

Ring of Fire Overview

ACEC – Ontario Executive Meeting
May 5th, 2025

Ontario 

NORTHERN INFRASTRUCTURE AND PARTNERSHIPS BRANCH

Branch Mandate

Leads implementation and delivery of unique and/or complex critical transportation infrastructure projects within Northern Ontario. NIPB's specialized expertise is focused on collaboration with Indigenous Communities and Northern Municipalities and oversight of the planning, technical design and construction work required for these initiatives.

Core Functions

- Project management, including governance and procurement
- Planning, design and construction oversight
- Oversight and coordination of specialized multi-disciplinary teams
- Relationship management and partnership building with Indigenous Communities, Northern Municipalities and other Government Agencies.
- Community engagement
- Consultation and negotiation
- Issues management and communications

Non-core Functions/Expertise

- Environmental planning and design
- On-going operations oversight
- Property management
- Geomatics
- Certain types of engineering (e.g., electrical, structural, materials, geotechnical)

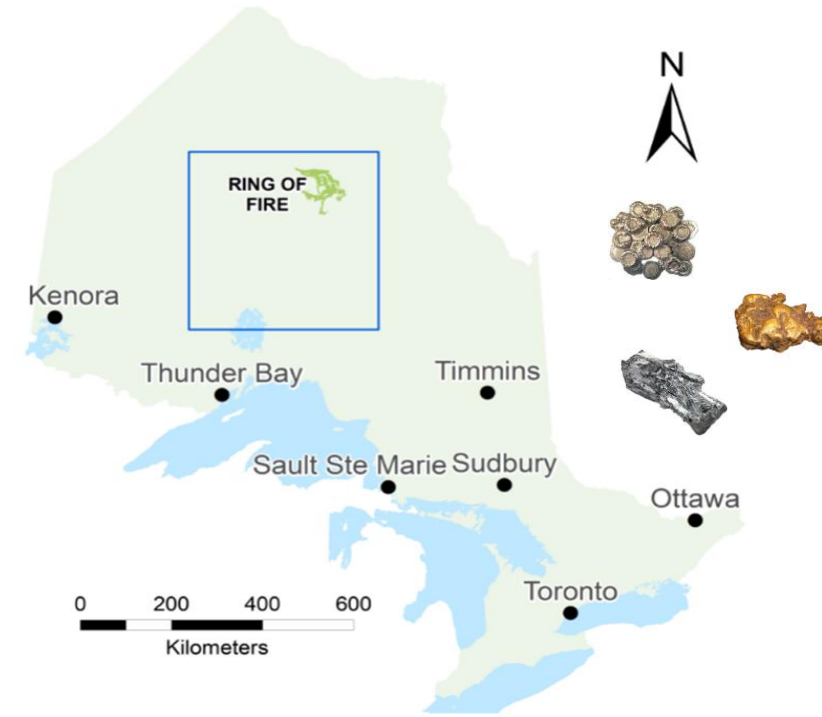
Ring of Fire: Background

The Opportunity

- The Ring of Fire (ROF) is **an area of major mine development opportunities** including critical minerals potential (e.g., nickel, copper, platinum and chromite) that could bring a multi-generational economic opportunity to northern Ontario communities, including for First Nation communities in the area including:
 - Continued interest from major international mining companies highlights the value of the mineral potential, especially for **critical minerals** for an **electric vehicle battery supply chain** in Ontario
 - Wyloo Canada and Juno Corp are the two largest claimholders in the Ring of Fire.
 - Wyloo purchased Noront Resources and all its Ring of Fire claims for \$616.9 million in 2022
 - Since 2014, Ontario has publicly committed \$1 billion to support critical infrastructure in the Ring of Fire area, including developing the proposed all-season road network, investing in high-speed internet, road upgrades and community supports.

The Economic Potential

- Road infrastructure development to enable access to the Ring of Fire area could, on its own, contribute to \$1.3B to Ontario's GDP and approx. 10,600 FTE jobs;
- One-time contribution due to all infrastructure development in the ROF area (roads, electricity transmission, broadband) could be up to \$1.96B in GDP and approximately 14,620 jobs.



