



Ginoogaming First Nation Social Impact Assessment



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Submitted by





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A hearty 'Migwach' is needed for all those community members who participated in the engagement sessions with such enthusiasm and openness. Thus project could not have been completed without you, and your input is shown in the richness of the reports and annexes.

Acknowledgement is also due for Chief and Council who on occasions went out of their way to meet for extended periods outside of regular hours, to ensure that input and guidance was available.

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Also, a thank you is extended to Miller Dickson Blaise and Cornerstone Consulting, who worked in partnership with Beringia in many of the engagement sessions.

Thank you to Jeff Cook and Glen Hearn from Beringia Community Planning.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Ginoogaming First Nation (GFN) is facing new resource development projects in its traditional territories, with the potential for significant impacts on the Nation and their land. The anticipated impacts could be positive in terms of increased jobs and economic development. However, there is also the risk of negative impacts such as environmental degradation, increased social and health problems associated with substance abuse, and continued erosion of traditional values.

GFN is taking these issues seriously and has undertaken a series of studies in 2015 to build their understanding and preparedness for the projects. The studies include a Community Needs Assessment, a Social Impact Assessment and full Community Economic Development strategy. The GFN staff have coordinated these studies to complement each other. These studies build on the previous work of the nation, such as the Consultation and Accommodation Protocol which outlines the actions the Nation will take to mitigate possible negative impacts on traditional, cultural and vocational uses of their land by its members.

Both this Social Impact Assessment and the Community Needs Assessment were conducted by Beringia Community Planning and are complimentary documents. The Community Needs Assessment focuses on how best to take advantage of the opportunities, such as increased employment and economic development. The Social Impact Assessment focuses on mitigating or minimizing the potential negative aspects of the developments on GFN.

The Social Impact Assessment was conducted to:

- *Build a better understanding of the current situation, identify the potential impacts, and identify measures and actions to remedy or mitigated negative impacts,*
- *Increase community empowerment to advance community well-being, and identify specific actions to seize opportunities related to the new developments; and,*
- *Provide greater support for negotiations with government and industry regarding the developments, to build on and advance existing GFN initiatives*

Key areas of potential impacts

There are both positive and negative impacts associated with mining activities. Figure 1 outlines the main themes associated with mining initiatives. The most notable positive impacts are greater opportunities for GFN members to benefit economically. These are related to both opportunities for individuals as well as generation of band revenue for general spending and community improvements. In this way, the ripple effects of increased Nation revenue could include better housing and infrastructure, access to amenities and recreation opportunities, improved diet, amongst others.



There are however, potential negative impacts associated with the benefits of economic development. There is concern from the community that increased jobs and economic activity combined with an influx of people to the region could lead to increased substance abuse. This could have very negative ripple effects on the community in terms of maintaining jobs, impact on family and education, and general social functioning.

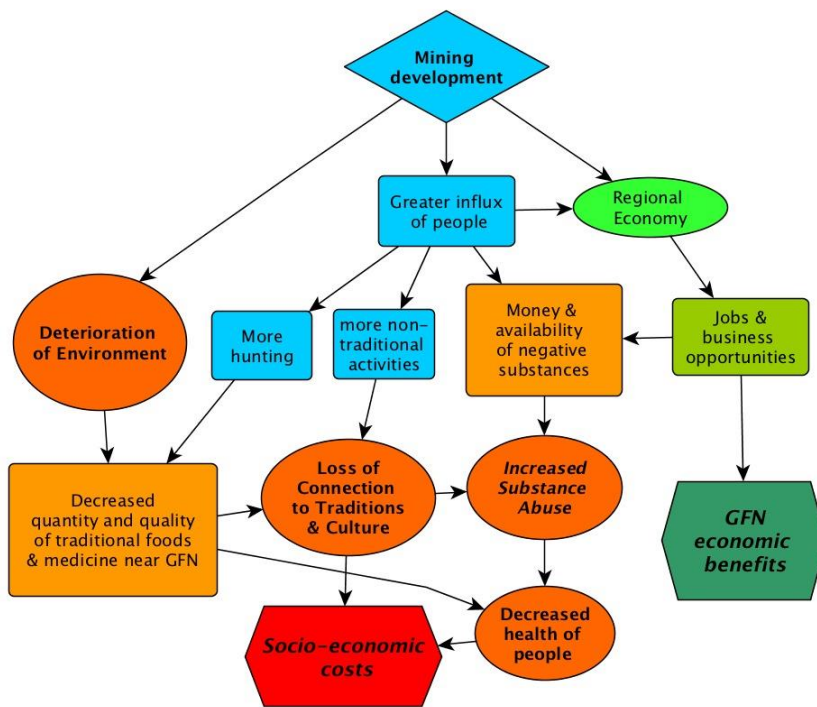


Figure 1 Positive and Negative Impacts Associated with Mining Development

Other major concerns involve impacts on the environment including wildlife and fish. The effects will be different for different mining projects, for example the Ring of Fire developments will not have measurable impacts on the local environment around GFN as might the Premier Gold or Goldstream Developments. However, the cultural and social impacts associated with earning money and a more vibrant regional economy would be similar. This assessment uses Premier Gold as an example to look at potential impacts of new mining projects, as there is more information available regarding this development. The information can then be applied to the potential Goldstream mining operation 40km east of GFN.

The key concerns identified by this Social Impact Assessment are listed below in Table 1.

*One day it is going to be hard, very hard to get a moose around Ginoogaming
Joe Towegishig*



Key concerns:

1) Decreased availability of fish, wildlife and traditional plants

- The quality of traditional foods will get worse. Minor amounts of increased pollution will add cumulative effects to an already stressed natural system. Already, there are problems with moose meat, fish, blueberries, in that they cannot be eaten.
- The quantity of traditional foods will diminish. Increased pollution and increased stress from additional hunters and fishers will make it more difficult for GFN members to access their traditional foods.
- Diminished trapping potential. However, limited economic impact, as trapping is not a source of economic activity in the community it is linked to culture and tradition.

2) Increased erosion of traditions and culture

- Decreased availability of traditional foods will diminish the strong connection that GFN members have to the land and their traditional practices.
- The influx of people and increased economic activity will come with greater distractions for youth and further distance them from tradition and culture.

3) Restriction of rights and title

- More people will set up tourist areas and fishing cabins, which restricts First Nation use because of private property.
- Less availability of traditional foods is a restriction of Rights and Title.

4) Increased negative health indicators

- The stresses associated with increased economic activity and jobs, as well as more money in the community could increase substance use, abuse and addiction.
- Influx of people and transitory nature of workers will lead to increased availability of drugs and alcohol
- Loss of traditions, culture and 'time on the land' could lead to increased use of drugs and alcohol.

5) Economic costs

- Decreased time on the land doing traditional practices could lead to other activities that may cost money
- Money spent on increased use of negative substances.
- Increased money spent on travel to find traditional foods – most people drive an



extra 2-3 hours on a hunting trip.

- Increased money spent on groceries (beef and fish) that would otherwise be from the land.

6) Increased crowding in housing

- Increased regional economy will lead to an increase housing prices causing members living locally to want to return to the reserve.
- If more jobs are available nearby, off-reserve members living further away will want to move back to take advantage of the situation.

Table 1: Key Concerns of Social Impact Assessment

Methodology

The methods used in this impact assessment include: literature research, interviews with experts outside the community, a community engagement process (which formed the core of the study), and an analysis phase to help develop succinct recommendations.

The community engagement process was lead heavily by the community itself. Between February and April 2015 a total of 75 community members were engaged through 17 interviews with experts and community members, 5 talking circles (which engaged 52 community members), and an Open House Community Gathering (where 42 adult community member attended).

Excellent cooperation between Beringia Community Planning and Miller Dickson Blaise—who conducted the Economic Development study—helped to maximize resources by sharing information and even conducting joint engagement sessions.

Key to the development of the Social Impact Assessment were discussions with Elders and trappers regarding the effects of cultural erosion from diminished land-based practices such as hunting and fishing.

Trigger for the assessment

There are significant resource development projects in and around Ginoogaming First Nation (GFN), ranging from mining to energy transmission corridors. Of immediate concern are mining developments related to Premier Gold’s Hardrock development located at the current site of Geraldton, 35 km from GFN. It is a proposed open pit mine with processing facilities, onsite treatment and storage. The project plans to extract an average of 6.5 M tones of mineralized material every year for approximately 12-13 years. ¹ The principle

¹ See Stantec 2015. Environmental Baseline Data Report – Hardrock Project: Socio-Economic Premier Gold Mines Ltd. Available at http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Socio-ec/pgmh_eis_ea_bsl_socio-ec_fin.pdf



environmental concerns are related to water run-off and leachates associated with acid drainage into the surrounding groundwater and Kenogamisis Lake. GFN have used the land in the direct area of the mine for hunting and fishing, however, this is not their primary area of use, which tends to be east of Long Lake.

Premier Gold is anticipating a boom to the local economy. They are expecting 15 years of development with 320 direct jobs and an additional 650 indirect jobs as a result of the mine.² This means that there are substantial opportunities for economic development in GFN as detailed in the Community Needs Assessment.

Further north, Noront hopes to develop its Eagle’s Nest Mine in the near future which will run for an estimated 11 years, with potential for up to 20 years. While the project is located some 540 kilometres (km) northeast of Thunder Bay³ there may well be potential economic activities for GFN and its members, particularly if they develop skills and assets during the Hardrock development.

The Premier Gold Hardrock development has been emphasized in this report, as it is the most advanced project at this point, and is the one in closest proximity to GFN.

Possibilities for Mitigation or Minimizing negative impacts

Concerns and suggested recommendations are outlined as follows in Table 2:

Table 2 Recommendations for Major Concerns

Major Concerns	Recommendations
<p>1</p> <p>Decreased availability of fish, wildlife and traditional plants</p>	<p>Acknowledge to the community that Council understands this is one of their primary concerns.</p> <p>Assess funding mechanisms to determine the best source of money to fund a “Traditional Food Study” to look at the quality and quantity of traditional food, including medicinal plants. Premier Gold may be interested from a baseline study point of view – but the study should show trends.</p> <p>Use the study to advance control and authority over management of traditional foods. Identify special areas and try to work for a strategy for maintaining traditional foods as part of rights and title.</p>
<p>2.</p> <p>Increased erosion of</p>	<p>Advancing traditional practices is very much an internal issue for GFN. Form a small task force to review the actions mentioned here and develop an internal strategy for how to best maintain culture and tradition. Involve the community in</p>

² Personal communication with Amiel Blajchman, Premier Gold, (23 April).

³ Ontario, environment and energy, 2014, <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/noront-eagles-nest-multi-metal-mine>



<p>traditions and culture</p>	<p>choosing action priorities.</p> <p>Consider teaching people to move away from the expectation of being paid for providing traditional practices like fire keeping at ceremonies. This should be in combination with other work if possible.</p> <p>Promote youth to take responsibility for maintaining culture. Allow young people to take a lead in teaching and conducting ceremony.</p> <p>Assess the viability of developing crafts for sale, either at a GFN owned café or hotel, or through a wider network of sales. Possibly collaborate with Long Lake #58 or other Matawa Nations to develop a cooperative. The primary goal in maintaining culture, the secondary goal is making money.</p> <p>Create a 'back to the land' initiative. See if other First Nations are also experiencing this issue and look for common ways to address this, such as building community cabins on Long Lake or some other area in GFN that low income families can book for a maintenance fee.</p>
<p>3 Restriction of rights and title</p>	<p>Based on the traditional food study develop a study on 'effective' infringement of rights and title due to lack of availability and quality of traditional foods and medicines.</p>
<p>4 Worsening health indicators</p>	<p>Create a small task force to report to council on the best methods to address substance abuse, including incorporation of traditional healing and best methods to do that. Build on previous experiences such as Constantine Eagle's Nest Village or Bedaban Healing Lodge</p> <p>Conduct a feasibility study for a traditional healing centre, back to land traditional healing program.</p> <p>Create a small task force to assess what is needed to increase support and awareness of substance abuse.</p>
<p>5 Economic costs of increased fuel and groceries from not eating traditional foods</p>	<p>Establish a 'back to land fund' to enhance traditional practices. Members or groups could apply to the fund for things like fuel costs and community outings. Build on the experience of the existing trappers group to a larger context of other land based traditional practices.</p> <p>Place one of the GFN staff in charge of looking for funding and additional support.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Conduct housing inventory and then strategy. Create a</p>



Increased crowding and lack of housing	housing / construction company to develop on-reserve housing but also make profit from off reserve housing development as will be needed.
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Implementation and timeline

The recommendations are designed for implementation at various levels and in stages. However, this is not a strategy document, but rather an assessment. Some of the activities can be developed with Premier Gold, as a means of enhancing their own knowledge and liability such as the traditional foods study. Others such as a traditional healing center would likely need to have support from a variety of funders including the health authority and may take longer to implement.



