



Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ

Have more questions? Contact our team:
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What is a Treaty?

- In Canada, a treaty is a formal agreement between the Canadian government and an Indigenous government or between the Canadian government and other countries. It is a “nation to nation” agreement. These treaties are legally binding agreements that establish the rights, responsibilities, and relationships between Indigenous nations and the Canadian government. They are considered foundational documents in Canada’s legal and constitutional framework, recognizing Indigenous rights and sovereignty within the Canadian federation.

What is the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan Treaty?

- The MN–S treaty with Canada will be a modern treaty.
- Our Elders have named it Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif, which means “the Sacred Document from the Métis”.
- It will be a nation-to-nation agreement, bound by the honour of the Crown, that recognizes our inherent right to self-government in Saskatchewan and entrenches that right in the Canadian Constitution.
- Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif recognizes Métis Nation - Saskatchewan as our government and obligates the Federal Government to recognize our right to self-determination regardless of any extenuating factors such as a change in political power.

Does having a Treaty mean Métis in Saskatchewan won’t have to pay Federal Tax?

- No, MN–S citizens will still be subject to provincial and federal taxes.

What is the difference between a historic treaty and a modern treaty?

Historic Treaties:

- Historic treaties, also known as “Numbered Treaties,” were negotiated between the Canadian government and Indigenous peoples in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- These treaties were primarily focused on the cession of Indigenous lands to the Crown in exchange for certain rights, benefits, and reserves, such as hunting, fishing, and land provisions.
- Historic treaties often involved large land areas and were negotiated through formal treaty-making processes, often involving oral agreements that were later written down.
- The terms of historic treaties have been subject to interpretation and legal disputes over the years, with Indigenous peoples often arguing that the agreements were not fully understood or fairly negotiated.

Modern Treaties:

- Modern treaties are negotiated in more recent times, typically from the late 20th century onwards.
- Unlike historic treaties, modern treaties are negotiated based on contemporary legal frameworks and principles, including constitutional rights and international standards such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
- Modern treaties are often more comprehensive and detailed than historic treaties, addressing a wide range of issues, such as self-government, resource management, economic development, cultural preservation, and social programs.
- The negotiation process for modern treaties is often more collaborative and participatory, involving multiple parties, including Indigenous nations, federal and provincial governments, and sometimes territorial or municipal governments.
- Modern treaties aim to reconcile Indigenous rights and interests with broader societal interests, promoting self-determination and Indigenous governance while also fostering economic development and resource management in a way that benefits all parties involved.
- Overall, while historic treaties laid the foundation for Indigenous-Crown relations in Canada, modern treaties represent a more contemporary and inclusive approach to Indigenous self-determination, reflecting evolving legal and political realities.

Why is it called **Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif**?

- Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif translates to “sacred document from the Michif”
- Our Elders wanted us to have a way to refer to this important agreement that reflected our unique identity, culture, values, and language as Métis people.
- Our Elders and Knowledge Keepers were consulted numerous times to discuss the agreement and what it means for our people.
- Our Elders come from all backgrounds and speak a variety of languages and dialects. They were unanimous in their choice and feel strongly that not only will Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif be a historic opportunity, its name reflects that importance.
- On May 14th, 2024, the MN-S PMC voted unanimously to accept the name gifted to us by the Elders.

Is **Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif** finalized?

- No, the Sacred Document will not be finalized until citizen feedback has been received.
- The final version of the document must then be ratified by MNLA and MN-S Citizens.

As a citizen, when will I get to see **Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif**

- Once a draft of Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif has been made public, we will be sharing it widely with citizens.



What are the steps for Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif?

- Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif must be negotiated by the MN-S under the direction of the MN-S Minister of Justice.
- Meanwhile, MN-S staff, regional representatives, and community leads will be travelling throughout the province to discuss what a modern Treaty means for the Nation and how it will impact citizens and communities.
- When the MN-S Provincial Métis Council and the Federal Government agree the document is ready, they will give direction to the negotiation teams to make the document public.
- At this point, MN-S staff, regional representatives, and community leads will share the document with citizens for closer review and get their feedback.
- Following this, the document will be updated based on citizen input before going back to the negotiation table.
- When Canada and MN-S reach an agreement on the final version of the document, it must then be passed by the Metis Nation Legislative Assembly.
- If passed by the MNLA, the document must then be ratified by MN-S citizens. 75% of citizens who vote (16 years and +) must vote yes to ratify.
- After ratification, the document must go through the federal parliamentary process to be ratified by Canada. .
- Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif is then signed by Canada and the MN-S.

When and How Can I Give Direct Feedback on Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif?

- We will be coming to your communities and events throughout the province to bring you information about the journey to self-government and the Treaty process. We encourage you to attend, ask questions, and review materials to learn more.
- Once the document is made public, we will be holding Treaty Talks with our Citizens where your feedback will be sought and recorded.

What does having Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif do for the Métis Nation–Saskatchewan?

- Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif will recognize MN–S' jurisdiction over three key areas: our citizenship, our own elections, and our core governance. Currently MN–S is already doing these things, however the Sacred Document means that our government laws can't be overruled and must be respected.
- It will allow us to create, manage and control our own institutions, under our own laws.
- Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif also guarantees stable funding in our recognized areas of jurisdiction allowing MN–S to be a strong, secure government for future generations.
- Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif will ensure that our funding cannot be cut off or reduced by any sitting federal government.
- Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif will entrench our rights and provide a pathway for negotiation of future areas of jurisdiction (such as health, child and family services, education and more.)
- Although Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif does not contemplate land at this point, it commits Canada to working with us to develop a transparent, legal, and thorough path to addressing historic land claims.

How will things change?

- For years, we have been the forgotten people and gone unrecognized. Our rights have been ignored, our people have been left on the outside, and other governments have denied any obligation or responsibility to deal with us.
- Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif is about our right to self government and self determination and making sure we have the resources to do this the right way. It will then be up to our citizens, our communities, and our government to chart our own path forward based on our own laws, culture, values, identity and language.
- This will start by strengthening our ability to have a strong, accountable government. MN–S will continue to provide services and supports to citizens while seeking to expand our jurisdiction in critical areas.

How does Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif impact the rights and interests of the Métis citizens in Saskatchewan?

- Under sec. 35 of the Canadian constitution, Métis people in Saskatchewan have collective rights but have historically been ignored. Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif will acknowledge MN-S as the governing body representing our collective rights and MN-S can then negotiate and advocate on our behalf to ensure Métis culture, language, values, and identity are protected and preserved.
- Kishchi Mashinaayikun Ooshchi Michif will not modify, surrender, or extinguish any existing, or future rights for Métis people.
- It will give MN-S the ability to meet the needs of our citizens without interference. The federal government will no longer dictate our priorities, we will determine them for ourselves by listening to our citizens and advance our programming and services accordingly.

Why now?

- Our people have been fighting for this recognition for over 150 years and we will not wait any longer.
- We have been involved in this negotiation process for more than five years. Between 2018 and 2023 we have signed a series of agreements with Canada in pursuit of self-government.
- The current political reality dictates that now is a crucial time to make this happen for our people and for our future generations. This opportunity may not come around again.

What led to MN-S' decision to leave Bill C-53?

- We are committed to fulfilling Louis Riel's dream and the dream of generations of Métis people for a self-governing Métis Nation.
- After more than a year of working in good faith with Canada to pass our self-government legislation, it became clear that the one-size-fits-all approach proposed by the federal government was fundamentally flawed.
- Louis Riel fought and died for Métis to achieve self-government and it is because of this that we pulled our support for Bill C-53.
- Instead, we decided to pursue our own agreement that achieves Métis self-government in Saskatchewan on our own terms and in a way that recognizes the unique history and reality of Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and our citizens.

How does Constitutional Reform and the Judiciary Act relate to the Treaty?

- The MN-S Constitution was created in 1993 and represents the laws of our government.
- The Constitution is periodically updated via constitutional reform
- Treaty does not in any way tell us what our laws are or should be. This is up to us, and the Constitution sets up the fundamental ways we will govern ourselves.
- Amending existing legislation or creating new legislation is how we exercise our self-determination and how we adapt and change our laws to meet current circumstances and evolving needs of citizens.
- Current proposed amendments to the Constitution provide for the introduction of a Métis Judiciary and the Kwayaskastasowin Judiciary Act will govern that Judiciary and enable it to hold the government to account according to MN-S laws.
- The Treaty recognizes MN-S jurisdiction over citizenship, elections, and core governance and the Kwayaskastasowin Judiciary will enforce that jurisdiction and any areas of jurisdiction added in the future.
- Preparing for the introduction of the Métis Judiciary is a key component of constitutional reform, ensuring that MN-S laws can be upheld by the Judicial Body.

How does Treaty impact my Harvesting Rights?

- The Treaty does not immediately impact Métis harvesting rights; however it commits Canada to negotiating future areas of jurisdiction and lists several priority areas, including harvesting.
- MN-S is currently pursuing a Harvesting Agreement with the Province of Saskatchewan. These negotiations are separate from the Treaty process.
- MN-S continues to assert a Section 35 (Constitution Act, 1982) Metis right to self-government in relation to harvesting and will continue to assert that Metis laws prevail over provincial laws.

Does Treaty mean Locals will cease to exist?

- No. Our MN-S Constitution makes it clear that Locals are the heart of our government, and the treaty recognizes our Constitution. A major commitment of the treaty is recognizing that MN-S has the right to create our own government structures and systems (such as Locals), and that Canada has no say in how we do that.

How will the Sacred Document support Locals?

- Treaty will provide secure and stable funding for core governance, which includes Locals. It also provides federal and constitutional recognition of our government, which means you will always have a Métis government in Saskatchewan providing employment opportunities, services, and programs for Locals and constituents.

What does the Locals Act propose?

- The Locals Act is proposed legislation for consideration in 2025. The goal of the proposed Locals Act is to provide fairness, transparency, and consistency in areas such as the roles of the Local President and Council, finances, frequency of meetings, and how to stay in good standing with the Metis Nation Legislative Assembly. The treaty does not comment on or dictate this process or the details of the Act. The treaty simply recognizes MN-S' jurisdiction over these matters.

Does Treaty mean we're getting Cows and Plows?

- No, MN-S citizens will not be getting "cows and plows" however it does contemplate how to address historic claims.

