

INTRODUCTION

This brochure is intended to outline Saskatchewan Environment's existing policy on Métis Aboriginal rights to hunt, fish and trap for food.

The application of Métis Aboriginal rights to hunt, fish and trap for food in Saskatchewan is evolving and still unclear. The government is working to gather the information necessary to become more knowledgeable about this issue and is committed to working with Métis communities to establish a common understanding of these rights.

Saskatchewan Environment has the responsibility to manage the environment and renewable resources for the benefit of all people of the province. Saskatchewan Environment and Métis people share a commitment to the conservation of fish and wildlife and will continue to work closely.

Métis people who feel that they may have Aboriginal rights to hunt and fish for food, or choose to exercise it before it is recognized by the province, need to understand all of the information provided in this guide. If you are unsure or have any questions you should contact a Saskatchewan Environment Conservation Officer **before** going into the field to exercise these rights. Saskatchewan Environment Conservation Officers can provide interpretations of applicable resource law and department policy and do not provide legal advice.

Note: Before exercising an Aboriginal right you are responsible to demonstrate that you meet the requirements set out by the Courts. An Aboriginal right is not recognized until these requirements are demonstrated.

Waiting until after being checked by a Conservation Officer in the field to provide this information places everyone in a very difficult situation. The officer is required to carry out a full investigation, gather evidence and make more inquiries to establish if these special rights apply in your situation.

GENERAL

- Métis Aboriginal rights apply to hunting, fishing and trapping for food and are not the same universal rights as Indian Treaty rights.
- Aboriginal rights are held by the community not the individual.
- Certain Métis communities that were well established by the late 1800's hold Métis Aboriginal rights.
- The rights apply in the area around the Métis community where the community's ancestors used to hunt, fish and trap for food.
- "Métis" does not include all individuals with mixed Indian and European heritage but refers to distinctive peoples with a distinct culture.
- Membership in a Métis organization alone is not sufficient evidence that a person holds Métis Aboriginal rights.

SAFETY AND CONSERVATION REGULATIONS

In all cases Métis people must follow all safety and conservation regulations. The following is a summary and you should discuss specific questions and local situations with a Conservation Officer beforehand. It is unlawful to:

- hunt on private or occupied Crown lands without permission;
- sell, barter or trade fish or wildlife taken for food purposes;
- use spotlights for hunting;
- carry loaded firearms in a vehicle or discharge firearms from a vehicle;
- hunt within 500 metres of occupied buildings and corrals;
- carelessly handle a firearm;
- hunt or carry unencased firearms in game preserves or other closed areas;
- waste fish or wildlife;
- set a net used for food fishing without clearly marking the net with your name address and phone number; and
- fish within 25 metres downstream from any man-made dam, fishway or obstacle.

NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN (NORTH OF THE NORTHERN ADMINISTRATION DISTRICT LINE)

The province has recognized Métis Aboriginal rights in northern Saskatchewan for a number of years and you may have already established a working understanding of these rights with Environment staff. However, **before** going into the field to exercise an Aboriginal right be certain that you are able to demonstrate:

- that you are a permanent resident of northern Saskatchewan defined as north of the Northern Administration District line;
- your Métis ancestry;
- that your family has long-standing connections to the particular northern Métis community that you reside in; and
- that you are living a traditional lifestyle;
 - ▶ traditional lifestyle relates to past and ongoing participation in a shared culture and in the customs and traditions that are important to your Métis community's identity, in this case hunting, fishing and trapping practices.

SOUTHERN SASKATCHEWAN

The province understands that some Métis people in southern Saskatchewan may hold an Aboriginal right to hunt, fish and trap for food. However, these rights are still unclear in southern Saskatchewan. If you feel that you may qualify, **before** going into the field to exercise an Aboriginal right be certain that you are able to demonstrate:

- long standing self-identification as being Métis;
- current resident of a Saskatchewan Métis community;
- an ancestral connection to members of a historic Métis community that your modern day community is linked to (Note: "historic" means that your community was well established as a Métis community in the late 1800s); and
- acceptance by your modern day Métis community as being Métis and a member of your Métis community;
 - ▶ community acceptance is about past and ongoing participation in a shared culture and in the customs and traditions that reveal a Métis community's identity.

If you need information or wish to report a hunting violation contact the nearest Environment office listed below. The area code for all numbers is 306.

* Indicates Compliance Area Manager location

Beauval*288-4710

Big River469-2520

Buffalo Narrows235-1740

Creighton*688-8812

Pelican Narrows632-5510

Hudson Bay*865-4400

Porcupine Plain278-3540

Greenwater278-3515

Preeceville547-5660

Duck Mountain.....542-5500

La Ronge*425-4234

Pinehouse884-2060

Southend758-6255

Stony Rapids439-2062

Meadow Lake*236-7557

Dorintosh236-7680

Pierceland839-6250

Loon Lake837-2410

Chitek Lake984-2343

Melville*728-7480

Fort Qu'Appelle332-3215

Yorkton786-1463

Moosomin.....435-4545

Moose Mountain577-2600

Nipawin*862-1790

Melfort752-6214

Cumberland House.....888-5810

North Battleford*446-7416

Lloydminster825-6430

Battlefords Park386-2212

Spiritwood883-8501

Prince Albert*953-2322

Christopher Lake.....982-2002

Candle Lake.....929-8400

Regina*787-2080

Assiniboia642-7242

Weyburn848-2344

Moose Jaw694-3659

Estevan637-4600

Rowan's Ravine.....725-5200

Saskatoon*933-6240

Humboldt682-6726

Wadena.....338-2452

Swift Current*778-8205

Leader628-3100

Kindersley463-5458

Outlook867-5560

Maple Creek662-5434

Cypress Hills662-5435

Shaunavon297-5433



A Guide to Métis Hunting and Fishing Rights in Saskatchewan



Saskatchewan
Environment