



BCMANR

British Columbia Métis Assembly
of Natural Resources ∞

LAWS of the ∞ **HUNT**

FIRST EDITION





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Table of Contents

Message from the BCMANR Captains	4
Introduction to the Métis Laws of the Hunt.....	6
Traditional Knowledge	8
Laws of the Buffalo Hunt.....	8
Obtaining your MNBC Harvester Card	9
Harvesting Regulations	10
Hunting and Trapping	11
Tidal Water Fishing	12
Fresh Water Fishing	12
Migratory Birds.....	12
Timber Harvesting.....	13
Other.....	13
Mandatory Annual Reporting	14
Map of BC Regions	15
Resource Appendix	16
Get in touch with your Regional Captain	18
Note-taking pages	18



A Message from Captains of the Hunt

Métis people were established in Canada well before European Control. We are a direct product of the Fur Trade and were integral to the Fur Trade and the opening of Canada from Ontario west to BC, and from the North down into the United States.

In our role in developing Western Canada, we harvested throughout the country we lived and travelled in. Anywhere the Fur Trade was, the Métis were. We were often the first non-First Nations people to venture west. We laboured, we ran Fur Trading posts, we lived and worked throughout Canada. This was our home, our lives and our culture.

Our harvesting was not limited to specific regions that might be considered a “homeland”. We were, and are, a roaming people by nature and by culture. We were not subjected to treaties or reservations that tied us to a specific land base. That is not who the Métis are. We are Western Canada. We were based in many areas, such as the Red River, Northern Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC, but we ranged and harvested throughout the whole of Western Canada.

Our harvesting rights predate Canada and range beyond Canada. Our Harvesting rights, and our rights to



have the tools to harvest and protect ourselves were never given up. They remain our rights regardless of specific barriers within Canadian Law and Policy.

Looking at our rights in terms of a land base is to ignore our history and deny our rights based on an incorrect concept of who we are. We are not First Nations. We are not immigrants. We are Métis.

We did not exert control over any particular region. We shared, we traded, and we lived with our First Nations relations on the land. We are not looking to exert control; we wish to continue our right to harvest as we did before Canada came. Our rights are equal to First Nations rights, but our circumstances are different. Our relationship with First Nations is a Nation-to-Nation relationship, independent of Canadian interference. We recognize First Nations rights and stewardship within their land base.

We wish to harvest where we traditionally harvested: everywhere the Fur Trade was conducted – all of Western Canada. This is our right. Along with this right comes the responsibility of stewardship guided by Métis traditional knowledge and values. The Métis are committed to work with our partners to ensure sustainability of our joint harvesting.

British Columbia Métis Assembly of Natural Resources (BCMANR)



Introduction to the BCMANR Laws of the Hunt

This first edition guidebook is compiled by the British Columbia Métis Assembly of Natural Resources to specifically guide British Columbian Métis Harvesters. It is meant to provide important details and relevant resources to support Harvesters. It is informed by the Laws of the Hunt, MNBC's Natural Resources Act, BCMANR's Traditional Knowledge Policy and BCMANR's Policies and Procedures. BCMANR was installed in 2001 to acknowledge both traditional knowledge and western-based knowledge.

BCMANR is a separate society that is affiliated with Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC). MNBC represents thirty-nine (39) Métis Chartered Communities in British Columbia. Its mandate is to develop and enhance opportunities for Métis communities by implementing culturally relevant social and economic programs and services. MNBC is recognized by the Métis National Council, Provincial Government of British Columbia, and the Federal Government of Canada as the Governing Nation for Métis in BC.

Within the MNBC Natural Resources Act, BCMANR is a non-political committee that manages natural resources on behalf of the MNBC.

The British Columbia Métis Assembly of Natural Resources (BCMANR) is based on the success of the Métis people since the 1700's. The "Buffalo Assembly" and the "Laws of the Prairies" were established by the "community" way of life. These communal commitments ensured the survival of the Métis people during tough times.