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Plan

There are significant economic development opportunities in and around the Ginoogaming First Nation (GFN) ranging from mining, pipelines, forestry and energy transmission. Mining exploration companies are currently conducting advanced exploration and staking claims in the area. In particular, Premier Gold has a fairly advanced application for mining in the nearby town of Geraldton, and Noront is hoping to bring its Eagle’s Nest mine into operation in the next 5 years to initiate the Ring of Fire development.

This Social Impact Assessment focuses on the concerns of the GFN community in relation to potential impacts to the Nation as a result of new mining activities. While positive impacts are also noted, these are detailed in the Community Needs Assessment document.

The two assessments both emphasize GFN’s position in relation to one specific project - Premier Gold’s Hardrock development in Geraldton. This project is closest in proximity to GFN and thus will likely have a greater environmental and social impact; it is also at a more advanced stage and therefore has more details associated with the development. Many of the potential social impacts identified in this report that are associated with the Hardrock development will be applicable to other future developments and those farther north.



GFN has already taken action to develop protocols and processes to enable the Nation to participate in local resource developments, particularly mining, in order to take full advantage of the opportunities that they offer. In particular the GFN’s Consultation and Accommodation Protocol outlines the actions the Nation will take to mitigate possible negative impacts on traditional, cultural and vocational uses of their nation by its members. GFN is in the process of developing a Business Development Protocol to further facilitate development opportunities.

As part of their preparation, GFN is undertaking several community-based projects, including this Social Impact Assessment, a Community Needs Assessment, and an Economic Development Plan. This Social Impact Assessment is heavily community driven and has been achieved through a high level of community engagement (See Section 2.1.2)

1.2 Anticipated outcomes and uses of the plan

Anticipated outcomes and uses of the Social Impact Assessment are:

- *To provide an understanding of the current social-economic conditions of the community, identify potential impacts of development activities, identify appropriate measures to mitigate and minimize adverse impacts, and maximize positive impacts;*



- *To increase community empowerment to advance community well-being, and identify specific concerns of the community and their thoughts around addressing them; and,*
- *To provide support for negotiations with government and industry regarding developments in order to build on and advance existing GFN initiatives.*

2 METHODOLOGY

The methods used in this impact assessment include: literature research, interviews with experts outside the community, a community engagement process (which formed the core of the study), and an analysis phase to help develop succinct recommendations (Section 7.2). The approach was developed to maximize community participation within the limited number of engagement sessions that could be conducted. Also, as the Community Needs Assessment and the Social Impact Assessment were conducted simultaneously, the community engagement process was designed to address the requirements of both studies.

During the community engagement process, Beringia Community Planning developed a solid and collaborative working relationship with Miller Dickson Blaise (MDB), who conducted similar consultations for GFN's Community Economic Development Plan. MDB and Beringia jointly facilitated several talking circles as well as the Community Open House (April 28th, 2015). Beringia and MDB also exchanged information on their respective information gathering, documents, contact information, and the results of specific engagement encounters. They jointly developed outreach material for community engagement. This collaborative approach facilitated the exchange of information, reduced redundancy, contributed to a sense of solidarity and purpose for the community, and reduced the logistical tasks for GFN staff associated with the community engagement processes.

2.1 Social Impact Assessment

The SIA was conducted based on several steps that build on one another (Figure 2):

Step 1: Understanding the local context. This is essentially a situational analysis or community profile. It gives a general context of the community to assist with decision-making.

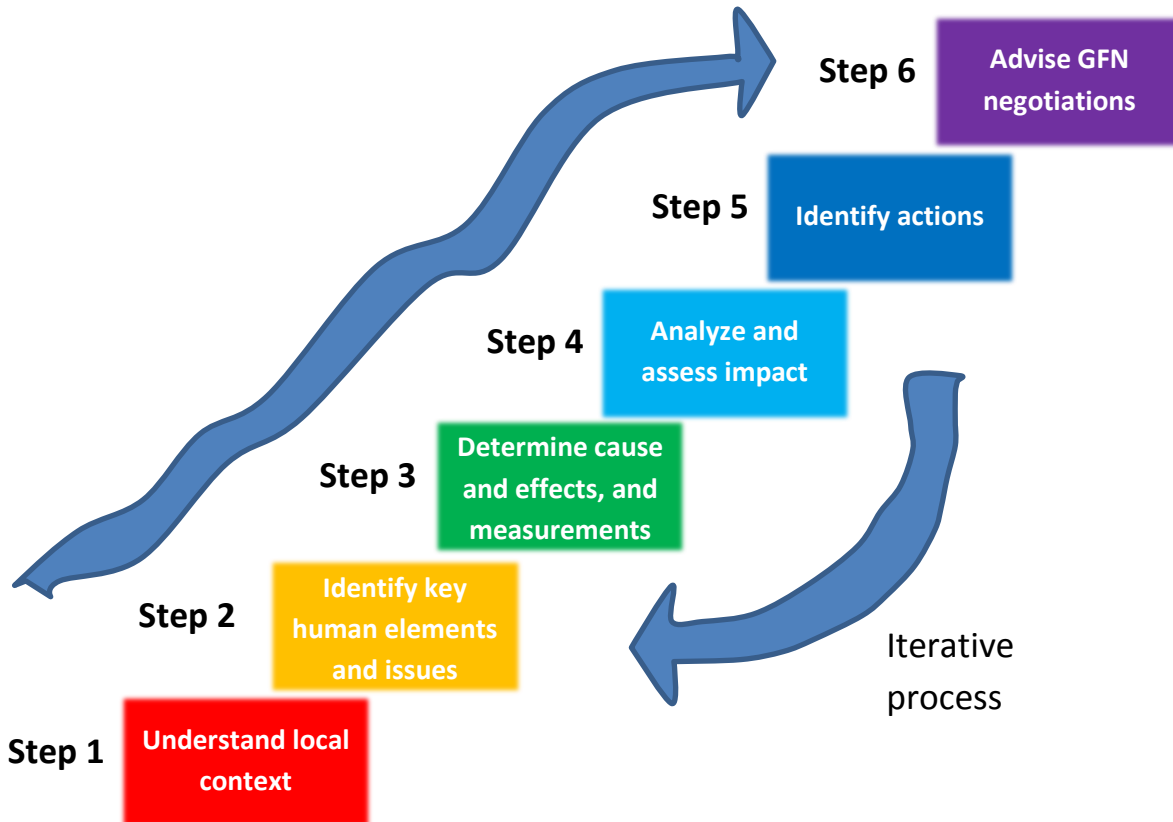
Step 2: Identify key human elements and issues. Identification of the key social and cultural issues related to the new mining projects—as seen from the point of view of the community—is a key aspect of community input in decision-making. This step highlights both potential negative impacts that should be mitigated, and how to enhance positive effects/opportunities (i.e. actions from the mining and development companies).

Step 3: Determine causes and effects. In this step social and cultural variables that describe the issues are identified and developed into cause and effects diagrams to explain impacts. The causes and effects may be direct impacts, indirect impacts, or cumulative impacts over time. Key information needed includes detailed data from the mining companies.



Step 4: Analyze and assess the measurable impacts. Assessing the impacts is difficult but important. To accurately assess impacts, a high level of information is needed to help determine the risk through their probability and significance. These can be both negative and positive impacts. This step was conducted through both literature research as well as community engagement. An attempt was also made to discuss potential ‘winners and losers’ within the community, related to the potential developments.

Figure 2: The 6 steps for SIA



Step 5: Identify actions to mitigate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts. The key actions are identified to remedy or mitigate adverse impacts and enhance positive ones. Actions have been categorised in terms of spheres of influence on the community – which actions does the community have total control over, which ones do they have varying levels of influence over, and which are likely be more feasible from a technical and cost perspective.

Step 6: Advise GFN on negotiations. Recommendations are given as to how the results of the Social Impact Assessment can inform and shape negotiations with industry and government processes.



2.2 Timeline

The project was fairly short for a study of this nature and was conducted over four visits to GFN, between February and June 2015. The major community engagement sessions occurred in March and April (Figure 3).

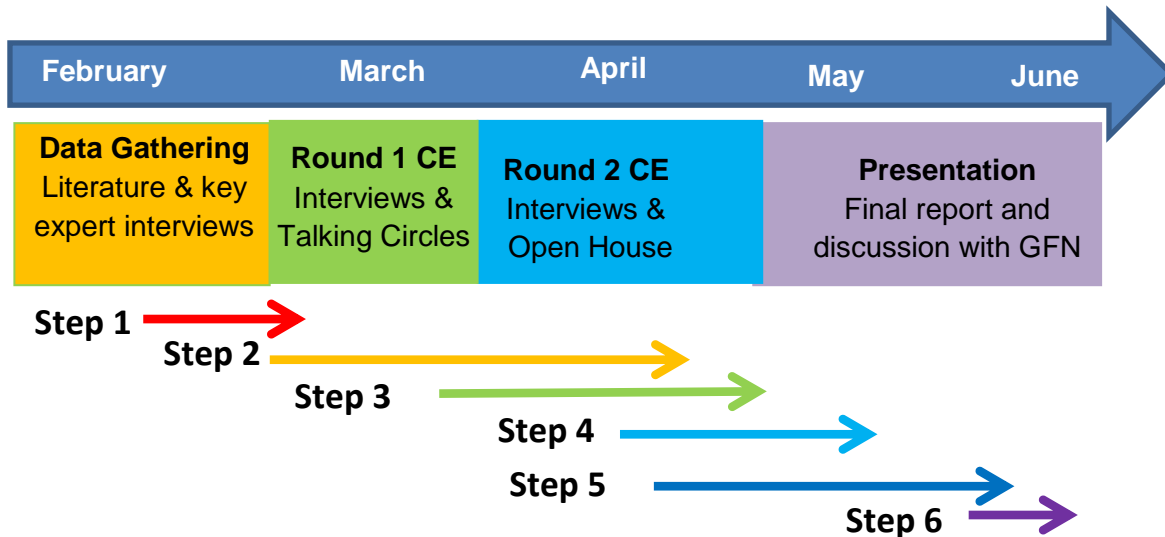


Figure 3 Project steps and timeline

2.3 Information gathering

The project began with preliminary data gathering with respect to the community and the potential development associated with Premier Gold’s Hardrock mine, Noront’s Ring of Fire activities, and other potential development in the next 5-10 years. This was carried out through literature research and initial discussions.

2.3.1 Literature, online information, reports and expert Interviews

- Expert interviews: These were conducted with GFN Staff, Matawa Nation (RoFATA), Four Rivers Environmental, Premier Gold, Gold Corp.
- Literature review: This included information and reports supplied by GFN including the 2003 Development Plan, Cultural Impact Assessment Report 2013, health reports etc.; studies conducted by Premier Gold; Statistics Canada; and additional material supplied by Matawa or Four Rivers Environmental. See References in Annex F.

The primary studies for this report were supplied by Premier Gold in April 2015 and related to the baseline studies for the proposed mine, including the reports on:⁴

⁴ Available from <http://www.premiergoldmines.com/s/Hardrock-CommunityRelations.asp>



- Air
- Archaeology - Stage 1
- Archaeology - Stage 2
- Fish
- Heritage
- Hydrogeology
- Hydrology
- Noise
- Socio-Economic
- Soil
- Surface Water Quality
- Terrestrial

2.4 Community Engagement

Between February and April 2015 a total of 75 community members were engaged through 17 interviews with experts and community members, 5 talking circles (which engaged 52 community members), and an Open House Community Gathering (where 42 adult community member attended). Figure 4 shows the overall community engagement process in detail. The engagement was based on the following key principles:

- **Promote and brand a fun creative process** – A logo contest was conducted; festive display tables were done at the Information House Session (March 28th); GFN staff initiated a quilting session to develop a ‘community quilt’; colourful posters and notices were developed for Talking Circles and Open House/Community Gathering; World Café and Bingo conducted for Open House/Community Gathering (29 April).
- **Respect our Cultural Values and Customs** – Key sessions were opened with prayer, the giving of tobacco to elders, and prizes; at the Open House/Community Gathering specialty food baskets were provided with smudging items such as sage and sweetgrass; Beringia made a point of using simple ‘Ojibwe’ words where possible to encourage its use.
- **Diverse choices for safe engagement** – A variety of methods ranging from interviews (1-2 people), Talking Circles (10-15 people) and large community gatherings were developed. Surveys were not employed as time and resources did not permit a survey.
- **Build on existing protocols and process** – Where possible the process built upon existing protocols such as the business protocol.
- **Expand capacity to govern lands and economic development** – The process built upon and helped develop the skills of GFN staff. For example, the GFN staff were shown techniques in facilitation and soliciting information, in particular with Ring of Fire work.