Whole-of-Government-Approach

Current Internal Coordination Lens

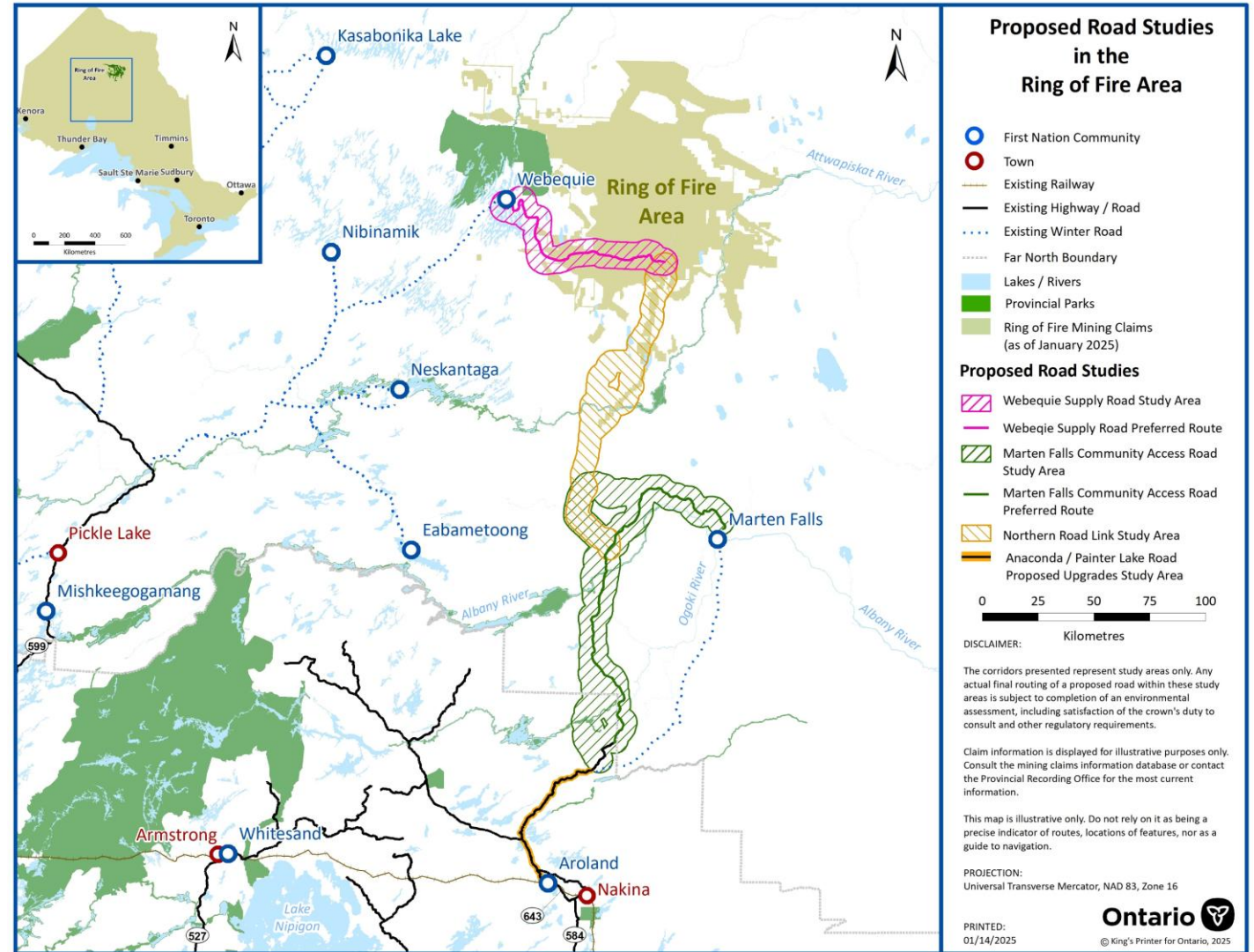
Core Goal: drive whole-of-government approach to coordinating ROF initiatives, bringing the right people at the right time across government to advance priorities.

