

Transportation network deficiencies demonstrate vulnerabilities within the Heart of Canada

Governments overlooking the safety and wellbeing of Northern Ontarians

Northerners who travel great distances in the winter months have experienced a significant number of transportation related delays & inconveniences to close out 2016. Over a seven week period, motorists encountered a total of 90 closures or blockages due to automobile or weather related incidents in the region.

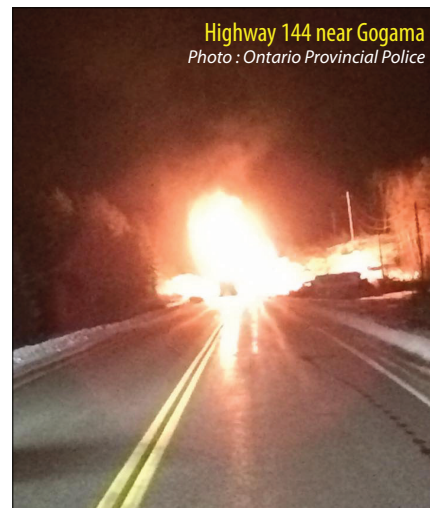
On November 24, **Highway 11**, one of Northern Ontario's primary roadways, was **closed for nearly 24 hours** due to a transport truck collision near Tonomo Lake Road, near the community of Marten River. Residents along this corridor between North Bay and Temiskaming Shores were left stranded, as the province could not provide a detour or an alternative mode of transportation to circumvent the incident.

A week before the Holidays in December, **Highway 17** was **closed repeatedly over a four day period** due to poor weather, blockages or collisions between the communities of Wawa, Sault-Ste-Marie and Blind River. According to the Ministry of Transportation's #511ONNortheast Twitter feed, the **Trans-Canada highway** was **shut down on 16 separate occasions**. Detours were either not an option or simply non-existent.

Around the same time period, commercial air travelers were affected by delays or unexpected layovers due to a **fuel shortage at the Victor M. Power Airport** in Timmins. Finally, one day after the arrival of 2017, a motor vehicle accident involving a propane truck near Gogama resulted in a **28 hour closure of Highway 144**, the only road linking the cities of Greater Sudbury and Timmins.



Highway 11 near Marten River
Photo : Baytoday.ca



Highway 144 near Gogama
Photo : Ontario Provincial Police



VIDEO OF WINTER HIGHWAY CLOSURE AT BATCHAWANA BAY (2015)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GotDgC0hNbl>

Too many highway closures, too few alternatives

These incidents, among others, are a clear demonstration of the gaps that exist within the Northern Ontario transportation network, and the need to reinstate passenger train services in the region. Within the last month, the province introduced weekend GO Train service between Barrie and Toronto, as well as extension of the Richmond Hill GO Train to the Town of Gormley.

Meanwhile in Northern Ontario, families, seniors and students are forced to endure the inevitable consequences from frequent highway closures and the lack of transportation alternatives readily accessible to many Southern Ontarians. Residents of Sault-Ste-Marie and the North Shore of Lake Huron are confined to one scheduled Eastbound and Westbound motor coach run to and from Sudbury. As a result, there are instances where Northerners are left stranded due to a limited supply of unreserved seating on the bus. Additionally, for the second time in three years, public transportation between the communities of Hearst and Longlac has been suspended indefinitely.


The province indicates in its latest discussion paper for the Northern Ontario Multimodal Transportation Study (NOMTS) that it wishes to improve long distance, regional and local intercommunity bus services. Yet, the province's highway infrastructure in Northern Ontario is incapable of, or is far too vulnerable and unreliable to deliver on this recommendation in the event of closures, weather related incidents or natural disasters. It is with irony that the region's adjacent rail lines (as indicated on page 3), which have proven to be time and again a safe and reliable mode of transportation for people and goods elsewhere in the province and country, remain underutilized or idle along the Northern Ontario Trans-Canada highways corridors. The Federal Government refuses to fund and reinstate the Algoma Central passenger rail service, while Queen's Park resists to the need to revive the Northlander passenger train.

