

# Avenues for Indigenous Influence of Oil Sands Reclamation<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** The oil sands industry in northern Alberta, Canada has intertwined environmental and cultural implications for Indigenous lands. In response to these complex impacts, ecological reclamation is levied as a key means of mitigating impacts from oil sands disturbances. Given the long-term impact on local Indigenous community health and wellbeing, these communities' participation throughout the reclamation process is important in both determining and achieving reclamation success. Not only does Indigenous leadership in oil sands reclamation make ecological sense, but Albertans have a legal and moral imperative to support Indigenous-influenced reclamation. Despite calls for increased involvement and some recent shifts in consultation protocol, there remains insufficient 'accommodation' and Indigenous leadership in oil sands reclamation. Using scoping and chronological approaches to a grey literature review, we identified (1) types of literature that discuss Indigenous engagement in oil sands reclamation, (2) the literature's proposed strategies for Indigenous influence of reclamation, and (3) trends in Indigenous influence of reclamation. Key findings demonstrate that current opportunities are limited, while support for Indigenous influence of oil sands reclamation is increasing. There is an overarching call for increased sovereignty for Indigenous Peoples to direct the entire process of reclamation from planning to execution to monitoring. Future opportunities should focus on the transition from extractive engagement to equitable leadership and on targeted capacity building. As large oil sands mines near closure and reclamation technologies continue to improve, members of the public, regulators, industry, and government can support the momentum of increasing avenues for Indigenous influence of reclamation.

**Additional Key Words:** consultation and accommodation, engagement, Indigenous rights, literature review, oil sands, participation, reclamation, reconciliation

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