

Métis Nation-Saskatchewan Lands & Resources



SUMMER 2011



Message from MN-S President Robert Doucette

Edlanete, Tansi, Hello Métis Citizens,

It is my pleasure to introduce the inaugural issue of Métis Nation-Saskatchewan *Lands & Resources*.

Throughout the history of the Métis Nation, our people have relied on the bounty offered by Mother Earth. As our Nation evolved throughout the great expanse called Canada, our citizens hunted, fished, and gathered plants to ensure the survival of our families.

As John Palliser remarked in 1857, “this pemmican harvest of their buffalo hunts was brought in for trade by the Indians of the Plains and the Half Breeds of Red River who organized with military discipline under their leader, the warden of the Plains, who went out on the Prairies every year on two tremendous buffalo hunts.”

The 1924 testimony of Elder Patrice Fluery noted that the location of present day Saskatoon was a primary buffalo hunting ground called “Bois de Fleche.”

As in the past, harvesting from Mother Earth remains an integral tradition of our Nation that we inherited from our ancestors. In the North, the people of the two oldest Métis communities, Île-à-la-Crosse and Cumberland House, continue to this day to provide sustenance for their families by hunting, fishing and gathering wild rice, berries and using traditional medicinal plants.

Over the past four years, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan has embarked on an ambitious process of discussions with the Government of Saskatchewan over the issue of harvesting. As this publication illustrates, we are working with many institutions, groups, and the federal and provincial governments to ensure that our tradition of harvesting will continue and be practiced by future generations of Métis citizens.

I want to thank Lands & Resources Minister LaFontaine and the Métis Nation Harvesting Team for the work they have done. They have shown great leadership on this file.

I want to also thank the Province of Saskatchewan, Premier Brad Wall, Minister of Environment Dustin Duncan, and Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations Ken Cheveldayoff for engaging with Métis Nation-Saskatchewan leaders on the issue of accommodating a province-wide Métis harvesting agreement.

Last but not least, let us thank the Creator for the progress we are making in this world.

It is an honour to be President of Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, an honour for which I am most grateful.



The Department of Lands and Resources promotes and protects Métis interests regarding environmental issues. It ensures a flow of information between the provincial and federal governments, industry, and Métis Nation-Saskatchewan citizens.

- We provide support and advice on issues regarding Duty to Consult, Harvesting, and environmental issues facing today's Métis.
- We strive to include Métis participation in consultation and decisions affecting the Locals, Regions and the Province.
- We promote relationships with the Crown regarding Métis harvesting rights.
- We contribute to stakeholder committees to ensure a Métis perspective.



Métis worldview reflects an ecological perspective that advocates careful use of renewable and non-renewable resources. Sustainability means finding a balance between environmental and economic needs.

WORKING TOGETHER

The Duty to Consult and Accommodate

What is Duty to Consult and Accommodate?

Duty to Consult and Accommodate (DTCA) arose out of the Supreme Court of Canada's judgments in the Haida Nation case, as well as the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and Mikisew Cree First Nation cases, which opened up new possibilities for relationships between governments and Aboriginal communities. This duty requires governments to consult First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and accommodate their interests whenever a Crown considers conduct that might adversely affect Aboriginal rights or interests.

Who is responsible for DTCA?

The legal framework determines that the duty flows from the honour of the Crown and s.35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. The duty applies when the Crown has real or constructive knowledge of the potential existence of Aboriginal rights or title that may be at risk from a course of action being contemplated by a Crown. The duty demands that all governments work with Aboriginal peoples to understand their interests and concerns prior to authorizing or proceeding with a plan, policy, development or activity that has the potential to affect Aboriginal rights.

What is the purpose of DTCA?

The purpose of the duty is achieved when government addresses, modifies or reconciles its actions with Aboriginal interests in a real and substantive way. It is designed to promote the transformation of the existing relationship between the Crown and First

Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to a new relationship based on consultation, accommodation, just settlements and reconciliation.

What triggers a DTCA?

DTCA may be triggered by Government decisions and actions that have the potential to adversely impact the exercise of Treaty and Aboriginal rights and pursuit of traditional uses. The decisions and actions that will be assessed by governments for potential consultation obligations include, but are not limited to the following:

- Legislation, regulation, policy and strategic plans
- Fish and wildlife management
- Resource extraction
- Land reservations
- Land use planning
- Lease, grant or sale of unoccupied crown land
- Changes to public access
- Environmental approvals

What are Métis Nation-Saskatchewan principles concerning engagement, consultation, and accommodation?

