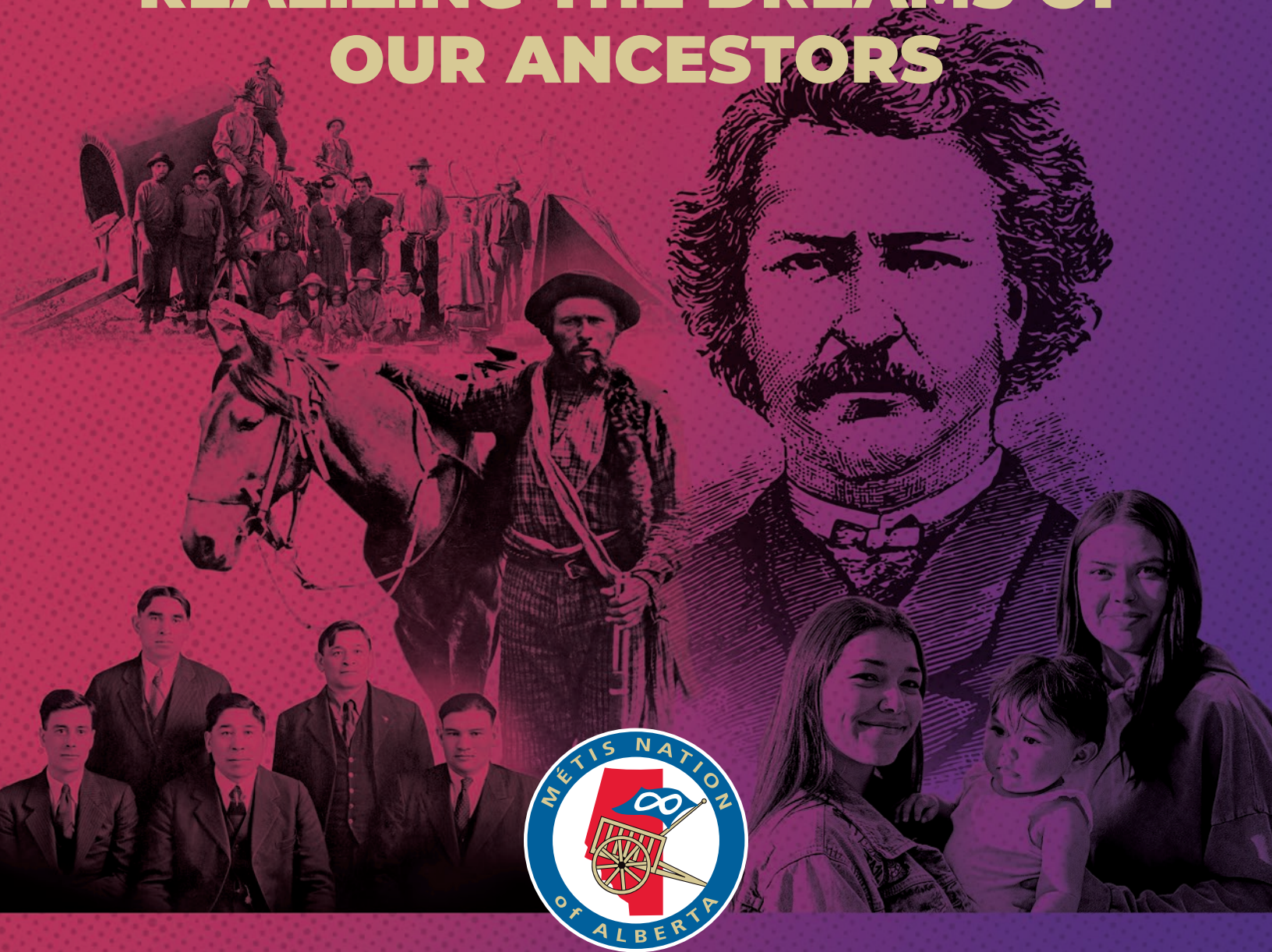


WE MADE HISTORY: REALIZING THE DREAMS OF OUR ANCESTORS



ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23



95TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AUGUST 10-13, 2023

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Provincial President Audrey Poitras



Each year, the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) comes together for the Annual General Assembly (AGA). It is a time to reunite together as a nation, with our friends, our family, and friends we have not yet met. It is also a time to celebrate and honour those who make a meaningful impact on our nation's progress. I am pleased to provide Citizens with this annual report detailing achievements made on your behalf at the local, regional, and provincial levels of our nation.

It is with a heavy heart that we gather for one last Annual General Assembly, but also with profound excitement to be able to announce that, with the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, our new Constitution, and the tabling of Bill C-53 in the House of Commons, we have reached our destiny! The journey that began from humble beginnings in 1928, in the Province of Alberta, where the Métis gathered to ensure their way of life, identity, and rights were recognized, to 95 years of nationhood, perseverance, and determination. Riel's dream for the Métis has become a reality; our way of life, our identity, and our rights are recognized. We have made history by seeing legislation tabled in the House of Commons on June 21, 2023 that federally recognizes our Métis self-government.

Some of the key priorities we needed to accomplish within our agreement with Canada were:

1. Develop our own MNA Constitution.
2. Complete a fiscal financing arrangement with Canada.
3. Develop a transition plan to move from the Societies Act to a Métis governance model.
4. And see federal legislation enacted that recognizes our Métis government in law.

I am pleased to announce that all of these tasks are moving forward and will be completed very soon.

You, our Métis Citizens, together with our new government, will tackle the difficulties and celebrate our triumphs, as always with one common goal, to propel the Métis Nation forward. The AGA was a great opportunity to have your voices heard. With the new Citizens' Gathering, you will continue to be the voice of the Métis people in everything the Otipemisiwak Métis Government does.

These are exciting times within our nation, and like the verse from our anthem, "We are proud to be Métis, watch our Nation raise again, never more forgotten people."

Please join by participating in our nation-building process, check out all the activities that have been planned, and most of all enjoy yourselves!

Sincerely,

Audrey Poitras,
President
Métis Nation of Alberta

Provincial Vice-President Dan Cardinal



Kakiyaw Kitatamiskatinawaw, greetings to you all.

It has been an honour and a privilege to serve you, the Citizens of the Métis Nation of Alberta. I am very proud to have been your Vice President for the past five years. It has been a pleasure to work alongside Madam President, also your regional representatives, and the Métis Nation of Alberta Self-Government team to support our transition to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. We continue to move forward, working government to government with both federal and provincial governments. We are on a journey that will take us to where we always knew we would be recognized as a nation of rights-bearing Indigenous people in this country.

With the Constitution and all of you in mind, Louis Riel fought and died for the Métis people so that we could have the Indigenous rights granted to those who came before us. I am proud to say that we are at the pivotal moment when the dream of Riel is becoming a reality. We can become our very own Otipemisiwak government, the boss of ourselves, but we cannot do it without you. This is for you and your family and generations to come.

I have attended many Métis business and professional mixers in Region 3, in addition to many local AGMs throughout the province, which have been enjoyable to come out and see you, the Citizens of the MNA. I have attended the Residential School survivors and Métis Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and seniors gatherings. I have also attended various regional council meetings and the Residential School Truthing Leadership Gathering at Métis Crossing. I was part of the signing with Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Marc Miller for the *Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Implementation Agreement*, which took place February 24, 2023.

I attended the 5th annual Pride Week at Grant MacEwan University, and I have supported the LGBTQ2S+ community in their continued efforts to ensure everyone has a voice, and each person has a right to participate in all aspects of society. We, at the Métis Nation of Alberta, believe everyone should be treated equally.

I had the honour of attending the Indigenous Awareness Week at the 3rd Canadian Division support base of the Canadian Army. This year's theme was "Reconciliation is a path walked together." I was a part of the Métis National Council's 40th Anniversary celebrating advocacy for Métis rights. I was honoured to be a part of the Papal visit last July, which took place at the Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples, which I am a parishioner of, and in which I was a part of the fundraising for rebuilding the church, in addition to sitting on the Indigenous Reconciliation Discernment Circle.

I was invited to attend the graduation at Ross Sheppard High School and was very proud to see 45 Indigenous students graduate. In my speech I stated, "*Never stop learning, never stop wondering, and knowledge is power. Education is the foundation for a better life.*"

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our committed staff and driven affiliates consisting of:

- Apeetogosan Métis Development Incorporated
- Métis Nation Holdings
- Métis Capital and Urban Housing Corporations
- Rupertsland Institute
- Cree Productions Limited

I am the Vice Chair of the Transition Committee and we travelled throughout the regions to inform Citizens about the MNA's transition that will take place from under the Society's Act over to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

In closing, I want to say once again I am thankful for the opportunity of serving you, our Métis Citizens, for this is the last position of Vice President before the transition over to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Kinanaskomithawaw, merci nititwan.

Dan Cardinal
Vice President
Métis Nation of Alberta



Tansi!

I am honoured to bring greetings to this 95th Annual General Assembly for the Métis Nation of Alberta. It is an incredible time to be Métis, and I am so proud to be working alongside your Métis government, in unity with other Métis governments across the Homeland, to continue to advance the Métis Nation's priorities, and especially in the pursuit of our ancestors' visions of one day achieving self-government for the Métis Nation.

The MNA has made significant progress toward this vision in this last year, and these successes contribute greatly to the entire Métis Nation because the success of one of our Métis governments carves the pathway forward for others. With that, I want to congratulate all Métis Nation of Alberta Citizens on moving forward with the transition into your Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution. You have all worked so incredibly hard to get to this point, and I cannot wait to see what the future holds. The Métis National Council is here to continue supporting and advocating with and for you at the national and international levels, pushing boundaries and fighting for our rights as Métis people.

Finally, upon the announcement of her retirement, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude and congratulations to President Poitras for her dedication and contributions to the Métis Nation over the last 27 years. In addition to all that she has accomplished, President Poitras, as the first Métis woman to be elected as President of any Métis government, has paved the way for women in leadership like myself and I am grateful to her for that. The Métis Nation is One Nation of Many Stories, and President Poitras has helped to create and shape many of the great stories of the Nation, the MNC is so grateful for everything she has done.

Marcii,

President Cassidy Caron
Métis National Council



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA



Tawnshi! Hello! Bonjour!

I would like to thank President Poitras and the Métis Nation of Alberta for inviting me to the 95th Annual General Assembly. It is with great respect that I acknowledge President Poitras for her years of dedication and service following her recent announcement that she will not be seeking re-election this year. Many, including myself, are sad to see her go; she has been a visionary leader and partner, and I'd like to thank her for the essential role she has played in advancing many of our joint priorities.

While much has changed over the last 95 years, the Métis Nation of Alberta has remained resolute in their efforts to advance Métis rights and self-determination. Many strong partnerships have been forged along the way. This includes the historic signing of a self-government agreement between the Métis Nation of Alberta and Canada in February 2023 and the introduction of federal recognition and implementation legislation in June. These are important steps toward reconciliation, advancing the MNA's vision for self-determination, re-affirming the Métis right to self-government, and formalizing our government-to-government relationship.

This critical and ongoing work on self-government, and initiatives like the Métis Justice Strategy and the protection of harvesting rights are just some of the MNA's accomplishments that have advanced self-determination. These exemplify the importance and transformative power of community-based governance and decision-making.

We remain firmly committed to working with the MNA on its core self-governance Treaty. I look forward to continuing to co-develop approaches that advance your priorities for reconciliation and support your vision of a better future for your Citizens and communities.

I wish you a successful Annual General Assembly!

Marsee, Thank you, Merci.

Hon. Marc Miller
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations



It is a great honor to have the Métis Nation of Alberta's 95th Annual General Assembly held at Métis Crossing.

Smoky Lake County is proud to have Métis Crossing nestled on the historic and beautiful banks of the North Saskatchewan River in our great county.

Just as the Métis are an integral part of the political, social, and cultural landscape of our province and country, so too is Métis Crossing's wonderful facility part of the fabric of our social, cultural, and geographical landscape in Smoky Lake County.

It is very fitting that your work and deliberations take place on historic land with family, friends, and neighbours that celebrate and value our shared history and beautiful countryside. If more global leaders worked together in grassroots and local atmospheres, the world could be a much better place for all.

On behalf of the Council and Citizens of Smoky Lake County, we thank you and wish you productive deliberations at the 95th Annual General Assembly, and every success in your many endeavours.

Best Regards,

Lorne Halisky
Reeve Smoky Lake County

Business Agenda

OPENING PRAYER

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Establish Quorum

ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR

Appointment of Sergeant at Arms

Adoption of Agenda

Resolution Committee

Appointment of Cree Translator

REPORT OF OFFICERS

President Audrey Poitras

Vice President Dan Cardinal

Secretary Carol Ridsdale: 2022 Summary of Motions

Treasurer Andrea Sandmaier:

Auditors Report & Financial Statements, March 2022/March 2023

RESOLUTIONS

Special

Ordinary

ADJOURNMENT

CLOSING CEREMONY

Closing Remarks, President Audrey Poitras

Closing Prayer

Audrey Poitras Announces Retirement as Métis Nation Of Alberta President



A 27-Year Legacy of Integrity, Growth, Success, and Results for Alberta Métis

On Saturday, June 10, 2023, at a celebration held in Edmonton with over 500 Métis Citizens, elected leadership, dignitaries from across the Métis Nation Homeland, and her large extended Métis family in attendance, President Audrey Poitras announced she would not be running in the next MNA provincial election.

For a generation of Métis Nation Citizens and Albertans, they have only known the steady, dignified, and respected leadership of President Poitras at the helm of the MNA—the government of the Métis Nation within Alberta. The MNA, which is celebrating its 95th anniversary this year, is the oldest continuous Métis government across the Métis Nation Homeland. For over a quarter of a century, President Poitras, known simply as “Audrey” to many, has been synonymous with the strength, resilience, and tenacity of Alberta Métis.

In 1996, President Poitras broke the first of many glass ceilings in her political career: becoming the first Métis woman elected as President of any provincial Métis government. President Poitras’ first task in her new position was to stabilize the MNA’s finances and separate politics from the MNA’s fiscal management and administration. As the MNA’s previous Finance Director, Audrey knew

first-hand just how important transparent, credible, and accountable governance was to improving the quality of life of Métis Citizens and Métis communities across Alberta.

After stabilizing the financial and administrative operations, President Poitras turned her attention to building a strong and united Métis Nation, focused on its Citizens, communities, and Métis rights. As a Métis nationalist, Audrey firmly believes Alberta Métis will succeed and achieve Louis Riel's vision by coming together as the Métis Nation within Alberta, not by falling into the "divide and conquer" traps past colonial governments used against the Métis or replicating an *Indian Act* Band form of self-government.

Building a strong, democratic, and accountable self-government for Alberta Métis at the local, regional, and provincial levels, and having the MNA recognized as a Métis government by other governments has been an unwavering goal for President Poitras. A focus on the needs of Métis Citizens and Métis communities as well as Métis self-government have been central to her multiple successful re-election platforms.

In her meetings with many Prime Ministers, Alberta Premiers, and Ministers over the years, President Poitras has always emphasized that if "we finally get our relationship right, the rest will fall into place." The recognition of the inherent Métis right to self-government, and the recognition of the MNA as the government of the Métis within Alberta has been key to this long sought after nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship.

In 2003, President Poitras stepped into the role of Interim President of the Métis National Council. During her time, she brought stability to the Métis Nation's national advocacy body, including representing the Métis Nation in the processes leading to the Kelowna Accord. Famously, she announced to the Métis Nation, Canadians, and the world on September 19, 2003: "We won! We won!" after the Supreme Court of Canada released its unanimous judgement in *R. v. Powley*, which confirmed the constitutionally protected rights of the Métis people.

In 2004, President Poitras, Premier Ralph Klein, and Minister Pearl Calahasen signed the first province-wide Métis harvesting agreement to implement the landmark *Powley* case. After that landmark agreement was later unilaterally cancelled by the Stelmach government in 2007, the MNA turned to the courts to defend Métis harvesting rights all the way to the Alberta Court of Appeal. While the MNA was not entirely successful, it continued to press for recognition of Métis harvesting rights and the use of MNA citizenship to identify Métis harvesters. In March 2019, the MNA negotiated a new Métis harvesting agreement recognizing the MNA as representing the Citizens within Alberta, and shifted identification of harvesters from the province to the MNA.





Message from President Poitras

“With the adoption of our Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution as Métis law in November 2022, our updated self-government agreement with Canada in February, and the introduction of Métis self-government legislation into Parliament in June, I believe we have put in place the solid and unshakable foundation to finally have a proper and respectful relationship with Canada.”

“In order to get to this place, it has taken the hard work and dedication of so many of our Citizens, communities, elected leaders, and ancestors. I am proud that after 27 years, I am able to retire with this solid foundation in place for the next generation to now implement our Constitution and take on the exciting challenges before us with the same hard work and dedication that got us here.”

The Métis Nation of Alberta’s election is scheduled to be held in the third week of September 2023.

Personal Background on President Poitras

Audrey is the daughter of Jean Baptiste (Sam) Dumont and Mabel Kinch, a descendant of the legendary Gabriel Dumont family, with family ties to the Fishing Lake Métis Settlement. She grew up on a farm near Elk Point, 150 km northeast of Edmonton. In 1966, she married her husband Gordon Poitras who passed away in 2011 and was known for his passion for the Métis Nation and his family.

For her tireless work on behalf of the Métis Nation, Audrey has received numerous awards and recognition, including: the Queen’s Golden Jubilee Medal, a National Aboriginal Achievement Award (now Indspire Award) for Politics, Esquao Lifetime Achievement Award from the Institute For Advancement of Aboriginal Women, Honourary Doctor of Law from Concordia University, Honourary Degree from NAIT, Honourary Diploma Norquest, and Alberta Chamber of Resources Indigenous Leader of the Year Award.

Overview of MNA Successes and Achievements (1996 to 2023)

Over the last 27 years, Audrey’s legendary hard work, tenacity, and stubbornness to never back down, along with strategic planning, negotiations with other governments, partnerships with educational institutions and industry, enhancing and creating new MNA institutions, as well as turning to the courts, when necessary, have ushered in an era of unprecedented growth and success for Alberta Métis. Some of these include:

- Establishing the largest objectively-verifiable Métis Nation citizenship registry with over 61,000+ registered MNA Citizens as of June 2023.
- Creating Rupertsland Institute in 2010 as the MNA's education and training arm, training approximately 800 Citizens a year through support from 10 Métis employment offices and three mobile unit offices.
- Creating Métis Crossing as an industry-leading tourism destination celebrating Métis culture on 688 acres of Métis-owned land just outside of Smoky Lake, including a 40-suite lodge for conferences and events.

In addition, Audrey's unwavering focus on building and securing the MNA's recognition as the government of the Métis Nation within Alberta has finally been achieved.

In 2017, after the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed in *Harry Daniels v. Canada* that the federal government has constitutional responsibility of Métis people, the MNA and Canada initiated formal negotiations on Métis self-government. In 2019, the MNA signed a Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement with Canada. In February 2023, the MNA and Canada signed an updated self-government agreement that confirms the MNA's inherent right to self-government in a legally-binding agreement. Legislation to implement this recognition and a future constitutionally protected treaty between the MNA and Canada was introduced into Parliament on June 21, 2023.

More importantly, after generations of Alberta Métis calling for the MNA to adopt a Constitution (instead of continuing to operate under the *Societies Act*), the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution, as Métis law, was ratified in November 2022 with over 97% in favour, the largest ratification vote ever undertaken by an Indigenous nation in Canada. In May, a Special Assembly overwhelmingly voted to implement this government's laws following the first election under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government in September 2023. ■





DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Children and Family Services



The Métis Nation of Alberta's (MNA) Children and Family Services Department (CFS) is dedicated to promoting the well-being of Métis children and families through culturally embedded programs and services. By embracing Métis culture and traditional knowledge, the department aims to strengthen familial bonds, facilitate reconnection to the land, and revitalize Métis cultural identity.

Through the implementation of community-led initiatives, the department has observed positive outcomes, including enhanced familial and communal connections, renewed ties to the land, and a resurgence of Métis cultural pride. These programs prioritize inclusiveness, providing a secure and supportive environment where all Métis children and families can engage in learning, personal growth, exploration, and reestablishment of their cultural heritage, community ties, and interpersonal relationships.

CFS' commitment to addressing the distinct needs and priorities of Métis children and families is exemplified through the thoughtful design and delivery of meaningful programs. By focusing on community involvement, CFS acknowledges the invaluable contributions of local knowledge and lived experiences, ensuring that these initiatives are relevant and responsive to the specific circumstances faced by Métis individuals. Sustaining accessibility and long-term viability of these programs and services is crucial to their continued impact. By nurturing the cultural and social well-being of Métis children and families, this contributes to the overall resilience and strength of the Métis Nation within Alberta.

Family Camps and Retreats

Frosty Reels Family Camp

Frosty Reels Family Camp gathered 30 Métis families (140 people) over four weekends filled with Métis culture, history, connection, and fishing! In collaboration with the MNA's Harvesting team, CFS facilitated weekend fishing camps where Métis families learned how to set a net under the ice on Pigeon Lake using the ingenious Métis invention, "the Prairie Jigger." Participants lodged in rustic log cabins, were served home-cooked meals, and had the meaningful opportunity to learn all about ice fishing from Métis harvesters and knowledge-holders whose families fished in the area for many



Frosty Reels Video

FROSTY REELS
Family Camp

Join us on an ice-fishing adventure with knowledgeable Métis harvesters!

February 24-26 OR March 3-5 OR March 10-12 OR March 17-19

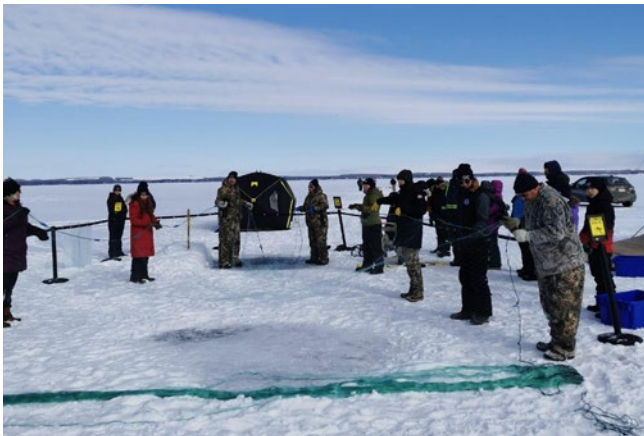
Registration opens February 4, 2023

APPLY HERE

Métis Nation of Alberta - Children and Family Services Department
Della Gray Building • 11738 Kingsway Avenue NW • Edmonton, AB, T5G 0X5
780-465-2200 • 1-800-232-7553 • albertametsis.com • CFSEarlyYears@metis.org

generations. By learning and practicing these Métis traditions as a community, Métis families gain a sense of self-sufficiency, ownership of their own well-being, and a strengthened cultural identity.

“ *It was one of the best times I've ever had with my son and also one of the first times I've ever felt so much a part of a 'village.' It really was so wonderful, and we both cannot wait to get more involved with MNA moving forward. My son's feedback – it was the best and he wishes he could go more often! He said, 'I'd even pay for that myself to go back once a month!' So, thank you so much from both of us. It really was one of the best experiences we've had.”*
– Nicole



Connecting Through Culture Family Retreat

CFS organized seasonal family retreats attended by over 50 Métis families at Métis Crossing, focused on fostering meaningful connections among Métis children, families, and knowledge-holders. These retreats were designed to provide participants with memorable experiences, deepen family bonds, and fully engage them in the vibrant Métis culture and way of life.

The family retreats encouraged intergenerational connections by facilitating shared activities, learning, and celebration. Knowledge Holders play a vital role in transmitting Métis traditions and teachings to the younger generations. This approach strengthened family bonds and promoted the preservation and revitalization of Métis cultural identity.

The impact of these retreats is reflected in the lasting memories created and the enduring connections formed. By actively involving Métis children, families,



and Knowledge Holders, CFS ensured the retreats met their specific needs and aspirations. The cultural immersion and strengthened family bonds experienced at these retreats contribute to the overall well-being and resilience of Métis children and families within the Métis Nation of Alberta.

“ *This program helped my family connect with each other, our culture, and other Métis families. This was such an amazing opportunity and it allowed my son to be himself (he has severe ADHD and anxiety) and still connect with other children, which he's not able to do so easily in our daily lives. We were able to learn things about our ancestors and connect with the culture that makes us who we are today.”*
– Shanon, Métis caregiver

“ *I am in tears as I write this. I am a single mom of 3 and have been parenting alone for a long time. I do have a good job and family support which has allowed us to be able to thrive. But I have never been given a weekend free of all the work. I have never had the freedom to just hang out with my children, and my only responsibility is to enjoy our time together. Planned meaningful activities, clean bright rooms to sleep in, awesome food and kitchen help, clear signage and helpful staff – I didn't know what it felt like to be taken care of like that. I will remember this weekend as a highlight in my parenting journey. ...Thank you to everyone who made this weekend happen. I imagine it was so much work and planning, but my heart is full, and I am grateful.”*
– Amy, Métis caregiver

Community Supports, Programs, and Initiatives

Early Years

Gear Up for School

The Gear Up for School Program is dedicated to equipping Métis children with essential school supplies, thereby enhancing school readiness and ensuring they embark on their educational journeys with the best possible start. The program's growth and success highlight the crucial need for early education and school-readiness support for Métis children and families throughout the province.

This year, the program took a step further in its commitment to reconciliation by including an MNA-designed orange shirt along with the school supplies. The orange shirt serves as a meaningful symbol of reconciliation and remembrance, acknowledging the impact of the residential school system on Indigenous communities. By incorporating the orange shirt, the program encourages dialogue and education surrounding truth and reconciliation, fostering understanding and empathy among Métis children and their families.

With the distribution of 3,000 backpacks to Métis families, the continued growth and success of the Gear Up for School Program emphasizes the persistent need for early education and school readiness support among Métis children and families throughout the province. This year,

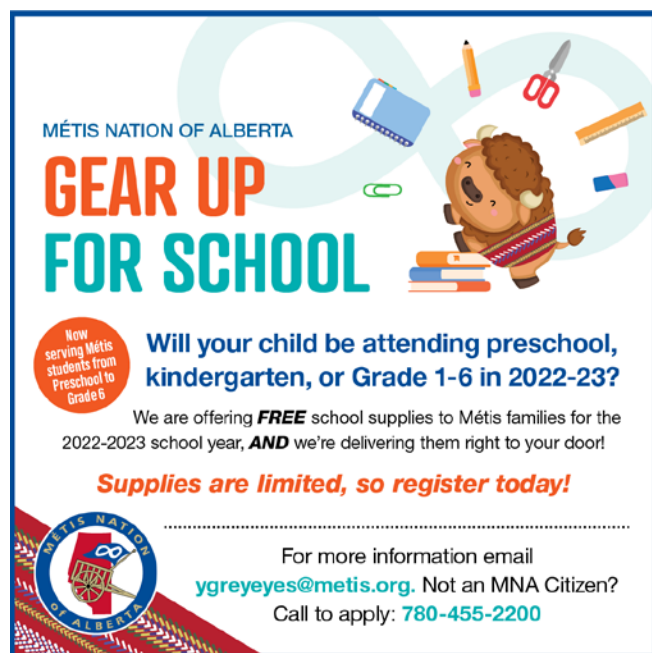
the program expanded its eligibility to include supplies for Métis children up to grade 6. The ongoing efforts of the Gear Up for School Program provide a valuable head start in preparing Métis students for the upcoming school year, establishing a strong educational foundation for Métis children. By investing in their educational futures, the program empowers Métis students and contributes to their long-term academic achievements.

“I've just received the backpack and box of supplies!! I wanted to say thank you from the entirety of my heart. This program saved me so much stress and the gift card made me cry, the tireless efforts of all those at the MNA are truly appreciated! I thank you all.”
— Métis caregiver

Oskaya Ayamichikewak (Young Readers) Program

The Oskaya Ayamichikewak (Young Readers) Program is an ongoing program that supports early literacy by inspiring a love of reading and connection for Métis children and their families. Through the MNA's partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, Métis children enrolled in this program receive books delivered to their home monthly, free of charge, from birth until the month of the child's fifth birthday.

The Oskaya Ayamichikewak (Young Readers) Program continues to facilitate family connections and a love of reading for Métis families across the province.



MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA

GEAR UP FOR SCHOOL

Now serving Métis students from Preschool to Grade 6

Will your child be attending preschool, kindergarten, or Grade 1-6 in 2022-23?

We are offering **FREE** school supplies to Métis families for the 2022-2023 school year, **AND** we're delivering them right to your door!

Supplies are limited, so register today!

For more information email ygreyeyes@metis.org. Not an MNA Citizen? Call to apply: **780-455-2200**



MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA

Rupertsland Institute
Métis Centre of Excellence

Dolly Parton's IMAGINATION LIBRARY

OSKAYA AYAMICHIKEWAK

Young Readers Program



To date, **945** Métis children throughout Alberta are currently enrolled in the Oskaya Ayamichikewak (Young Readers) Program.



508 Métis children have graduated from the program.



A total of **1,453** Métis early learners who have benefitted from this program.

“ *This program is amazing for children and for families! It opens new doors and allows us to explore a world that we wouldn't be able to do otherwise. We check the mail every day, waiting in anticipation for our new book!”*
– Métis caregiver

Natoona Michif Pimatisiwin (Exploring Métis Culture) Culture Cards

During Métis Week (November 13–19, 2022), CFS launched an innovative resource called Natoona Michif Pimatisiwin (Exploring Métis Culture) Culture Cards. Specifically designed for younger children and their families, these Culture Cards aim to provide accessible and engaging information about Métis culture.

Each Culture Card in the series presents important Métis cultural concepts in a simple and interactive manner, ensuring they are easily understood by children at an elementary reading and comprehension level. The cards also include thought-provoking discussion questions that encourage meaningful conversations within families. Furthermore, the cards feature Michif translations, allowing for a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Métis language. To promote experiential learning, each card is accompanied by a QR code linking to an activity.



The release of Series 1 of the Natoona Michif Pimatisiwin (Exploring Métis Culture) Culture Cards has been met with enthusiasm and appreciation from the Métis community. These cards have been made available free of charge to Métis families, providing them with a valuable resource for cultural exploration. CFS is currently developing subsequent series, which will be launched in the upcoming months, further expanding the collection.

If you are eligible and have not yet applied for your complimentary set of Natoona Michif Pimatisiwin (Exploring Métis Culture) Culture Cards, we encourage you to do so. Take this opportunity to engage in a meaningful exploration of Métis culture and heritage with your family.



“ *The cards are engaging, and my daughters ask me to read them the cards, helping them to learn about our Métis history. I'm learning along the way too.”*
– Métis caregiver

“ *A wonderful resource!! My daughter is still young, only a year old, so the pictures and colours are excellent to keep her interested while I'm reading to her! Thank you so much for such a beautiful family culture activity! We can't wait for more sets if they are released!*
– Métis caregiver



Natoona Michif Pimatisiwin (Exploring Métis Culture) At Home

Connection to culture and the MNA community is an imperative aspect of well-being for Métis children and families; one of the ways we do this is by sending activities to families that create opportunities for them to connect to culture and community together in their own home.



Fur Trader
Game Video

The Natoona Michif Pimatisiwin (Exploring Métis Culture) at Home Program has provided Métis families this opportunity through various seasonal mailouts including the Beaded Flower Activity (May 2022) and the Fur Trader Game (October 2022). Each mailout includes cultural information, materials, and an activity aimed to engage early learners and their families in an activity based in Métis history and values, all while connecting as a family. Additionally, CFS released an online video to accompany each seasonal mailout to connect with the community in a virtual way.

“*#MetisAlberta fur trader game! Playing with Everly teaching her about our heritage.*”
– Dylan Knull, Métis parent



Character Naming Contest

In October 2022, CFS introduced a series of new characters that have been featured in various promotions and resources. A naming contest was held for Li Bufloo, the main character featured in the Natoona Michif Pimatisiwin (Exploring Métis Culture) Culture Cards.

There was a call-out for MNA children under the age of 12 to put forward name submissions. The name submissions were narrowed down to a top 10 list, and children under the age of 12 were given a chance to vote for their favourite name for Li Bufloo. We were excited to announce the name Lou Lou was voted as the official name for Li Bufloo, which was a submission by three-year-old Isabella Fedun from MNA Region 1. Congratulations Isabella!

Métis Family Christmas Party

On Saturday, December 10, 2022, the Métis Family Christmas Party took place at the historic Métis Crossing, to bring together Métis families and community members to celebrate the holiday season while surrounded by Métis culture and community.

The Métis Family Christmas Party included multiple indoor and outdoor family activities, including holiday cookie decorating, snowshoeing, gingerbread house building, performances by Métis musicians, a Métis magician, and a special visit from the famous Métis Santa.

Our most notable and engaged posts were around the Christmas holidays with our Christmas stories and well wishes receiving over 9,600 views. The CFS Christmas party invite travelled the furthest on both Facebook and Instagram, reaching over 15,700.

Navigation Supports

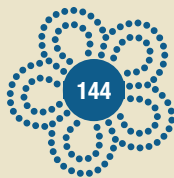
Supports and Services Navigator Program

The Supports and Services Navigator (SSN) Program provides navigation support to Métis Albertans to help them access program and services best suited to their specific needs. The SSN fields inquiries from all over the province and keeps a database of agencies and support available.

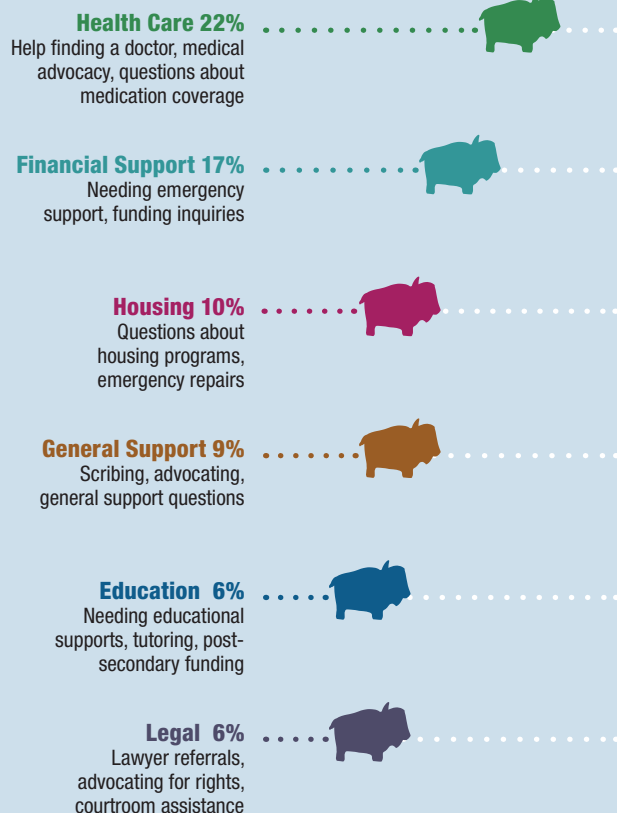
The Supports and Services Navigator Program will continue to field inquiries from Métis Citizens and beyond to build a network of culturally safe resources both within the MNA and in communities.



The SSN Program answered **1,014** unique inquiries from September 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023



This is an average of **144** unique inquiries per month!



Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

FASD Bridging Connections Program

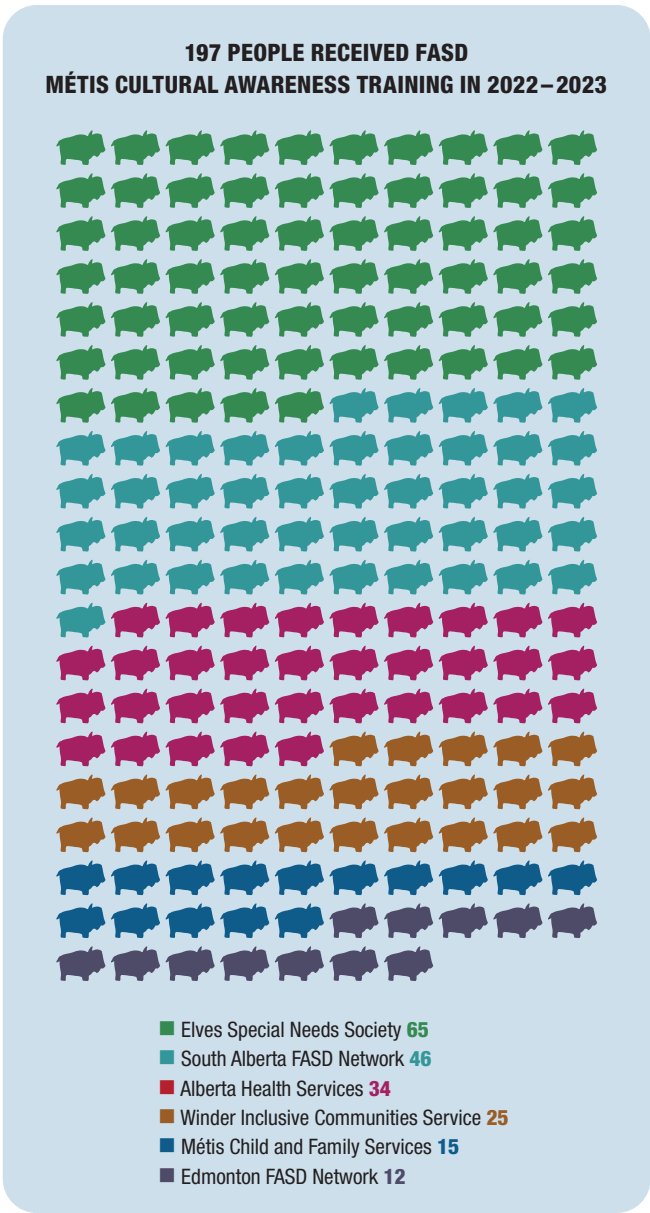
The MNA's Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Bridging Connections Program is meeting Métis Albertans where they are at with a focus on support and connections, such as the Alberta FASD Networks, culture, community, and FASD resources and services. This program can help by providing support and advocacy before, during, and after the diagnostic process; connecting to FASD services and resources; assisting with navigation of community programs, resources, and systems; and assisting with connection to cultural supports and resources.

We are excited to see the FASD Bridging Connections Program has grown significantly since its launch in 2020, with new programs and partnerships being implemented next year to better serve Métis Albertans who may have or are diagnosed with FASD.

“It taught me things I did not know about them, who they are and their history.”
— Elves Special Needs Society staff

“It was a very informative session of learning Métis culture, way of life, food, and how they lived and survive.”
— Alberta Health Services staff

“I had no knowledge when I started, and this course has opened my eyes to the struggles, culture, and traditions that Métis people have.”
— Elves Special Needs Society staff



FASD Community Information Sessions

The FASD Bridging Connections Program staff lead bi-monthly sessions called FASD Community Information Sessions. Guest speakers present on a variety of topics including the prevention of FASD, living with FASD, healthy pregnancy, FASD and sensory integration issues, and more. FASD Community Information Sessions also provide practical strategies to improve the daily lives of people with FASD and their caregivers. Sessions promote Métis culture and traditional values as integral to well-being, and topics are FASD focused and promote health and well-being to over 300 Métis Albertans. Some of the topics hosted in the past year were: Better Choices, Better Health; Finding Strength in Recovery; and Community Disability Workshops.

FASD Métis Cultural Awareness Training

The FASD Métis Cultural Awareness Training is an experiential and interactive Métis cultural training that includes the history of Métis peoples, Métis culture, upbringing and values, and Métis experiences with colonization and intergenerational trauma. It also includes FASD information and resources, the FASD Bridging Connections Program, and other MNA programs and information. Our goal is that Alberta FASD service providers and professionals have a better understanding of the unique needs of Métis Albertans with FASD to improve their cultural understanding and working relationship with Métis children, youth, and families across the province.

Throughout this year 197 individuals – through their respective networks, agencies, and organizations – have received our FASD Métis Cultural Awareness Training.

FASD Bridging Connections Program

FASD Caregiver Connect Nights

FASD Caregiver Connect Nights are hosted online monthly as a safe space for parents and caregivers to share their experiences, talk about hard things, and learn more about FASD. Métis culture and traditional values are encouraged because we know they are integral to well-being and resilience. Our goal is to walk alongside Métis families to improve outcomes for their loved ones with FASD by providing an opportunity for caregivers to gather and build community so they can reduce the isolation and stress that is common to caregivers with a loved one with FASD. Participants are invited to register for our free monthly FASD Caregiver Connect Nights.



FASD Bridging Futures For Métis Youth with FASD Transitioning to Adulthood

This program is designed for Métis youth (aged 15–25) who are diagnosed with or may have FASD. The youth and their caregivers are provided with transitional support, including our FASD Bridging Futures Guidebook. This serves as a tool to help prepare them for adulthood through goal setting, strengths and needs determination, connections to culture and culturally appropriate resources, and connection to appropriate FASD supports and services, all while ensuring the youth and their caregivers play a strong role in the planning and implementation of their supports.

Métis Self Care Kit For Parents and Caregivers of FASD

The Métis Self Care Kit provides ideas and tips for Métis and non-Métis parents and caregivers to use as self-care for their health and well-being. These Métis self-care ideas and tips are intended to help better manage stress and build resilience in caring for their loved one with FASD. This resource will be available in the summer of 2023.

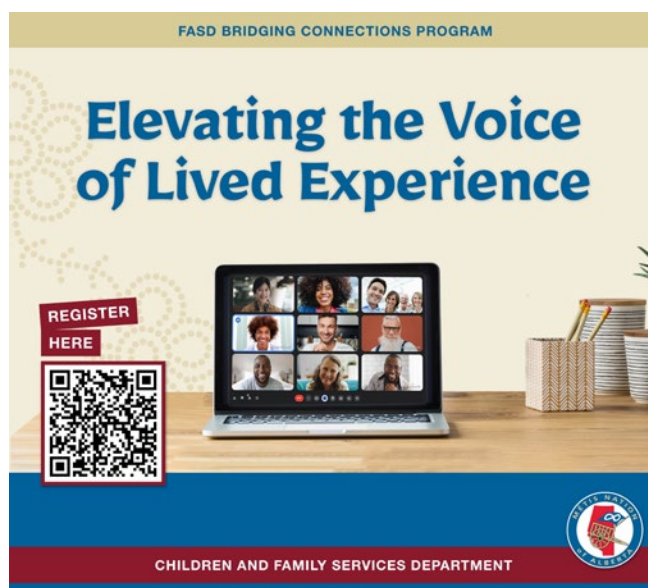
Community Information Sessions and Circles

Community Information Sessions

In partnership with MP Psychology, our Community Information Sessions cover a variety of topics that address common challenges like anxiety, co-parenting after separation, internet safety, etc. Community Information Sessions are available online province wide on the third Tuesday of every month.

Learning Circles

In partnership with MP Psychology, the CFS Department is excited to host in-person and virtual Learning Circles across the province. Learning Circles are educational group sessions that provide strategies and skills targeting different areas of mental health and overall well-being. Learning Circles are being delivered to every region in the province this year. Topics are grief and loss, and healthy boundaries.



Children's Services and Act C-92

Métis Family Resource Program

The Métis Family Resource Program (MFRP) works in conjunction with Alberta Children's Services to ensure Métis children, youth, and families involved with child intervention services are culturally connected and supported. This program aims to strengthen family and promote community connections through Métis culture, client-centered and culturally sensitive approaches to wellness, culturally appropriate family plans, advocacy, and community-based referrals.

Education of Children's Services staff is a mandate of the MFRP. This year, 71 Alberta Children's Services staff have completed our Métis Cultural Awareness Training. This training is the only one of its kind offered to provincial government employees, providing a history and overview of Métis culture, interactive cultural activities, and an overview of the MFRP and other MNA programs and resources. We will continue to offer our Métis Cultural Awareness Training both virtually and in person.

Through the MFRP, we have supported over 81 families with current or past Children's Services involvement this year and were able to assist in advocacy, referrals, cultural planning, resources, and citizenship supports.

Of the children and families supported, 45 citizen applications have been processed and approved, resulting in 45 children in care who have been identified and connected to their community and culture.

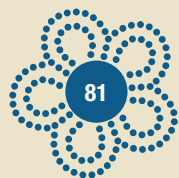
The MFRP completed cultural plans for 35 Métis children and youth, and updated cultural plans for one caregiver and seven children, totalling 42 cultural plans that serve as an agreement between the MNA and the caregiver to uphold the cultural connection of the Métis children in care.

The MFRP holds regular consultations with Children's Services offices in Calgary and Edson. These consultations serve as a mechanism for caseworkers to connect with the MNA to identify the best support for the Métis children and youth in their care.

This year, four consult meetings were held: two in Edson and two in Calgary. As a result, 79 children in care were connected to the MFRP for further support and connection.

Act C-92: An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Children, Youth, and Families

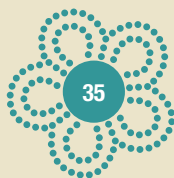
Act C-92 (previously called Bill C-92) an "act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, youth, and families" is the first federal legislation passed regarding



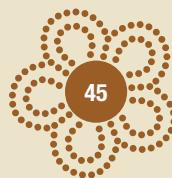
81 Families
with current or past
Children's Services
involvement.



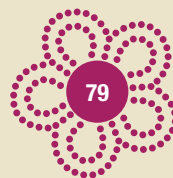
45 Citizen
applications have
been processed
and approved
per month!



**35 Métis children
and youth**
have had cultural
plans completed.



45 children
in care who have
been identified and
connected to their
community inquiries
per month!



79 Children
in care were
connected for
further support
and connection
per month!

Indigenous Children and Family Services (CFS) within Canada. Act C-92 was developed for the purpose of reducing the number of Indigenous children in care and to improve the overall state of CFS across Canada. Act C-92 affirms the inherent Indigenous jurisdiction over CFS for Section 35 rights holders (*Constitution Act, 1982*) and addresses the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #4 – establishing national minimal standards for CFS delivery for all Indigenous children and families. The Act pertains to First Nations, “non-status”, Métis, and Inuit children and their families who live on or off reserve. The Act recognizes numerous rights, opportunities, and responsibilities of Indigenous governing bodies in the provision of child and family services to their citizens.

The MNA created a phased approach to pursuing jurisdictional control under Act C-92. To date, we have completed three phases and are currently in Phase 4: Citizen Engagements.

Phase 1: Information Sharing

In partnership with Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research (RCMR), the creation of an educational booklet entitled “Reclaiming our Children: Exercising Métis Child and Family Services Jurisdiction Under Act C-92” was completed and is now available. The booklet provides background information and an overview of Act C-92, and a snapshot of the Métis experience within Alberta.

In January 2023, the MNA presented information from the Reclaiming Our Children booklet at Métis Talks at the University of Alberta. Métis Talks is a semi-annual



CFS Advisory Committee, left to right: Amber Yarmuch (Senior Manager, Children and Family Services), Brandie Wachter (Métis Family Resource Program Manager, Children and Family Services), James Henry (Committee member), Florence Gaucher (Committee member), Tanya White-Shaw (Committee member), MNA President Audrey Poitras, Lillian Parenteau (Committee member, sitting), Andrea Sandmaier (Committee member, Region 2 Vice President), Carol Carifelle-Brzezicki (Strategic Development Advisor, Children and Family Services) and Kelsey Bradburn (Director, Children and Family Services)

public event highlighting Métis-specific research, art, and culture. Presentations are held twice a year: in the fall and in the spring. Additional educational materials and projects in relation to Act C-92 will continue to be developed and offered to the community once available.

