BC Métis FEDERATION

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BC Metis Federation launches Metis Terrestrial Investigations Project

"MTIP" KICKS OFF PROJECT WITH COMMUNITY RESEARCHERS

April 28, 2022, (Xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh)/ Vancouver, B.C.) - BC Metis Federation Director of Research Joe Desjarlais provided membership with an update on the "MTIP" project this week.

The Métis Terrestrial Investigations Project (MTIP) aims to understand human activity within the TMEP (Transmountain Expansion Project) pipeline corridor and how development impacts the harvesting, gathering, hunting, fishing and sacred/cultural sites of BCMF's member communities. This study hopes to identify historical, cultural, and geospatial baselines within mainland terrestrial and freshwater environments along the whole of the corridor that are relevant to Métis harvesting regions and significant sites.

MTIP will build on existing research on the Métis lived-experience within the TMEP corridor by: (1) coordinating on-going community consultations and managing a growing understanding of the impacts of the TMEP on Métis land-use; (2) building community capacity in ways that equip local leaders to participate fully in detailed and technical land-use studies within the pipeline corridor; (3) facilitating ongoing dynamic knowledge partnerships so as to facilitate culturally-informed land-use decisions; and (4) operationalizing a robust database and archival system (Geographic Information System – ARC/Gis) that allows for dynamic, informed decision-making and establishes a basis for environmental modeling.

Historical and contemporary Métis "Kinship Mapping" (or *wahkohtowin*— meaning the act of being related to one another, and implying a sense of relatedness to people, land, and resources) and archival, oral, and contemporary land-use research are required to understand Métis history and contemporary land-use along the TMEP corridor. MTIP will be guided by Indigenous Research Methodology where the BCMF will facilitate knowledge partnerships for its members and allow specific communities to generate, own and represent their own history and memory in ways that benefit them. It will consist of cooperative research practices that promote dialogue and collaboration, and acknowledge a shared history while negotiating each other's distinctive pasts with honour and respect.

MTIP project facilitator Joe Desjarlais stated," The project team is encouraged by the enthusiasm of community partners and they are the engines of this project. It's exciting to witness the restoration of community history in Metis settlements across BC. The idea that cumulative effects research has broader implications -- where research can build community, reflect local ways of knowing, foster new and rekindle old relationships and kinships and bring healing, wellness and a sense of belonging -- is

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exciting to the BCMF project team and community participants. Through this MTIP funding, Metis people in British Columbia are demonstrating that thriving Metis kinship relationships and communities existed in the past and they exist today!

A group of Community Researchers gathered online earlier this month to review their roles and responsibilities as Community Researchers. These individuals have committed to a very special role within their communities to gather historical data through various methods, reflect on what they find and report on it through a series of journal entries or blog posts that will be captured on the BCMF website and archived. For more information about the project or if you wish to learn more about potential research partnerships please contact Joe Desjarlais at: j.desjarlais@bcmetis.com.

About BC Metis Federation: The BC Métis Federation (BCMF) is a non-profit association that works to ensure the well-being of its growing membership across British Columbia (BC). Through capacity building, advocacy, and cultural revitalization efforts, BCMF works to advance Métis knowledge and self-determination and to encourage the use of the Michif language.

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