HOW MANY MORE LIVES OF NORTHERNERS IS THE PROVINCE AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILLING TO RISK?

Continued on page two...

PARAGRAPH FROM COALITION FOR ALGOMA PASSENGER TRAINS POSITION PAPER

Canada is the second largest country in the world. Ontario is the second largest province in Canada. Therefore, both Canada and Ontario have substantial challenges transporting both goods and people that are significantly complicated by winter. Canada and Ontario have become primarily dependent on road transportation. Roads are very effective for short distance and local transportation but are inefficient, costly and intimidating for long distances. Long distance driving, especially in winter, also risks public safety. Dependence on road transportation is also a barrier to socio-economic opportunity for those who cannot, or do not drive, because of physical, mental or financial disability or discomfort over long-distance or winter driving. Much of Ontario and Canada's roads are overburdened which leads to accelerated deterioration and the need for very expensive road reconstruction and expansion. Air transportation in Ontario and Canada is fast but expensive and very limited in destinations. Air travel also suffers from many of the same winter and weather hazards as roads. Rail transportation is deteriorating and eroding, and rail is now a very limited and decreasing in opportunity for both passenger transportation or competitive freight.




Northeastern Ontario Highway Closures and Blockages Statistics

Between November 14 and December 31, 2016

Highway 11 :	39	
Highway 17 :	26	<i>Other highways</i>
Highway 63 :	4	<i>closed at least once :</i>
Highway 129 :	3	<i>6, 101, 535, 540, 556,</i>
Highway 144 :	4	<i>566, 575 and 663</i>
Highway 400/69 :	4	






Source : Ministry of Transportation of Ontario



Collision Statistics Nationwide (2014)

Automobile collisions :	112,167 (1,667 fatal)
Passenger train collisions :	61

Sources : Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, Railway Association of Canada, and Transport Canada

COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF PASSENGER TRAINS IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO VS NORTHERN ONTARIO				
 GO TRANSIT	TOTAL WEEKDAY SERVICE		TOTAL WEEKEND SERVICE	
Barrie Line	35x inbound	35x outbound	18x inbound	20x outbound
Kitchener Line	80x inbound	70x outbound	No service	No service
Lakeshore East Line	245x inbound	225x outbound	64x inbound	64x outbound
Lakeshore West Line	245x inbound	225x outbound	62x inbound	66x outbound
Milton Line	50x inbound	50x outbound	No service	No service
Richmond Hill Line	25x inbound	35x outbound	No service	No service
Stouffville Line	40x inbound	45x outbound	No service	No service
Union-Pearson Express	390x inbound	390x outbound	156x inbound	156x outbound
 VIA RAIL CORRIDOR	TOTAL WEEKDAY SERVICE		TOTAL WEEKEND SERVICE	
Ottawa - Montréal (QC)	30x inbound	30x outbound	8x inbound	5x outbound
Toronto - Montréal (QC)	35x inbound	35x outbound	10x inbound	11x outbound
Toronto - Niagara Falls	5x inbound	5x outbound	2x inbound	2x outbound
Toronto - Ottawa	45x inbound	45x outbound	13x inbound	13x outbound
Toronto - Sarnia	10x inbound	10x outbound	4x inbound	4x outbound
Toronto - Windsor	25x inbound	25x outbound	8x inbound	8x outbound
NORTHERN ONTARIO		PEAK SEASON SERVICE	OFF SEASON SERVICE	
	Sault-Ste-Marie - Hearst	Suspended since 2015		
	Cochrane - Moosonee	6x weekly (per direction)	5x weekly (per direction)	
	Toronto - Cochrane	Cancelled since 2012	Cancelled since 2012	
	Sudbury - White River	3x weekly (per direction)	3x weekly (per direction)	
	Toronto - Vancouver (BC)	3x weekly (per direction)	2x weekly (per direction)	

ABOUT THE NORTHERN & EASTERN ONTARIO RAIL NETWORK

The Northern & Eastern Ontario Rail Network (NEORN) is a grass roots organization advocating for the retention of existing rail corridors and the reinstatement of passenger train and corresponding shuttle services throughout the Districts of Algoma, Cochrane, Greater Sudbury, Kenora, Manitoulin, Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Rainy River, Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Timiskaming.