Phase 2: Form Advisory Committee

A Children and Family Services Advisory Committee (CFS Advisory Committee) was established with the purpose of exploring and developing a model of care and associated capacity needs related to the MNA's readiness to exercise inherent jurisdiction over children and family services.

Phased Approach to Act C-92:

An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Children, Youth, and their Families



PHASE 1 Information Sharing

- ∞ Community learning series
- ∞ Information booklet
- ∞ Web and social media updates



PHASE 2 Form Advisory Committee

- ∞ Métis Albertans with expertise in Child and Family Services



PHASE 4 Citizen Engagement

- ∞ Surveys, focus groups, in-person & virtual meetings
- ∞ Revise and finalize drafts



PHASE 3 Draft Models of Care

- ∞ Internal research
- ∞ Provincial engagement report
- ∞ Advisory Committee



PHASE 5 Community Approval

- ∞ Citizens vote on final drafts
- ∞ Notify appropriate parties of intent to enact
- ∞ Request tripartite coordination agreement



PHASE 6 Implementation

- ∞ Develop transition plan
- ∞ Enter into coordination agreement
- ∞ Implement and deliver

Phase 3: Draft Models of Care

The MNA's Children and Family Services Advisory Committee has been creating a draft model of care (structure for service delivery) in preparation for jurisdictional control under Act C-92, drawing from research, community engagement data, and professional experiences and knowledge. The draft model of care focuses on supporting healthy Métis families and connections to Métis culture, language, and community.

Phase 4: Citizenship Engagement (Currently in this phase)

Now that there has been a draft model of care started, our focus for summer 2023 is to engage with our communities to hear about what is important to consider while we continue to develop our Métis-specific Children and Family Services model. As we gather to discuss the importance of having our own MNA Children and Family Services law, we have the opportunity to create a future where we can support Métis children and families across the province in a way we have never been able to before. ■

Consultation



This year has been another busy year for the Consultation Department; through our various programs, we collected knowledge and used this knowledge to establish a foundational database to inform future consultations with the government and industry. In particular, the department gained a better understanding of aquatic habitats and the impacts of human activity on aquatic habitats, cumulative effects of human activity on the land and the life that the land supports, and how and where our Citizens are practicing their Métis rights and engaging in Métis cultural activities.

The Consultation Department is here to protect your Métis rights against Crown action, which has the potential to negatively impact those rights. “Consultation” is a general word, but the kind of consultation the Consultation Department does is very specific; our department is responsible for Crown consultation, which stems from the Crown’s “duty to consult.”

Purpose of the Consultation Department

The “duty to consult” is a duty imposed on the Crown that requires it to consult Aboriginal peoples on any action it plans to take that may impact Aboriginal or treaty rights. As the Métis do not have any treaty rights, our department deals exclusively with Aboriginal rights, which are recognized and

affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The duty can also be delegated to industry by the Crown.

For example, if the Crown wishes to grant a permit to a company to construct a new mine, it may delegate the duty-to-consult requirements onto that company. That company would then be responsible for consulting with any Indigenous community whose proven or claimed Aboriginal, or treaty rights may be impacted by the construction of that mine.

The level of consultation required is situational and scaled. Proven rights have more weight than rights that are claimed or asserted but not proven, and strong claims have more weight than weak claims. Likewise, the extent of the expected or potential impact on these rights can change how much consultation is required with Indigenous communities.

If an Indigenous community has a weak claim for an Aboriginal right and the project is unlikely to have any substantial or lasting impacts, the duty to consult may only require the Indigenous communities be notified; if an Indigenous community has a proven right or strong claim and the project is likely to produce substantial and lasting impacts, the duty to consult may require the consent of the Indigenous communities. However, these are both extreme examples and most consultation falls somewhere in the middle. In most cases, impacts are mitigated (e.g. altering how or where a project is constructed to avoid or minimize impacts) or accommodated (negotiating ways to offset unavoidable impacts, e.g. setting aside land for protection or reclamation, or developing programs that benefit affected rights holders).

Our department handles the Indigenous community’s end of the duty to consult for Citizens of the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA), in collaboration with the MNA Regions. We consider what negative impacts a project may have and how those impacts can be mitigated, and work with industry and government to implement those mitigations. When mitigation is not possible, the Consultation Department collaborates with leaders and rights holders to propose accommodations, to ease the burden of those impacts on our Citizens.



In consultation with government and industry, we represent our Citizens and their interests; we engage with Citizens to learn about how and where they practice their rights so the weight of potential impacts can be better understood. Citizens provide our department with the knowledge and foundation to effectively consult with government and industry on behalf of the collective Métis community.

Aquatic Habitat Restoration Fund

Under the Government of Canada's Aquatic Habitat Restoration Fund, the Consultation Department has completed research related to the health of waterbodies and what restoration of these aquatic habitats could look like. The team reviewed existing literature and engaged with Citizens to determine how human activity can impact and has impacted aquatic habitats in Alberta.

Much of this research was centered on Pigeon Lake, chosen by the Consultation Department due to its unhealthy and at times dangerous condition, as well as feedback received from Citizens indicating the lake's importance to the Métis community. Pigeon Lake was also an ideal choice because an application to establish a large cattle feedlot on Pigeon Lake's watershed that had been submitted to the Alberta Natural Resources Conservation Board put the lake particularly at risk. The



Consultation Department was able to utilize the Aquatic Habitat Restoration Fund to conduct research to support our opposition to the feedlot.

Ultimately, the feedlot application was denied owing to strong opposition to the feedlot by many members of the communities surrounding Pigeon Lake and the opposition of various Indigenous governments, including the MNA. The immense pressure that the feedlot would impose on the already struggling lake was undeniable. Through the research conducted in the MNA's submission regarding our opposition to the feedlot, the department was able to build up a solid foundation of knowledge regarding aquatic habitat destruction, management, protection, and restoration.

Using the knowledge collected, the Consultation Department is preparing to launch restoration activities to improve the condition and health of Pigeon Lake. The Consultation Department is eager to monitor progress and assess the viability of each restoration activity. The successful restoration techniques can then be applied in the future to other lakes.

The Consultation Department has secured additional resources from the Aquatic Habitat Restoration Fund to support and inform these restoration activities by developing a Citizen-led province-wide monitoring and reporting program. The department looks forward to developing this program over the upcoming months and expects it to be operational by June 2024.

Terrestrial Cumulative Effects Initiative

Under the Government of Canada's Terrestrial Cumulative Effects Initiative, the Consultation Department expanded the capacity of the department to understand cumulative effects and how our Citizens have experienced them. Cumulative effects refer to the combined – or cumulated – impacts of human activity on the land; the impacts of individual projects may seem negligible, but when the impacts of those projects are considered in combination, their effects become much more serious.

To better understand how our Métis Citizens have experienced cumulative effects, the Consultation Department conducted surveys and workshops. A survey conducted online and at the 2022 Annual General Assembly provided the department with valuable insights into how we can better support our Citizens with opportunities to learn about cumulative effects, with more effective communication strategies. By providing a list of resources to Citizens, they can easily navigate and understand cumulative effects and how they have been impacted.

Under this initiative, the department built its current understanding of cumulative effects, how cumulative effects may advance, and how various developments and projects may contribute to greater cumulative effects in the future. Staff attended meetings and workshops to learn about cumulative effects and strategies they can apply to our work in the Consultation Department, including cultural awareness and consideration.

Staff also developed their skills working with digital Geographical Information Systems (GIS), which allows data and information to be stored and presented on a map. By presenting the data on a map, it is easier for staff to analyze and understand the impacts of a broad scale

of human activities. The map helps demonstrate where cumulative effects may be prominent, the intensity of the effects, and how exasperation of those effects can be avoided in the future. GIS helps staff identify how, when, and where Citizens are practicing their rights. This assists in better predicting how a project may impact those rights, and how those impacts may be avoided.

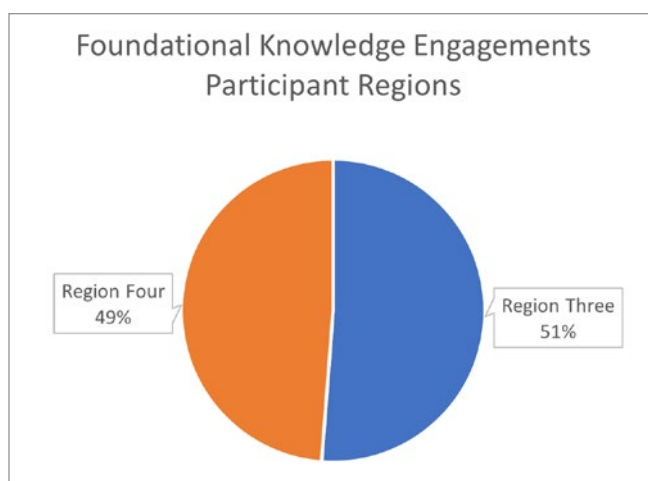
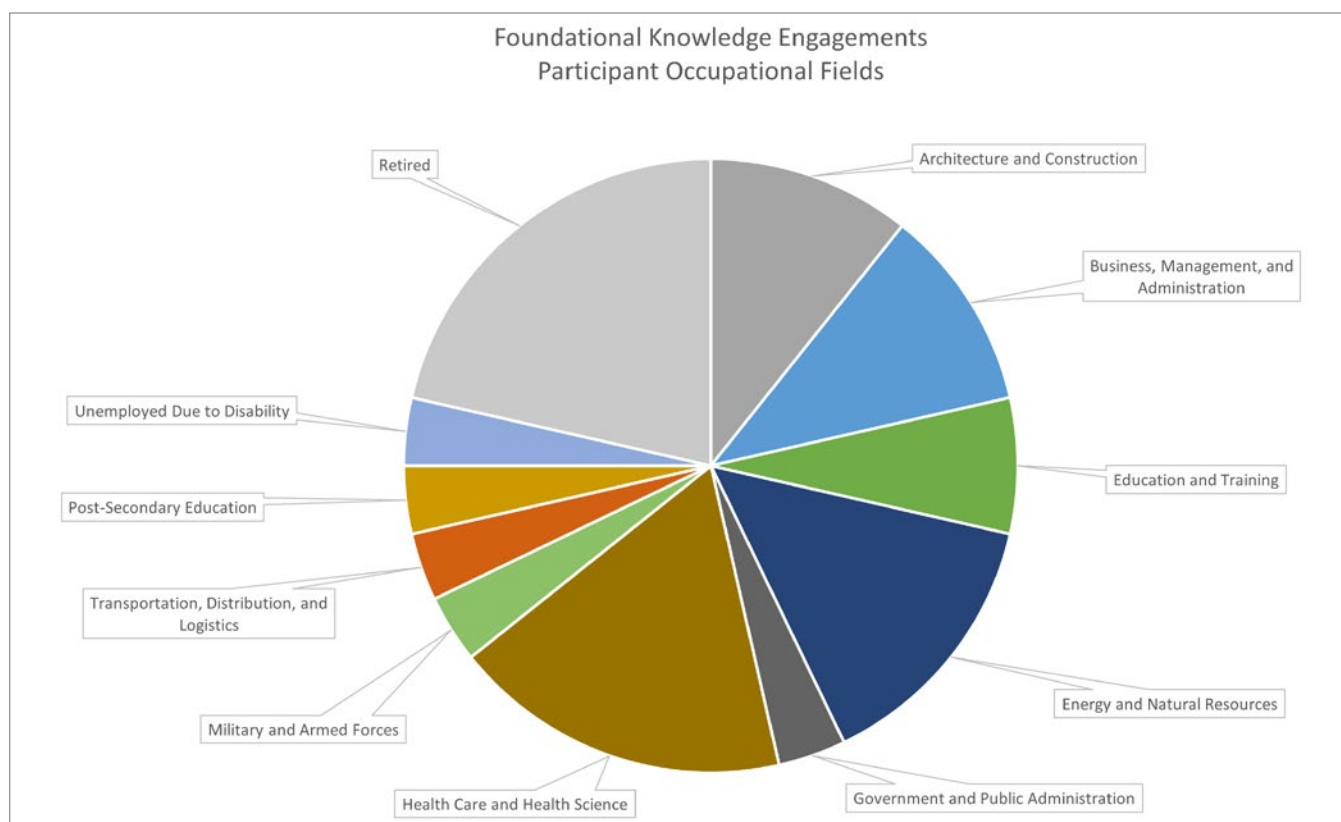
Cumulative effects are complex and interconnected; developing effective means of communication is key to supporting Citizens' understanding of cumulative effects, and its impact. Furthermore, while the department has gained a better understanding of cumulative effects, there is always more room for departmental growth and there are always new things to consider and learn. Going forward, the Consultation Department will continue to expand its capacity to understand cumulative effects and communicate this understanding to Citizens.

Region 3/Region 4 Foundational Knowledge Building

The Consultation Department also piloted a foundational knowledge building program in Regions 3 and 4 to collect information about how and where Métis Citizens practice their Aboriginal rights. This information will serve as a starting point to determine how, and to what degree, a project may impact our Citizen's ability to practice their Aboriginal rights.

The initial program focused on Citizens living in Regions 3 and 4, but participants were encouraged to share knowledge and information about anywhere they felt relevant to their Aboriginal rights practice. Throughout February and March 2023, over 40 Citizens were interviewed by phone, virtually, or in-person at the Provincial Office, or as part of a group interview in Calgary. Each participant received an honorarium to acknowledge the value of the knowledge and information they shared with us.





Information recorded included geospatial data, personal knowledge and experiences, any concerns or priorities, and demographic information. A few participants also provided visual data such as photographs, maps, and family trees at the time of or following the interview.

This initial program was a huge success and provided the Consultation Department with indispensable knowledge that will support, inform, and make our future consultation processes more efficient. Following this success, we hope to expand this program and regularly begin collecting knowledge from Citizens across the province. We would like to establish a foundation of baseline knowledge to continuously build upon.

Concluding Thoughts

Over the last year, the Consultation Department has substantially increased its technical capacity, both in terms of a foundational knowledge base and skills development for staff. We connected and engaged with Citizens, and we watched as the Métis Nation of Alberta vote overwhelmingly to adopt the Constitution and move forward as the new Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

As we transition to the new government, our department will undergo many changes, but our mandate will stay the same; we will always strive to protect and advance the collectively held, constitutional rights, claims, and interests asserted by the Métis Nation of Alberta (and subsequently the Otipemisiwak Métis Government) as the representative and governing body of the Métis within Alberta.

We are enthused to be a part of this historical transition to a recognized Indigenous self-governing body; the future is now, and the Consultation Department is here to support and protect it. ■

Department of Health



The Department of Health has had a very exciting year. Not only has our team grown, but we have undertaken new programs and projects to better meet the needs of Métis Albertans. The Department of Health serves Métis Albertans through two pillars: a) Health Research and Advocacy and b) Community Wellness. In the past year, we developed new research reports to fill gaps in Métis health data, sustained funding to continue offering current programs, and launched new programs to expand mental health supports available for Métis Albertans. Below is a brief description of our projects and programs between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023.

Health Research and Advocacy

Cancer Portfolio

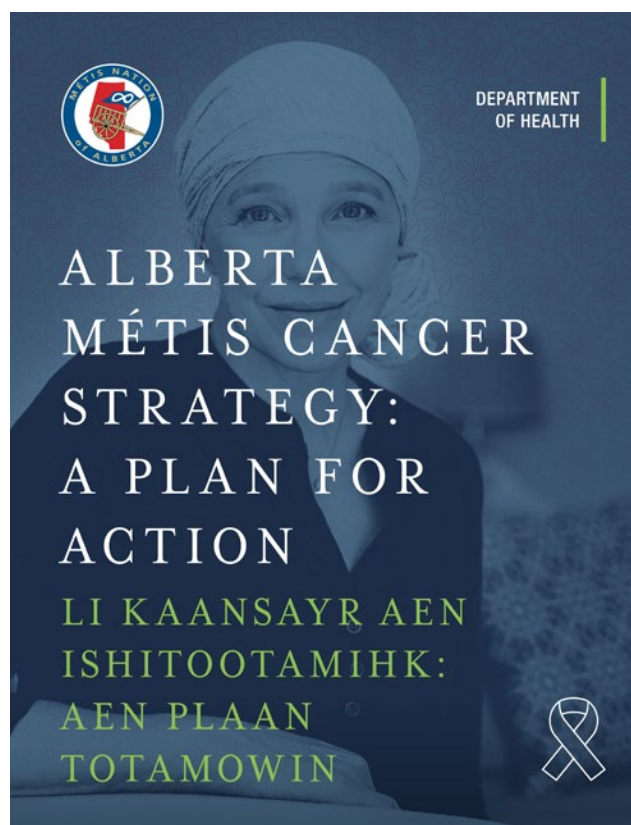
Alberta Métis Cancer Strategy

The Alberta Métis Cancer Strategy provides a clear path for the MNA to respond to the cancer journey needs of Métis Albertans, made possible through funding from the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. The Health

department is very excited to announce the Alberta Métis Cancer Strategy is now complete and available on the MNA website, in print at the provincial office, or at request from the Department of Health. The main objective of the Alberta Métis Cancer Strategy is to prioritize the self-determined needs of Métis Albertans by sharing their personal cancer experiences and those of their loved ones. The strategy aims to develop culturally significant programs and resources and enhance the understanding of cancer care providers on the unique cancer journeys of Métis people, helping to ensure Métis Albertans receive safer and more effective cancer care. The MNA will begin implementing the strategy in Summer 2023. The strategy will be shared with



Alberta
Métis
Cancer
Strategy



stakeholders in the cancer care system and future international conferences to spread awareness of Métis cancer journey experiences and increase cultural safety in health care.



Throughout the development of the Alberta Métis Cancer Strategy, the cancer portfolio also worked on a few other projects, some of which helped inform the strategy and contribute to the progress of the strategy's action items. This included the creation of the *Cancer Incidence and Mortality Among the Métis Population of Alberta, 2013-2019* report, made possible through an Information Sharing Agreement between Alberta Health and the MNA. The report includes cancer statistics from 2013 to 2019 and works to fill a large gap in Métis health data. The report will be used to better understand cancer rates and outcomes among Métis Albertans and will inform programs for cancer prevention and health policy in Alberta. The data from this report informed the development of the Alberta Métis Cancer Strategy.

Métis Cancer Care Course for Health Care Providers

In partnership with SE Health, we developed a Métis Cancer Care Course for health care providers working in cancer care. The course is available nationally on the SE Health learning platform and will be available provincially through Alberta Health Services within the coming months. The course is a first step in addressing racism and discrimination in the health care system by creating awareness of Métis Albertans' cancer journeys, Métis culture, and approaches to health and well-being.

Cancer Screening Survey

The research team at the MNA conducted a cancer screening survey with partners from the University of Calgary, Alberta Health Services, and Alberta Health. This project is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The survey examines cancer screening rates among Métis Albertans and investigates facilitators and barriers to cancer screening. The findings will be used to develop a community report with recommendations and next steps for increasing cancer screening rates among Métis Albertans, contributing to earlier detection of cancer and better health outcomes.

HPV Survey

In collaboration with the University of Alberta, the Health department conducted a survey to examine access to and awareness of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. This survey aligns with the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer's goal to eliminate cervical cancer in

Canada by 2040. The survey results will be used to inform cervical cancer prevention initiatives within the Métis population.

Maternal and Child Health Portfolio

Lii Zaanfaan (The Children) Project

The Lii Zaanfaan (The Children) project is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and is a collaboration between the MNA, Queen's University, the University of Alberta, and Alberta Health. The study seeks to inform the MNA's 10-year strategy and the planning of culturally competent, Métis-specific health services and initiatives. This study will utilize a multimodal strategy (i.e., survey, gatherings, and children's activities) to help us gain insight into the determinants of health impacting Métis children from the perspectives of both Métis children and caregivers and identify supportive actions and resources.

This year, we developed the Lii Zaanfaan Survey, which will be completed by caregivers of Métis children who are 10 years old and younger. Our survey aims to understand how the health and well-being of Métis children are impacted by their environment and family perspectives. The Lii Zaanfaan study is a foundational step for contributing to Métis-led actions and supporting the MNA's self-determination as it relates to the health and wellness of Métis children and families across Alberta. The survey will be launched on the MNA website in summer 2023.

Kihew Awasis Wakamik (KAW)

The MNA, in partnership with Kihew Awasis Wakamik (KAW), offers support to new families through all stages of life, starting at preconception, continuing into the first years of life, to the end-of-life journey back to the spirit world. KAW is a Métis-led, grassroots community collective that includes Aunties, Elders, grandmothers, cultural birth helpers, and health care professionals such as midwives, lactation specialists, and childbirth and sexual health educators. Some of the programs offered by KAW include the 13 Moons Mentorship Program, prenatal health and parenting circles, wrap-around support for birthing families, and reawakening and sharing cultural knowledge through community workshops like Kistehitah kimeskanām (moccasin making).

Between April 2022 and March 2023, 10 Métis mentees (nine of whom are Métis youth) were mentored through the 13 Moons Mentorship Program to support Indigenous families from pregnancy through to the end of life. Each

subsequent cohort of mentees expands access to Indigenous birth workers for Métis families. KAW also provided Prenatal Education through an Indigenous perspective, bringing expectant parents together to learn as a group about the ceremony of bringing life into this world and the role of parents. The goal of prenatal classes is to allow parents to begin or continue to learn about themselves, their culture, and to create a community of support around themselves.

Chronic Disease Portfolio

Epidemiological Indicators of Arthritis Among Métis in Alberta

We are excited to complete *The Epidemiological and Health Services Indicators of Arthritis Among Métis in Alberta*, a report on arthritis among Métis Albertans. This project was completed in collaboration with the University of Alberta and Alberta Health. This report aims to fill the gap in knowledge related to the impact of arthritis on the health and well-being of Métis Albertans. The report leverages administrative health data from Alberta Health to identify ways to best support Métis Albertans with arthritis. This forthcoming report will provide a comprehensive understanding of the epidemiology of arthritis among Métis Albertans, offering a foundation for future advocacy, as well as programs and initiatives designed to improve the health and well-being of Métis Albertans. This report will be available online, in print at MNA offices, or at request from the Department of Health when finalized.

Transitions in Care Project

The Transitions in Care project was funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and focuses on the lived experiences of Métis Albertans with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes. It seeks to understand health outcomes and the potential challenges in receiving effective diabetes care while transitioning from pediatric to adult, and adult to older-adult care. The project has unfolded in two phases. Phase 1 compiled data through a study of past health records in Alberta, in collaboration with the University of Alberta and Alberta Health. In Phase 2, Métis Albertans with diabetes were invited to share their stories and experiences through an online survey (completed by 862 people in August 2020) and individual interviews (completed with 40 participants in fall 2021).

The community report from Phase 2 identifies key themes that Métis Albertans face during their diabetes care transitions. Themes include access to supports and services for diabetes management; the role of traditional Métis history, medicines, diet, community practices, and

connections; healing methods in defining and managing diabetes; and challenges and barriers to managing diabetes and potential solutions. The report also outlines potential avenues for advocacy and suggests ways to improve the lives of Métis Albertans living with diabetes. We are excited to announce that an infographic and a community report from Phase 2 will be available online and in print at MNA offices in the coming months.

Mental Health and Addictions Portfolio

Mental Health Status Among the Métis Population of Alberta

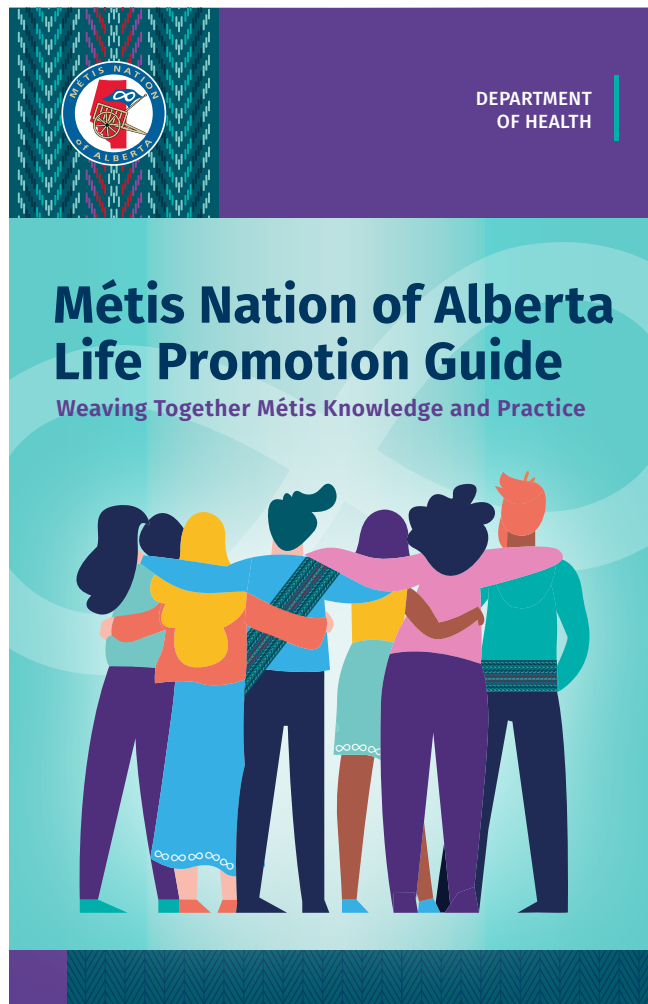
We are excited to complete the *Mental Health Status Among the Métis Population of Alberta* report that shares over 15 years of epidemiological data specific to mental health among Métis Albertans. The data from this report include incidence and prevalence rates of nine mental health diagnoses, rates of self-harm and self-harm-related mortality, pharmaceutical initiation therapy rates, addiction treatment initiation rates, and mental health service-use rates. This report aims to share the mental health status of Métis Albertans and guide the Department of Health to respond to identified priorities. This report was created in collaboration with the University of Alberta and Alberta Health, and will be available online, in print at MNA offices, or at request from the Department of Health when finalized.

Quality of Care for Métis in Alberta Emergency Departments: Co-creating Understandings and Definitions

In collaboration with the University of Alberta and Alberta Health, this project seeks to understand Métis Albertan's experience of racism in emergency departments (ED). Project objectives include examining quantitative differences in ED visit characteristics and quality measures between Métis and non-Indigenous persons in Alberta, exploring Métis experiences of seeking and receiving care in EDs, and producing Métis definitions of ED quality of care. This year we have focused on building our project research team, applying for ethics at the University of Alberta, and designing the community gatherings we will use to collect this knowledge from Métis Albertans. Community gatherings will be held in the spring of 2024. Knowledge gathered from this report will directly inform how the Department of Health moves towards addressing racism in the health system.

MNA Life Promotion Guide

This year, the Department of Health released the *Métis Nation of Alberta Life Promotion Guide – Weaving Together Métis Knowledge and Practice*. This guide shares Métis knowledge on developing, implementing, and evaluating programs that connect young people to life. This guide introduces life promotion and provides strategies program providers can undertake to strengthen connections to life in the community.



The guide includes information on how to put life promotion into action and resources and tools to support programming. The knowledge shared in creating this guide will inform the Department of Health's life promotion strategy in 2023–2024, which will share the department's next steps in addressing suicide through strength-based initiatives aligning with Métis values, knowledge, and priorities. The guide is available online, in print at MNA offices, or at request from the Department of Health.

Community Wellness

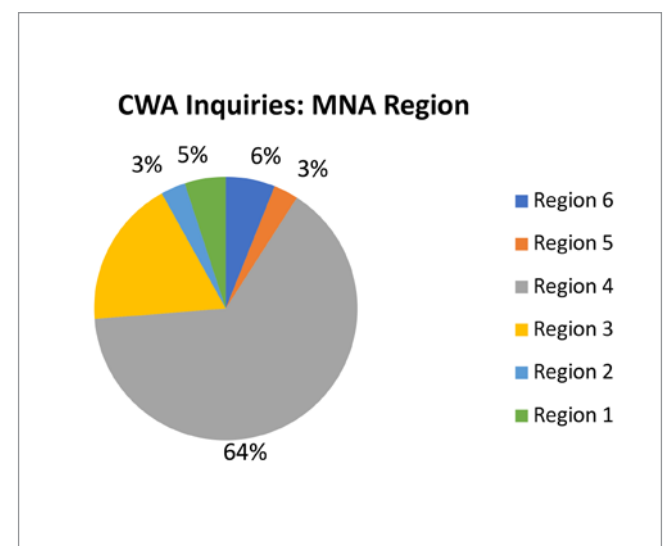
Community Wellness Advocate Program

The Community Wellness Advocate (CWA) Program, funded by Alberta Health, aims to support Métis Albertans in improving their overall mental health and wellness through a broadened definition of mental health that is grounded in a Métis perspective. This is achieved by providing information and resources, follow-up support, and system navigation and advocacy to Métis Albertans to support them in reaching their mental wellness goals.



Between April 2022 and March 2023, the CWA responded to 269 information and referral inquiries from across Alberta and provided 306 referrals, 160 of which were directly related to mental health. The vast majority of people chose not to disclose which region they were calling from, however, of those willing to disclose this information, most were from Region 4. A full breakdown of information and referral inquiries by MNA Region is below.

The CWA is continuing to support Métis Albertans across the province, by responding to phone and email inquiries. In the last 12 months, the CWA has received over 800 emails from the general CWA inbox in addition to many voicemails and phone inquiries. The CWA continues to work towards responding to inquiries more efficiently with the most accurate and up-to-date information. To access more information about this program, please visit the MNA Community Wellness Advocate webpage

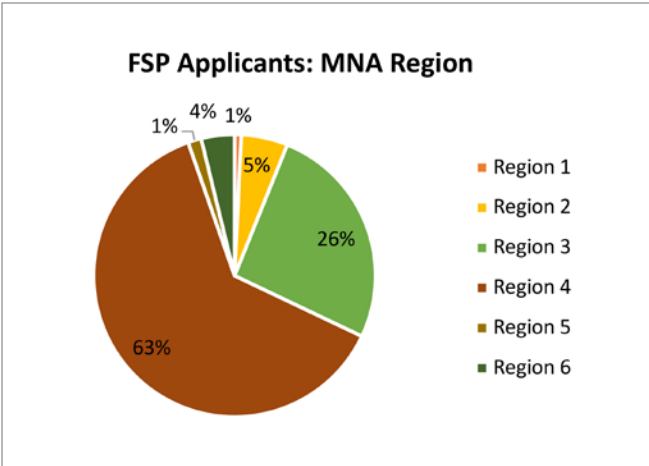


Financial Support Program

The Financial Support Program (FSP) for Mental Wellness, grant funded by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and Alberta Health, provides funding for eligible MNA Citizens to access a psychologist or counsellor whom they have an established relationship with. This allows the Citizen to continue working on their mental wellness goals through talk therapy by eliminating financial barriers. Each eligible Citizen qualifies for six sessions when their application is approved, but if they complete these sessions within six months, they will automatically qualify for six additional sessions for a total of 12 for the year or \$2,640 of funding.

The program ran for the first time during the 2022-2023 fiscal year and supported 84 Citizens to access a psychologist or counsellor for six sessions at a maximum of \$150 per session. For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, however, the program will be expanded to support 132 Citizens for a maximum of 12 sessions at \$220 per session, the full recommended pay schedule set out by the College of Alberta Psychologists (CAP).

The Financial Support Program accepted 131 citizen applications during the initial run of the program. Of these 131 Citizens, 82% identify as female and 16% as male, 70% applied for themselves and 30% were parents applying on behalf of a child. A total of 43 children were enrolled and of them, 55% were reported as female and 45% as male. Applications from each region break down as follows:



It is our hope that we can continue to expand this program to eliminate financial barriers for Métis Citizens engaging in talk therapy and working on their mental wellness goals. We will continue to work to make the program more accessible and more efficient. This program is at capacity at the moment, however, future roll outs will be advertised on the MNA Facebook page as well as the MNA Community Wellness webpage.

Métis Mental Wellness Program

The Health department has invited Métis Elders, Knowledge Keepers, members of the Métis community, Métis scholars, and regional Métis mental health representatives to gather over a period of 6-8 months to build relationships with one another and co-create a Métis Mental Wellness Program.

Through this program, we will be hosting a series of small gatherings to answer the following question: “What are the essential components of a Métis Mental Wellness Program?” The first Mental Wellness Envisioning Session was held at Métis Crossing from March 24-26, 2023. This gathering involved connecting through cultural activities and informal discussions where participants shared stories and perspectives related to Métis mental wellness. The goal of this program, funded by ISC, is to generate a thoughtful rendering of our community’s perspectives and experiences regarding the essential components of a Métis Mental Wellness Program.

Shakiwayniwayhk (Embrace): Opioid Recovery Wrap-Around Support Program

The MNA's Opioid Recovery Wrap-Around Support Program, grant funded by Alberta Health, offers eligible Citizens financial support for up to nine months following the completion of a residential care treatment program. The goal of this program is to provide financial wrap-around supports, such as rent subsidy, utilities, groceries, transportation, and prescriptions, which meet the unique needs of each person on an opioid recovery journey during their transition back to living in the community. With the funding available, the MNA can support 20 Citizens for nine months post-discharge from a residential care treatment program. This program was launched on November 4, 2022, and the MNA currently has seven Citizens enrolled.



In addition to financial supports, Citizens in the program can also access referrals to culturally safe community resources, including mental health and medical professionals. We actively collaborate with Métis Housing and Simon House Recovery Centre to support Citizens in their search for housing and effective treatment options. We also have partnerships with MC College and MacEwan Massage Therapy Teaching Clinic to maximize self-care and wellness opportunities that can be accessed by program participants.

Goals for the Opioid Recovery Wrap-Around Support Program include supporting 20 Métis Citizens by the end of March 2024. The Health department also plans



Playback Dinner Theatre Community Wellness Gathering

to organize awareness engagements throughout Alberta to share information about the services offered through the program and work increasingly with MNA Regional Offices, community addiction supports, and treatment organizations to support MNA Citizens in their recovery journey. For more information about this program, please visit the MNA Opioid Wrap-Around Support Program webpage.

Community Wellness Gatherings

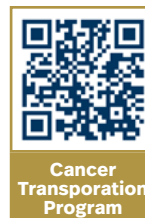
In the spirit of kinship, culture, community, and connection, the Health department hosted several in-person regional Community Wellness Gatherings, funded by ISC, throughout fall 2022 and winter 2023. Métis Citizens were invited to submit various mental wellness topic preferences through an online survey that was advertised on MNA social media channels. The Health department received over 300 responses from all six MNA Regions. The gatherings so far have included a beading session, a Playback Dinner Theatre, and a presentation by Indigenous Psychological Services. In the upcoming year, we will continue to find opportunities to organize Community Wellness Gatherings in each region. The Health department has set a goal to host 10 gatherings by the end of March 2025.



Community Wellness

Cancer Transportation Program

The Cancer Transportation Program offers MNA Citizens financial assistance for the costs associated with travel to and from their cancer-related medical appointments. MNA Citizens have expressed that the financial cost of needing to travel to and from appointments has been a barrier to seeking the treatment they require. This program helps to alleviate some of the financial stress Citizens are faced with during this difficult and often costly time. This program is available to MNA Citizens of all ages



Cancer Transportation Program

CANCER TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Fiscal Year	Number of Citizens Using the Program	Number of Appointments Citizens Attended	Total Reimbursement Costs
April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023	66	553	\$82,575.60
April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022	40	331	\$39,660.80
April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021	6	17	\$4,459.90

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

residing in Alberta who must travel a minimum of 50 km to attend cancer-related appointments. Individuals who plan to use personal transportation must have access to an operational vehicle and a driver (i.e., family member, friend, etc.) to take them to and from cancer-related appointments. MNA Citizenship and a letter confirming proof of appointment from a medical provider are required to access the program. Reimbursement for mileage, bus fare, and parking (up to \$40 reimbursement for parking per appointment) occurs after the appointment has taken place and is mailed out directly to the provided home address.

The Cancer Transportation Program was made possible through our partnership with the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. This program is incredibly important, as it gives Citizens some financial relief during these incredibly difficult times. Many Citizens have stated they would not be able to attend their appointment, had it not been for the support of the MNA. The program has seen an increase in demand over the past year. From April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023, the Cancer Transportation Program was used a total of 175 times by 66 individuals. This helped individuals attend a total of 553 appointments, with reimbursement costs totaling \$82,575.60. The reimbursement costs include mileage (at \$0.35/km) and parking. This is a significant increase from the year before. A full breakdown of participants accessing this program is provided above.

As the Cancer Transportation Program continues to grow, the MNA will work hard to provide financial relief for transportation and support for its Citizens. We value the feedback we receive and hear there are still gaps and needs to meet. We share those needs with key stakeholders to evaluate our program and seek funding opportunities to sustain our existing programming. For more information about this program, please visit the MNA Cancer Transportation Program webpage.

Youth and Adult Dental Programs

The MNA Dental Program operates through its partnership with the University of Alberta School of Dentistry. The Dental Care Program provides access to several dental care services for Métis adults and youth. The Youth Dental Program provides free basic dental services for Métis youth between the ages of 3-16. The Adult Dental Program is a referral-based program that provides Métis Citizens with access to affordable dental care. Services provided by the University of Alberta School of Dentistry include emergency dental services, hygiene services, implants, and denture services.

Between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023, the MNA Adult Dental Program referred 109 Citizens to access emergency dental services at the University of Alberta School of Dentistry. The Youth Dental Program has been

an overwhelming success, with the program referring 130 Métis youth. Families have expressed that their children would not have been able to receive dental treatments had it not been for this program. Unfortunately, due to overcapacity issues, the adult dental hygiene and denture care services have been on hold since June 2022.

MNA DENTAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program	Inquiries	Registrations
Youth Dental Program	Average 10/week Approximately 350	130 referrals sent
Adult Emergency Dental Program	Average 15/week Approximately 525	109 referrals sent
Lac La Biche Dental Clinic	6	65

We have the honor of reporting that after two years of envisioning, the MNA held a free pilot dental clinic in Lac La Biche in November 2022. This initiative was a collaboration between the Health department, MNA Region 1, and Access for All Dentistry. The Access for All Team provided free dental care for Citizens, including



adults and children. Following their care, each Citizen was invited to share their experience by completing MNA-provided comment cards. Each Citizen who shared their perspectives overwhelmingly conveyed gratitude and positive care experiences. In a room next to the dental clinic were daily community activities such as music, cultural activities, a child-minding space, and lunch.

We can confidently report that this pilot was successful at creating a culturally-safe space for Métis Albertans to access dental care as well as to celebrate community and culture. It was a beautiful week of celebrating healthy teeth, community, culture, and visiting. Moving forward, the MNA and Access for All Dentistry will collaborate to bring this free mobile clinic to each MNA Region.

As the need for affordable dental care continues to grow, the MNA will work hard to provide dental services and support for its Citizens. We will continue looking at other opportunities for funding or partnerships to provide more services to MNA Citizens across the province. We value the feedback the program receives and hear there are still gaps and needs to meet. We share those needs with key stakeholders to evaluate our program and seek funding opportunities to sustain our existing programming. For more information, please visit the MNA Community Wellness Programs webpage.

Medically Necessary Accommodations Program

The Medically Necessary Accommodations Program assists MNA Citizens in accessing free, safe, and reliable accommodations when travelling to Edmonton for medically necessary appointments treatments. This program was created to help alleviate some of the financial stresses when needing to travel for medical or dental reasons. This program is available to MNA Citizens, 18 years and older, living in Alberta, who must attend a medically necessary appointment, treatment, or dental appointment in the City of Edmonton. To be eligible for the program, you must travel at least 50 km from your home address to your medical appointment. An appointment letter from your medical provider and an MNA Citizenship number or ID is required for this program.

This program offers short-term and long-term accommodation. Short-term accommodation is offered at the Chateau Louis Hotel. Having hotel accommodation has been extremely useful and helped assist numerous Citizens with short-term accommodations when travelling to Edmonton for medical or dental reasons. We also offer long-term accommodations at the Métis Capital Housing Corporation's Renaissance Tower in Edmonton. The Medically Necessary Accommodations Program has

MEDICALLY NECESSARY ACCOMMODATIONS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Fiscal Year	Citizens Accessing Short-term Accommodations	Citizens Accessing Long-term Accommodations
April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023	260	30
April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022	111	26
April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021	30	2

one 1-bedroom suite and two 2-bedroom suites available. One of these suites is a fully accessible unit. People accessing this program can check in the day before their appointment and stay for the agreed upon amount of time. The length of stay is determined based on the logistics of the medical appointment the person is attending.

This program has been an overwhelming success and has given Citizens the ability to focus on their health or the health of their loved ones. Travel for medical reasons can often be an unexpected financial burden to families that inhibits their ability to receive proper care. The long-term accommodations are fully furnished with all the amenities required when away from home. The last fiscal year saw a significant increase in demand for and use of the Medically Necessary Accommodations Program. Between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023, the MNA provided short-term accommodation for 260 Citizens and their families at the Chateau Louis Hotel with stays ranging between 1–7 days. Our accommodations at the Renaissance Tower also saw an increase, hosting 30 Citizens (and their families) with stays ranging from one week to six months. This program has also helped transition two families from the Medically Necessary Accommodation program to permanent housing in Edmonton by working together with Métis Housing.

As the Medically Necessary Accommodations Program continues to grow, the MNA will work hard to continue providing accommodations and support for its Citizens. We will be adding an additional hotel accommodation to the south side of Edmonton, as this will be closer to appointments attended at the University of Alberta Hospital or the Cross Cancer Institute. We value the feedback the program receives and hear that there are still gaps and needs to meet. We share those needs with key stakeholders to evaluate our program and seek funding opportunities to sustain our existing programming. For more information, please visit the [MNA Medically Necessary Accommodations Program](#) webpage.



ChangeCore

MNA commercial tobacco peer support group

For Métis Albertans 18+

- Do you smoke, vape, or use smokeless tobacco and wish you had a non-clinical peer-led support to help you reduce or quit?
- Have you already quit but wish you had ongoing support to maintain your quit?
- Are you unsure about reducing or quitting but wish you had a non-judgmental, safe space to talk about it?

ChangeCore may be the right fit for you.



each other with their tobacco-related goals. Since November 2022, 27 meetings have been hosted and 16 QuitCore graduates have enrolled.

Graduates from QuitCore are eligible to join a Cultural Quit Retreat with their families at Métis Crossing for a weekend filled with cultural activities, Métis-inspired cuisine, and connecting to the land, people, and animals. This retreat is a celebration for QuitCore graduates but also an opportunity to connect and learn more about Métis heritage. Culture may act

Tobacco Reduction Program

The Tobacco Reduction Program at the MNA consists of four initiatives: QuitCore, Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT), ChangeCore Peer Support Group, and Cultural Quit Retreat.

The MNA QuitCore program is an online, six-week commercial tobacco cessation group program that helps Métis Albertans learn different skills and strategies to reduce or quit their commercial tobacco use. This program introduces scientifically proven methods along with holistic and cultural approaches to address tobacco cessation. Graduates from MNA QuitCore receive a \$500 Alberta Blue Cross card to use on Nicotine Replacement Therapies and Cessation Medications. From April 2022 to March 2023, five QuitCore programs were held. A total of 51 Métis Albertans graduated throughout this time.

The MNA NRT Program consists of three sessions with the MNA Community Prevention Practitioner to build a change plan. Following the three sessions, the participant receives a \$500 Alberta Blue Cross card to use on Nicotine Replacement Therapies and Cessation Medications. Métis Albertans who do not have the availability to commit to a six-week QuitCore program have the option to participate in the MNA NRT Program. Twenty-five Métis Albertans have accessed and enrolled in this program.

Graduates from the MNA QuitCore program are eligible to join ChangeCore. ChangeCore is an MNA Commercial Tobacco Peer Support Group. This group provides continuous peer support following the completion of QuitCore and meets every Monday for one hour. This group allows participants to stay connected and support



as a source of strength and resilience on a tobacco cessation journey. So far, a total of 41 Métis Albertans have attended a Quit Retreat.

The MNA, with continued grant funding from ISC, looks forward to continuing to provide necessary tobacco reduction programs to Métis Citizens. For more information about this program, please visit the MNA Tobacco Reduction Program webpage.

The MNA Wellness Program

The MNA Wellness program provides Métis Albertans with access to 12 hours of free professional, confidential counselling, or life-skills training offered through Homewood Health. This program offers goal oriented, short-term counselling to improve personal well-being, manage relationships and family, address workplace stress or challenges, take control of finances, and develop life skills. In the last fiscal year, 423.17 individuals* accessed Homewood Health services, which equates to 0.77% of all MNA Citizens and MNA employees (*0.17 comes from individuals accessing online course/articles/resources, which does not count as one full case). In detail, 402 individuals accessed counselling services, 18 individuals accessed Life Smart Coaching, and there were 3.17 cases accessing online course/articles/resources. Moving forward we will continue to increase communication and awareness of this program to Métis Albertans to encourage access of program resources. To find out more about this program, please visit the MNA Wellness program webpage. ■



Environment and Climate Change



The Métis Nation of Alberta's (MNA) Environment and Climate Change (ECC) department works in a variety of areas and disciplines to address environmental concerns and promote sustainability. The team is focused on reducing impact on the environment, serving Métis Citizens to ensure traditional practices and culture are preserved, and ensuring future generations are resilient to our changing environment and climate.

During the past year, the ECC department continued environmental monitoring efforts under Askîy, the MNA's Community-Based Environmental Monitoring Initiative. Monitoring projects currently focus on the health, distribution, and abundance of cultural keystone species and traditionally harvested plants, fish, and wildlife. Under our conservation efforts, the ECC department secured a site for the future declaration of an MNA-led Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA). For a second year, the ECC department ran the MNA Native Bee Conservation Program, expanding it to double the amount of MNA Citizens than the previous year.

Our efforts and initiatives continued under the MNA's Climate Change Action Plan. In the fall of 2022, construction began for the Métis Crossing Solar Project (MCSP), a 4.86-megawatt alternating-current MNA-owned community-generation solar project located at Métis Crossing. The project is expected to be in operation in the fall of 2023. Work is also ongoing to secure resources to increase the solar micro-generation capacity and to reduce the energy use at MNA and MNA affiliate facilities.

The ECC department is committed to understanding how climate change will affect MNA Citizens and how to best adapt to changing climate and extreme weather

events. The MNA Emergency Preparedness Kit Program was launched in early 2023 to try to address the needs of Citizens in the face of environmental emergencies.

The ECC department also continued events and initiatives aimed at information and Traditional Knowledge sharing with Métis Citizens and launched the ECC Speaker Spotlight Program. The MNA Traditional Plant Walks continued for a third year, and several citizen engagement initiatives ran on our social media channels throughout the year.

Department Highlights 2022/2023

- Construction is underway for the Métis Crossing Solar Project, producing enough electricity equivalent to powering 1,200 Alberta homes.
- 3,500+ Citizens engaged through ECC events.
- Secured 158 acres of land for conservation.
- Provided 500 MNA Citizens with 72-hour emergency kits

Askîy Community-Based Environmental Monitoring Initiative

The Askîy (Cree for "earth" or "land") initiative aims to undertake environmental monitoring using methods that braid Métis Traditional Knowledge with western science. This initiative was developed from Citizen engagements that heard concerns related to environment and climate change. Monitoring launched in March 2020 and many projects continued annually. Monitoring projects currently focus primarily on examining the health, distribution, and abundance of cultural keystone species and traditionally harvested plants, fish, and wildlife.



Askîy Re-Engagement Session in Red Deer.

This past year specifically saw the Askîy Re-Engagements, in which the ECC department went into the community to provide updates on Askîy and discuss concerns Citizens have and suggestions for improving and expanding Askîy and future monitoring.