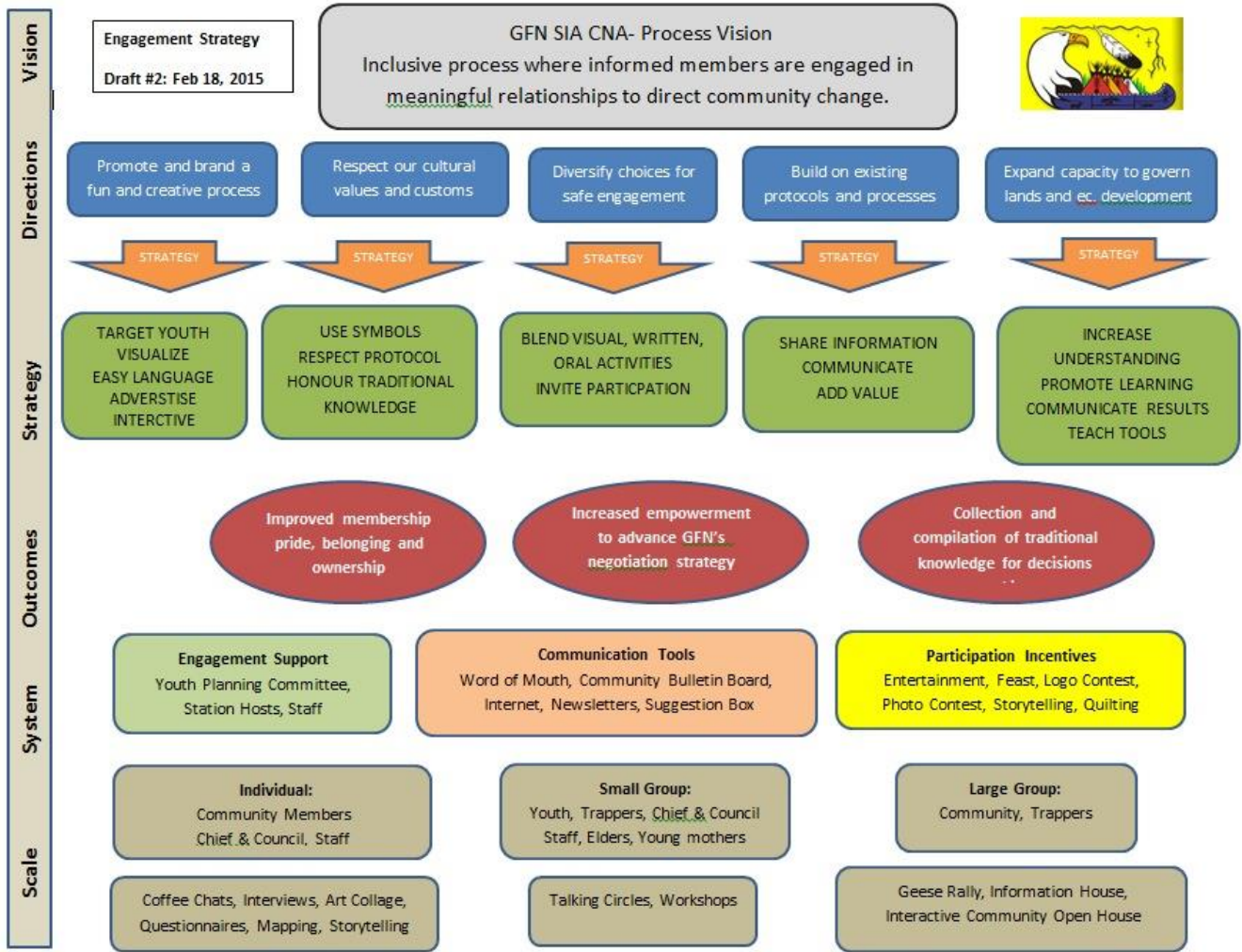


Figure 4 Community Engagement Process

2.4.1 Interviews

A total of 17 Interviews were conducted throughout the community engagement process, in addition to conversations during the initial 'preparation trip', which was spent developing a familiarity with the situation and building relations. Interviewees included GFN staff, community members and several external experts from Matawa Nation (RoFATA), Four Rivers Environmental, Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund (NADF), Premier Gold, and Gold Corp. In general, GFN staff members were selected for interviewing based on their position. For a list of those interviewed see Annex C.

Interviews covered three main areas:

- Basic overview of situation and information – This allowed for a more holistic type of information gathering.
- Theme confirmation – Where certain lines of thinking or ideas were confirmed and pursued.



- c) Focused information – Where specific information was solicited. This usually occurred towards the end of the process where certain ideas of themes were being explored.

2.4.2 Talking Circles

A total of five Talking Circle meetings were conducted with Young Moms, Women, Trappers, Elders, and Young Adult/Teens. Several of the same people attended two Talking Circles, which was useful in that not all the focus groups focused on the same themes. Moreover, in the case of the Trappers and Elders group, which had significant overlap in attendance, more focus could be placed on advancing discussions and carrying on from where the trapper circle had left off. A total of 41 different community members participated in Talking Circles.

2.4.3 Information House

The gathering took place on March 27th, 2015, at the end of the first round of engagement, and provided an opportunity for community members to see the results of the initial engagement sessions.

2.4.4 Open House/Community Gathering

This event took place on April 28th, 2015 in the gym of the training center. Some 42 adults, and 30 or so children attended a ‘chili and bannock’ dinner, World Café stations to source information/input, and Bingo games (Annex B).

2.4.5 Meetings with Chief and Council

Meetings were held with Chief and four of the Council Members as well as the Band Manager to solicit input, review ideas that had emerged, and better understand the decision-making context of the project.

2.5 Community Outreach

Many different strategies were used to contact the community in order to inform them and involve them in the community engagement activities. Posters were sent to homes and placed in prominent locations such as the Band Office, Health Centre and social places such as Robin’s Coffee Shop. The posters advertised the talking circles and the Open House (Annex F).

The GFN website was down between the end of February and beginning of May which made it difficult to use during the bulk of the engagement process. Nevertheless, efforts were made to use the Matawa website and advertisements and updates were made available to them (Annex F).

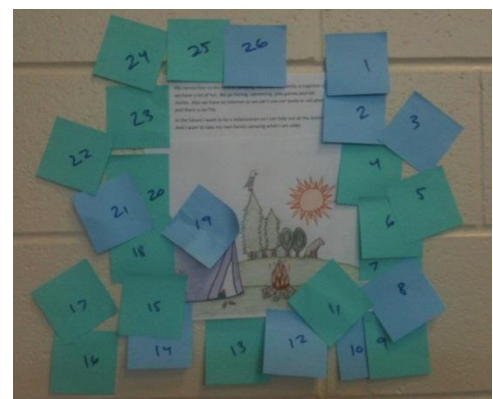


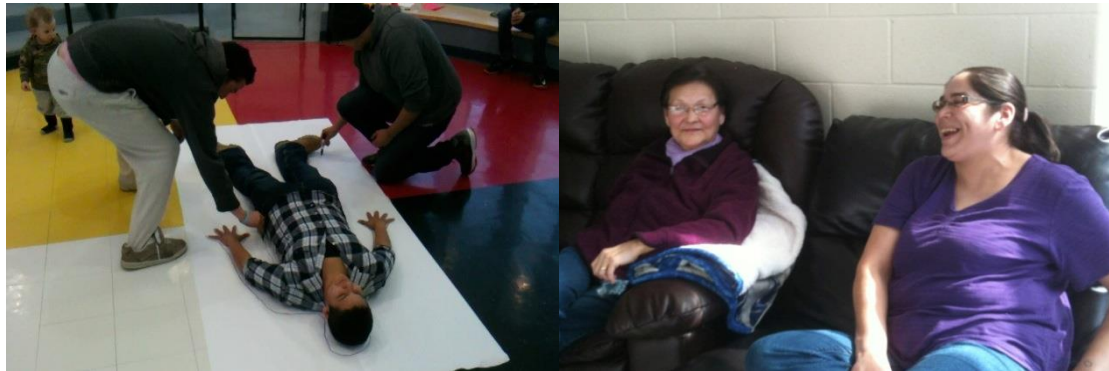
Figure 5: Logo Contest Winner



To help bring more community ownership to the process a logo contest was held on March 29th at the Ginoogaming Information Session. The winning logo will appear on all the reports and posters from this process as well as the Economic Development Plan.







2.6 Confirmation with GFN staff

To ensure that the data and information was pertinent and appropriate, Beringia Community Planning submitted periodic reports for review by GFN staff. In particular, this included: the Situation Assessment and Community Profile; a report on the interviews and talking circles; a report on the results of the open house/community gathering; an issues and concerns report; the Strengths/Challenges/Opportunities/Threats analysis; amongst others.

2.7 Quality of the information and limitation of the data

The principle limitation on the quality of the data relates to a lack of planning information held by GFN or others. Contact was made with various organizations including Four Rivers Environmental and Matawa in an effort to secure available information. Also the majority of the extensive information from Premier Gold was only made available in April and was therefore not incorporated into the community engagement process early on.

The information obtained from the community consultation represents a broad range of the community perspectives. An attempt was made to contact a variety of different groups. One of the groups which was least represented was the 25-40 year old group, which is the prime group associated with potential interest in working in the proposed mine. Miller Dickson Blaise did conduct a focus group with this demographic, which focused on advancing the SCOT analysis. Of the participants in this group none showed an interest in working directly at the mine. However, there were several 20-35 year olds who did during the April 28th Open House.

2.8 Analysis of Data

The information gathered from the literature review, key interviews, and community engagements was analyzed and refined over the course of the project. Because of the time limitations of the consultation the methods of developing goals, defining interests and objectives, and determining action priorities needed to be integrated throughout the process. As a consequence the primary needs/action priorities have been developed through a back chain analysis linking opportunities and interests.



3 STEP ONE – UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

3.1 Regional development

Northwestern Ontario is the largest region in Ontario geographically, and at the same time has the smallest population.⁵ The number of employed workers in the region increased by 2.6% from 2011 to 2012, and the total number of full-time positions increased by 3100 from 2010 to 2012.⁸ This is largely because of investments in the forestry and mining industries. The high commodity prices for gold, silver, nickel, and platinum have created an increasing demand for developing mines in the region. As of 2012, there were more than 80 exploration projects underway.⁸ These developments are subject to further approval. The forestry industry in the region has experienced significant challenges previously, but as of 2013, was showing signs of recovery, largely thanks to increased interest in biomass products.⁸ Two operations have started in the region, which are expected to create more than 1900 jobs in Ontario.⁸

3.1.1 Premier Gold Mines Ltd.

GFN is located near the former Theresa Gold Mines that operated in the 1960s, but later ceased production due to a drop in the price of gold.¹³ In 2009, Premier Gold Mines Ltd. proposed advanced mine exploration on the traditional territory of GFN and have conducted an extensive community engagement process in which they have already signed an MOU with Long Lake #58 First Nations.

The proposed Hardrock mine is an open pit gold mine and processing plant. The project is estimated to produce between 3,650,000 tonnes per year (3.65M tpy) or 10,000 tonnes per day for the first 2 years; 6.57M tpy or 18,000 tpd between years 3-13; followed with two years of rehabilitation activities.⁶ The mine and the mill will operate 365 days per year. The Hardrock resource will be mined from several open pits: one large pit (460 metres in depth at the end of mine life) and several smaller satellite pits of various depths (up to 150m deep at the end of mine life).⁷



The estimated production of acid generating waste is 388M tonnes, which will be stored on site. An estimated 5.5M tonnes may be potentially reactive waste rock requiring secondary treatment beyond removing suspended solids. This waste will be stored in a lined pad, with run-off collected and sent to a treatment facility prior to discharge into Lake Kenogamisis. The mine will also have to have ore pads for material ready to be processed, milling, and crushing plant discharge. The ore processing will be carried out by a

⁵ Government of Canada, 2013. Environmental Scan: Ontario, March 2013. Available at <http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/lmi/publications/e-scan/on/mar2013.shtml>

⁶ Stantec 2015. Environmental Baseline Data Report – Hardrock Project: Socio-Economic Premier Gold Mines Ltd. Available at http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Socio-ec/pgmh_eis_ea_bsl_socio-ec_fin.pdf

⁷ Ibid.



combination of gravity separation and cyanidation for gold recovery. Cyanide will be destroyed inside the plant using a SO₂/air oxidation process.⁸

Premier Gold is proposing that all water from the facilities, ore pad runoff, and waste rock pile runoff will be treated, so effluents will meet Metal Mining Effluent Regulations (MMER) Schedule 4 limits.⁹ The project will also fill in several small lakes, as well as realigning some watercourses that drain into Kenogmisis Lake.

