

2023

Teme-Augama Anishnabai

Citizenship Law News

***Bigiiweyaan
(coming home)***



Introduction

*The Teme-Augama Anishnabai have lived within N'dakimenan
as a distinct nation since time immemorial.*

*The Teme-Augama Anishnabai have always maintained distinct systems of law and governance.
An integral aspect of governance is the determination of who is a Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizen.*

*The Joint Temagami First Nation– Teme-Augama Anishnabai Council resolved to create a
Citizenship Law in order to exercise the right to Teme-Augama Anishnabai self-determination,
self-government, and self-sufficiency.*



*The objective is to set out the guiding principles used to determine
who is a Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizen;*

*To establish, maintain and administer the citizenship list, to be known as the
Teme-Augama Anishnabai Central Registry; and*

*To ensure the Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizens have a strong identity and a sense of belonging,
so together we can fulfill our obligations and responsibilities to N'dakimenan and future generations.*



A Message from Ogimaa

Boozhoo Kina Weya! Greetings all! Mino Oshki Biboon! Happy New Year!



I want to take this time to share with you about our very important Teme Augama Anishnabai Citizenship Law Bigiiweyaan (Coming Home) initiative.

This initiative is so significant for our people and for our future generations. Citizenship (E'Dbendaagzijig - those who belong) is a key aspect of nationhood for nations around the world.

Without its citizens, there can be no nation!

We know who we are!

We are Teme Augama Anishinabai!

We know that that we have the inherent right and Jurisdiction to determine for ourselves those who belong to our citizenship and our nation.

The intent behind the Indian Act regime has always been assimilation and we cannot rely on that regime to govern and protect our citizenship into the future!

We cannot rely on colonial law to govern who belongs to our people...our citizenship. It is important that we assert our own inherent right to determine our citizenship for ourselves and ensure this is protected for generations into the future. This is so crucial to ensure that our people are connected to our nation and are connected to participate in important Teme Augama Anishnabai decisions and initiatives.

The Teme Augama Anishnabai Citizenship Law - Bigiiweyaan (Coming Home) initiative started several years ago with the appointment of a Citizenship Committee who completed the initial steps and hard work to develop a draft Citizenship Law.

The draft Citizenship Law was shared with our Teme Augama Anishinabai citizens by mail out in the summer of 2020. Since then the Committee has been working very hard with Council to prepare plans for engaging with our citizens about this very important law. Through these engagements we want to inform citizens about the draft Citizenship Law and obtain any feedback on necessary amendments.

We aim to bring a final draft of the law to our citizens in May, 2023 for a vote to ratify the law.

The Committee has been working very hard to organize ways that we can communicate with you and receive your feedback. As we move along with this initiative, we will be sharing via social media, websites, mail outs, BI Blast, and engagements sessions (in person and by Zoom).

If you have any questions or wish to share your perspectives, please reach out and connect with us!

This is our opportunity to use our inherent jurisdiction regarding our citizenship! This is such a positive endeavour for our future generations! Teme Augama Anishnabai Council hopes that you will take the time to learn about this initiative and the draft law and share with us!

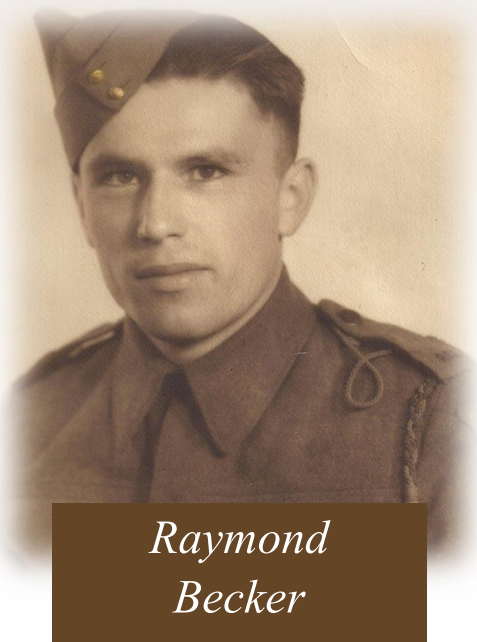
Kind regards,
Ogimaa Leanna Farr

Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizenship Coordinator



Dwayne Becker

Dwayne Becker is the grandson of Raymond Becker. He has been part of the Citizenship Committee for the last 4 years. Together with the group he has built the Citizenship Law Draft which has been presented for approval to Joint Council. After it was approved, it was sent to the Legal Team. The next step was for the people to read and learn about the Draft version with the upcoming information sessions. This Draft has a huge importance to our people of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai. The Value is priceless, and the rewards are the strength to our Lands, water, and all other valuable resources inside our boundaries. Most important is the Sovereignty of our People.



*Raymond
Becker*

*“I look forward to seeing our Citizens
at the Bear Island Vote on
Saturday, May 20th, 2023.”
Miigwetch.*