Askîy Re-Engagements

In early 2023, the ECC department re-engaged MNA Citizens about Askîy and held 12 in-person engagement sessions in nine different communities across the province. A detailed online survey was also made available for Citizens unable to attend in person.

The Askîy Re-Engagements had three main goals:

- Provide an update on the previous work completed under Askîy and gather feedback on the current Askîy monitoring programs.
- Gather information about how MNA Citizens experience environmental changes and what concerns they may have about these changes.
- Understand how MNA Citizens' experiences of environmental change and concerns shape Askîy moving forward.

In total, 283 participants attended the in-person engagement sessions, and 356 Citizens filled out the online survey. Some main topics of concern that emerged from the Askîy Re-Engagements were the loss of wildlife and plants, damage to natural spaces, increased pollution, and changes in weather. The top mentioned environmental impacts experienced were wildfires, pollution (air, waste, water), and heatwaves. Possible improvements mentioned for Askîy were more

educational opportunities and increased communication to Citizens.

Future Work:

- Continue with data analysis of responses from the engagement session and survey.
- Share findings with MNA Citizens.
- Provide and implement recommendations, informed by the engagement feedback, on how best to improve and expand the Askîy initiative.

Plant Projects

Traditional Plant Monitoring

To address MNA Citizens' concerns regarding plant health and changes in abundance, the ECC department launched the berry monitoring project in 2020 under the Askîy initiative. Based on community feedback, 36 berry harvesting sites were selected and monitored year after year. Monitoring included an assessment of the productivity of berry-producing species, site-species composition, health of the plants, and site characteristics such as canopy cover. Three years of berry monitoring have now been completed.

Project Highlights:

- In 2022, 8,570 plants were counted, consisting of 14 species of berries and medicinal plants. The most counted species were blueberry (34%), saskatoons (19%), wild rose (15%), and raspberries (8%).

- 99,150 flowers and buds from 1,505 plants were counted in the spring to compare fruit produced on those same plants later in the summer.
- Fruit was produced for 0-17% of the flowers counted across all plant species, with the most productive being blueberries (57.9%), raspberry (47.3%), and currant (27.6%).
- Low productivity is suspected to have resulted from high temperatures and low rainfall last summer.

Future Work:

- In 2023, monitoring activities will continue to further build the dataset and evaluate changes and long-term plant health trends.
- To expand traditional plant monitoring, the ECC department will launch a new community monitoring project in summer 2023. Citizens will act as Askîy Guardians and be able to report on their plant harvesting activities.
- The ECC department will compare the data to local climate conditions to identify which factors may be influencing the productivity and health of these valuable plants.

- Saskatoon Island Provincial Park near Grande Prairie.
- Sir Winston Churchill Provincial Park near Lac La Biche.
- Moose Lake near Bonnyville.
- 96 people participated in the six plant walk events.
- In 2023, the program expanded to offer more traditional plant walk events.
 - 7 traditional plant walk events were held between May and June 2023.
 - Another 2 traditional plant walk events scheduled for May 2023 in Grand Prairie and Peace River were cancelled due to wildfire conditions and air quality concerns. These events were rescheduled for July 2023.

Future Work:

- The ECC department will look for opportunities to continue offering traditional plant walks next year.

Traditional Plant Walks

In the summer of 2022, six in-person Traditional Plant Walks were hosted across Alberta to facilitate the transfer of Métis Traditional Knowledge and engage with Citizens on traditional plant harvesting practices. At each event, participants were given an opportunity to learn about traditional plants and their uses from a Métis Knowledge Keeper through a combination of storytelling, cultural activities, and a guided plant walk. Plant walks also included a salve-making workshop, in which the Métis Knowledge Keeper demonstrated how to make a balsam poplar bud salve. Participants were supplied with a recipe card on how to make the salve, along with tea and rose-hip syrup recipes.



Left: Saskatoon berries picked at Misery Mountain in Peace River. Photo credit: Courtney Anderson.

Bottom: Plant walk participants follow Knowledge Keeper Natalie Pepin during a plant walk at Fish Creek Provincial Park in Calgary.



Project Highlights:

- In 2022, Traditional Plant Walks were held at the following locations:
 - Fish Creek Provincial Park in Calgary.
 - Kinsmen Park in Edmonton.
 - Devonshire Beach in Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park.

Fish Projects

Fish Health Community Monitor Program

In August 2021, the ECC department launched the Fish Health Community Monitor Program. This program aims to collect waterway and waterbody-specific information to help the MNA detect changes to fish populations and health. The program also invites Citizens to act as Askîy Guardians by using online reporting forms to collect information regarding fishing activities, the size and health of fish caught, and the palatability of fish kept for food. Seasonal prize draws were held to reward Citizens who participated in the program.

Project Highlights:

- By the end of March 2023, MNA Citizens submitted 324 fishing trip reports, 78 fish health reports, and 82 palatability reports.
- Fishing trips were reported for over 130 unique waterways or waterbodies across Alberta, with the most frequented locations being Lac La Biche, Pigeon Lake, Lesser Slave Lake, and Wabamun Lake.
- Common concerns included fish being too small to keep and fewer fish being caught. However, Citizens generally reported positive fishing experiences, and as one Métis harvester shared, “A bad day of fishing is better than a good day at work.”

Future Work:

- This program will continue to accept reports from Citizens throughout the year and offer seasonal prize draws. The ECC department will analyze the data to detect changes in fish health and abundance, which will inform future environmental monitoring and conservation work.

Fish Health Interviews and Knowledge Sharing

In fall 2022, a series of one-on-one interviews were conducted with Métis harvesters and Knowledge Holders to understand the connection between Métis people and fishing. The interviews specifically aimed to explore fish health indicators used by Métis harvesters and to document and preserve Traditional Knowledge. The interview results will be used to create a fish health assessment tool that applies a Métis lens. Once complete, the tool will be shared with Métis Citizens and can be used when completing the fish health community monitor reporting forms, creating consistency among data gathered for assessing fish health.



A collage of photos Citizens shared with the MNA through the fish health community monitor report forms. Photo credit: Thomas McGillis, Dawn Olsvik, Angie Snaychuk, Justine Moriarty, and those who wish to remain anonymous.

Project Highlights:

- 18 interviews with Métis harvesters were conducted.
- Key indicators common amongst interview participants were identified and are being used to draft an assessment tool.

Future Work:

- Once complete, the draft version of the fish health assessment tool will be shared with interview participants for comments and feedback and then will be shared at planned community monitoring events to receive broader MNA Citizen feedback.

Lake Fish Monitoring

In February 2023, the ECC department conducted fish health monitoring while ice fishing that focused on sampling fish from four lakes across Alberta. A team of Métis harvesters, Métis youth, and MNA staff members travelled to each lake and fished using a gill net set overnight. Each fish was measured, weighed, and examined for health indicators. Tissue samples from lake whitefish and walleye were collected for mercury toxicology testing. Harvesters took fish home to consume, where they filled out reporting forms to share fish health and palatability information with MNA staff.



Left: A team of MNA staff, harvesters, and youth prepare to send a jigger under the ice to set a gillnet.



Right: The Askîy Youth Guardian ice fishing team take a break from hard work in -35° C to showcase their catches. From left to right: Madeleine Aldridge, Ireland Knox, Tyawna Edmonds, and Maxxam Johnson. Photo credit: Dean Fahner.

Project Highlights:

- Fishing surveys were held at Calling Lake, Lesser Slave Lake, Sturgeon Lake, and Pigeon Lake.
- A total of 94 fish were caught across all lakes: 75 lake whitefish, 8 walleye, 7 northern pike, and 4 burbot.
- 33 fish were sent for mercury toxicology testing, results were still pending as of publication.

Future Work:

- Another round of lake fish monitoring is being planned for the upcoming ice fishing season (January 2024 – March 2024). New lakes may be targeted to investigate Citizen concerns, based on responses from the community monitoring reports.

Askîy Youth Monitoring

As part of lake fish monitoring conducted in February 2023, the ECC department invited a group of four Métis youth to participate in a week of monitoring. Throughout the week, youth learned scientific monitoring techniques from MNA staff, and Traditional Knowledge from MNA harvesters, including how to set a gill net and how MNA harvesters assess fish health. Youth participants were selected through a contest, in which applicants were asked to submit an essay explaining what being part of the Askîy Youth Guardians team and participating in fish health monitoring would mean to them. The harvesters involved with the lake fish monitoring acted as judges to select the four youth.

Project Highlights:

- 7 youth submitted essays for the contest.
- Filmed a recap video, including interviews with the Youth Guardians sharing their experiences.

Future Work:

- Another round of lake fish monitoring is planned for winter 2024, and the Askîy Youth Guardians contest is planned to run in conjunction with the monitoring work.

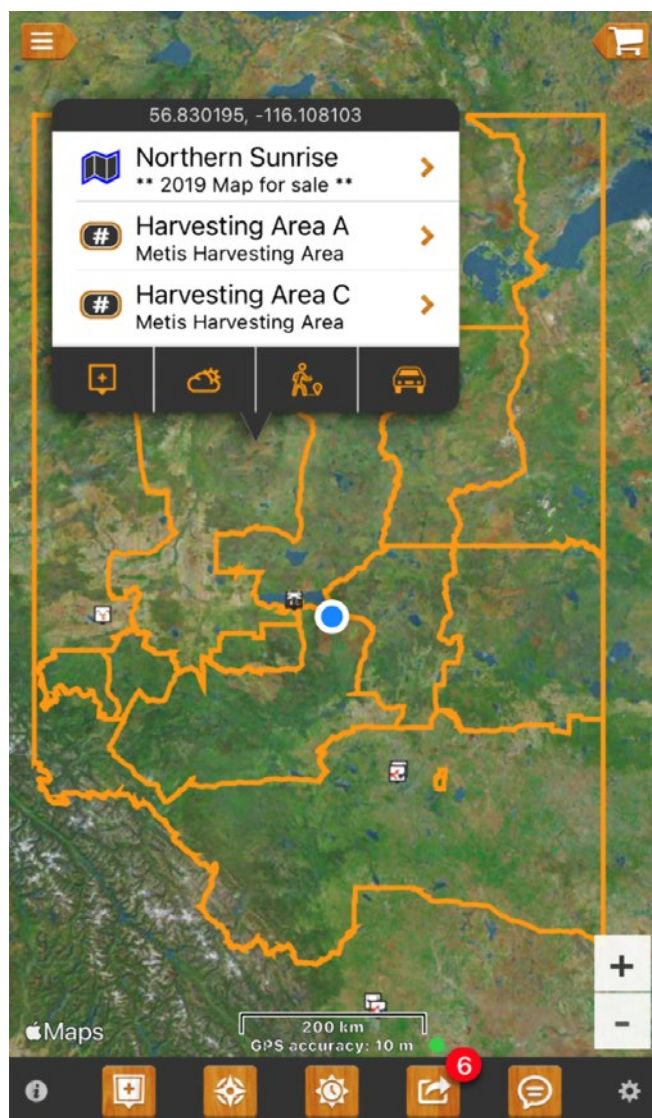


Wildlife Projects

iHunter ABHuntLog

The Alberta Conservation Association (ACA), the University of Alberta (U of A), and Inside Out Studios (IOS) developed an in-app survey in 2021 called ABHuntLog, which allows users to share information about their hunting activities, observations, and success through the iHunter mobile app. ABHuntLog users gain access to a dashboard which summarizes the data they have submitted through the survey, such as: days scouting, days hunting, number of animals harvested, and total distance travelled. The data collected is used to assess population trends of

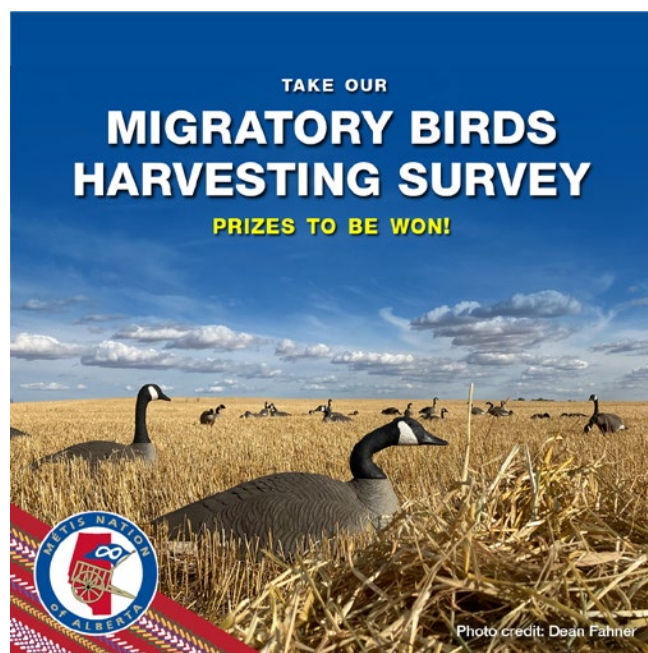




MNA Harvesting Area boundaries layer can be viewed through the iHunter app.

harvested species across Alberta to inform wildlife management. All data collected is anonymized and summarized at the Wildlife Management Unit level.

The ECC department has been engaging with ACA, U of A, and IOS throughout the development of ABHuntLog, allowing for participation in survey question development and testing app features and functionality. In October 2022, the MNA joined the ABHuntLog project as a partner and added the option for users to identify as a “Métis Harvester.” All survey data submitted by this user group will be made available to the MNA to support monitoring wildlife populations, examine economic value of harvesting activities, and demonstrate areas where Citizens exercise their section 35 rights.



Future Work:

- The ECC department will be launching initiatives to encourage MNA Citizens to participate in ABHuntLog during the upcoming fall hunting season.
- Data collected during the fall 2023 hunting season will be analyzed and shared with MNA Citizens.

Migratory Bird Harvesting Survey

The ECC department, with funding support from the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), completed its annual migratory bird harvesting survey for the 2022 harvesting season. The primary purpose of this survey was to collect harvest data from MNA harvesters in Alberta to share with CWS to inform migratory bird conservation.

Project Highlights:

- 598 Citizens participated in the survey for the 2022 harvest season.
 - 5,308 birds, consisting of 30 bird species, were reportedly harvested across Alberta.
 - The most common migratory bird species harvested were Canada goose (1,607), mallard (1,282) and snow goose (764).

Future Work:

- The ECC department will run a survey next winter to examine migratory bird harvests for the 2023 harvest season.
- The ECC department is aiming to expand migratory bird-focused activities to include bird walks, identification workshops, and monitoring activities.

Askîy Challenge Coin Design Contest

In December 2022, the ECC department launched an art contest to design a Métis-inspired commemorative coin to give to Citizens participating in Askîy environmental monitoring and conservation programs to recognize their contributions. Contest participants created a design to best illustrate their interpretation of Métis peoples' connection to the land. Citizens aged 18 to 78 submitted artwork and winners were announced in spring 2023. The grand prize-winning design, *Harmony* by David York, is being produced as a commemorative coin and there will be opportunities for Citizens to obtain coins through Askîy programs by late 2023.

While only a few artworks could be selected as winners, there were many beautiful artworks created by Citizens for the contest. The MNA is also producing a colouring book to share more of these beautiful artworks with the MNA community in a fun and meaningful way.



Askîy Challenge Coin Design
Contest's grand prize-winning design,
Harmony by David York.

Emergency Preparedness and Management

In early February 2023, the ECC department launched the MNA Emergency Preparedness Kit Program, which provided MNA Citizens the opportunity to receive one of 500 emergency preparedness kits. Each kit contained enough supplies to support a household of six for 72 hours, or three days. Supplies included food, water, heat, lighting, shelter, sanitation, and first aid supplies, which are vital in isolated areas with limited access to basic resources. Applications were prioritized from individuals and families in rural or remote communities, and who may be at increased vulnerability, such as seniors, those with small children, and people with disabilities. Those selected were contacted throughout March and kits were shipped out in May and June 2023.

Project Highlights:

- More than 1,600 applications received.
- 500 emergency preparedness kits provided to MNA Citizens.

Future Work:

- The ECC department is assessing the program and securing resources to continue and improve the program.



A sample of emergency kit contents provided to MNA Citizens through the MNA Emergency Preparedness Kit Program.

Environmental Conservation Initiative

The Environmental Conservation Initiative aims to undertake action to protect the lands, waters, and air Métis Citizens rely on across Alberta to practice their culture and traditions. Projects undertaken through this initiative will work in synergy with Askîy, the MNA's Community-Based Environmental Monitoring Initiative to address environmental concerns and provide opportunities for Citizens to become involved in land stewardship.

Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCA) Project

In 2019, the MNA secured funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada to explore the potential development of a Métis-led IPCA in Alberta. In late 2020, the ECC department engaged with MNA Citizens through a series of online engagement sessions and an online survey. Feedback provided from MNA Citizens were used to define the core values to guide the establishment of Métis-led IPCAs in Alberta, including:



ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION



HARVESTING OPPORTUNITY



EDUCATION OUTREACH



RELATIONSHIP BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES



HEALING THE LAND



CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY

A single IPCA cannot sufficiently meet the needs of MNA Citizens living across Alberta. A long-term plan was developed to establish a series of Métis-led IPCAs across Alberta as a part of a conservation network. The first site established in this network would be located near Edmonton and serve as a pilot from which the MNA could develop a management model to be applied to future sites.



Top: This busy muskrat was spotted swimming around the large pond located on the southwest portion of the pilot IPCA site in Lamont County. Photo credit: Jordan York.

Bottom: Red-winged blackbirds can often be spotted belting out songs and foraging for food around the grasses and wetland habitat on the pilot IPCA site. Photo credit: Jordan York.

Project Highlights:

- In August 2022, the MNA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Nature Conservancy of Canada to work in collaboration to advance Indigenous-led conservation in Alberta.
- In May 2023, 158 acres of tame/native grasses and wetland habitat were secured in Lamont County, purchased from Ducks Unlimited Canada, to establish a pilot MNA-led IPCA site.

Future Work:

- Baseline monitoring of the pilot MNA-led IPCA site is being conducted and will inform the development of a management plan.
- The ECC department will explore stewardship and programming opportunities on the site for MNA Citizens.

Native Bee Conservation Program

In the spring of 2022, the ECC department launched the Native Bee Conservation Program to provide MNA Citizens with tools to support conservation of native bee species in Alberta. MNA Citizens received native bee conservation kits, which contained a bee nesting box, an Alberta native wildflower seed pack, and pollinator-focused educational materials provided by the Edmonton & Area Land Trust. By setting up bee nesting boxes and planting native wildflowers, MNA Citizens provided food and shelter for Alberta native bees. In the spring of 2023, MNA ECC expanded the program to double the number of Citizens provided with kits from the previous year.

Project Highlights:

2022

- 529 MNA Citizens registered for the native bee conservation kit prize draw in spring 2022.
- 234 MNA Citizens were provided with native bee conservation kits.
- 121 MNA Citizens reported back on bee nesting box and wildflower use on their properties in a fall 2022 survey.



A bee nesting box an MNA Citizen set up on a post in their yard.
Photo credit: Jamie Rozema-Stinson.

2023

- 946 MNA Citizens registered for the native bee conservation kit prize draw in spring 2023.
- 500 MNA Citizens across Alberta were provided with native bee conservation kits.

Future Work:

- The ECC department will look for opportunities to offer the Native Bee Conservation Program to MNA Citizens next year and explore additional actions Citizens can take to support native bees.

Energy Efficiency and Energy Management Initiative

Reducing the use of energy at MNA facilities is an effective way to reduce carbon emissions. The MNA has implemented an energy management system using in-house and industry-standard tools to effectively monitor energy consumption at MNA and MNA affiliate sites. Significant energy savings have been realized since completing energy retrofits at seven MNA and MNA affiliate buildings, and completing solar retrofits at 37 sites.

For example, retrofits to the Provincial Office (Delia Gray) and Métis Housing (Larry Desmeules Building) offices resulted in the following emissions reductions:

- 34.5% reduction at the Delia Gray Building, Edmonton
 - From 175.9 tonnes of carbon-dioxide equivalent (2020) to 115.2 tonnes of carbon-dioxide equivalent (2022).
- 9.9% reduction at the Larry Desmeules Building, Edmonton
 - From 151.1 tonnes of carbon-dioxide equivalent (2020) to 136.2 tonnes of carbon-dioxide equivalent (2022).

In fall 2022, the MNA acquired a new building primarily for the Youth Programs and Services Department. Since then, the building has been retrofitted with lighting upgrades, heating, ventilation and air conditioning upgrades, and a new efficient water heater, which will result in significant emissions reductions and cost savings.

Future Work:

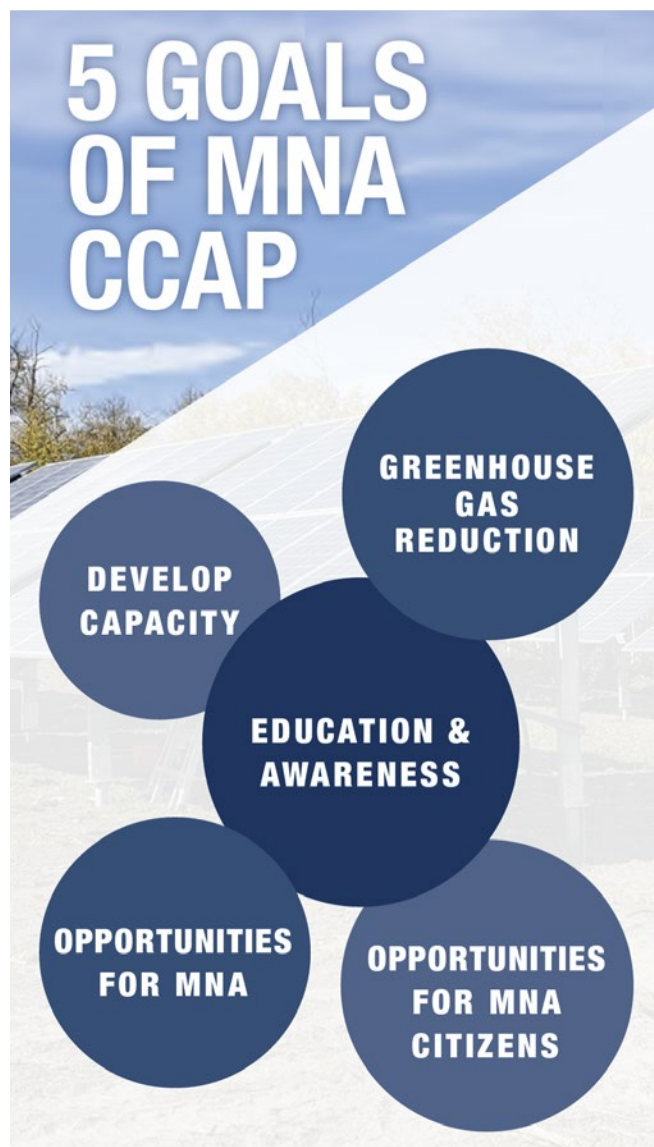
- The MNA continues to work with funders to secure new opportunities in making MNA and affiliate buildings more energy efficient and climate resilient through retrofits.

Citizen Engagement Initiative

The Climate team is working on diverse ways to engage and educate MNA Citizens on the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) and related topics of interest. The engagement initiative is evolving to address current situations and connect with Citizens across Alberta.

Engagement Highlights:

- Over the last year our team engaged over 3,500 MNA Citizens through in person and online events, information sharing initiatives, and various programs. Citizen engagement and feedback continues to drive program planning, delivery, as well as inform policy and decision making.



Keep an eye out for this banner advertising the next online session.

Environment and Climate Change Speaker Spotlight



Speaker
Spotlight

Following the 2022 Sustainability Topic Survey, 276 MNA Citizens shared areas of environmental concern, as well as topics in which they would like to learn more about. This directed the ECC team to launch the Speaker Spotlight, which invites Métis community members and industry professionals to talk about environmental stewardship, sustainability, and climate action from a Métis lens. Several virtual sessions have been completed, covering topics including food security, emergency preparedness, traditional clothing making, international policy, energy efficiency at home, and more.

Over 300 attendees have tuned into sessions and 89 per cent agreed the spotlight helped increase their knowledge of the topic and 90 per cent agreed they felt more empowered to make sustainable actions and choices following the session. Feedback will continue to be gathered and future sessions curated to fit Citizen suggestions and concerns. Each Speaker Spotlight has been recorded and can be found on the MNA website. Stay tuned to the bi-weekly newsletter, *Voyageur Voice*, and social media for upcoming sessions.

Community Garden Project

The community garden planted at the Delia Gray Building (Provincial Office) in Edmonton supports sustainable practices and education. This garden area was designed in partnership with a Métis permaculture consultant, with sustainability and promoting the growth of native plants in mind. The garden has been successfully planted for a third year, and resources are being developed to share knowledge on gardening and growing food.

Future Work:

- The MNA Climate team will keep working on developing the garden's front area to be a centre for education on traditional Métis permaculture growing techniques and plant uses for MNA Citizens and the public.

Promoting Sustainability

The Environment and Climate Change engagement team works to provide information and resources to help inform Citizens when making eco-conscious decisions. Over the last year, the engagement team shared sustainability tips in the MNA bi-weekly newsletter, *Voyageur Voice*, along with several social media posts about waste and emissions reduction, and food security. To equip Citizens with baseline knowledge, a Speaker Spotlight session focused on “Sustainability for Beginners” and shared ways to save money and reduce your environmental footprint. The recording of this session is available online.

The engagement team also held an Earth Day campaign and challenge, encouraging Citizens to clean up litter and share photos. This was done alongside a draw to receive an Earth Day kit filled with reusable products. Earth Day kits were sent out to almost 300 MNA Citizens, with information on how to use each item.

Future Work:

- As we work on outward-facing sustainability, the ECC engagement team is also working to reduce our environmental footprint internally through an ongoing eco-team to support green procurement practices, waste reduction, and energy savings at the MNA Provincial Office.
- Resource sharing and program development will continue to evolve in line with Citizen needs, with an upcoming focus on tackling food security, emergency preparedness, and youth education.

Conclusion and What's Next

The ECC department will continue to investigate and monitor Citizens' environmental concerns under the Askîy initiative. Ongoing monitoring efforts will be used to establish baselined data to help the MNA detect environmental changes and trends. We will also continue our efforts to secure lands for environmental conservation and create opportunities for MNA Citizens to engage in land stewardship and practice culture and traditions.

The ECC department will build upon the initiatives under the Climate Change Action Plan and continue to undertake climate change initiatives and programs aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing Métis involvement and awareness of climate change while creating capacity and economic opportunities for Métis Citizens. The ECC department will continue to collaborate and work on behalf of the MNA and its



Vegetables harvested from the MNA community garden at the Delia Gray Building in 2022. Photo Credit: Ali Greenslade.



Sustainable products included in this year's Earth Day kits.

affiliates to fulfill the mandate from Citizens to act on climate change.

The ECC department will continue engaging with MNA Citizens to hear concerns and gather feedback, which will inform the development of new projects and programs. The ECC department also intends to provide MNA Citizens with the knowledge, tools, and opportunities to adopt sustainable-living practices, reduce their carbon footprint, participate in environmental conservation, and increase awareness of environmental issues and potential impacts.

We encourage Citizens to reach out and provide any comments, questions, or ideas for our team at environment@metis.org or climate@metis.org. ■

An aerial photograph of a vast solar farm. The image shows numerous long, parallel rows of solar panels stretching across a flat, open landscape. The panels are dark blue with a grid pattern. Between the rows of panels, there are narrow paths of dry, brownish ground and patches of green grass. A small, dark-colored vehicle is visible on one of the paths in the upper left quadrant. The overall perspective is from directly above, looking down at the rows of panels.

Creating a Better and More Sustainable Future for the Métis Nation

Environment and Climate Change Department
Leading The Way with Renewable Energy Initiatives



Drone shot of Métis Crossing Solar Panels. Photo credit: Gerardo Ramos.

The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) is taking action against climate change the Métis way – through community and collaboration. Under the MNA Climate Change Action Plan, the Environment and Climate Change Department has been leading the way with its renewable energy initiatives, including the soon-to-be operational 4.86-megawatt solar farm at Métis Crossing.

Since the start of the renewable energy initiative in 2017, the MNA has shown renewable energy is an effective tool for reducing greenhouse gas emissions that also provides opportunities for MNA institutions through its economic value.

The renewable energy initiatives are targeted through two main components: community generation, and microgeneration.

Métis Crossing Solar Project

The Métis Crossing Solar Project (MCSP) is an MNA-owned community-generation solar project located at Métis Crossing. It is a collaboration between the MNA, the Town of Smoky Lake, and Smoky Lake County. The solar farm has been designed to fit in with the ongoing development of Métis Crossing and is a key initiative under the MNA Climate Change Action Plan. MCSP will serve as a model for collaboration and partnership while respecting Métis governance, simultaneously uplifting the community partners and upholding Métis traditional values.

The 4.86 megawatt alternating-current solar facility will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and generate economic and community benefits for the community partners. The project will result in emissions reductions of approximately 4,700 tonnes of carbon-dioxide equivalent per year, comparable to powering 1,200 Alberta homes. The project will contribute to the Town of Smoky Lake and Smoky Lake County through tax revenue, local economic activity, and contributions to a local community development fund.

Construction of the solar project began in the fall of 2022 with a target completion date of fall 2023.



Métis Crossing Solar Project Aerial View, May 2023. Photo credit: Gerardo Ramos.

Solar Retrofits at MNA Buildings

The MNA's current microgeneration solar portfolio has a capacity of 530-kilowatt direct current at 37 sites across Alberta including at MNA and MNA affiliate offices, housing units, a campground, and others. The sites have the capacity to produce enough energy annually to offset 300 tonnes of carbon-dioxide equivalent.

The MNA is continuously exploring opportunities and financial mechanisms to expand the current portfolio of microgeneration solar systems to offset the carbon emissions of the MNA and MNA affiliates' growing portfolio of buildings.

In January 2023, the MNA partnered with a Bachelor of Technology capstone project team from the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT). The students created a tool that could be used to evaluate Métis Housing sites for their potential to be retrofitted with a solar photovoltaic system, considering the financial impact, solar energy potential, and structural factors such as the condition of the roof.

The MNA will utilize the tool created by the NAIT Bachelor of Technology capstone team to identify ideal locations for the expansion of the microgeneration initiative. ■

Intergovernmental Relations & Economic Development

Intergovernmental Relations

It has been another busy year for the Métis Nation of Alberta, and the Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Department has felt it. We have grown again, adding a Manager of Justice Initiatives to oversee and advance the development of our MNA Justice Strategy. We are also seeking to further grow to support the work coming in the very near future. IGR supports all departments in their engagements with governments and other stakeholders (i.e. community-based organizations) to ensure the rights and recognition of our role as the government of the Métis Nation within Alberta is made apparent, maintained, and advanced. A large part of the job of our staff, and all MNA staff, is educating others on who we are, what we do, and the importance of the Métis. Here are some of the specific achievements we have witnessed over the past year.

Federal Relationships

Since April 2017, the Métis Nation and Canada have had a Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (PBM). This is a process established government to government to identify joint priorities, co-develop policy, and monitor progress in advancing reconciliation between the Métis Nation and the Government of Canada. It is through this process that we have secured funding for our housing programs, early learning and childcare, and post-secondary education, and it is the way we will secure resources for other priorities of the Métis Nation.

IGR supports the PBM process throughout its path. The PBM requires support of our elected leaders to build the case for securing necessary resources for the Métis Nation's key priorities and culminates annually with a meeting between the Prime Minister and cabinet and our elected leaders. The priorities for the coming year(s) are then actioned by support staff. We have made some progress in the areas of health, economic development, fiscal relations, and languages, but there remains work to be done.

We have worked in the development of the updated self-government agreement signed in February 2023 with Canada and continue to work to advance that agreement. We also support the negotiation process with the federal government. On June 21, 2023, we saw the self-government legislation identified within the agreement tabled in Parliament, which is a major milestone we should all celebrate. This is the first time anything like this has been accomplished.

IGR works to implement the MNA/Government of Canada Framework Agreement for Advancing Reconciliation, signed in 2017. While we have witnessed some outcomes from the framework agreement, like the national park passes and the self-government agreement, there remain key items that are outstanding, like establishing a claims process to settle outstanding claims against the Crown, including scrip. We have made some progress but there remains much more work to be done to fulfill this framework agreement.

Provincial Relationships

IGR works to advance the 10-year framework agreement between the MNA and the Government of Alberta. The Health, and Children and Family Services sub-tables flow from this agreement, and we look to build similar tables to work on other MNA priorities. The past few years have been difficult for the province, and the country, with emergency situations arising what seems to be constantly since 2020, but we continue to try to build on past successes and find new and innovative ways to move our priorities forward. We will continue to try to build relationships and inroads that will support the MNA in moving us all forward.

UNDRIP

On June 21, 2021, the UNDRIP Act (also called the United Nations Declaration Act, “UNDA”) received Royal Assent. The Act provides a roadmap for the Government of Canada and Indigenous peoples to work together to implement the Declaration. It directs Canada to take measures to ensure federal laws are consistent with the Declaration, table annual reports on progress, and develop an action plan for implementing the Act. The UNDA Action Plan was tabled in Parliament on June 21, 2023. The Plan includes 181 measures that reflect the priorities of Indigenous peoples across Canada and is meant to contribute to achieving the objectives of the UN Declaration. The Action Plan will continue to evolve and is the document that guides the way forward for this work.

The IGR team, with the Métis National Council (MNC) and other Governing Members, have been working with Justice Canada on the action plan, reviewing annual reports, and ensuring consistency of laws. Many meetings were held in a very short period, an average of three meetings a week to build and inform the development of the draft action plan. While we are not completely satisfied with the end product, the plan is broad enough in scope to allow for more specific actions during the implementation phase.

The plan was tabled in Parliament June 21, 2023, and now will need to be implemented. This means much more work coming to ensure the needs of the Métis Nation within Alberta are being considered and supported. This is no small task given the broad nature of the United Nations Declaration, and we need to hold government accountable to the obligations they have committed to by adopting the Declaration and the Action Plan.

Languages

The IGR team has been moving this file forward with the rest of the Governing Members of the MNC and its staff. As the government of the Métis Nation within Alberta, we have been working with Heritage Canada to secure dedicated long-term sustainable funding for Métis language programs and initiatives to support the development of relevant revitalization, promotion, and preservation initiatives for Métis languages in Alberta. Previously, funding for language revitalization was issued through the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages, which required submitting a proposal for review, and being issued a decision as to whether it should be funded. The new model recognizes the role the MNA plays on behalf the Métis Nation within Alberta by providing dedicated funding for five years for us to develop strong capacity to deliver. While departments within the MNA have been successful in accessing funding in the past and have done amazing work in languages, this new model will ensure long-term funding for language programs for Alberta Métis.

As well as planning to grow language development capacity at the MNA, we are also supporting Rupertsland Institute in the good work they are already doing in the language revitalization space. We plan to build capacity in our communities to create spaces for people to learn, improve, or just use their language. It is in this way we can build the number of speakers in our community to better ensure the language is part of all we do. We will continue to work with MNC, the rest of the Governing Members, and Heritage Canada in promoting Métis language revitalization and preservation.

Métis Artist Collective

At the 2022 Annual General Assembly, an ordinary resolution was passed to create a Métis artist collective to support Métis artists. Since then, the MNA has created a Métis artist collective to support Métis artists and provide opportunities for professional growth and for new artists to enter the field.

The collective has hosted two Métis Markets; one in November of 2022 and the other in May 2023. Both markets were extremely successful for the artists and we received overwhelmingly positive feedback from vendors. The Métis Markets were held at Kingsway Mall in Edmonton, who has been extremely supportive. The November event saw many vendors sell out of product and included a display of the artwork from the MNA Provincial Office, jiggers, and music. At the Métis Spring Market, we were able to bring in multiple art forms such as visual art, jigging, fiddle playing, and singing.



Spring Métis Market

We hope to hold markets outside of Edmonton using the same methods. The MNA will continue to support the collective in hosting the Métis Markets including the next market set for November 2023. We hope to grow the range of art forms within the group.

We are also working to build a marketplace for Métis artists and a space the collective may use. We have secured a space in the Renaissance Tower in downtown Edmonton to promote Métis art in Alberta and for Métis artists to collaborate, gather, and learn with each other as well as produce art. The new marketplace is planned for launch during Métis Week 2023.

Knowledge of Southern Alberta

The MNA has accessed the Government of Canada Museum Assistance Program via Heritage Canada to support the development of a set of travelling Augmented Reality posters to showcase the vibrant history of the Métis in southern Alberta. This history is often ignored by governments and Albertans yet is another integral part of Métis history in Canada. We hope this project will be a fun and interactive way for all Albertans to learn about the Métis in the southern part of this province.

Augmented reality is an interactive experience that combines the real world and computer-generated content. To do this, the MNA contracted Know History to assist us in developing an interpretive plan to guide the content of the posters and develop the final product. While developing the interpretive plan,

the MNA worked with Know History and Region 3 to conduct an engagement with key knowledge holders in southern Alberta. Based on the information provided at this engagement, we have created an interpretive plan model. The MNA has continued to support Know History in connecting with key knowledge holders in designing the augmented reality posters to display the rich Métis history that exists within southern Alberta. The augmented reality posters are estimated to be completed by 2025.

MNA Justice Strategy

The overrepresentation and systemic discrimination of Indigenous people, including the Métis, in the Canadian justice system is well documented and has received high level attention. According to a 2020 report by Dr. Ivan Zinger, Correctional Investigator of Canada, both federal prisons in Edmonton have a population that is more than 50 per cent Indigenous.

In response to this issue and to an ordinary resolution put forward by a Métis Citizen at the 2021 AGA, the MNA hired a Métis Justice Advocate (MJA) in March 2022 to support Métis Albertans involved in the justice system, and a Justice Initiatives Manager (JIM) in October 2022 to develop a Métis Justice Strategy (MJS) that is culturally appropriate and informed by Métis ways of knowing and healing, including recommendations for action to address the overrepresentation of Métis people in the Canadian justice system.

From April 17 to June 3, 2023, the IGR team facilitated nine community engagement sessions in Regions 1-6 and one provincial online session with Métis Citizens. The information gathered from the MJS engagements will also inform the Indigenous Justice Strategy, currently being developed by the Government of Canada.

Along with the MJS initiative, the MJA and JIM continue to engage and establish working relationships with community stakeholders such as:

- Creating Hope Society
- John Howard Society
- Inclusion Alberta
- Native Counselling Services of Alberta
- EPO Duty Counsel at Legal Aid Alberta
- Corrections Canada
- Correctional Services (Alberta)
- Parole Board of Canada
- Edmonton Police Service
- Alberta RCMP – Indigenous Policing Services
- Alberta Justice – Indigenous Policy & Services
- Edmonton Community Legal Centre
- University of Alberta – Student Legal Services
- Whitecourt & District Public Library
- Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
- Alberta Community Corrections (Probation)

Economic Development

Over the past year we have witnessed a renewed energy in advancing economic development at the national level with the Métis National Council. In the fall of 2022, the Métis Nation Technical Committee on Economic Development (MNTCED) was created, led by MNC. Meetings are held every other month with participants from the four governing members and our respective capital corporations.

Through this table, we have identified key principles to guide our work. These principles are:

- Non-Métis governments at all levels need to recognize that Métis are section 35 rights-holders.
- Métis are a Nation; Non-Métis governments need to respect nation-to-nation relationships.

- Non-Métis governments need to provide distinctions-based funding that meets the needs of Métis.
- All economic development initiatives need to improve the socio-economic conditions of Métis people and create wealth within the Métis Nation.

On October 27, 2022, the Métis Nation General Assembly unanimously adopted the following Economic Development priorities for the 2022 meeting of the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism, with particular attention paid to the rights and special needs of Métis Elders, women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities.

1. *Build Métis economic institutions:* Canada increase capacity support and tools to build Métis economic institutions and achieve sustainable Métis economic self-determination.
2. *Increase federal procurement from Métis-owned businesses:* Canada achieve target of 1.69 per cent of the value of federal procurement from Métis-owned businesses by the end of 2024.
3. *Increase capital for Métis enterprises:* Canada increase capital to drive Métis-owned businesses, Métis ownership in major projects, and investments in Métis community-owned entities.
4. *Respect for Métis governments:* Canada recognize the authority of Métis governments to certify Métis businesses as owned by Métis Citizens and protect and defend Métis intellectual property.
5. *Increase trade and export opportunities for the Métis Nation:* Canada improve trade policy capacity for Métis governments and export opportunities for the Métis Nation including Métis-owned businesses.
6. *Complete adoption of a distinctions-based approach to policymaking and program delivery:* Canada ensure all economic development initiatives be co-developed with the Métis Nation and provide funding to support the policy development and participation of the Métis Nation.

While we have not seen new investments specific to the Métis Nation since 2020, we continue to press this priority with governments and find ways to benefit Métis Nation Citizens in Alberta and our government.



Alberta MétisWorks

www.AlbertaMétisWorks.ca

November 2022 saw another milestone for Alberta MétisWorks (AMW), as the 250th business was approved and registered on the directory. As of this writing, the directory has 257 verified Métis-owned businesses listed.

Marketing the tool to industry has built several business-to-business relationships, mainly in the oil and gas industry. Industry continues to actively access AMW to seek out Métis contractors where they have project opportunities. AMW has also connected businesses to learning opportunities through Apeetogosan, Business Link, the Government of Alberta, and the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC). AMW is also being used to share information about employment opportunities, and grant and funding programs to help the business community grow and succeed.

As part of the MNA's business engagement priorities, we aim to connect with each business at least once per year. Métis business owners and community members continue to guide program development through continued feedback and engagement.

We have also been collaborating with SaskMétisWorks, which was launched in 2022 by the Saskatchewan Métis Economic Development Corporation (SMEDCO), sharing best practices and marketing efforts. It is in these ways we are able to support each other in succeeding.

We are continuing to explore ways to build the capabilities of this database to become a source of opportunities for Métis-owned businesses in Alberta and to provide training and education opportunities to help businesses stay competitive and be successful.

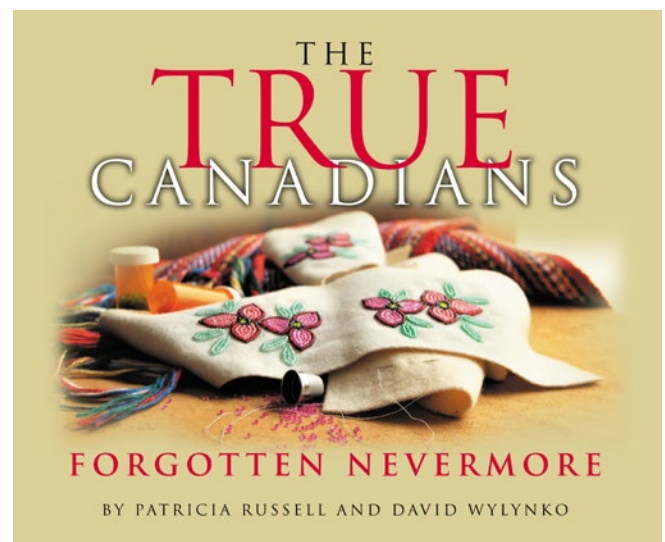
The True Canadians: Forgotten Nevermore

The Economic Development team has been administering the distribution of the MNA's recently published book, *The True Canadians: Forgotten Nevermore*, to Citizens. This book was written to highlight the progress and

struggles of the MNA in attaining recognition of our right to self-govern and self-determine as Indigenous people in Canada.

We had earmarked 4,000 copies for distribution to MNA Citizens and 1,000 copies for public distribution. Public distribution was taken on in partnership with Sandhill Book Distributors to distribute books to various bookstores, including Audrey's Books in Edmonton, Chapter's outlets across western Canada, and as an online purchase option.

Distribution to Citizens began at the Youth and Seniors Gathering Artisan Market on February 10, 2023, with over 150 Citizens receiving the first copies. This was followed by an online submission form on the MNA website, number, and email to ensure that every Citizen who wanted a copy could find a way to get one. Copies were mailed out upon request, and by the end of March 2023, we had distributed 2,870 copies to Citizens.



Summary

IGR looks forward to the coming year and the changes that will take place. Regardless of the changing structures and standing, we will continue to work hard for the Métis Nation in advancing our priorities at all levels of government. ■

Métis Identification and Registry Systems

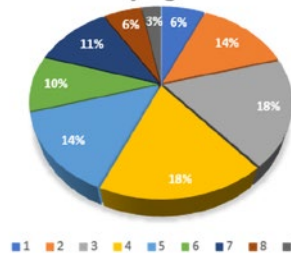
Registry

The Registry Department is committed to maintaining its integrity to identify Métis in Alberta, while providing consistent support and service to its Citizens and MNA applicants. It was a very busy year for Registry operations as we received a total of 7,519 applications by way of in-office, email, mail, or registry sessions. During this same period, we issued citizenship to over 7,000 applicants. These are the largest totals we have seen to date, in a fiscal year, for total applications and citizenship issued. Total citizenship reached 60,056 by March 31, 2023.

Registry sessions resumed throughout the province in April 2022, and we focused on serving our applicants by committing to travel to each region monthly to facilitate application intake. Over the course of the fiscal year, we planned and facilitated a total of 98 sessions, and took in a total of 1,682 citizenship applications from these events alone. Our Registry team played an integral part in this success and provided in-person assistance to applicants starting the application process. Our team also provided extended hours intake (two Saturdays per month, and weekday evening hours) to allow more flexibility for those applying in person at the Provincial Office. This was well received by the community and something that we will be continuing in 2023/2024.

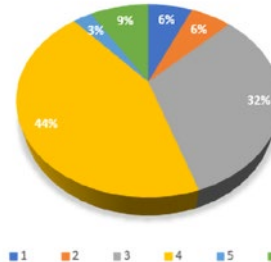
We also looked at new opportunities to meet the needs of the Métis community and source new citizenship applications. We focused on correctional centres and

Provincial Citizenship by Age



Provincial Citizenship by Age	
Age 0-9	3928
Age 10-19	8426
Age 20-29	10996
Age 30-39	10546
Age 40-49	8334
Age 50-59	5739
Age 60-69	6867
Age 70-79	3469
Age 80+	1710
Total	60015

Citizenship by Region



Citizenship by Region	
Region 1	3928
Region 2	3616
Region 3	19373
Region 4	26223
Region 5	1681
Region 6	5194
Total	60015



Youth applicant.



Three-generational family applying for citizenship.

contacted both the Edmonton Remand Centre as well as the Pê Sâkâstêw Centre, facilitating presentations and providing information to their Parole Officers and Indigenous Liaisons. This was to create greater understanding of what the citizenship process involved, and in order to identify Métis residents in the facilities who would benefit from programming/assistance while transitioning out of the correctional institutions.

Our continued focus on citizenship verification for both MNA affiliates, as well as departments within the MNA, provided us with an opportunity to strengthen the integrity of the citizenship database through address verification. Verifications for programming such as Gear Up for School, Harvester Relief, National Parks Pass, Youth and Family Camps, Emergency Response Kits, Food Sovereignty, and Sports and Rec to name a few, and also, ongoing support to Rupertsland, MétisWorks, and Métis Housing. Our team was able to confirm and/or update the addresses for those applying for programming and initiatives. This resulted in 13,046 individual address verifications during the 2022/2023 year.