As described by Louis Riel Institute, published in 2020:

The Métis Nation became a dominant force on the plains during the late 1700s and way into the 1800s. They were a highly organized body of people. They enacted laws, rules and regulations around the buffalo hunt which later became the “Laws of the Prairie” and the beginning of law enforcement in the area, subsequently adopted by the North West Mounted Police. The initiation of these laws brought the Métis Nation the solidifying process of self-government. (para 2)

A number of captains were nominated by the President and the people jointly. Their duty was to see that the Laws of the Hunt were strictly carried out. It was the duty of the captains and their policemen to see that this was rightly done. (para 5)

Although the Métis sustained themselves in a variety of ways (such as fishing, trapping for furs, practicing small-scale agriculture and working as wage labourers for the Hudson’s Bay Company)...(para 12)

In September of 2008, the Métis citizens of British Columbia ratified the MNBC Natural Resource Act. This act was to institute sound conservation practices and measures, protect the sustenance and cultural needs of the Métis Citizens in British Columbia, adequate consultation on all natural resource issues and above all, establish natural resource regulation by combining both Métis traditional knowledge and western-based knowledge.



Métis Traditional Knowledge

Métis recognize and value the fact that our ancestors have been living on the land from time immemorial. Métis have a unique culture that is the combination of the best aspects of indigenous and European cultures. This connection to the land has provided Métis with an extensive body of knowledge, values, beliefs and practices that is often referred to as traditional knowledge. This knowledge, which has been passed down orally and through land-based experience, is the foundation of Métis identity and survival.

DID YOU KNOW?

1840'S LAWS OF THE BUFFALO HUNT

In 1840, the following hunt rules were put in place to ensure no hunter would act greedily or harm the other members of the brigade in any way.

- *No buffalo to be run on the Sabbath-Day.*
- *No party to fork off, lag behind, or go before, without permission.*
- *No person or party to run buffalo before the general order.*
- *Every captain with his men, in turn, to patrol the camp, and keep guard.*
- *For the first trespass against these laws, the offender to have his saddle and bridle cut up.*
- *For the second offence, the coat to be taken off the offender's back, and be cut up.*
- *For the third offence, the offender to be flogged.*
- *Any person convicted of theft, even to the value of a sinew, to be brought to the middle of the camp, and the crier to call out his or her name three times, adding the word "Thief", at each time.*



Obtaining Your MNBC Harvester Card and Harvesting Guidelines

MNBC Harvesting Cards may be issued to Métis Citizens who submit applications and meet requirements for approval

How to obtain the Harvester Card (without hunting)

An Adult Applicant (18 years or older) requires:

- MNBC Citizen number

A Youth Applicant (10 - 18 years only) requires:

- MNBC Citizen number
- Youth Applicant (10 years of age or older and under 18) must provide a fully completed and signed "Acknowledgement of Responsibility" from their parent or guardian

How to obtain the Harvester Card (with hunting)

An Adult Applicant (18 years or older) requires:

- MNBC Citizen number
- A copy of your BC Resident Hunter Number card or Fish and Wildlife ID; or
- Proof of Hunter Safety Training (e.g. CORE)

A Youth Applicant (10 - 18 years only) requires:

- MNBC Citizen number
- Youth Applicant (10 years of age or older and under 18) must provide a fully completed and signed "Acknowledgement of Responsibility" from their parent or guardian
- Youth applicants must provide proof of Hunter Safety Training (e.g. CORE)





Harvesting Regulations

Harvesting regulations as mandated by BCMANR and the Natural Resources Act:

1. BCMANR will make regulations that are consistent with Article 3.0 and develop regulations based on the principles of existing case law, and whereas;
 - a. An agreement (as per Article 7.0) that has been endorsed between the MNBC and a provincial and/or federal government partner, or;
 - b. Legislative or political direction has been provided by the Métis Nation Governing Assembly, MNBC Annual General Assembly or a ratified motion of the MNBC Board of Directors, however;
 - c. If neither Articles 9.0 a. nor 9.0 b. are present, then provincial and federal government legislation and regulation will be sanctioned
2. BCMANR regulations are installed to promote and facilitate the protection of traditional land use locations and other historical resources of significance to Métis within British Columbia. Measures can be found in the Natural Resources Act (Article 9.0). They include and are not limited to:
 - Respecting threatened species or endangered species;
 - Designating no shooting and/or no harvesting areas
 - Prohibiting or regulating methods and devices for hunting or taking wildlife and respecting safety in those activities;



- Providing for the reporting and recording of harvesting activities;
 - Specifying open seasons or closed seasons, or both, for a sex, age or species of wildlife;
3. The holder of a MNBC Harvesting Card constitutes acceptance of all terms and conditions for use of the card as outlined in this Act and any subsequent regulations created under the regulations of BCMANR.
 4. A MNBC Citizen cannot cumulatively harvest wildlife or fish under multiple licensing authorities (i.e. MNBC Harvesting Card and a Province of British Columbia Wildlife Act hunting license).
 5. Unless otherwise specified, harvesters must conduct all other harvesting activities under the appropriate federal or provincial hunting license, fishing license, or another permit.
 6. Harvesting of wildlife and fish for commercial purposes is not authorized. Only harvesting by Métis Citizens for food, social, ceremonial, and traditional purposes is permitted.
 7. Offences will proceed with the BCMANR investigations process. Appeal mechanisms are handled by the MNBC Senate.