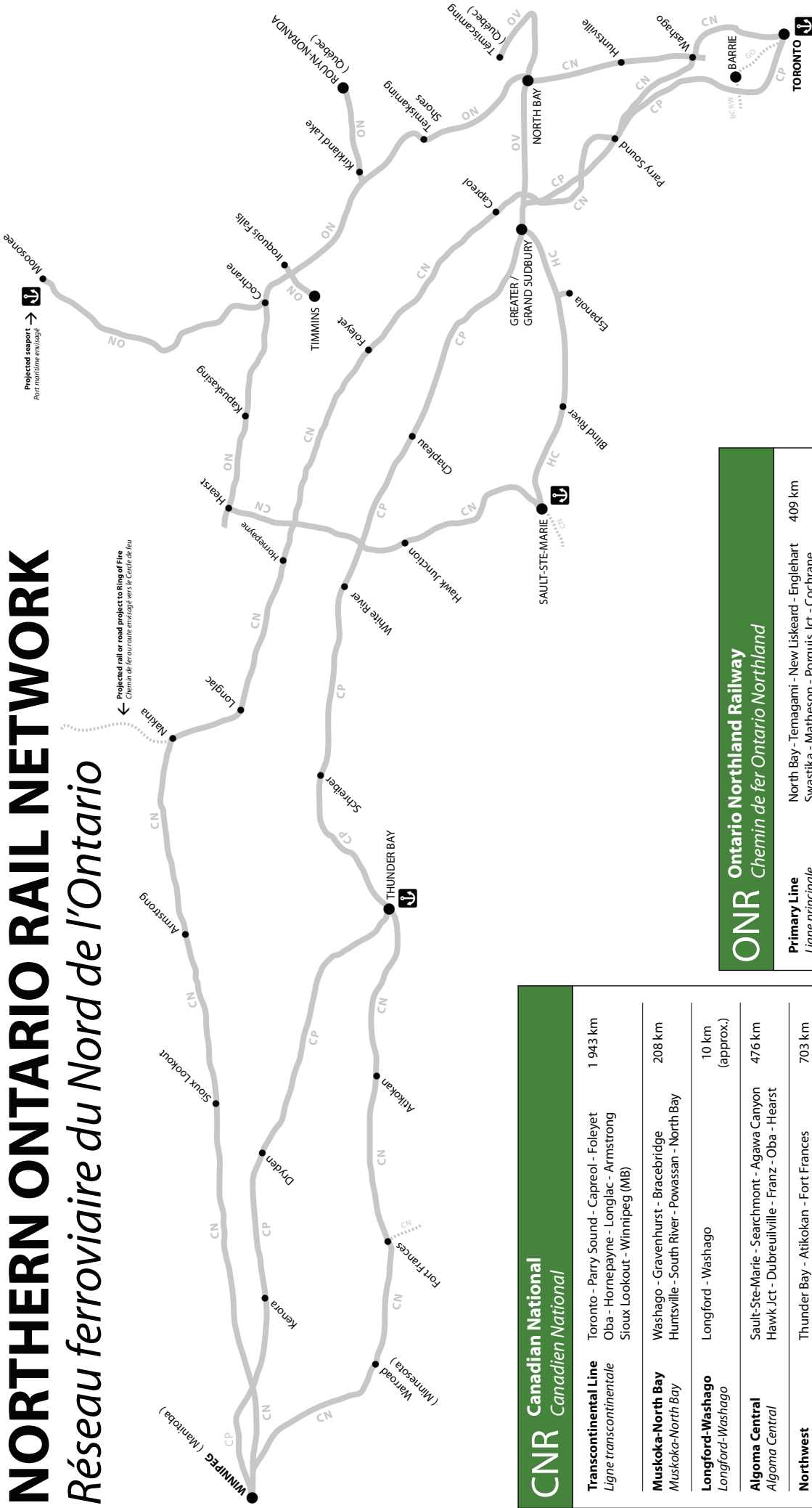
Northern Ontario has a network of approximately 6 000 kilometres of rail interlinking a significant portion of municipalities & First Nations throughout the region. There are many economic, environmental, practical, social and health factors that contribute to the importance of providing frequent & reliable passenger train service for communities, businesses & visitors looking to explore & travel great distances throughout the Cambrian Shield. NEORN is actively attempting to demonstrate to the provincial & federal governments the need for publicly supported investments in this endeavour, as is the case in every other jurisdiction in Canada.