The fulfillment of the duty requires good faith on the part of all parties and consultations must be conducted in equitable, transparent and respectful manner.

Timelines must be reasonable and provide sufficient opportunity for the Métis to re-

view and assess the information provided by the Crown or industry.

The Crown must recognize and support the unique capacity needs and realities of the Métis people and their elected governance structures at the local, regional and provincial levels.

The Crown must provide the necessary funding/capacity to Métis government or ensure the necessary funding/capacity is provided to Métis government to engage with government and/or industry, as well as with Métis citizens.

Consultations must be with the Métis government structures that are elected and supported by the Métis people. Consultations with individual Métis, service delivery organizations, mayors and municipal councils, and pan-Aboriginal structures cannot discharge the duty owed to the Métis, as a rights-bearing people.

Métis government has the responsibility to consult with its citizens and represent its citizens, not the Crown or industry.

Métis consultation processes must provide all Métis citizens the opportunity to participate and be heard (i.e. public meetings, timely information, etc.)

Ultimate decision-making with respect to consultation and accommodation must rest with the affected rights-bearing Métis community.

How does a consultation and accommodation process function?

An effective process of consultation and accommodation has five steps:

NOTICE: Government must give notice that it is considering a development project, activity, policy change, etc. Notice must go to all of Aboriginal peoples, including Métis peoples who live in and use the affected area. In the interim, while capacity is being built throughout MN-S, notice should be given to potentially affected MN-S Locals, Regions, as well as the Secretariat.

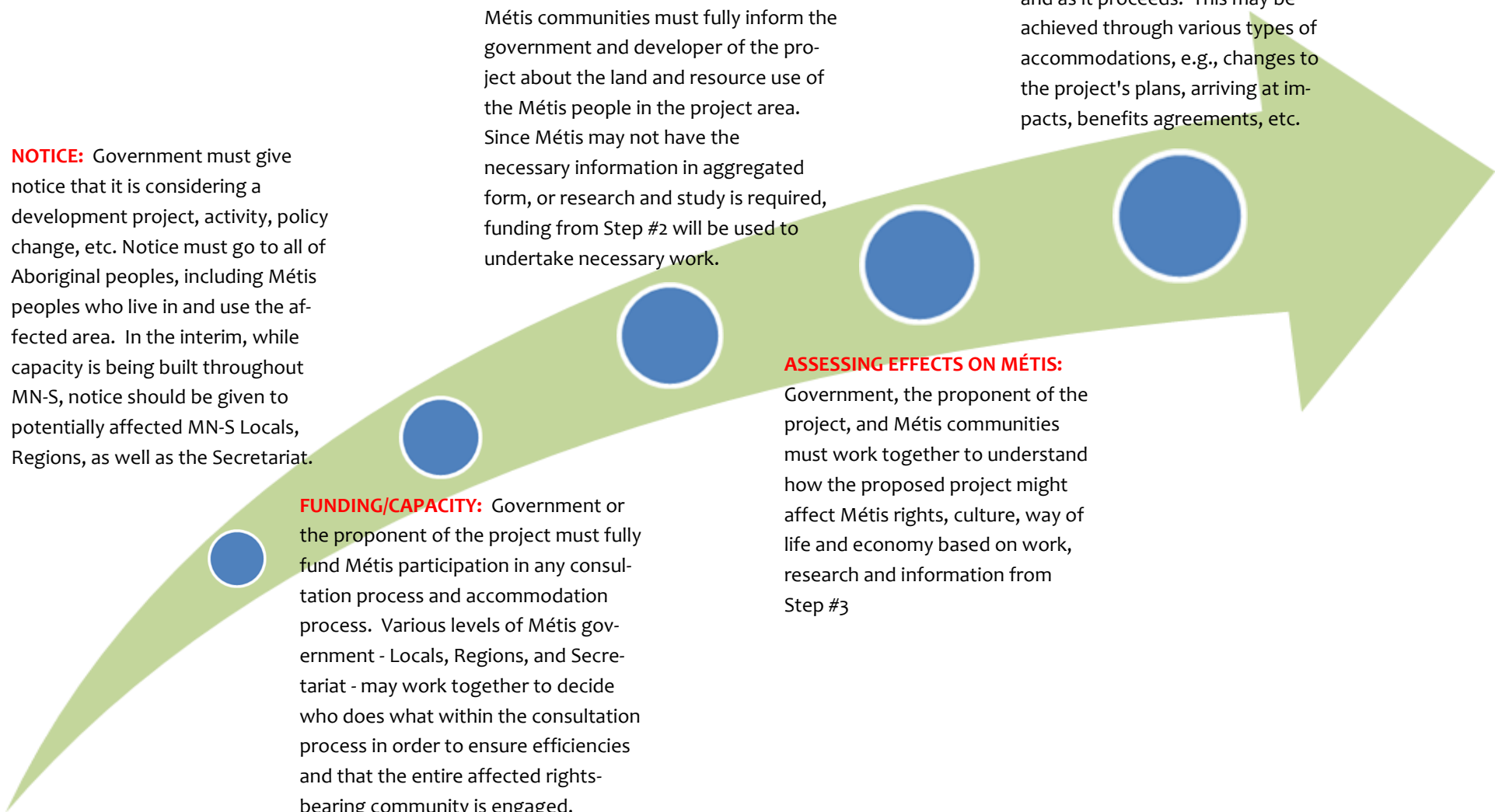
INFORMATION EXCHANGE: Government and the proponent of the project must fully inform Métis communities about the proposed development, while the Métis communities must fully inform the government and developer of the project about the land and resource use of the Métis people in the project area. Since Métis may not have the necessary information in aggregated form, or research and study is required, funding from Step #2 will be used to undertake necessary work.