Our Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizenship Committee



*Chair
Dwayne Becker*



*Co Chair
Kathy Beddows*



*Hugh
McKenzie*



*Michelle
Lalonde*



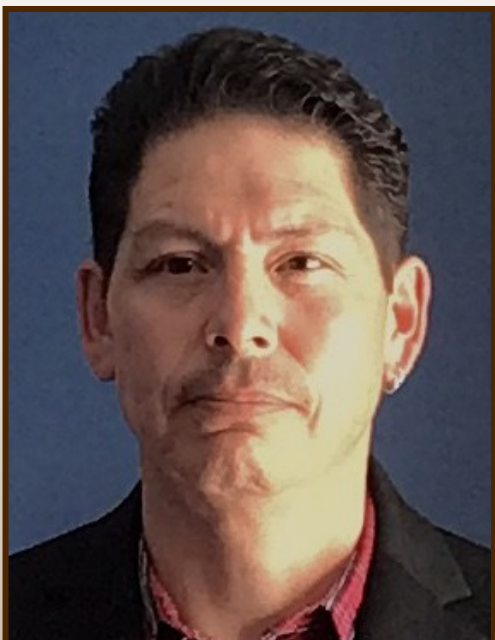
*Laura
Irvine*



*Julian
Cote*



*Caroline
Brown*



*TFN Council Ex
Officio Douglas McKenzie*



*TAA Council Ex Officio
Mary Laronde*



Our Legal Team First Peoples Law

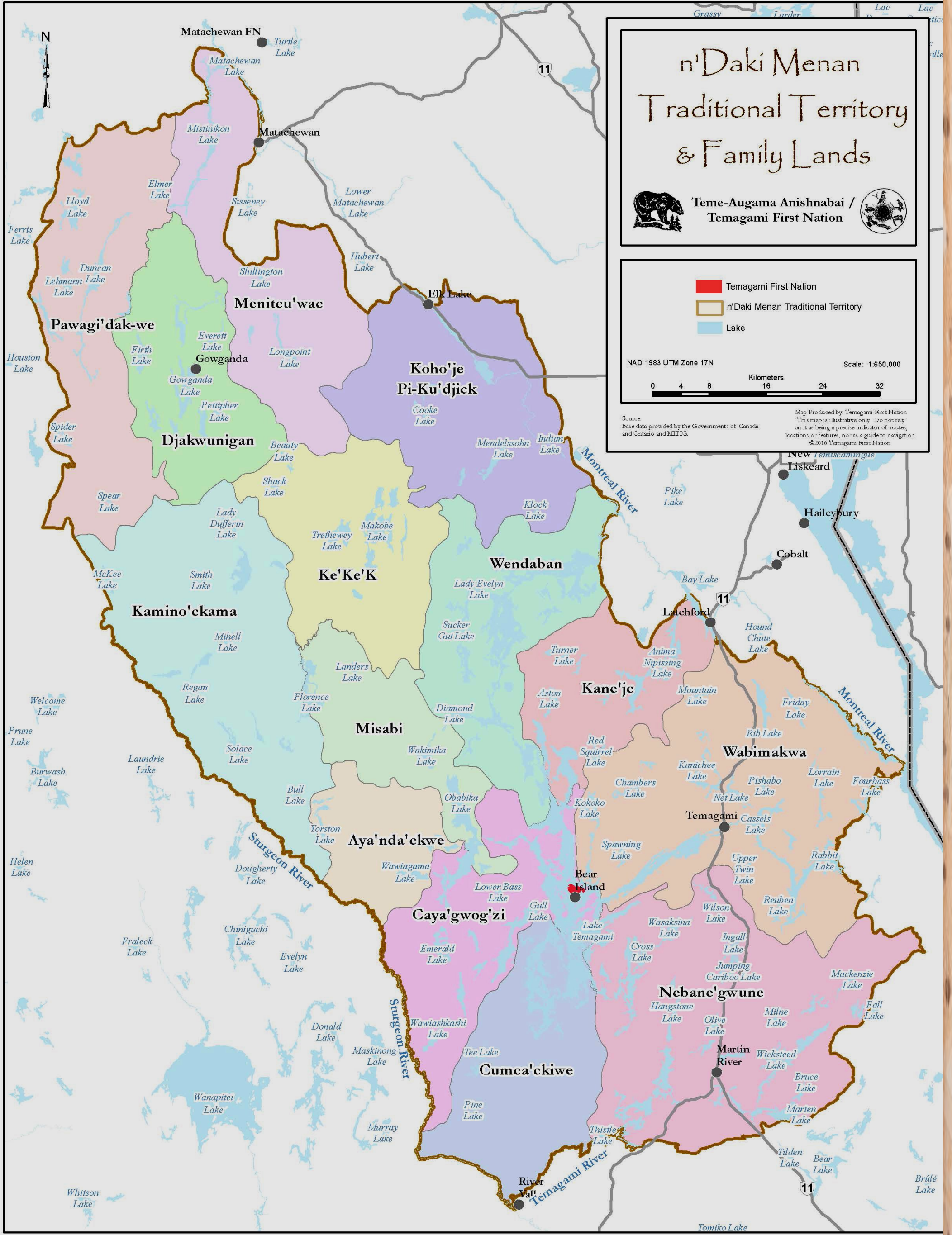
Bruce McIvor

Dr. Bruce McIvor is a partner at First Peoples Law LLP. His work includes both litigation and negotiation on behalf of Indigenous Peoples across Canada. Bruce is recognized nationally and internationally as a leading practitioner of Aboriginal law in Canada. His collection of essays entitled *Standoff: Why Reconciliation Fails Indigenous People and How to Fix It* (Night Wood Editions) was published in the fall 2021. Bruce is a member of the Manitoba Métis Federation.



Geneva Lloyd

Geneva Lloyd is the Director of Operations at First Peoples LLP where she works with the firm's partners and management team to ensure day-to-day operations run smoothly and to help plan and implement First Peoples Law's strategic vision. She also works closely with lawyers to help advance clients' interests by providing project management and planning support. She holds a master's in community and regional planning from the University of British Columbia.