Approach: multiple touch points with key ministries at the technical, executive and political levels:

- **IAFNER:** Leadership for any agreements/negotiations and Indigenous relationships policy
- **MTO:** Road planning/guidance to First Nations on provincial standards for EA consideration, design, cost and time estimates for construction, delivery
- **MECP:** Regulatory oversight - Environmental Assessments, permissions and permits, including decision-specific consultations
- **MINES:** overall project milestone tracking to support strategic decision-making, communications and links to federal government supports. Oversight of mineral sector/ authorization of mineral exploration and development activity.
- **MNR:** Regulatory and planning oversight - Permits, licenses, First Nations Community Based Land Use Planning, including decision-specific consultations
- **MND:** NOHFC - Economic development and readiness in Northern Ontario
- **MLITSD:** Labour supply and training
- **Energy:** Energy supply considerations for mine development and related facilities
- **MEDJCT:** Driving Prosperity- The future of Ontario's Automotive Sector and attracting investment
- **PO, Intergovernmental Affairs** – Supporting Federal engagement and negotiations
- **Other Social Ministries:** Improving quality of life in First Nation communities
- Multi-ministry legal staff

Ring of Fire: Study Area Map

- **Webequie Supply Road (WSR)** - a future all-season road connecting the First Nation to the Ring of Fire mining area
- **Northern Road Link (NRL)** - building from a section of the proposed Marten Falls Community Access Road to the Ring of Fire
- **Marten Falls Community Access Road (MFCAR)** - a community all-season road
- **Anaconda and Painter Lake Roads (APLR)** - upgrades to existing roads



Advancing Road Planning with Indigenous Leadership and Collaboration

Memorandum of Agreement

- In 2020, Ontario signed a six-year Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with MFFN and WFN (which expires in 2026) and includes commitments to discuss implementation details related to the Northern Road Link, community economic and social supports, equitable sharing of economic benefits associated with ROF development and a joint process for the FNs to provide advice and recommendations for Crown decision-making on permits and approvals. Many of these commitments have been honored but those related to equitable benefits sharing and a joint process for decision-making remain to be negotiated.

