



# The History of Shibetsu

Shibetsu City is one of the towns, villages, and cities located in the Teshio River Basin and derives its name from the Ainu word *si-pet* meaning “true river”.

The development of Shibetsu City began in 1899 as a settlement established by the northernmost and final regiment of *tondenhei* settlers.

Before the arrival of the *tondenhei* settlers, this land was home to the local indigenous Ainu people. Matsuura Takeshiro, the explorer responsible for giving the island of Hokkaido its name, traveled to the area in 1857 and recorded his interactions with the Ainu people in his *Diary of Teshio District* (Teshio Nisshi).

In 1954, 55 years after settlement began, the town of Shibetsu and the villages of Kamishibetsu, Tayoro, and Onnebetsu were merged to form Shibetsu City. In 2005, the city was once again merged with Asahicho to create the Shibetsu City of today.

Since its settlement, the development of Shibetsu has continued in a variety of areas including forestry, agriculture, starch production, sheep farming, cultural arts, and sports.

