



**December 15, 2025**

Tony Pigott, Executive Director  
Georgian Bay Aspiring Geopark  
via email: [Frances.Heydeman@nbm-mnb.ca](mailto:Frances.Heydeman@nbm-mnb.ca)

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**Re: Formal Objection to Georgian Bay Aspiring Geopark – Unauthorized Use and Monetization of Mississauga Anishinabek Culture**

Aanii,

On behalf of Mississauga First Nation #8 (“Mississauga First Nation”), I write to formally object to and oppose the Georgian Bay Aspiring Geopark (“GBAG”) proposal and to specifically object to the current and proposed use of Mississauga Anishinabek and broader Anishinaabe culture, knowledge, and sacred places without our consent.

For clarity, this correspondence places GBAG, its leadership, and the Crown (including federal and provincial funders and partners) on notice that the continued development, promotion, and funding of the aspiring geopark in its present form is inconsistent with the Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, 2021*, and Indigenous legal orders and community protocols governing the use and sharing of cultural teachings, stories, and ceremonial knowledge.

For clarity, nothing in this letter shall be interpreted as a waiver, limitation, or alteration of any of Mississauga First Nation’s Aboriginal, Treaty, constitutional, or human rights, or as consent to the project or any related activities.

**1. Unauthorized use of Mississauga Anishinabek culture and teachings**

According to GBAG’s own materials, the marketing and conceptual framework for the geopark is “centred around Indigenous wisdom” and explicitly grounded in Anishinaabe teachings such as Two-Eyed Seeing, The Dish with One Spoon, and the Seven Grandfather Teachings. This has occurred without the consent, participation, or full engagement of Mississauga First Nation or, to our knowledge, any other Indigenous communities within the proposed geopark footprint.

GBAG representatives have publicly stated that “the whole principle of the geopark” is to operate on the basis of Two-Eyed Seeing, combining Western research with traditional knowledge, and that their guiding principles align with Indigenous principles and teachings. GBAG marketing further asserts that the geopark “plans to be the voice of the Anishinaabe to the world,” and promotional materials present Anishinaabe cultural concepts (for example, rocks as “grandfathers” and related spiritual understandings) as interpretive content owned, curated, and presented by the geopark.

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**MISSISSAUGA FIRST NATION**

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These are not neutral statements. They amount to appropriation, commodification, and misrepresentation of cultural and spiritual teachings that belong to the Mississauga Anishinabek and other Anishinaabe Nations, and which are governed by our own laws, protocols, and decision-making structures. GBAG has no legal, cultural, or moral mandate to represent itself as the interpreter or “voice” of our Nations, or to solicit and curate “Indigenous stories” for presentation under its brand.

## **2. Monetization of culture and promotion of sacred sites**

The GBAG proposal is explicitly tourism-driven. The original feasibility work was funded to “enhance development opportunities by extending tourism to new global tourists,” and public commentary has described the initiative as one that “monetizes Georgian Bay.”

More concerning, GBAG’s own materials indicate that it is not only monetizing the land, but also monetizing Anishinaabe culture. The logo is imposed over a medicine wheel, and marketing materials identify and promote sacred sites, including Giant’s Tomb and pictograph locations in Collins Inlet, as tourism attractions.

Promoting sacred places and spiritual teachings in this manner—without consent, without proper cultural protocols, and without governance by the First Nations whose territories and sacred sites are being advertised—creates serious risk of:

- Increased and unmanaged visitation to sensitive and sacred areas;
- Misrepresentation, trivialization, or distortion of spiritual teachings;
- Commercial exploitation of ceremonies, stories, and cultural concepts; and
- Further erosion of trust between Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous institutions and governments.

## **3. Lack of Indigenous governance and meaningful involvement**

GBAG’s own description of its leadership indicates that, with the exception of one “Indigenous Outreach/Planning” role, the core management team is non-Indigenous and based in Southern Ontario. Despite this, the project has advanced to “aspiring” status and secured significant public funding without letters of support, free prior and informed consent, or formal agreements with affected First Nations, including Mississauga First Nation.

Notwithstanding this lack of formal Indigenous mandate, GBAG presents itself publicly as operating on First Nation/Indigenous wisdom and as “the voice of the Anishinaabe to the world.” This is the antithesis of Indigenous-led development and does not meet even basic standards of co-development, partnership, or collaboration. It risks misleading the public, funders, and international bodies into believing that the project enjoys Indigenous endorsement or governance when it does not.

## **4. Position of Mississauga First Nation and requested actions**

In light of the above, Mississauga First Nation formally opposes the Georgian Bay Aspiring Geopark initiative in its current form and does not consent to any use of our culture, teachings, imagery, place names, or stories by GBAG or its partners.



We hereby request that GBAG and all Crown and non-Crown partners:

1. Immediately cease and desist from using Anishinaabe cultural teachings, symbols, or narratives in marketing, branding, programming, or interpretive materials unless and until proper cultural protocols are followed and formal consent and agreements are obtained from affected First Nations.
2. Suspend any representation that the geopark speaks for “the Anishinaabe” or presents “Indigenous stories” or “Indigenous voices” until and unless Indigenous Nations themselves determine such an arrangement under Indigenous-led governance structures, documented in binding agreements.
3. Pause further funding approvals, endorsements, and applications for UNESCO Global Geopark status until a robust, rights-based Indigenous engagement process has been undertaken, grounded in UNDRIP, the honour of the Crown, and the duty to consult and accommodate.

For further clarity: **Mississauga First Nation does not consent to the use of our cultural heritage, in whole or in part, as a foundation or marketing tool for the Georgian Bay Aspiring Geopark.**

We request written confirmation of receipt of this letter and a clear, timely indication of how you intend to respond to the issues raised. Miigwetch for your attention to this serious matter.

On behalf of Council,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brent A. Niganobe".

Brent Niganobe  
Ogimaa (Chief)  
Mississauga First Nation  
705-261-1441  
[Chief@mississaugi.com](mailto:Chief@mississaugi.com)

Cc:

Canadian Geoparks Network  
Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario)  
Ogimaa Patsy Corbiere, Chair, United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising  
Chair Peyton Pitawanakwat, Mamaweswen, The North Shore Tribal Council  
Chief Joanne Sandy, Beausoleil First Nation, Ogemawahj Tribal Council  
Ogimaa Shane Tabobondung, Wasauksing First Nation, Waabnoong Bemjiwang Association of First Nations