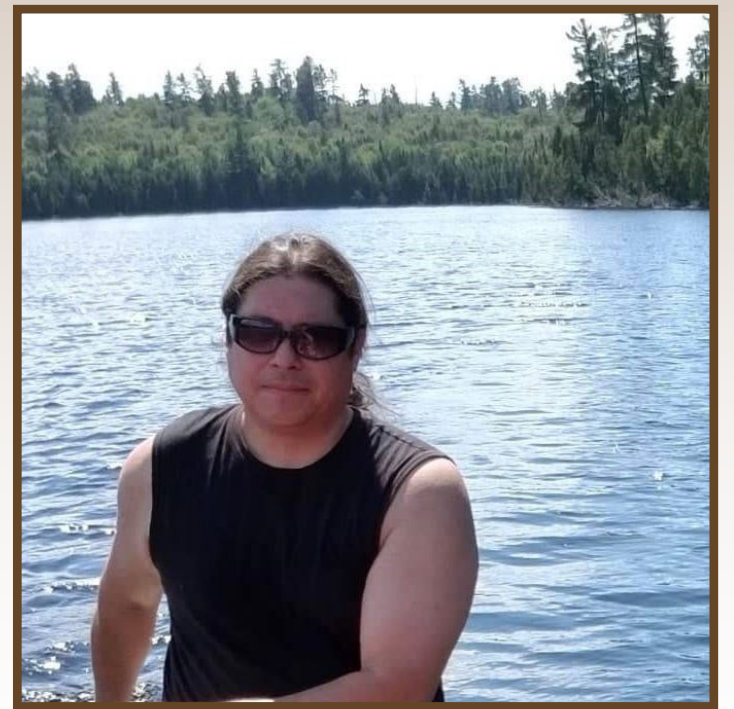


Maang indoodem Mitiginaabe (John Turner)

*NdooDaadam niizhwi-daawnisag Sophia ashij Julia zhinkaaziwag
I am Dad to two daughters, Sophia and Julia.*

Why the term “Citizenship?”

An important aspect of successfully navigating through the tide of colonialism, in the past and continuing today, is to learn to understand and master the colonial languages. Their language and words come with histories and meanings that aren't always fully compatible with Anishinaabeg world views and philosophies. For example, even popular buzzwords in native politics today, such as “sovereignty” have origins in notions of the “absolute power” of monarchs over their lands and subjects. This idea is not reflective of values we have held historically. However, in its modern usages, especially in terms of international law, there are today principles and definitions for the term that we may find suitable. So the defining of terms that we use are a critical part of agreements that we choose to enter into.



“Membership” versus “Citizenship”: an Explanation

These are the English terms we often hear when discussing our being a part of, or belonging to, an Anishinaabe Nation. Although both have origins that are not ideal either, “Citizen” originally referring to an inhabitant of a city, and “Member” referring to parts, organs of the body, or later, a “member of a church” as the “body of Christ”.

However, both terms’ modern and legal usages have evolved. Today the term “Citizenship” has a relevant definition in international law with regards to “Nations”, especially democratic nations that value concepts of freedom and self-determination. “Membership” generally refers broadly to individuals composing a group.

English words are often selected and intentionally used to convey certain “tones” that are employed to influence people (in a subtle way) towards the viewing of their environments from an intended perspective. These influences can last for very long periods, and are still recognizable to us in today’s English, despite our never specifically being taught to be cognizant of such changes. A great example are the terms “perspire” and “sweat”. “Perspire” has Latin roots and came from language of the aristocratic ruling class, “sweat” however came from the language of the conquered indigenous Britons. Today one term still has a more “polite” air about it.

It is no mistake that the term “member” is used in Canadian Laws in reference to First Nation peoples and their registered lists. “Citizens” is reflected in International Law in relation to a free, self-governing people, with the power to create and mould their governments as they see fit. To use such terms in reference to First Nation peoples recognizes that they are on more equal footing in terms of a Nation to Nation relationship.

We do not hear Canada, the US, UK or any Nation refer to their people as “members”; that term would diminish who they are. Accordingly, Canada deems the term “members” as properly applicable to First Nation Bands. It is true that “Bands” are legal entities within colonial law- they were created within that framework by the Federal Government, which controls their membership.

We have on two occasions previously pursued a “Membership Code” through Temagami First Nation, following Section 10 of the Indian Act, which gives Indian Bands a greater degree of control over the membership. Both of these initiatives did not attain the required threshold of support for them to be formally adopted.

It was determined in 2017 to consider a different approach that would flow from within our people as opposed to being something brought in and developed by the Federal Government. Our ancestors half a century ago had determined to argue in Canada’s courts, what seems obvious: That WE determine who we are, NOT Canada. Despite the disturbing parts of Justice Steele’s Decision, he did recognise that it was the Teme-Augama Anishnabay [sic] who were the proper beneficiaries of the action, and he also acknowledged the Teme-Augama Anishnabai’s existing right to determine our own citizenship.

Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizenship lists have not been significantly updated since initiatives in 1992 and 2000. As citizens, unlike within any other “body”, we have an opportunity for creating together a government structure that suits us, that we may change and refine through time, as WE see fit. As a critical step towards the full restoration and rejuvenation of our authentic collective voice as the original Stewards of N’dakimenan, we endeavour to update our Citizenship lists and processes in ways that are transparent and that exceed international standards.

We have to continue the fight to have an ever-greater degree of our inherent indigenous authority recognised throughout N’dakimenan. To truly succeed in these endeavours, it is critical that we follow through and exercise every Inherent Authority that we have defended, fought for and won recognition of. To be clear, to develop and adopt our own Teme-Augama Citizenship Law is not an exercise of diminished colonial power that’s been delegated to some of us within Canada’s terms; rather, it is a bold self-determined exercise of the original and authentic authority that we have inherited from our ancestors.

