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NEWS LOCAL

North shrinking, but Nipissing growing



By PJ WILSON, The Nugget
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Northern Ontario has lost the equivalent of the population of North Bay since its peak population 20 years ago, according to a study released this week by the Northern Policy Institute.

But the study also shows that five of the 11 Northern Ontario districts – including Nipissing and Parry Sound districts – have actually increased.

Diversify, Innovate, Invest and Grow shows that Northern Ontario's population has lost 54,000 people since 1995, when more than 859,000 people called this region their home.

The population for the 11 districts in Northern Ontario was 805,333 in 2013, a decrease of 54,000.

Nipissing, according to the report, grew by more than 1,000 from 2001 to 2013, an increase of 1.2%

"What the report does is it gives us a baseline to compare to in the future," Charles Cirtwell, CEO of the institute, said in a telephone interview Thursday.

"If you are trying to assess growth or the impact of (governmental) policies, you have to have something to compare it to. That's the value behind something like this."

The study drew data from Statistics Canada which showed the population across Northern Ontario overall declined by 2.2% between 2001 and 2013. Five of the 11 districts – Manitoulin, Kenora, Parry Sound, Greater Sudbury and Nipissing – saw population increases during that period.

The other six districts – Thunder Bay, Algoma, Timiskaming, Cochrane, Rainy River and Sudbury – saw decreases ranging from 4.7% to 12.9%.

"You can see that . . . it's not all bad," Cirtwell said. "Six of the districts are in decline, but Northeastern Ontario seems to have weathered the storm somewhat better."

Cirtwell said there is "direct correlation between the fortunes of the resource industries and resource-reliant communities," with upticks in population accompanying investments in infrastructure, such as new hospitals, new highways or other major building projects.

The regions which saw population growth, he said, have a more diversified economy.


"The growth of First Nations communities were driven by that, to a large degree," he said, pointing specifically at Manitoulin, which had population growth of 6.5%, to 13,538 from 12,713 in 2001.

He admitted events that have occurred in the past year are not reflected in the study, but stressed the study is "laying a baseline" for the future.

"It's just one of the pieces of the baseline, to show where the area was in a 12-year period."

Its strength, he said, will be to measure the impact of governmental policies on specific regions.

While the study did not look at individual communities, it did note a slower growth rate in Nipissing in the early years following the closing of the Weyerhaeuser mill in Sturgeon Falls in 2002.

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Stewart Millar · 44 minutes ago

The ONLY thing growing in Nipissing is the Welfare and Unemployment lineup.

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o.cossette · 11 hours ago

Not to worry NB, we will soon have jobs and growth from the pipelines and the windfarms

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Stewart Millar → o.cossette · 32 minutes ago

Really

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Northern_Princess_1 · 12 hours ago

I don't understand why there isn't more industry/commercial companies here in North Bay. It is the center of Hwy 17 from/to Ottawa, and from/to Sudbury, Hwy 11 from/to Toronto and from/to New Liskeard/Province of Quebec. So what's up North Bay Mayor and Council? This town/city should be prospering more than Sudbury and yet, Sudbury has more population and commerce (not including the mines). I don't get it.

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Stewart Millar → Northern_Princess_1 · 40 minutes ago

Once you pay for your flight into North Bay just to see how high the property taxes are...your moving on

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Cav · 15 hours ago

North Bay has a lot of government jobs. But they are on the brink of chasing their private industry out of town.

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Stewart Millar [↗ Cav](#) · 39 minutes ago

Hospital 75 job cuts
Nipissing University 40 jobs gone
and the threat by the provincial government to lose 200+ jobs contracting out at
Corrections

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flyconair · 15 hours ago

HOWEVER, since 2013 how many people have lost their jobs and moved away? That should
take care of the increase you talked about.

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