

**Province of Manitoba / Manitoba Metis Federation
Agreement on Metis Natural Resource Harvesting
Frequently Asked Questions**

What has been announced?

The province has reached an understanding with the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) and has agreed to legally recognize Metis Natural Resource Harvesting rights in part of Manitoba, through the development of new regulations in the coming months.

Why did Manitoba and the MMF enter into this agreement?

Metis in Manitoba have constitutionally protected aboriginal rights to hunt, fish, trap and gather for food and domestic use, including wood for personal use. Manitoba courts have affirmed the existence of Metis natural resource harvesting rights in regions of the province, which requires Manitoba's regulatory regime to recognize the Metis right to harvest. This agreement achieves this direction.

At the same time, the Supreme Court of Canada has also encouraged governments and aboriginal groups to negotiate mutually agreeable, practical arrangements in order to recognize aboriginal rights as well as advance reconciliation between the Crown and aboriginal peoples. This agreement advances both of these objectives.

What are the benefits of this agreement to Manitobans?

This agreement increases certainty with respect to the where Metis natural resource harvesters are exercising their harvesting rights. As such, it enables better information sharing, enforcement, monitoring and management with respect to natural resources between Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship and the MMF. This strengthens the province's management of natural resources for all Manitobans as well as future generations.

What are the benefits of this agreement to Manitoba Metis?

It provides Metis natural resource harvesters with certainty with respect to the exercise of their rights to hunt, fish, trap and gather for food and domestic use within Manitoba. It also sets out mutually agreeable processes for information sharing, consultation and collaborative work between Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship and the MMF with the goal of improved management and monitoring.

What does "Metis natural resource harvesting" include?

For the purposes of this agreement, Metis natural resource harvesting includes hunting, trapping, fishing and gathering for food and domestic use, including for social and ceremonial purposes. It also includes the harvest of timber for domestic purposes.

Where will Metis people be able to hunt, trap, and fish without a licence?

There will be a designated area in Manitoba where Metis Natural Resource Harvesting rights can be exercised (see map). In this Metis Natural Resource Harvesting Area, Metis people will be able to hunt, trap and fish without a provincial licence, subject to conditions contained within new regulations that will put in place. Outside of the Metis Natural Resource Harvesting Area, Metis people will be required to comply with all provincial legislative requirements including the purchase of a licence.

The designated area reflects the land and waterways that were traditionally used by Metis people.

Does this agreement include commercial harvesting?

No, this agreement only recognizes Metis natural resource harvesting for food and domestic use.

How will the agreement be implemented?

The commitments in the agreement will be implemented by the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship by making regulations for Metis natural resource harvesting that are consistent with the MMF's Metis Laws of the Hunt as well as the Points of Agreement executed by the province and the MMF. The province and the MMF will also establish a Working Group to work collaboratively together on the implementation of the commitments in the Points of Agreement.

What harvesting laws apply to Metis?

Metis natural resource harvesters are required to comply with all provincial laws respecting safety and humane trapping.

What about areas where conservation closures are in place?

Metis natural resource harvesters are bound by any enactments that prohibit the hunting or trapping of an animal in order to conserve that species and sustain its ongoing viability, including moose in the moose conservation closure regulation 122-2011.

Does this mean there will be lots of new natural resource harvesters?

No, Metis are already harvesting natural resources in Manitoba.

Does this mean that Metis natural resource harvesting rights don't exist outside of the recognized area?

The province and the MMF have reached an agreement that Metis natural resource harvesting rights exist in the area identified by the map. The agreement sets out a process by which additional research may be undertaken in other areas of the province.

How does the Government know who is Metis and who is not Metis (for purposes of exercising Metis natural resource harvesting rights)?

The government will be accepting the MMF Harvesters Card as proof of Metis identity. The government will also recognize other similarly objective and verifiable forms of identification.

How will the new regulations be enforced?

Natural Resource Officers of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship will enforce the new regulations.

Does this agreement affect First Nation rights?

No. Metis rights and First Nation rights co-exist in areas of the province. The recognition of already existing Metis natural resource harvesting rights does not affect First Nation harvesting rights in any way.