Premier Gold conducted a special study on **Metal Bioavailability** which showed that seepage from previous mines in Barton Bay and the Central Basin of Kenogmisis Lake have elevated the levels of arsenic in the water above the federal water quality guideline and the Interim Provincial Water Quality Objective (of 5 µg/L), and above the Provincial severe effects level in sediments¹⁰. Copper, iron, and aluminium concentrations in the water were higher than federal or provincial guidelines by 33% for copper, 33% for iron, and 15% for aluminium, based on samples from the two basins. However these are not at levels considered a concern for toxicity. Nutrients from the Geraldton sewage treatment plant also enter Barton Bay, resulting in elevated phosphorus levels.

Mercury levels were higher in Kenogmisis Lake compared with other reference lakes. However, it appeared to be lake-wide factors as opposed to historical mining that affects the mercury and methyl mercury levels. While the current elevated levels of arsenic and other metals in the water and sediments of Barton Bay and Central Bay likely contribute to bioaccumulation, the study did not show any adverse effects on the aquatic biota studied.¹¹

In preparation for their Environmental Impact Assessment, Premier Gold has undertaken several studies to look at the baseline indicators for the project which are published on their website.¹² In summary:

Air Contaminants: Air contamination from the site would consist mainly of particulates, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides from combustion of fuel as well as dust from earthworks. In the study, they suggest that the town of Geraldton and traffic on Highway 11 are the primary influences on the air quality. As the study uses stations in residential areas, the baseline actually indicates higher levels than may actually be present.¹³ Also, the study did not examine air quality in the vicinity of Ginoogaming, as it would likely not be influenced.

Archaeology: Premier Gold's Stage One Report discusses the historical context of Aboriginal peoples and the evolution of settler-Aboriginal relationships (i.e. the fur trade). It includes a

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Water quality in Barton Bay (100%) and Central Basin (86%) exceeded the interim provincial guideline, but not the existing guideline of 100 µg/L. Stantec 2015 Technical Data Report - Hardrock Project: Metal Bioavailability May 5 2015, available

http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/BaselineSummary/pgmh_ea_tdr_bioavailability_fin%20%282%29.pdf

¹¹ Ibid

¹² See <http://www.premiergoldmines.com/s/Hardrock-CommunityRelations.asp>

¹³ See Climate and Air Quality, Environmental Baseline Report – Hardrock Project, Stantec April 2015, available at http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Air/pgmh_eis_dfta_bsl_air_fin.pdf



discussion of the establishment of treaties and rights and title. It does not *per se* list any sacred sites that may be affected.¹⁴ Stage Two of the report was not available for downloading.

Heritage: The heritage report describes the narrative of gold discoveries starting in the 1930s and subsequent mining developments, as well as the transcontinental railways.¹⁵

Fish: The fish study examined samples of aquatic species taken in the vicinity of the proposed mine site including Kenogamisis Lake.¹⁶ There was no mention of any sampling or effects on Long Lake. Between September 2013 and October 2014 they tested 4400 fish from 23 species, including Walleye, Lake Whitefish, Burbot, Northern Pike, and Yellow Perch. They also reviewed over 30 years of studies from the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC). They tested for a number of contaminants however; **arsenic** and **mercury** were the ones of key concern.

Mean total arsenic concentrations in forage fish (0.073 to 1.24 ppm) were higher than concentrations in game fish (0.018 to 0.223 ppm) such as Walleye. Arsenic accumulation is species specific and there was a spatial trend with respect to areas affected by historical mining activities.¹⁷ This shows that historical mining continues to have an impact today. There is no standard Provincial or Federal consumption guideline for arsenic, however the level in sport fish from the LSA did not exceed international consumption guidelines for most countries (1 -5 ppm).

According to Stantec (2015): “Background concentrations of total mercury in walleye were above the partial restriction guideline (0.26 ppm). Walleye collected from where the Kenogamisis River, which flows into Kenogamisis Lake, was tested at 0.666 ppm and **exceeded the complete restriction guideline of 0.52 ppm**. Game fish typically accumulate more mercury than small-bodied fish due to their longer life span and higher trophic status. However, Trout Perch collected from the mouth of Goldfield Creek had the **highest mean concentration of mercury (3.45 ppm)** of all fish sampled in 2013 and 2014. Mercury accumulation is species specific but no spatial trend was evident.”¹⁸

Sediments were also assessed showing that the central basin of Kenogamisis Lake had higher concentrations than the southern arm. Copper, arsenic, and sulphides were generally high which is expected due to the geology of the region. However, arsenic levels generally exceeded the Lowest Effect Level¹⁹ indicating that any additional arsenic from mining could present a problem in the future.

Hydrogeology: The study showed that the overburden (near surface rocks) and the shallow bedrock are hydraulically connected and groundwater levels are generally at 1-2m below ground

¹⁴ Stantec 2014 Environmental Baseline Data Report - Hardrock Property; Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment, March 2014, Available at

http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Arch%20Stage%201/rpt_60865_Stage1Arch_20140321_fin.pdf

¹⁵ Stantec 2015 Environmental Baseline Data Report - Hardrock Property; Cultural Heritage Evaluation, March 2015, Available at http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Heritage/pgmh_eis_ea_bsl_heritage_fin.pdf

¹⁶ Stantec 2015 Environmental Baseline Data Report - Hardrock Property; Fish and Fish Habitat, February 2015, Available at http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Fish/pgmh_eis_fnl_dft_ea_bsl_fish_fin.pdf

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Ibid,

¹⁹ Ibid.



surface.²⁰ The groundwater is controlled by geologic features and flows west to east into Kenogamisis Lake. Groundwater samples showed some metals, iron, arsenic, and magnesium, exceeded the Ontario Drinking Water Standards in 31%, 8% and 69% of the samples.

Hydrology: The hydrology study discusses the climate such as air temperature, precipitation, and evapotranspiration. It also lists the different river and stream flows, water balance estimates, peak and mean annual flows.²¹

Noise: The major contributors to baseline noise in the area were found to be traffic noise from Highway 11 and Michael Power Boulevard during the day, with background noise at night. These were not found to be excessive of any limits.²²

Socio-Economic: The socio-economic study looked at the region of Greenstone and included some analysis on Aboriginal groups. The study details different growth areas showing that the region had suffered from the downturn in the forest sector in the late 2000s and is coming back slowly, driven principally by small businesses.²³ More details are found in Annex A, which references this study.

Surface water quality: Barton Bay and Central Bay, which receive water discharge from historical mining operations, have elevated levels of arsenic ranging from 1.8 to 34.6 µg/L with the highest levels in Barton Bay. Levels of copper, iron, and aluminium exceeded the federal standards by 33% (copper), 33% (iron) and 15% (aluminium) of samples.

Terrestrial: The study describes the vegetation communities in the area. It is in the southern boundary of the Boreal Forest Region, with a mix of conifer and deciduous as well as coniferous swamp. White and black spruce, tamarack, balsam fir, and jack pine are common. Wetlands include swamp marsh, bog and fens. The human disturbances from both mining and forestry have resulted in a variety of serial stages and communities.²⁴

GFN recognizes the potential benefits of the mine (i.e. employment, training, etc.) but remains concerned about how it will impact their traditional territory and land uses. These concerns have led to the establishment of a Cultural Impact Assessment to better understand the implications for this development to make an informed decision. “The ultimate goal of this study is to identify and protect GFN traditional lands and territories by ensuring that the lands and waters are protected for future generations, and by enabling Elders to provide direction for and inspire our youth.”²⁵

²⁰ Stantec 2015 Environmental Baseline Data Report - Hardrock Property: hydrogeology March 2015. Available at http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Hydrogeology/pgmh_eis-dftea_bls_hydrogeology_fin.pdf

²¹ Stantec 2015 Environmental Baseline Data Report - Hardrock Property: Hydrology March 2015, available at http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Hydrology/pgmh_eis_dftea_bsl_hydrology_fin.pdf

²² Stantec 2015 Environmental Baseline Data Report - Hardrock Property: Acoustics January 2015, available at http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Noise/pgmh_eis_dftea_bsl_noise_fin.pdf

²³ Stantec 2015. Environmental Baseline Data Report – Hardrock Project: Socio-Economic Premier Gold Mines Ltd. Available at http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Socio-ec/pgmh_eis_ea_bsl_socio-ec_fin.pdf

²⁴ Stantec 2015 Environmental Baseline Data Report - Hardrock Property: Terrestrial January 2015, available at http://www.premiergoldmines.com/i/pdf/BTR/Terrestrial/pgmh_eis_dftea_bsl_terr_fin.pdf

²⁵ GN, 2014. Cultural Impact Assessment. Available at <http://www.ginoogaming.ca/?pgid=58>



3.1.2 Noront Resources Eagle Nest Project

Noront is proposing to develop the Eagle’s Nest mine at a high-grade nickel, copper, and precious metals deposit that contains approximately 11 million tones of resources. This will provide for an eleven-year mine life at a proposed extraction rate of 2,960 tones per day. The waste rock is to be housed in parts of the mine once the minerals have been removed. The Project is located near McFaulds Lake in the Ring of Fire, on the edges of the James Bay Lowlands and within the province’s Far North planning area, approximately 540 kilometers (km) northeast of Thunder Bay and 570 km northwest of Timmins.²⁶ This is part of the Ring of Fire development.

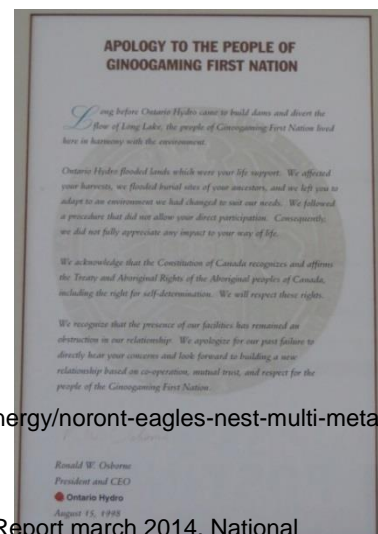
The Ring of Fire refers to a massive mineral deposit in Northern Ontario, referred to as “the most promising development opportunities in northern Ontario in perhaps a century.”²⁷ The Ring of Fire is located on the traditional territory of Webequie First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation, both members of Matawa First Nations. This development could have significant benefits for local communities. GFN’s neighbour, the municipality of Greenstone, has been identified as an important gateway for the Ring of Fire, which can also lead to key benefits for GFN. According to AANDC, “[First Nations] are generally well positioned to take advantage of the economic opportunities resulting from the development. However, successful participation of these communities will require the development of financial, management, and regional/community-based infrastructure capacity.”¹⁶ Ensuring that Nations have adequate capacity within the community to capture the benefits associated with the Ring of Fire is important.

3.1.3 Goldstream’s Hard Rock East Project

“Hard Rock East” is a 350km² contiguous land package just 40km east of Longlac. Goldstream Minerals is exploring the area for gold and has identified three potential target locations. The property is road accessible and is traversed by Trans-Canada Highway 11. The area is in close proximity to energy supplies and rail. The company is increasing drilling and surveying in the next years to determine mineral production viability.²⁸

3.1.4 Previous development

The forestry industry has had a large impact on the region both in terms of employment as well as affecting the environment. The Kenogami Forest has been harvested primarily to feed pulp and paper mills situated along the shores of Lake Superior. Kimberly Clark and Buchanan Group have been large companies involved in the area since the 1970s. Kimberly Clark has since pulled out of the region in 2005.²⁹ Spraying of the forest to retard deciduous growth in favour of planted conifers has had a negative impact on the ecosystem and



²⁶ Ontario, environment and energy, 2014, <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/noront-eagles-nest-multi-metal-mine>

²⁷ AADNC, 2013. Ring of Fire (Information for Minister).

²⁸ Goldstream 2014. See http://www.goldstreamminerals.com/projects/hardrock_east/

²⁹ NAFA 2014. Ready Willing and Able: opportunities in the Kenogami Forest, Final Report march 2014. National Aboriginal Forest Association.



traditional practices such as berry harvesting and hunting of ungulates like moose.

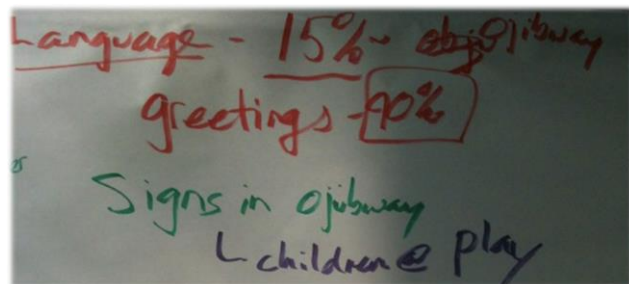
As part of a larger power project Ontario Hydro Power constructed a series of dams on the Kenogamisis River and the Aguasabon River. In 1938, the diversion of the headwaters of the Kenogami River reversed the flow of that river south towards Long Lake and then into the Aguasabon River, where a second dam controlled the outflow for power generation downstream. The resulting flooding of Long Lake destroyed much of the traditional lands of the Ginoogaming First Nation, and required moving of the village, which continues to have ripple effects on the community even today. In 1998 the Nation took action against Ontario Hydro and received both compensation as well as an official apology.