Hunting and Trapping:

Current requirements (subject to change) are:

1. *Harvester must be a MNBC Citizen with a current MNBC Citizenship card*
2. *Harvester must have a currently valid MNBC Harvesting card*
3. *Harvester must have a BC Resident Hunter Number, to hunt or*

trap under BC hunting Regulations and to apply for Limited Entry Hunting Authorizations

Tidal Water fishing:

Current requirements (subject to change) are:

1. *Harvester must be a MNBC Citizen with a current MNBC Citizenship card*
2. *Harvester must have a currently valid MNBC Harvesting card*
3. *Harvester must have a valid Government of Canada Tidal Water license, to harvest in tidal waters, required by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans*

Fresh Water fishing:

Current requirements (subject to change) are:

1. *Harvester must be a MNBC Citizen with a current MNBC Citizenship card*
2. *Harvester must have a currently valid MNBC Harvesting card*
3. *Harvester must have a BC Freshwater Fishing License, to fish under BC Freshwater Fishing Regulations*

Migratory birds:

The current situation regarding the need to hold a Government Issued Migratory Bird license is unclear. If a Harvester meets the necessary criteria below, some legal support may be offered in the event charges are laid





Current requirements (subject to change) are:

1. *Harvester must be a MNBC Citizen with a current MNBC Citizenship card*
2. *Harvester must have a currently valid MNBC Harvesting card*
3. *Harvester must be hunting within all other regulations set out in the migratory bird harvesting synopses (currently following BC regulations)*
4. *Harvester must have a valid BC Resident Hunter number*

Timber harvesting:

Current requirements (subject to change) are:

1. *Harvester must be a MNBC Citizen with a current MNBC Citizenship card*
2. *Harvester must have a currently valid MNBC Harvesting card*
3. *British Columbia requires Métis to have appropriate licenses and permits to harvest timber under BC Regulations and Policies*

OTHER:

Eagle parts

In British Columbia, it is not illegal to possess Eagle Feathers. Note that this does not address harvesting of feathers or possession of parts other than feathers, it addresses ONLY possession of Eagle Feathers

You may not harvest (take, injure, molest, destroy) Eagle Feathers while still on the bird or nest unless you obtain a permit from the Regional Wildlife Manager



Mandatory Annual Reporting

Every MNBC Harvester Card holder is required to complete an annual online harvester survey. The survey gathers information about hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, and other recreational and cultural land uses. If a harvester does not complete their annual online survey, the card is no longer valid.

What information do Harvesters provide?

Any land use including hunting (small game, big game, upland birds and migratory birds), fishing (freshwater, saltwater, and invertebrates), trapping, and gathering (plants, earth materials, and prospecting). Harvesters provide the amount, location (Management Units - MU's), and season of harvesting for these activities. The survey includes questions about recreational and cultural land use as well. It also prompts land users to document feedback surrounding species at risk, encounters with law enforcement, and other comments or concerns they have regarding the lands and wildlife in British Columbia.

How is the information used?

BCMANR and MNBC can use this data to demonstrate the current importance of the land to Métis and to contribute to the management of species in British Columbia. Reporting helps to trigger and guide our consultation processes, monitor wildlife populations and habitats, inform provincial management policies, and fight for our harvesting Rights.

As you know, harvesting is a measured and carefully considered practice. By protecting the land we use, our traditional ways of life; including harvesting, language and other cultural practices, are maintained for present and future generations. This has the potential to benefit all British Columbians and supports the importance of Métis stewardship of this beautiful land.

Survey address: <https://secure.bcmetiscitizen.ca/survey>

Please note the survey is open January 1 to June 30 of each year, allowing a six-month window for harvesters to complete their survey.