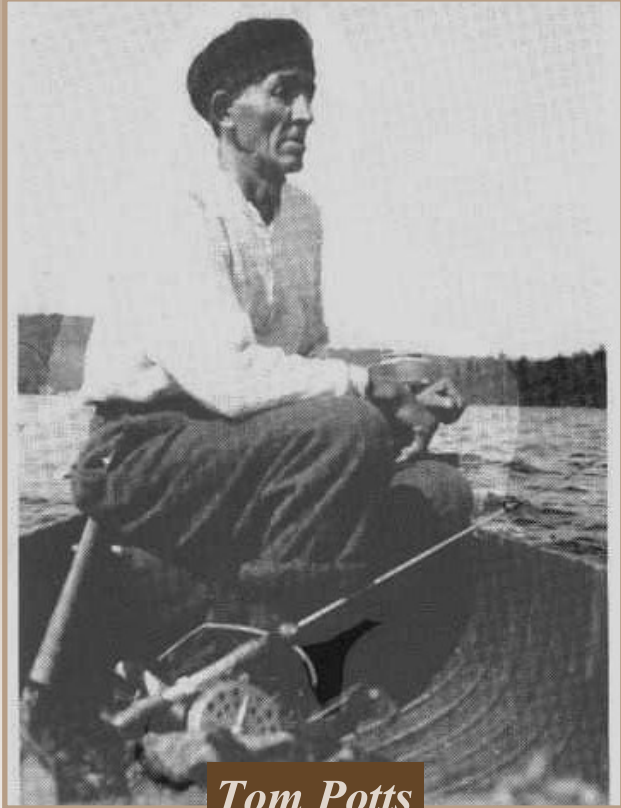


*Patsy & John
Turner*

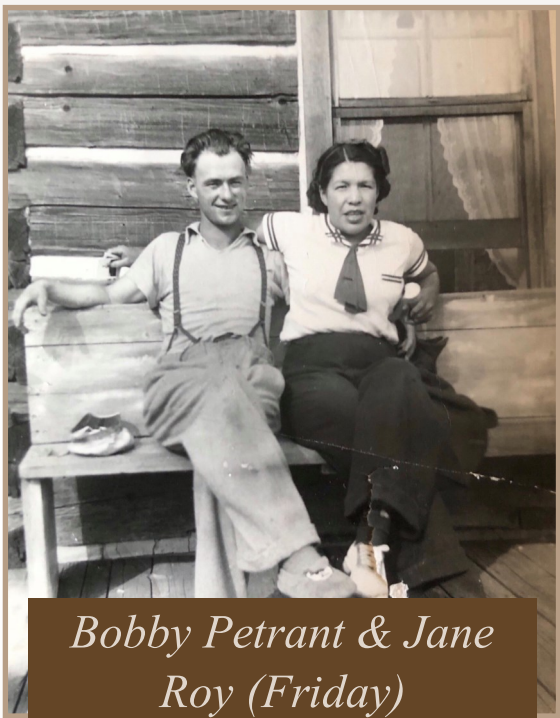




Petrant Family



Tom Potts



Bobby Petrant & Jane Roy (Friday)



Phillip Potts



Rosanne Katt & David Missabie



*St. Ursulas's Church
Bear Island, ON*



Gus Friday



*Rosanne Katt, Agnes Katt,
Charlotte Missabie, Susan Twain*



Donald McKenzie & Tom Potts



*Ellen & Jane Friday
(Turner)*



Emma Turner



Old Jim & William Friday

Excerpts from the Draft Citizenship Law (February 21, 2023 Version)

Section 3- Eligibility for Citizenship

Section 3 of the Citizenship Law describes who is entitled to be enrolled as a citizen. Applicants will be eligible if they show that:

- They are a direct descendant of one of the traditional families of N'dakimenan;
- They appear on one of the official Teme-Augama Anishnabai lists described;
- They are a member of Temagami First Nation; or
- They were adopted as a minor by a Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizen or an individual entitled to be a Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizen.

Children of Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizens may register for citizenship by presenting a long-form birth certificate.



Section 7 - Becoming a Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizen

After the Citizenship Law is ratified, individuals will be able to apply for citizenship. In order to apply, individuals must submit their application to the Enrolment Officer. Applications may be submitted on behalf of children or individuals who are under legal guardianship. Individuals who are members of the Temagami First Nation will be enrolled as citizens automatically.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide all information and documentation required to establish eligibility for citizenship. If information is lacking from the application, the Enrolment Officer will attempt to contact the applicant to request the missing information.

Section 8- How Applications will be Considered

The Enrolment Committee will be appointed by the Citizenship Committee to review applications and determine whether applications meet the eligibility requirements. The Enrolment Committee will attempt to reach consensus on application decisions. If there is no consensus, the Enrolment Committee will make a majority decision. After the Enrolment Committee determines an applicant's eligibility, the Enrolment Officer will notify the applicant of the decision.



Section 9 - Proposed Appeal Process

If an application is rejected, the applicant may appeal the decision. The appeal will be considered by the Appeals Committee.

Individuals who choose to make an appeal will be given a reasonable opportunity to make written or oral submissions to the Appeals Committee.

Written reasons will be provided for all decisions of the Appeals Committee. Individuals whose appeals are rejected have a right to further appeal to Teme-Augama Anishnabai Council.



Kingfisher– Ogiishkimanisii



Questions and Answers on The Draft Citizenship Law and Process

Who can vote?

- All Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizens 18 years and over as of May 20th 2023, and whose names appear on our citizenship lists.
- This includes all Temagami First Nation status Indians the age of 18 or over.
- Citizens who are not sure they are on the citizenship list can contact:
-Sherry Mathias 705-237-8943 ext.120 or Laura Irvine 705-237-8943 ext.101

When will the final vote for the citizenship law occur?

Pending the adoption of the Draft Ratification Process at the Teme-Augama Anishnabai Assembly to be held **March 18, 2023:**

- The ratification process for the FINAL DRAFT Citizenship Law will end on May 20th, 2023 with in-person balloting at Bear Island, ON, from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm est.
- Mail-in ballots must be post marked no later than May 20th, 2023.
- Electronic balloting will end on May 20th when the in-person poll closes at 6:00 pm est.
This marks the end of the ratification process.

How can I get more information?

- Email: citizenship@temagamifirstnation.ca
- Facebook: Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizenship Law
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089185131112>
- Website: [theTeme-Augama Anishnabai.ca](http://theTeme-Augama-Anishnabai.ca)
- Attend the Citizen Engagement Sessions on February 26th, 2023 & March 18th, 2023, on Bear Island and April 22, 2023, in North Bay, On - Both In person and on Zoom.
- Individuals, clans, families, and citizens' groups such as Youth and Elders can request specific meetings to review and discuss the Draft Citizenship Law.

What is the process for voting?