FUNDING/CAPACITY: Government or the proponent of the project must fully fund Métis participation in any consultation process and accommodation process. Various levels of Métis government - Locals, Regions, and Secretariat - may work together to decide who does what within the consultation process in order to ensure efficiencies and that the entire affected rights-bearing community is engaged.

ASSESSING EFFECTS ON MÉTIS:

Government, the proponent of the project, and Métis communities must work together to understand how the proposed project might affect Métis rights, culture, way of life and economy based on work, research and information from Step #3

ACCOMMODATION: Government, the proponent of the project and Métis communities must work together to ensure that the project protects and accommodates Métis rights, culture, way of life and economy when it is initiated and as it proceeds. This may be achieved through various types of accommodations, e.g., changes to the project's plans, arriving at impacts, benefits agreements, etc.



Harvesting

In November 2010, MN-S and the Province of Saskatchewan signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Métis harvesting rights. The MOU addresses the negotiation

of several key actions needed for an interim and ultimately final agreement between the parties on issues regarding:

- Métis community and Métis traditional territories;
- Métis food harvesting customs, practices and traditions;
- Ancestral and community acceptance requirements necessary to be a beneficiary of harvesting rights;
- Achieving legal enforceability and certainty of those rights; and,
- The identification of additional research or studies necessary to assist MN-S and the Province of Saskatchewan to reach interim and final agreements.

While the negotiations are occurring, harvesters can turn for information to the MN-S Métis Harvesting Guide which is available on the MN-S website or can be ordered by contacting the Lands & Resources Department of the MN-S Secretariat.

It is important to note that based on the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan decision on *R. v. Laviolette*, Métis who live in northwest Saskatchewan, which includes the areas in and around Lac La Biche, Île-à-la-Crosse, and Green Lake, can hunt and fish for food without a license.

However, since the harvesting negotiations are not finalized, Ministry of Environment policies continue to apply in other regions and Métis harvesters should be aware that they may still be charged.

IF YOU PLAN ON HARVESTING:

- Ensure that you have the appropriate identification needed for Métis harvesting – an MN-S Citizenship card;
- Ensure you have written and verbal permission to hunt on any private or First Nations land;
- Follow all safety and conservation standards while harvesting;
- Contact the MN-S Harvesting Advisor for the most up-to-date information.

If you are not a registered Métis person and encounter a provincial Conservation Officer while harvesting, you can trigger the Screening Process by identifying yourself as a Métis and stating that you are exercising your Métis right to harvest for sustenance.

The MN-S Citizenship Registry: Working with Harvesters

Registering eligible Métis persons in Saskatchewan through a secure, efficient, standardized, and objectively verifiable process is the goal of the MN-S Registry. This comprehensive process is the key element from which all aspects of MN-S governance and funding flows. It also provides a concrete base of data for the development of MN-S policy specific to Métis harvesting and the exercising of Métis rights.

For harvesters, having an MN-S Citizenship

card helps to clarify and simplify the relationship between those Métis citizens who hunt, trap, fish, and gather and the provincial Conservation Officers.

Over the past two-and-half years, in incidents where a non-registered Métis harvester has been charged with illegal harvesting by a Conservation Officer, the harvester could trigger a Screening Process to have their harvesting rights recognized. The Harvesting Advisor, a member of the Department of Lands & Resources staff, acts as an advocate for these

harvesters and, in cases where proof of a harvester's Métis ancestry/ancestral connection is in question, works closely with Registry Department and the resident Certified Genealogist in Saskatoon to find the link to their Métis ancestors.



