

# Noodaagan News

"Story Being Told"

The Mackinac Band(s) of Chippewa and Ottawa Indians



## Mackinac Bands



Treaty Signatory Bands



## MACKINAC BAND(S) ENROLLMENT IS THE MOST REPRESENTATIVE

By  
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Mackinac enrollment is a very complicated subject, and there is only one way to understand it and that is to research history and all the legal issues involved.

Mackinac people thus far have agreed on a lineal descendancy to one or more of the Straits Area Bands of the many treaties signed starting back in 1820. This is what is commonly used to create a base roll.

Some Mackinac people are listed with separate tribal affiliations, maybe the Sault Tribe or maybe the Burt Lake Band and maybe even the Little Traverse Bay Band. Some Tribes use the blood of one distinct Band, some tribes use the combination of biological measure from more than one Band and now Canadian blood is being considered.

The Mackinac people have fairly agreed that it is Bands eleven thru seventeen who are the ones entitled to enroll in the Mackinac reaffirmation groups. All Mackinac people can be listed on the base roll.

Typically, tribal genealogists are in the dark about legal issues and they often make mistakes. Enrollment ordinance handed out by the Bureau of Indian Affairs may not apply if the Tribe/Band has their own Constitutional interpretation of who is their citizen.

The difficulty comes in a variety of problems. Individual records that are not complete, inaccurate or may not even exist. Some records contain many assumptions by the person who has interpreted them. This gets very tricky when you add in family relations, adoptees or even friends for that matter. This is the present condition of the Mackinac enrollment.

Will the Mackinac people's genealogy be certified by the B.I.A. or is enrollment exclusively a Sovereign right. This is one of our legal questions.

Finding the best answer or the correct answer is in the long run the critical issue for the Mackinac survival. Tribes with blood quantum will soon go extinct unless they change their constitutions. Mackinac with lineal descent will have the reverse problem when calculated by the math of genealogy and will have many thousands of people wanting to be enrolled. No matter what the criteria, no matter what our tribal government may legislate, the problem is a big one. Doing it right is the hardest problem facing the Mackinac people.

Understanding the complexities of this issue are multiple and complex. And then there is the need for educating the tribal members. The issue sometimes involves the question of Indian Trust Funds, sometimes it involves commercial fishing treaty rights.