

Northern Ontario First Nation Takes Action to Protect its Fishery

The First Nation is taking this action because fish poaching at spawning beds and protected sanctuaries on a commercial scale observed on White Lake, ON

MOBERT, ONTARIO, CANADA, April 28, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- This is a public notice that Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg (NN, also known as Pic Mobert First Nation) has mobilized its resources to monitor fishing activity that is putting the community's conservation objectives at risk.



The First Nation is taking this action because fish poaching at spawning beds and protected sanctuaries on a commercial scale has been observed on White Lake, and the Ministry of Natural Resources has not acted to prevent it.

Effectively immediately, and at least until the spring spawn is over, NN Department of Lands & Resources will be monitoring fishing activities on White Lake, Shabotik River and elsewhere as deemed necessary within our Territory.

If you are fishing in the area, please be advised that you will be greeted by the First Nation's officials at the White Lake check-point. In addition, you may see the First Nation's officials present on access roads, on the water and at landings. Licensed, recreational and other authorized fishing will not be interfered with. In the event you are approached by First Nation representatives, we ask for your cooperation. We are promoting peaceful monitoring. Please do not approach anyone directly, but report any details to MNRF/OPP. We must avoid confrontation and violence.

Location of NN fishery check-point at White Lake access. Sacred Fire will be tended until completion of spawn. Pipe Ceremony 7pm Saturday April 27.

Unethical and unsustainable practices by non-members of NN asserting Aboriginal rights to fish in NN territory have been occurring for a number of years during spawning, and this information has been routinely shared with the Government of Ontario. The First Nation is frustrated that previous investigations conducted by the Ministry of Natural Resources at the request of the First Nation have not resulted in charges, and our recent request for deployment of Conservation Officers during this years' spawn have fallen on deaf ears.

These fishery management operations by the First Nation are located in areas where the First Nation has asserted Aboriginal Title. The First Nation first provided the provincial and federal Crowns with notice of Aboriginal title in 1979, and is in settlement discussions with the Crown. By asserting Aboriginal title, NN has given notice to the Crown that it did not cede their fisheries through the signing of a treaty.

NN Chief Louis Kwissiwa made the following statement:

“All of us who enjoy responsible and sustainable fishing in the area have a shared interest in proper oversight and enforcement. Please bear with us while we tend to this important matter, in coordination with the Ontario Provincial Police.”

Neighboring Chief Duncan Michano of Biigtigong Nishnaabeg (Pic River First Nation) has expressed his support for the actions that NN is taking.

“Biigtigong Nishnaabeg fully support Netmizaaggamig in their efforts to protect their fisheries. Unsustainable fishing and the taking of huge amounts of fish, on spawning beds, is both unethical and irresponsible. The fishery will be destroyed in matter of a few generations if this practice is allowed to continue.”

For more information please contact:

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