A New Screening Process

The Ministry of Environment recognizes that Métis Nation–Saskatchewan, through its Regions and Locals, has an integral role to play to support and assist Métis food harvesters in their dealings with the Ministry. As a result of negotiations, an amended Screening Process was signed between Minister of Lands & Resources, Robert LaFontaine and MOE Director of Enforcement, Ken Aube on June 28th.

The Screening Process is for Métis citizens who feel they may have Aboriginal rights to hunt and fish for sustenance (food) or choose to exercise that right

believing it is relevant to the Métis food harvesting rights being claimed.

It is the responsibility of the Métis food harvester involved to trigger the Screening Process which starts with the completion of a Métis Harvester Screening Process Consent Form. Providing a copy of the consent form to the Ministry triggers the Screening Process. A signed copy of the consent form must also be received by MN-S.

The screening process is intended to take the burden off Métis harvesters having to provide information to Conservation Officers about Métis food harvesting rights by intervening on the harvester's behalf.



Minister of Lands & Resources Robert LaFontaine and MOE Director of Enforcement Ken Aube sign the amended Screening Process agreement.

Intergovernmental Affairs

In the ongoing harvesting negotiations, the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs has been providing advice on negotiation strategies and processes to the MN-S negotiation team, with an emphasis on the general overview and possible impacts on MN-S governance issues. The critical knowledge and information being developed by the Department of Lands and Resources is

crucial to IGA, which was called on through a motion at the last Métis Nation Legislative Assembly, to develop a Lands and Resources Act.

This piece of legislation is timely given recent developments in duty to consult, harvesting negotiations, and industrial development, all of which affect the use and access to Métis traditional lands. A new Lands and Resources Act will assist Métis citizens and leadership in responding to and acting on environmental issues.

The Department of Intergovernmental Affairs will work with the Department of Lands & Resources to undertake consultations with Métis citizens throughout Saskatchewan to develop a piece of legislation that best represents an MN-S vision. The discussions will also include the MN-S Wildlife Act which requires review in light of current harvesting negotiations between MN-S and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment.

Métis health and well-being is connected to the land

Métis people traditionally lived a lifestyle connected to the land as it provided Métis families with most of what was needed to survive. Hunting and fishing provided the meat necessary to feed their families, and berries were gathered, eaten fresh or dried and stored for future use. Métis families picked many wild plants for food and medicines.

Gathering and preparing food also provided opportunity for families to get together, share food, laughter and stories. Extended families would go together in large groups to pick berries, often for days at a time. Today, these core values continue to influence Métis health and well-being.



Mirepoix

The Métis people traditionally lived a communal lifestyle. Since sharing and borrowing food was common practice in the Métis community, it was common for a pot of soup to be

cooking on the stove for family members or visitors dropping by.

A basic nutritious Métis soup recipe includes onions, meat (ground or chunks), potatoes, carrots and celery which can be simmered for about half an hour and then seasoned with salt and pepper.

The celery, onions, and carrots make up the French “*mirepoix*,” aromatics that are the flavor base for a wide number of dishes, such as stocks, soups, stews and sauces.

Carrots are an excellent source of vitamin A, a good source of potassium, and contain vitamins C & B6, copper, folic acid, thiamine and magnesium. The high level of beta-carotene which gives carrots their distinctive orange colour increases the level of key antioxidants in the bloodstream.

Onions contain chemical compounds believed to have anti-inflammatory, anti-cholesterol, anticancer, and antioxidant properties, and are a good source of Vitamin C, potassium and calcium.

Celery is high in dietary fibre.

Potatoes are a good source of vitamins and minerals, including Vitamin C, potassium, Vitamin B6, and provide excellent fibre content equivalent to many whole grain breads, pastas and cereals.

Meat is very high in protein and contains all of the essential amino acids. In most cases it is a good source of zinc, vitamin B₁₂, selenium, phosphorus, niacin, vitamin B₆, choline, riboflavin and iron. Several forms of meat are also high in vitamin K₂.

But what's in a serving?