3.2 Key findings for Ginoogaming

This section is based on the literature review, the situation assessment (Annex A), the results of the first engagement talking circles (Annex D) and open house (Annex C), and the SCOT analysis (Annex B).

3.2.1 Ginoogaming Social & Cultural

- There are approximately 208 on-reserve members and 688 off-reserve members.³⁰
- The people of Ginoogaming have a strong concern for overall community well being, and appreciation for social values.
- Health issues, and in particular addiction issues, are major priorities. Consistently throughout the community engagement process – ‘addressing addictions’ was one of the top priorities. Currently, an estimated 60% of those over the age of 10 suffer from adverse effects of prescription drugs.
- There is a housing shortage on the reserve, and this is one of the most pressing issues, particularly as there is a potential for more members to return due to economic upturns.
- GFN has a low rate of members graduating from high school (approx. 50%); however, this rate has been increasing over time. Approximately 20% go on to some form of higher education. There is an opportunity to encourage both secondary and post-secondary education.
- There is problem with reserve members ability to access amenities, groceries in particular, as there are a number of families (estimated 20% of families) that do not have access to vehicles and therefore the 5km drive to Long Lake is difficult. This is a real challenge in improving the lives of community members as it also affects access to amenities such as banking, sports facilities and recreation, and other services.
- Ojibwe is spoken by approximately 15% of members.



³⁰ Annex A.



3.2.2 Economic

GFN is involved in numerous ventures related to economic development on their traditional territory and in the region of Northern Ontario.

In 2012, GFN signed as a shareholder to Minawshyn Development Corporation. This is a regional economic development corporation for Matawa First Nations that assists the 9 Nations to pursue large scale and regional business opportunities.

Rocky Shore Development Corporation (RSDC) is a GFN not-for-profit corporation that is currently operating 32 separate projects. These include the Making Ground River Bridge and Road Construction, Plywood and Wafer board mills, Wind Farm project, Gaming activities, Long Lake Dam Hydroelectric, and the Woodpecker Project.³¹ RSDC also partnered with Boreal Resource Industries Inc. to form Making Ground Forest Products Inc. to develop value-added products on two sites in northern Ontario.

The Timber Claim Trust Fund is a multi-million dollar fund related to a Settlement Agreement with the Government of Canada that was paid in 2002. This is a significant “long-term asset for the present and future benefit of Ginoogaming members.”³²

GFN has approximately 208 on-reserve members, of which approximately 70-80 are available for the ‘workforce’. There are approximately 688 off-reserve members who might be enticed to return back if there are employment opportunities in the area.

There are highly fluctuating employments rates in GFN. Approximately, 30-40% of the workforce appears to have stable positions associated with education, health and social services, and public administration in the band office (Table 5 -Annex A). There are about 30-40% who have fluctuating jobs primarily dependent on the resource sector.

Currently, employment rates are high due to the operations at the Buchanan Mill. Consequently, there is not a great deal of available skilled labour for work in the mines or other sectors. However, with fluctuations in forestry it may be better to transfer skilled labour to Premier Gold mine where there is 10-15 years of stable job opportunities.

The primary positive impacts of the proposed developments are related to improved economic activity in the region. There will be a possible 320 new jobs from Premier Gold’s Hardrock mine and a further 650 service and support jobs in the region.³³

The community engagement process and SCOT analysis³⁴ reveal that GFN has good physical resources to take



³¹ Municipality of Greenstone, n.d., First Nations in Proximity to the Municipality of Greenstone.

³² Ginoogaming website, 2014. Available at <http://www.ginoogaming.ca/?pgid=52>

³³ Personal Communication Ameil Blanjchman April 23, 2015.

³⁴ Strengths Challenges Opportunities and Threats (Annex B)



advantage of potential development in the region, as it has large areas that are undeveloped and in close proximity to Highway 11, including an area for an industrial park and an under-developed lakeshore. There are also potential opportunities that have been highlighted for the Band to become involved in economic activity both on- and off- reserve. On-reserve initiatives include developing a diesel pump station and machine shop, developing tourist cabins along the lakeshore, creating a grocery store (particularly for community members as a means of keeping revenue in the Band and saving money). Off-reserve initiatives include developing or purchasing a hotel in town, and/or creating a café in Geraldton (where the bulk of mining activity will take place from Premier Gold), which could also sell crafts, amongst others.

3.2.3 Environmental

The potential negative impacts of development extend from both the mining activities and related industries, as well as increased economic activity and the associated influx of people.

All the members of the trappers' circle and Elders circle noted that hunting, fishing, and land-based activities are important elements of their livelihood and maintaining traditional values. It was clear from the development of a 'traditional land use pattern map' for hunting, fishing and gathering³⁵ that there is a good deal of the traditional lands that are still being used (Figure 6).

The Cultural Impact Assessment³⁶ noted that within the Hardrock mine area of impact GFN has an interest in:

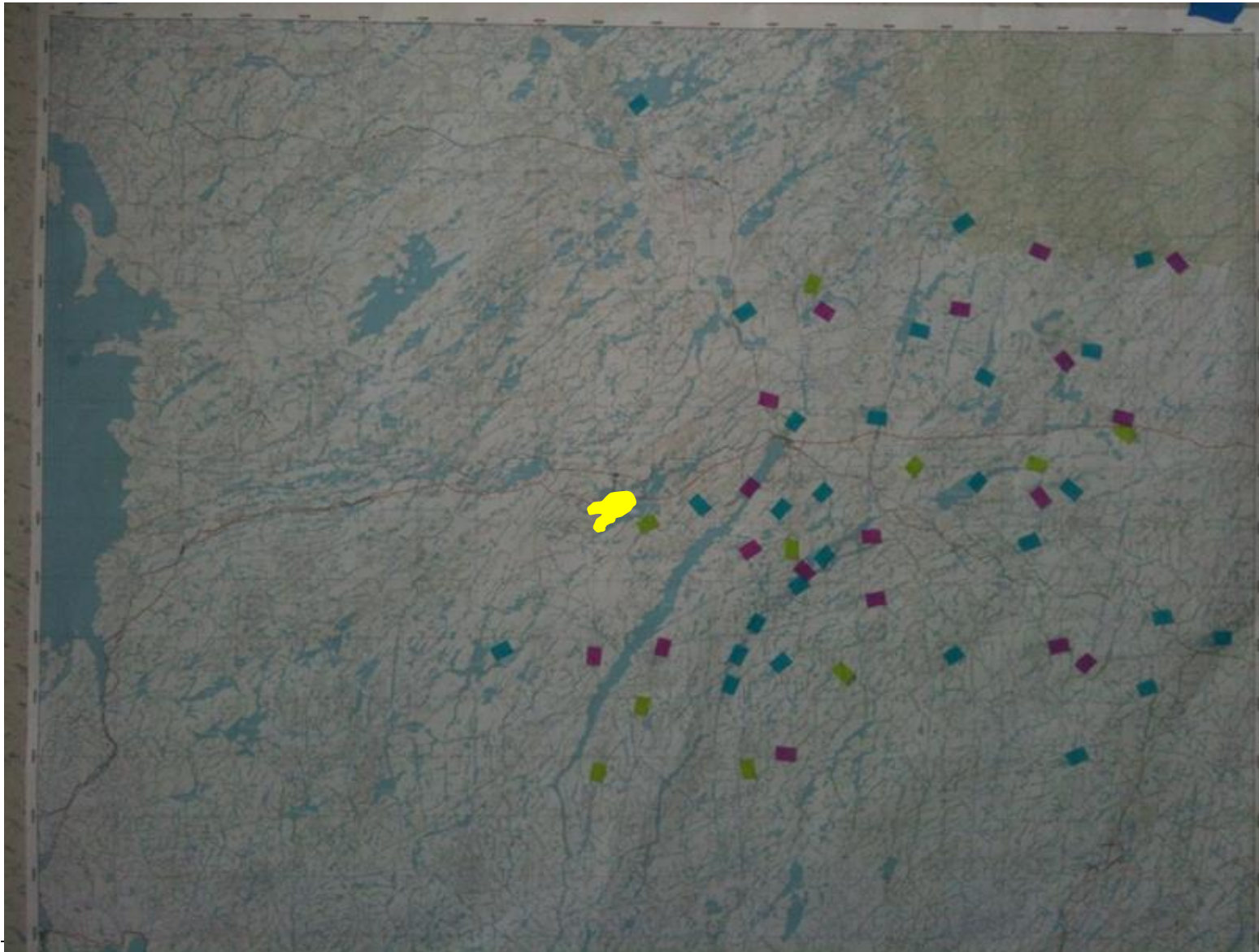
- Gathering sites;
- Medicinal plant gathering sites;
- Sacred sites, burial sites;
- Hunting and fishing sites; and
- Travel routes and trap-lines.

Moreover, the assessment indicated that mining interests could negatively impact sweetgrass, specifically along the shores of Kenogamisis Lake. More so, mammals (moose, rabbit, martin), birds (geese, grouse, duck) and fish (pike, perch, walleye) are all used and could be influenced by site development, noise, water quality alterations etc.³⁷

³⁵ Note traplines are already well mapped out and not included.

³⁶ GFN CIA 2014: Ginoogaming First Nations Cultural Impact Assessment, Final Report February 2014

³⁷ Ibid.



The traditional land use pattern map was developed through consultation with community members. It represents the 'general' areas where people have used the land in the past five years or so. Note that there are also areas off the current map.

The GREEN represents harvesting such as blueberries, or medicinal plants

The PURPLE represents favourite hunting areas, particularly moose.

The BLUE represents fishing areas.

The YELLOW area shows the Hardrock mine location.

Figure 6 Traditional Land Use Patterns



4 STEP TWO – KEY ELEMENTS AND ISSUES

4.1 Key development concerns

During the course of the community engagement process, a number of clear issues arose concerning proposed development. Some of these were presented at the Open House gathering on April 28th and the community had the opportunity to rate them in terms of their overall importance (Figure 7).

The responses confirmed the overall sentiment from the interviews and talking circles that the key concerns for the community are the environment—particularly the health of the fish and wildlife—and increased substance abuse.

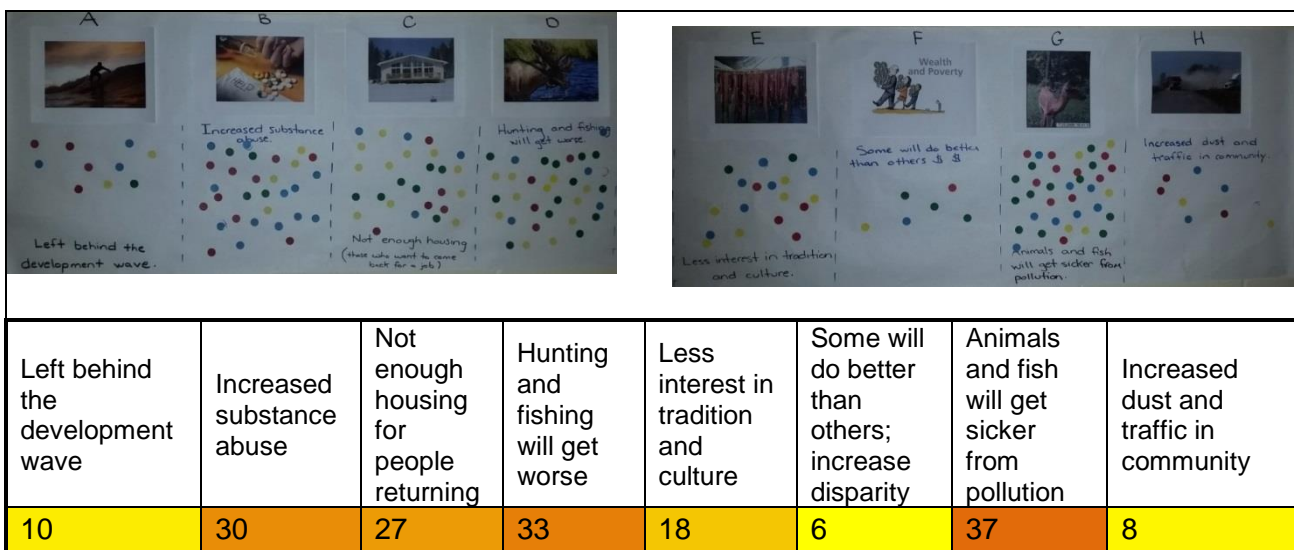


Figure 7: Overall importance of impacts from Mining initiatives

4.1.1 Environment

In particular, the community has expressed its concern over the health and numbers of fish and wildlife over the past twenty years and feels that further development could add to the **cumulative effect**. There is a concern among some that this could create a ‘tipping point’ whereby there will be a great decrease in health and numbers of fish, wildlife and plants.