Community Development Agreement

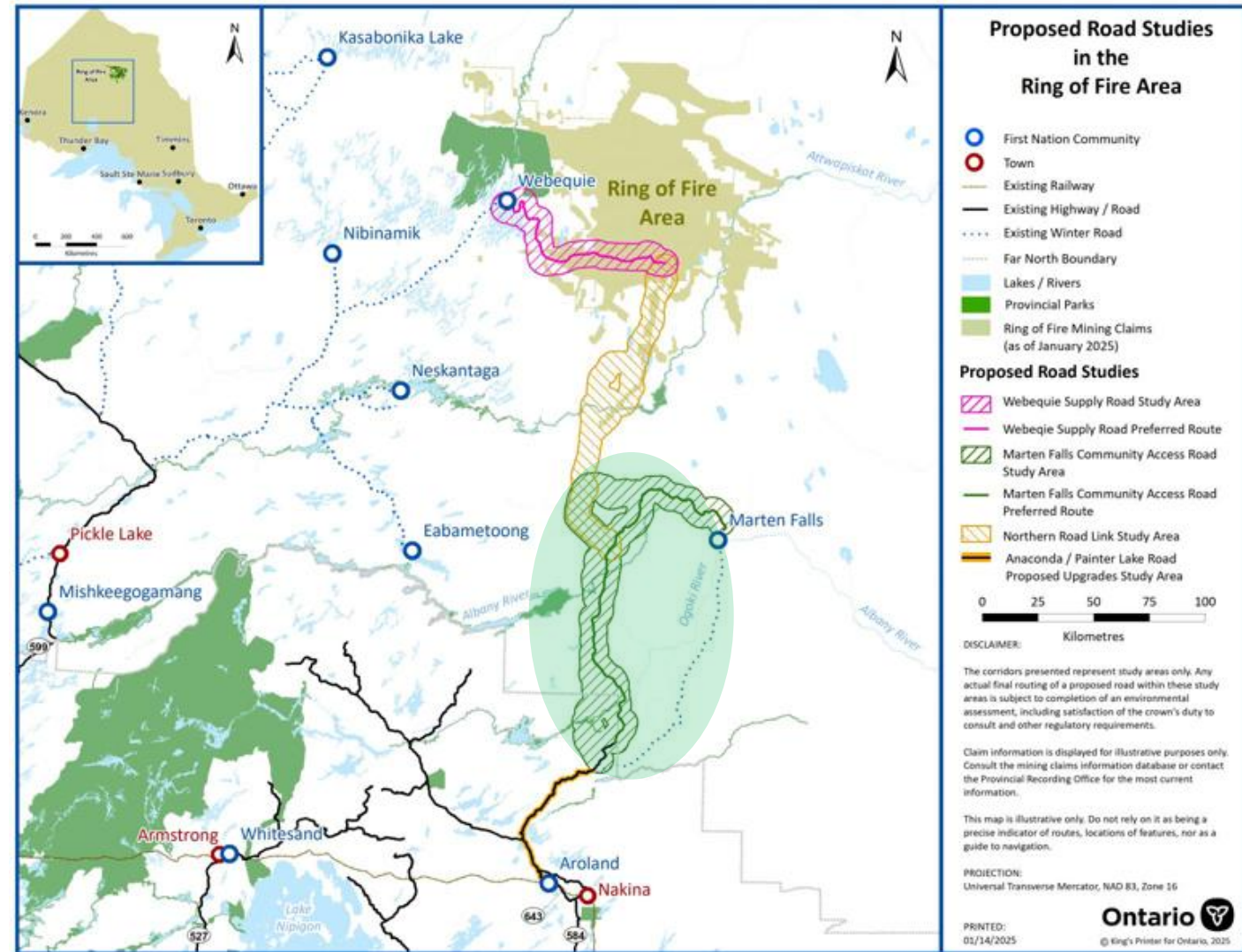
- In March 2024, Minister Pirie signed a Community Development Agreement with Marten Falls First Nation and Webequie First Nation to drive road delivery post-EA decisions (construction and operations). The agreement sets out a Terms of Reference for the negotiation of the Long-Term Agreement and well as commitment to build community infrastructure to support economic development in the area.

Shared Prosperity Agreement

- On January 28, 2025 Ontario and Aroland First Nation signed bilateral agreement Shared Prosperity Agreement to advance collaboration and work on the A/PLR and advancement of Ring of Fire development, including infrastructure investments related to energy transmission, roads and community development in a way that involves and benefits Aroland.