Conclusion and What's Next

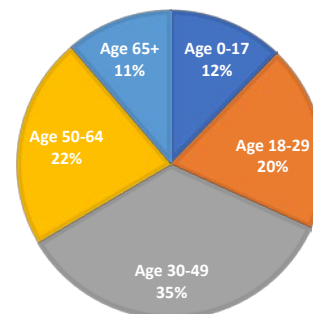
We look forward to continuing to serve our applicants and Citizens in the province at both a local and regional level. We will continue to promote, identify, and register MNA Citizens and harvesters. Our ongoing focus remains on reducing the application timeframe and increasing citizenship year over year.

Harvesting

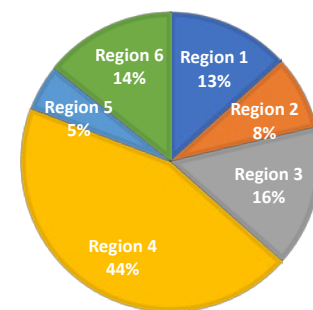
The Harvesting team has placed continued focus on creating efficiency in the harvesting card process to ensure we are sending out cards quickly to qualified harvesters. We have assisted our Citizens to update their Alberta RELM accounts, so they can print off their domestic fishing license (DFL). In addition, we facilitated another round of the Harvester Relief Support (HRS) Program, which benefited MNA-approved harvesters by assisting with costs surrounding harvesting.

The MNA accepted the first harvester applications on September 1, 2019. To date, the MNA has over 10,000 MNA-approved harvesters, of which 12.1 per cent are youth aged 0-17 and 11.1 per cent are over age 65. It is interesting to note that 57.7 per cent are male and 42.3 per cent are female. We continue to receive on average 250-300 harvester applications per month.

HARVESTERS BY AGE RANGE



REGIONAL HARVESTING NUMBERS BREAKDOWN



Alberta RELM

The Harvesting department is continually updating Citizens' Alberta RELM accounts. During this process, an MNA harvester's status is changed on their Alberta RELM account to "Recognized Métis Harvester." This means that harvesters no longer need to go to the Fish and Wildlife Office to get their account updated as we can complete this task in house.



Top: Finishing up setting the gill net at Sturgeon Lake to the backdrop of a beautiful sunset.

Left: Harvesting Manager Craig Letendre lines up the prairie jigger and sends it under the ice at Cold Lake. Joey Blackman, Keith Grant, and Brett Kelln in the background.

Right Middle: Region 2 New Dawn Representative Paulette Dahlseide is pretty excited about one of the fish caught in the gill net out at Cold Lake, a 5-lb. lake trout.

Right Bottom: Students Ireland Knox, Maxxam Johnson, Tyawna Edmonds, and Maddie Aldridge with the big catch from Sturgeon Lake.



*Fun fact: The prairie
jigger was actually a
Métis invention.*

Harvester Relief Support Program

The Harvester Relief Support Program was extremely successful in 2023. It provided MNA-approved harvesters with a maximum \$200 reimbursement for many of their harvesting needs such as ammunition, butchering costs, deep freezers, fishing equipment, etc. In total, we were able to help over 550 MNA-approved harvesters.

Askîy Fish Health Study

Once again, this past winter, the Harvesting department worked alongside the Environment team for the Askîy Fish Health study. Gill nets were set at four different lakes across Alberta (Calling Lake, Lesser Slave Lake, Sturgeon Lake, and Pigeon Lake). The Environment team held an essay contest whereby Métis university students could submit an essay that spoke about their Métis connections and what it would mean for them to take part in the fish study. Four Métis students were chosen to join the project and learn all about setting gill nets and all other aspects of fishing. At the end of the week, after learning about setting nets, the students then put all their knowledge to the test by setting the nets that day.

The project was a huge success and the MNA collected data pertaining to the provincial lakes and overall fish health. The Environment department was able to secure funding to have the fish sent and tested for a variety of different things such as mercury levels.

Frosty Reels Family Camp

In the spring, our Harvesting team assisted the Children and Family Services department in facilitating the Frosty Reels Family Camp. These camps ran on multiple weekends at Camp Wohelo on the north shore of Pigeon Lake. A total of 32 families were able to come out and stay in a cabin for the weekend and enjoy the great outdoors.

Each family member who attended received an ice fishing rod and reel, ice fishing bucket, and lures to keep. In addition, they were able to fish at Pigeon Lake on Saturday and try out their new rods on the ice. Families were also able to see and learn how a gill net was traditionally set through the ice using the “prairie jigger,” which was originally designed by a Métis fisherman in the early 1900s. Everyone was then treated to a fresh fish and chips feast right out on the ice.

We would like to take this opportunity to recognize all the Knowledge Holders and MNA harvesters who helped with the fish study and the family camps – your knowledge and assistance are much appreciated.

New Dawn Catch-Clean-Cook Cultural Fishing Day

In partnership with New Dawn Métis Women’s Society, we held the first New Dawn Catch-Clean-Cook Cultural Fishing Day. The Harvesting department took 15 New Dawn ladies from Region 2 out on Cold Lake.

When we first arrived on the ice, we went through some ice safety, then proceeded to set a gill net, teaching all the aspects involved with setting a gill net under the ice, such as running the prairie jigger, and pulling the net under the ice. We left the net in for the duration we were out there, approximately 3-4 hours. We caught one 5-lb. lake trout as well as three whitefish, so we didn’t get skunked. It was a very successful day.

For the “Catch” aspect of Catch-Clean-Cook, we gave all the ladies fishing gear to go out fishing on their own: a rod and reel, some lures, and a fishing bucket, as well as a tutorial on how to tie on their lures. For “Clean,” we gave the ladies a pack of filleting knives and we also gave a filleting demonstration on the lake. For “Cook,” we gave them a cast iron frying pan so that they could cook their fish. We later had a fish and chips feast right out on the ice with fresh walleye, whitefish, and home cut French fries. This was a big hit.

Conclusion and What’s Next

In the upcoming fiscal year, we are looking into more New Dawn fishing days with different regions. We are also interested in taking out a group of MNA-approved harvesters onto the land to do land-based learning, like animal tracking and looking to see what the animals are eating, such as willow tips.

The Harvesting team is also looking to build a reporting system so that MNA harvesters can report what animals, birds and fish they have harvested. This information will be kept by the MNA for conservation purposes. Métis have always been conservation minded; not hunting in the spring when the animals are calving, and not shooting cows so not to disturb the reproductive cycle of the animals. ■

Self-Government Department

The word “democracy” comes from two Greek words: *Demos* meaning people and *Kratia* meaning rule. The idea that the people should rule themselves. Otipemisiwak means “the people who govern themselves.” We as Métis are moving towards reclaiming our own democracy and our rights to self-govern.

In August 2022, the 94th Annual General Assembly (AGA) was held in Calgary. At the 2022 AGA, the MNA Constitution Commission (MNACC) presented the third draft of a Constitution for the Métis Nation within Alberta, following more than two years of development and consultation. The AGA decided to put the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution to a province-wide vote of MNA Citizens, which was overwhelmingly passed. To support that vote and the MNA's journey to self-government as an Indigenous nation, we needed to create the Self-Government Department.

Constitution Ratification Vote

Leading up to the ratification vote in November 2022, the Self-Government Department and its partners were tasked with engaging Citizens in an informed, reliable, and equitable vote. To achieve this, communications were created to encourage Citizens to attend in-person sessions to better understand the Constitution. Informational videos and other content were also created to explain complex legal concepts. To share these resources, a new website was launched to make it easy for Citizens to access the latest information in one location: www.mnaconstitution.com



AGA 2022 booth. Photo Credit: Leigh Jardine.

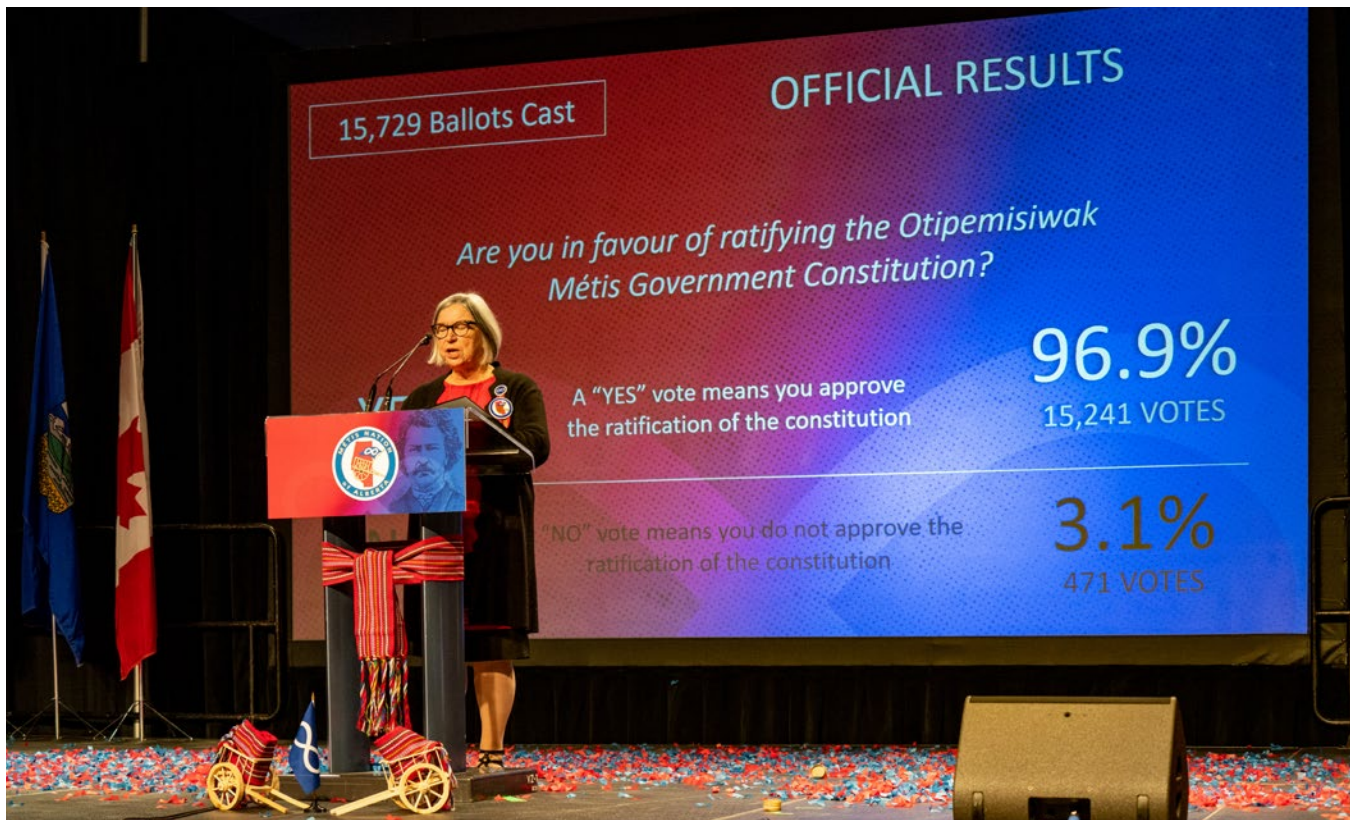
To engage Citizens of the MNA, materials were created to build awareness surrounding the upcoming vote and the significance of ratifying the Constitution. These were distributed through a variety of methods, including mail, text messages, social media posts, and public signage.

Implementing a range of communications ensured that as many Citizens as possible were aware of and excited for the upcoming vote.

Through the month of October, the MNA's Constitution Commission organized 11 Information Sessions across the province of Alberta, allowing Citizens to make informed decisions about the ratification process.

The Ratification Vote

In November 2022, the Self-Government Department supported the Métis Nation of Alberta in conducting the largest Indigenous ratification vote in Canadian history. Citizens over the age of 16 were able to cast a vote in support of or against the ratification of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution. This ratification was the



Ratification vote results announcement.

culmination of years of consultation and engagement with Métis Citizens to create the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution.

To ensure a fair and transparent voting process, Provincial Council adopted a set of voting guidelines and appointed Del Graff as Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) for the province-wide vote in November. The Self-Government Department supported CEO Del Graff in developing a strategy that would make voting as accessible as possible; with options for mail-in, in-person, and online voting.

During the week of November 14, 2022, MNA Citizens gathered to celebrate their culture, traditions, and way of life at Métis Week events across the province in each Region. The purpose of these events was to celebrate Métis Week and amplify efforts for Citizens to participate in voting. To keep the momentum of the Constitution going, the Self-Government Department travelled to these events, providing information and materials to Citizens about the vote.

The Constitution's ratification voting process spanned the entire month of November, guaranteeing maximum participation. To support in-person voting, over 40 voting locations across Alberta were opened, with at least two locations per Region. Mail-in ballots and information on how to vote was shared with every MNA Citizen over the age of 16. Online voting was available 24/7 for the entirety

of the voting period. Additionally, Citizens were able to make use of the contact centre that was established to answer questions and update Citizen information during the voting period.

Ratification Vote Results

After voting closed on November 30, the ballots were received by the Chief Electoral Officer and counting commenced in the early morning of December 1. The results were tallied and officially announced the evening of December 1, 2022 during a gala at the Edmonton Expo Centre. With over 15,000 MNA Citizens voting, this represented the largest Indigenous self-government vote in Canadian history. Of the Citizens that voted, an overwhelming 96.9% voted 'yes' to ratifying the Constitution.

This Ratification Vote was an essential step towards self-government. The Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution opens doors with both Canada and Alberta, including: a new fiscal relationship with Canada to provide Métis-designed supports to Citizens in health, housing, language, education, training, economic development, and justice; and, improve the services the MNA provides to Métis in Alberta including mental health, supporting

those with disabilities, delivering culturally appropriate child and family services, and caring for Elders when they can no longer take care of themselves.

The Ratification Vote was a significant milestone for the Self-Government Department and set in motion the work the department would continue to do in the following months to progress the transition to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Transition Committee

The Transition Committee is an independent, neutral, and non-political advisory body. The Transition Committee was established with representation across the province and is comprised of 16 members: a Chair, a Vice Chair, two appointed representatives from each MNA Region, and two youth representatives.

The mandate of the Transition Committee was first established, as directed by a 2021 Annual General Assembly (AGA) resolution, to work with Provincial, Regional, and Local Councils to transition from the Métis Nation of Alberta Association under the Province of Alberta's *Societies Act* to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. To achieve this, the Transition Committee is developing a plan that will help transition:

- Regional and Local Councils' assets, contracts, agreements, and interests to District Councils while ensuring ongoing local and/or regional benefit and control of any currently held interests and assets.
- MNA affiliated entities such as Métis Crossing, Rupertsland Institute, or Métis Housing Corporation to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

The Transition Committee has been working with the MNA, Provincial Council, the Laws Group, Regions, and

Locals to develop the Transition Plan. Initial Information Sessions were hosted in each region during May 2023 to gain Citizen feedback and insight. This information will be leveraged to develop a Transition Plan that will inform the MNA on the best path forward as it relates to transition.

The Transition Committee holds regular Transition Committee meetings to further progress towards the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. Since February 2023, the Self-Government Department has supported the Transition Committee in holding seven meetings to review administrative items, discuss new business and progress to date, and identify next steps and action items going forward.



Peace River Info Session. Photo Credit: Leigh Jardine.

Information Sessions

Throughout the month of May 2023, the Self-Government Department prepared informational materials and travelled countless kilometres to support the Transition Committee in hosting Information Sessions in each region at the following locations:

- Region 1 Fort McMurray
- Region 2 Lloydminster
- Region 3 Calgary
- Region 4 Edmonton
- Region 5 Slave Lake
- Region 6 Peace River

The purpose of the Information Sessions was to inform Citizens, introduce the Transition Committee, and outline the actions that will be taken in the coming months to prepare for the transition to self-government. Citizens also asked questions about the transition and shared their feedback on the information provided.



Transition Committee. Photo Credit: Maren Jensen-Joyce.



Signing of the Métis Nation within Alberta Government Recognition and Self-Government Implementation Agreement (MGRSIA).

A variety of resources were produced and shared by the Self-Government Department for Citizens to use. These included:

- **Transition Brochure:** outlines the journey to ratify the Constitution and the road ahead.
- **Maps Brochure:** outlines the journey to reach the current District Map.
- **District Atlas:** outlines the new Districts.
- **Transition Infographic one pager:** outlines who is involved in transition.
- **Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution:** the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution as ratified by the Citizens of the Métis Nation within Alberta in November 2022.

More than 500 MNA Citizens attended the Information Sessions to learn more about the transition and additional Information Sessions will be scheduled for those who were unable to attend.

Signing of the MGRSIA

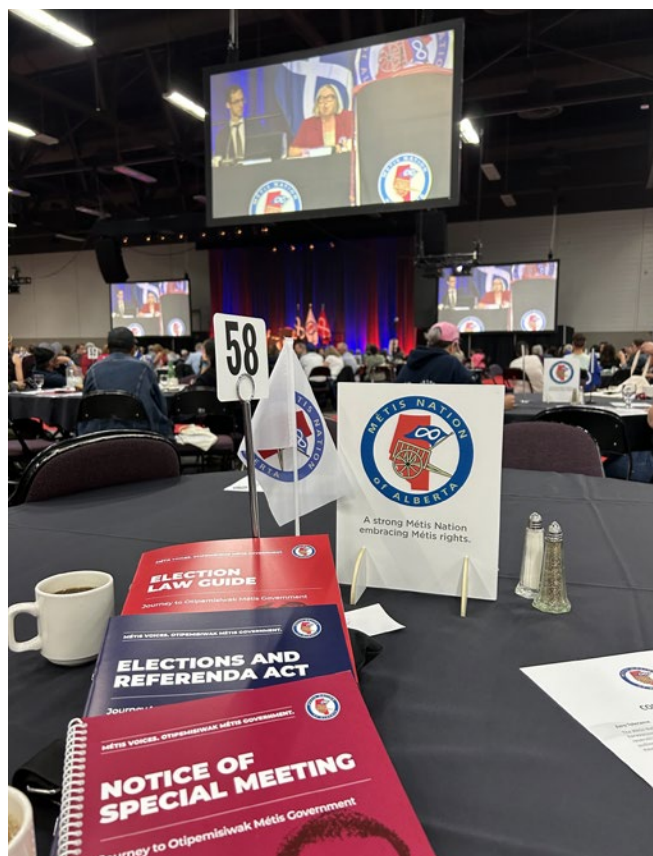
Building on previous self-government agreements and formal negotiations, the MNA signed in February 2023 a new agreement with Canada, the *Métis Nation within Alberta Government Recognition and Self-Government Implementation Agreement*. The federal government now recognizes the MNA as the Indigenous government representing our Citizens and their Métis communities within Alberta. The agreement also recognizes that the MNA, as a Métis government, has law-making powers

and authority over our citizenship, elections, governance operations as well as Métis child and family services. The agreement commits the federal government to introduce recognition legislation into Parliament to anchor our nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship. Bill C-53 was introduced into the House of Commons in June 2023 and was passed by unanimous consent through Second Reading. In fall 2023, it will be reviewed by the House of Commons Standing Committee (INAN). This legislation will ensure that even as Canadian governments come and go, the recognition of our Métis self-government here in Alberta will remain protected. We will continue to work hard to secure its swift passage.

Development of Laws

Leading up to the first election under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, there are new laws that must be passed to replace current MNA bylaws where applicable, to support the transition to self-government under the Constitution.

The laws required under the Constitution will be developed by the Laws Group with assistance by the Self-Government Department and other relevant MNA departments as required. The members of the Laws Group are lawyers and subject matter experts with a wide range of knowledge and skillsets required to develop laws, policies, and other documents, and provide advice to assist. The Laws Group will work with Provincial Council, the Self-Government Department, and other MNA stakeholders to ensure the laws respond to the needs of the future Otipemisiwak Métis Government.



Election Law

One of the laws developed by the Laws Group is the Election and Referenda Act (Election Law). The new Election Law builds off the existing MNA bylaws, with changes made to implement the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution and to integrate leading practices used during the Constitution Ratification Vote and in other similar jurisdictions.

The Election Law will have been adopted prior to the General Election in September so it can be held according to the new Election Law. To advance the Election Law, Citizens were provided the opportunity to share feedback online and at the Information Sessions. All feedback received from Citizens was considered by the Laws Group, and changes were made to the Election Law as appropriate. Afterwards, the Provincial Council was asked to adopt the Election Law as one of the key laws required for transition to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Special Meeting

On May 27, 2023, a Special Meeting was called to rescind and replace the objects of the Métis Nation of Alberta, as well as the existing bylaws of the Association. The

replacement of these existing bylaws with new bylaws enables the MNA's transition to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government under the Constitution.

The Self-Government Department provided assistance in advance of, and on the day of the Special Meeting, including logistics, administration, and management of the Special Meeting, as well as the vote on the Special Meeting resolutions. To enable accessibility to the Special Meeting and ensure all Citizens had the opportunity to have their voices heard, the Self-Government Department offered Special Meeting attendance both in-person and virtually.

At the Special Meeting, 97.7% of MNA Citizens voted 'yes' in support of the resolution. With approximately 750 Citizens in attendance both in-person and virtually, the result was a show of confidence in the continued progress towards self-government and was a key step in enabling the transition to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government in September.

Conclusion & What's Next

While significant progress has been made towards reaching self-government, there is still work to be done. In the coming months, the Self-Government Department will continue to support transitioning to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. This includes:

- **General Election:** The Self-Government Department will support in preparing for and executing the first General Election under the new Constitution. This General Election will serve as the coming into force of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, as well as the mechanism for electing new representatives.
- **Transition Plan:** The Self-Government Department will continue supporting the Transition Committee in progressing the Transition Plan. Once the Transition Plan has been developed, engagement sessions will be held with Citizens to gain feedback. The Transition Plan will then be revised to include Citizen feedback as appropriate.
- **Citizen Engagement:** The Self-Government Department will support the Transition Committee in continuing to share information with Citizens about the development of the Transition Plan and other important actions being taken to progress the MNA to self-government. Engagement sessions will be hosted, and online resources will be shared to allow Citizens to have their voice heard. For more information on the work being done as we transition to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, visit: www.mnaconstitution.com/learn_more ■

1) JUNE 2019: SIGNING THE AGREEMENT

The MNA signed a historic Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement with the Government of Canada.



2) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: 3 YEARS

19 community gatherings in 6 MNA regions to gain feedback to inform the drafting of the Constitution.



4) NOVEMBER 2022: CONSTITUTION RATIFICATION

Of those who voted an overwhelming 96.9% of MNA Citizens voted 'yes' to ratifying the Constitution.



3) AUGUST 2022: FINAL DRAFT OF THE CONSTITUTION

Presented to Citizens at the MNA's Annual General Assembly. Citizens voted to proceed with a province-wide Ratification Vote.



5) FEBRUARY 2023: SIGNING A NEW AGREEMENT

The MNA signed a new agreement with Canada- Métis Nation within Alberta Government Recognition and Self-Government Implementation.



6) WHAT'S NEXT: TIMELINE TO THE OTIPEMISIWAK MÉTIS GOVERNMENT

- Information sessions with MNA Citizens
- Engagement with MNA Regions and Locals
- The passage of Métis Laws
- Preparation for an election in September
- Development of a Transition Plan



A New Otipemisiwak Métis Government

RED = DONE
BLUE = UNDERWAY

Truth & Reconciliation

The Métis Nation of Alberta's (MNA) Truth and Reconciliation Department (TRC) is committed to serving and supporting our Métis residential school Survivors and intergenerational Survivors. We are here to listen, build trusting relationships, share, and gather to have their voices heard. We also work towards creating initiatives stemming from those conversations to promote and foster healing. We continue to document stories from our Survivors who wish to share about Alberta's residential schools, day schools, and other institutions that have impacted our Métis Citizens.

We are governed by an advisory committee that consists of residential school Survivors. We also work to create outside partnerships with those who wish to learn more about truth and reconciliation and partner them with our Survivor speaker's group.

Documentation of Stories and Residential Schools

We continue to document stories from our residential school Survivors, residential school sites, and other artifacts. We either attend the gatherings or travel to Survivors' homes. We participated in the healing gathering in Fort Chipewyan and presented the documentary, *The Forgotten People*, and the Residential School Mural to the attendees. We participated in the Region 6 Elder gathering at Métis Crossing in May 2023. We shared the Survivor exhibits and *The Forgotten People* documentary, participated in activities, and

were available for questions, relationship building, and listening/documentation of Survivor/intergenerational Survivor stories.

In June, we partnered with the Rupertsland Institute and attended Region 5's Elder Survivor Gathering to show the documentary, *The Forgotten People*, share the Survivor exhibits, and unveil the Survivor mural. All events have been positive, and the attendees are thankful for the opportunity to be heard.



Fort Chipewyan healing gathering.

Research and Preservation

We continue to collect and catalogue archived photos and information gathered by us or provided by the Survivors to preserve ongoing archived data. We continue to research historical data that pertains to Alberta's residential schools, day schools, and institution records and documents to preserve and catalogue the material so it can be accessed in the future.

Residential School Survivor Advisory Committee

We created an advisory committee consisting of five residential school Survivors. We meet every second month to listen and talk about ideas and initiatives. They approve every major initiative before the planning goes forward. We speak regularly as well as update them and seek advice.

Residential School Survivor Speakers Group

The Residential School Survivors Advisory Committee has expressed a great interest in having a Survivor speaking group. They would like to talk and share their stories at functions, schools, any place that requests them, and events we create or partner with. We have discussed and agreed when they travel, two people will go at all times.

Follow-up Gathering for Elders and Vatican Delegates

In March of 2022, we had a gathering with our Elders, residential school Survivors, and intergenerational



Region 5 Elder Survivor Gathering with Rupertsland Institute.

Survivors so the Vatican delegates could listen to their messages and take to Rome. In March 2023, we had a follow-up gathering, bringing together all those who attended the year before with an opportunity to listen and ask questions to those who went to Rome.

Every step we take brings healing, especially when we gather and connect. Trauma can be isolating; therefore, we strive to create opportunities for listening, connecting, vulnerability, and laughter. To be present with one another creates a human connection, a safe place where our Survivors and Elders can share with one another.

Partnerships with Outside Organizations

We continue to grow and support more partnerships and collaborations. The TRC department worked with the City of Fort Saskatchewan on several initiatives in 2022 and 2023. On September 30, 2022, we brought four of our Survivors to the Shell Theatre in Fort Saskatchewan.



Elder and Survivor gathering before the Vatican trip.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

We viewed *The Forgotten People* documentary with 400 registered guests, followed by a Q & A panel.

Last June 21, we teamed up with the Rupertsland Institute to share with the local schools in Fort Saskatchewan the historical precinct, exhibits of Métis Elders, and Knowledge Keepers. We again did this on June 21, 2023 and will work with them for Métis Week. On June 27, Elder Norma Spicer and I joined the City of Fort Saskatchewan in a ceremony where they raised the Métis and Treaty 6 flags.

We have received a request from PCL Construction and have scheduled a tour of their head office to work with them on their journey to truth and reconciliation. We have also received a request from the Town of Raymond to work with them on their journey to truth and reconciliation.



We contacted the Edmonton Oilers Hockey Group and discussed how we could support their truth and reconciliation journey all year round. The Oilers Group provided five U9 girls hockey camp spaces for the week of July 24-28, 2023. MNA Communications and I will be conducting interviews and taking photos at Rogers Place to create a short video.

We have also discussed other projects and will continue to have discussions with them.

Healing Gathering for Survivors

Survivors and intergenerational Survivors have expressed the need for a healing gathering in the fall of 2023.

Métis Residential School Museum

We are continuing our collaboration with the MNA Intergovernmental Relations team to compile a proposal for the Métis Residential School Museum, a place where we can share our history and create a space of healing, gathering, and community events in Edmonton.



Survivor Exhibit at Métis Crossing.

We would like to establish a program of volunteer Survivors, Elders, and supports to educate and offer a safe space of healing and listening, and co-ordinate learning events for students, partner organizations, and corporate employees to learn about residential school history.

Residential/Day School Survivor Registry

We are adding Survivor data to the registry with the ability to run reports and have the history of our Survivors in one location.

Other Initiatives

Video on the Papal Visit

We are working with MNA Communications to put together a video focusing on the power of healing, with content collected from various documented Papal visit events.

Attended conferences

I have been connecting with others and organizations doing the same work in truth and reconciliation to learn processes and build relationships that continue the work.



Coming Home mural at Fort Chipewyan gathering.

- National Gathering of Unmarked Burials: attended four conferences thus far.
- Recommended to President Poitras and Provincial Council more of a Métis presence, as I feel we are not truly represented. Region 1 Vice President Jason Ekeberg, Elder and Survivor Pearl Sandor, Survivor Elsie Cardinal, and Lisa Weber attended the Toronto Conference as well. Lisa Weber and I will work on creating a document to send to Special Interlocutor Kim Murray.
 - Held Zoom meetings with Special Interlocutor Kim Murray to build a relationship

Residential School Mural Coming Home

- Showcased the Residential School Mural at different events and gatherings. Talked about history and intergenerational trauma, as well as listening to Survivors.
- Documentation on the mural is also in the works for a more extensive tour.

Partnership with Rupertsland Institute

- Create an educational and informational guide to share with Alberta students the truth about the experiences and history of Métis residential school Survivors.
- Work to create sensitivity training.
- Using the Alberta Residential School Interactive Map created in 2022 to educate students on residential schools. The hyperlinks take the viewer to more information provided on the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation's website.
- Requesting the students assist in doing a creative project for our Survivors as they are being informed.
- Assist RLI with connecting students to Métis residential school Survivors to build relationships for a project funded by Canadian Heritage.
- Continue to work with RLI and visit the regions to listen and share about truth and reconciliation. ■

Youth Programs and Services



The Métis Nation of Alberta's (MNA) department of Youth Programs and Services is committed to addressing the unique needs and challenges that Métis youth face within Alberta. This generation of youth are excited to learn about their Métis culture, history, and instill a strong sense of pride in who they are. It is essential to involve youth with key decisions as they continue to offer new perspectives and ideas that will move the Métis Nation forward. We must continue to engage with our youth and connect them to their community and culture.

The following report provides details regarding the activities of the MNA in addressing the needs of Métis youth in Alberta and meeting the goals of the Government of Canada's Urban Programming for Indigenous People (UPIP). During the 2022/23 fiscal year, the MNA provided support to youth and families in maintaining, establishing, and enhancing connections to culture and identity, while empowering future Métis leaders through support provided to the MNA Provisional Youth Council.

Youth Leadership Conference

The 2022 Annual General Assembly (AGA) took place from August 4–7 at the Grey Eagle Resort and Casino in Calgary. The Youth Programs and Services department hosted the Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) on Friday, August 5. The theme that year was Youth in Governance and the conference included guest speakers: Métis National Council (MNC) President Cassidy Caron, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Region 4 Councillor Mitch Case, and Métis Herbalist, Kalyn Kodiak. The conference was emceed by the Region 3 Youth Council representative, Rebecca Lavallee.

MNC President Cassidy Caron and MNO Region 4 Councillor Mitch Case spoke on youth in governance. They offered inspiring words of encouragement to questions about current issues, areas of improvement, and a discussion that followed about what youth can do to initiate change. The Constitution Commission presented to YLC participants with the goal of engaging and inspiring young Métis youth.

Oskâyak Youth Camp 2022 & 2023

The third and fourth annual Oskâyak Kapayshiw Youth Camp took place from August 21–26, 2022 and July 10–15, 2023 at Camp Wohelo in Pigeon Lake. Oskâyak Kapayshiw immersed Métis youth in experiences that built relationships, created mentorship opportunities, and encouraged participation in cultural activities on the land including: canoeing, plant gathering, daily lessons in Métis culture and history, voyageur games, survival skills training, storytelling, trapping, beading, and Métis dance. The camp was free for all participants and was attended by 25–35 youth.



Oskâyak and Kitaskinaw Youth Camps.

Kitaskinaw Day Camp

On July 15, 16, and 17, 2022, the MNA held its first Kitaskinaw (Our Land) Day Camps in partnership with Métis Crossing. The goal of this program was to address the need for culture, on the land experiences, and connection with other Métis youth.

To ensure the 2022 Kitaskinaw (Our Land) Day Camps were accessible to all youth, lunch and transportation were provided free of cost from the MNA Provincial Office in Edmonton to and from Métis Crossing each day. Mileage costs were also provided to those who indicated that travel was a barrier for them. In recognition that our definition of youth ranges from pre-teens to young adults, days were separated according to age group to ensure appropriate connections and comfort.

Day one and day two were dedicated for youth aged 12–17, while day three was available to youth aged 18–29.

Despite the age ranges, each camp was structured similarly, with some variation due to other groups attending Métis Crossing on the same day.

Sports and Recreation Grant

Sports and recreation activities are vital to the health and wellness of Métis youth. Low-income Métis youth are often unable to participate in sports and recreation activities due to financial barriers such as registration, equipment, and travel expenses.

To ease the financial struggle of many Métis families, and to ensure Métis youth have increased opportunities to participate in sport and recreation activities, Youth Programs and Services launched the Sports and Recreation Grant. This grant provides Métis youth from across Alberta the opportunity participate in sport and

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recreation activities without worrying about the financial barriers that often accompany them.

The Sports and Recreation Grant was available to Métis Albertans who are the parent/guardian of a youth between the ages of 5–17 living within their household. This program could be accessed once during the application period, and applicants had to submit all required documents within the application period. Youth between the ages of 5–17 were eligible for a maximum of \$500 during the application period.

This financial support could be used towards registration costs, equipment costs, and travel costs. Between October 1–31, the MNA approved a total of 2,534 applications.



Alberta Indigenous Games.

Alberta Indigenous Games

For a week last August, the Youth department participated in Alberta Indigenous Games (AIG). Ten teams represented the MNA for a week of competition, and we are thrilled to share the results:

- Volleyball Intermediate Boys finished 3rd
- Volleyball Intermediate Girls won their pool and made it to the elite bracket
- Ball hockey competed hard and represented the MNA well
- Baseball Mini #1 finished in 1st
- Baseball Mini #2 went face-to-face with the MNA Voyageurs #1 in the semis and took home 3rd
- Baseball Junior finished 2nd
- Basketball Intermediate finished in 1st place
- Basketball Mini battled hard and finished in 4th place
- Soccer Intermediate CO-ED participated in three days of competitive scrimmages that represented the MNA well

- Golf displayed Voyageur pride on the course and had a great tournament.

Bringing youth together and surrounding them with the support of their community while they pursue sporting endeavours contributes to empowerment, wellness, and cultural connection within our community. Huge congratulations and admiration for the athletes, coaches, parents, and volunteers.



Native Hockey Provincials.

Native Hockey Provincials

The Métis Nation of Alberta had eight teams compete in the 2023 Native Hockey Provincials, the most teams we have ever entered into a tournament and the first time we had multiple girls' teams competing. We are extremely proud of the way our athletes represented themselves

and the Métis Nation on and off the ice, at the arena, hotel, team-bonding activities, and restaurants. Sport is an important part of community and nation building, forming long-lasting relationships and instilling confidence and pride in the generations of tomorrow. A weekend like this takes a village, and we are thankful for our coaches, managers, volunteers, and parents for supporting our athletes and making this tournament possible.



Youth and Seniors Gathering.

Youth and Seniors Gathering

We were excited to welcome MNA Citizens back to the 7th annual Youth and Seniors Gathering. This event took place February 10–12, 2023 at the River Cree Resort and Casino, located in Enoch. This gathering was an opportunity for Métis youth aged 12-29 and seniors aged 60+ who reside in Alberta to gather, participate in cultural activities, hear inspiring Métis speakers, and build long-lasting connections with other Métis Citizens.

The agenda included powerful keynote speakers, Métis cultural workshops, storytelling, and musical performers. Citizens travelling more than 100 km from their Alberta residence to the River Cree Resort and Casino were provided with travel reimbursement and accommodations. The MNA Youth and Seniors Gathering is an annual provincial event with an attendance rate of 400 Citizens. The event was developed with the vision of encouraging mentorship and knowledge-sharing opportunities between youth and seniors. This annual gathering is an opportunity for Métis Citizens to gather, share knowledge and stories, participate in cultural activities that are unique to Métis people, and grow their sense of belonging to the Métis community.

This year's theme was "Community in Kinship." We hosted many Métis performers, keynote speakers, and cultural facilitators who were able to facilitate the transfer of Métis knowledge, culture, and traditions to Métis youth for the continuation of our rich, distinct culture for generations to come. This event aims to connect youth to their community and facilitate a sense of belonging, which is a protective factor against mental health challenges and suicide.

Infrastructure Project: MNA Youth Programming Centre

The department was granted \$1.61 million for fiscal year 2022/23 through the Urban Partnership for Indigenous Peoples (UPIP) Major Infrastructure funding stream. This money was approved to purchase and renovate a building to be used as a Youth Programming Centre for Métis youth.

In December 2022, the MNA purchased a building located at 11821 123 Street, Edmonton, for the new Youth Programming Centre. It has three floors of office space and is in a central location less than a five-minute drive from the MNA Provincial Office. This infrastructure purchase will allow the MNA Youth Programs and Services Department to greatly increase program capacity. There will be a space dedicated to delivering programs and services to Métis Albertans such as mentorship groups, life skills programming, language, and cultural workshops. Additionally, there will be multi-purpose rooms, office space for youth workers, a commercial kitchen, storage space, inclusive washrooms, and open space for youth hangouts.

Over the three months following the closing date, the MNA worked with hired contractors to renovate the first two floors of the building to suit the needs of the Youth Programs and Services Department, and Métis youth in Alberta. Most offices were removed to create an open, welcoming space for the upcoming youth drop-in centre. Additionally, a dance/exercise studio was added alongside a teaching kitchen, drop-in counselling/study rooms, and a large classroom-style room.

As of March 2023, MNA Youth Programs and Services staff have moved into the building and are currently working out of it on a full-time basis. This has greatly improved the capacity of programming already and will allow the department to grow to its full potential. We expect the Métis Youth Programming Centre to be fully open to the public for programming by fall 2023!



Alberta Métis Fest.

Alberta Métis Fest

On Saturday June 24, 2023, the department hosted the 5th annual Alberta Métis Fest. The event was held at the Métis Crossing Cultural Gathering Centre in Smoky Lake County. This event was highly anticipated as it is one of the largest Métis gatherings held across the Homeland.

Additionally, it is an amazing opportunity for people from across Alberta to celebrate Métis culture and history at our very own cultural heritage site. Our department hosted many Métis performers, dancers, and vendors from each of the six MNA Regions.

Musical performances from each region were showcased and viewers had the opportunity to enjoy community talent through the jigging competition. The jigging competition age categories were as follows: 0-6, 7-12, 13-17, 18-59, 60+. It is estimated that throughout the course of the event on Saturday, nearly 3,000 individuals attended. This year was also the debut of our Homeland Hour, which featured Canada's Got Talent performers, the Ivan Flett Memorial Dancers, along with an Indigenous Fashion Show and The True Canadians: The Play, adapted from the newly released book written by Patricia Russell and David Wylenko.

Cultural Programming

The department of Youth Programs and Services hosted a variety of Cultural Enrichment Programs that connected Métis youth with their community and culture, as well as supported life skills and mental wellness. The Cultural Enrichment Programs were offered in different regions across the province. Programs included but were not limited to art therapy sessions, yoga, gender expression, beading, at-home grounding boxes, and jigging workshops. Below is a summary of some of the programs offered from April 2022 – March 2023. Other programs

- safer spaces
- self-care plans
- Métis dot art
- moccasin making
- medicine hearts
- art for mental wellness
- fish scale art
- fiddling lessons
- finger weaving
- capote making

offered but not listed are:

This year saw the Youth team emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and return to predominantly in-person events. This aspect cannot be overlooked when reporting on cultural programming, as the ability for youth to gather in-person, learn hands-on from facilitators, and create connections with other youth is critical to learning cultural skills and teachings.

Region 1

On May 25, MNA youth in Region 1 strengthened their gardening skills with a Lemon Balm & Mint Garden Workshop. Youth received a package containing seeds, soil, and starter pots through a mailout and then

joined a zoom call to participate together. Living off the land is a huge aspect of Métis tradition, and the skills youth learned help them carry this tradition for future generations.

Métis youth gathered in-person on June 4 for a beaded-tie workshop. Métis are known as “the flower beadwork people” and this class gave youth a chance to incorporate an incredibly important piece of our culture onto clothing to create a gift for a loved one or represent their heritage at their next job interview or family event. The decision to bead a necktie showed that beadwork can be used in a variety of ways and done to represent and show pride.

For four dates in the fall, Métis youth wore their moccasins and tapped their toes in Lac La Biche as they took part in jigging classes. These classes were a huge step forward in our return to in-person programming. There is no way to replicate online the experience of learning how to jig and being part of a troupe. Jigging is vital to the Métis way of life for many reasons, dating back to when our people would close the blinds in their houses and dance around in “kitchen parties” to express themselves without fear of discrimination and hate. Sharing this expression with the next generation instills pride and is also a great form of physical and mental well-being exercises.

Region 2

Youth in Bonnyville and the surrounding area gathered at the Region 2 office to learn and practice the cultural skill of beading. This cultural event gave youth a chance to connect, practice their beadwork, and learn from an experienced facilitator. This event's key messaging focused on getting beginners out to teach them an important skill while aiding mental well-being. Throughout the fall, employees and facilitators travelled across the region on different dates to teach jigging. This was a fantastic idea by the region, as it provided the opportunity for youth in rural areas, who might not have had a chance to go to the regional office, with the ability to get involved.

Historically, moccasins, being comprised of hide and fur, provided warmth and protection for Métis people. Now, moccasins are primarily worn as a source of pride and cultural expression. On October 1 and 2, youth took part in a workshop to bead and create their very own pair of moccasins. Opportunities such as this are not only good for relationship building and creating connections, but it also provides a learning opportunity for the facilitator to teach participants about their culture.

On February 15, youth were invited down to the Kalyna Family Resource Network Hub for a Vegreville Métis Awareness Night. This was an opportunity for people to enjoy a night of stew, bannock, and learn about the resources available in their community.

Region 3

Every Thursday in October, youth met for a capote-making workshop. Capotes are a warm, colourful jacket worn throughout the winter months. Participants finished the workshop ready for winter and to show off their Métis pride.

At the end of October, youth gathered in Calgary to create beaded poppies for Remembrance Day. Métis Veterans played a vital role in many historic conflicts, and this workshop was a way to honour them and tie together Métis pride with Canadian history. A facilitator helped each participant with their design and poppies were worn throughout the month of November.

The Region 3 Youth Coordinator partnered with the Lethbridge Local to do a loom-beading workshop. A loom is a tool that allows faster beading and is typically used when the item being beaded is more difficult to bead by hand than traditional clothing. In this case, youth beaded bracelets to show off their Métis pride.

Throughout the months of May and June, Region 3 held a jigging class once a week in Calgary. During these classes, facilitators led participants through a journey of dance knowledge and practice. Jigging dances taught included: the duck dance, broom dance, sash dash, sword dance, reel of four, Red River jig, seven step, and the heel-toe polka. Participants were invited to showcase what they learned at the Mount Royal University convocation, Trellis Pow Wow, Grey Eagle Casino and Resort, and the Brookfield Place Indigenous Awareness Day Event.

Jigging class continued in the fall with instruction of the basic step, two changes to the Red River jig, sash dance, broom dance, and heel-toe polka. The advanced students learned more changes to the Red River jig, the duck dance, drops of brandy, Virginia reel, reel of four, and reel of eight. The troupe was also invited to perform at the Orange Shirt Day celebration at Fort Calgary.

In partnership with Parks Canada, Region 3 had the privilege of running a youth camp that included: jigging, finger weaving, beading, and medicine hearts. The camp provided a great opportunity to create connections and teach cultural skills to youth aged 12–29.

Region 4

In preparation for Mental Health Week, the Region 4 Youth Coordinator sent out grounding boxes containing: a journal, grounding stone, plant kit, decorating supplies, positive affirmation cards, self-care manuals, and a grounding technique. The mail out was followed by a social media post calling for youth to comment their positive self-affirmations such as: “I love myself,” “I matter,” “I am important,” and more. The campaign was

a great way to focus on mental health and provide youth with some tools to promote self-care and love.

Once a week in October, a group of Métis youth gathered at the Provincial Office in Edmonton to create their very own pair of custom-made moccasins. Diamond Whitney was the facilitator and brought her wealth of experience and knowledge to the group. Verbal knowledge-based learning is a huge part of Métis culture, as Knowledge Keepers are known as some of the most important people in the community, passing down hundreds of years of traditions to future generations.

Region 5

On April 19, youth virtually joined a traditional plants watercolour night. The purpose of this night was to create connections between youth in the community and increase knowledge of traditional plants, including their importance and how they have historically been used. Twenty-four spots were available, and kits with paint and canvas were mailed out to registrants to create their masterpiece.

Region 6

On September 9, a group of youth from Region 6 experienced an exciting tour of the Dunvegan Historical Site, followed by tasty bannock cooked over a campfire. This tour provided participants with an opportunity to journey out into the fresh air and learn about history in a hands-on way, instead of in a textbook or classroom.

Life Skills Programs

The MNA offered Citizens aged 10–29 the chance to take an online Hunter’s Education course. The program opened August 28, 2020, and as of February 1, 2023, we’ve had 671 individuals apply to take the course.

Of those 671 applications, 85 were denied, 91 were duplicates, and 436 were approved. Of those 436, 13 are currently waiting to be processed, 133 people have passed, 28 people have failed, 46 have resigned their application, and 216 people are currently in process. The participants who took the course and failed can rewrite for a fee not covered by the MNA.

The MNA has continued to offer Personal Development courses throughout the 2022/23 fiscal year. In partnership with Spectrum Safety Services, Citizens partook in online personal development courses that were completely self-motivated and self-navigated. Initially the program offered a total of 10 available courses, however, due to an overwhelming response, 10 more courses were added. Citizens are now able to choose from 20 personal development courses and receive certification.



Citizens can take up to three courses per calendar from the comfort of their own home. In total, we have approved 264 applications.

Online courses varied from 60–120 minutes of self-navigated modules, segments, and assessments. In most courses, Citizens can retake the course if they do not pass the original assessment.

Youth Council

The MNA's Provisional Youth Council is dedicated to ensuring the voice of Métis youth is being heard at all levels. Their work also involves directing the MNA on programs and services best suited for Métis youth within Alberta. The Provisional Youth Council is comprised of one Métis youth from each of the six MNA regions, as well as a provincial chair elected by the council. On March 13, 2022, Hannah Nash was elected by the youth council as Chair of the Provisional Youth Council.

Conclusion and What's Next

It has been another incredible year for the Youth Programs and Services Department. We have been able to continue furthering the connection with Métis youth in Alberta through the development and implementation of engaging programming, exciting events, and cultural initiatives that connect them to their community, their culture, and to other Métis youth across the province.

The department was able to offer a variety of events and programs to Métis youth across Alberta, including a variety of large-scale, provincial events that youth could attend from their home and in person. We found that following the pandemic, the need for community connection was great. Therefore, we were thrilled to welcome back community members to attend events in person. To mitigate any personal preference, a virtual component was also available to those who felt more comfortable tuning in from their home. These in-person provincial events included Youth and Seniors Gathering, Alberta Métis Fest, and the Youth Leadership and Governance Conference.

The Sports and Recreation Grant, which aims to help Métis youth who wish to participate in a sport and/or recreation activity overcome any financial barriers that may exist, has been extremely successful in supporting Métis youth and their families, and we look forward to continuing to run this grant program in the future.

Our department also ran a variety of smaller, regional programs that youth across the province were able to attend. The development and implementation of these programs was done by the Regional Youth Project Coordinators. These regional programs took a variety of forms; however, they were all developed with the intention to continue to promote cultural enrichment and life skills for Métis youth. Some examples of these programs were Métis Culture Kits (beading, embroidery, and finger weaving), Personal Development Courses through Spectrum Safety, Hunter's Education, cultural videos and livestreams, Pilates, and more.