“Once the resources are gone they are gone”.

Spraying from forestry has already had large impacts killing blueberries and other plants. There will be less use of traditional plants and medicines in particular:

- Cedar
- Red Willow
- Bear root
- Bull rush
- Sweetgrass



- Juniper
- Blueberries & cranberries

“We are worried about additional effects of a mine on top of the negative effects of forestry and pollution”.

“Sometimes there is too much dust on the berries and they look small”.

“Animals get sick from eating the sprayed plants”.

There is a concern that fish will continue to get worse. There are already high levels of mercury in some of the fish species that the Nation harvests, in particular trout, pickerel, and pike.

“There are pike with worms”

“Pickerel with red spots so bad that they are bleeding”.

“You find deformed fish, who wants to eat that!”

The additional effects on wildlife are of concern particularly with respect to hunting, but also in general in terms of the health of Mother Earth.

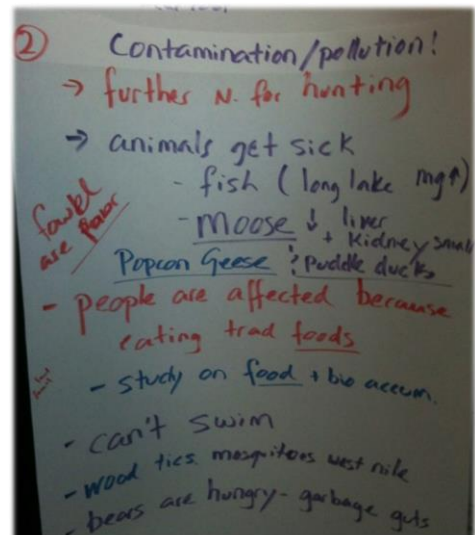
“Fowl are foul!”

“Popcorn geese and puddle ducks – taste is bad”.

“The moose are getting bad. The liver or kidneys are small and the meat is sour.” “I even once thought it was a gut shot!” “ I couldn’t eat several moose in last couple of hunts”.

“Bears are more hungry and starting to eat more garbage”.

“There is a decrease in martins, there is less balsam poplar for habitat because they don’t want leaf trees”.



Already people no longer swim in Long Lake, removing an important recreational activity from the community.

“We don’t let our kids swim in Long Lake water because of itch and bugs. It wasn’t like that before.”

“What happens in Kenogamisis Lake will flow into Long Lake”

The environment is changing rapidly, and the community feels there is little they can do to alter the changes.

“Insects are now having new diseases like West Nile Virus, or more ticks with lime disease. We can’t go into the forest like we used to.”



4.1.2 Hunting and fishing will worsen

Beyond the effects of pollution on the quality and quantity of traditional foods, there is a concern that increased people in the area will mean increased hunting and fishing pressure on an already stressed resource.

Also as more people come it means there will be increased tourism and private lodges, which amounts to further restrictions on where First Nations can hunt and fish. Even if members have a right, they often experience negative attitudes from the guides and outfitters.

“It just takes away from being there when you have to argue about it”.

4.1.3 Health issues & increased substance abuse

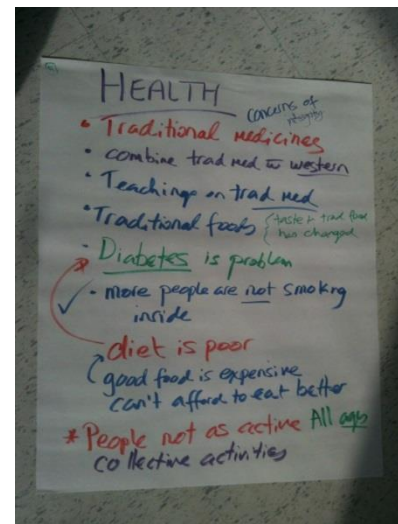
Approximately 60% of GFN members over 10 years of age show negative effects of prescription drug use³⁸. Moreover, there is an increasing trend in prescription drug abuse. With more people moving to the region, greater in- and out- migration, and more economic activity, there is a likelihood of increased access and use of drugs.

There is also a concern in the community that members will not be able to keep their jobs if there is more substance abuse.

“People get stressed on their job, turn to drugs, loose their job, are stressed they don’t have a job.... It’s a bad cycle”

Substance abuse in the community was seen as the main challenge for the community to take advantage of the potential opportunities from mining developments.³⁹ Also, **‘supporting and addictions healing program for people to maintain jobs’** was one of the top priorities for the community in dealing with mining interests.⁴⁰ A Church and Healing Center were some of the most popular options to help advance economically with potential mining developments.⁴¹

Diet and access to good food is also a concern. One of the more popular ideas proposed was a grocery store, to allow everyone the opportunity to access decent and fresh food. This is particularly important as traditional foods may become less edible. It is also important in light of the fact that many people (20% of families) do not have access to a vehicle when they need it.



³⁸ Health Report 2014.

³⁹ Station #4 Annex C

⁴⁰ Station #6 Annex C

⁴¹ Station #3 Annex C



“People don’t have a good diet, they don’t make good choices” “We had a community garden, but it did not continue”

“It is too expensive to get to Value Mart by taxi”. (Estimated \$9 a ride).

Other concerns voiced by the community include:

- ***“Lots of kids don’t make it to school often as parents are not well”***. Education is an important issue in the community. In asking community members their priorities for discussions with the mining interests, ***“expanding the school meal program to keep children in school”*** was voiced as the top priority.⁴²
- ***“More mainstream society influence may lead to more teen pregnancies and limit our girl’s choices of career.”***⁴³
- Community members often have poor self-esteem. In particular, youth and teens are susceptible to bullying and this can increase with more exposure to mainstream culture, especially without a strong sense of self and culture.
- ***“Cyber world can be dangerous if there is not a sense of self”***.
- ***“Many kids are left at home when parents go to Bingo. Kids might prefer to do activities with parents”***.

4.1.4 Housing issues and infrastructure

Along with concerns for the environment, animals, and health, the housing issue is the most pressing concern in relation to potential development. Housing on reserve is crowded and often inadequate; 45% of the homes are need of major repairs or replacement.⁴⁴

Within the consultations it was indicated that there are also members who would prefer to return to the reserve if there was space to come back to. There is concern that if there were more job opportunities, more people would like to return.

In general, infrastructure is seen an important issue. In the Open House people were more in favour of developing community infrastructure than developing personal wealth.⁴⁵ Housing was seen as the second most important challenge facing the community, after substance abuse.⁴⁶

4.1.5 Tradition and culture

The community expressed their interest in maintaining cultural ties to the land and in enhancing the cultural gatherings that occur throughout the year. This was true both with the Elders and trappers groups, as well as among several of the teens that participated in the engagement process.

One of the main concerns for the community is that with worsening hunting and fishing there will be less connection to the land.

⁴² Station #6 Annex C.

⁴³ This also needs to be seen in light of the fact that there are ripple effects in the sex trade etc. associated with rural mine developments.

⁴⁴ AANDC 2014.

⁴⁵ Station #1 Annex C.

⁴⁶ Station #6 Annex C.



“We have a strong connection to food and culture and it may be lost as our foods become less available or poor quality”.

“Less time is being spent on the land by middle age and Elders. There is a loss of connection to the land - mostly because hunting and fishing not as good”.

“In 20 years time there will be nothing left to keep the young people here”.

“Connection to nature is part of our dignity”.

Also, as the quality and quantity of fishing and hunting gets worse, members have to drive further away and spend more money on store bought food.

“I have to travel further to get traditional foods, on average around 2-3 hours more each trip”.

“If more people come, everything will go up in price, including food”.

There is concern that traditions and culture are eroding as youth are not as interested in the ‘old ways’ as much, and that this will worsen as more mainstream society moves into the area with the economic boom from mining,

“There is less interest from youth, they are more interested in technology”.

“Some kids get bored from traditional culture. They need to understand traditional culture to NOT get bored.”

“There are only a few of us teens (2-3) that go hunting regularly”.

There is/maybe increasing loss of language with greater influence of mainstream society. It was estimated that only about 20% of on-reserve members speak Ojibwe now.

“Most know greetings but they are not using them – There is a lack of pride”.

4.1.6 Other issues

Different groups, when talking about the potential impacts of mining development, commonly brought several other issues forward. These include:

- Being left behind the development boom – This stemmed from the concern that GFN would not be included in important discussions regarding the details of plans, and therefore would be find out about important developments after they had been decided or occurred.
- Increase in the cost of living and housing – If there is a minor economic boom from mining, the marginalized will become further marginalized.
- Increase in dust and traffic throughout the region.



5 STEP THREE - CAUSE & EFFECT ANALYSIS OF ISSUES

5.1 Major Cause and Effect Pathways

Figure 8 illustrates the major cause and effect relationships of the potential impacts associated with mining development that were raised by the community. Many of the issues are inter-related and influence each other to varying degrees.

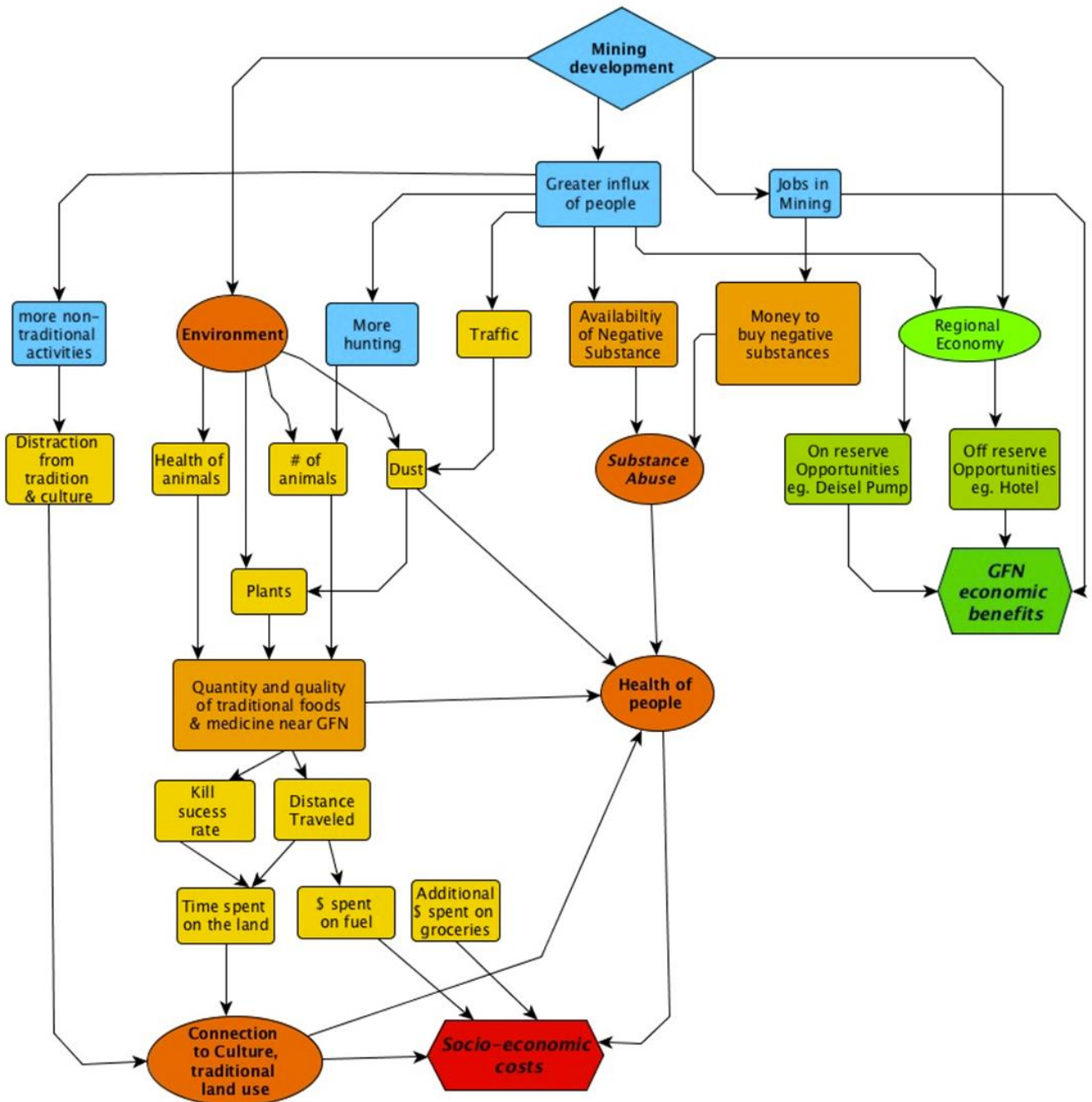


Figure 8 Major cause-effect relationships associated with mining development



The principle streams of cause-effect are shown as positive (GREEN) and negative (YELLOW, ORANGE and RED).

