

# Reclaiming Anishinaabeg Moss Bags: Identifying the Connection Between Maternal Ecological Knowledge and Anishinaabeg Peatlands

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## Project Description:

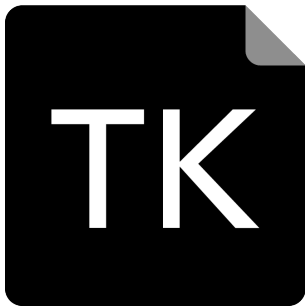
Moss bags represent a traditional maternal care practice in many Indigenous communities, including the Anishinaabeg. The practice promotes healthy development and allows babies to develop a sense of community. As a result of colonial policies and actions, many Anishinaabeg became disconnected with our moss bag teachings. This includes the use of sphagnum moss as a diapering material in moss bags, straining the relationship between the Anishinaabeg and our peatlands. To identify this process of reawakening, this thesis considered how moss bags allow the Anishinaabeg to create, embed, and pass on Maternal Ecological Knowledge of our peatlands. This research aimed to reawaken moss bag knowledge for the Anishinaabeg and learn how to reclaim the practice in a way that acknowledges the Anishinaabeg connection to our peatlands through Maternal Ecological Knowledge. Drawing on a mix of Indigenist qualitative methodological approaches, an Anishinaabe Moss Bag Creation Workshop was held for Indigenous Peoples in the Waterloo Wellington area and interviews were conducted with Anishinaabe Moss Bag Cultural Practitioners across Turtle Island. Applying thematic analysis using Bédard's Madoodiswan as Sacred Maternal Pedagogy, an abductive coding approach was used to identify the themes present in the workshop and interview transcripts. A manual coding approach was also utilized for analyzing workshop observations. Results of the thematic analysis demonstrated how moss bag materials and core teachings are Nation specific, reinforcing our sovereignty and connection to peatlands. Maintaining maternal teachings allows the Anishinaabeg to resist the colonial history which tried to suppress our knowledge and provide an avenue for bringing these teachings forward and maintaining ancestral connections for future generations.

## Project Notices



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