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# *News Release*

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September 29, 2012

**PROVINCE PARTNERS WITH MANITOBA METIS FEDERATION TO UPHOLD  
MÉTIS HARVESTING RIGHTS, NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION**

Based on rulings by the Supreme Court of Canada involving aboriginal rights for Métis people, the government of Manitoba is partnering with the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) to recognize Métis rights to harvest natural resources for food and domestic use in Manitoba, and to acknowledge the Métis peoples' commitment to conserve and respect the resources that sustain those rights, Premier Greg Selinger and David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Metis Federation, announced today.

“In addition to recent jurisprudence, history makes it clear that Métis people have aboriginal harvesting rights in certain regions of Manitoba,” said Selinger. “Through co-operation with the MMF, we have been able to attain a balance of recognizing those rights while ensuring an orderly approach to conservation and enforcement. I commend the MMF on their commitment to meet the traditional responsibility to protect the wildlife, fish and other resources we all depend on.”

The agreement, signed today at the MMF's 44th Annual General Assembly, provides for the recognition of Métis harvesting rights in mutually agreed to regions of the province, and relies on the MMF's Metis Laws of the Hunt as the basis for the development of new provincial regulations to govern Métis harvesting. As well, MMF Harvester Cards will be recognized as a means to identify Métis harvesters.

The agreement also commits to collaborative processes for examining Métis harvesting right claims in regions of the province outside of the designated Métis Natural Resource Harvesting Zone and for establishing a working group to monitor and address issues relating to Métis rights-based natural resource harvesting.

“Based on many years of discussion and decisions from the courts, I am very proud to jointly announce this Métis Harvesting Agreement between the government of Manitoba and the Manitoba Métis,” said Chartrand. “Our Métis laws and the provincial laws will now work together to improve resource management and sustainability. I want to thank Conservation and Water Stewardship Minister Gord Mackintosh for his dedication to getting to this historic moment. With this agreement, the Selinger government is taking a leadership role within Canada on the recognition of the constitutional rights of the Métis people.”

“The conservation principles of the Métis Laws of the Hunt are similar to those for licensed hunters and anglers,” said Reid Woods, president, Manitoba Wildlife Federation. “I commend the MMF for this responsible approach, and encourage other provinces to look to Manitoba for an exceptional model of dedication to sustainable use of natural resources.”

As part of the recognition of Métis harvesting rights, Métis people will continue to be required to follow safety and conservation regulations. It is expected the regulations respecting Métis harvesting, based on today’s agreement, will be finalized later this fall.

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