The positive impacts are related to an influx of people and economic activity in the region, and potential direct and indirect jobs associated with mining. More people in the region and the mine itself will help increase the regional economy, which GFN can benefit from either with on-reserve or off-reserve business. There is a good possibility that some mining jobs will be available for GFN members, particularly if related education programs and training is developed. This will have direct economic benefits to GFN.

There are, however, potential negative aspects of mining development, which are more complicated. These include:

- i) There is a likelihood of increased cumulative impact on the environment, including increased pollution, increased traffic and dust, and increased hunting from more people in the region. This would mean more pressure on fewer animals, fish, medicinal plants and food plants. This will have the effect of **reducing the quantity and quality of traditional foods and medicines near the GFN.**

Many community members consulted felt that it will be difficult to attribute specific effects on the environment to mining operations. Nevertheless, this cumulative effect could be significant. It was suggested that negotiations with the mining sector and governments could be used as an opportunity to open discussions around this topic in terms of 'encroachment' on Aboriginal Rights. There was some discussion as to whether GFN can begin to explore joint management of fish and wildlife resources in the region.

There is an inherent importance in maintaining a healthy ecosystem from a spiritual point of view, but also from a practical point of view. Poorer quality of traditional foods will **negatively impact the health of the people** who consume the foods, or are forced to eat other foods. This will also **reduce connection to culture, tradition and land use.**

- ii) There is a real concern that there will be continued **loss of connection to culture, tradition and land use** from a) increased disconnection to the land because hunting and gathering is more difficult; and b) more incorporation of mainstream society in the region, which will distract people and dilute interest in traditional values.

All the members of the Trappers circle and Elders circle noted that hunting, fishing, and land-based activities are important elements of their livelihood, and for maintaining traditional values. Several of the youth noted their keen connection to the land, however they also noted the lack of interest from many of their peers.

Other important factors are also influenced by connection to culture, traditional land use and time on the land, such as healing of individuals affected by substance abuse or those affected by residential schools. It also influences physical wellness, as forms of recreation and physical activity. Overall, maintaining a connection to the land will become increasingly challenging, particularly if the usual way of hunting and fishing is not as influential in the future as it was in the past.



- iii) One of the main concerns with increased resource development activities in the region will be the **social and health impacts of substance abuse**, particularly prescription drugs, and the subsequent stress in paying bills and maintaining a household. As noted 60% of the population over 10 are affected from prescription drug use.⁴⁷ Some of the key triggers related to substance abuse is from i) increased access because of more movement of people and also more people in the region and ii) because jobs would provide increased money to obtain negative substances.

In both the interviews and talking circles it was overwhelmingly suggested that part of the reason that substance abuse is difficult to deal with is due to a loss of traditional culture and values in the community, as well as within the individual families where many of the land-based activities are promoted. **Connection to culture and traditional land use, as well as time spent on the land** influence a sense of pride, self-esteem and spiritual health (Figure 9). This in turn influences the ability of people to cope with the stresses of working, particularly in mainstream society jobs. Coping with stress is important in addressing substance abuse.

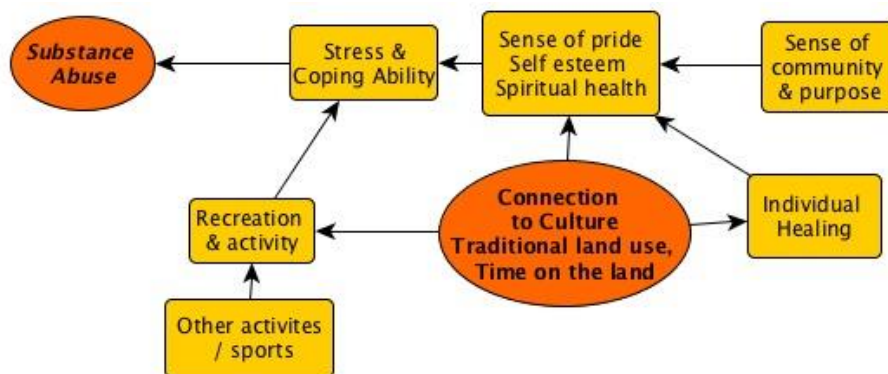


Figure 9 Cause-Effect of tradition and culture on substance abuse

Several suggestions in dealing with the issue of substance abuse include: increasing program support, developing more traditional approaches to healing, celebrating success of people completing programs, develop a cultural camp where healing can occur, amongst others.

Also enhancing life skills such as dealing with finances, developing a budget, participating and taking advantage of opportunities in mainstream society may help to reduce the stress associated with maintaining a household. There has been an Aboriginal Work First Development Program to help get people back to work, which has been developed by First Nations. This program may need to be promoted more and perhaps offered periodically, and/or have a specialized youth version of it developed.

- iv) Another major concern is that with a growing influx of people there will be increased recreational use of the surrounding traditional territories. This will result in more private

⁴⁷ Evaluation Report to Health Canada, Ginoogaming FN, Community based response to prescription. July 29, 2013.



lodges, and a significant 'restriction' in access—if not a legal one—of where GFN members can go to fish and hunt.

- v) There is a concern that a population influx will lead to greater crowding of on-reserve housing, because: i) housing prices in the region will likely rise, and therefore some members that are currently living off reserve may no longer afford to do so and want to return to the reserve; and ii) more employment opportunities will result in more off-reserve members wanting to return to the reserve to take advantage of the opportunities.

6 STEP FOUR – ASSESSING IMPACTS

All the participants in the trappers' circle and the Elders circle noted that some form of assessing impacts of the new developments is important. This will help establish the potential source(s) of the impacts, and what strategies will be needed to mitigate negative impacts.

Often impacts are only assessed in terms of economic costs. While these are easier to address in terms of compensation, this greatly diminishes the 'value' of such things as culture, community cohesion, and self-esteem. Therefore, it is beneficial to look at both financial costs and non-tangible costs.

6.1 Positive Impacts

6.1.1 Economic benefits

The principle positive impacts are those associated with increased opportunities for employment and band revenue. These relate to:

- i Direct mine-related jobs such as drilling, book keeping, etc.
- ii Industries servicing the mine, such as cleaning or truck maintenance.
- iii Off-reserve businesses to service the increased population, such as a hotel or café/gift shop.
- iv On-reserve businesses to service the increased economy, such as a diesel station or a new casino.

The potential social benefits of increased jobs and band revenue could be significant. Presently, with GFN's current Buchanan Mills Cooperative Agreement the unemployment rate is quite low. This could change dramatically however, as it has in the past, with changes in the forestry industry or even changes in procedures such as drug testing in the mill. Therefore for GFN to best take advantage of the anticipated economic upturn would be to create opportunities to generate Band revenue and employment for members in businesses controlled, or partly controlled, by GFN.

Potentially large benefit



6.1.2 Non-economic benefits

The only potential social benefit identified by the community is the increased possibility of greater education and recreational opportunities for students and community members. For example it was thought that if enough people came to the region it might prompt the development of a better recreational facility with a swimming pool.

Potentially small to moderate benefit

6.2 Negative Impacts

6.2.1 Financial Costs

This section outlines the methods for assessing the financial impacts on individual members/families, related to potential mining development. Time and lack of data (mostly related to environmental impacts) did not permit a detailed analysis within the context of this Social Impact Assessment. If sufficient data were available to estimate the effect of mining development on the populations of key species it would be possible to estimate financial impacts.

As an example, if an estimate were available for how development would affect the number of moose in the region, it would be possible to estimate the change in the number of moose available to the Nation each year (assuming hunting practices stay constant). From here, a calculation can be done to show that if moose meat had to be substituted by beef it would cost a certain amount. An average eastern male moose weighs 630kg; a female weighs on average 320kg. Once quartered and cleaned this translates into about 220kg of meat from a male and 110kg from a female. In March 2014 a kg of beef was \$13 in Thunder Bay.⁴⁸ This means that average male moose is worth \$2894 worth of meat, and a female half of that. Also, this is a conservative estimate as a wild moose would be the equivalent to buying organic grass-fed beef as opposed to regular grain-fed beef. Clearly this is a significant amount for families that hunt and consume a moose or two each year.

The same thought can be applied to fishing or even fowl. An average pickerel in Long Lake is approximately 10lbs which would equal approximately 70\$ of filleted fish in a store. A family might eat 10 fish each season, or \$700 of store-bought fish.

Additional consideration can be given to increased costs of actually conducting traditional activities. On average members indicated they now drive an additional 2-3 hours (170-230km) for hunting trips than they used to. Many families do this 3-4 times a year. Most GFN members drive a pick-up, which uses between 17-20L of gas per 100km. An additional 700km a year would cost approximately \$170 a year.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ <http://thunderbaycountrymarket.com/the-price-of-beef/>

⁴⁹ This rough calculations assumes fuel is \$1.20/L



The impact on trap-lines was not assessed as this was done in greater detail in the Cultural Impact Assessment.

In terms of financial costs related to health, it is possible to estimate the dollar cost associated with an individual needing to go through a substance abuse program, including the indirect costs to the family. An estimate can be developed relating the potential increase of substance abuse as a result of mining. This could be done by looking at other case studies from around Canada and other countries like Australia, as well as Ginoogaming's own experience with the forestry sector. Again, the focus of this report did not permit a detailed assessment of this.

Overall, the negative financial impacts of mining development could be viewed as a moderate overall impact, although more consideration is needed for financial issues related to increased substance abuse.

Potentially moderate impact

6.2.2 Non-financial Costs

Perhaps more importantly than financial costs is the impact that non-financial costs could have on the community.

6.2.2.1 *Decreased availability of fish, wildlife, and traditional plants*

The importance that hunting, fishing and gathering has on the maintenance of GFN tradition and culture is arguably more important than the financial aspect. This can be seen even in looking at non-native hunters and fishers. Non-native hunters from the United States fly up to Northern Ontario, whereby it is not uncommon for people to 'pay' the equivalent of \$500/kg of fish once flights, accommodation, and guiding are considered. Clearly, there is an enormous value to hunting and fishing which is not economic but rather recreational, spiritual, and health related. For First Nations these non-monetary values are all the more important.

Hunting and fishing activities are often done with family, and smoking and drying using specific traditional practices. Moose is often shared amongst the extended family and community, as a symbol of communal caring and support. The importance of connection to the land in terms of social health and spiritual well-being is not easily 'assessed' in terms of monetary value, and indeed, may detract from the actual essence of it.

As also described by the community, connection to the land (and related traditions and culture) impacts issues such as substance abuse (Figure 9) and maintaining jobs, which in turn influence the home environment for students to complete high school. Consequently, when looking at the impact of loss of connection to land and culture there are multiplier effects that need to be considered.



The loss of availability of wildlife and fish as a result of the mining development and increased influx of people is hard to measure, however any loss would have a significant negative social impact on the community.

Potentially high impact

6.2.2.2 *Increased erosion of traditions and culture*

Again, it is hard to measure the impact of the erosion of traditions on culture due to an increased influx of people to the region, and more exposure to mainstream society. The community feels very strongly that this is a concern, and with the potential decrease in availability of wildlife and fish as an added impact on traditions and culture. Nevertheless, they did not rank it as a major concern during the Open House; consequently it is assessed as a moderate impact.

Potentially moderate impact

6.2.2.3 *Worsening health indicators*

The impact of increased substance abuse is considered a major concern in terms of the social costs of mining development⁵¹. The community sees substance abuse as the primary challenge they face⁵⁰, therefore and any activities that increase its likelihood need to be taken seriously, with strategies developed to mitigate.

The general influx of people to the region—particularly young single males working in the mining sector—is considered to be a potential for catalyzing substance abuse in the community (Figure 8). While there is little chance for GFN to control the influx of people, there can be steps taken to mitigate the potential negative health and social effects. Examples include developing more awareness, increasing existing programs, and developing new programs for substance abuse that use traditional healing.

Potentially high impact

⁵⁰ Station 4 Annex C



6.2.2.4 *Restrictions of rights and title*

This was mentioned as a concern within the community in relation to private lodges and increased tourism. It is however likely to be a low impact in relation to other impacts as it is difficult to determine the potential legal impediment for GFN members to continue practicing Aboriginal rights in their territory. This is something that Chief and Council should be aware of to make sure it is not overlooked when addressing related issues.

Potentially low impact

6.2.2.5 *Crowding of housing and stress on community infrastructure*

Crowding and quality of housing were constantly mentioned as issues in the community, and were deemed a priority during the Community Engagement process.⁵¹ The impact of mining and increased economic prosperity in the region could easily place greater stress on the already overcrowded housing situation. Better housing would also attract more members to return home, particularly if there were some form of facility or lodge to assist with elderly members.