- There will be a vote on the recommended ratification process at the March 18th, 2023, Teme-Augama Anishnabai Assembly on Bear Island.
- Upon approval of the ratification process at the Teme-Augama Anishnabai Assembly, there will be in-person voting, mail-in ballots, and electronic ballots to ratify the citizenship law.

Why are we doing this?

- To exercise inherent jurisdiction over the determination of our citizenship by deciding on the criteria for:
 - Who is eligible to be a Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizen
 - What responsibilities and benefits Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizenship includes
- To decide the processes and procedures for applications for citizenship and the decision-making process on those applications, including an appeal process (due process).
- To ensure the Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizens have a strong identity and a sense of belonging so together we can fulfill our obligations and responsibilities to N'dakimenan and future generations.

How will the Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizenship Law affect Temagami First Nation?

- There is no effect or impact on Temagami First Nation governance, First Nation membership, Indian status, or Temagami First Nation programs and services.

Why is there only a Teme-Augama Anishnabai vote at this time?

- We know who we are! We are all Teme Augama Anishnabai! This initiative is about self determination and inherent rights. We must ratify this law based upon exercising the authority we have inherited from our ancestors: our inherent right. Neither Canada nor any Colonial government has no right to determine who our people are.
- We reject the “Doctrine of Discovery”. We are in a process of decolonization.
- Temagami First Nation is not restricted in its considerations of any determinations it may choose to make in terms of Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizenship, for example, such as choosing to formally endorse the Citizenship Law or not.

Will the government of Canada and Ontario recognize the outcome?

- We do not need recognition by Canada or Ontario. What we need is our own citizens’ recognition of their inherent authority to determine Teme Augama Anishnabai citizenship.

What other steps may be applicable after the vote?

- Assuming the draft law is adopted by the Citizens, we would be determining and administering our own citizenship processes and procedures (i.e.: registry, application process, decision-making processes on granting citizenship, appeals processes and potential amendments).

What is the origin of the draft Citizenship Law?

- The current draft Citizenship Law was developed by the Citizenship Committee in consultation with Teme-Augama Anishnabai /Temagami First Nation Joint Council and First Peoples Law. The draft Citizenship Law is based on Teme-Augama Anishnabai customs and our inherent right to determine citizenship.

How do I offer input on or recommend changes to the Draft Citizenship Law?

- Individuals, clans, families and citizens’ groups such as Youth and Elders, can request specific meetings to review, discuss, and propose amendments to the Draft Citizenship Law. In addition to the above, some planned sessions will be organized.
- Attend the planned information and engagement sessions Feb 26th, 2023, and March 18th, 2023, at Bear Island, ON and April 22nd, 2023, in North Bay, ON
- Email: citizenship@temagamifirstnation.ca
- Phone: (705) 237-8943 ext. 232 (Dwayne Becker, Citizenship Coordinator)



Independence, sovereignty key themes at “Honouring the Past” event



Elder June Twain and Paula Potts set the tone for the ‘Honouring the Past’ information and engagement event on the Draft Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizenship Law held Sunday, February 25, 2023, at the Minowaabandan-gamiing Maawanjihidiwining, the Lakeview Gathering Place, at Bear Island.

“Our youth are looking for our traditions, our ways of doing things,” Elder June Twain said in her opening address.

Kokomis June remarked how happy she was that we are picking up our gifts and bringing back Anishinaabe ways, such as the Round Dance held the night before, and opening our meetings with ceremony to call in our ancestors, asking for their continued strength and guidance.

About the Draft Citizenship Law, our Elder reminded that we need to reclaim our independence to make decisions without interference from outside forces. “This is the way we did things in the past. This is important for those coming behind us.”

Paula Potts offered the opening Migisi drum song. Speaking on behalf of Elder June at our Elder’s request, Paula spoke about traumatic events since the 1800s, and ongoing to this day, that were outlined in a chronology distributed at the meeting. “We are not victims, we are survivors. This document is a testament to the strength of Anishinaabe people. This is what we are passing on to our children. Our strength comes from N’dakimenan and our ancestors.”

Inherent authority, identity in relationship to N’dakimenan

In her opening remarks, Ogimaa Leanna Farr said that the Draft Citizenship Law was about exercising our inherent rights. “The Indian Act was meant to assimilate us. We are exercising self-determination from within and from who we are...This is about our identity as a sovereign nation.”

Chief Shelly Moore Frappier said, “Citizenship, who belongs, is the most important conversation we can have because it is about our identity. This is an exercise of our sovereignty.

Our ancestors want us to do this. This is about who we are and relationship to place. We have to be in relationship to N’dakimenan.”

Aanike Ogimaa John Turner said, “We reject the ‘Doctrine of Discovery’. When we were independent, we made decisions without Canada. If we take away all government interference and exercise our authority – an authority not delegated by Canada - we can cut away those colonial strings.”

Some participants agreed, saying that no mention of

Canada, the Supreme Court of Canada, or the Indian Act, should appear in the document. In the same vein, the use of the term “law” was questioned. It was noted that our own Anishinaabemowin terminology would improve the document.

Newly-appointed Citizenship Committee member, Caroline Brown, presented ‘A Family Divided by the Indian Act: Citizenship and the Journey of Reclaiming Identity and Belonging’. Caroline delivered a powerful indictment of Canada’s arbitrary control of the registration of status Indians as a method to “disappear” Anishinaabe people.

Review, discussion, next steps

The Draft Citizenship Law document was reviewed clause by clause, followed by discussion, questions, and answers. Bruce McIvor, Legal Counsel, remarked that “decolonization is hard work” and “exercising your own authority is an expression of who you are...This is a discussion document. How can you make it better?”