Vegetables and Fruit

125 mL (½ cup) fresh, frozen or canned vegetables, fruit or 100% juice
250 mL (1 cup) leafy raw vegetables or salad
1 piece of fruit

Grain Products

1 2.5 x 2.5 inch piece of bannock
125 mL (½ cup) cooked wild rice,
30 g cold cereal or 175 mL (¾ cup) hot cereal

Milk and Alternatives

250 mL (1 cup) milk
175 g (¾ cup) yogurt
50 g (1 ½ oz.) cheese

Meat and Alternatives

75 g (2 ½ oz.)/125 mL (½ cup) cooked fish, poultry or lean meat
175 mL (¾ cup) cooked beans

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/basics-base/serving-portion-eng.php>



Did someone say Bannock?

Bannock? Boulette soup? Beignes? Each year, as *Back to Batoche Days* draws near, we begin to think about the mouthwatering, tasty delights available on the grounds. What we often don't consider is that these are traditional foods our families have eaten for generations.

Bannock has always been a staple of a traditional Métis diet, along with other traditional foods such as wild meats, fish, chokecherries, Saskatoon berries and blueberries, to name a few. And,

let's not forget the mounds and mounds of vegetables our kokums, aunties and mothers used to grow in order to feed our families all winter.

Health Canada recently incorporated some traditional foods into its Canada Food Guide and it is important to consider how they can be incorporated into our everyday diets.

There are other healthy benefits to incorporating these foods into our diets. Not only is the physical activity of hunting, fishing, gathering berries or gardening good for us but, as these activities are often done with others, it creates the opportunity for quality time together with our young people, our relatives and our Elders.



How to Make Li Grens – Crushed Chokecherries

Take your auntie or your kokum along when picking chokecherries. They always know where to find the best berries.

Pick lots of chokecherries, wash them well, and find two rocks to crush the berries. Preferably, one flat rock should have a small hollow or depression on the top to catch the berry juice and pulp; the other rock, slightly smaller, should have a blunt or smooth bottom. This rock will be used to crush the berries so it should fit smoothly in your hand. Your auntie or kokum will know how to find the good rocks, or they might even have a couple hiding in the back of a cupboard or closet somewhere.

Crush a few berries at a time, placing them in the hollow of the flat rock and using the second rock like a hammer to crush the berries. You will know when they are crushed because they tend to make a bit of a popping sound and the stones emit a slight almond smell. If you don't have the time to crush the berries by hand, you can also use a food grinder. Just make sure to use a blade that will grind the berries up small enough.

Next, form the crushed berries into small patties and place on an oil cloth or a screen out in the sun to dry. Drying between two screens sometimes works better because it keeps the birds out of the berries if you don't have time to keep a close eye on them. When they are dried, they can be stored in a cloth bag and kept for the winter.

To eat the dried berries, place two cups of berries in a large pot. Add ¾ to 1 cup of water and bring to a boil. Stir in ½ cup of butter or lard and ½ to ¾ cup of sugar, depending on how sweet you like the berries. Add a small touch of flour to thicken and then cook until the berries reach a thick consistency which will vary depending on the amount of water you add.

Serve with fresh bannock.

Enjoy!



New results-based regulations to protect Saskatchewan's Environment

point source pollution and unregulated resource harvest. The new model represents a significant shift, one that focuses on holding proponents accountable for achieving desired environmental outcomes.

The Saskatchewan Environmental Code will be a legally binding, enforceable set of requirements to be followed by anyone conducting activities regulated by any of the Acts that reference the Code. It will contain a clear concise statement of objectives and best practices that will govern the management and protection of the environment in Saskatchewan. It will provide directions and guidelines for projects, allowing operators in many situations to proceed in an environmentally friendly way without unnecessary permits from the Ministry.

As part of the comprehensive review of environmental regulation in Saskatchewan, the MOE contracted Clifton Associates to provide an assessment of the current regulatory model and legislation, as well as to develop a benchmark against other jurisdictions, undertake consultations, and provide a set of recommendations.

To support the new results-based approach, several key pieces of enabling legislation were updated and introduced in the fall of 2009 and passed by the Legislature in the spring of 2010, including:

- The Environmental Assessment Act
- The Forest Resources Management Act
- The Environmental Management and Protection Act
- The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act.

These Acts have not yet been proclaimed so they do not have the force of law, however once initial sections of the Saskatchewan Environmental Code are completed, the new legislative framework will be brought into effect. The Code, a key feature of the new results-based model, is targeted for completion in the summer of 2011.

To ensure compliance, the MOE is establishing an auditing function based on risk. It is also establishing a Client Service Office to help clients, particularly first time entrants, through the regulatory process.

Saskatchewan's Ministry of Environment (MOE) is adopting a new, results-based model for environmental regulation to improve protection of the environment while promoting innovative new tools in environmental management.

