that there have *never* been distinct metis communities within N’dakimenan.”

In 2017 the MNO was able to convince the Province of Ontario that a number of historic metis communities existed prior to effective control. This process involved detailing what the MNO refers to as, “verified metis family lines”, each line identifying one or more, “Metis root ancestors.” Yet, Teme-Augama Anishnabai, including members of the Temagami First Nation, have thoroughly documented their history through oral tradition, fur trade records, and church records. There is clear evidence that the MNO is often recasting well known Teme-Augama Anishnabai as, “Metis ancestors” for the purpose of political gain and Indigenous credibility.

“If you look at their official verified metis family lines from its so-called Abitibi-Inland historic community, you will find that the MNO has claimed not just one, but several of my own direct ancestors as metis,” stated Temagami First Nation Chief Moore-Frappier. “In their Polson verified family line, they claim my great-grandfather Thomas McBride as a documented metis, and in their Saunders-Leblanc line, they claim another set of my great-grandparents, Ellen Friday and Joseph Turner as documented metis. This is absurd. I have old family photos of some of these people hanging in my living room. I wouldn’t be here almost 100 years later, still Teme-Augama Anishnabai, if they were not, also, Teme-Augama Anishnabai.”



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“We find that the MNO’s historical research, as it relates to Teme-Augama Anishnabai, is a fraudulent attempt to legitimize the so-called Abitibi-Inland historic metis community. This is deeply offensive and there is evidence of it throughout key MNO documents,” added Teme-Augama Anishnabai Aanike-Ogimaa (2nd Chief) John (Mitiginaabe) Turner. “Look at the August 2019 issue of the Metis Voyageur, where the MNO announces their so-called self-government agreement. There is a picture of my family, all Timiiaagamiing Anishinaabeg! It includes my great-great grandparents, John (Oocham) and Mary Turner, their son Joseph and his wife Ellen Friday (my great grandparents), and their children and son-in-law. These are the grandparents of all the current Teme-Augama Anishnabai and Temagami First Nation Chiefs (see photo below). All of these families were stewards of traditional Teme-Augama Anishnabai hunting grounds at some point under Teme-Augama Anishnabai sanction. The family even added their signatures to a 1907 petition of Teme-Augama Anishnabai, delivered to the Government, seeking a reserve!”

In 1976, the Teme-Augama Anishnabai exercised its inherent right to determine its “citizens” in an updated citizenship list that was submitted to the courts as part of this action. All known descendants of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai were recognized and confirmed as citizens under Teme-Augama Anishnabai law and governance.

“It is important that any MNO “citizens” claims via Teme-Augama Anishnabai descendancy, and any claims of Métis rights to use and occupy N’dakimenan, be resolved immediately,” added Chief Moore-Frappier. “To date, there has been no consultation with First Nations on proposed self-government agreements that are linked to our people and our lands and this is unacceptable. We are presently receiving notifications from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) that individuals belonging to the “North Channel Métis” organization who claim to be exercising metis Aboriginal rights to erect permanent structures within our territory with the permission of the MNRF (Ontario). The MNO has suggested that we address this through dialogue and yet they refuse to answer our correspondence sent a year ago. What we would really like to know is who these new metis citizens really are.”



Metis Nation of Ontario uses this historical photo of members of Teme-Augama Anishnabai on their website and promotional material. Top L-R: George (Kijik) Turner Sr., Joseph Turner, and Charles Moore Sr., Bottom L-R: Mary Turner (nee McLean), John (Oocham) Turner Sr., Ellen Turner (nee Friday) Emma Moore (nee Turner) at Bear Island, circa 1896

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**TEME-AUGAMA
ANISHNABAI**



**TEMAGAMI
FIRST NATION**

Backgrounder May 10, 2023, News Release

TEMAGAMI FIRST NATION AND THE TEME-AUGAMA ANISHNABAI OPPOSE PROPOSED MNO SELF-GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION

We oppose on two major grounds:

1. Fraudulent claims to Indigenous identity and Indigenous rights in N'dakimenan by the Métis Nation of Ontario; and
2. There has been no consultation by Canada or Ontario with the Teme-Augama Anishnabai and Temagami First Nation as the sole bearers of Indigenous Rights in N'dakimenan. Our Inherent Rights are now recognized - not created - and protected by Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

We take issue with any claims by “citizens” of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) claiming Métis status as descendants of John Turner of N'dakimenan. This is an example of clearly fraudulent identity claims. Oocham (old John Turner), from Moose Factory, who had arrived N'dakimenan in the 1860's as an employee of the HBC and who built a new post at Bear Island, was adopted under Teme-Augama Anishnabai laws and provided a trapping ground. (See map.)

In 1975, we exercised our inherent right to determine our “citizens” and all known descendants of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai. Both status and non-status Indians were recognized and confirmed under Teme-Augama Anishnabai law and governance, supported by the Temagami First Nation.

We have received no response to our letter of June 24, 2022 issued to MNO President Margaret Froh: “We remind you that any Indigenous persons with historic ties to the land and waters of N'dakimenan have been naturalized into the Teme-Augama Anishnabai and the boundaries of N'dakimenan are not disputed by our First Nation neighbours. Accordingly, the Teme-Augama Anishnabai and the Temagami First Nation are the sole rights bearing entities within N'dakimenan entitled to protections under section 35. For greater clarity, there are no Métis communities who hold established or credibly asserted rights within N'dakimenan.”

Similarly, since 2020, we have been protesting a North Channel MNO member's encroachment onto our territory since he erected a cabin within our territory to facilitate his alleged rights in N'dakimenan. We have repeatedly requested to meet with Ontario to resolve this issue. In our April 17, 2023, letter to Ontario Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, Graydon Smith, we write: “As we have previously asserted, the Teme-Augama Anishnabai/Temagami First Nation holds established rights within our clearly defined territory of N'dakimenan. We have repeatedly advised that there are no credible claims of Métis settlements on N'dakimenan and that there are no distinct Métis (MNO) Indigenous rights within N'dakimenan. Our citizens include all those Indigenous peoples whose ancestors lived within N'dakimenan and are recognized by the Teme-Augama Anishnabai community; this includes non-status individuals who were previously referred to in the colonial record as unregistered Indians or metis.” MNO President Froh was also made aware of this encroachment on our homeland territory.

Currently, we are in negotiations with Canada and Ontario to settle outstanding land and jurisdictional issues. Both Canada and Ontario negotiators are aware of the MNO issues in N'dakimenan.

N'dakimenan 1890





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Seen here, Teme-Augama Anishnabai Aanike-Ogimaa (2nd Chief) John Turner (Mitiginaabe) with the Métis Voyageur magazine, his ancestors pictured within and on the cover itself. "It's identity theft!"



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