Potentially high impact

7 STEP FIVE – PRIORITY ACTIONS

7.1 Actions for positive impacts

The actions associated with taking advantage of greater economic opportunities are discussed in detail in the Community Needs Assessment, which focuses on maximizing GFN’s benefits from the potential economic development in the region. These include:

- Social and health activities**
- Church/Traditional Healing Centre for community gathering and spiritual healing, as well as to address addictions and substance abuse.
 - Traditional healing program for addictions and self-esteem.
 - Youth Centre to provide focus for youth, cultural programs, addiction awareness, education and skill development.
 - Extend school meal program to encourage children to remain in school.
 - Scholarships & internships for mining work.

⁵¹ Station 4 and 2 Annex C



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to groceries, sports facilities and amenities
<p>Business related activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create housing company for local construction • Partner with existing businesses to develop companies to take advantage of increased economic activity • Café / hotel in Geraldton or Long Lake. • Cleaning service for mine • Truck maintenance for mine • Mining jobs – bookkeeping, drilling etc. • On-reserve business development – casino, diesel bar, birch syrup, tourist cabins • Off-reserve businesses – hotel or café/gift shop
<p>Studies and assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills inventory & training – for specific needs in the mining sector • Tourism strategy – take advantage of increased local population • Feasibility studies for blueberry farming, solar power, casino, etc.
<p>Procedural and governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Mining-First Nation Liaison Officer for two-way cultural learning etc. • Increase council meetings & transparency for better governance

7.2 Actions to mitigate negative impacts

Over the course of the Community Engagement, numerous activities were suggested to address some of the major concerns or potential impacts associated with mining development in the region. There wasn't an opportunity in the process for the community to systematically assess each of the actions in combination with the major concerns, as they emerged at various stages of the process. However the Open House (April 28th) did provide an opportunity to assess many of the actions, to help give an indicator of the relative importance placed on some of the mitigation actions (Annex C).

To further establish the priority actions for mitigation, the actions should be considered in terms of:

i) The degree of influence GFN has over their implementation

This is a brief assessment of the degree of control/influence that GFN has over the implementation of the action.

Low	Med	High
Requires agreement with industry, government, or other First Nations	Requires some agreement with either industry or government	Can be implemented by GFN without involving any other party



ii) The technical feasibility of their implementation

This is an assessment of how technically simple it may be to implement the action, in terms of expertise and knowledge within the community.

Low	Med	High
Difficult to implement; technically demanding. Likely requires technical knowledge outside GFN	Moderately technical; may need some additional assistance outside GFN	Technically feasible

iii) The cost of their implementation

This is an assessment of how costly it would be to implement the action, in terms of money that the band may have or be able to generate.

Low	Med	High
High cost; will require significant external funding	Moderately cost; likely needs some additional funding from outside GFN	Minor cost; funding likely available from within GFN



7.2.1 Possibilities for Mitigation or Minimizing Negative Impacts

Table 3 Possibilities for Mitigating Negative Impacts

Importance of Impacts	Mitigating Actions	GFN Influence	Technical Feasibility	Cost
Decreased availability of fish, wildlife and traditional plants (High)	Identify key plant gathering areas and specific fishing and hunting areas; lobby MNR for their protection or management.		May require some assistance	A minor cost if community participates
	Conduct baseline traditional food study to determine previous and current situation; assess trends. Premier Gold has started studies on 'bio-uptake' mostly of aquatic species; study could be extended to look at 'quality and quantity' of traditional foods.	Will need info from PG and MNR etc.	Requires expertise	Will require some external funding
	Develop strategy in partnership with MNR to enhance and preserve availability of traditional foods, such as GFN involvement in tags and licences.	Needs MNR to participate	Not technically but politically challenging	Will require some external funding
Increased erosion of traditions and culture (Moderate)	Involve youth in traditional practices. Move people away from the expectation of being paid for traditional practices like fire keeping at ceremonies. Promote youth to take responsibility for maintaining culture. Allow young people to take a lead in teaching and conducting ceremony. Develop a youth-mentoring-youth program and make YouTube videos with youth and Elders about traditional practices (combine youth knowledge of technology with Elders knowledge of traditions and stories).	Easily within GFN control	All simple to address	All low cost
	Beyond hunting and fishing, promote other methods and forms of 'being on the land' and connecting with the 'Provider', such as vision quests, meditations, camping etc.	Easily within GFN control	All simple to address	May require some funding. But low.
	Create a crafts project for selling traditional crafts to people; could combine with a gift shop.	Easily within GFN control	All simple to address	Start up funding



Importance of Impacts	Mitigating Actions	GFN Influence	Technical Feasibility	Cost
	Provide or encourage some form of access for those people who do not have access to the land.	Easily within GFN control	All simple to address	Requires funds for services
Restriction of rights and title (Low)	Conduct an inventory and study of loss of rights, in particular restriction to land areas that are private. Extend the Cultural Impact Assessment.		May need expertise	Moderate to low costs
	Conduct a traditional foods study and show trends of decreasing availability. Develop an understanding regarding right to traditional foods and illustrate infringement of rights from decreasing availability.	Need access to information - MNR	May need outside expertise	
	Develop a collective approach towards the issue with other First Nations. (Matawa nations)	Political will of other FN	Technically simple,	Low cost
	Lobby Provincial and Federal governments framing the diminishing availability of wildlife and fish as a restriction of rights and title.			May take money to effectively lobby
Worsening health indicators (High)	Conduct a feasibility study for a traditional healing centre – ‘back to the land’ traditional healing program including a healing lodge.	One of the major ideas for health care	May need additional help	May need funding
	Church or community gathering space for spiritual healing.		May need assistance in developing the proposal	Expensive infrastructure
	Move towards developing a centre and program of traditional healing for surrounding First Nations. Build on idea of Lake Constantine Eagle’s Nest Village or Bedaban Healing Lodge.	One of the key ideas emerging for GFN health	Will require technical assistance	Potentially expensive



Importance of Impacts	Mitigating Actions	GFN Influence	Technical Feasibility	Cost
	Develop a Youth Centre with programs for substance use awareness, recreational activities, and cultural programs.	Addresses multiple issues	Technically simple.	Requires building and operational funding
	Increase support and awareness of substance abuse.	Can be done within community	Technically simple.	May need additional staff
Financial costs of increased fuel usage and groceries from not eating traditional foods (Moderate)	Develop a 'back to the land' fund to enhance traditional practices. Could be in combination with other First Nations. This is specially focussed on getting people into nature.		Simple to implement. May need input on design etc.	May require staff, location, depending on the scale of the program.
Increased crowding and lack of housing (High)	Create a housing / construction company to develop on-reserve housing but also make profit from off-reserve housing development, as this will be a growing market.	Could create a partnership with existing company.	Would need business skills and technical skill development	May need start-up capital and training. But it should be cost effective in mid-term.



8 RECOMMENDATIONS

Specific recommendations to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the mining developments have been detailed in the Community Needs Assessment. Key methods for advancing the Nation’s interests include:

- i Improving transparency of governance and decision-making through increased communication, more frequent council meetings, and taking advantage of community gatherings to share information.
- ii Improving the opportunity for GFN members (off and on reserve) to benefit individually from increased economic activities in the region. This focuses on improving the ability of members to take advantage of employment and economic opportunities by improving education levels and skills, and very importantly the ability to maintain employment through the development of life skills and addressing substance abuse.

As methods for advancing the nation are detailed in the Community Needs Assessment, this section focuses on the recommendations related to mitigating or minimizing the negative impacts.

An overview of the main community concerns and their priorities are given in Table 3 of the previous section, along with a series of mitigation actions and their feasibility. Prioritizing actions into a strategic plan needs to be conducted with Chief and Council and is beyond the scope of this Social Impact Assessment. Nevertheless there are some clear ideas that emerge from the study, to address the various concerns of the community. Below are the Key Recommendations in Table 4:

Table 4 Key recommendations

Major Concerns	Recommendations
<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>Decreased availability of fish, wildlife and traditional plants</p>	<p>Acknowledge to the community that Council understands this is one of their primary concerns.</p> <p>Assess funding mechanisms to determine the best source of money to fund a “Traditional Food Study” to look at the quality and quantity of traditional food, including medicinal plants. Premier Gold may be interested from a baseline study point of view – but the study should show trends.</p> <p>Use the study to advance control and authority over management of traditional foods. Identify special areas and try to work for a strategy for maintaining traditional foods as part of rights and title.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2.</p> <p>Increased erosion of traditions and culture</p>	<p>Advancing traditional practices is very much an internal issue for GFN. Form a small task force to review the actions mentioned here and develop an internal strategy for how to best maintain culture and tradition. Involve the community in choosing action priorities.</p> <p>Consider teaching people to move away from the expectation</p>



	<p>of being paid for providing traditional practices like fire keeping at ceremonies. This should be in combination with other work if possible.</p> <p>Promote youth to take responsibility for maintaining culture. Allow young people to take a lead in teaching and conducting ceremony.</p> <p>Assess the viability of developing crafts for sale, either at a GFN owned café or hotel, or through a wider network of sales. Possibly collaborate with Long Lake #58 or other Matawa Nations to develop a cooperative. The primary goal in maintaining culture, the secondary goal is making money.</p> <p>Create a 'back to the land' initiative. See if other First Nations are also experiencing this issue and look for common ways to address this, such as building community cabins on Long Lake or some other area in GFN that low income families can book for a maintenance fee.</p>
<p>3 Restriction of rights and title</p>	<p>Based on the traditional food study develop a study on 'effective infringement of rights and title due to lack of availability and quality of traditional foods and medicines.</p>
<p>4 Worsening health indicators</p>	<p>Create a small task force to report to council on the best methods to address substance abuse, including incorporation of traditional healing and best methods to do that. Build on previous experiences such as Constantine Eagle's Nest Village or Bedaban Healing Lodge</p> <p>Conduct a feasibility study for a traditional healing centre, back to land traditional healing program.</p> <p>Create a small task force to assess what is needed to increase support and awareness of substance abuse.</p>
<p>5 Economic costs of increased fuel and groceries from not eating traditional foods</p>	<p>Establish a 'back to land fund' to enhance traditional practices. Members or groups could apply to the fund for things like fuel costs and community outings. Build on the experience of the existing trappers group to a larger context of other land based traditional practices.</p> <p>Place one of the GFN staff in charge of looking for funding and additional support.</p>
<p>6 Increased crowding and lack of housing</p>	<p>Conduct housing inventory and then strategy. Create a housing / construction company to develop on-reserve housing but also make profit from off reserve housing development as will be needed.</p>



8.1 Implementation and timeline

The recommendations are designed for implementation at various levels and in stages. However, this is not a strategy document, but rather an assessment. Some of the activities can be developed with Premier Gold, as a means of enhancing their own knowledge and liability such as the traditional foods study. Others such as a traditional healing center would likely need to have support from a variety of funders including the health authority and may take longer to implement.



9 CONCLUSIONS

If the predictions of the mining sector over the next 3 to 5 years come to fruition there will be significant economic development opportunities in the region. Ginoogaming is well positioned to take advantage of some of these opportunities. It has a workforce with skills in the resource sector (forestry), and with some additional training, could be ready for work in the mining sector. GFN also has an entrepreneurial administration that is looking forward, in order to take advantage of a variety of potential initiatives. The community has good existing opportunities for education and training, and a significant land base to use for development. GFN is a strong community with a well-developed sense of communal priorities, and a segment of the population with a strong sense of tradition and cultural values.

At the same time GFN does face some challenges. These include a housing shortage, aging or soon to be inadequate infrastructure, a high rate of drug abuse, erosion of traditional values and culture, and a need for greater clarity and communication in leadership.

With the coming development, of particular concern to the community is the potential for cumulative impacts to the environment and increased stress and pressure on animals and plants. Such pressure comes not only from environmental degradation/pollution, but also from increased hunting and fishing, due to more people in the region. Further decline in animals and fauna will lead to less time spent doing traditional land based activities. It cannot be overstressed that for GFN, the connection to hunting and gathering is a connection to the Earth and provider, and thus culture and identity.

Another major concern is the potential for increased drug and alcohol abuse. Greater mobility (workers traveling in and out of the region) could increase access to substances, and therefore lead to a further deterioration in health and well-being. A third priority issue for the community is the housing shortage which is anticipated to get worse as members currently living off-reserve will want (and need) to return to the reserve. This is due to the fact that as housing prices off reserve increase those members will no longer be able to afford housing in the region, and more job opportunities in the area will entice members to return from afar.

Activities that could help mitigate the potential negative aspects of mining development in the region are listed in Section 8 on Recommendations, and include: doing an inventory on traditional foods to begin the process of taking control over traditional resources; creating a traditional healing center for substance abuse, and/or a 'back to land' program; developing a housing cooperative; and promoting youth in leadership of traditional practices.

This report was developed with significant input from the community. As Chief and Council are faced with many different decisions, issues and opportunities—both from the mining sector as well as other aspects of development—it will provide a basis for making sound and rational decisions for the benefit of the community.