Saskatchewan's current regulations were developed in the 1970s to address industrial

MN-S participates on Saskatchewan Environmental Code Committee

Development of the Saskatchewan Environmental Code began in January 2010 with information sessions held in Saskatoon and Regina. At those sessions, Ministry staff and consultants presented stakeholders and other interested parties with information about the Code—its purpose, scope, a proposed Code outline, and planned next steps.

The new legislation is being developed collaboratively by bringing together experts with extensive knowledge in environmental protection, law, and governance. The Code Development Committee, established in the summer of 2010, will provide advice to the Minister of Environment on Code content and its supporting materials. The 19 members who make up the committee have a broad range of backgrounds and interests, and includes a Métis representative.

The actual writing of the Code chapters is a collaborative process

done by eight Content Committees. These committees are comprised of members from government, regulated communities, and interested parties, all chosen for their interest in and knowledge of a particular subject area. The eight committees are: Municipal, Industrial, Lands; Fish and Wildlife; Climate Change; Air Management; Forestry; and Linear Activities. Each committee will work initially on two or three Code chapters in their area.

Participation in the committee does not release the Government from the Duty to Consult.

Both the Code Development Committee and the Content Committees receive support from the Code Secretariat. The Secretariat includes staff from the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General, and will provide administrative and technical assistance to both groups.

Woodland Caribou recovery strategy underway

The MN-S Department of Lands & Resources has joined the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment to assist in the work of updating a draft Woodland Caribou recovery strategy begun in 2007.

The Woodland Caribou is considered "threatened" under the federal *Species at Risk Act* and the strategy must be updated to align with work done by the federal government and changes in delineating habitat.

Participation in the recovery strategy includes representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations, and representation from other stakeholders, such as the

Saskatchewan Trappers Association, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, and MN-S. Industry is represented by the Meadow Lake Oriented Strand Board (OSB) mill, Cameco, Weyerhaeuser, and Mistik Management.

MN-S has an interest in gathering information for Métis communities regarding the recovery and strategy plans of both the provincial and federal governments in order to determine the impact of those plans on the Métis of the North who are traditional harvesters.

The next course of action is to form smaller working groups to discuss the issues.



Completion of a Saskatchewan Recovery Strategy is set for April 2012. The Ministry envisions the strategy to be the first step in a future Boreal conservation plan.

Saskatchewan Wild Species at Risk Program

Saskatchewan strives to maintain a healthy environment for the thousands of native wild species that live in the province. Despite many programs focused on maintaining and enhancing wildlife populations, some species have been threatened with extinction and require special attention to help ensure their survival.

The mission of the Saskatchewan Species at Risk Program is to protect species from extirpation or extinction, and to prevent additional species and ecosystems from becoming

threatened with extinction. The focus of this program is directed at the needs of provincially threatened and endangered species, and is integrated with Canada's Species at Risk Program.

Within the Ministry of Environment, the Fish and Wildlife Branch is legislated to address species at risk in Saskatchewan. This is done under the direction of The Wildlife Act, 1998 which includes provisions to designate and protect species at risk. There are currently 15 at-risk plants and animals identified in the Act.

Wildlife in Saskatchewan, including all species at risk, are protected from being disturbed, collected, harvested, captured, killed, sold or exported without a permit.

In addition, the den, house, nest, dam, or usual place of habitation of wildlife and wild species at risk is also protected from disturbance and destruction.

Habitat protection has additional benefits for the province's flora and fauna, and helps to maintain a healthy environment for all of Saskatchewan's wildlife.

Under The Wildlife Act, 1998 any native wild species can be designated as extirpated, endangered, threatened, or vulnerable if it is believed to be at risk. These categories are similar to those used by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada to assess a species' risk of extirpation or extinction.

The conservation status rank applied by the Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre (CDC) is used to select and prioritize candidate species for listing under The Wildlife Act, 1998. The CDC maintains a centralized database used to store scientific information on the status, location and ecology of Saskatchewan species and plant communities, with a focus on those deemed to be

at risk. The database is housed in the Ministry of Environment's Fish and Wildlife Branch.

In addition to determining conservation status ranks, this database is also used to assist in development and conservation planning, and to support species recovery, biological research and direct monitoring for species at risk.

If you have information that you'd like to report on any rare or wild species at risk in Saskatchewan, please fill out the online Rare Species Report Form, found at: www.biodiversity.sk.ca/Docs/speciesreportform.pdf

Also see www.environment.gov.sk.ca/wildspeciesatrisk.