Concerns and questions were expressed about the role and status of Temagami First Nation in the Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizenship Law initiative. Bruce answered that the proposed citizenship law does not change anything regarding Temagami First Nation. “All Temagami First Nation members are automatically on the Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizenship list; Temagami First Nation governance does not change; funding from Canada and programs and services do not change; and Indian status does not change”

About 60 Teme-Augama Anishnabai citizens participated in the “Honouring the Past” event. The next major engagement session, ‘Honouring the Present’, will be held on March 18, 2023, also at Bear Island. The next steps for the Citizenship Committee include analyzing and reporting on the feedback and potential amendments. Other engagements by Zoom and in-person in North Bay, Temagami, and Bear Island, are being planned in addition to the three major feast events.

‘Honouring the Future’ is scheduled for April 22, 2023.

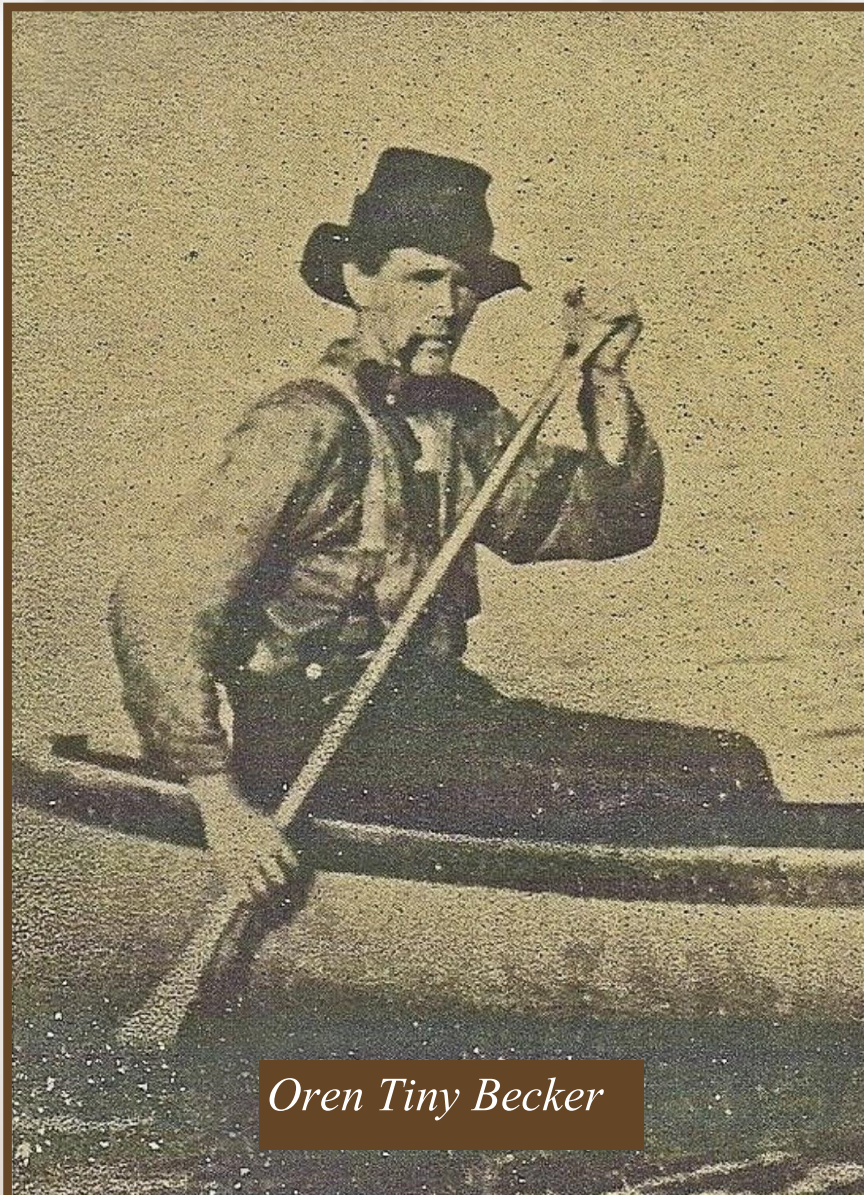
The Citizenship Committee and Leadership are pleased and encouraged with the feedback received thus far. “There were many thoughtful suggested changes to the document, many of which would likely be incorporated into the evolving draft for our consideration,” said Aanike Ogimaa John Turner. “The document will be really improved and strengthened due to direct input from our citizens. Gitchi miigwech.”

-Mary Laronde



Lucy Paul & Alex Paul

*Prior to contact,
we had our own
histories and
methods of
governing our
identity. There
was matriarchal,
patriarchal, clan
and relationship
systems. Before
the Europeans
came to North
America, we were
sovereign nations;
we were
self-governing.*

