

Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment Workshop



Regional strategic assessment and sustainability

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Agenda

- sustainability
- regional strategic assessment
- the Ring of Fire case, including (maybe) regional assessment
- Eabametoong First Nation's framework for a regional assessment of potential development pathways
- implications for regional strategic assessment in the Slave Geological Province

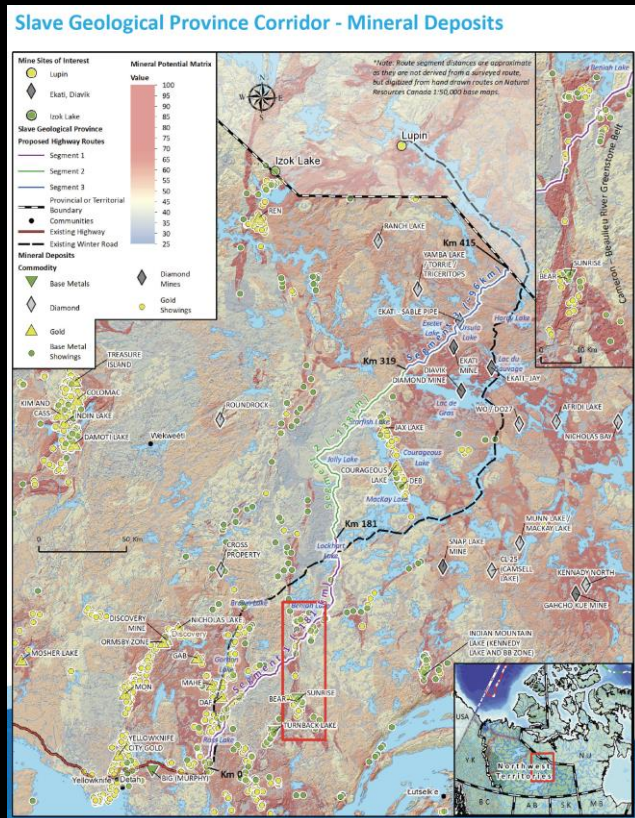
Sustainability in the north



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- lasting wellbeing: environmental protection and community wellbeing across generations
- recognized Indigenous authority and co-governance
- past lessons about negative negative mining legacies
- combines preservation and positive change
- key role of lasting wellbeing

Regional strategic assessment for lasting wellbeing in the Slave Geological Province



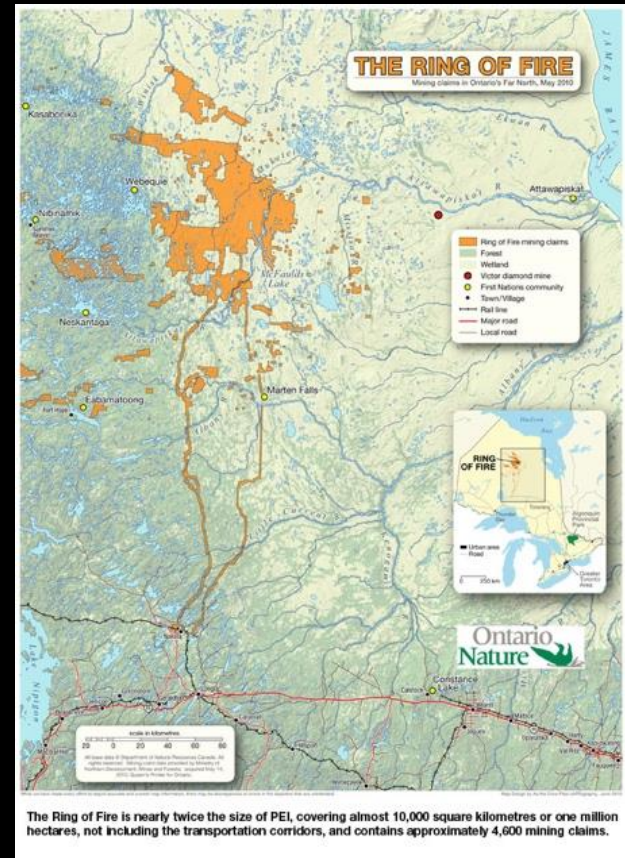
- strengthen the regional basis for moving to desirable futures
- identify and assess development options
- guide development and application of land use plans
- guide planning and assessing particular projects
- likely also guide regionally-relevant policies, programs, regulatory tools associated governance arrangements

Ontario's Ring of Fire

ideal subject for regional strategic assessment?