BURROWING OWL

CATEGORY	DEFINITION	SPECIES AT RISK
Extirpated	No longer exists in the wild in Saskatchewan, but exists in the wild outside of Saskatchewan	Black-footed Ferret, Grizzly Bear, Greater Prairie Chicken, Eskimo Curlew, Small White Lady's-slipper
Endangered	Threatened with imminent extirpation or extinction	Burrowing Owl, Piping Plover, Sage Grouse, Whooping Crane, Swift Fox, Sand Verbena, Western Spiderwort, Tiny Cryptanthe, Hairy Prairie-clover
Threatened	Likely to become endangered if the factors leading to its endangerment are not reversed	Slender Mouse-ear-cress

MN-S joins Sturgeon River Plains Bison Stewards

Given the Métis Nation's historic relationship with the Plains bison, the MN-S Department of Lands and Resources and Local 108 President Bryan Lee are pleased to be members of the Sturgeon River Plains Bison Stewards.

This management group is made up of concerned ranchers and farmers who are working as stewards with Prince Albert National Park and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment to create an environment where the bison can co-exist with local landowners in a mutually beneficial way.

The Plains bison herd is located in and around the west side of the Prince Albert National Park which borders the rural municipalities of Big River, Debden, Canwood, and Shellbrook. They are Canada's only free-ranging herd of Plains bison existing within historic range.

Stakeholders are currently developing a plan to manage the bison herd in the Park and adjacent lands.

Goals for the long-term conservation of the herd include maintenance of the natural eco-system processes, such as habitat, predator/prey relationships, and disease. The management plan will ensure the sustainability of the bison population and provide guidelines to manage bison when they are in conflict with other resource users outside of Prince Albert National Park.

The project will also promote the recognition of bison to local residents, First Nations, and Métis communities. For Saskatchewan as a



Bison herd crossing the Sturgeon River. Photo courtesy the SRPBS and Université Laval Critter Cams.

whole, it has significance in terms of history and culture, tourism and economic development, educational opportunities, and the advancement of conservation.

The development of this cooperative management plan began in mid-March 2011 and is expected to be finalized by September 2012.

Learn more about the Sturgeon River Plains Bison at: <http://www.bisonstewards.ca/>

Developing Saskatchewan's Water Management Strategy

As one of our most important natural resources, ensuring that the water in Métis communities is clean and safe means balancing the conservation of the aquatic ecosystems and wells with the management of the water/wastewater of communities and industry. It has become apparent that issues around the management of this necessary resource in Saskatchewan are rapidly changing and the Province has started to set a course to deal with the principle drivers of that change, which are:

- The increase in water demand due to rapid industrial growth and growing populations.
- A warming climate leading to severe storms of greater frequency and accompanying droughts that will result in changing precipitation and runoff patterns requiring an adaptation in water management strategies.
- The increased challenge of sustaining current aquatic eco-systems that are being impacted by changing water flows of rivers which, in turn, affect valleys and lakes.

More than 100 organizations are participating in the water strategy development, some of which are provincial bodies that, in turn, brought the views of many other member organizations. During May and June, independent consultants HJ Linnen Associates and Clifton Associates began the initial round of stakeholder consultations that focused on dialogue and discussion to identify issues and priorities needed for consideration in the strategy.



The primary components of the consultations were to:

- identify issues that a comprehensive provincial water management plan should address and stakeholder priorities regarding those issues;
- Determine the best approach to the management of water quality.

Further updates to the Water Management Strategy will be forthcoming as advances are made.

MN-S joins North Saskatchewan River Basin Council

Source waters of the North Saskatchewan River Watershed consist of wetlands, sloughs, lakes, rivers, and groundwater aquifers. These provide for our drinking water and support the agricultural, forestry, oil, gas, and manufacturing industries. Source water is also an important resource for ensuring healthy, functioning ecosystems and maintaining cultural assets.

Concerns about the quality and quantity of these waters moved volunteers to begin meeting in 2004 to develop a Source Water Protection Plan with regulators and technical experts under the leadership of the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority. Meetings in local communities provided the opportunity for input to define those concerns and develop recommendations and actions to address them.

A draft of the plan, completed in January 2008, was circulated for review with amendments finalized in June. Implementation of the 144 key actions began in the fall of 2008. As a living document, the plan will enable stakeholders to adapt and respond to emerging issues through the collaborative and integrative work of the North Saskatchewan River Basin Council.

Source water protection is a long-term initiative that will require continued involvement of resident volunteers, as well as support from municipal, provincial, federal, First Nations, and Métis governments. MN-S has been asked to participate and has an elected board member sitting on the committee to ensure that Métis interests are heard.

