

BC Métis Federation Participates in CBC's Indigenous Community Engagement Session
Focusing on Media Representation of Metis in B.C.

June 29, 2022, (X̱w̱məθḵw̱əy̱əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱w̱ú7mesh (Squamish) and sə̱lilw̱ətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/ Vancouver, B.C.) - [The BC Métis Federation](http://TheBCMetisFederation.com) was invited to participate in an Engagement Session hosted by CBC as part of their goals to build a National Indigenous Strategy.

On June 27th, 2022 BCMF's Director of Research, Joe Desjarlais shared perspectives on how the national public broadcaster can represent and reflect Metis in British Columbia and their needs, interests and traditions. The Engagement Session, hosted by CBC, included First Nations and Metis people from British Columbia from all walks of life and occupations, including filmmakers, reporters, archivists, policy experts, as well as Indigenous advisors and executives from CBC.

The BC Metis Federation is grateful to have been invited to participate in this important conversation, build relationships, and speak to important actions that CBC could be taking regarding all Metis people in this province. Mr Desjarlais was clear that the current approach is broken for Metis and that a knowledge partnership is required. The government has made vague pan-indigenous promises to include Indigenous voices and content, but this has not translated to proper recognition and meaningful policy for local Metis communities in BC. Metis people and communities with long histories in the Pacific Northwest are erased in CBC content, and have no unique Metis voice.

Mr Desjarlais stated, "I explained that there are 1000's of stories about Metis people, kinship networks and communities in the Pacific Northwest with long histories that need to be told. Our local elders and knowledge keepers own and tell these stories and continue to shape who we are as communities."

The ongoing challenge is that if British Columbians do hear news or content about Metis, it is not by or about local Metis in this place. If Metis are mentioned at all, the CBC media portrays Metis people and culture as originating from the prairies. Mostly we hear voices and see images in the news media of 'national' Metis leaders or Metis cultural or literary figures from outside BC, but few if any local voices. Dominant images about Metis in the media portray hostile identity politics. There is no space made for Metis journalists or filmmakers to tell their local stories.

Desjarlais concluded, "Any outcomes such as a National Indigenous Strategy" only happen at the speed of relationship building, trust and accountability within a knowledge partnership. CBC must create mechanisms, capacity and funding for local Metis people to participate in shaping community-based policy that benefits them at the community level as they recover their history, tell their stories and build community capacity. On this day BC Metis Federation invited the CBC along with First Nations and others to co-create a 'new story of us' that will bring healing and benefit to all."

Media Inquiries:

Kassandra Sison
Director of Communications
#390-3665 Kingsway, Vancouver, BC V5R 5W2
Office 1-604-638-7220
Email k.sison@BCMetis.com

Li taan paasii. Li taan ki vyayn.

From our past. For our future.