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"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." — Margaret Mead

NORTHERN ONTARIO RAIL NETWORK

Réseau ferroviaire du Nord de l'Ontario



CNR <i>Canadian National</i> <i>Canadien National</i>	
Transcontinental Line <i>Ligne transcontinentale</i>	Toronto - Parry Sound - Capreol - Foleyet Oba - Hornepayne - Longlac - Armstrong Sioux Lookout - Winnipeg (MB)
Muskoka-North Bay <i>Muskoka-North Bay</i>	Washago - Gravenhurst - Bracebridge Huntsville - South River - Powassan - North Bay
Longford-Washago <i>Longford-Washago</i>	Longford - Washago
Algoma Central <i>Algoma Central</i>	Sault-Ste-Marie - Searchmont - Agawa Canyon Hawk Jct - Dubreuilville - Franz - Oba - Hearst
Northwest <i>Nord-Ouest</i>	Thunder Bay - Atikokan - Fort Frances Rainy River - Warroad (MN) - Winnipeg (MB)
CPR <i>Canadian Pacific</i> <i>Canadien Pacifique</i>	
Transcontinental Line <i>Ligne transcontinentale</i>	Toronto - Parry Sound - Sudbury - Chapleau Franz - White River - Schreiber - Thunder Bay Dryden - Kenora - Winnipeg (MB)
HCR <i>Huron Central Railway</i> <i>Chemin de fer Huron Central</i>	
Primary Line <i>Ligne principale</i>	Sudbury - McKerrow - Massey Blind River - Thessalon - Sault-Ste-Marie
Espanola-McKerrow <i>Espanola-McKerrow</i>	Espanola - McKerrow

ONR <i>Ontario Northland Railway</i> <i>Chemin de fer Ontario Northland</i>	
Primary Line <i>Ligne principale</i>	North Bay - Temagami - New Liskeard - Englehart Swastika - Matheson - Porquois Jct - Cochrane
Québec-Kirkland Lake <i>Québec-Kirkland Lake</i>	Rouyn-Noranda (QC) - Virginiatown Larder Lake - Kirkland Lake - Swastika
Iroquois Falls-Timmins <i>Iroquois Falls-Timmins</i>	Iroquois Falls - Porquois Jct - Timmins
Cochrane-Hearst <i>Cochrane-Hearst</i>	Cochrane - Smooth Rock Falls - Moonbeam Kapuskasing - Hearst - Calstock
James Bay <i>Bate-James</i>	Cochrane - Moosonee

OVR <i>Ottawa Valley Railway</i> <i>Chemin de fer de la Vallée de l'Outaouais</i>	
Primary Line <i>Ligne principale</i>	Témiscaming (QC) - Mattawa - Bonfield North Bay - Sturgeon Falls - Sudbury