

WITHIN OUR SIGHTS

SPRING 2025



**Personal Musings on
Hide Tanning..... 2**

**Building Climate Resilient Homes &
Communities in British Columbia..... 4**

**New Funding Agreement Boosts Marine
Safety for Métis Nation British Columbia 6**

Nature Speaks: A Michif Youth Art Contest... 7

Winter Animal Tracking 8

Harvester Cards 10



BCMANR

British Columbia Métis Assembly
of Natural Resources ∞

PERSONAL MUSINGS ON HIDE TANNING



A bead of sweat drips from my forehead and off the end of my nose, landing in the hide dust from my efforts to dry scrape a bison hide. My arms are tired, as I use my blade to scrape away layers of dry skin from the massive hide so that it will be thin enough to tan. Usually this process would be done with the hide tied in a wooden frame to help keep it in place, but I don't have a wooden frame large enough to fit the hide. I also wouldn't be working on a hide this size by myself. But many factors have led to me scraping a huge bison hide on the floor of my room, using a concrete block to help keep the hide in place while I work on it.

Hide tanning is an unexpected skill I am developing relationship with. I say "unexpected" because although my father hunted, we didn't know any hide tanners so it never occurred to me as a possibility. In addition, he hunted less frequently once we moved into the city in my later childhood so even having access to wild meat became rare. It wasn't until a couple of years ago that I was introduced to hide tanning through a Métis-Cree cultural educator in Alberta.

The weekend was full of learnings and connections. There weren't many of us and we weren't able to get

far on the deer hides we were collectively learning on, but the feeling of community that weekend will stay with me forever. During the day, between working on deer hides at different stages of tanning, we told stories, sang, and helped cook our meals together. In the evenings, we sat around the fire late into the night and laughed. I'd forgotten what that felt like, having moved away from home many years before.

Nearly a year later, I decided to re-learn hide tanning in a virtual setting, since I had forgotten so much from that first program I took in Alberta. This meant I could learn how to build my own equipment and figure out how I would need to set up my practice in my own home. It lacked the community feel my first program did, and wasn't taught from an indigenous worldview, but I could afford it. To my delight, there was a Métis hide tanner in BC who was acting as the hide tanner auntie for the course. Following the program, she was open to mentoring me within a Métis cultural context and I jumped at the opportunity.

The distance between us means we have to get creative about how we go about navigating teaching me to tan a bison hide with minimal time in-person. In our first weekend session, I quickly learned



humility. While it is possible to tan a deer or sheep hide in a weekend, I vastly underestimated how helpful it is to have other people to help with as large of a hide as a bison. Between the two of us, we were able to at least get the hide into a wooden frame to dry, but I was pretty sure my arms were going to fall off by the end of that weekend. I feared having to work on it by myself, and here I am a year and a half later, hoping that I have scraped enough layers of the hide so that it is thin enough for tanning. But without my mentor nearby to feel and see it in-person, all I can do is cross my fingers.

So while I learn humility, with aching arms and sweat dripping off my brow, I reflect on my hide tanning journey. It has connected me to some amazing people, who are doing amazing work to revitalize this skill. I have developed a love for work with hides that would otherwise be left on the land, and transforming them into a textile for art. I relish using natural dyes for fish skins, and hope to soon explore dyeing deer hides. But what I have appreciated the most about learning from these more experienced hide tanners, is a deepening curiosity into my own ancestry (including my French ancestry) and a deeper connection to the

spaces and places where I live. From those people I've been learning with, my relationship with my own ancestors and how I am connected has deepened.

People I have learned hide tanning from include:

- Adele L^ᓃb^ᓃᓃ^ᓃᓃ^ᓃ Arseneau is a disabled Nehiyaw/Michif multidisciplinary artist who creates bespoke works for galleries, private collections, and public art commissions (text from her website). She is based on Vancouver Island:
<https://metiscaron.com/>
- Kakisimow Iskwew (Natalie Pepin), is a Métis-Cree cultural educator based in Tawatinaw Valley, AB, and offers many online and in-person cultural programs:
<https://meetingmyancestors.com/>
- Janey Chang is based in North Vancouver. She specializes in fish skin tanning and dyeing. She offers in-person and online courses:
<https://www.janeychang.ca/>
- Mara Cur from Fern + Roe, is based on Vancouver Island. She offers in-person and virtual hide tanning courses, tending to focus on sheep and deer hides:
<https://www.fernandroe.com/>



BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENT HOMES & COMMUNITIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Climate resilience strategies are more important than ever as communities in British Columbia deal with more unpredictable and extreme weather events and infrastructure demands. Though large-scale community projects that involve Indigenous-led land stewardship and sustainable planning are a significant part of bolstering community resilience, individual actions are also crucial to climate change adaptation. Home energy efficiency improvements are a practical and affordable way for individuals and families to contribute to the creation of a more sustainable future.