We have also had the opportunity to provide resources and events to help educate the public on Métis history and culture. We developed educational kits during Métis Week and released a variety of online educational video content for educators to better teach their students about the Métis. Events such as Alberta Métis Fest also aim to bring both Métis and non-Métis individuals together to celebrate Métis culture in an inclusive, educational, and fun way.

In the future, Citizens can expect the Youth Programs and Services Department to continue engaging with and developing informed, quality programming specifically for Métis youth within Alberta. We hope to continue building Métis youth Citizen's sense of belonging and connection to Métis culture and community. ■



REGIONAL REPORTS

REGION ONE



James Cardinal
President
Region One



Jason Ekeberg
Vice President
Region One

President's Report

To the Citizens of Region 1, thank you for the experience of serving in this leadership role and administration. Vice President Jason Ekeberg and I have worked together to provide you with support and assistance during the past five years to the best of our ability and we want to extend our gratitude for the opportunity to serve you, the Citizens of Region 1.

To our Provincial Office, sincere appreciation and our gratitude for your support and guidance when we needed it. Your guidance through the COVID-19 pandemic was unsurmountable. We were able to provide our Citizens with financial support and assistance which we were grateful for.

To our community organizations and service providers we partnered with to provide community functions, Lac La Biche County, Portage College, and our event sponsor Enbridge, we will continue to build lasting relationships with you and your administration. Together, we can provide community events and celebrations we can all be proud of, that any visitor or guest to our community can take part in. It will be a memorable experience because of our commitment to our community.

We continue to work with Lac La Biche County council and administration and Lakeland Out of the Elements Society to provide much-needed homeless shelters and protection for our vulnerable and homeless members of our community. Land is being provided by Lac La Biche County and being prepared for a mobile shelter facility purchased through Rural Development Network funding. The space will provide a wide range of resources, programming, and shelter for at-risk members of our community. Jason continues to work closely to ensure the success of this project that will enhance the lives of so many.

Jason has ensured that seniors with housing but whose home is in need of repair are provided for through the emergency home repairs program. He continues to find funds through the Provincial Office to ensure success is reached. If we can provide repairs to the home, these seniors can continue to live independently and be comfortable in their own home.

To date, we have not been able to provide our Citizens with an Annual General Meeting. We are diligently working with a new auditor, and we thank Lori Girard for her comprehensive and analytical guidance to ensure our financials are provided.

Jason and I have been on the road attending and working closely with industry and our Locals to bring change to certain areas of our region. Local 125 (Fort Chipewyan) is still in negotiation with industry and municipal leaders to bring the enterprise to reality.

On Wednesday, June 21, 2023, we held our Indigenous Peoples Day celebration. We filled McArthur Park with children from four local schools and members from our community. It was attended by approximately 600 people and was a success. The Indigenous Market was a huge success, the trapper's cabins and tipis were a sight to behold. The music, the food, the displays that were showcased and the weather, it was a perfect day to showcase our Indigenous culture and heritage.

Once again, we have our summer students who will be providing garden and lawn maintenance, painting, and related duties to assist Citizens who have limited mobility.

We received funding to accommodate the growing number of resources our office is currently working

on. We have added two full-time Community Resource Workers who are facilitating new ideas while providing assistance to Citizens and promoting elder and youth programming and events. They have been coordinating with the county of Lac La Biche and partnering with Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) to provide community events and programs for our Citizens and children.

Throughout the last year we were able to provide wood for our Elders and Citizens with limited mobility issues. Our seniors lunches have resumed and so have barbecue lunches. It's a way to bring our Citizens together to visit and share ideas and stories.

Consultation

Cheryl Gordon, our consultation representative for Region 1, has completed Traditional Knowledge site visits in regard to project development within our region. She continues to work with industry leaders and government officials, attending meetings on behalf of the MNA Region 1 Citizens. Some exciting news is that we are in the early stages of implementing a Wildlife Camera Monitoring program within the region and should have baseline data in the spring of 2024. Her door is always open to Citizens that are willing to share Traditional Knowledge, attend a site visit, or to stop in and chat!

Lac La Biche Restorative Justice

In March, funding was advanced to our office for the Lac La Biche Restorative Justice program. Gayle Desmeules has taken on the role of program manager, and we are elated with the work she has already put into the program and what it will provide to the community. The





program will be of epic proportions and will provide a new and meaningful way of handling justice focusing on meaningful accountability through involvement of the victim and the offender while creating healthier and safer communities.

Gayle brings with her 30 years of knowledge, comprehension, and experience of the justice system while providing training and facilitating community engagement and restorative resolution processes in child intervention services and justice.

We welcome you Gayle and look forward to working with you on the Restorative Justice Committee as you advance this program in our community.

Grant Funding

Dianna Cook, our director for grants, continues to provide our office with grants and contributions that are meaningful and significant to the Citizens of Region 1; \$315,221 in grants were made and approved during our last fiscal year. These applications were:

1. Canadian Heritage (Michif/Cree Immersion Cultural Camps and National Indigenous Peoples Day), Community Foundations of Canada (Community Services Recovery Fund), and Enbridge Inc. (National Indigenous Peoples Day and Michif/Cree Immersion Cultural Camps).

Two Michif/Cree Immersion Cultural Camps were offered: Trapping (January 2023) and Ice Fishing (March 2023). Participants came from as far away as Calgary as well as from Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Bonnyville, and Lac La Biche. Activities utilized the skills of several Elders, as well as other knowledgeable Métis Citizens. An extension was approved to continue this project into the 2023-24 fiscal year with three additional camps: Plant Harvesting/Preservation, Hunting, and Wilderness Survival. These camps are presently being organized.

2. An application was made to Community Foundations of Canada to create a strategic communications plan and implementation for the current Region 1, which is presently in the preliminary stages, and will be adapted to the new governing model.

The remainder of \$929,332 in grants, which had been approved prior to the 2022-23 fiscal year, continued to be distributed to Citizens in 2022 and 2023 in the form of grocery and fuel cards, seniors lunches, the purchase of 30 walled tents, prescriptions, transportation to medical appointments, firewood, and reimbursement and payment to Region 1 Locals for COVID-related expenses.

In closing, this is what our Region 1 Office is working on, the events that were held, and it's just a glimpse of things to come. Dianna continues to explore and research, and





we are hopeful that we will continue to have additional funding and contributions to provide assistance to the Citizens of Region 1. As we continue to work together, we can provide a stronger and successful future for all Citizens of our community and region.

Because of the dedication and hard work, we will ensure our Nation is better for all Citizens.

This has been a year of countless positives for the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 1. We are very proud to be a part of the Nation, building a greater future as we journey to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government. We are moving forward for the benefit of our Citizens, and for this we can all come together as one, as a distinct Nation of Métis people that is recognized and respected. There is still progress to be made and the journey to self-government is within reach, but together we will keep moving this forward to provide greater independence and capacity to deliver to our citizenship.

Thank you to everyone for your participation and valued input. From the signing of the Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Implementation Agreement (MGRSIA), to the community engagements that were held, to the Citizens who voted to ratify the Constitution, to the citizenship who voted to review and vote on new bylaws to implement the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, we thank you for your involvement and participation in walking with us on this historic journey. This is our time to continue to work together, to have our voices heard, to make a difference in the lives

of our people as it provides the foundation for our future generations.

You, as a Citizen of the Métis Nation of Alberta with your vote, have contributed to this historic event that will forever be a piece of history that is ours to be so proud of. Your voice made the difference for future generations, and we encourage you to continue to be an integral part of the process and our Nation, building the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Vice President's Report

Grant Funding Successes

At our regional level, we have kept the momentum going as we diligently continue to apply for funding for our seniors, vulnerable, and less fortunate Citizens. In addition to successfully applying for these grants, we were also successful in gaining a grant from the federal government through the Department of Canadian Heritage— Indigenous Language Immersion Culture Camps that are beneficial to keeping our language alive. The cultural camps provide participants a chance to engage in our culture, traditions, and way of life through activities that are inherent to our Métis life. To date, we have been able to complete the ice fishing and trapping activities and have asked for an extension to allow for the right time of year to hold the remaining activities this specific grant has to offer.



The Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund grant available through Community Foundations of Canada was another success story. This was another culturally-based grant that brought Citizens together to share stories about culture, language, and our traditional way of life.

The grants we received federally from Indigenous Services Canada were related to COVID-19 and were dispersed to provide aid our many Citizens region-wide.

We were successful in obtaining the New Horizons for Seniors Program funding, which we used to hire a Community Resource Worker to assist seniors in the region with guidance and programming available through local, provincial, and federal agencies.

We were successful in receiving funding from the Government of Canada - Canada Summer Jobs to hire two positions for an eight-week period. The positions have been filled and the employees were busy assisting with preparations for our Indigenous Day celebration held on Wednesday, June 21, 2023.

We successfully acquired funding from the Rupertsland Institute for four students who began employment on July 3, 2023. The students will be providing yard maintenance, gardening, painting, and related duties for our senior population. They will also be available to assist with other events local to our area.

The grant funding that we applied for and were successful in acquiring for our homeless and vulnerable through Rural Development was very much needed and we are actively looking for similar funding to assist these Citizens.

In conclusion for the grant funding, we are ecstatic to share we were able to secure funding for a program that is new to our community and region and is being developed provincewide in select communities. The funding was successful, and Gayle Desmeules is our consultant who will develop, guide, and direct this program. This program will provide services that benefit victims of crime, promote public safety, and provide those that have caused harm to be held accountable, ensure they are supported, and make reparations to the victim. The program focuses on the participation of the victim, the offender, and ensures accountability by providing respect for all involved. We believe this approach to justice will promote healing, meaningful accountability, and involvement of the community, which will create a healthier and safer community.

Community Events

On July 25 and 26, 2022, Pope Francis visited Edmonton and it was important for a few of our Citizens to attend and witness this event. Our office was able to provide limited funding to these Citizens who were survivors of residential schools, and it was an event they felt they needed to attend to be part of their healing journey.

We held our Métis Week celebration in partnership with Portage College, which was successful and we were able to socialize and interact post-COVID. It was amazing to be amongst family and friends as we celebrated our traditional culture and Métis heritage.

We offer our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Provincial Office for providing Region 1 Citizens with

the opportunity to have a dental week clinic where Citizens were able to consult with dental experts, book appointments, and have dental procedures performed through a partnership with the University of Alberta School of Dentistry. Participants were offered exams, cleanings, fillings, and extractions. This was an amazing week, and we are grateful that the program was successful. The Citizens who were fortunate enough to secure these appointments for the procedures and expert treatment are grateful for having had this amazing opportunity.

Reducing Homelessness in Region 1

We continue discussions with Lac La Biche County regarding and in respect to the growing number of people who are experiencing homelessness in our region. To date, Lac La Biche County, FCSS, and Out of the Elements Shelter expect to have a facility to house our homeless ready for residency in early Fall. This facility will provide a place for shelter, and aims to reduce homelessness in Lac La Biche County, supporting the Council's goal of promoting social wellness and building a healthy and connected community. The county is providing support to establish a facility to host a four-stage program to help people transition from homelessness to independence.

Responsibility for the operation of this facility will be with the Lakeland Out of the Elements Shelter Society. The society is an experienced non-profit group who have been running facilities in Lac La Biche County for years.

Industry Relations

Our regional office continues to establish a working relationship with industry leaders in developing strategies that would be beneficial to our regional area as upstream industry begins to see an increase in activity in our area. These relationships and potential partnerships are a work in progress that we continue to develop and promote.

These are just some of the projects and programs we have been able to provide to our Citizens and we continue to search for grants and funding to expand and increase services that will be beneficial to the Citizens we serve.

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation and gratitude to Dianna Cook who works diligently to successfully bring a wide variety of functional programming and enhancement to our organization.

To our administration and volunteers, we want to extend our appreciation for your dedication to making our office a place where our Citizens feel comfortable as we work together to grow our Nation stronger and most importantly, more efficiently. Our administration is committed to a stronger and healthy organization and together we will accomplish this goal and objective. ■



REGION TWO



Duane Zaraska
President
Region Two



Andrea Sandmaier
Vice President
Region Two

Tansii and hello from your Vice President and staff of the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) Region 2 office in Bonnyville. I want you to know that it has been my honour to represent Métis Citizens of Cold Lake, Lloydminster, Elk Point, Wainright, St. Paul, Vermilion, Camrose, Vegreville, Bonnyville, Smoky Lake and areas over these past four years. I have received great enjoyment from your visits at the regional office, in your homes, at community gatherings, and during those chance meetings on the street when we have just enough time to say, “Hey, how’s your family doing?”

This past year has been unprecedented and exciting for Métis in our Region and across the province as we witnessed historic achievements in our 200-year struggle for recognition as an Indigenous nation within Canada. To achieve the advances outlined in other sections of this Annual Report, Citizens of our region took part in community consultations on the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) draft constitution in-person, online, or by written submission, attended special meetings, and then cast ballots in an epic province-wide ratification vote that reinforced what our ancestors envisioned generations ago: Métis have the inherent right to govern ourselves. This is a great achievement made possible through the dedication of our staff and the commitment of Métis Citizens.

Honouring Elder Francis Dumais

While Citizens celebrate our accomplishments around achieving long-held aspirations of self-government, we also offer condolences to relatives, kin, and friends whose families have been affected by the loss of precious souls who have returned to the Spirit World. When our loved one’s leave, lives are forever changed by the realities of grief and loss, feelings we don’t “get over” but, instead, learn to embrace as a part of our lives. We preserve and memorialize those who have



Photograph by Lorna Dancey.

gone before us by speaking their names and honouring their lasting impressions on our lives.

One such loss is that of our Regional Elder, Francis (Boston) Joseph Dumais, whose soul departed unexpectedly on Monday, July 18, 2022, at the experienced age of 89.

We remember Francis as a Métis Citizen of immeasurable integrity, honour, wisdom, patience, and good humour. He was a modest man whose presence could fill a room. When he sauntered in, sporting a ribbon shirt resplendent in Métis colours, wearing his favourite, white cowboy hat, we knew Francis arrived. The energy in the room always shifted in his favour and we were drawn to his presence. When asked how he was doing, Francis would often say, “If I were any better, I’d be dangerous.” He was known to cut a few rugs at Métis gatherings, jigging and two-stepping around the dancefloor with more than one lucky dance partner. Francis was a strong-willed and excellent horseman and cowboy known for winning his share of roping competitions at local rodeos. In the bush, he held a deep connection and respect for the land, medicines, and ceremonies and a determination to protect them. His extraordinary physical strength earned him the title “King Trapper.”

Until his death, Francis remained committed to moving our nation forward. He believed strongly in our Métis nationhood, in our traditions, language, lifestyle, family connections, economies, music, and dance. Everything, including our politics, even when they became messy and uncomfortable. He advised our people consistently to return to a state of respect for each other, for the land, for our culture, and respect for our Elders. An online video series titled “Our Elder’s Stories” immortalizes Francis’

words and steady presence. In one recording he said, “If only the Elders were here, the ones that were leaders, everything was run right when there was a lot of Elders. And we’re running out of Elders, my friend...the concept of respect has been lost for many years, but I can see it coming back slowly.”

Francis had some rough times with addiction in his early years, a truth he never denied but embraced instead. He drew upon personal struggles and experiences to relate genuinely with other souls navigating life’s challenges. As a revered Métis Elder, Francis connected easily with people at risk and shared with them how a better life could be achieved by recovering one’s self-respect and finding identity. He maintained that knowing one’s history is the surest route for returning to family, kin, friends, and culture. He believed it important to know where our people come from, to know about our history, and the struggles of our Métis ancestors.



In 2021, Francis dictated a letter sent to His Holiness Pope Francis describing the life-long effect of being forced, as a child, to attend the Blue Quill Residential School:

“Alongside our First Nation Cousins, we the Métis endured years of abuse and hardship attending residential schools. We lost so much, our language, culture, loss of identity and childhood innocence...I ran away from Blue Quills three times while I was there. My parents always sent me back. I couldn't explain to them what was going on there. I was too young and too scared. My parents thought that they were doing a good thing and thought I was just homesick...I had a good childhood and my parents provided and brought me and my siblings up in a good home. This did not stop me from becoming a drunk. I drank for many years, and I know now that it was because of the abuses I endured and witnessed when I attended Blue Quills Residential School. One day I woke up and decided it was time to quit drinking. I thank God the Creator that he watched over me in those dark days and that HE still does today.”

As a Knowledge Holder, Francis had a special way of motivating Métis children and youth. He shared his experience as an expert trapper with children attending one-day camps for kids and at the end of his presentations on trapping and fur preparation, was keen to advise children to “always listen to your mommy and daddy and don’t do drugs.”

In the video series, Francis acknowledges and thanks his children, grand and great grandchildren for the love, respect, and caring he received from Lena, Cecile, Vera, Shelly, and Christopher (Nancy), and William (Pauline) Dumais, Nancy (Maurice) Yarmuch, Daniel (Kerri) and Teri (Mitch) Prevost, Francis Jr., and Dakota (Alexis) Gladue, Janet Trottier, and adopted son Melvin Abraham.

Francis is reunited with predeceased children Patrick, Joe, Doreen, and Lorna Dumais, Delores Keewatin, loving wives Christine Dumais, Beverly Klein, and Patricia Gladue, parents Frank and Mary, and siblings Jimmy and Art Dumais, Cecile Talentyre, Joey Quimpere, Helen Foreman, Violet Gladue, and Elizabeth John.

Francis’ departure amounts to the great loss of an Elder dedicated to passing on knowledge and traditions. In his words, “I’m thinking about our people, so they won’t get lost...we are reminding them to prepare for the future in case they have hard times. So, they won’t suffer. So, they can walk straight. Then it doesn’t matter what happens.”

When I met Francis in 2018, I felt like I had known him forever. He reminded me of home and of my grandfather. I am forever appreciative of the mentorship, leadership, and wisdom Francis provided me in his gracious and humble manner.





Vice President's Report

This section of the Regional Annual Report summarizes activities, engagements, meetings, and events where I have represented our Citizens over the past year as an active member of the following boards and committees:

- Bonnyville Indian Métis Rehabilitation Centre (board member and treasurer)
- MNA Bill C-92 Children & Family Services Advisory Committee
- Métis Child and Family Board Member
- Métis National Council Rights Panel
- Treasurer of the Métis Nation of Alberta
- Advocate and supporter for the Sansom and Cardinal families, and
- Assisted the MNA to review the Alberta Provincial Courts Indigenous Justice Strategy

While the work schedule has been packed full, I have been privileged to represent our region at all MNA Provincial Council meetings, at Constitution and ratification engagement meetings, at regional engagement sessions and events on numerous issues, Métis Week events, regional youth events, New Dawn Métis Women's Society events, MNA Residential School Survivor events, the annual MNA Youth and Seniors Gathering, Rupertsland Institute events, and at events held by Métis National Council. It's been a very busy and rewarding year, indeed.



New Dawn Métis Women's Society – Culture and Wellness

- St. Paul, October 2022: Canning food, medicine teachings, jigging lessons, Constitution information sessions
- Elk Point, January 2023: New Dawn Métis Women's Society - Visioning for the Future
- Vermilion, January 2023: Making moccasins
- Lloydminster, January 2023: Senior's Mental Health First Aid
- Cold Lake, March 2023: Ice fishing hosted by the MNA Harvesting Department
- Various locations and dates: Kokum and Me Series – Beading, making crochet rag rugs, and medicine teachings.
- New Dawn Métis Women's Society participated in the 2022 Lakeland Centre for FASD Mocktail Challenge and won FIRST Prize! Congratulations!

New Dawn Métis Women's Society (Region 2) – Land-Based and Traditional Knowledge session

This was a wonderful day at St. Paul. Three stations were set up and participants rotated through to learn about canning food, traditional medicine, and jigging lessons. We also had a Master of Education student, Roz Schnieder present on Métis History and Women of the Métis Nation. The Harvesting team and Self-Government team were present to provide information to Citizens. We were



honoured to receive a presentation from MNA President Audrey Poitras on the Otipemisiwak Métis Constitution, followed by great food and entertainment from the talented Lillian Parenteau.

The feedback received was invaluable and emphasized how, as Métis, we know our cultural practices are directly related to family and community wellness.

Seniors Bannock and Bingo

We hosted an afternoon for Region 2 seniors to play bingo and enjoy fresh bannock. It was an enjoyable afternoon of bingo games called by Violet LaPratt. We visited, ate bannock and berries, and gave out lots of prizes. It was an enjoyable afternoon and we look forward to hosting more events for seniors.

Dental Clinic

The Métis Nation of Alberta partnered with Access4All to host a dental clinic for Region 2 citizens in April. Regional and Provincial staff and members of the region's New Dawn Métis Women's Society volunteered to deliver a successful week of Citizen outreach. Our people, some who hadn't seen a dentist in years, were so pleased to receive basic and necessary dental and hygiene care that was inaccessible because of the cost. At the same time, while waiting for service, our Citizens were busied with activities such as beadwork, Métis dot art, making succulent planters, playing crib, and other board games. We had great meals, a jigging lesson, and listened to some beautiful Métis music.

Bill C-92: Children's Authority Engagement Sessions

For decades, Métis Citizens have been conveying to government our need to have jurisdiction around decisions respecting the well-being of our children and youth in custody. In 2020, the federal government passed Act C-92: *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, youth, and families*, which provides a pathway for our Nation to exercise our inherent right to manage the well-being of our children, youth, and families. I am honoured to be a member of an Advisory Committee working to develop a Métis Nation of Alberta Model of Care and Law. This past June, we initiated meetings with Citizens to document their experiences with Alberta Children Services and to receive personal perspectives on how to improve policy and services to provide the best care for our children and families. Every engagement session has been insightful and productive, with meaningful conversations and valuable feedback on how the system, process, and policies can be improved to better support the needs of our children and families.





What's Next

We have another exciting year coming up as our Nation transitions into a new province-wide governance structure. I'm confident our regional staff are up to the challenge. Here, I express my personal thanks and gratitude to our regional staff for the effort and hard work they have dedicated to providing Citizens with services and support. Our successes achieved over the past year, and going forward, are possible because of the excellent work and deep commitment of our staff to the region and the Métis Nation.

- Viola Schaumberger, Administrative Assistant
- Gina Levasseur, Community Wellness Coordinator
- Jade Fleury, Youth Coordinator

- Violet LaPratt, Métis Urban Housing Corporation Tenant Relations Officer
- Ashley Shaw, Consultation Coordinator
- Dave Dahlin, Summer Student

I hope our 95th Annual General Assembly will be productive, memorable, and enjoyable and that you'll be able to enjoy the activities and experiences Métis Crossing has to offer. I'm looking forward to the music and dancing at Homer's Place, the delicious food, the youth and family activities, shopping at the Métis artisan booths, and especially to visiting with friends, family, and kin.

All my very best,
Andrea Sandmaier, Region 2 Vice President ■

REGION THREE



Judy Gentes
President
Region Three



Joe Chodzicki
Vice President
Region Three

Communications Report

Monthly Newsletter, The Southern Sash

The Southern Sash has received a huge amount of positive feedback since its inception. There was a need in the Métis community to feel connected and involved on a consistent basis, and our newsletter has provided that. The Southern Sash has also helped Métis entrepreneurs; I received feedback that our advertisement space has been effective for attracting new customers to Métis businesses. The newsletter provides potential sponsors with a snapshot of the programs and events we offer to our community. This has helped us obtain sponsorship for programs from new businesses.

- Design, write, and edit Region 3 monthly newsletter.
- Design promotional material such as advertisements and social media posts for Region 3 events and Métis business owners.
- Add new subscribers and manage existing mailing list.
- Prepare and process monthly printing for newsletter.
- Deliver the printed monthly newsletter to Mount Royal University, Bow Valley College, SAIT, the Region 3 Office, and our Business & Professional Mixers each month.
- Create newsletter content based on community, in-office, and in-person engagement.
- Provided the community with COVID-19 updates regarding information about vaccines, isolation and MNA social, financial, and mental support during the pandemic.

Mailing list, Community Updates, Social Media, and Community Relations

With the positive reception to The Southern Sash from our community, I realized there was need for increased engagement. The Southern Sash covers many of our communication needs, but once-per-month contact is not enough for our community to feel involved.

Increasing our presence on social media and providing community updates has helped build a strong connection in Region 3. Most of the Region 3 events and programs reach capacity within the same day. Showing up at events and partaking in important meetings has made me the primary contact person for and Region 3-related event promotion or communication. Most recently, I helped promote the signing of “The True Canadians: Forgotten Nevermore” and received feedback from author, David Wylynko, that his Calgary book signing tour had the largest turnout to date.

- Provide community updates of programs and events offered throughout the month to our mailing list.
- Curate events and programs based on what will benefit our community.
- Professionally represent Region 3 through email, social media, or in-person.
- Assist affiliates, local Indigenous organizations, and the MNA with program and event promotion.
- Regularly update the Region 3 Facebook page with community, MNA, and our affiliates’ events and programs.
- Current collaboration with Mike Parks to launch a new Region 3 website and an Instagram page.
- Coordinate promotion of events, programs, and attend meetings to build and strengthen relationships within our community.

Event Coordination: Métis Business & Professional Mixers

The mixers serve to encourage networking, mentorship, and economic advancement for members of our community. We reached out to our Business and Professional Mixers community for testimonials and were happy to learn the business mixers helped Métis Citizens advance within their businesses and careers. The mixers help our businesses build relationships with our sponsors.

- Coordinate events for the monthly Métis Business and Professional Mixers.

- Manage and organize all aspects of the event including: event promotion, registration, creation of personalized name badge lanyards for each guest, hosting at the event, managing the front desk, booking the musician, booking catering (and assisting with the set-up and takedown), sourcing and purchasing gifts for the prize draw, and communicating with Loughheed House staff to keep the event on track.
- Engage directly with Métis business owners, Indigenous organizations, and Indigenous relations departments to ensure a successful outcome of the Métis Business & Professional Mixers.
- Recommend traditional Métis foods cooked and served at catered events.

Other Activities

Mark’s Discount Program: In the months of August and September 2022, I sent out 180 Mark’s Work Wearhouse discount cards via email that were personalized (by me) to include the name and MNA # of each Citizen.

September 16, 2022

3rd Annual Marlene Lanz Golf Tournament: I designed all print media for the event and arranged for professional printing. I designed the following: event poster for social media, sponsorship brochure, event itinerary brochure, table tent cards, two banners, water bottle labels, hole sponsor signage. I assisted with registration and hosting the day of the event.

November 13, 2022

Annual Senior’s Dinner: I was the assistant event coordinator for this event. Along with Jamie Domoslai, I managed registration and hosting. I helped source and purchase (many) giveaways and door prize gifts. I did all the print media for this event such as the event poster, a banner, and the itinerary. I made all the Métis-specific signs for the photobooth.

November 16, 2022

Louis Riel Day Community Mixer: This was an all-ages event at Loughheed House to celebrate Louis Riel day. I was the event coordinator for this event and did the same tasks I’d normally do for a business mixer, except this one had a larger capacity (100+).

Christmas Break 2022

Holiday Gift Card Program: I created promotional material, the google registration form, and I followed up with registrants who did not provide full mailing addresses on the form.

March 31, 2023

Fiddle & Feast: I designed the promotional material, managed registration, and helped Jamie host the event.

March 2022

Region 3 Youth Week: I designed all promotional material and created the google forms, helped manage registration for all events including: The Rec Room, Michif at the Zoo, Treehouse Indoor Playground, Speeders Calgary, and both Cineplex events.

March 25, 2022

Michif at the Zoo: I was an assistant event coordinator and host for this event. As mentioned above, I designed the promotional material and managed registration. I also designed the print media at the event (banner) and edited and prepared the animal cards for print (I did not design the animal art; Mike Parks did this). I sourced and booked the photobooth company and made Michif-specific signs for the photo booth. I sourced and booked “Experience Métis” to add a cultural and interactive element to the event.

May 2023

Cultural Connections: I am working with Mike Parks to provide weekend workshops for the following: capote making, moccasin making, and moss bag making. I have created the promotional material and will manage registration. I will be present at these events to host and help participants. I will also bring in lunch and snacks. Our capote workshop is booked up and will be run on May 6 and 7.

Danielle Domoslai

Corporate Communications & Event Coordinator Report

Introduction

It is my pleasure to present to you my annual report detailing my various activities and responsibilities. As a proud member of the Métis community, I have been privileged to contribute to the growth and development of our region through my involvement in Region 3 events and initiatives. My contributions this year began with my assistance with the Métis Business and Professional Mixers, where I had the opportunity to meet and engage with our community members. I took on an active role hosting, organizing, and fundraising for events with 150+ people. I was honoured to bring people together, to share our culture, and raise funds in support of our community initiatives. Throughout the year, I had the opportunity to collaborate with other Citizens of Region 3, sharing ideas and working towards our common goals. Our collective efforts helped strengthen our community and create a brighter future for our people. I am grateful for the trust and support of the Region 3 MNA Citizens and look forward to continuing to serve our community.

June 2022 – August 2022

Last summer, I had the opportunity to provide support to my sister, Danielle Domoslai, with the Métis Business and Professional Mixers. Through my involvement in these events, I developed a strong interest in working with the community and felt compelled to make a meaningful contribution to this non-profit organization. I began assisting with the Métis Business and Professional Mixers regularly and even took on the responsibility of catering for groups ranging in size from 60 to 100 people. It was a pleasure to witness the positive impact the Métis Business and Professional Mixers had on the community.

September 2022

The Annual Marlene Lanz Golf Tournament

In my initial role with the region, I organized the annual Marlene Lanz Golf Tournament. Despite having only three weeks to put together the event, I was able to successfully fundraise \$17,000. The tournament was at Lakeside Greens in Chestermere, which was Marlene's favourite course. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of everyone involved, the tournament was a success and had an excellent turn out. I look forward to organizing this event again this year.

November 2022

Seniors Dinner Event

Last winter, I organized a memorable seniors' dinner that drew an impressive turn out of 200 seniors and Elders. The event at the Westin hotel featured live music and entertainment from talented local Métis artists and musicians. Entertainment included a fun-filled photo booth experience. This event was even more special as it coincided with the significant Constitution vote taking place at the hotel. As a result, the fully-funded event by the MNA Provincial Office allowed us to deliver an exceptional experience. Region 3 received an overwhelming response of positivity from its attendees.

March 31, 2023

Fiddle and Feast Event

With the goal of highlighting the talent of traditional Métis fiddle music and jig dancers, Region 3 organized the Fiddle and Feast event. We hosted this event at Gasoline Alley in Heritage Park.

The event featured three talented local fiddlers, Alex Kusturok, Calvin Vollrath, Robbie Fraiser, and local youth jiggers. The Fiddle and Feast event drew a crowd of 150 guests who enjoyed a cocktail reception and a sit-down dinner. This event was grant funded by Heritage Park.

The generous grant awarded to Region 3 totalled \$10,000. The financial support made it possible for Region 3 to host an unforgettable event that highlighted the very best of Métis culture and traditions in a unique and beautiful setting. Overall, the event was a success, as positive feedback was received from those in attendance who appreciated the cultural experience.

In conclusion, I am thrilled to have had the opportunity to take on a variety of roles and tasks within our organization, and I am proud of the successful events I have organized. As summer approaches, I look forward to the planning of the Annual General Meeting in Calgary, the Entrepreneurship Awards, and the annual Marlene Lanz Golf Tournament. In addition to coordinating these events, I am always happy to volunteer my time, participate in meetings and other organizational activities. As well, I will be working with ATCO on programs and initiatives designed to benefit Métis youth. I enjoy exploring opportunities that positively impact our community. Overall, I am deeply grateful for the experiences I have had so far and look forward to contributing to the organization's overall ongoing success.

Sincerely,
Jamie Domoslai

Youth Coordinator Report

I support and help organize provincial events:

- Alberta Métis Fest
- Youth and Seniors Gathering
- Oskayak Kapayshiw Youth Camp
- Sports and Rec (quarterly)
- Hunter Education (ongoing)

Regional Events

- jigging lessons (quarterly)
- weekly Youth Group (except for July and August)
- dot art x3
- loom beading x2
- beaded poppies x2
- capote making
- finger weaving x4
- naloxone training
- standard first aid

Virtual Events

- yoga x4
- wellness art classes x4

Accomplishments

- Youth Group: Region 3 is the only region with an ongoing, well-attended youth group.
- Jigging lessons: The youth from our jigging lessons have been invited to showcase what they've learned at many events including the Catholic School Board Indigenous Graduation, Grey Eagle Resort and Casino, and many Indigenous Awareness Day events throughout Calgary and the surrounding area.

Kristen Acuna, Regional Youth Coordinator

Michif Language Report

Michif Youth Comic Book

- Interviewed multiple Métis Elders to record folklore stories.
- Conducted a mix of at-home visits and Métis Youth Night presentations to teach Métis youth our folklore.
- At these visits, the children would draw their own folklore stories.
- Interviewed artists to professionally draw the children's stories and turn them into comic books.

Michif Language Classes

- Started planning and creating course material for the language class in summer of 2022.
- Conducted a Beginners Michif Class from November to December 2022.
- Held a student potluck Christmas party in December 2022.
- From January to March 2023 we continued the Michif Class for Beginners and Intermediates.
- Held a kitchen party for students in March 2023, taught some Métis recipes.
- Each class ended with a cultural teaching that lasted about 45 minutes.
- Each class had 30 students who all expressed an interest to continue their language learning.

Métis Youth Week

- In March 2023 we ran a Métis “Youth Week” for two weeks.
- Planning for the event started in December 2022.
- Our events were as follows: Métis Speeders Race Day, Métis Rec Room Game Day, Métis Family Movie Day (Shazam 2), Métis Family Toddlers Day (Treehouse Indoor Playground), Métis Family Zoo Day (Calgary Zoo), and Métis Family Movie Day (The Super Mario Bros.).
- In total we had 600 families participate in these events and for many of them it was their first time participating with the MNA.

Michif 1885 Virtual Tour

- In September 2022, I took a team to Batoche, Saskatchewan to spend a week filming in the area.
- In November 2022 I signed an agreement with Mitacs to hire students to build the virtual tour and Mitacs matched our funding 2:1.
- In March 2023 the students began work on the virtual tour.
- Work will continue on the tour for the rest of the year.

Métis Family Events/Workshops

- A capote-making workshop was held in May 2023 with 15 students. This was a weekend event, 8 hours a day.
- A mossbag workshop was held in June 2023 with 10 students, held at a midwifery with all proceeds going towards new Indigenous moms.
- A moccasin workshop is planned for this summer.
- A Métis Royal Tyrell Family day is planned for August 2023.

Métis Residential School Project

- Initial filming was recorded in September 2022, with editing in the fall to create a demo reel.
- Interviews with Métis Elders were conducted in June 2023.
- A closing prayer ceremony is being planned for summer 2023 as an opportunity for community members to pray for the children in the unmarked graves and bring some closure to the surviving family members from residential schools.
- Editing and film completion slated for July 2023.

Region 3 Website

- Contacted a small marketing company (Vanspec Marketing) to create the Region 3 website and emails.
- Worked with the marketing company on new website design.
- Website to go live this summer.

Mike Parks, Michif Coordinator

Consultation Office Report

The Region 3 Consultation Protocol Agreement was followed and implemented in many projects this year. Several meetings were able to take place in person and as site visits.

In the activities mentioned below, Local Presidents were present in virtual meetings, as well as at a few instances of in-person meetings. They also were sent emails and briefing notes and responded via email and phone call as necessary. Our Citizens were engaged in several projects and studies in the region that required contact via phone and virtual interviews. We were able to bring Métis Citizens from across the province to Region 3 for in-person engagement and education.

The Consultation Office’s key achievement this year must be the Traditional Land Use and Traditional Knowledge Study (Program 345), as well as a Traditional Land Use study specific to Calgary and Region 3.

The key barrier encountered this year continues to be the lack of recognition of Region 3 Métis Citizens and the inability to practice our rights, be consulted on larger projects led by provincial regulators, and be seen as a nation of the province. To overcome this barrier, we continue to educate proponents and regulators we interact with.

Currently, we are satisfied with consultation protocol implementation.

Consultation Requests / Notifications Received (April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023)

LEGEND

AEP Alberta Environment and Parks

AHS Alberta Health Services

CER Canada Energy Regulator

DFO Fisheries and Oceans Canada

IAA Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

INFC Infrastructure Canada

IRO Indigenous Relations Office

NGTL WPD NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd.

West Path Delivery

Consultation notification name	Source of consultation notification or request	Name of department/regulator for this consultation file	Month consultation request/notification received	Was the notification actioned?	Was notification part of an active consultation file?
Waskasoo Creek Scour & Erosion Repairs Project	Municipal City of Red Deer	DFO	April 2022	Yes	No
City of Calgary Parks Phase 2	Municipal City of Calgary		April 2022	Yes	Yes
Chin Reservoir Designation	Federal	IAAC	April 2022	No	No
Snake Lake Designation	Federal	IAAC	April 2022	No	No
Deadhorse Coulee Designation	Federal	IAAC	April 2022	No	No
Writing on Stone	Provincial	AEP	May 2022	No	Yes
New Calgary Centre	Provincial	AHS	May 2022	Yes	Yes
NGTL WPD Meeting	Federal	CER	May 2022	Yes	Yes
Indigenous Tourism Alberta	Indigenous Tourism Alberta	Indigenous Tourism Alberta	Jun 2022	No	No
Limestone Road Bridges	Federal	DFO	Aug 2022	No	No
Shoreline Stabilization Engagement Session	Federal	DFO	Sept 2022	Yes	No
Drumheller Flood Mitigation	Federal	DFO	Oct 2022	No	No
West Bragg Creek Draft Masterplan	Provincial	AEP	Oct 2022	Yes	No
Indian Residential School Engagement	Municipal	City of Calgary	Oct 2022	Yes	No
Indigenous Busyness – Art Projects	Other	Other	Nov 2022	Yes	No
Nordeg Area Trails Planning	Provincial	AEP	Nov 2022	Yes	No
Métis Trail Art – Calgary Arts Development	Other	Calgary Arts Development	Dec 2022	Yes	Yes
Clearwater Peat Harvesting Project	Federal	IAAC	Dec 2022	Yes	No
Calgary River Valley Plan	Municipal	City of Calgary	Jan 2023	Yes	No
Calgary Green Line LRT	Federal	DFO	Jan 2023	Yes	Yes
Nordeg & Bearberry Culvert Replacement	Federal	DFO	Feb 2023	Yes	No
Medicine Lodge Ski Hill Masterplan	Municipal	Town of Penhold	Mar 2023	No	No

Active consultation files (April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023)

LEGEND

AEP Alberta Environment and Parks

AHS Alberta Health Services

CER Canada Energy Regulator

DFO Fisheries and Oceans Canada

IAA Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

INFC Infrastructure Canada

IRO Indigenous Relations Office

NGTL WPD NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd.

West Path Delivery

Consultation file name/title	Source of consultation notification or request	Name of department/regulator for this consultation file
Dickson Dam	Federal	INFC
Calgary Parks Study Phase 2	Municipal	Possibly DFO
Waskasoo Creek Scour & Erosion Repairs Project	Municipal – City of Red Deer	
City of Calgary Parks Phase 2	Municipal – City of Calgary	
Chin Reservoir Designation	Federal	DFO
Snake Lake Designation	Federal	DFO
Deadhorse Coulee Designation	Federal	DFO
Writing on Stone	Provincial	
Waskasoo Creek Scour & Erosion Repairs Project	Municipal – City of Red Deer	
Bow River Reservoir	Municipal – City of Calgary	DFO
New Calgary Centre	Provincial	AHS
NGTL WPD Meeting	Federal	CER
Crown Consultation – Recommendation Report for NGTL WP 2023	Proponent – TC Energy	CER
Indigenous Tourism Alberta	Indigenous Tourism Alberta	
NGTL WPD 2023 Conditions Meeting	Proponent – TC Energy	CER
Limestone Road Bridges	Federal	DFO
Shoreline Stabilization Engagement Session	Federal	DFO
NGTL WPD 2023	Proponent – TC Energy	CER
Drumheller Flood Mitigation	Federal	DFO
West Bragg Creek Draft Masterplan	Provincial	AEP

Consultation file name/title	Source of consultation notification or request	Name of department/regulator for this consultation file
Indian Residential School Engagement	Municipal – City of Calgary	
Métis Trail Art Project	Municipal – City of Calgary	
Indigenous Busyness – Art Projects	Other	
Terrestrial Cumulative Effects Initiative – Innovation 7		
Nordegg Area Trails Planning	Provincial	AEP
Métis Trail Art – Calgary Arts Development	Other	
New Cancer Centre Site Visit	Provincial	AHS
Clearwater Peat Harvesting Project	Federal	IAAC
Crown Mountain Coal Project	Federal	IAAC
Calgary River Valley Plan	Municipal	
Calgary Green Line LRT	Federal	DFO
Nordegg & Bearberry Culvert Replacement	Federal	DFO
Medicine Lodge Ski Hill Masterplan	Municipal – Town of Penhold	
Fording River (Castle) Project/ Teck Coal	Federal?	
Métis Policy	Municipal – City of Calgary	
Forty Mile Project	Proponent – Suncor	
Indigenous Governance Report	Municipal – City of Calgary	
Indigenous Relations Governance Model	Municipal – City of Calgary	
Indigenous Advisory Circle	Federal	Parks Canada
Writing On Stone	Provincial	AEP
Bow River Reservoir Options Phase 2	Provincial	AEP

All workshops and/or training sessions hosted (April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023)

LEGEND

AEP Alberta Environment and Parks

AHS Alberta Health Services

CER Canada Energy Regulator

DFO Fisheries and Oceans Canada

IAA Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

INFC Infrastructure Canada

IRO Indigenous Relations Office

NGTL WPD NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd.

West Path Delivery

Who was the workshop/training session with?	What was the workshop/training session about?	Month workshop/training session held
Calgary IRO	Discussions on governance, meeting with Elders	April 27, 2022
Indigenous Advisory Meeting (BNP)	Continued discussion on issues related to BNP	April 27, 2022
Monthly Alberta Culture, Multiculturalism & Status of Women	Various historical sites we would like to protect and manage as a nation	April–June 2022 August–September 2022 January 2023
Pioneer Acres Site Visit	Discussions about a possible Métis exhibit	May 3, 2022
IRO Governance Engagement Model Meeting	Discussions about governance model and associated agreements	August 2022
Heritage Park Touchbase	Various projects in discussion	August 2022
Baptiste Site Visit – 2	AEP and archaeologist joined us to confirm and discuss preservation of site and possible land lease	August 2022
St. Mary Milk River Advisory	Discussions about issues and concerns of this study	September 2022
Calgary Parks	Met with historian and Elders for several projects related to Métis history within Calgary parks	September 2022
Indigenous Gathering Place and City of Calgary Mayor	Discuss project and how to move forward together	November 2022
INFC meeting	Discuss how process works	January 2023

Historian Report

As historian, it is my responsibility to conduct research on the history of the Métis people in what is now Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3. In addition to this research, I also write, report, consult, and present based on these findings. Sometimes this work is internal, while at other times I am working with external organizations on behalf of Region 3. As well, given my background in the museum and heritage field, I also consult with some museums and historic sites about how to appropriately represent our history and culture.

Projects

- Completed work on “Between Buffalo and Forts,” a research project exploring Métis-Blackfoot relations through the lens of Middlemen in the Pemmican trade.
 - Began July 2021. Completed May 2022.
 - 94-page document discussing the nature of Métis occupation and activity in southern Alberta.
 - Government of Alberta research grant.
- Curated “Remembered: The Story of Métis Children at St. Joseph’s-Dunbow Industrial School” for Lougheed House on behalf of Region 3.
 - Worked on exhibit from April to July 2022.
 - Exhibit ran from July to October 2022.
 - Funded by Alberta Museum Association Grant to Lougheed House.
- Ran fingerweaving workshops for MNA Region 3 Youth Group.
 - May to June 2022.
- Worked with Michif Media on a tour of battle sites from the 1885 Métis resistance.
 - Researched the battles and surrounding events.
 - Wrote script for the journal portions of the virtual tour.
 - Acted as host for documentary components.
 - August 2022 to March 2023.
 - Paid by Michif Media.
- Researched and wrote a report on the experiences of Métis students at Dunbow Industrial School.
 - July 2022 to present.
 - 50+ page report (excluding appendices) detailing Métis students at Dunbow.
 - Government of Alberta Residential School Community Research Grant.
- Produced videos of Métis history in Calgary for the City of Calgary Parks department.
 - Videos to be accessible via QR codes on city park signs.
 - Videos cover the Confluence, Victoria Park/ Stampede Grounds, Fish Creek, Nose Creek, the Upper Elbow River, and Shaganappi Point.
 - Videos also contain subtitles in Michif.
 - December 2022 to present.
 - Paid for by City of Calgary.
- Curated and co-ordinated the development of a trapper’s tent containing archival images of Métis in the Calgary area and exhibiting floral beadwork for the City of Calgary Parks department.
 - Tent to act as pop-up exhibit in city parks.
 - Tent can also be used by MNA for community events when not in use by the city.
 - March 2023 to present.
 - Paid by city.
- Represent MNA Region 3 on the Lougheed House Reimagined Committee (2020 to present).
- Represent MNA Region 3 on the Fort Calgary Indigenous Advisory Committee (2020 to present).

Accomplishments

- Recipient of the 2022 Alberta Heritage Awareness Awards, presented by the Government of Alberta Ministry of Arts, Culture, and the Status of Women.
 - This award was given in recognition of the extensively researched, well-written, and engaging articles I wrote for the RETROActive blog, which were some of the most popular blog posts of the year and have greatly contributed to the understanding and interpretation of Métis heritage in Alberta. The blog is a source of Alberta-specific heritage information and stories. These publications have also helped strengthen the relationship between Alberta Culture and the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3.

Matt Hiltermann, Historian

Alberta Tobacco Reduction Report

MNA QuitCore

MNA QuitCore is an online six-week group commercial tobacco cessation program that helps Métis Albertans learn different skills and strategies to reduce or quit their commercial tobacco use. This program introduces scientifically-proven methods along with holistic and cultural approaches to address tobacco cessation. Graduates from MNA QuitCore receive a \$500 Alberta Blue Cross card to use on Nicotine Replacement Therapies and Cessation Medications.

Successes:

- From April 2022 to June 2023, six QuitCore programs were held.
- A total of 41 Métis Albertans graduated.

MNA Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) Program

Métis Albertans who do not have availability to commit to a six-week QuitCore program have the option to participate in the MNA NRT Program. The MNA NRT Program consists of three sessions with the MNA Community Prevention Practitioner to build a change plan. Following the three sessions, the participant receives a \$500 Alberta Blue Cross card to use on nicotine replacement therapies and cessation medications.

Successes:

- 25 Métis Albertans have accessed and enrolled in this program.

ChangeCore Peer Support Group

Graduates from MNA QuitCore are eligible to join ChangeCore. ChangeCore is an MNA Commercial Tobacco Peer Support Group. This group provides continuous peer support following the completion of QuitCore and meets every Monday for one hour. This group allows participants to stay connected and support each other with their tobacco related goals.

Successes:

- Since November 2022, 27 meetings have been hosted and 16 QuitCore graduates have enrolled.

Cultural Quit Retreat

Graduates from QuitCore are eligible to join a Cultural Quit Retreat with their families at Métis Crossing for a weekend filled with cultural activities, Métis-inspired cuisine, and connecting to the land, people, and animals. This retreat is a celebration for QuitCore graduates but also an opportunity to connect and learn more about their heritage. Culture may act as a source of strength and resilience on a cessation journey.