Big issues beyond the project level

- multiple different metal mining prospects in a new mining area
- cumulative effects of mining, roads, and other infrastructure in
 - a largely inaccessible and undeveloped part of the boreal forest with crucial carbon sinks
 - a region of chiefly First Nations communities and lands
 - communities with major needs; province with big economic aspirations
- alternative development pathways



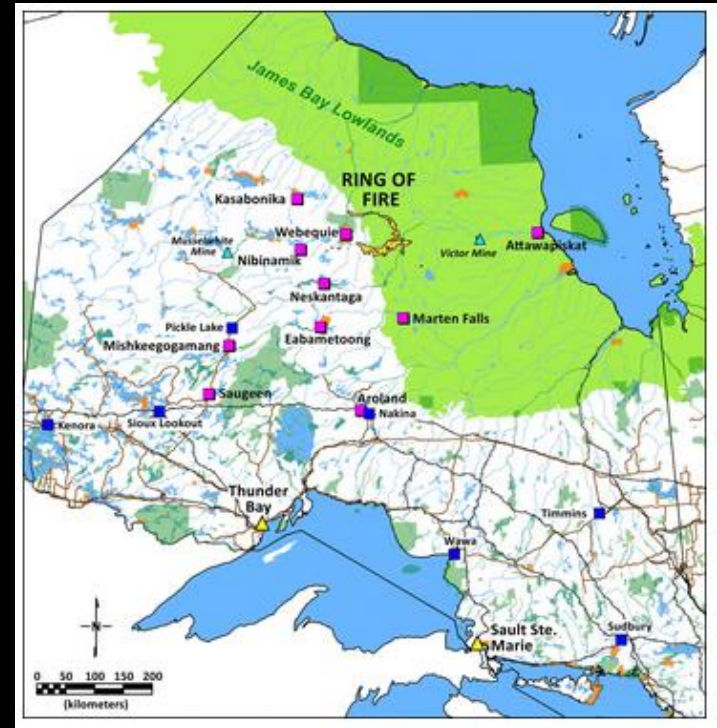
Ontario's Ring of Fire the basic story

- multiple rich orebodies, far from transportation infrastructure, in Indigenous traditional territories
- multiple FNs with limited and strained capacities, no industrial experience, no regional planning, no co-governance structures
- weak project assessments
- early calls for joint panel review and regional assessment rejected
- competing prospects: economic bonanza, poorly distributed community benefits and risks, adverse cumulative legacies



Ontario's Ring of Fire governance strategies

1. regional framework agreement between Matawa Tribal Council and Ontario; terminated by current provincial government
2. Ontario agreements with two communities to support community/mine access roads; federal and provincial project assessment beginning
3. federal acceptance of proposal for a regional assessment, draft terms of reference negotiated with Ontario, without Indigenous authorities

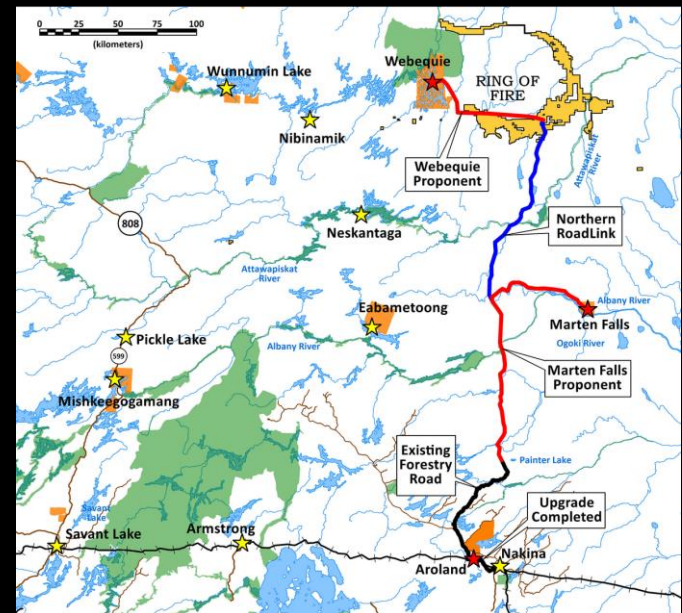


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Ontario's Ring of Fire

implications for regional strategic assessment

- collaboration and foresight are crucial but difficult for conventional government authorities
- much depends on building co-governance capacities, structures, experience and trust (inevitably gradual and easily undermined)
- tensions often centre on immediate openings for advantages for some that pose risks and disadvantages for others
- may be more common ground on shared future needs, aspirations and pathways



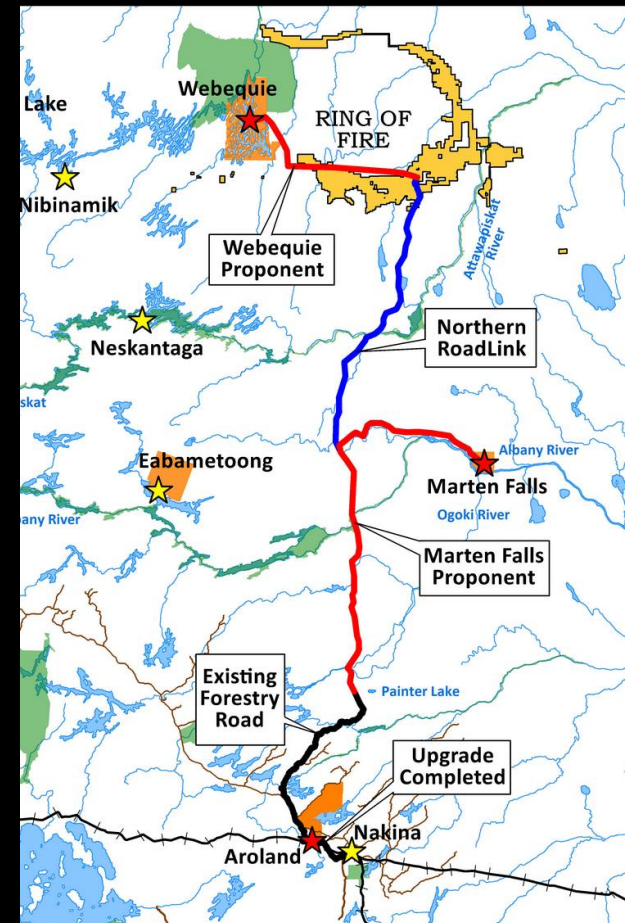
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Ontario's Ring of Fire

