

President's Message

May 6, 2014

I am excited to announce that we have finalized a settlement with Manitoba Hydro on behalf of the Summerberry trappers. During the period between 1940 – 1964 trappers in the Summerberry area had their livelihoods disrupted when Manitoba Hydro built its dam flooding traditional trapping grounds. After 50 years of waiting and hard work we have achieved a settlement. I am disheartened by the fact that some of our trappers are no longer with us to celebrate this victory.

A few weeks ago I mentioned on Metis Hour x2 that we had an agreement only to discover that Manitoba Hydro had to make corrections to their list. The list we received had some trappers mistakenly left off and others not from the Summerberry area added in error. I appreciate and thank you for your patience as we waited for the finalized list. It makes me happy to tell you now, compensation to trappers will commence immediately.

All trappers listed on the finalized list will receive compensation for loss of their livelihood. For those trappers who have passed on, their benefactors will receive an inheritance from this compensation. I have instructed our staff responsible for the Summerberry trappers compensation file to quickly get these funds into the hands of the trappers or their benefactor. The MMF Northwest Metis Council and the MMF The Pas Region offices will be handling the compensation. Staff will be travelling to the many communities involved in the Summerberry settlement to distribute compensation claims. We will provide notice via our website and Metis Hour x 2 as to when and what communities we will be visiting.

When I was first asked to accept this responsibility on your behalf nearly 15 years ago, I felt honoured that you would put your trust in me. I knew full well that justice would be served and I gave you my word to that effect. I am proud to say that together we have done it!

I want to thank Scott Thomson, President and CEO of Manitoba Hydro, and Ruth Kristjanson, Vice-President of Corporate Relations for Manitoba Hydro, for working with me and my team in finalizing this settlement.

I also want to thank Marc LeClair, MMF General Counsel Murray Trachtenberg, Minister Jack Park and Marci Riel for their tireless efforts in helping reach this settlement. Thank you too to all our dedicated staff who will be assisting in the distribution of the compensation to the trappers or their benefactor.

The finalized list of trappers can now be found on the MMF website. You can visit the website online at www.mmf.mb.ca. When you arrive at our web page, you just click the Summerberry Trappers picture to view the list. The list is arranged in alphabetical order and has the area the trapper worked next to their name. Contact information for MMF staff who are managing the distribution of the trapper's compensation is also found on this page. You may also contact these staff members using the information on the Summerberry notice in this issue of Le Metis.

On another note, I want to give a shout out to Michael Ferland. Michael is a Metis hockey player playing in the Stanley Cup Playoffs for the Calgary Flames. He is playing well and making a good contribution to his team with a couple of goals and an assist against the Canucks in the last round. I will be Anaheim this week on business and I hope to see him make some duck soup in round two action for the Stanley Cup. Good luck Michael!

Upon closing, I offer my prayers for our friends, family members, and veterans who have passed on and my condolences to those who have lost a loved one. My hopes are with those who are sick or shut in and I offer my best wishes to all.

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