The collective impact of individual homeowners making energy-efficient decisions cannot be overstated, even though large-scale community development projects and sustainable infrastructure investments are crucial. The overall demand on energy grids is decreased when a large number of homes in a region implement energy-saving practices, especially during peak periods like extreme weather events which can help avoid overloading electricity grids and aid in resource

management during emergencies. Additionally, these initiatives support broader reconciliation initiatives by lowering reliance on extractive industries and boosting community self-sufficiency in the face of environmental change.

Improving the energy efficiency of your home is essential for improving housing stability during extreme weather and lessening the burden on community infrastructure. Energy-efficient homes improve community health and well-being by consuming less energy and using fewer fossil fuels, which also helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Homes with improved insulation, heat pumps, and energy-efficient designs are better equipped to handle the increasing frequency of extreme heat, cold snaps, and power outages. Further, installing energy-efficient windows and doors, upgrading insulation, and implementing renewable energy technologies such as solar panels are examples of home energy upgrades that can save homeowners money over time. As a result, local economies become more stable and energy poverty can be more easily avoided, which advances the larger objective of community resilience.



One of the most significant barriers to adopting home energy upgrades is the upfront cost. Fortunately, several programs in BC exist that are working to reduce that financial burden. Programs like the CleanBC Better Homes and Home Renovation Rebate Program and the Indigenous Communities Conservation Program provide financial incentives for upgrading insulation, windows, and heating systems as well as replacing old appliances with more efficient models to reduce energy consumption. BC Hydro also offers rebates for home solar panel and battery storage installation, which can help reduce reliance on fossil fuels as well. Beyond the reduction in fossil fuel consumption and energy usage, these changes will also lower utility bills and lead to a more safe and comfortable home. However, these rebates do not address the upfront cost of these home upgrades. Therefore, MNBC is currently developing programming for its citizens to ensure it is both affordable and accessible to make energy-efficient upgrades to your home.

BC can and should strive to advance the development of climate-resilient communities by blending community-led projects with individual energy efficiency efforts. Home energy improvements support the shift to a low carbon economy and help achieve provincial climate goals while providing an effective and achievable way for individuals to directly support community resilience. Further, these initiatives promote affordability and energy independence. It is clear that both individual and collective efforts are crucial to building a healthier and more resilient future all British Columbians.

- [CleanBC Better Homes and Home Renovation Rebate Program - Better Homes BC](#)
- [Indigenous Communities Conservation Program - Better Homes BC](#)
- [BC Hydro Rebates for solar panels and battery storage](#)



NEW FUNDING AGREEMENT BOOSTS MARINE SAFETY FOR MÉTIS NATION BRITISH COLUMBIA

With more than 40,000 islands and 25,000 kilometres of coast, it's hard to argue that British Columbia is home to some of the most beautiful coastlines in the world.

In a significant move to enhance maritime safety and emergency management, the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) has created a new funding agreement with Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC).

This collaboration aims to bolster marine safety measures across coastal waters, ensuring that Métis communities are better prepared to respond to emergencies while preserving the rich cultural heritage tied to the waterways.

Through the new agreement, Métis citizens now have access to funding for training and skills development in several marine safety categories. This includes training for cleaning up oil spills and shorelines, emergency management training including incident command system training as well as small vessel operator training. Other possible eligible activities will support partner capacity development, collaborative planning and operational programming and participation in marine emergency preparedness and response activities.

Training programs will be crucial components of this initiative. They're designed to equip individuals with hands-on skills and the confidence needed to

react swiftly during emergencies. This will not only safeguard lives but also promote a deeper understanding of safety protocols and regulations among Métis citizens. The emphasis on training reflects a proactive approach to community safety, ensuring that everyone is prepared for unexpected challenges that may arise on or near the water.

As part of the agreement, funding will be allocated to various projects focused on emergency management training, marine safety awareness campaigns, and emergency prevention and recovery in coastal environments. These initiatives will empower Métis citizens with the knowledge and resources necessary to navigate the complex challenges of marine emergencies, whether it be responding to accidents or protecting the coastline from environmental threats.