Successes:

- July 2022 virtual retreat.
- September 2022 in-person at Métis Crossing.
- March 2023 in-person at Métis Crossing.
- May 2023 in-person at Métis Crossing.
- Coming up September 2023 at Métis Crossing.
- Total of 56 people have attended.

What's Next

- The MNA Tobacco Reduction (TRP) program will continue to run QuitCore monthly and the MNA NRT program quarterly. ChangeCore Peer Support Group will be open to all Métis Citizens and will continue to run once a week. There will be three Quit Retreats hosted every year.
- In addition to maintaining our current programming, the TRP will be:
 - releasing a series of educational videos to help Métis Albertans reduce or quit their commercial tobacco use on their own.
 - designing and implementing a Youth Nicotine Prevention Program.
 - designing and implementing a text message/email motivation support line.
 - piloting a Crash QuitCore that will occur over a two-day period in person and virtual.

Tail Creek Park Development Report

Since the Region acquired what is now Tail Creek Park from the County of Stettler in 2007, it has had the goal of further developing the facilities and the tourism potential of this historic Métis property, which was part of a Métis hivernant community of 400 cabins and 2,000 people in the 1870s.

After preparing a Tourism Development Strategy for the park, the region was able to leverage funding to prepare a Campground Expansion Business Plan in conjunction with Stantec Consulting Ltd.'s Design Narrative. These planning documents were the basis of a funding application to Alberta's Aboriginal Business Investment Fund which had recently become available to Métis applicants, having formerly been restricted to First Nations.

This application secured Alberta government funding to conduct a Site Development Expansion Plan to further support the application.

Recent Developments

This application was successful in obtaining a grant of \$748,000 of a maximum of \$750,000 for further development of Tail Creek Park. The funding is for three key elements including a new facility, campsite development, and shower house renovations.

Current Status

A multi-purpose building has been designed, made up of three separate, but connected custom-designed manufactured buildings which include: a Manager's Residence, a Cultural Interpretive Centre, and a Campground Office/Snack Bar/Convenience and Souvenir Store.

One of the conditions for being issued a building permit requires the filing of a Stormwater Management Plan. This had proven to be a significant obstacle, as no current information on the 1 in a 100-year flood level was available and estimates for a modelling study show the cost was prohibitive. The provincial government undertook a large hydraulic study on the Red Deer River, but the study area ended upriver from the park. Taking data from this study, a second engineering firm was able to determine the 1 in a 100-year flood level and is finalizing its report to be submitted to the County.

Electrical power was added to 13 additional RV sites and water lines were installed at the same time.

The limited capacity of the existing showerhouse was augmented by purchasing three new portable shower/toilets and one new portable double toilet. They are to be installed early in the 2023 season.

The lack of potable water has been a long-standing issue at the park. A used commercial-sized reverse osmosis water system has been purchased and was installed in the spring to provide drinkable water to the guests.

Campground Operations

- Following the 2021 season when camping was restricted to self-contained RVs due to continuing COVID-19 restrictions, the 2022 season was not restricted and the washhouse was open to the public.
- A newer (2008) used pickup truck was added to support campground operations.
- A log splitter was purchased, which more than paid for itself by processing logs for sale as firewood.
- After having experienced a severe ice-jamming event on the Red Deer River in late April of 2020, there was no repeat of this event in either 2021 or 2022.
- The Region allowed the Campground Managers to stay at the park over the off-season again in 2022. This provided a higher level of security, as did the installation of security cameras, and there were no incidents of theft or vandalism.
- Additional storage was added by installing a portable fabric garage.
- Two Métis students gained work experience as Campground Attendants during the summer season.

John Parkins, Project Manager ■

REGION FOUR



Alfred L'Hirondelle
President
Region Four



Gary Gagnon
Vice President
Region Four

President's Report

Since my appointment to President in January 2023, most of my focus has been on sorting out the financials and looking into past and present projects. When I joined the Region 4 Office, I found it renovated and looking great. There were no filing cabinets with documentation or information from the past four years of operation. Upon further investigation, there were no files stored on any computers in the office. I have had to rely on the Region Council (RC) to update me on any information they may remember from past RC meetings. Since these discoveries, I have been pursuing calls to the lawyers, accountants, and other professionals that have been working with or for Region 4.

Dani Martin was hired in February to the Administration Coordinator's position. She began by assisting with returning calls related to the over 200 messages left on the answering machine from Region 4 Citizens. Since that time, Ms. Martin has been performing many duties related to the administration of the office.

The MNA advised the President that there were still limited COVID funds available for Region 4 Citizens. The office worked with the MNA Provincial Office to get 200 Walmart gift cards worth \$200. We focused on providing these cards to our Elders/seniors and families in need.

The Region 4 Office organized to take donations to assist the families who were and continue to be affected by the fires in Region 4. The President also assisted Rupertsland Institute with gathering and delivering supplies to evacuation centers in our area. Our office also connected with the other northern regions to offer our assistance, should they need any support or supplies.

The office received a number of calls regarding partnerships. There were a number of companies that had previous agreements with the region and wanted to continue with them. New companies

called that we had not previously worked with, wanting to establish a partnership, and offering opportunities for jobs for individuals and for Métis businesses in our region.

The office staff continue to work on the region finances with Allen Lee (Region 4 Accountant).

The office has been busy working with EPCOR, City of Edmonton, and Strathcona County, supplying site monitors for ground disturbance work. All the site monitors are from Region 4 and include Elders and Youth.

What's Next

Our office will continue to provide support and opportunities for the Region 4 Citizens. This will include finding jobs for Citizens and for our Citizens that have companies; we are working to help open the door for future contracts with a few of the major industry companies.

We will continue with our work until September, when the Constitution changes our structure. ■



REGION FIVE



Elmer Gullion
President
Region Five



Hilda Lambert
Vice President
Region Five

Leadership Address

Tansii and good day everyone.

On behalf of our Region 5 Council and Elder Herb Anderson, another year has passed and what a spectacular whirlwind of activities moving us forward into an exciting new era before us. Stating it has been a super busy year is an understatement, but as always, we are truly honoured to serve our Citizens and communities in Region 5 on several fronts and in various capacities.

We are so very pleased to better inform our Citizens with all our new updated social media platforms since last August 2022 so our Citizens are always in the know of all our initiatives: cultural events, wellness activities, and ongoing helping programs to assist our Citizens.

Kudos to the Truly Creative Marketing team, along with our Saltmedia team, who update our website for us. We greatly appreciate all their hard work in collaborating with us in a good way, to provide monthly newsletters to our Citizens through quick and easy sign up.

We must acknowledge our dynamic staff, who have worked diligently post-COVID to deliver healing and enrichment programs, which council has designed to assist Métis Citizens in this tough economic climate. We publicly feature any new members to our Region 5 team on our new, updated Facebook page, our new Instagram page, and of course on our webpage. Apparently, we also have our own YouTube to share videos taken at all group and community activities and/or cultural events. We are very proud of our team, our four staff, our Communications support, and a positive Council who work together very efficiently.

We had many wonderful and meaningful opportunities to connect with our people at many events outside our region as well. For example, the Papal Visit at Lac Ste. Anne through sponsorship

from the Métis Nation of Alberta, we were able to bring a handful of Métis Elders to this once-in-a-lifetime event. We also attended Batoche Days, the annual Alberta Métis Fest, and with MNA sponsorship, we could invite our local Indigenous performing artists to showcase their talent at these glorious, fun-filled events for families.

The Métis Nation of Alberta Environment and Climate Change department held one Traditional Plant Walk and one Lake Fish Monitoring event in Region 5 for the past two years. Plant walks were held at Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park each year and the last two lake fish monitoring events (winter of 2022 and 2023) were on Lesser Slave Lake. Traditional plant monitoring activities have also been conducted annually around Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park and Hilliard's Bay.

Thank you, Métis Nation of Alberta and to our Provincial Council colleagues for another year of working together to uplift our people and our communities.

Economic Development

Our Region 5 Economic Development Council works hard to establish added, valuable new partnerships with industry, and seek out further appropriate funding streams to create new employment opportunities and support our pertinent annual regional Métis events and cultural-sharing initiatives such as Métis Week, National Indigenous Peoples Day, and Truth and Reconciliation Day. We plan to host another Métis Business Mixer before fall 2023, as we have not done so since before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leadership and staff work hard to find and leverage funds to host other events by writing proposals to various industry, government, and independent organizations with grants for specific projects or events like Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Day, Sisters in Spirit, Pink Shirt Day, and Orange Shirt Day.

The S-11 Logging three-party partnership company is doing well. In partnership with the Slave Lake Métis Local #19, we have written a proposal for a new community garden project and received permission from the Town of Slave Lake to utilize a specific location. Region 5 will top up or match funds from United Way to successfully complete this project, with further plans to create healthy food boxes next fall. We will utilize local farmers to deliver meat boxes in September to Métis Elders and families on fixed incomes, who are in greater need. Our committed volunteers and summer students deserve all the appreciation, as cleaning garden beds and maintaining them can be rigorous, grueling work in the hot sun. Two team leads from our office and the Slave Lake Local, as volunteers, will team up to organize and ensure plans are on schedule for many "working bees" this summer.

Utilizing funds from our S-11 Trust Account, more repairs and painting renovations are occurring in our building in preparation for Rupertsland Institute (RLI). RLI has committed and signed on to open doors in our adjacent office for another M.E.T.I.S. Centre in Slave Lake this summer. We will host an Open House and grand opening in September 2023.

Sponsorships

Last year in April of 2022, using funds solely from the S-11 Logging Trust Fund, our Region 5 Council approved sponsorship of six families with children registered in Alberta Native Hockey Provincials, as well as two young adult youth registered in Provincial Hockey Leagues. Parents sent in heartwarming letters expressing thanks to our Regional Leadership and Council. It has been a pleasure to be of service in this way each year. One group wrote us a letter requesting sponsorship to assist Métis families in their area with toys and turkeys at Christmastime. Since there is no Métis Local in the McLennan, Donnelly, and Kathleen area, we granted it to the Smoky River Ryders, and they sent us list and a newspaper clipping of their adventures with Santa and (flat deck) sleigh delivering to Elders and single-parent families in their area.

Other ways our Council assisted Citizens with funds from the S-11 Trust account have been through monetary donations to the local food bank, or to specific communities who suffered great loss due to floods or fires. We also hosted a new partnership with the Slave Lake Adult Education committee to host a non-restricted firearms safety course last summer, based on ongoing requests from our Citizens. However, some seats were not filled, and we did not get reimbursed from the trainer for the no-shows. Then, as we learned, this is not our responsibility and the MNA Harvesting team announced they will be hosting and sponsoring these throughout the province.





We look forward to their team visiting our Region to host this course and have urged our Citizens to contact the Harvesting team to be placed on a waiting list.

We have also utilized funds for legal representation towards resolving the ongoing Métis Kathleen land claim, which has been at a standstill for some time due to the land title transfer agreement from the Kathleen Local to the Regional office many years prior to this term, could not be located in any of the office files. However, the process will begin again soon, in light of realizing our new Métis Constitution and in learning about new updates in laws concerning this case, even though the previous Local dissolved and was never reactivated.

Moving forward, we embarked on a unified commitment with Council and staff to do much needed, focused strategic planning and team building just before fall with MNA leadership present. This included work to realize our very own five-year plan, with contingency details pertaining to the trust account, our business partnership funding stream. This Strategic Plan will be made available at the 95th Annual General Assembly at Métis Crossing for Citizens’ review.

One other much needed and exciting endeavour is Region 5 Council’s plans to develop Region 5 Métis student awards and bursaries in the name of Métis Elders who have passed on but were very active and made valuable contributions in our Métis community. These include Sam Sinclair, Mable Courtorielle, Lloyd Norris, and Florence Gullion. These will be announced at our next Regional Annual General Meeting with help from, and in honour of, their family members.

Our partnership company is also the main sponsor of our very own annual Culture Camp for Métis youth and Elders within our region. Region 5 Leadership, staff, Métis Elders, contracted cooks, cultural teachers, and coordinators proudly hosted our 2nd annual Region 5 Culture Camp near Snipe Lake for nine Métis youth and several visitors

in mid-August 2022. We want to acknowledge and thank the main facilitators who helped make this a reality last year, Mr. Jamie Chalifoux and his Elder helper, Herman Sutherland. In July of 2023, we hosted the next one at the Northern Lakes College Wilderness Campus in Marten Hills for up to 20 youth, opening it to all Métis youth in Alberta.

Marshi, Merci, Kinanaskomitin!

Executive Director Report

Tansi, and greetings from Region 5.

Wow, I can’t believe it’s time to write another Annual Report. Region 5 has been busy this past fiscal year assisting the Métis Citizens in our area.

Through funding from the Métis Nation of Alberta, we were able to continue providing support to Region 5 Métis Citizens through our COVID-19 Food Support and Utility Relief Programs.

Post COVID-19 Report

With the announcement that the global pandemic was “nearing the end” and the world was moving towards an endemic, the final COVID-19 funding was received. Below is a table highlighting the expenditures for this funding allotment.

In addition to the Food Supports and Utility Relief payments, Region 5 was able to offer workshops,

FOOD SUPPORT INITIATIVE

Month (2023)	Number of Citizens Assisted
January	181
February	262
March	246
May	251
Total Food Supports Issued	940

UTILITY RELIEF PAYMENT

Program	Patients	Amount
Final Utility Relief Payment	217	\$150
Total	217	\$32,550

programs, and additional services to our Métis Citizens, which Barbara Emmrich, our Métis Wellness Coordinator will speak to in her report.

Through additional funding from outside sources such as TC Energy, Canada Heritage Fund, United Way, CNRL, and the Family Violence Prevention Program, we were able to offer some additional activities to our Region 5 Citizens.

Community Events and Activities

In June 2022, we were also invited to attend and assist Slave Lake Veneer in setting up a tipi on their production grounds for the month of June, as they recognize June as National Indigenous People's Month. Slave Lake Veneer sets the tipi up on June 1, and it remains standing until the first snow fall.

On June 18, 2022, Region 5 hosted its 1st Annual National Indigenous People's Day. We chose to host the event on a Saturday, as this provided an opportunity for families to attend and participate together. This event was an excellent opportunity for us to showcase our vibrant, proud culture. The event was well attended by many people in our community and included Métis artists such as the Rocky Walker Band, the Métis Child and Family Service Dancers, and Alfred Mitchell. We also extended an invitation to the Young, Wild, and Cree Drum Group and Traditional Indigenous Dancers to take part in our day. We had facepainting and a craft table set up for the children and youth. Region 5 would like to acknowledge the Town of Slave Lake, Sobeys, A&W, McDonald's, and Boston Pizza. In addition to this, we had volunteers from Slave Lake Veneer and other community members in our Region to help make our day successful.

In August 2022, Region 5 hosted our 2nd Annual Youth Camp. The camp was situated near Snipe Lake, and the youth participants had the opportunity to take part in land-based teachings. Their week-long camp started with the youth setting up trappers tents, hide tanning stations, and racks to smoke fish. The youth participated in cleaning and de-scaling fish, filleting fish, preparing it for smoking. They also prepped the fish scales for fish scale art, and later that evening they created beautiful works of art. The youth learned about proper protocol on harvesting medicines and picking berries. Again, at the end of the day, the youth were taught the value of learning and hard work, as they were treated to a fresh, homemade saskatoon berry pie made from their harvest. Each night the youth ended their day with a sharing circle with the Elders.

In September, the Region 5 Regional Council and staff attended a strategic planning session in Canmore. The session was facilitated by Robert Breaker, and Leadership and staff worked together to create a Métis Nation of Alberta Region 5 Board of Directors Strategic Plan.

During our planning session, we also created an updated Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and new Value Statements. The Strategic Planning Document will be shared on our Region 5 website.

Region 5 has been able to establish an excellent working rapport with the Town of Slave Lake. In recognition of the truth and reconciliation process, the Town of Slave Lake agreed to Region 5 painting two separate crosswalks to bring a greater awareness to "Every Child Matters" and the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) initiatives in Canada. Both crosswalks were strategically placed in high-traffic areas located close to the Region 5 Office.

On September 30, 2022, Region 5 participated in the "Every Child Matters" walk for Orange Shirt Day. This event is hosted annually with the Town of Slave Lake, Slave Lake Native Friendship Centre, and Region 5.

Region 5 hosted our first annual Sisters In Spirit Walk and Candlelight Vigil in Slave Lake on October 4, 2022. Participants walked from Town Hall to Rennie Hall Plaza where participants were provided with statistics and information on MMIWG in Canada and around the world. A moment of silence was observed, and our evening concluded with a social gathering with dainties, coffee, tea, and an opportunity to visit with each other at the Regional Office.

Region 5 observed Métis Week in November by hosting events during the week. We kicked off Métis Week with an open house at the Regional Office. Region 5 Citizens who attended were served fresh beef stew, homemade chicken noodle soup, and fresh, piping hot bannock. On Wednesday, November 16, 2022, the MNA flag was flown at City Hall. Even though the weather was quite crisp, a small crowd gathered to take part in the flag raising and to enjoy some coffee and cake. Region 5 closed off Métis Week by hosting our Annual General Meeting (AGM). The meeting was well attended with 87 voting members in attendance. During the meeting, the Citizens were



provided with updates from each staff member. Reports were presented from staff and Leadership, as well as Ruben Jeffries, chartered professional accountant from Kingston Ross Pasnak, who presented the financial statements for 2020 and 2021. We wrapped up our AGM with a banquet and a dance. During the banquet, we honoured four Métis Elders for their hard work, dedication, knowledge, and contributions to Region 5. The four Elders selected for recognition were Margaret “Chilly” Davies, Pearl Sandor, the late Nora Chapdelaine, and the late Dwayne Calliou. It was an amazing event, and we cannot wait until this year’s!

In December, Region 5 hosted a Christmas dinner for Region 5 Citizens. The Citizens enjoyed a full Christmas dinner of turkey, ham, potatoes, gravy, stuffing, and all the fixings. This event was very well attended, and we say approximately 120 people attended. We had a special guest appearance by Santa Claus, who brought gifts and candy bags for the children. The Region 5 Citizens that applied also received a gift card for Sobeys or Freson Bros., along with a voucher for a turkey or ham to assist them with their Christmas dinner.

In closing, 2022 was an exciting and busy year for the staff, Leadership and Métis Citizens of Region 5. I would like to thank and congratulate the Region 5 team and volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the Métis Citizens, and for giving me the opportunity to work with them in providing these needed services.

Sincerely,

Brenda Genaille, Region 5 Executive Director

Métis Wellness Report

In the post-COVID Wellness Program, we completed 10 workshops, as well as various other activities that will be explained in this report.

Our workshops this past year included:

- Dreamcatcher workshop
- Moccasin making
- Sweat Lodge and reiki energy healing
- Medicine bag making
- Métis dot art
- Ribbon skirt sewing, 3 sessions
- Traditional star teachings
- Reiki energy healing

We have a variety of facilitators who were kind enough to share their knowledge and teachings with us, including

Jamie Chalifoux, Jennifer Anderson, Marcel Desjarlais, Amanda Wanotch, Bonnie Lamouche, Rita Gullion, and Wilfred Buck. We were able to offer workshops in other communities this year as COVID restrictions were finally lifted. We went to High Prairie and Wabasca to offer Citizens in all areas of our region the chance to participate. Our Citizens enjoyed the chance to gather and visit, eat, and learn skills traditional to our culture.

In addition to the workshops, our funding allowed us to run the grocery card program again. From April to end of July, we used up funds from the previous year in the Ki-Miyo-Machion Métis Mental Health and Wellness Program and supplied grocery and some gas cards to Métis Citizens in greater need. Over the five months, we distributed 185 \$200 Sobeys cards, 164 \$100 Freson Bros. cards and 69 gas cards.

We had funds again in January to assist our Métis Citizens and from January to April we distributed 622 \$100 Sobeys cards and 318 \$100 Freson Bros cards. We also handed out 217 utility relief cheques in the amount of \$150 each to eligible applicants.

With wildfires in the area, we helped out by giving grocery cards to affected Citizens, as many as we could. The number of cards distributed was not available by publication.

Some of the other events we organized or participated in over the year were:

- Métis Indigenous Day – June 18, 2022
- Youth Culture Camp – August 15-19, 2022
- School Supply program – August 2022
- Every Child Matters Walk in solidarity with members of the community and Slave Lake Native Friendship Centre – September 30, 2022
- Sisters In Spirit Walk and Candlelight Vigil – October 4, 2022
- Métis Week – November 14-18 culminating in the AGM on November 19, 2022
- Christmas Dinner and Giveaway – December 11, 2022

The Culture Camp is a project we are very proud of. The camp was held at the property of the Chalifoux/Fisher family near Snipe Lake. There were eight youth involved. Four facilitators were on hand to teach moosehide tanning and cleaning, smoking fresh fish, medicine and berry picking, fish scale art, and birch bark biting.

We had demonstrations of hand drum making, learned a little about the stars, and listened and shared stories around the fire each night. We learned to play traditional hand games, which the whole group of campers enjoyed. The food was prepared by Valene and Nancy

Fisher, which was very filling and delicious. Other Elders came to do some teaching and stayed to visit. This was a very successful and enjoyable week spent with our regional youth.

It has been a very busy and engaging year, a year where we have had the opportunity and pleasure to meet people from all over the region and the province. I look forward to continuing serving the people of Region 5.

Barbara Emmrich, Region 5 Outreach Support Worker

Youth Coordinator Report

Danielle (Dani) Gillis was our Regional Youth Coordinator for part of last year, and we were sad to see her go, but she was needed back home in Grande Prairie, Region 6 area. Youth in our area miss her dearly as well. These are some of the many activities Dani coordinated with local cultural artisans out of our office, in other communities, or via online instruction. Dani was very talented artistically and taught some of these workshops on her own.

- Moccasin workshop
- Beading with Bonnie
- Métis dot art for Region 5 Citizens
- Youth hangouts in house: Métis dot art, fish scale art with Pearl Sandor, medicine hearts
- Virtual Programs since late March 2022:
- Métis dot art paint night
- Watercolour traditional plants paint night
- Poetry workshop
- Yoga 101
- Yoga practice series
- Emotional freedom techniques
- Art therapy experience
- Herb garden starter kits

We were fortunate to have Kelsey Hordal join us a few months later and she jumped right in, not missing a beat by planning new and exciting activities.

The youth were also very pleased to have weekly hangouts again beginning in the new year, and have gotten to know one another well. They had the opportunity to sit in on Star Teachings with Wilfred Buck, in partnership with our Region booking the event, and this had an awesome turnout in Slave Lake. We hosted it at the Legacy Centre and it made for some really interesting learning.



Kelsey reports the weekly youth group is going well, though the group is small but growing, as there are four to six youth who attend regularly on Fridays. They usually eat dinner and do a craft such as air-dry clay or painting.

The beaded keychain event went very well and was well received. The art club at St. Francis catholic school is beginning soon, and Kelsey planned another Métis dot art class plus a two-part air-dry clay class. Kelsey will continue to attend the art club a few times a month this spring and summer, as she works with our team to build on her cultural artisans' resource list for other upcoming crafting sessions.



MNA Region 5 Consultation Coordinator Walter Andreeff.

Regional Consultation Coordinator Report

Region 5 Consultation Matters

This will be my final report for the MNA Region 5 Consultation office. After September 19, 2023 we will be called the Lesser Slave Lake Métis District consultation office. I've really enjoyed the support of the Regional Consultation Committee (RCC) over the past five years and all the leadership they have provided in managing my activities. I've reviewed many industrial oil and gas projects and forestry projects over the 2022/2023 reporting year and undertook work activities in the bush looking at pipeline installations, oil spills, and pipeline construction projects. I've placed some of our qualified Métis people on the job to undertake caribou monitoring and pipeline construction monitoring over the past year.

Three years ago, the MNA Region 5 presented our Credible Assertion Process and Criteria Application (CAPCA) to the Alberta Ministry of Indigenous Relations. In developing our application and through our work with our contractor, Region 5 had developed several maps and wrote a report showing large areas in and around Region 5 where our Citizens hunt and fish, and where we practice our harvesting and cultural activities. It was delivered to the Ministry in February 2021. The MNA believes a Credible Assertion decision by the Government of Alberta would ensure our Lesser Slave Lake Métis community is properly and justly consulted on projects that could impact our Indigenous right to hunt and fish. To date, the Government of Alberta has not approved our application.

TC Energy has been a willing partner in working with our office this past year. Our Economic Development Corporation (EDC) has worked with TC Energy to provide some of our contractor service partners with opportunities to work on the NCC Red Earth Loop 3 Pipeline Project north of Red Earth. As a result, EDC has received funds for these partners to grow the business, but some funds have also be used for regional council projects. Our Region 5 leadership and the EDC work in partnership with other Indigenous groups and municipal governments. For example, we have one First Nation contractor partner who works out of Maskwacis and another who works under agreement with MNA Region 3.

The members of the MNA Region 5 Regional Consultation Committee (RCC) are Region 5 President Elmer Gullion, Vice President Hilda Lambert, Wabasca Métis Local 90 President Diane Kim Peredery, Slave Lake Métis Local 19 President Shane Combs, and Local 19 Vice President Susan Cunningham.



MNA Region 5 receives a friendship gift from former Slave Lake mayor Tyler Warman.



Susan Cunningham and Diane Kim Peredery gather Labrador tea leaves on their tour of the pipeline right of way.



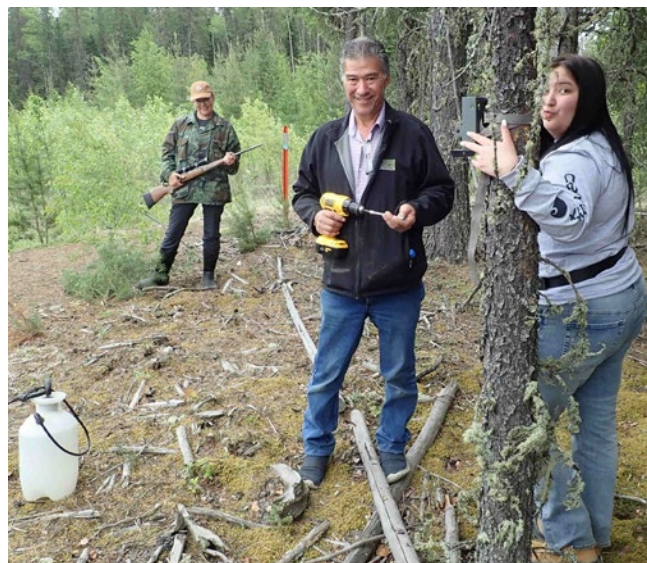
Diane Peredery and Shane Combs share a laugh with VP Hilda Lambert during a break at the Canadian Energy Regulator-Indigenous Leadership meeting.

The RCC have met several times over the past 12 months to discuss Métis rights, court documents involving consultation, regional industrial projects, oil company site visits, and economic development. We work together to bring better opportunities to Region 5 and look after Métis rights for the Citizens of Region 5.

This winter, we were fortunate to take the RCC on a field tour with TC Energy personnel to view the completed Red Earth Loop 3 pipeline, and physically inspect the pipeline's right of way and area where the 48-inch gas pipe was installed underneath the Loon River using a high-density drill.

In early 2023, several of our Region 5 leaders travelled to Edmonton for a Canadian Energy Regulator (CER)-Indigenous Leadership meeting to discuss co-developing a procedure to increase Indigenous involvement in the CER's regulation compliance and oversight of the TC Energy's North Corridor Expansion Project.

Region 5 is part of the TC Energy Indigenous Working Group (IWG) for the Red Earth Caribou Range. The representatives on the committee are Jamie Chalifoux and me. This winter, the region implemented a Community-Based Caribou Monitoring Initiative to inform our Citizens about the program and identify and gather information on cultural and environmental indicators in Métis Traditional Land Use Areas (TLUAs) where caribou may live.



Installing wildlife cameras in the Red Earth Caribou Range. (L-R) Diane Peredery on bear watch, Randal Noskiye (First Nation trapper), and Métis youth Danika Cunningham assisting.

We also installed 18 wildlife cameras on two traplines inside the Red Earth Caribou range. Over the next couple of years, we'll gather and analyze data from each camera to show caribou presence and other notable indicators within these areas.

I also sit on the National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium as the MNA Region 5 representative. I'm still working on the Indigenous Circle of Experts with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) to assist in drafting a discussion paper on Indigenous Co-Administration Agreements. The paper is almost completed and should be published in the winter of 2023. I've also been appointed to the national Indigenous Advisory Committee with IAAC. Both committees develop regulations through IAAC for Indigenous involvement in large projects that could impact Indigenous people. If you want to learn more, go check out canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/programs/participation-indigenous-peoples.html.

This concludes my report but if you have further questions, please call me at (780) 380-1468 or email wandreeff@metis.org.

Walter Andreeff, Regional Consultation Coordinator ■

REGION SIX



Carol Ridsdale
President
Region Six



Barry Dobb
Vice President
Region Six

President's Report

Greetings Region 6 Métis Citizens.

I am honoured to present this report to you all, for the fiscal year 2022/2023. As you are aware, we have been working tirelessly in our office to meet the needs of our Métis Citizens across Region 6. It is an exciting time for us all as this will be the last time a report is written for the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 6.

As you all know, we are transitioning into our new Otipemisiwak Métis Government, and I am thrilled to be a part of that process. It is so amazing that a process started by our ancestors will be accomplished in our lifetime. This has been something that the MNA has worked on for many years. We are truly making history with the progress we have made in our work towards self-government. It is humbling to realize the hard work is now paying off. We are so close to achieving our goals of self-government.

The approval of our Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution followed the biggest ratification by an Indigenous nation in Canada's history. I am so proud of us, over 15,000 Métis Nation of Alberta Citizens let their voices be heard, and 97.7 per cent voted "yes" to moving forward with our new government. This historic vote creates a new financial relationship with the Government of Canada and will help to make sure we can best support our Citizens, and our voice is heard and acknowledged federally on an ongoing basis. It will truly be a government-to-government relationship going forward.

I want to especially thank President Audrey Poitras and her team for all their hard work achieving and bringing our nation to this moment, and for her 27 years of service. She's been in every one of our communities, and always made her work about us. Audrey is an irreplaceable visionary, and I feel so fortunate to have worked under her leadership. We have made history together, taking our rightful

place in this country as the Métis Nation of Alberta. I thank her and honour her.

The past several years have been very difficult for so many reasons. We have faced challenges in our region such as fires, floods, and worldwide pandemics. We have overcome these challenges by working hard to get our Citizens the financial assistance they needed and the support required to meet their everyday struggles: loss of work, medical assistance, money for groceries and gas, and the list goes on. It has been difficult yet rewarding, at the same time, meeting these challenges. Witnessing how our Citizens pull together in times of crisis is truly inspiring. I am proud to be Métis, and I am so proud of our Métis Citizens for everything they do. Myself, Regional Council, and our Region 6 staff are here for you, and I am humbled to continue to work hard to make sure our Métis people are getting the services and programs, along with opportunities, they require and deserve.

On our journey towards self-government and the important work of transitioning into our new Otipemisiwak Métis Government is taking time and careful planning, and as such, a lot of important work has been done to make this happen. I encourage all our Citizens to get involved in any capacity you can to help make this a reality. I thank all our Citizens that voted “yes” to moving forward, also for those who voted “yes” to approve the bylaw changes needed to start our elections process in the new government model. So much work is being done by so many people to bring this transition into reality. We will be hosting more community engagements explaining how the Transition Plan will support Region 6 Council to become three District Councils and what will

be required to make that happen. We have information on the MNA website about the Constitution, and the Transition Committee, the Election process, and each step will be posted accordingly. I encourage our Citizens to go to mnaconstitution.com and read the news the MNA is posting and to get in touch if you have questions. We are more than happy to explain and assist Citizens in understanding and supporting the process.

The past year has been a busy one for me as President of our Region. As you know, we have put on many events for our Citizens, Elders, and youth, as follows:

- Elders Valentine’s Party
- Elders St. Patrick’s Day Party and Bingo
- Family Easter Party
- Mother’s Day Basket Draw
- National Aboriginal Day events
- Back to Batoche and Lac Ste. Anne
- Métis Nation of Alberta Annual General Assembly
- Orange Shirt Day event
- Missing and Murdered Women and Girl’s memorial walks
- Family Halloween Party and gathering
- Métis Week celebrations
- Family Christmas Party
- Many events by the MNA Provincial Office we sent youth and elders to.





We also continue to provide bereavements for families in need, and we thank the MNA for contributing this support. The MNA has an annual golf tournament in June to raise money for this fund and Region 6 always donates and sends Region 6 Citizens to participate. This year we are excited to announce that we will be hosting our 1st Annual Region 6 Golf Tournament at the Mighty Peace Golf Course. All proceeds for this will go towards our Marina Brothers Bursary and Ruth Kidder Bursary, which funds 12 college and university Métis students from Region 6 with \$1,000 each to support their academic success.

Region 6 has provided donations to families taking their children and youth to Native Hockey Provincials, basketball, rodeo, and volleyball sports tournaments. We will continue to support our youth in these endeavours as it is important for their well-being, strength, and leadership within our communities.

Community Consultation:

Region 6 has been actively engaging in consultation and engagement activities, emphasizing the importance of building relationships and growing capacity. Over the last year, we have successfully established working relationships with industry and government and received financial support, enabling our participation in significant projects such as the NEBC Connector project and the TC Energy North Central Corridor Loop project. Through these endeavours, Region 6 has demonstrated its capacity to foster collaboration and achieve noteworthy outcomes under the leadership of the region and shown a commitment to the protection of Métis rights, claims, and interests.

Over the course of the year, we have secured capacity funding that has supported involvement in projects that align with the interests and priorities of the Region 6 community, including foundational discussions in developing monitoring capacity and opportunities in the region across multiple TC Energy projects, and participation in the Chinchaga Caribou Range Plan Task Force. Region 6 has also been proactive in recognizing, documenting, and honouring Traditional Knowledge by conducting research in collaboration with MNA Provincial Office and incorporating Indigenous perspectives into decision-making processes. By actively engaging in consultation and effectively utilizing available resources, Region 6 continues to make strides towards promoting the well-being of Métis people and ensuring their voices are heard in the consultation process. This work will continue throughout the transition to the new Otipemisiwak Métis Government and would not be possible without the highly-engaged Métis Citizens who make up the Region 6 community.





If you have questions about consultation or are interested in opportunities to participate in the consultation process, please reach out to the Consultation Department at consultation@metis.org or the Director of Consultation, Theo Peters at tpeters@metis.org.

Transition Committee

As we transition into our government, we have two Region 6 Citizens on the Transition Committee. We thank them for the hard work they do and dedication. Our representatives are Pat Brothers and Camellia Ridsdale, who will continue to represent our region in this important work going forward.

Region 6 will be now known as the Peace River Territory and will have six elected political representatives. There will be three District Captains in each territory to handle the administrative needs in each district office. We will see more of what this looks like during our Citizen engagements and transition plan that is being drafted and presented very soon. We will also have three elected leaders called Citizen's Representatives to represent our Citizens within our new government.

The north will continue to have strong voices to represent us, and they will make sure our unique needs are brought forward and met. Districts will also be renamed by the communities and given a traditional name of the Métis Citizens' choosing.

Our Regional Council held strategic planning sessions for our community leaders to determine important areas across the region that need to be addressed. We have also discussed the entities within our region that are collectively owned by our current government structure,

and we have identified or made suggestions as to how those assets can transition. We met with our Transition Committee members to make sure they are aware of how we want to retain autonomy over our own earned resources going forward. We have been assured that all assets, land, companies, and resources we currently have will stay with the Peace River Territory for the three districts to inherit so the needs of Citizens in the north are being met. This is something that will be explained in community engagements and meetings going forward. In our new government, we will have significant core capacity to fully staff our district offices to continue to run programs and services more effectively.

So, in addition to maintaining the services we currently provide, I have also attended meetings federally to speak to Members of Parliament and ask for their support of our self-government legislation in Ottawa, for our Otipemisiwak Métis Government. We now have a bill before Parliament, Bill C-57, that had gone through two readings on June 21, National Indigenous Peoples Day. The bill will be going through third reading in September 2023, and then will be presented to the Senate for final reading, which is the final step for implementation of our self-government legislation.

Community events we have supported:

- Elders Tent at the Peace River Annual Pow Wow and in Grande Prairie
- Missing and Murdered Women's memorial walks
- National Indigenous Peoples Day
- Sashes for Grade 12 Métis graduates presented at graduation ceremonies



- Region 6 women's gatherings and workshops: capote making, beaded hats, etc.
- Ice Fishing for youth and families
- Residential School gatherings across Region 6
- Winter Carnival Princess Pageant in Fort Vermilion
- Music and Art Retreat in Buttertown
- And many more...
- Upcoming: National Indigenous Veterans Day on November 8, 2023

Region 6 had a successful Annual General Meeting at Camp Artaban in October 2022 and was very well attended. We not only had the indoor meeting space, but we also had a large outdoor space for cultural activities such as dry meat making with an Elder from Manning Métis Local. We had traditional Métis beading and much more. Our Regional Report and financials were well received by our Citizens and passed. We thank everyone for their attendance to hear your voices in all that we do together. The entertainment and food were amazing.

We continue to support those of our community facing displacement because of floods and fires. Thank you to all who volunteered to help during these crises. We have had continued support from the Rupertsland Institute as they filled buses with supplies for our people in need. We thank our partners in industry for their donations: Bison & Flint, TC Energy, and many others. Big shout out to Nipiy Industries for bringing supplies to the northern communities of Manning, Paddle Prairie, High Level for the evacuees.

Our Elders had many opportunities this past year to participate in events, and to sit down with community members – especially our youth – and share their stories and wisdom. We are well into the gardening season with our greenhouse and raised garden initiative. We can't wait to share the harvest with our Elders! We also hosted an Elder gathering out at Métis Crossing for our Region 6 Residential School survivors to gather stories that will be published in a book and translated to Cree and Michif – very exciting projects for our Elders. We thank Lorna Dancey for all her hard work in our community and her photography and writing. Lorna's family is from Fort Vermilion and she is a Lizotte.

As the next year unfolds, I remain committed to meeting the needs of our Métis Citizens in Region 6. I'm looking forward to improving how we communicate with our Citizens, making sure that we use all the strategies we can to successfully reach everyone and make sure they know about the services, supports, and fantastic events that are available to them. I am also looking forward to seeing our citizenship continue to increase as our Citizens see the pride we have as Métis, and the opportunities that are available to all Métis Citizens.

Thank You

I need to express my gratitude to all of our Métis Citizens. In the last five years, I've seen nothing but growth with our Knowledge Holder engagement, and Métis families continually being involved. We have many Métis businesses in the north getting opportunities that were not available to them in times past. I can't say enough

about the Métis people, the youth, and the Elders. Thank you for all you're contributing.

During COVID, we received additional federal funding. We were able to show again how beneficial citizenship was and added many Citizens whom we were able to really help when they needed it. I want to give a big shout out to Director of Métis Identification and Registry Systems, Shawn McKay and his department staff for all the hard work and dedication to our people in the north.

I would like to thank our Regional Council and Barry Dibb, Region 6 Vice President, and the amazing staff at Region 6. Without them, we would not have been able to accomplish all that we have in the past year. Our team care so much about our Citizens, and they're always ready to do even more to support them, to literally going over and above. Running a region with almost 5,000 Citizens is a lot of work, and much of that work falls back on the staff. Thank you, every one of you for the work you do for our Métis Citizens.

The Local Presidents and Vice Presidents are also doing amazing work, and they're all volunteering their time to support their Locals. I'd like to change this in the future, because what they're doing is essential to our region. Be sure to thank them for all the work they're doing the next time you see them!

Again thank you to Barry, Vice President for his ongoing efforts to assist with Region 6's work with TC Energy. It continues to generate funding and employment opportunities for our Citizens. We ensure our partners and connections are always referred to TC Energy whenever a new opportunity arises, and this is benefiting many Métis businesses that operate across our region.

We want to thank Manning Local's Vice President Doug Tremblay for working together with us to connect Region 6 with the companies and information we need so our companies can successfully bid on projects.

Hiy Hiy

Carol Ridsdale, Region 6 President



Vice President's Report

As the Vice President of Region 6, I am happy to thank our Métis Citizens who continue to work so hard with our Economic Development office to ensure our region prospers and has economic and employment security.

We continue to maintain joint ventures in Region 6 with the following companies:

- Mur-Cal Services Ltd.
- Mountainview Safety Services
- Attack Oilfield Services Inc.
- Precision Services Ltd.
- A.O.S. Services Ltd.
- West Suncor Energy
- Flint Energy (Bison Contracting LP)
- Febu Outdoors Ltd.
- DFI Piling
- G Enterprises Ltd.
- D&M Contracting
- NCSG/Nesokmhatah LP.
- Meston Group

As the MNA moves forward as a nation, we'll have many more opportunities through the federal government and have access to all the information we need to bid successfully on projects. We'll also have the government mandate to be included in projects and more corporations will be open to working with us. It's important to note that TransCanada and Keyera are already reaching out to us. They know it's good business to include Métis Regions, Locals, and businesses in their contracts and they're taking the initiative to negotiate early with us.





Some of the big pipelines are now in, but there's still many opportunities for Region 6 as the feeder pipelines get added. We're here to support our region to successfully bid on these contracts.

Once the Otipemisiwak Métis Government is implemented, we'll be taking another huge step forward as a nation and a region. It will require the Alberta government to send us all the information about developments, and we'll be able to reach out to companies directly to get the information we need to bid properly.

I'm so proud of our nation. We have 60,000 cardholders across Alberta, including nearly 5,000 in our region. Every event that takes place, all the cultural and traditional things, all the support, I've never seen anything like it. I'm committed to helping to keep this going. Our traditions are important, and we want to grow on this and expand.

Barry Dibb, Region 6 Vice President

Housing and Tenant Relations Officer Report

We have a new Housing and Tenant Relations Officer who is familiarizing herself with the role, and working hard to ensure the housing needs of the region are met, and that our Citizens are accessing all the support available to them.

Youth Report

We had a youth camp in Peace River at Peace River Cabins and Outdoors. We had 10 youth from across the region come and engage in fun cultural activities. Some of the activities included drum making, jigging lessons, canoeing, fish scale art, horseback riding, and Alex Kusturok came down to do a fiddling performance. We got very good feedback from the youth and Elders in attendance.

We had two excursions over the winter where we brought out 10 youth and families (per trip) to ice fish along Slave Lake. We got good feedback from the youth and families in attendance. Lots of people caught fish. The excursions were facilitated by Matthew Campbell and Clayton Cardinal.

Elders Report

Region 6 Elders gathered at Métis Crossing to share their stories of survival and resiliency. Their stories were captured by a videographer throughout the weekend. We also got a residential school grant, and we were able to give a portion to each Métis Local in Region 6 to use for programming for Métis people (Elders and younger people) who have been impacted by residential schools. Many of the Locals did cultural workshops.



Post-COVID Programs

We continued to provide COVID relief through grocery gift cards, assistance with medical travel, small business assistance, and sport and recreation programs. We also provided traditional medicine opportunities for healing: sweat lodge, energy healing sessions, and sacred circles to talk and support one another.



Local 78 Annual Report

July 2022:

- Partnered with Region 6 in hosting a Métis Youth Culture Camp.
- Volunteers worked a casino in Grande Prairie.

August 2022:

- A youth representative from our Local attended the Annual General Assembly in Calgary.

October 2022:

- Partnered with Region 6 in planning and participating in the Region 6 Annual General Meeting held at Camp Artaban.

November 2022:

- Hosted an event in honour of Métis Week in Peace River. Cassandra Vreeling opened the evening with singing the Métis National Anthem.
- Held an Open House during Métis Week.

December 2022:

- Made Christmas trays filled with baked goodies for Elders, and each Elder was given a Christmas present donated by another organization.

February 2023:

- Held six sessions for families affected by Residential Schools, from February 2023 to the end April 2023. The sessions were:
 - Hat beading, ribbon-skirt making, Métis apron/ table runner/placemat making, blanket exercise, star-quilt making, and beaded-earring making.

April 2023:

- Gave out \$5,000 worth of grocery cards (\$200 each) for COVID relief.

May 2023:

- Donated \$1,000 toward a Vision Quest held May 1-5 at Camp Artaban.

June 2023:

- Partnered with Region 6 in hosting an Open House on June 16 at the Region 6 office in Peace River.

July 2023:

- From July 21-23, partnered with Region 6 in hosting another Métis Youth Camp held at Camp Artaban.

Tansi!!

Carol Wanotch, Métis Local 78 President

Manning Local 2020 Report

It is with great pride I provide the following achievements our Manning Métis Local 2020 Board provided throughout this fiscal year. We are so pleased with the many partnerships, programs, events, and activities we had provided in moving our Métis Citizens forward in Métis culture.

We have worked very hard to come to a place where we are building momentum in keeping with our traditions and culture. With continued support from Region 6 and grants that we obtained, we provided the below supports.

Key Highlights:

- Provided financial assistance for our Citizens to get to their medical appointments
- Every Child Matters events within our schools and community
- Residential School Survivor's project
- Elders' Gatherings
- Beading sessions
- Moccasin-making sessions
- Ribbon-Skirt sessions
- Métis flag-raising ceremony
- Medicine Wheel workshop
- Assisting with medical accommodations through MNA resources
- National Indigenous People's Day event
- Supported Vision Quest camp
- Dry meat-making demonstrations
- Supported evacuees who were displaced
- Collective Kitchens sessions in partnership with community organizations
- Recognizing and honouring Indigenous graduates
- Participated in Remembrance Day ceremony
- Tipi teachings in partnership with schools
- Actively promoting Regions 6 and MNA services and programs to our Métis Citizens
- Monthly Board meetings

Sincerely,

Georgina Supernault, Manning Métis Local 2020 President



Valleyview Métis Local 1929 Report

The Valleyview Métis Local 1929 had a busy year. Last summer, we held several cultural evenings including beading and ribbon-skirt making. We attended the Region 6 AGM on October 1, 2022 at Camp Artaban, which recognized Pat Brothers, our local treasurer, for his years of service with the Métis Nation. Pat Brothers is now on the Transition Committee.

Tracy Brown, Local 1929 President, attended the Métis National Council in Vancouver. From November 1-31, we participated in making history with the Métis Constitution vote. Two local college youths completed a presentation on Métis scholarships in November 2022. Louis Riel Day was celebrated with a supper for our Citizens on November 16.

The Youth and Seniors Gatherings in February 2023 was a wonderful event to be part of. We held our Valleyview AGM on March 25 with a luncheon, and we had a very nice turnout. The month of March was dedicated to the Residential School Survivor Project with weekly gatherings to share stories, video presentations, and connect with our culture.

Since April, every Wednesday evening we hosted a craft event. Citizens have made everything from beaded earrings, fish scale art, Métis dot art, ribbon skirts, moccasins, and dream catchers. These events will continue, and we plan to host a showcase on Saturday, August 19 to share and display our projects.

On June 2, 2023, we held a tipi raising at our office with a barbecue, and the event was well attended.

Over the past year, we have continued to build our local Métis community. Everyone enjoys and feels welcome in our Métis building that is slowly being decorated with local artwork. Métis Local 1929 has also employed a summer student, Reegan Sandbeck, funded by the Rupertsland Institute.