a more positive effort in Eabametoong

Eabametoong First Nation

- orange square middle left on map, just west of the proposed roads
- many immediate challenges
- participant in the now abandoned framework agreement and early push for a regional assessment
- developed its own sustainability framework for assessing regional development pathways, projects and other proposals
- wanted a base for choices involving consent



Eabametoong First Nation

Sustainability Assessment Criteria Categories and Sub-categories (2019)

| Sustainability criteria categories | Sub-categories |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Improving community wellbeing | 1.1 Livelihood sufficiency and opportunity, economic equity and diversification, small/Indigenous-owned business expansion 1.2 Social life and interaction 1.3 Community health |
| 2. Healthy environment and relationships | 2.1 People-ecology relationships Community stewardship values and practices Attention to cumulative effects |
| 3. Wisdom and equity for generations | 3.1 Education, community values and decision-making priorities 3.2 Cultural vitality and traditional practices 3.3 Family, youth, and children |
| 4. Open and responsible governance | 4.1 Free, prior and informed consent, Indigenous jurisdiction and decision-making, participatory community governance, capacity building 4.2 Community safety |
| 5. Walking together with respect and precaution | 5.1 Developing resilience, strategic guidance for projects and programs, community and regional adaptive management |
| 6. Combining action, learning and planning | 6.1 Progress towards local opportunity, Increasingly strategic and informed planning, mutually-reinforcing and strategic gains, community learning |

The criteria in sub-category 1.1

| EFN Category | Sub-categories | Criteria/ Questions The * refers to criteria without pre-existing baseline data |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Improving Community Wellbeing | 1.1 Livelihood sufficiency and opportunity | a. Would this option still allow people to pursue a traditional lifestyle (as opposed to a Western lifestyle)? |
| | | b. Would this option increase the availability of employment options within EFN? |
| | | c. Would this option improve local economic conditions in EFN? |
| | Economic stratification and equity | d. Would this option increase the number of members who have participation in on-the-job training or local certification? |
| | | e. Would this option increase the proportion of members employed part-time? |
| | Economic diversification | f. Would this option increase the proportion of members employed full-time? |
| | | g. Would this option increase the proportion of members employed in management or leadership positions? |
| | Small business/ Indigenous-owned business expansion | h. Would this option increase the proportion of members employed in indigenous owned business or partnership? |
| | | i. Would this option increase the proportion of members employed in local band administration or other public service? |
| | | j. Would this option increase the proportion of members employed in mineral exploration, support service, or mine-related company? |
| | | k. Would this option decrease economic stratification in the community?* |

The criteria in sub-category 2.1

| EFN Category | Sub-categories | Criteria/ Questions The * refers to criteria without pre-existing baseline data |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2. Healthy environment and relationships | 2.1 People-ecology relationships | a. Would this option increase the quality of game fish? |
| | | b. Would this option increase the quality of large game? |
| | | c. Would this option increase the quality of small game? |
| | Community stewardship values and principles | d. Would this option increase the quality of other important/ ecologically significant species? |
| | | e. Would this option increase the quantity of game bird species? |
| | | f. Would this option increase drinking water quality in lake and river water? |
| | Socio-ecological systems and stewardship relationships | g. Would this option decrease the presence of abnormalities on game species? |
| | | h. Would this option decrease the presence of refuse or other visible pollutants in traditional territories? |
| | | i. Would the option decrease linear corridors in the traditional territories?* |
| | Cumulative environmental effects and conditions | j. Would this option decrease fossil fuel emissions overall?* |
| | | l. Would this option improve river navigability (considering water levels, dams/levees, etc.)?* |

Potential applications of the criteria/questions by the Eabametoong FN

- evaluating options for community initiatives including community-level planning, collaborations with other communities, assessments of individual projects, impact and benefit negotiations
- maybe in a regional assessment of potential development pathways
- helping to provide a foundations for decisions involving or indicating consent



WawatayNews



Cole Atlin



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Potential for similar criteria/questions in an NWT regional strategic assessment

- regional/strategic assessments of development options (characteristics of desirable futures, tentative pathways, possible future trajectories to avoid or resist or re-direct)
- developing strategic direction to address emerging problems and opportunities
- evaluating particular proposed strategic initiatives, including guidance for individual projects
- deliberations on any matter involving consent



Hey mom, why do they
want to do a regional
strategic assessment in
a province?

At least it's
not Ontario



Photo by Karsten Heuer