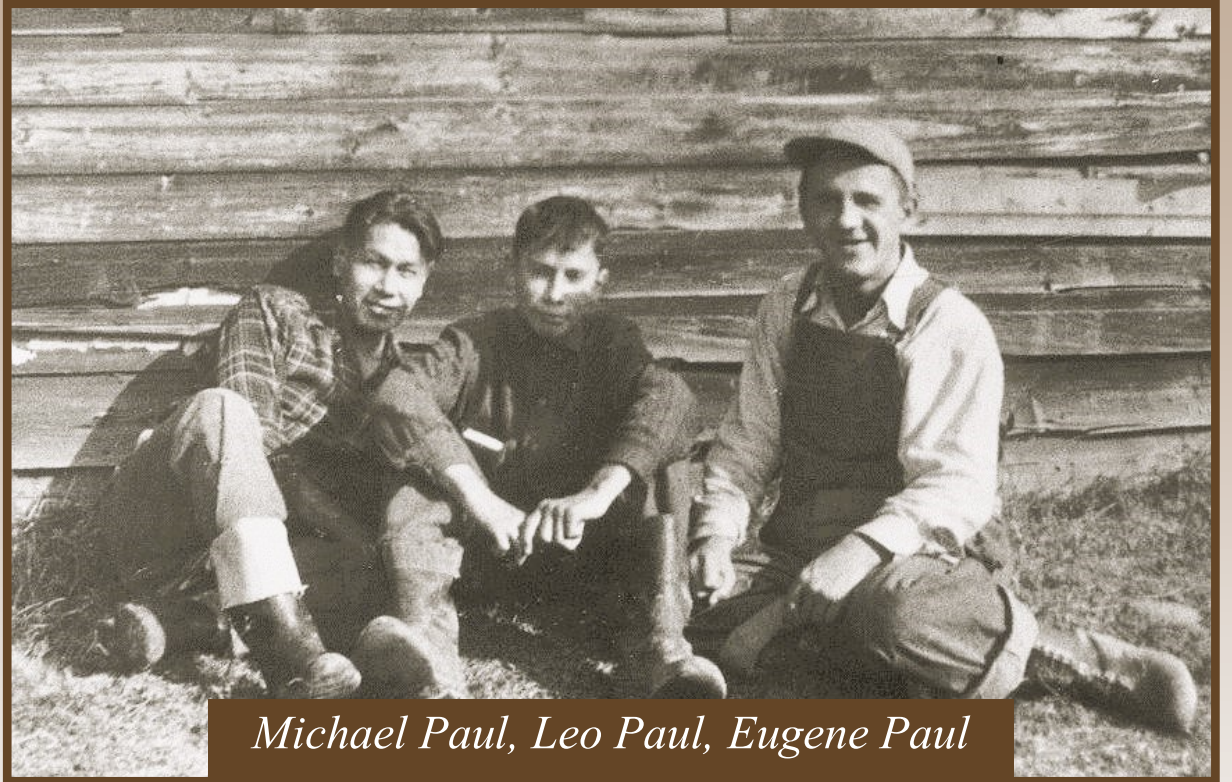


Oren Tiny Becker

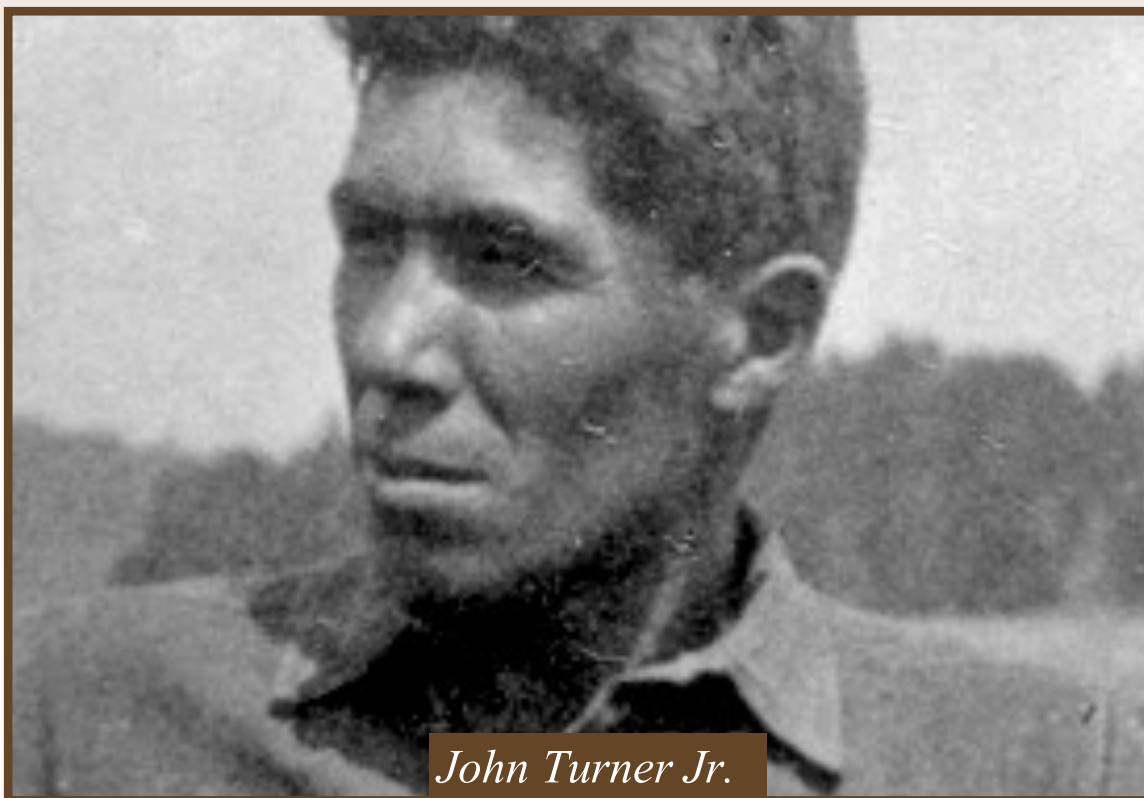


*Frank
Whitebear*

*The Teme-Augama
Anishnabai
(People of the Deep
Water by the Shore)
were gifted
N'dakimenan
(Our Land)
and the
responsibility for its
stewardship by the
Creator.*