This is a vital step forward in enhancing marine safety and emergency management. This initiative is a win-win, equipping Métis communities with essential skills and resources while reinforcing the invaluable connection between people and their environment. Through increased knowledge and skills development, we are paving the way for safer waterways, a healthier environment and a brighter future for Métis citizens in British Columbia.

NATURE SPEAKS: A MICHIF YOUTH ART CONTEST

We're excited to invite you to participate in the Nature Speaks: Michif Youth Art Contest! This is your chance to share your unique connection to nature. We're looking for creative artwork that represents species (plants, animals, or other living beings) or natural elements (bodies of water, mountains, landscapes, etc.) in British Columbia that are important to Métis youth. Along with your artwork, submit a short bio (30 to 100 words) and an artist statement (300 - 500 words) explaining your connection to the species and the meaning behind your artwork. We welcome artwork of all skill levels.

This contest is open to all Métis Citizens and self-identifying youth aged 15-30 living in BC.

The types of artworks accepted include: Painting, Photography, Sculpture, Beadwork, Collage, Drawing, Ceramics, Fibre Art, Digital Art, Mixed Media.

Participants can enter for a chance to win one of five \$500 prizes!

Submissions will be open March 9 - May 9, 2025

Some themes to consider for the contest:

- What species and natural elements have special significance in your life or community? Why are they important to you?
- How do species and natural elements around you shape your sense of belonging or identity?
- If you could tell a story about a certain species or natural element through your artwork, what would that story be?
- Is there a species or natural element that you feel connects you to your Métis culture?
- How do you see the relationship between Métis culture and nature today?
- What do the land, plants, and animals around you teach you about resilience or survival?

Additional details can be found on the Ministry of Youth page on the MNBC website at the following link: <https://www.mnbc.ca/youth>

If you have any questions, please contact youth@mnbc.ca



Can you identify
what critter made
each of these
tracks?

See below for
answers!

WINTER ANIMAL TRACKING

The winter months are often considered to be a peaceful and quiet time of year where many animals are hibernating and resting until the warmer spring days. However, there are many critters who are out and about during these colder months and a fresh blanket of snow makes it easier to tell their story.

Tracking animals is an important skill used by hunters, trappers, and even by “backyard naturalists” to identify the various animals we may encounter during our winter outdoor adventures.

Whether you are searching for your next meal or trying to learn who you share your backyard with, here are some tips to get you started:

- 1. Timing.** The best time to track an animal is in the early morning at sunrise, ideally right after a new snowfall. Fresh snow captures clear tracks.
- 2. Look around and Observe Your Surroundings.** Are you: Near a water source, like a river or creek? Near an old growth forest? Near a wildlife tree? At higher elevations (or lower)? These may all provide hints as to who is living nearby.

3. Identify Species: Learn to recognize the tracks of common species in your area. This will help you better understand their behavior and interactions. Hint – wild cat and wild dog prints can look very similar. Look for claw marks. Claw imprints are left by dogs and their wild cousins (coyotes, wolves, foxes), not by wild cats.

4. Observe Behavior: Pay attention to the patterns in the snow, these can reveal how animals navigate their environment and their resourcefulness. Notice if they lead to trees or food sources. Is there a dragline? (indicating the animal has a dragging tail like a mouse).

5. Use Resources & Tools: Use guides and tools to help identify tracks and understand the wildlife in your area. Here are a couple of resources to get you started:

- [British Columbia Animal Tracks – Canada Book Distributors](#)
- [NCC_NovYearEnd_TrackingGuide_v8.pdf](#)





A) Deer Tracks B) Snowshoe Hare Tracks C) Coyote Tracks

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HARVESTER CARDS

HARVESTER CARD NEWS

Harvester Card Validity

BCMANR recently passed a motion to increase Harvester Card validity. All Harvester Cards issued in 2025 and after are valid for 10 years from issue date.

Harvester Card Transition

Harvester Card applications have transitioned from the Ministry of Citizenship to the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Food Security. This change means that applications fall under a Ministry whose work is more closely aligned. We are also committed to streamlining card processing as part of this transition. Please note that we are working through an existing back-log of applications from the last two years and appreciate your patience.

To extend support to applicants and harvesters, the following channels are now closely monitored:


HARVESTER HOTLINE

CALL: **(604) 557-5851 Extension 7100 or 7103** - open every Monday and Thursday. Voice-messages and Text messages are welcome too!