Sincerely,

Tracy Brown, Valleyview Local 1929 President

Fairview Local Annual Report

We've spent the 2022/2023 fiscal year serving and supporting our Citizens through various programs:

Summer 2022:

- Used COVID funds to provide grocery gift cards and \$150 cheques

August – September 2022:

- Partnered with youth for their Possession and Acquisition License (PAL) license
- Distributed more gift cards

December 2022:

- Purchased beef from Métis youth to distribute to our Citizens along with gift cards
- Had a Christmas supper and handed out 20 turkeys
- Helped Elders with firewood throughout the cold winter

February 2023:

- Distributed gift cards
- April 2023
- Delivered supplies to wildfire evacuees

Sincerely,

Kevin Watchorn, Fairview Local President



Conclusion

Region 6 will be proudly moving forward as part of the Métis Nation within Alberta in the next year. We will continue initiatives that provide our youth with meaningful cultural experiences and learning that supports them as they grow into the next generation of Métis.

We will again host our annual Youth and Elder's Gatherings, our AGM in the fall, and events for our entire region – including a much-anticipated Region 6 Métis Festival July 7 and 8, 2023. We showcased Métis entertainers from across Region 6 and Alberta. We invited our Métis artisans to come and sell their cultural items that they worked so hard making throughout the year. We had the best Métis cooks to come feed everyone a delicious traditional meal of moose meat stew and bannock.

We will continue to work with the companies we have joint venture agreements or memorandums of understanding with, and we will pursue further economic development and advancement that benefits our region.

In late summer and early fall, we'll see the first harvest from our greenhouse and raised garden initiative, with the food going to our Elders. This will set us up for growing even more produce next year and addressing food insecurity from within our region.

These are exciting times for our people! Enjoy the AGA with your families. Métis Crossing is a truly wondrous traditional place for our people.

From all of us at Region 6, sending prayers, love, and kindness. ■





AFFILIATE REPORTS

Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc.

History

Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. (AMDI) was created in 1984 under a federal government contribution agreement with Native Economic Development Program, an initiative promoted by Industry, Science and Technology. The total committed funds for the creation of AMDI was \$8.8 million.

In 1988, AMDI commenced operations by providing commercial financial services and business management advisory services to Métis entrepreneurs throughout Alberta. Under the original Federal Government Contribution Agreement, \$800,000 was expensed on the initial start-up costs while the capital pool of \$8 million was disbursed in stages.

AMDI has lent out over \$100 million since 1988 and helped in the creation of over 1,400 Métis-owned businesses throughout the province of Alberta, while maintaining our capital base of \$8 million. By remaining committed to the growth of Métis business and prosperity in Alberta, AMDI has become an intergenerational service provider as the children (now adults) of clients we assisted long ago now approach AMDI as their parents once did. We are proud of what AMDI has accomplished in this respect in that we have clearly supported Métis entrepreneurship through all their successes, difficulties, and uncertainties. We remain relevant to Métis people – shedding the notion of just being a lender of last resort – we imagine it is what the framers had envisioned. The purpose of AMDI has always been to assist the Métis men and women of Alberta in developing economic opportunities through entrepreneurship. It is our hope that our clients, past and present, pass on their experience with us to other Métis entrepreneurs who may be considering first steps to becoming owners of their own business.



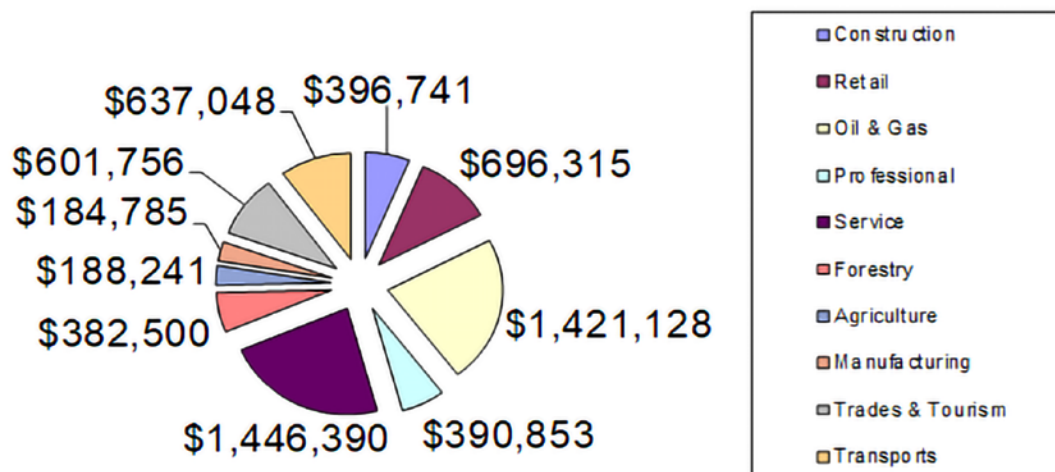
Report on Operations

With most of the disruptions from COVID-19 behind us, we are excited about returning to a normal social and economic atmosphere – making new friendships, developing opportunities, establishing partnerships, and participating in spirited exchanges. It has been too long.

During the period April 2022 to March 2023, AMDI approved \$5.3 million in funding assistance to new and existing business, constituting virtually a flat year-over-year performance of excellent loan growth that we saw accelerate during the 2021/22 fiscal year. The bounce-back from COVID has remained as 2022/23 maintained that record growth – and recovery from an economy that was in a state of total uncertainty for over two years. The projects we developed once again tapped all sectors of the economy, and the volume of applications continues on a record-breaking path. The total number of applications received for 2022/23 amounted to 178, comprising \$16.3 million, constituting a fruition rate of about 32.5%, and regional participation was relatively balanced across all six Regions.

The increase in growth is remarkable and time will tell if we've reached a true milestone. We think that most of the increase is a result of our springing into action on behalf of the Métis Nation of Alberta to provide emergency COVID relief short-term lending aimed at assisting business impacted by the lockdowns. So, while this has not been the optimal organic growth strategy, in some ways COVID has literally propelled AMDI deeper into the Métis community out of a crisis. It was not ideal and would never have been a preferred route. But like Mike Tyson once said, "Everybody has a plan until somebody punches you in the face." It simply went like this: AMDI worked hard to deliver the COVID relief. That relief turned into new and hopefully lasting relationships – propelling us deeper into the Métis community, translating into greater exposure, counselling, more applications (volume), and ultimately, more business development. In fact, we don't believe there is anything we could have done differently that would have yielded the same results. In one year, we basically trebled our exposure and we

Total New Loans Year to Date By Industry



competed better as a service provider than any of the Schedule A & B banks on COVID relief. So that must count for something – certainly enduring. It always comes back to a durable and winning business model.

As usual, most of the new loan applicants this year took advantage of the Métis Entrepreneurs Assistance Program (MEAP), as the non-repayable contribution serves to substantially reduce debt-servicing costs associated with acquiring assets for the business' operations. Loans to businesses included, but were not limited to, construction, retail, agriculture, professional, oil and gas, and service-based businesses, as well as some tourism and transports. The service and trades sector continues to dominate this year's lending and we are experiencing a surge in growth on the professional side of the economy as well, which provides AMDI with a solid base of portfolio diversification where we are not at risk with any one overweighted industry.

Of course, we would also be remiss if we were not to recognize our partners in all of what we have accomplished at AMDI. We know, for example, that a lot of AMDI's loan demand has arrived from the Métis Entrepreneurship Workshops and the Métis Women's Micro Business Workshops hosted by the Rupertsland Institute annually – enhancing our low-risk profile to our portfolio, while complimenting a long-standing training initiative of the Rupertsland Institute. In general, the total loan demand was relatively evenly distributed across all industries, though the service industry remains our strongest sector. Finally, after several years of near total absence, the oil and gas sector surged for us, suggesting that Métis entrepreneurs are responding, penetrating, and participating in every sector of the economy.

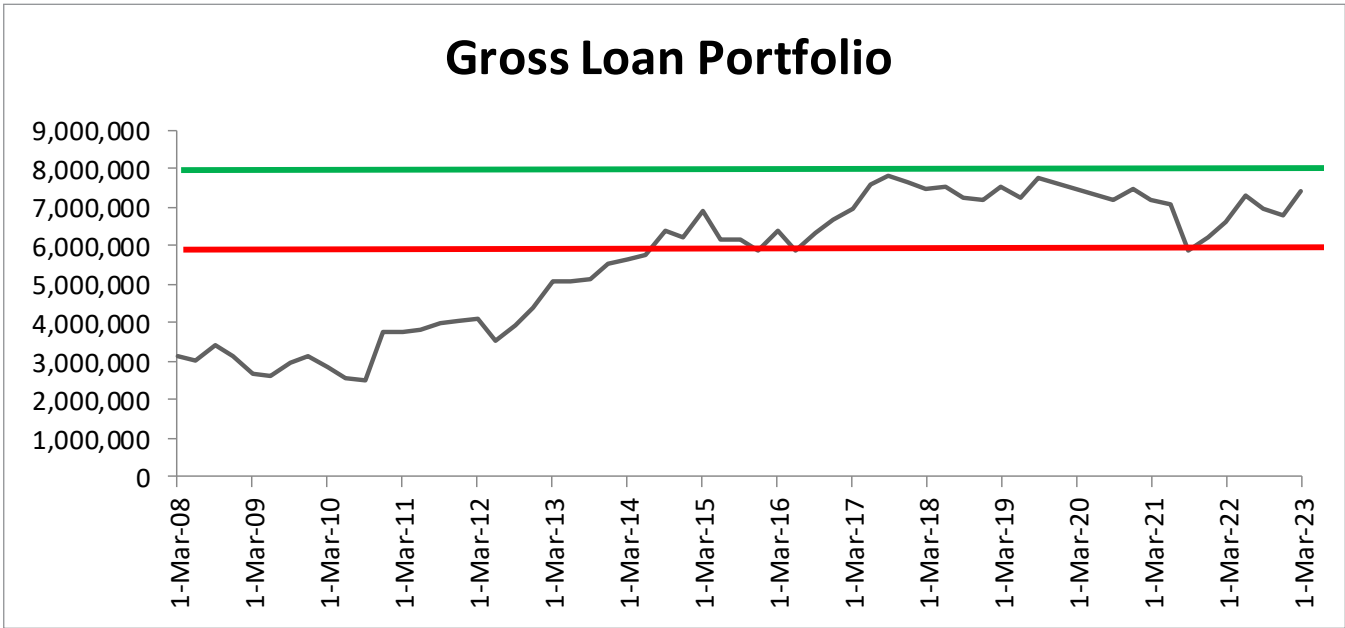
Gross Loan Portfolio

Having weathered the economic chaos that COVID created, AMDI has resumed its march toward breaking through the seemingly formidable barrier of \$8 million that we keep banging our heads on but can't seem to break through without there being some economic malaise to break our stride.

Yet, we have maintained our portfolio throughout nearly 10 years of super low interest rates. We used this period to ramp up our business services side – services Métis clients do not experience with any other financial institution. As we did not have the luxury of reducing rates to near zero percent, AMDI recognized over four-year amortizations that clients cost of capital was not all that different from the larger banks offering lower rates but pushing longer amortization periods.

Our edge is, and always has been, to offer business support services and flexibility to Métis clients when 50 per cent of them are just starting out. This formula has worked well for us. It has kept us diversified, valued by clients when they confront difficult times (and they will confront those times), and to this end, profoundly relevant to the Métis community. It's hard to believe that not so very long ago, AMDI's portfolio was under \$3 million, and where our total capital base was \$8 million. Since inception, we have rolled our capital over at least 12 times while maintaining strength (value) in that portfolio to the extent that if we ever had to access more loan capital, we could leverage that portfolio.

Thus, through organic growth of trial and error we have learned to not only maintain our capital, but also grow it – all the while without losing focus on the needs of our



clients. It's been a durable model of success, profitability, and we stand out as one of the best performing Indigenous financial institutions across Canada. It has often been remarked that if the government ever decided it wanted its capital back from 1988, we could actually cut them a cheque tomorrow. That's something to be proud of for sure.

The People that Make it Happen

Stalwarts that have made this happen are the people that have been with the organization for many years. Ken Balcom, who leads our consulting division, has been entertaining business inquiries from Métis entrepreneurs for over 31 years. Sally Bidin has been providing loan capital to them for over 25 years, and Cindy Castelletti has been managing staff, Board, external auditors, and our internal accounting also for 30 years. These are milestone measures that will forever remain the outstanding contributions of commitment and service to making AMDI great.

What is also very exciting is the crop of young staff who will one day surely be handed the reins, taking AMDI to the next level through innovation and creativity, and Michael Ivy has been charged with helping them find their stride as the old make way for the new – perhaps one of the most important yet often overlooked steps a successful organization needs to embrace. Don't be surprised, therefore, if one day, you are talking to Austen Houle about the Métis Entrepreneurs Assistance program, or Samantha Gushue about the Métis Women in Micro Business program, or Joanne Gunville about our conventional loan program in between clients

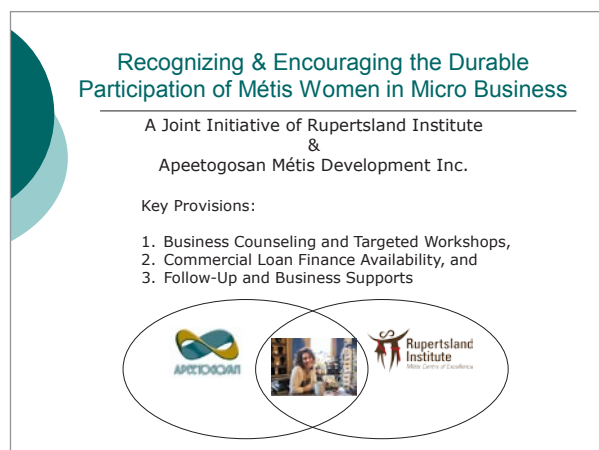
requiring help with their accounting, or Jacklyn Laboucan and Michael Abrantes who you will find helping Métis entrepreneurs develop the most important element of their project(s) – coordinating the business plan that demonstrates their economic opportunity.

We have an impassioned team at AMDI that has evolved out of the targeted aim of helping Métis people gain access to tools that will enhance their economic prosperity. Our door is always open.

Other Investments

Métis Entrepreneurs Assistance Program (MEAP) Renewal

For over 25 years, Apeetogosan has provided external delivery services to Aboriginal Business Canada's business development program. As part of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) initiative to increase the delivery capacity of its external partners, ISC continues to support the small business development program. For the 2022/23 fiscal year, AMDI delivered about \$1.6 million in equity to over 50 Métis entrepreneurs. Now called the Métis Entrepreneurs Assistance Program, or MEAP, AMDI provides Métis entrepreneurs the single window of access to equity and commercial finance capital to all Alberta Métis entrepreneurs. As you might imagine, this means a lot to AMDI as it ensures better service for our clients and solidifies expectations on timing and capital availability.



Affiliates Partnering Together in Response to Covid: AMDI & RLI

A few years ago, AMDI experienced a significant shortfall with equity normally made available to Métis entrepreneurs through the federal government's Aboriginal Economic Program. Around the same time, the Rupertsland Institute was experiencing a massive influx of clients seeking capital assistance and/or training with entrepreneurship and self-employment initiatives. As this was outside the scope of their education, labour market, and training initiatives where Rupertsland showcases its expertise, Rupertsland reached out to AMDI, as we reached out to them, to see if they could help us with our own business development and client equity shortfall.

This ended up becoming an enduring partnership that has provided Rupertsland with another means of demonstrating its reach into essentially all economic activities of education, training, labour market development, and now self-employment within the economy. It has also helped AMDI reach new milestones in lending, as we were able to assist more clients in bringing their business ideas to fruition, which in turn reaffirmed a shared mandate between AMDI and Rupertsland. Moreover, it has helped AMDI remain profitable, durable, and increasingly relevant to the Métis community.

Now fast forward to the COVID-19 pandemic and again AMDI found itself coordinating resources with the Rupertsland Institute, this time to enhance and encourage Métis women in microbusiness development because, as we learned through COVID, many of the businesses that were affected by mandatory lockdowns were small microbusinesses, owned and operated by women. Moreover, the majority of clients applying to the Indigenous Community Business Fund for COVID relief, a program that recognized losses to microbusinesses affected by COVID lockdowns and restrictions on social gatherings, were women.

Conservatively, we estimate there to be \$20 million in goods and services exchanged in the Métis women microbusiness space in Alberta. We also learned that these microbusinesses arrive from a nutritional and nurturing source of production and exchange where there is value extended beyond the baked goods, sown ribbon dresses, childcare, and entertainment, aesthetics, and home care for the elderly. These microbusinesses are inextricably tied to the overall well-being of the community and are derived from a very passionate source of commitment and aspiration that is intertwined with the matriarchal need to provide for the family. Throughout COVID, we have learned that the scope of Métis women in microbusiness is incredibly diverse and dynamic.

This observation became the basis for both Rupertsland and AMDI's commitment to developing a business program that would address the needs of Métis women vying for self-ownership. Such needs include, but are not limited to: (1) access to affordable capital, (2) support for assessing viability, (3) entrepreneurship workshops and networking, and (4) basic financial acumen, bookkeeping, and marketing. It turns out that the women found these workshops incredibly valuable, remarking, "this is exactly what I needed!" Accordingly, in concert with Rupertsland, AMDI has developed a microbusiness loan program for Métis women that, in addition to commercial financing, provides entrepreneurship workshops aimed at informing and instilling confidence in Métis women who are looking at self-employment as a reliable source of income.

For the fiscal year 2022/23, AMDI assisted 55 Métis women in accessing the Métis Women in Micro Business Program, amounting to \$1.1 million and \$931,000 in loans approved and disbursed. It was a brilliant opening year for the program where AMDI's portfolio of Métis women constituted over one-third of Canada's first-year initiative in this space.

Here are just some of their stories we'd like to share.

Meet Our Métis Women in Micro Business

Laura Robb

Laura Robb is the founder and principal Landscape Architectural Technologist of Beauty Through Nature Landscape Design. She grew up on a farm just east of Sherwood Park where she learned the value of hard work from both her parents and grandparents. At the time, she thought her folks were extremely lucky to have free child labour; now that she reflects, working hard has served her well all through life. Laura graduated from the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology's (NAIT's) Landscape Architectural Technology program in the year 2000 with honours. After working eight years in pretty much every facet of the industry, she put drafting up beautiful landscapes on the backburner and became a mom. Being a mom has been one of the greatest gifts of her life so far, however, as her kids have grown, she realized it was time for her creative brain to get restarted. Fourteen years later, she finds herself in midlife opening her very own landscape design studio. Some people may call this crazy; she calls it creative freedom! Laura is extremely grateful for the funding of Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. She looks forward to working hard with the funding she has been gifted to make her business dreams come true.

Website: beautythroughnature.ca

Insta: [BeautyThroughNatureDesign](https://www.instagram.com/BeautyThroughNatureDesign)

FB: [facebook.com/beautythroughnaturedesign](https://www.facebook.com/beautythroughnaturedesign)

Email: hello@beautythroughnature.ca



Marie "Dodi" Lizotte

"That DeCor provides purposeful window coverings that communicate your DeCor Style! I did not know what I would ever do in the design world until I 'fell backward' in life onto this little niche in the industry. It was an instant love as I could see how impactful they were in a room, hence that



little entrepreneurial side of me became a sponge with the intention to set out on my own one day. My first stop was to the Métis Entrepreneur Workshop to pitch my idea and work through if it was even viable. Six years later, the Apeetogosan, Ballad Consulting, and RPI community has helped me make real changes forward in mine and my family's lives. For that I am eternally grateful."

Website: thatdecor.com

Email: info@thatdecor.com

Samantha Lissack

"Blend Hair Studio is a full-service hair salon located in Red Deer, Alberta. We have been open for 10 years serving many great clients. We are a six-station salon specializing in colour, women's haircuts, and hair extensions. The Métis Women in Micro Business program enabled me to expand and modernize my studio, offering more services and greater capacity!"

FB: [facebook.com/blendhairstudio](https://www.facebook.com/blendhairstudio)



Tracy Alexander

"My name is Tracy Alexander. I am a 42-year-old mother of five. I am a proud Métis woman from Roblin, Manitoba. I am an Indigenous esthetician and I have been in this profession for the past 18 years. I took a three-year break while I raised my younger children and this past year, I decided I wanted to get back into my practice, but as a solo entrepreneur. In 2022, I opened my own Spa called Kyrre Spa and it's located here in Calgary, Alberta. I have had incredible support along this new journey as a new entrepreneur from close friends, family, and programs such as the Métis Women In Micro Business Program through Apeetogosan. I look forward to growing my new business and hope to inspire more Indigenous women to follow their dreams."

Website: kyrrespa.ca

Insta: [kyrre_spa](https://www.instagram.com/kyrre_spa)

FB: [facebook.com/kyrrespa](https://www.facebook.com/kyrrespa)



Rae Larocque

"I have always been interested in the consensus building process of establishing agreement and consensus between landowners and project developers. I gained a lot of experience working with my extended family in permitting local ground disturbances and other activities occurring on landowner property, and I felt I could be very accomplished at making this process easier for both parties. Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. and its Women's program, aided and enhanced my business plan and provided a possibility that I would not have had otherwise. It was a game-changing opportunity to boost efficiency and drive my success."

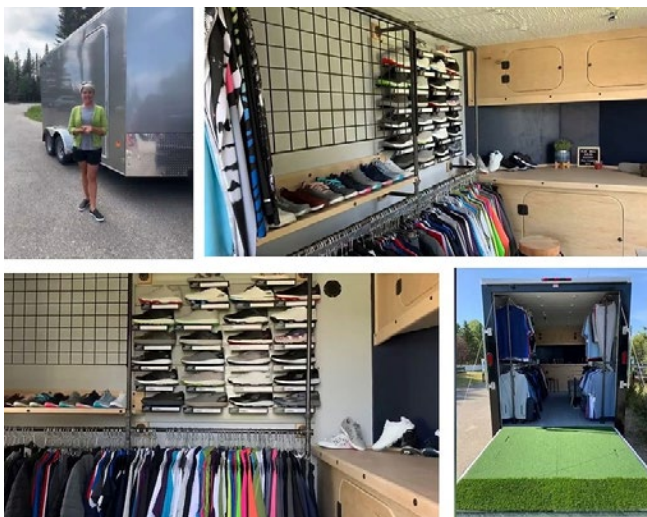


Website: renegadelandinc.com

Tanice Bosanko

"Play Well Sales Agencies Inc. specializes in providing wholesale golf products and apparel to all golf courses in Alberta and East Kootenays. We also accommodate corporate apparel and gifting. We offer over 15+ brands to choose from. The assistance received from the MWMB Program was used towards building a mobile showroom trailer to better service customers needs and to continue to grow my brands. Thank you for the support!"

Website: playwellagencies.com



There you go, and there are 50 other women with similar stories, stories of how they are changing people's lives through their products and services. This is entrepreneurship and it is very exciting to see this new program take off as it has. I encourage all Métis women who are considering taking on even the smallest of endeavours to reach out to AMDI and the Women's program. I am certain that they will be able to help you.



Pinnacle Business Services Ltd.

Pinnacle staff provides applicants an opportunity to access government programs available through Indigenous Services Canada, as well as loan financing from AMDI, by assisting the client in developing their business opportunity into a plan of action. The primary role of the Pinnacle business consultant is to assist Métis clients in assessing their opportunities, including identifying areas of weakness and exposure to risk, and what may be required of clients to mitigate such risk. To this end, Pinnacle Business Services assists clients in evaluating whether their business opportunities have a reasonable chance of becoming successful small-business ventures. The last thing we want is to see anybody fail.

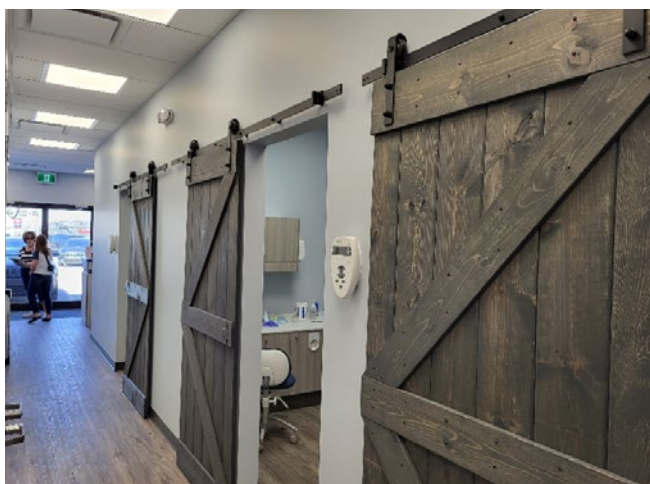
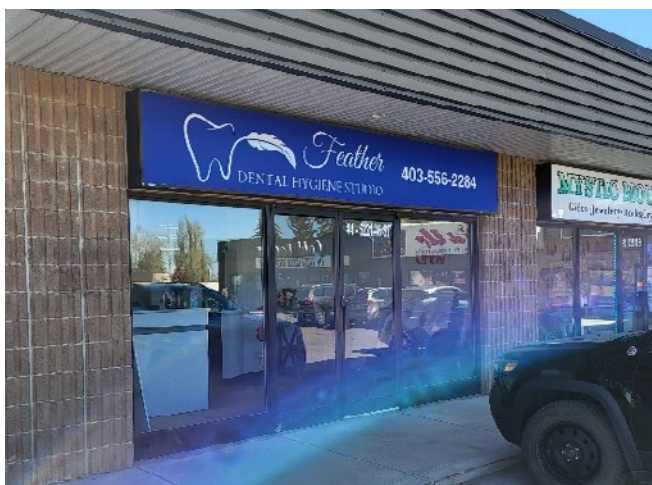
The follow-up work to assessing an opportunity is developing a plan of execution that demonstrates the client's opportunity and its implementation. Pinnacle assists clients in formalizing their opportunity and implementation plans by helping the client develop a business plan. The business plan becomes the presentation document to financiers that demonstrates the integrity of the client's proposal, including an assessment on commercial viability, capital cost and financing requirements, and the client's ability to competitively deliver the product or service under consideration.

During the 2022/23 fiscal year, Pinnacle Business Services Ltd. assisted in the development of over 50 business plans for clients that helped leverage commercial financing of \$5.2 million from AMDI.

Aftercare is another component of services that Pinnacle provides, ensuring clients have the appropriate accounting and bookkeeping systems in place, adequate training, and appropriate internal controls. During the year under review, Pinnacle Business Services Ltd. provided after-care services to 45 clients. Here is just one of Pinnacle's success stories.

Feather Dental Hygiene Studio Ltd. – Sandy Bearchell & Misty Reberger

“What we love about our job is getting to know our patients and their families. We understand how important it is to take care of each other. For your care, safety, and protection, we adhere to strict sterilization protocols. We cannot wait to welcome your family to the Town of Olds’ newest dental hygiene studio, Feather, is a powerful symbol that signifies honour,



trust, strength, wisdom, power, and freedom. It is often used to represent the purity of a person's heart or soul and it symbolizes something that is light and gentle. The feather symbolizes our philosophy and gives recognition to our Métis heritage.”

Closing Remarks

It was overall a steady year for AMDI, with loan growth maintaining our portfolio of \$7.5 million, despite COVID-19's deleterious effects on mobility and activity. AMDI continues to demonstrate its own durability, posting net income of over \$500,000, and a steadily increasing retained earnings balance of over \$3.7 million. It is reassuring to see the resilience of the projects we have participated in remain successful. It provides affirmation in our assessments of the strength in Métis entrepreneurship.

Life gets in the way of the best laid plans and COVID-19 is an acute example of what can happen when you least expect it to happen. The true test of one's resilience, however, is how you choose to respond to it. We learned, for example, that there is a very real and robust economy being forged by Métis women and that there probably always has been – wrapped in tradition, nurturing and family. So, we will have a new focus at AMDI, thus illustrating there is always a silver lining in dark times.

It is our hope the Métis people of Alberta will understand our commitment to positioning AMDI as the preferred lender of choice among increasingly repeat Métis business. Of course, the economy will be what it will be, and we will remain a reliable source of financial and business support to all Métis participating in it.

The staff of AMDI continues to work very well together and has established a very efficient office driven by a commitment to client service and care. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for their hard work this past year – most challenging, given the uncertainty – and the Board of Directors for their commitment and numerous contributions to ensuring AMDI continues to play an integral role in the growth of the Métis Nation of Alberta. ■

Métis Child & Family Services Society

Executive Director's Report

This last year has been more of the same and a few surprises as we begin the 3rd Family Resource Network program year, wondering what the future holds for us, and if we will ever see the purpose of this program. The changes in practice and service delivery have been confusing and nothing like we have experienced in the past.

I would like to acknowledge and thank our Métis community for their continued support and confidence in our ability to deliver services. Without their support and that of our funders, our efforts to deliver services and support to our community would be much more difficult.

I want to recognize our staff for their dedication and perseverance in carrying out our mandate in providing supports and services to members of our community during a difficult year. I want to acknowledge the support provided for the Métis Crossing festival, St. Albert Aboriginal Days, Kids Christmas Party, and maintaining their caseloads during this long pandemic period.

I want to thank our Métis Child Jiggers for showcasing our agency and serving as positive role models for our youth. They are now productive young adults, and it is amazing how well they still interact and enjoy performing together. Thank you for the 19 years of carrying our banner, sharing our culture, and being the young people you are.

This has been a difficult year for our community as caseloads have remained constant, with poverty and lack of proper housing continuing to plague our families and prevent them from moving ahead.

With the influx of so many people coming to Alberta, this has made finding suitable, affordable housing for our families difficult and near impossible. This has become more prevalent with new service delivery demands and the battle against COVID-19. This pandemic has created a great deal of stress and confusion and I worry about our young families, especially our single moms, and the lack of meaningful employment or financial support. Many

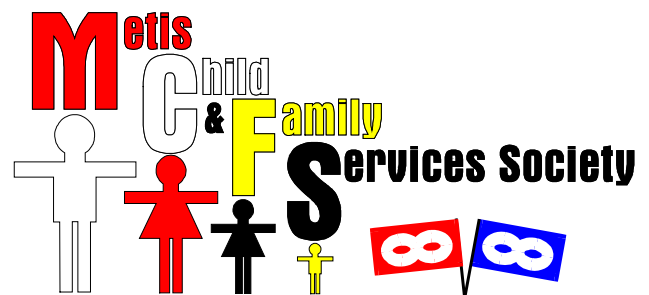
of the families we serve continually need in-home and financial support to keep their families stable and together.

Unfortunately, this struggle isn't getting any easier, as I believe that a lot of the confusion is caused by Children's Services and the manner in which some workers treat our children and families. Many of these workers feel it is their right to make decisions without consultation. This noticeable disrespect and lack of consideration for individual rights, opinions, or culture has grown over the past few years.

To be honest, no progress has been made over the last 20 years to meet the needs of the Indigenous community, and we continually watch the number of children in care increase and families broken up. No real effort is being made to return children to their families or help families stay together.

We are still hopeful, but very disappointed, in the leadership provided by past governments towards our community; none have lived up to the promises made in their Indigenous policies, which were usually soon forgotten or ignored.

We must now exercise our rights under Act C-92 and take back the responsibility and authority for decisions made with respect to our children and families. It is now time to end this journey of broken promises and good intentions.



Programs

Aboriginal Child and Family Support Program/Family Resource Network

Four years ago, the services and supports provided in this program were aligned with the 2015 accreditation program standards and goals in the Government of Alberta's Human Services 2015-2020 Business Plan, and now we have to write our program to align with the demands of the new Family Resource Network.

The core of our program, built over the past 35 years, is focused on family-based services, which has not changed and still includes in-home supports such as teaching child management techniques, parenting skills, urban living skills, individual counselling, support in advocacy, and the successful transition of children home who were formerly in care. Listening to the client is still a big part of the service, as I think that we all know what we have to do to improve our situation and only need confirmation or encouragement.

Over the past years, we have noticed an increase for supports requested from outside bodies and have also had a noticeable number of referrals from Consolidated Service Delivery/Outcome-Based Service Delivery agencies. Support in court and child custody matters continues to be high on the list, but we are fortunate to have skilled workers in the courts. Keeping the family together in a safe, caring way has been the goal from day one.

Family Service Program

The Family Service Program under the City of Edmonton Community Services is preventative in nature and has been renewed until March 31, 2025. While services in this program are similar to the Alberta Child and Family Services program, they are short term, specific, and available to everyone who walks through our front door with the goal of dealing with the problem they came in with. Unfortunately, this program continues to be underfunded, and while we have seen some relief recently, it is not to the extent needed. The program, however, meets a critical need in the community that must be fulfilled, and we manage with support from our other programs.

Aboriginal Seniors Program

We have ended the third year of providing support to our community seniors and demand is high. Prior to this, our seniors were served as part of our Family Services Program. Val has worked hard to build a viable service and engage our seniors who are alone and could use some assistance. Home visits and group activities take up

most of her time, with the remainder spent on connecting seniors to other community supports.

This program was renewed until June 30, 2023 this year, as Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) is consolidating the intake for all City of Edmonton senior services and support from one central intake office, which is quite different from our Indigenous engagement culture or ways of gathering. We will continue our current intake and inform their central system each time we take on a new client. Our Executive Director is also a member of the Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council.

Family Violence Program

The Family Violence Program has been demanding and the numbers for the last five years of clients engaged have not decreased. Numbers are high for families and children, as well as our women on the streets and youth in school. No one seems to come in for family-violence concerns, but they appear as soon as the client is comfortable and can relate to the worker. Safety and emergency policies are in place to ensure all staff are aware of what is needed to keep clients and staff safe, as well as other support programs that can be used to help support a safety plan and good outcomes.

Protection of Sexually Exploited Children

We have delivered this much-needed program since 1998 and employ two RSW (registered social workers) as follow-up support workers to work with the youth involved in child exploitation. Our staff are culturally sensitive, have a good understanding and awareness of the needs of the youth, and have the ability to address diverse cultural issues and needs.

Community follow-up workers (CFU) provide support to at-risk youth who are referred by Children's Services High-Risk Youth Unit or PSECA (Protection of Sexually Exploited Children of Alberta) workers. A large number of youth are Indigenous and for many, family and community life has become increasingly dysfunctional as they experience incidents of family violence, spousal and child abuse, sexual abuse, addictions, suicide, poverty, and prostitution.

These problems are not diminishing, and these behaviour patterns and attitudes are often reflected in the youth's everyday life and interactions. Individual caseloads are full and demanding.

The program is committed to early intervention and prevention and based on a harm-reduction model. Services and supports include a suicide risk assessment, PESQ (substance abuse assessment), and an evaluation of the possibility of sexual exploitation. Services offered are ongoing support, advocacy, educational support,

informal counselling, and community referral for professional assessments.

Community Support Homes Program (Foster Care)

We have just over 110 children in our homes. We are in our 25th year of delivering foster care services within this region. I believe that we are better off under this system because it is a fee-for-service and we do not have to provide a schedule B, do a program audit, or give up any surplus retention. This has allowed us to combine all foster care services into one program, which has made it a more accountable system and easier to manage. We continue to operate a kinship care program within the region. Unfortunately, the Ministry has made the decision to take over all kinship care effective immediately and agencies will not be a part of this service anymore.



Accreditation

Since we are completing our fourth year of accreditation, we are starting to prepare for our next review in December. We are accredited in the following program standards: Family Support with Aboriginal Designation; Mentor Program with Aboriginal Designation; Foster Care Program with Aboriginal Designation; Aboriginal and Kinship Care Program.

Accreditation is about maintaining good practices for service delivery and adhering to high standards of governance and management. As previously stated, we obtained excellent results in these programs for the last 20 years and look forward to the same results this time. ■

Board of Directors

The MCFS Edmonton Branch Board of Directors:

Audrey Poitras, President

Dan Cardinal, Vice-President

Lawrence Gervais, Treasurer

Carol Ridsdale, Secretary

Staff

Donald Langford, Executive Director

Jordan Langford, Reception/File Clerk, Dance Instructor

Jolene Langford, RSW, Youth Worker, Sexually Exploited Children (PSECA)

Harry Fuccaro, RSW, Team Leader, Choices & Choices A Partnership

Chelsea Boudreau, BCD, Youth Worker

Jada Langford, Youth Worker

Caren Robinson, Youth Worker

Luc Gauthier, Youth Worker, Dance Instructor

Donna Kratky, RSW, Manager, Aboriginal Child & Family Services

Claude Gallant, Aboriginal Child and Family Support Worker

Bernice Gladue, Aboriginal Child and Family Support Worker

Val Gauthier, Seniors Support Worker

Jasmine Hannig, Family Support Worker

Florence Gaucher, RSW, Foster Care Program Manager & MCFS Jiggers

Amanda Collins, Receptionist, Foster Care

Rebecca Lima, RSW, Foster Care Support Worker

Kelly Klaue, Foster Care Support Worker

Siobhain O'Hare, RSW, Foster Care Support Worker

Ashley Santos, RSW, Foster Care Support Worker

Mary Fleming, RSW, Kinship Care Support Worker

Nathalia Liknes, Foster Care Support Worker

Carla Fiddler, Foster Care Worker, Driver

Métis Crossing



Introduction

In 2022/2023, Métis Crossing continued to build on the incredibly strong foundation laid by our past leadership, on historic lands, settled by our ancestors. Located in the Victoria District National Historic Site within Smoky Lake County, Métis Crossing sits on five original river lot farmsteads settled by Métis families between 1860–1890. The MNA purchased this land in 2001, and about a year later, the Belcourt Brosseau Métis Education Foundation generously contributed the money to pay off the loan. The MNA owned the property debt free! And with that, was able to pursue further development.



For the Centennial Opening in 2005, Métis Crossing undertook the restoration of historic buildings onsite including the Cromarty homestead and barn, then added essential visitor services such as the parking lot, washrooms, and signage. The walking trails and stage were also added so that Métis people would once more gather here to perform, sing, fiddle, and dance along the banks of the North Saskatchewan River. The site was operated seasonally from May to September for many years.

During this time, the MNA continued to tirelessly pursue further opportunities to build a place to share and celebrate the Métis story with all people. Then in 2018, after receiving a Building Canada Fund contribution for the Cultural Gathering Centre at Métis Crossing (CGC), development began again toward the full vision of Métis Crossing. Between 2018–2022 Métis Crossing planned, designed, and built *The Cultural Gathering Centre, The Lodge, and Visions, Hopes, and Dreams at Métis Crossing*. The land base also grew to 688 acres, allowing even more space for cultural sharing.

The Purpose

Métis Crossing is a major initiative of the MNA and the premier destination for Alberta Métis cultural

interpretation, education, and business development. As an affiliate of the MNA, Métis Crossing is governed by a Board of Directors who have led with integrity and vision:

- Chairperson, Audrey Poitras
- Vice-Chairperson, Dan Cardinal
- Elder and Knowledge Holder, Art Cunningham
- Director, Duane Zaraska
- Director, Andy Popko

The four main goals for Métis Crossing were first recorded in 2005, and continue to guide decision-making by this Board, the CEO, and her administration. Métis Crossing will:

- Share the Métis story with all people
- Be a gathering place
- Achieve financial sustainability
- Minimize capital debt.

As an Indigenous owned and operated destination, Métis Crossing has the obligation to operate responsibly on the land. Our approach to development has not only been sustainable, but we are moving the bar to become a *Regenerative Destination*. We want the land, our guests, and our culture to be better, stronger, and healthier because Métis Crossing exists.

2022–2023 Progress

On September 25, 2022, Métis Crossing celebrated a Grand Opening Celebration for both the Cultural Gathering Centre at Métis Crossing and the Lodge at Métis Crossing. As the last few COVID restrictions were lifted through the summer, leadership was confident to celebrate the achievements Métis Crossing had made through the pandemic. Elders, the Métis Nation of Alberta, friends, corporate, and government partners gathered at Métis Crossing to be recognized and to witness the incredible work and resources that had been invested to



complete these structures. In fact, Smoky Lake County acclaimed September 25 as *Métis Crossing Day*. We invite you back on September 25, 2023 to celebrate our next group of accomplishments.

With that, MC completed its first complete year of year-round operations. Internally, it was a year of progress, learnings, and growth.

Operations

With the relief of COVID-19 restrictions, and the completion of the major site components including:

- The Cultural Gathering Centre in December 2019
- Visions, Hopes, and Dreams at Métis Crossing Wildlife Park in September 2021
- The Lodge at Métis Crossing in May 2022

Métis Crossing transformed from a cultural interpretive centre to a major cultural destination. Our guests are now invited to spend two to three days at Métis Crossing to enjoy our warmth, eat our foods, sleep under our quilts, and experience our culture. Days and hours of operations grew from five days, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. in 2021 – 2022 (when allowed to open through COVID), to seven days with 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. coverage. As a result, our systems and team grew as well.

Significant efforts were invested to build point-of-sale systems for our gift shop, culinary options, and cultural experiences. An online system was also built so that guests from around the world could reserve their experiences from the comfort of their own homes. Inside the Lodge, a hotel management system was implemented to ensure smooth functioning of check-in and check-out, as well as housekeeping and hospitality services.

Human Resources

Leading and supporting this infrastructure and systems growth were the Human Resources at Métis Crossing. Last year (2021–2022) Métis Crossing had 13 permanent full-time employees who were supported by another 10 part-time and casual team members.

During 2022–2023, our team grew to a total of 66 employees! This number included 32 full-time employees, 8 part-time employees, 16 casual employees, and another 10 summer students. Our summer students were generously supported by the Rupertsland Institute and Canada Summer Jobs employment subsidy programs. Of this total, 22 were Métis and 38 were local.

Cultural Experiences

Métis Crossing boasts amazing facilities, but the element of this destination that truly sets us apart from all others is the strong Métis culture, and how it is integrated into each element of our site. Beginning with the historic land, our guests, Métis and non-Métis, often report feeling the spirit of the Métis here, of knowing that they are walking in the steps of our ancestors. The site layout and each building has been carefully designed to contribute to the Métis story shared on this land. The Board of Directors has been intimately involved in the planning of each element, and in choosing the designers and contractors with whom they would work. From the Métis architect who designed the facilities, to the Métis general contractor who built them, to the Métis electricians who powered them, each demonstrates the strong capacity of the Métis people today.

Building on the success of our existing signature experiences including, *Paddle into the Past*, *Through the Eye of the Hunter*, and *Visions, Hopes, and Dreams at Métis Crossing Wildlife Park* tours, additional experiences were added. In anticipation of the new sky-watching domes to be completed next year, the development of a new night-sky experience, *Whispers from the Stars*, was completed. The traditional workshops on weekends were expanded including capote making, quill work, and tufting. MC also hosted our first Christmas Market.

Experience development is always underway. Conceiving and developing cultural experiences that appropriately share the distinct and diverse culture of our people while exciting the interest of our visitors is a hefty responsibility. As such, plans are underway to develop a *Cultural Council*. Like the Buffalo Councils before, this body will guide the work with the Métis Crossing team. Cultural and culinary experiences will be reviewed to ensure they honour the spirit of our ancestors, share the truths of today, and build anticipation for the prosperous future of what is to come.



Alberta Métis Fest.

The culinary experience offerings were expanded to include the very successful Sunday brunches. There is something unique about sharing Sunday brunch along the banks of the North Saskatchewan. Special day celebration meals were also added including Family Day, New Year's Day, Mother's Day, etc.

Event Highlights

As a gathering place, Métis Crossing has experienced substantial growth. In addition to the grand opening celebration in September 2022, many events were planned and hosted in partnership with the MNA and our affiliates:

- Connecting Through Culture weekends for families
- Constitution Committee meetings
- RLI Elect programs
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation: unveiling of the Métis Memories of Residential School Mural
- QuitCore weekends
- Department retreat and meetings
- Alberta Métis Fest

Other corporate, government, Indigenous, and trade organizations began to rent our facilities for their retreats and teambuilding as well. The competitive advantage for Métis Crossing includes our immersive cultural experiences in which almost all participated.

- Four different First Nations
- Travel Alberta
- Government of Alberta departments
- Indigenous Tourism Alberta
- Municipalities
- Government of Canada departments
- Explore Edmonton
- School Boards
- Industry: Cenovus, ATCO, TC Energy
- Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada

New Developments

When the MNA first purchased this land, it was a farmstead. As we have added facilities, we have grown into a cultural destination with infrastructure requirements similar to a small town. Not unlike the buffalo hunts of the past, when Métis Crossing hosts large events, upwards of 800 people gather on this site. To ensure we are sustainable on this land, significant infrastructure planning has been undertaken within our regenerative framework. A full *Site Infrastructure Masterplan* for the water treatment and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, electrical, civil roads, and trails, along with lighting and communications will be completed in 2023/2024. This year saw the completion of the Phase I plan connecting all existing

structures to the River lot 11 developments, including the sky-watching domes and the indoor garden.

River Lot 11 developments include the addition of sky-watching domes – six of which are furnished with a king-size bed, and another two family domes that have capacity for six persons. Here our guests will sleep under the night skies. Half of the domes have transparent roofs facing the southern skies to enjoy the constellations, while the other half have viewing of the northern skies and the aurora borealis. They will grow to be legendary accommodations with heated concrete floors, indoor plumbing, air conditioning, and beautiful decks for year-round accommodations. We are very appreciative of our funders at Travel Alberta and Prairies Canada for their financial support of these developments.

Also on River Lot 11, we have added an indoor garden. In partnership with the MNA, this garden was designed and built to provide a space to grow fresh vegetables and greens year-round. It is a great addition to our existing Food Forest, including haskap and saskatoon fields.

New Bison in Visions, Hopes, and Dreams at Métis Crossing Wildlife Park (VHDataMC)

In partnership with the MNA, Métis Crossing welcomed 20 pure wood bison to our Wildlife Park. The relationship between the MNA and Elk Island National Park (EINP) has been growing for many years, and the goal of transferring bison had been identified long ago. The wildlife facilities built for VHDataMC provided the perfect home, and EINP transferred 15 cow (female) and 5 bull (male) bison to Métis Crossing. We also welcomed baby bison in May of 2023.



Recognition

Like the Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Crossing has been recognized for the work that has been done.

- Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada:
Leading the Way in Sustainability Award
- Conde Nast Travel Magazine:
One of the 22 Best Places in the World to Visit in 2022

The Future

While much has been accomplished, there is more to do in 2023/2024.

- **Business Development:** Métis Crossing is doing significant work with Travel Trade to invite more guests from around the world to visit. We are nurturing relationships with Receptive Tour operators and media from Germany, the Netherlands, England, France, Japan, and the USA.
- **Cultural Council:** Recruit and orient members for our Cultural Council advisory body.
- **Expansion and landscaping of River Lot 11:** Landscaping will include trails and lighting, shrub plantings, and beatification around sky-watching domes and indoor garden. Plans are also underway to add more domes.
- **Activation of the Indoor Garden:** Crops and rotations will be planned to produce year-round vegetables.
- **Full Infrastructure Masterplan:** Plan will be completed to ensure appropriate development throughout the 688 acres, now and into the future.
- **Potable water treatment plant:** Métis Crossing will be treating its own water and distributing it throughout the site.
- **Wastewater treatment plant:** What goes in must come out! A wastewater treatment plant will be built to treat the waste to a state at which it can be distributed across hayfields onsite.

We look forward to seeing you in 2023/2024 when we host the Annual General Assembly. ■

Métis Judiciary Council

The Métis Judiciary Council (MJC) derives its authority from the Métis Nation of Alberta Bylaws, and the decision of the MJC on matters before it is final. The MJC has a representative from each of the six regions of the Métis Nation of Alberta. It has its own offices separate and apart from the offices of the Métis Nation of Alberta.