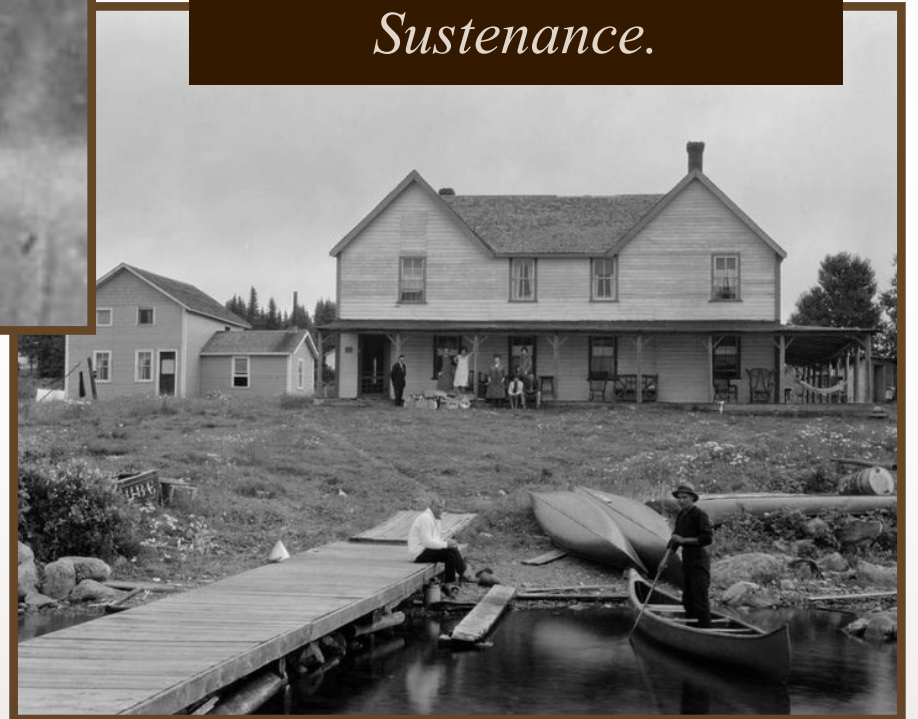


Michael Paul, Leo Paul, Eugene Paul



John Turner Jr.

*From time immemorial
we have lived with the
lands, waterways, and all
life upon N'dakimenan
protecting, nurturing,
and receiving our
Sustenance.*



*The Citizenship Law is a set of
guiding principles to determine who is
a Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizen.*



*The Citizenship Law
ensures that the Teme-
Augama Anishnabai
Citizens have a strong
identity and a sense of
belonging, so together
we can fulfill our
obligations and
responsibilities to
N'dakimenan and
future generations.*



Creator of the Magazine
is
Christine Lalonde (Friday)
Teme-Augama Anishnabai Workplan Assistant

Pictures
Christine Lalonde
Tessa Hope- Temagami First Nation Library
&
The Facebook Group

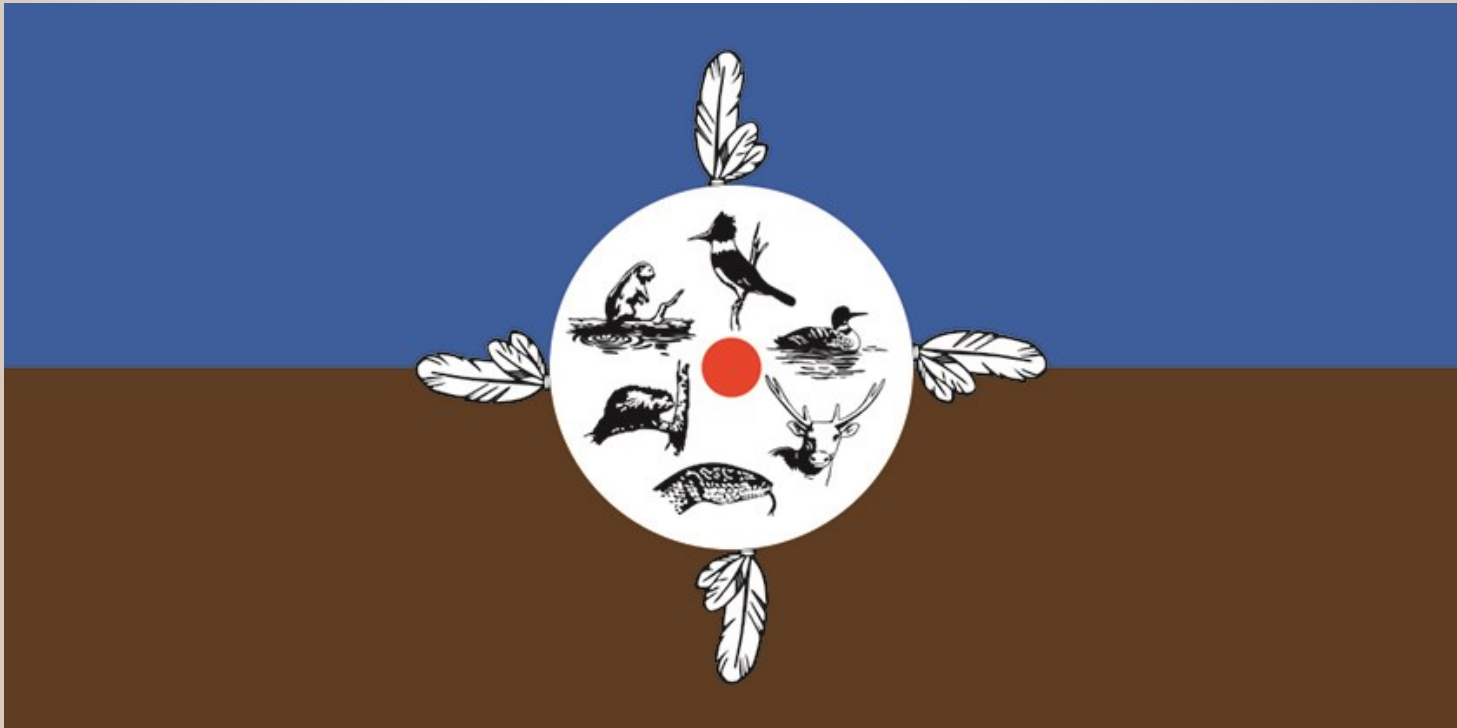
Photo sharing with the purpose of labeling photo's date, location and names

Thank you to all who contributed to the creation of this document.

The Citizenship Law Committee would also like to Thank:
David Laronde for his contributions to the Citizenship Law,
Natasha Fortin for her administrative skills and dedication,
and previous Teme-Augama Anishnabai Chief Randall Becker for
establishing the Teme-Augama Anishnabai Citizenship Committee.

Chi Miigwetch





*To comment on this Proposed Citizenship Law, please
contact:*

Dwayne Becker

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Ph: 705-237-8943 Ext: 232

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