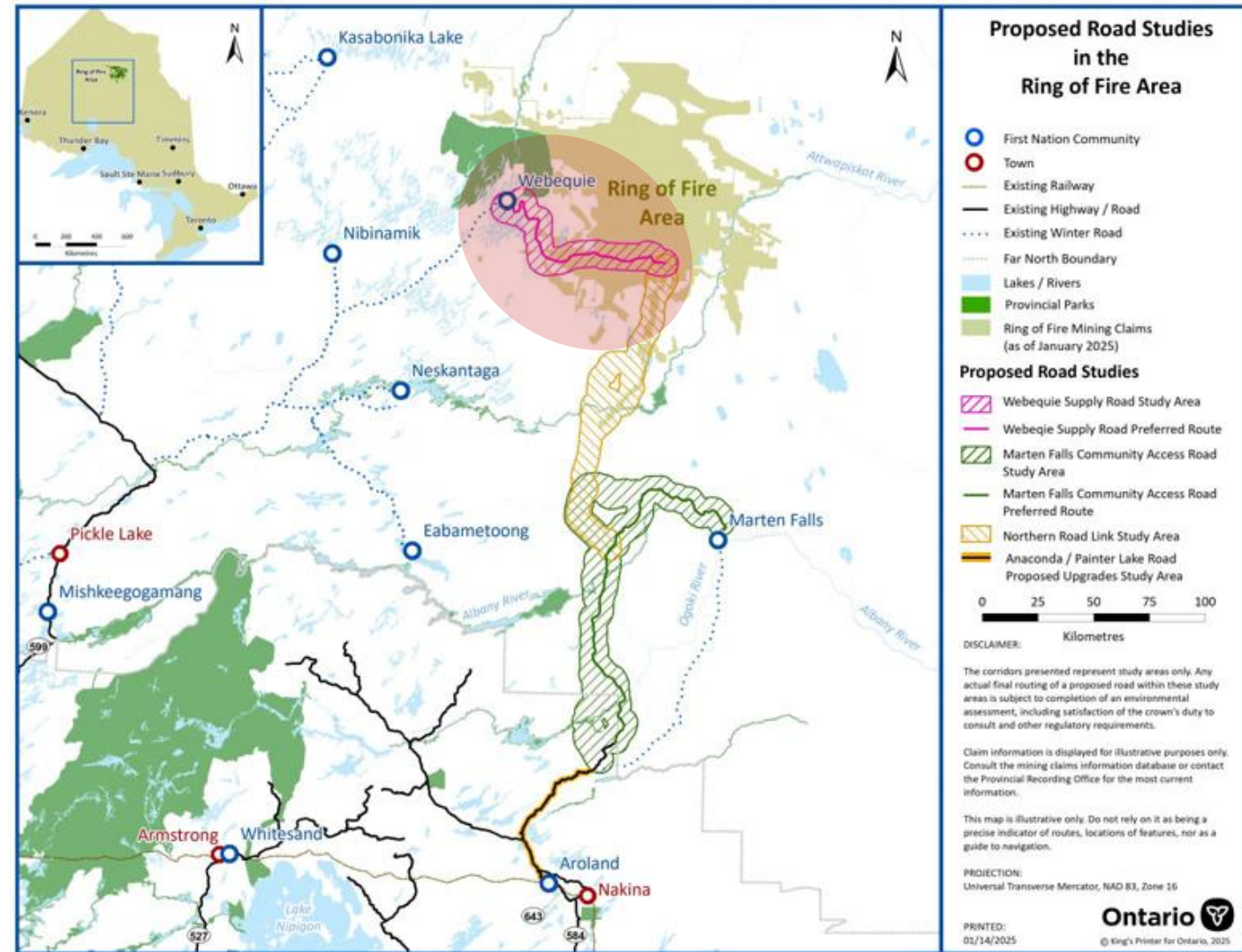
1. Marten Falls Community Access Road: Location

- The current route starts near the end of a forest access road known as the Painter Lake Road.
- Runs generally north for approximately 128km to just north of the Albany River, then heads east for about 89km to Marten Falls (total length **217km**).
- A completely new build with the first segments within the Area of Undertaking on the Ogoki Forest Unit and the remainder laying in the Far North area.