Map of BC Regions



Region 1- Vancouver Island

Management Units 1-1 to 1-15

Region 2- Lower Mainland

Management Units 2-1 to 2-19

Region 3- Thompson

Management Units 3-12 to 3-20,
3-26 to 3-46

Region 4- Kootenay

Management Units 4-1 to 4-9, 4-14 to 4-40

Region 5- Cariboo

Management Units 5-1 to 5-16

Region 6- Skeena

Management Units 6-1 to 6-30

Region 7A- Omineca

Management Units 7-1 to 7-18, 7-23 to 7-30,
7-37 to 7-41

Region 7B- Peace

Management Units 7-19 to 7-22, 7-31 to 7-36,
7-42 to 7-58

Region 8- Okanagan

Management Units 8-1 to 8-15, 8-21 to 8-26



Resource Appendix



BC Métis Harvester Card Survey



BCMANR information and Métis
Traditional Knowledge policy | MNBC



Apply for a tidal waters sport fishing
licence in British Columbia | Pacific
Region | Fisheries and Oceans Canada
(dfo-mpo.gc.ca)



Hunting regulations summary for
migratory birds: British Columbia -
Canada.ca



Freshwater fishing regulations in B.C.
- Province of British Columbia
(gov.bc.ca)



Hunting & Trapping Regulations
Synopsis - Province of British
Columbia (gov.bc.ca)



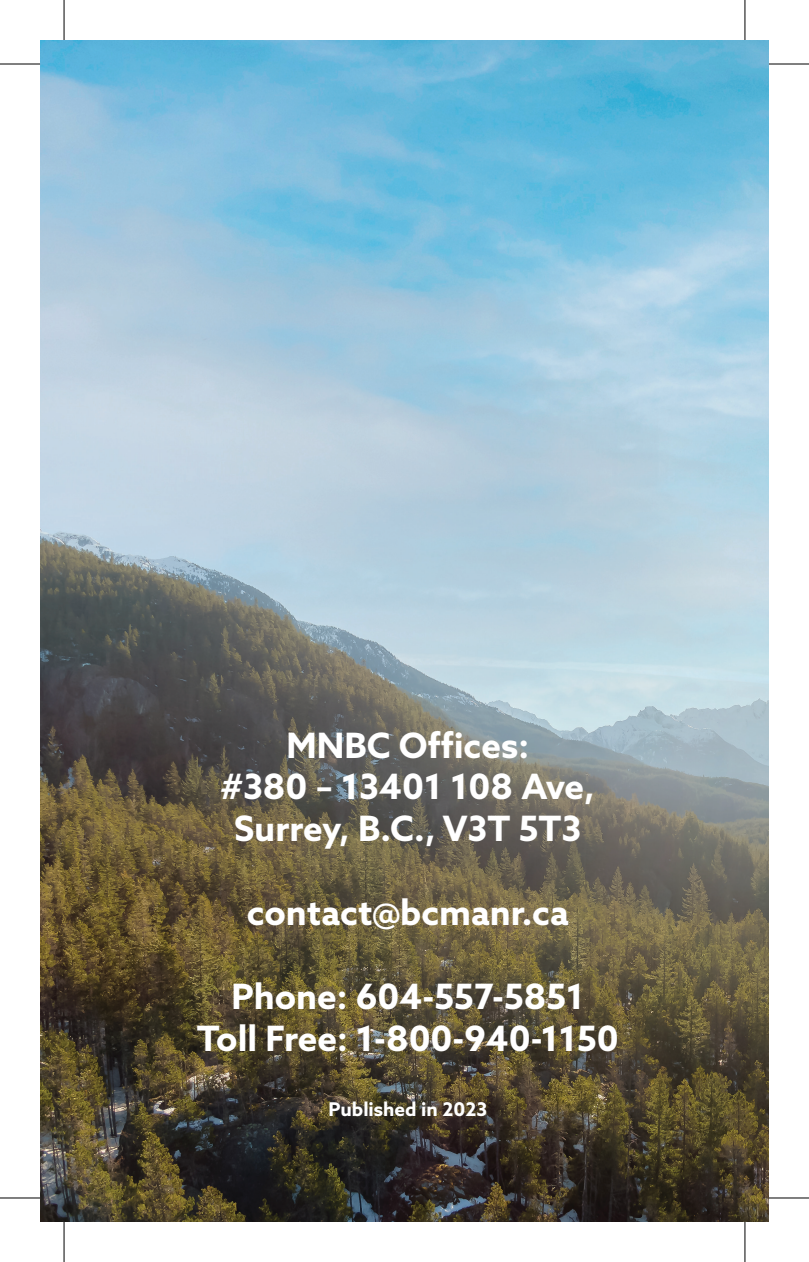
Free Use Permit - Forestry -
Province of British Columbia
(gov.bc.ca)



Wildlife Act (gov.bc.ca)



Wildlife Act Permit Regulation
(gov.bc.ca)



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Published in 2023