Manitoba has been in the mining business for hundreds, if not thousands of years. In fact, no one can say for sure when minerals were first extracted from the Manitoba terrain, but it is known who initiated the activity. Aboriginal people who settled in Manitoba used to quarry red ochre/hematite from the Red Cliff area on what is now called Black Island. This deposit became a valuable resource for many tribal rituals, as the red rock was crushed to make a pigment used in body decoration and rock art.

These guiding principles were developed by representatives from the following organizations with the support of Elder Frank Wesley and Elder Sandy Beardy:

- Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
- Cross Lake Mineral Exploration
- Manitoba Energy and Mines
  (now Manitoba Industry, Trade and Mines)
- Manitoba Prospectors
  and Developers Association
- Manitoba Heavy Construction Association
- Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak
- Manitoba Metis Federation
- Manitoba-Saskatchewan Prospectors
  and Developers Association
- Mining Association of Manitoba
- Northern Association of Community Councils