Learn more about the Council at: <http://www.nsrbc.ca/>



Getting to know SaskH₂O

Two serious breaches of water safety in 2000 and 2001 led the Government of Saskatchewan to strengthen requirements and refocus the roles of regulatory agencies that manage drinking water and related raw water sources:

- The tragedy in Walkerton, Ontario was the result of the contamination of the water supply by E.coli bacteria in May 2000 which resulted in approximately 2,000 cases of illness and the death of seven people.
- The boil water advisory in North Battleford was due to the detection of the protozoan parasite "Cryptosporidium parvum" in the community's drinking water system which sickened some 7,000 people.

Since then, the Government has focused on preventing further incidents from occurring based on the following concepts:



The SaskH₂O.ca website brings together, under one web address, information and services available from the Government of Saskatchewan related to water, regardless of the department or agency that produces the information or offers the service.



**A Closing Message from
Minister of Lands & Resources
J. Robert LaFontaine**

Greetings, tansi, welcome,

As the Minister of Lands and Resources for the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, I would like to acknowledge the assistance of our staff, our resource people and, of course, the valuable contributions of our Elders in the development of this Lands & Resources publication.

Métis people have always had a strong connection to the land and have been active harvesters of its resources. We are the people who built the fur trade, developed relationships with the First Nations, hunted buffalo, picked berries, and used the natural medicines provided by the land and wildlife. We developed the Red River Cart trails, used the waterways as transportation routes to haul trade goods, and, as the first entrepreneurs, we built the first economies.

Our traditional customs and practices are the foundation for our conservation beliefs - using only what is needed, hunting and fishing only certain species and at only certain times of the year, and using the full complement of resources provided by the natural world. As stewards of the land, it is in essence who we are.

It has also been our practice to acknowledge the gifts that have been provided by our Lord, the Creator, and to give thanks in our own ways for those gifts.

The Métis are a unique and passionate Nation of people who have evolved to love and respect the land, the people, and its resources. We are a testament to our persistent forefathers who were excited to settle this country with their distinctive blend of hard work and good humour.

As we look to the future, we will continue to embrace those steady traditions as we work to develop relationships that provide for our full participation in the land and the environment.

In Métis Pride,

J. Robert LaFontaine

Métis Nation-Saskatchewan would like to thank and acknowledge the University of Saskatchewan Archives, and other sources, for their generosity in letting us use their photos:

- Bison, Prince Albert National Park: Source: University of Saskatchewan Archives. Dommasch (MG 172. - 2001-100) F. Slides 3. Saskatchewan, 1976-85.
- Several varieties of mushrooms grow in the province's north: Source: University of Saskatchewan Archives. Hans Dommasch (MG 172) - Box 26 main acc. - F. Slides 10. Waskesiu 1980-1996 - sheet Fungi Waskesiu Park 1992 - 08-14-96 (15)
- Black Footed ferret photo courtesy of: <http://www.blackfootedferret.org/photo-gallery>
- Droplets of Dew on Blades of Grass: Source: University of Saskatchewan Archives. Hans Dommasch (MG 172 - main acc.) -Box 26 - F. Slides 7. Emma Lake - Sheet Emma Lake Enchanted Forest 1983-1985 - "Emma Lake"
- Mirepoix: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirepoix_\(cuisine\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirepoix_(cuisine))
- Red ripe chokecherries photo courtesy Charlie Papazian, ©2008 <http://www.examiner.com/beer-in-national/harvest-time-chokecherry-beer-and-wine#ixzz1R4w65pxS>
- Tall Aspen trees grow new leaves in the spring: Source: Pakhisimon Nuye?ah Library System. Department of Northern Saskatchewan collection, # 95
- Woodland Caribou: <http://www.weforanimals.com/free-pictures/wild-animals/caribous/caribou-1.htm#Terms of Use of Free Wild Animal Pictures>
- Burrowing Owl: <http://sww.prairiesouth.ca/sblogs/michelleb/daily-photo/>
- Two Female "Mallard" Ducks Feeding: Source: University of Saskatchewan Archives. Hans Dommasch (MG 172 - main acc.) F. Slides 7. Emma Lake - Emma Lake 1986-88
- Tributary into Qu'Appelle Valley - Source: University of Saskatchewan Archives. W.O. Kupsch (MG 146) - J. Audio Visual Material - 17. Slides - Field Season 1940-2000 - Slide 3-149

We are all connected to the land

Our changing Earth requires an adaptation of knowledge by Métis people, over time, to ensure survival.



MN-S LANDS & RESOURCES

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