EMAIL: harvesters@mNBC.ca

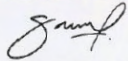
(Please email us your inquiries for fastest response)






HARVESTING CARD
STATUS: With Hunting
ID: 000000

	Last Name Sample	Birth Date 1998-Aug-09
	First, Middle Name John, B.	Gender Male
	Address 123 City Street Town Name, V1A 2B3	Issue Date 2023-Oct 10
	Region Northeast	Expiry Date 2028-Apr 01


SIGNATURE



Renewals

Has your Harvester Card expired? All cards issued prior to 2025 have validity periods of up to 5 years. For example, if your card was issued in 2020, its expiry date would be March 31st 2025. Cards issued after 2025 have an expiry date stated on the card.

Please note that you can still access the annual harvester survey with an expired card. The survey is available at www.metishub.ca/harvestersurvey/login

There are 2 ways to tackle your card renewal.

1. Download the application from the following site:

<https://www.mnbc.ca/media/3380>

i. Digitally: You may fill the form out digitally and when complete attach all required documents and a picture to an email and send the package to harvesters@mnbc.ca. This is the fastest method.

ii. By hand: You may print the form, fill it out and when complete scan the application along with all the required documents and a picture. Then attach all documents to an email and send the package to harvesters@mnbc.ca

iii. By Mail: We have had several cases of misplaced mail so we don't recommend this method, however if this is your only option, please email us at harvesters@mnbc.ca so we know to expect it.

Attach the completed application along with required documents and a picture (please see picture guidelines on application form) and mail to:

**Ministry of Environment
Métis Nation British Columbia
380 - 13401 108 Ave, Surrey
V3T 5T3**

2. The fastest and easiest way to get your card renewal application in, is through the MNBC Métis Hub. Please note that some users are having trouble with the platform. If you are signed up for the Hub and want to try this application.

You may use the following link guide to walk you through the process: <https://www.mnbc.ca/media/3390>

Annual Harvester Survey

MNBC Harvester Card holders are reminded that the annual survey is open and needs to be completed by June 30, 2025. The survey covers a harvester period of April 1st 2024 – March 31st 2025.

Fill it out here: <http://mnbchub.ca/harvestersurvey/login>

Need help signing in? Find a guide to the survey here: <https://www.mnbc.ca/media/3438>

Thank you to all our harvesters that have maintained valid cards and filled out surveys annually. Your observations and reporting gives us the ability to continually advocate on your behalf and provides our BCMANR Captains insight into the needs of the next generation of Métis Harvesters. Your efforts ultimately contribute to how we collectively maintain healthy ecosystems and thriving communities.

Maarsi



BCMANR
British Columbia Métis Assembly
of Natural Resources ∞



MÉTIS NATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA

BCMANR CAPTAINS

REGION 1 VANCOUVER ISLAND:	Curt Smecher 604.866.2495 region1captain@bcmnr.ca
REGION 2 LOWER MAINLAND:	Holly Tennant 672.975.3339 region2captain@bcmnr.ca
REGION 3 THOMPSON OKANAGAN:	Marlene Beattie 250.309.4608 region3captain@bcmnr.ca
REGION 4 KOOTENAY:	Mark Carlson 250.231.1494 region4captain@bcmnr.ca
REGION 5 NORTH CENTRAL:	Gary Ducommon 250.855.9071 region5captain@bcmnr.ca
REGION 6 NORTHWEST:	Rene Lucier 250.631.9514 region6captain@bcmnr.ca
REGION 7A OMINECA:	Victor Lavallee 250.301.8676 region7acaptain@bcmnr.ca
REGION 7B PEACE:	Position Vacant

MNBC STAFF

SUSIE HOOPER	MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOOD SECURITY shooper@mNBC.ca
LEONA SHAW	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOOD SECURITY lshaw@mNBC.ca
HARVESTER CARD APPLICATIONS	harvesters@mNBC.ca

BCMANR VISION STATEMENT:

"To help revitalize Métis culture and nationhood pride through the wise use of our natural resources."

MANDATE:

"To establish a natural resource policy to support the sustenance and cultural needs of the Métis people in British Columbia through the conservation and management of our environment using both traditional and educational knowledge."

MÉTIS NATION BC

#308-13401 108 Ave, Surrey, BC V3S 2V7
Phone: 1.800.940.1150



BCMANR MÉTIS HARVESTERS
SCAN THE QR CODE TO VISIT
THE VIDEO ON YOUTUBE