

NI'N AQ NO'KMAQ

DEFINING WHO. DEFINING WE.

UPDATE ON ROUND 2 FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Determining who can exercise Mi'kmaq Aboriginal and Treaty rights is not about Indian status. It's about who is Mi'kmaq, who we are as a people and our identity as a Nation. How we connect with each other has always been grounded in our family roots and relationships. This work is about creating a process that is based upon the ways in which we relate to each other. We cannot exercise our Mi'kmaq Aboriginal and Treaty rights if we don't have our own process for defining who is Mi'kmaq. And we need to protect against individuals who are pretending to be Mi'kmaq when they are not. **We need our own process, and that's what we're working towards.**

L'NUEY'S ROLE

L'nuey, on behalf of the Mi'kmaq leadership, wants to make sure that:

- Rights are being exercised by the Mi'kmaq.
- Resources are being protected and used properly. With rights come responsibilities.
- Resources will be there for future generations.

Every step of the way, we will engage with Mi'kmaq from across the province, on and off reserve, coming back to you at each stage to ask if we heard you correctly and then share our progress.

FIRST STEPS

As part of the first round of engagement, we achieved the following:

- Chose "Ni'n aq No'kmaq" as the name of the process, which translates to "Me and My Relations."
- Ensured everyone clearly understands the work ahead by sharing banners, posters, and a special glossary of terms.
- Conducted 350 interviews, which represents one-third of Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq aged 18+.

The kickoff to the second round of engagement included:

- A podcast summarizing the first round of engagement.
- A community mailout focusing on key terminology.
- A month-long social media campaign.



ROUND TWO: FOUR KEY QUESTIONS

The second round of engagement focused on four key questions based on gaps from the first round of engagement. This is what we heard.

1 Who should be recognized as beneficiaries, and how does that relate to how we define “community members”?

A beneficiary is an individual who receives a benefit and, in this instance, would be able to exercise their Aboriginal or Treaty rights. Nearly half of respondents felt at minimum a beneficiary should be Mi'kmaq of Prince Edward Island. The answers received are starting to provide an understanding of how to define the concept of “community member,” but further research and discussion are needed.

3 Are adopted children included in the process? If so, how?

Most people’s opinion was that if you are raised Mi'kmaq, you are Mi'kmaq, which aligns with traditional teachings about family relations.

2 Should out-of-province Mi'kmaq be able to exercise Aboriginal and Treaty rights on PEI?

57% of respondents said yes, although responses to this question made a distinction between Mi'kmaq from other parts of Mi'kma'ki residing on PEI and Mi'kmaq visiting temporarily. This distinction is important and should be considered going forward.

4 In terms of claiming Mi'kmaq ancestry, how far back do we go? What is needed for proof?

Community members had a vast array of responses with the one consistent recommendation being to ensure individuals have strong genealogical proof.

NEXT STEPS

Now that we’ve completed two rounds of community engagement, we’re taking what we’ve learned and will be working with the Nation on the following:

- Further engage on concepts and terms.
- Deciding who will be part of the Enrollment Committee, how these individuals will be nominated, and for how long.
- Deciding what the criteria for the Enrollment Process will be.
- Working with the other parts of Mi'kma'ki to create an inclusive process that recognizes Mi'kmaq from all parts of Mi'kma'ki.
- Carrying out additional L'nu genealogy work and building an accessible database for the information.
- Explore options for secure identification cards for Ni'n aq No'kmaq.

We’ve been making steady progress, but there’s still work to be done. We encourage you to participate by sharing your opinion and making your voice heard: www.lnuey.ca/communityupdate

**Guided by our past, we are moving forward together,
toward a bright future for all Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq.**