When a complaint is received by the MJC, it is considered at the next meeting of the MJC. If it appears to be a valid complaint, the complaint is then passed on to the respondent. The respondent is then required to provide a response to the complaint to the MJC.

The complaint and the response are then considered at the next meeting of the MJC. At that time, the MJC will decide whether further information is required, or whether the matter can be decided without holding a hearing. If it is decided a hearing is not necessary, the complaint will be decided by the MJC, and the parties notified of its decision.

If it is decided that a hearing is necessary, a hearing will be held to allow the complainant and the respondent to present evidence and arguments regarding their positions. The parties are able to have legal representation and the hearings are public. After the hearing, a decision is made by the MJC and delivered to the parties.

In 2022, there were 10 complaints that were received and resolved. In 2023, as of publication, there is currently one complaint being dealt with by the MJC. ■



Métis Nation Holdings



In 1997, the MNA took an inactive but current company, called Métis Nation Productions,

Métis Nation **HOLDINGS**

and renamed it Métis Nation Holdings Ltd. The MNA holds 100 per cent of the shares. This entity holds title to the MNA Provincial Office property on Kingsway Avenue in Edmonton and 50 per cent of the Inglewood Centre property on 111 Avenue in Edmonton. The Inglewood property is held in partnership with Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. The holding company allows for arms-length lease transactions and limited liability. The Board of Directors for Métis Nation Holdings is the same as the MNA Executive.



Delia Gray Building, MNA Provincial Office **11738 Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton**

In January 1997, the building the Métis Nation leased on St. Albert Trail was sold. Shortly after taking possession, the new owner proposed doubling the rent, which drew grave concern from the MNA.

In response, the MNA Provincial Council issued direction to explore the purchase of our own building. It was reasoned that purchasing our own building would create program stability, would meet the office needs of the MNA, and have potential for gain. The parameters of the purchase were that ownership should cost no more than the proposed lease and no MNA program funds could be used in the purchase.

After several months of research, a deal was concluded on the purchase of the building on Kingsway Avenue, now occupied by the Provincial Office. The MNA acquired the building by assuming the existing mortgage without having to make a down payment. The MNA now holds clear title to the Delia Gray Building after paying off the mortgage in September of 2004.

In 2021–2022, a full roof repair was completed. A 63.2-DC kW solar panel microgeneration unit was installed during the summer of 2021. An energy efficiency retrofit throughout the Delia Gray Building was finished in the fall of 2022. Through the efforts of the MNA's Environment staff, successful applications were submitted, allowing these repairs, retrofit, and the array to go ahead at a favourable cost to the MNA. We look forward to decreased operation and maintenance costs for the building.

The years 2022–23 saw the upgrade of the Executive office, as no significant improvements had been done since purchasing the building in 1997. Flooring, paint, ceiling, reception-area upgrades were all completed. As well, additions to the Human Resources department dictated a multi-person office needed to be built to accommodate that growth.





Larry Desmeules Building **11922 – 121 A Street, Edmonton**

On May 1, 1999, Métis Nation Holdings completed the purchase of the building occupied by Métis Urban Housing Corporation (MUHC). This purchase was prompted by the proposed sale of the building by the previous owners. Due to the foresight of the MUHC Board, the MNA was provided the right of first refusal. The building was financed through the assumption of a mortgage and a loan to Métis Nation Holdings from the Royal Bank. Once again, no MNA program funding was used in the purchase. Lease payments cover all costs associated with the building. This was a requirement put down by the MNA Board. The building has a clear title as of May of 2009. The remainder of the old office space has been converted to file storage. A 10,000 sq. ft office tower addition was completed in April 2012. In 2013, the warehouse was upgraded and insulated with a sprinkler system added. During 2013–2014, the sale of the Larry Desmeules Building to Métis Capital Housing Corporation was completed. This action was consistent with the MNA mandate of assisting affiliates wherever possible to achieve stability in program delivery.



Métis Veterans Building **12304 – 111 Avenue, Edmonton**

On November 1, 1999, Métis Nation Holdings completed the purchase of the Inglewood Centre.

Tenants in the building include: Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc., Pinnacle Business Services, Rupertsland Institute, Métis Centre of Applied Learning,

Alberta Family and Social Services, Mother Earth Essentials, the Métis Nation of Alberta Judiciary Council, Métis Veterans Society, and the MNA Elections Office. The building mortgage was paid out and a clear title obtained in September 2010. Property management of the building, previously contracted out, has now been assumed by Métis Nation Holdings and Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc., which each hold 50 per cent of the shares in the building.

In 2021–22, a full roof repair was completed on the Métis Veterans Building in preparation for installation of a solar panel array that was finished in July of 2022. Once again, successful MNA Environment grant applications allowed these projects to go ahead and should result in decreased operating and energy costs. Tenant improvements in 2021–22 were undertaken in conjunction with lease renewals for Rupertsland and Mother Earth Essentials. Repairs to sidewalks and parking ramp were completed. Major upgrades to the parkade first floor surface were part of an ongoing preventative maintenance program.

The years 2022–23 saw the development of Rupertsland Centre for Applied Learning on the main floor. Renovations included demolishing walls for training rooms and more offices, completing paint, ceiling tiles, updating the kitchen and student lounge, and some new flooring.



Nekinan **4607 – 52 Avenue, Smoky Lake**

In 2019–2020, the Smoky Lake Continuing Care Centre was acquired through a lease arrangement made possible through the co-operation of Alberta Health Services and the Town of Smoky Lake. It has been renamed Nekinan (Our Home). This 11,000 sq. ft, 20-bed facility has undergone extensive renovations during the 2020–21 fiscal year to repurpose this building into a residence for Métis Crossing staff, instructors, students, and program resource people. Renovations included a complete roof repair with skylights,

complete kitchen renovation, repurposed laundry room, complete repair and paint throughout building, replacement of all plumbing fixtures, new shower rooms, state of the art FOB security system with cameras, upgraded LED light fixtures, new bedroom furniture, upgraded common area with air conditioning, and new sidewalks and steps.

The 2021–22 fiscal year saw replacement of all windows, new flooring throughout, and construction of private washrooms for all guest suites. Air conditioning was added for the common area and kitchen. Exterior painting was undertaken. Significant upgrades to landscaping were completed.

In 2022–23 we began the complete replacement of the boiler system. The pneumatic control system is being replaced with a digital system.

A detached 4,000-sq. ft former nurses residence was renamed Kapesowin (Lodge). It had acted as a storage facility while an assessment of future use was conducted. The building was determined to be worthy of repair. In 2020–21, a complete roof repair was undertaken in preparation for adding six to eight more residential rooms.

The year 2022–23 saw a complete interior renovation upgrade including electrical, plumbing, furnace, on-demand water heating, insulation, new subfloor, framing, drywall, paint of demising walls, new doors, new windows, kitchen, and fixturing of three washrooms.

The long process of transferring the property title to the MNA is nearing completion. Title was passed to the Town of Smoky Lake by the Province of Alberta this spring and the transfer from the Town to the MNA should occur by this Fall.



Métis Youth Building **11821 – 123 Street, Edmonton**

In December 2022, Holdings assisted the MNA's Youth Department to purchase an 11,000-sq. ft three-story office building to house the Youth Department and host youth programming. Complete renovation of the building occurred between late December 2022 and the middle

of March 2023. This included a remodeled main floor to accommodate youth programs including a gathering centre, dance studio, kitchen, computer learning area, and meeting rooms. Additional renovations included paint and LED lighting throughout the building, some new flooring and electrical, kitchen upgrades, new furnaces and air conditioning, on-demand water heating with circulating pump, fire panel, security system, and cameras.

Other Activity

While not owned by Métis Nation Holdings, the company has invested considerable time and effort assisting in the purchase of the Region 1 building; the purchase and renovation of the Region 2 building, including a complete roof repair, major sidewalk upgrading and solar array as a result of a successful application by MNA Environment during 2020–21; the purchase of a Local building in Region 3; purchase of the Region 4 building; the purchase and complete renovation of the Region 5 building; the purchase and initial development of Métis Crossing; involvement in certain Métis Housing projects; as well as renovations connected with Rupertsland and some of its MES Centres.

Just prior to the 2019–2020 fiscal year, through a contribution from Métis Nation Holdings Ltd., 160 acres of land adjacent to the Métis Crossing property was acquired, allowing for increased options for programming.

In July of 2022, Métis Nation Holdings built a traditional Métis trappers cabin within a two-week timeline to commemorate Pope Francis' visit to Lac Ste. Anne. The cabin will be left in place to symbolize a Métis presence and assist with programming at the Lac Ste. Anne pilgrimage site. ■



Métis Urban & Capital Housing Corporations



Métis Capital Housing Corporation and Métis Urban Housing Corporation have provided affordable and subsidized housing to Indigenous Albertans for over 40 years. Together, both organizations operate over 1,000 properties across 14 branches in Alberta. The year 2022 was fruitful for both organizations, with new opportunities explored and accessed. Métis Housing housed over 90 new families resulting from its increased housing stock. This allowed individuals who had been on the waitlist for several years to be provided with housing. Over 100

homes were fully renovated during this time, exhibiting our commitment to maintaining the quality of our housing stock.

In 2022, Métis Capital Housing Corporation obtained a parcel of land under the Federal Lands Initiative to build 127 suites for women and children. Fifty of these suites are dedicated to women and children fleeing from domestic violence. This facility will also offer accessible suites for individuals with physical challenges. This facility will exceed energy efficiency and accessibility standards. The project is expected to be completed in 2025.

Métis Capital Housing is also building an 11-unit apartment building in partnership with Region 6. This facility will offer safe, suitable, and adequate housing to



Renaissance Tower, a home in the heart of Edmonton, designed for seniors (55+) and people with disabilities.



Solar panels on Métis Housing Head Office.

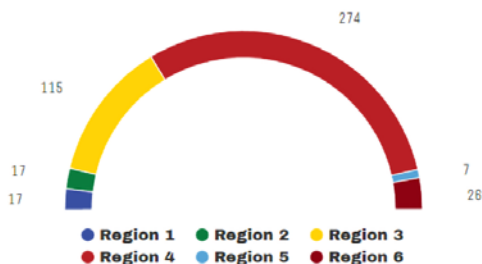
Métis and other Indigenous people in Peace River. We expect this facility to open for occupancy in early 2025.

Métis Housing is committed to enhancing and maintaining its housing stock across the board. Métis Housing is building another seniors' lodge in Edmonton to meet seniors' housing needs. This project is also expected to be completed in early 2025. We are also rebuilding 18 properties across Alberta and constructing 36 new subsidized and affordable homes for low-income Indigenous families.

Programs

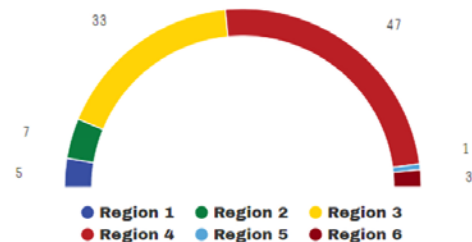
Rental Supplement Assistance

Our program service delivery has been exceptional. During this period, Métis Capital Housing supported 456 Métis households with the Rental Supplement Assistance Program. Though we still have several households to reach and offer this support, the regional details for this program are as follows:



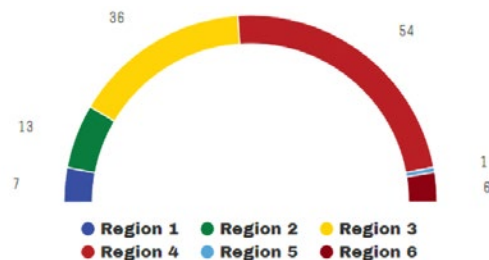
Student Rental Supplement Program

The sub-program under the Rental Supplement Program is the Student Rental Supplement Program. We supported 96 Métis students during this time. The regional details for this program are as follows:



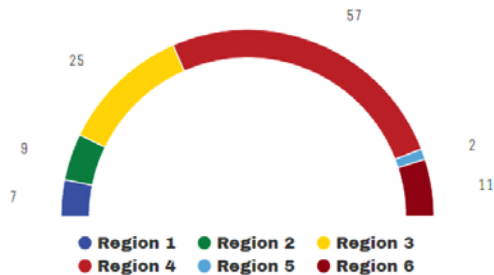
Home Repair Program

The Home Repair Program funded essential repairs in the homes of 117 Métis households. The regional details for this program are as follows:



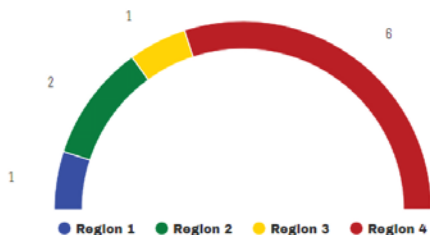
Down Payment Assistance

The Down Payment Assistance Program funded the home purchase for 111 Métis households during this period. The regional details for this program are as follows:



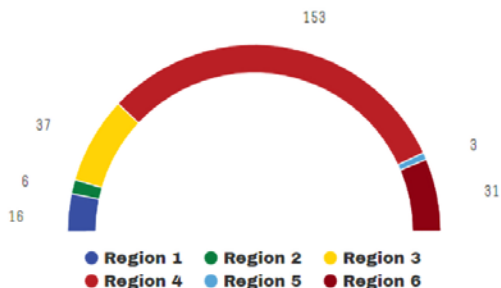
Mortgage Assistance Program

On the other hand, 10 Métis households were funded by the Mortgage Assistance Program. The regional details for this program are as follows:



Reaching Home Program

Métis Housing’s Reaching Home Program assists homeless Métis people in Alberta. Several supports are available through this program, such as Emergency Housing, Housing Set-Up, Housing Placement, Client Support, Clinical and Treatment Support, Prevention and Referrals, and Economic Integration. During this period, the Reaching Home Program team served 246 Métis clients with various supports. The regional details for this program are as follows:



Family Reunification Program

Lastly, Métis Capital Housing’s Family Reunification Program has also been successful. Three families completed their healing journey and successfully transitioned into the community with full custody of their children. The children were reunited with their parents during this reporting period. Two of the three families who successfully completed the program were Métis. Overall, five Métis families were supported by the program during this reporting period. This facility was fully occupied, with more than five families on the waitlist throughout the year. The demand and success of this program exhibited the need for these services. With the support of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Capital Housing Corporation is building a larger facility in Bonnyville to operate as a Phase II Family Reunification Program. Late in 2022, it was decided to transfer the program to the Métis Nation of Alberta’s Children and Family Services department to enhance the level of available services and support provided to families as we move towards self-determination. ■

Rupertsland Institute



Rupertsland Institute –
Métis Centre of Excellence
provides professional,
transparent, and
accountable services



under its triple mandate entrusted by the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) in Education, Training and Research. Rupertsland Institute (RLI) was incorporated in 2010, as a non-profit section nine company under the Alberta Companies Act and is governed by a professional Board of Governors with representatives from the Métis business community (both private and public sectors), the University of Alberta, and the MNA Provincial Council.

RLI provides support through a service-delivery structure that divides the province into four regions (NW, NE, Central, and South), and includes 11 Métis Education, Training, and Information Services (MÉTIS) Centres. Additionally, two RLI Mobile Services Units provide itinerant services to remote communities through regularly scheduled visits. Online applications can be completed anytime by Métis post-secondary students to determine if they are eligible for financial support. Funding is subject to availability on a first-come, first-served basis (applicants who complete their applications first will receive funding first). RLI also offers services to find employment with resume writing, job search, and access to employers looking for workers.

RLI's research mandate is served in part through a partnership with the University of Alberta (U of A) for the Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research (RCMR). This long-standing partnership has produced valuable research on Métis scrip and other issues of importance to the Métis community, guided by the RCMR's Executive Council that includes RLI representatives as well as Métis academics from the U of A and other post-secondary institutions in Alberta.

Métis Education & Training Information Services

In 2022, RLI began to streamline its operations under one service-delivery model: Métis Education, Training, and Information Services (METI-Services). Programs and services will remain the same under this model. The only difference is that staff will be cross trained in all RLI programs and services designed to help Métis Citizens access post-secondary education and training that leads to employment. Broadly, many of the programs and services are aimed at access to post-secondary but may also include safety ticket training and cost of equipment (e.g. work boots, laptops, etc.) required for training or employment. The programs and services fall under three funding streams:

- 1. Métis Training to Employment Program** provides financial support to eligible students in the final year of studies. Between April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023, 1,313 Citizens were funded; 949 have secured employment or are self-employed and 168 have returned to school.
- 2. Post-Secondary Education Program** provides funding to eligible post-secondary students in all years of post-secondary study. Between April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023, 1,009 students across Alberta received post-secondary funding, with 461 students accessing Métis Student Services.
- 3. Métis Student Services** provides funding to eligible post-secondary students attending school to help them stay in school.

The overall objective is to close the gap in higher learning and unemployment that persists for Métis people compared to other Canadians. Results from the METIS Centres are shown by region below.

The **Northwest** region team assisted 326 Citizens with their employment and training needs. Out of the completed journeys, 168 Citizens secured employment and 21 returned to school.

AFFILIATE REPORTS

The **Northeast** region team assisted 265 Citizens with their employment and training needs. Out of the completed journeys, 213 Citizens secured employment or are self-employed and 49 returned to school.

The **South** region team assisted 170 Citizens with their employment and training needs. Out of the completed journeys, 137 Citizens secured employment and 35 returned to school.

The **Central** region team assisted 246 Citizens with their employment and training needs. Out of the completed journeys, 156 Citizens secured employment and 35 returned to school.



- Funded: 1,313
- Employed/Self-employed: 949
 - Returned to school/Stayed in school: 168
- Non-funded: 121
 - Returned to school/Stayed in school: 46
- Additionally, 1,009 students across Alberta received post-secondary funding in 2022–2023.

Disability Program Services

The Disability Program provided consultative support to Citizens. Support includes professional assessments with licensed practitioners (psycho-educational assessments, vocational assessments, assistive technology assessments, etc.), assistive technology supports and training, tutoring, laptops, ergonomic supports, and more.

Apprenticeship Service Program

In 2022, the Apprenticeship Service Program (ASP) was created to connect first-year apprentices from underrepresented groups with employers across Alberta. With funding by Employment and Social Development Canada, Rupertsland Institute launched the Apprenticeship Service Program on October 13, 2022 to support employers and inspiring trades workers by creating apprenticeship opportunities for individuals who self-identify as Indigenous (Métis, First Nations, Inuit) and/or women (gender).

Since its launch \$260,000 has been paid out to businesses through ASP, and the ASP has assisted:

- 34 business hire new first-year apprentices.
- 35 apprentices find work and get sponsored in 9 different trades. Of these apprentices, 19 were Métis, 13 were First Nation, and 3 were non-Indigenous women.
- \$260,000 have been paid out to businesses through ASP.

Diversity & Inclusion Training

As part of the ASP, RLI has developed and administered a Diversity and Inclusion Training course with a special focus on Métis inclusion in the workplace.

In our first session on March 27, 2023:

- 19 people attended: 8 in-person, 11 virtual.

In our second session on May 5, 2023:

- 37 people attended: 8 in-person, 29 virtual.

In 2023/2024, RLI’s diversity and inclusion training will administer:

- 2 more session dates.
- 16-hour Moodle course.

Mobile METI-Service Centre

In 2022–2023:

Region	Number of Visitors	Métis	First Nations	Non-Aboriginal
Northwet	502	256	78	168
Northeast	421	214	129	78
South	259	209	4	46
Central	223	140	83	—

Total kilometres travelled 35,000 km.



Rupertsland Centre for Teaching and Learning

Rupertsland Centre for Teaching and Learning (RCTL) includes Métis Early Learning, K-12 Supports, courses, professional learning, Métis Access to Post-Secondary, and Michif language revitalization. RCTL envisions education in Alberta to include an understanding of Métis foundational knowledge, Métis content and Métis resources for all learners and educators to access in an authentic and purposeful way.

RCTL Courses

Rupertsland Centre for Teaching and Learning (RCTL) proudly offers a variety of lifelong learning opportunities for and about the Métis Nation.

Métis Foundational Knowledge Themes Course (ongoing)

- a five-module open online course that invites learners to build their foundational knowledge about the Métis Nation.
- **109 registrants on local, national, and international levels.**

Post-Secondary Courses (new as of September 2022)

University of Alberta Graduate Course – EDU596 Métis Foundational Knowledge

- EDU 596 Métis Foundational Knowledge for Teachers and School Leaders is a graduate course designed for teachers and school leaders in collaboration between Rupertsland Institute and the Faculty of Education.

Royal Roads Course – Métis Culture Component

- Rupertsland Centre for Teaching & Learning offered a Métis cultural component to support the Royal Roads University Métis-specific Project Administration course.

niya michif – Métis Educator and Facilitator Learning (ongoing)

- Métis educators are invited to meet online with a cohort to learn about weaving their stories into their teaching, to enhance their foundational knowledge, and to share best practices guided by Métis ways of knowing and keeoukaywin (visiting).

Preschool funding for Métis Early Learners

Parents and caregivers of Citizens can apply for preschool funding support. Approved applicants can receive up to \$100 per month.

Michif Language Revitalization

RCTL is dedicated to revitalizing the Michif language in Alberta through courses, educational resources, videos, and more. Michif language resources are designed to support lifelong learners of all backgrounds. An Introduction to Michif Language course is coming soon and 24 students are currently piloting it.



Tutoring

- RLI partnered with Calgary Mobile Teachers Inc. to deliver Tutoring Support to Métis learners from grades K-12. Approved learners can receive one-on-one tutoring from qualified educators. Flexible sessions and delivery methods are available.
- **151 learners were provided Tutoring Support.**

Professional Development (stats)

Rupertsland Centre for Teaching and Learning offers a variety of professional learning opportunities on Métis education and how to use RCTL's resources. RCTL's learning opportunities are designed and presented by Métis educators and supported by the community. New professional development sessions were developed and

delivered to learning consortias and to Métis Education Service Agreement school division holders.

- **73 professional development sessions were delivered to over 3,500 educators, community and pre-service teachers in Alberta and across Canada.**

Resources and RECC Room

RCTL offers a large selection of Métis Education Resources that support educators and are constantly being updated and added. Monthly email lists are sent out to educators and community members to receive updates about new resources, events and programming offered.

The Rupertsland Education Community Connection platform (RECC Room) offers many virtual classroom field trips, programs (tutoring, ExamBank), learning communities, events, and services for everyone to access.

- 2,900 local and international members
- Over 9,300 learners reached through Métis Virtual Field Trips
- 1,250 exams written by Métis students through ExamBank
- 47,000 Enn Fleur tattoos mailed to learning communities



Métis Access to Post-Secondary

- MAPS provides support to Métis high school students to decrease barriers and increase pathways to higher education for Métis learners in Alberta.
- Over the last year, MAPS provided support to **over 200 Métis students** from Grades 9-12.

Métis Education Service Agreements (MESA) (new as of 2022)

Métis Education Service Agreements (MESAs) are agreements held with three school divisions across Alberta. Through these agreements, school divisions are supported with resources, cultural support, programming, and professional development. These agreements are a form of reconciliation, accountability, and transparency to Métis students and families, and ensure authentic Métis ways of knowing and doing.

The three school divisions that entered into Métis Education Service Agreements are:

- Wildrose
- Prairieland
- Livingstone Range

Métis Student Services

To support RLI's goals, Métis Student Services (MSS) was tasked with creating meaningful supports, and enhancements to complement existing programming. These initiatives empower Métis youth, post-secondary students, and alumni with opportunities for meaningful cultural connection, community engagement and sources of funding. Over the course of 2022/2023, 461 students across Alberta accessed Métis Student Service supports.

Rupertsland Métis Student and Alumni Association (RMSA)

To bring past and present-funded students together to maintain a connection with RLI. Being part of this association can open many doors and allow alumni to reap various benefits.

Rupertsland Métis Student and Alumni Association membership as of June 2023: 5,773 Citizens

Internship Program

RLI was excited to be able to offer paid internship opportunities in a variety of fields, including human resources, business, marketing, communications, computer science, and more.

Open to RMSA members currently in school, the internship program offered a chance to learn new skills, gain exposure to meaningful career opportunities, and explore cultural and community connection, which were major draws for students who partook in the inaugural program during the winter 2023 semester.

Student interns: **16**



Shakamohta

Five students in digital audio arts, education and communications were given the opportunity to create a unique, student-led podcast exploring Métis people excelling in numerous fields ranging from art to fashion to language and more.



Evening of Excellence

The second annual evening of excellence was hosted on June 9, 2022 to celebrate community and the success of RLI students and alumni.

Alumni Events

As the Métis Nation within Alberta grows, the community will gradually become more engaged. Rupertsland Institute Alumni Mixers are a way to help RLI alumni connect with one another and *continue to make history*.

April 15, 2023

RLI held the inaugural Rupertsland Institute Alumni Gathering on April 15, 2023 at the Edmonton Expo Centre. RLI and the MNA partnered to engage Citizens to continue the work that lies ahead with the new Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Total attendees: **239**

Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research

The Rupertsland Centre for Métis Research (RCMR) was established at the University of Alberta to advance Métis-specific research. Rupertsland Institute (RLI) and RCMR aim to create internally-driven studies and academic research that shed light on important contemporary issues to the Métis community and that enhance the well-being of Métis Citizens.

RUPERTSLAND CENTRE
10 YEARS
FOR MÉTIS RESEARCH

RCMR Projects and Events

Métis Talks Winter 2023

The theme for Métis Talks this winter was Act C-92 and Métis kinship care. This event celebrated the publication of *Reclaiming Our Children: Exercising Métis Child and Family Services Jurisdiction Under Act C-92* and *It Takes a Community: Strengthening Métis Families Through Kinship*, in collaboration with the Métis Nation of Alberta. Presentations were held by Angie Tucker and Carol Carifelle-Brzezicki. ■

MÉTIS Talks

Carol Carifelle-Brzezicki
Reclaiming our Children-Exercising Métis Child and Family Services Jurisdiction Under Act C-92

Angie Tucker
It Takes A Community: Strengthening Métis Families Through Kinship

RUPERTSLAND CENTRE FOR MÉTIS RESEARCH

Jan 12, 2023
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

ORION ROOM
Student's Union Building 0-51
University of Alberta North Campus

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF NATIVE STUDIES

Métis Education Foundation



Established in 1991 by the MNA, the Métis Education Foundation (MEF) is incorporated as a non-profit charitable foundation with the goal of improving education outcomes for Alberta Métis.



In 2006, the MNA and RLI's predecessor, the Labour Market Development Unit (LMD), began to capitalize the MEF and started the process of negotiating Métis endowments with post-secondary institutions across Alberta, with funds derived from the Federal Indigenous Labour Market Program.

The MEF is governed by a four-member Board of Directors that is made up by the Executive Committee of the MNA Provincial Council. The Board meets as needed and generally once every quarter to consider matters placed before the Board by Rupertsland Institute.

- Audrey Poitras – MNA Provincial and Executive President
- Dan Cardinal – MNA Provincial and Executive Vice-President
- Carol Ridsdale – MNA Executive Secretary
- Andrea Sandmaier – MNA Executive Treasurer

Today, the Métis Education Foundation holds an endowment portfolio with a market value over \$30 million dollars, 21 post-secondary endowment partnerships within Alberta, and two MEF internal endowments.

Métis Scholar Awards

The Métis Scholar Awards program disburses the proceeds of the MEF's endowment investments funds to individual Citizens through Métis Scholar Awards.

Because the majority of the endowments are created in partnership with post-secondary institutions, these endowments and awards are administered directly by each post-secondary institution. A representative from Rupertsland Institute participates in all selections to ensure Métis Citizens are receiving these awards.

The two internal endowments are administered and selected by both Rupertsland Institute and MEF board representatives. These endowments were created to support Citizens pursuing out of country, artistic, and athletics pursuits, as well as supporting our Citizens entering the Early Learning and Child Care field.

Since inception, the Métis Scholar Award program has dispersed close to \$9 million to over 2,500 Citizens. ■



2021/2022* Métis Scholar Award Endowment Chart

Endowment	Original Date Established	2021/22* Awards Disbursed	2021/22* Award Value Disbursed	2022* Market Value
MacEwan University	2008	13	51,000	3,997,872
University of Alberta	2008	30	210,000	7,943,255
NorQuest College	2008	10	44,000	850,000
NAIT	2009	44	185,500	3,502,977
Portage College	2009	13	39,000	1,278,529
Northwestern Polytechnic	2011	4	2,500	405,021
University of Calgary	2012	14	93,750	3,351,848
Mount Royal University	2012	8	25,200	760,504
University of Lethbridge	2012	9	49,400	1,319,662
Lethbridge College	2013	4	14,000	531,255
Athabasca University	2014	2	5,000	554,225
Northern Lakes College	2015	15	13,500	121,756
Lakeland College	2015	8	8,000	526,690
Bow Valley College	2015	6	15,000	488,889
MEF Endowment Trust Fund	2015	26	104,500	2,479,929
Medicine Hat College	2018	3	12,000	130,000
SAIT	2018	4	12,000	765,097
Concordia University of Edmonton	2018	1	2,500	247,500
ELCC Endowment Trust Fund	2020	2	15,000	1,618,470
Keyano College**	2022	0	0	1,000,000
Red Deer Polytechnic**	2022	0	0	325,000
Olds College**	2022	0	0	350,000
Total Contributions/Market Value		216	901,850	32,548,479

* Reporting is lagged one-year to due to post-secondary fiscal-years ending beyond this reporting period

** Institutions were newly created and did not have data as of 2021-2022 reporting period



SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS

**SPECIAL RESOLUTION OF THE MEMBERS OF
THE MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA ASSOCIATION**

WHEREAS, with the ratification, adoption, and implementation of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution, the Métis Nation of Alberta's six large administrative regions are to be transitioned to 22 smaller Districts;

AND WHEREAS, under the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution, District Councils are to be established as new District level governance structures, in place of existing Local Councils and Regional Councils;

AND WHEREAS, in order to allow for the transition from existing Local Councils and Regional Councils to new District Councils, as contemplated in the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution, certain amendments are required to the current bylaws of those Local Councils and Regional Councils;

AND WHEREAS, the current bylaws of certain existing Local Councils and Regional Councils require that any amendments to such bylaws must be ratified by the Citizens of the Métis Nation of Alberta at an Annual Assembly;

**NOW THEREFORE THE 95th MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA ANNUAL
GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLVES, AS A SPECIAL RESOLUTION, THAT**

1. Any amendments to the bylaws of a Local Council or Regional Council that are approved by a special resolution of the members of that Local Council or Regional Council (whether prior to or after the date hereof) are hereby ratified and confirmed, provided that such amendments:
 - (a) are made for the purpose of transitioning such Local Council or Regional Council (including the interests and assets thereof, as applicable) to one or more District Councils that will represent the Citizens formerly represented by such Local Council or Regional Council;
 - (b) conform to any requirements set out in the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution and any applicable Otipemisiwak Métis Government laws;
 - (c) ensure the ongoing local and/or regional level benefit and control, through the District Councils, of any currently held interests and assets of the Local Council or Regional Council; and
 - (d) meet such other requirements as the Citizens' Council may establish to ensure the effective and orderly transition to District Councils, provided such requirements reflect the spirit and intention of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution.

2. For purposes of this special resolution, any reference to the Citizens' Council shall be read as reference to the Provincial Council prior to the coming into force of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution.

Moved by: Garrett Tomlinson

Seconded by: President Audrey Poitras



MEETING MINUTES (2021/2022)

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS FROM THE MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA 94TH ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Motion #1: Brian Hamelin moves that we elect the Chair and co-chair with one vote, with the highest number going to the Chair and the second highest going to the co-chair and if we have more than three nominees, we go to a secret ballot.

Motion #1: Brian Hamelin moves that we elect the Chair and co-chair position using the highest number of votes for the Chair and the second highest for the co-chair. If there is more than three nominees then we have a secret ballot, seconded by Marcel Proulx

The Chair confirmed there is a motion on the floor to be dealt with first and spoke against the motion advising that it goes against the bylaws which contain a process on how to proceed to a secret ballot.

Motion #2: Karen Collins moves to cease nominations for Chair, seconded by Dan Cardinal.
Motion Carried

Motion #3: Sylvia Johnson moves to cease nominations for Vice-Chair, seconded by Lorelei Lanz.
Motion Carried

Motion #4: Joe Pimlott moved to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Kendrick Cardinal.
Motion Carried

Motion #5: Brian Hamelin moves to accept the President's Report, seconded by Jeff Chalifoux.
Motion Carried

Motion #6: Rick Boucher moves to accept the Vice President's Report, seconded by Brandy Ustichen.
Motion Carried

Motion #7: Gail McLenaghan moves to accept the Secretary's Report as amended, seconded by Sharon Lahey.
Motion Carried

Motion #8: Melanie Omeniho moves to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Garrett Tomlinson.
Motion Carried

Special Resolution #1

WHEREAS: ARTICLE 26 of bylaws of the MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA ASSOCIATION sets out the proper procedure and requirements for the calling of a Special Meeting which includes notice of 21 days in writing of the time and place of the Special Meeting and the Proposed notice for same;

AND WHEREAS: Proper notice to call a Special Meeting for June 4, 2022 by the MNAA Provincial Council did not follow the bylaws of the Association, the Societies Act section 1 d I A, and Alberta's Interpretation Act, given the notice posted online on May 15, 2022 failed to meet the 21 day notice, such notice being sent on May 15, 2022 for the proposed special meeting on June 4, 2022;

AND WHEREAS: The rationale for holding such a meeting was presumptive in assuming the MNAA Constitution would be passed at the Annual General Assembly in August 2022 in Calgary and ratified in a province wide vote in fall of 2022;

AND WHEREAS: The Special meeting location was in a jurisdiction that did not allow for adequate accessibility in terms of location, time and expense for MNAA members to attend upon such short notice;

AND WHEREAS: MNAA Election Bylaws specifically state that all rules, regulations and procedures shall be identical. Or as identical as possible, to those of the Election Act of the Province of Alberta;

AND WHEREAS: Section 3 (3) of the Alberta Elections Act clearly states:

(3) The Chief Electoral Officer **may**, where the Chief Electoral Officer considers it necessary for the efficient conduct of an election, enumeration or plebiscite under this Act, an election under the Alberta Senate Election Act or a petition, plebiscite, referendum or vote under any other Act to which this Act applies,

(a) extend the time for doing anything under this Act, **except**

(i) the time for the holding of an election.

AND WHEREAS: The Rule of Law considering the Rules of Democracy state that there must be an opportunity for the changing of elected officials as set out in legislation and to postpone or ignore that important requirement would be to ignore the Rule of Law in Canada;

AND WHEREAS: The 12 principles of democracy are Citizen participation, equality, political tolerance, accountability and transparency, regular free and fair elections, economic freedom, control of the abuse of power, bill of rights, accepting the results of elections, human rights, multiparty system, postponement of the 2022 elections contrary to the MNAA bylaws, the Alberta Elections Act and the Society's Act;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the June 4, 2022 MNAA Special Meeting to postpone the 2022 MNAA provincial elections be repealed and the MNAA Provincial elections stand for 2022 in accordance with the MNAA bylaws, the Alberta Elections Act and the principles of a free and democratic society.

Moved by M. Jeannette Hansen
Seconded by Dr. Adam Browning

Resolution not Discussed
MJC Decision Stands

ORDINARY RESOLUTIONS

Ordinary Resolution #1 Re: Advancing Self-Government

WHEREAS the Métis Nation emerged—as a distinct Indigenous people—in the historic North-West before Canada became Canada and Alberta became Alberta;

AND WHEREAS all Indigenous peoples hold the inherent rights to self-determination and self-government, as recognized in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* (“**Section 35**”)

AND WHEREAS for generations Métis Nation citizens and communities within what is now known as Alberta have come together to advance Métis rights, including, exercising and implementing the Métis right of self-government through the creation and evolution of the Métis Nation of Alberta (“MNA”) as the government of the Métis Nation within Alberta;

AND WHEREAS through the hard work and determination of our ancestors over the generations the MNA is now the oldest continuous Métis government within the Métis Nation Homeland and has the largest Registry of verified Métis rights-holders with over 54,000 registered MNA citizens and thousands more registering each year;

AND WHEREAS MNA citizens, Métis communities and this Annual General Assembly (“MNA AGA”) have provided consistent and persistent direction to the MNA to further advance Métis rights and self-government in Alberta through the development and adoption of a Constitution — as Métis law—instead of continuing to operate under the MNA Bylaws and Alberta’s *Societies Act*;

AND WHEREAS after generations of organization, political advocacy and Métis rights litigation that has gone all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada, on June 27, 2019, Canada signed the historic Métis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement (“MGRSA”) with the MNA;

AND WHEREAS the MGRSA recognizes the Métis Nation within Alberta possesses the inherent right to self-government that is protected by Sections 35 and sets out a process to fully implement a government-to-government relationship between Canada and the Métis Nation of Alberta based on a Constitution—as Métis law—being developed and adopted by the MNA and Parliament adopting its own legislation to give legal force and effect to the MGRSA in Canadian law;

AND WHEREAS the 2019 MNA AGA adopted a resolution establishing a Constitution Commission to consult on and develop a draft Constitution that all MNA citizens will ultimately have an opportunity to consider and vote on through a province-wide ratification;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution Commission (i) reviewed and relied on numerous self-government reports that MNA has prepared over generations, (ii) held a series of round tables with the MNA Provincial Council, MNA Regions, which include MNA Locals, the MNA Judiciary Council, MNA Affiliates as well as with elders, women, youth, and, (iii) prepared a draft Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution that was presented to 2021 MNA AGA;

AND WHEREAS based on the direction received from the 2021 MNA AGA the Constitution Commission held hearings and gatherings across Alberta in 2021/2022 to receive feedback on the

draft Constitution and all MNA citizens were invited to submit written comments on the draft Constitution;

AND WHEREAS a Special Meeting was held on June 4, 2022 and approved a Special Resolution to postpone the MNA general election until September 2023 to allow all MNA citizens to vote on a final draft of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution, so the next general election will be conducted under the self-government authority of the Constitution (if it is ultimately approved), including, the new positions to be elected as a part of the Citizens' Council in the Constitution;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution Commission, based on its above-noted mandate and the province-wide consultations it undertook in 2021/22, has now tabled a final draft of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution with the 2022 MNA AGA;

NOW THEREFORE THE 94th MNA AGA RESOLVES THAT:

A) the final draft of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution is approved to be placed in the hands of all MNA citizens and that a province-wide ratification vote be held in the fall of 2022 to allow all MNA citizens 16 years of age or over to vote on the potential passage of this fundamental Métis law;

B) the MNA provide information on the final draft of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution to all MNA citizens, including ensuring information is sent to each citizen's last known mailing address as well as undertaking an extensive information and media campaign on the ratification vote to encourage as many citizens as possible to vote;

C) the MNA advocate that the Parliament of Canada introduce the implementation legislation contemplated in the MGRSA by the end of 2022 and the MGRSA potentially be supplemented to ensure the MNA has the same self-government recognition provided to all other Métis Nation governments; and

D) if a majority of MNA citizens who vote in the province-wide ratification approve the final draft of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government Constitution (i.e., 50% + 1), a Special Meeting will be called to implement the new Constitution, including ensuring the general election under the new Constitution be held in September 2023.

Moved by: Lisa Weber

Seconded by: Karen Collins

A request was made for a friendly amendment to the resolution to include the means of voting under the first Therefore Be it Resolved, as follows: '...allow all MNA citizens 16 years of age or over to vote **(by ballot, including online or by mail)**...'

The mover and seconder to the motion both confirmed their agreement to the amendment. Additional debate was held and following a show of hands vote the resolution was passed with a clear majority.

**Ordinary Resolution #1 was re-read Moved by: Lisa Weber and Seconded by: Karen Collins
AMENDED MOTION CARRIED**

Ordinary Resolution #2 Re: Métis Artisans

WHEREAS Métis artisans, artists, and makers have historically been entrepreneurs, using unique skill sets to create art and items that reflected culture and through trade and sale allowed Métis families to thrive,

And contemporarily Métis artists, artisans, and makers often struggle to get their products to mainstream markets or pass along the skills that had been passed to them through generations,

And new generations who wish to learn these skills often do not have access to Métis instructors or mentors, leading to loss of culture, tradition and identity.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the MNA create a Métis artist collective that supports Métis artists, artisans and makers through platforms and programs where artists, artisans, and makers may bring their goods to mainstream and community markets, have opportunities to expand their skills, vision, and reach, and connect the Métis community with goods and services that reflect Métis culture and identity.

THEREFORE BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that this artist collective and the MNA provide opportunities to those who wish to learn the skills involved in traditional and contemporary arts and craftsmanship, ensuring the stories, culture, and identity around Métis arts and craftsmanship follow through to future generations.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Métis Nation will plan and host a Métis Arts, Artisans, and Makers Fair by no later than December 17, 2022.

Moved by Krista Leddy
Seconded by Aura Leddy

RESOLUTION CARRIED

Ordinary Resolution #3 Re: Métis Harvesting Rights

WHEREAS the Métis Nation of Alberta (“MNA”) continues to have significant concerns about the trial judge’s conclusions in *R. v. Hirsekorn* in 2010, which were subsequently upheld by the appeal courts in Alberta;

AND WHEREAS since 2010 additional research regarding Métis presence and harvesting in southern Alberta has been undertaken and recent decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada and other appellate courts have contradicted the narrow, site-specific approach to Métis harvesting rights taken in *R. v. Hirsekorn*;

AND WHEREAS the MNA continues to emphatically reject the position that Métis do not have any harvesting rights protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* anywhere in southern Alberta;

AND WHEREAS despite the Government of Alberta (“Alberta”) committing to discussions with the MNA on Métis harvesting rights, including an express commitment in the 2019 *Métis Nation of Alberta– Government of Alberta Métis Harvesting Agreement* (“**Harvesting Agreement**”) to discuss “[t]he recognition of Métis harvesting rights in southern Alberta,” the current provincial government refuses to engage with the MNA on this issue;

NOW THEREFORE THE 94th MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLVES THAT:

A) the MNA President write to the relevant Alberta Ministers to once again request a meeting to discuss the recognition of Métis harvesting rights in southern Alberta consistent with previous commitments;

B) the MNA convene a conference to be held somewhere in southern Alberta that brings together MNA Region 3, including MNA citizens who ancestrally connect to southern Alberta, as well as historians, experts, and lawyers to better understand the history of Métis throughout southern Alberta as an indivisible part of the Métis Nation within Alberta;

C) the MNA work within MNA Region 3 to develop a public and government education campaign on Métis rights in southern Alberta, including raising this issue in the ongoing UCP leadership race;

D) if Alberta continues to refuse to discuss Métis harvesting rights in southern Alberta, the MNA initiate litigation, in consultation with MNA Region 3 Regional Council and Local Councils, to secure recognition of Métis harvesting rights in southern Alberta.

Moved: Audrey Poitras
Seconded: Cindy Lemley

RESOLUTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Ordinary Resolution #4 Re: 2SLGBTQ+ Inclusion

Whereas the MNA is the representative of all Métis citizens within Alberta; and

Whereas, the 2SLGBTQ+ community has historically been underrepresented within the political and social structure of the MNA; and

Whereas members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community face higher rates of violence and discrimination, both historically and contemporarily;

Whereas, the MNA strives to advocate for inclusivity and fairness for all citizens; and

Whereas the MNA is working towards self-governance, and the inclusion of Métis people from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences is critical to the future of our Nation, culture, and people; and

Therefore, be it resolved that the MNA take every reasonable effort to be inclusive to the 2SLGBTQ+ community in all the work that is being done within the Métis Nation of Alberta's programs, services and political body.

Moved by Hannah Nash
Seconded by Rebecca Lavalley

RESOLUTION CARRIED

Ordinary Resolution #5 Re: Youth on Transition Committee

Whereas, the Métis Nation has fought for centuries for our inherent right to self-government and self-determination; and

Whereas, the Métis Nation of Alberta has developed a draft constitution that will move the Métis Nation of Alberta out of the Societies Act and provide a solid foundation for our Métis government for generations to come, and

Whereas, there will be a Transition Committee to aid the Métis Nation of Alberta in the successful transition from the Societies Act to self-government; and

Whereas, the implementation of the Métis Nation of Alberta Constitution will have immense impact on all Métis Nation of Alberta citizens for generations to come; and

Whereas, for generations Métis families and communities within Alberta have organized, advocated and advanced the goal of Métis Nation Self-Determination and Self-Government, and Métis Youth must be meaningfully involved and included in the governance of the Nation in order to ensure this legacy is not lost; and

Whereas, Métis Nation of Alberta youth citizens must be involved in every aspect of the Nation, including but not limited to the transition from our current bylaws to a ratified Métis Constitution.

Therefore, it be resolved that the Métis Nation of Alberta's Constitution Transition Committee will include two youth between the ages of 18-29, who will be unanimously appointed by the MNA Provisional Youth Council

**Moved by Hannah Nash
Seconded by Rebecca Lavallee**

***RESOLUTION CARRIED
UNANIMOUSLY***

Ordinary Resolution #6 Re: Addressing the Sorry Legacy of Métis Scrip

WHEREAS following Canada's colonial expansion westward into the Métis Nation Homeland, the federal government issued scrip that acknowledged the Métis Nation's pre-existing rights to land and purported to extinguish the 'Indian title' of the Métis;

AND WHEREAS the Métis scrip system created by the federal government was rife with fraud and abuse, which led Métis across the Homeland to be dispossessed of their lands and resources;

AND WHEREAS in response to the injustice of scrip Métis resisted, organized, petitioned, and litigated to seek redress and secure their rights and land, but Canada amended its own laws to stop Métis from pursuing claims against scrip speculators and ignored the injustice the system created;

AND WHEREAS redress for the injustices of the Métis scrip system is fundamental to meaningful reconciliation between the Crown and the Métis Nation within Alberta and all Métis whose ancestors were subject to Métis scrip must benefit from any negotiated settlement;

AND WHEREAS the Supreme Court of Canada has acknowledged the “the history of scrip speculation and devaluation is a sorry chapter in our nation’s history;

AND WHEREAS on November 16, 2017, Canada and the MNA signed the *Framework Agreement for Advancing Reconciliation*, which includes a commitment to “explor[e] with a view to settling the outstanding claims of the Métis Nation within Alberta against the federal Crown, including, but not limited to, claims relating to Métis scrip issued pursuant to the *Dominion Lands Act*;

AND WHEREAS, despite the MNA’s persistent efforts, Canada has failed to establish a substantive process to address Métis scrip or negotiate on this issue;

AND WHEREAS the MNA organized at provincial, regional, and local level to challenge litigation related to Métis scrip initiated by a few unauthorized individuals and so-called “community associations” (*Durocher et al v. Canada*) and, in response, all Alberta based plaintiffs abandoned their claims in this litigation;

NOW THEREFORE THE 94th MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLVES THAT:

A) The MNA demand that Canada immediately establish a formal process to negotiate a settlement in relation to Métis scrip for the Métis Nation within Alberta, consistent with the *Framework Agreement for Advancing Reconciliation* (November 16, 2017);

B) The MNA consult with citizens, Regional Councils, and Local Councils from across the province to provide information and garner support for efforts to secure redress for the injustices of the Métis scrip system;

C) If no meaningful progress is made with Canada to establish a process to negotiate a settlement in relation to Métis scrip, the MNA initiate litigation on behalf of the Métis Nation within Alberta as a whole to secure a negotiations processes and redress for the injustices of Métis scrip against the Métis Nation within Alberta.

Moved by **James Henry**
Seconded **Paul Bercier**

RESOLUTION CARRIED

Notes



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