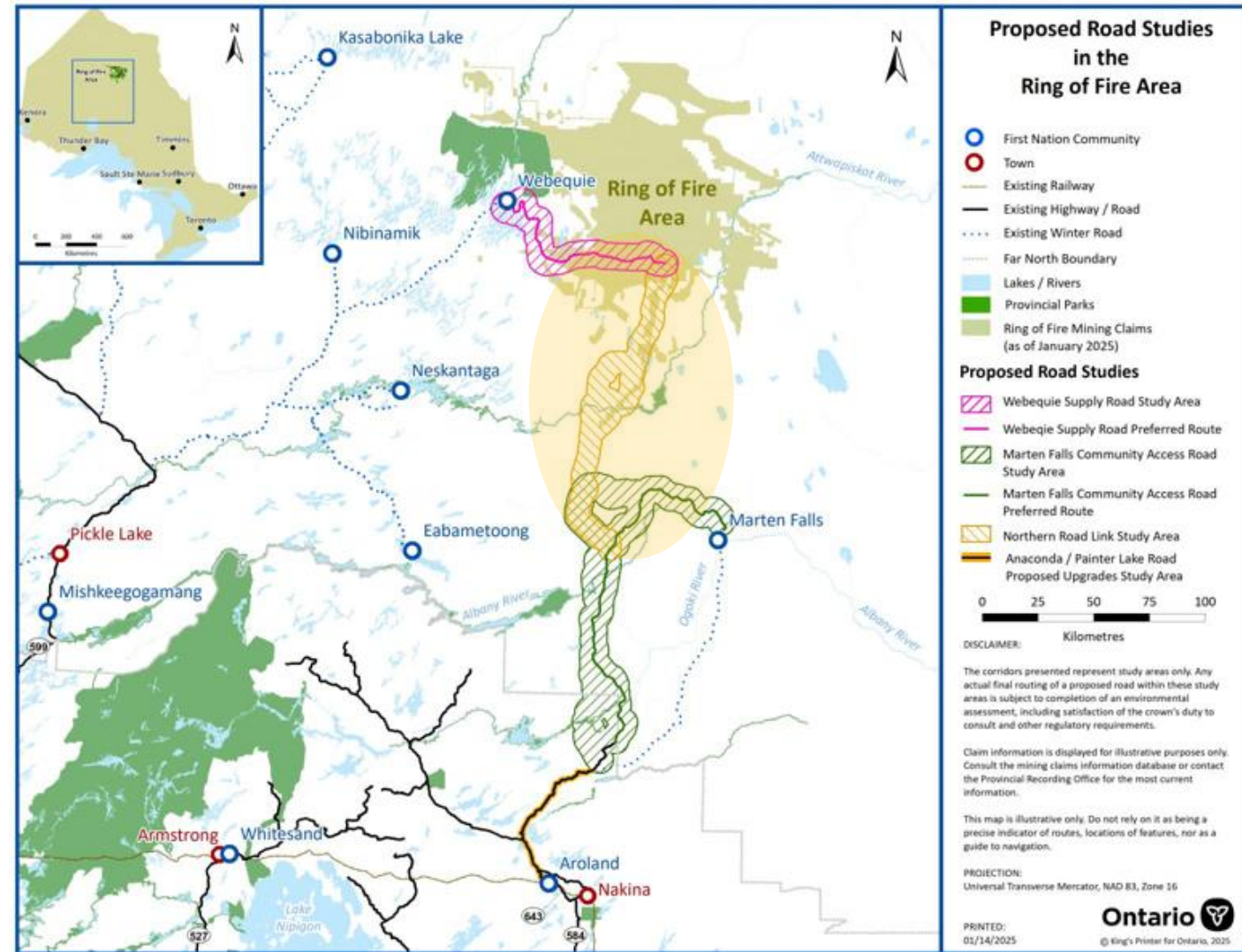
2. Webequie Supply Road: Location

- The current route starts at the Webequie airport, within the community.
- Heads generally south then east for **107km** to connect with the Northern Road Link near the Noront Eagle's Nest site in the Ring of Fire area (the first 17km being on reserve lands).
- A completely new build whose latter easterly trajectory follows the formerly proposed Noront East/West Route and lies entirely in the Far North area.



3. Northern Road Link: Location

- The currently favoured route begins at approximately kilometer 125 of the Marten Falls Community Access Road.
- Heads generally north for **126km** to connect with the Webequie Supply Road near the proposed Eagle's Nest mine site in the Ring of Fire area.
- Previously referred to as Phase 2 of the Marten Falls proposal, it is a completely new build that generally follows the former Cliff's North/South proposed rail line and lies entirely in the Far North area.



4. Anaconda / Painter Lake Upgrades: Location

- Begins at the end of Highway 643 at Aroland.
- Heads generally north and east for 69km up the Anaconda Road on the Kenogami Forest Unit, then continues for another 28km up the Painter Lake Road on the Ogoki Forest Unit (total length 97km).
- Both existing roads lie within the Area of Undertaking
- The current project area is only **77km** in length in order to avoid precluding a result of the Marten Falls Community Access Road EA.

