



## YOUR RED RIVER MÉTIS GOVERNMENT'S BI-WEEKLY NEWS.



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Since the end of the pandemic, Canada has been grappling with the rising cost of living. I know it's had an effect on our Citizens, which is why your Red River Métis Government introduced the Métis Cost of Living Supplement Program in October of last year, and extended it to March of next year.

Federal and provincial governments also know that the cost of living has impacted many Canadians, which is why political statements about taxes and rebates are frequently hitting the headlines. Carbon tax has been a significant conversation in the last few months.

#### Why does it matter?

Fossil fuels include natural gas, diesel, coal, and oil that is refined to become gasoline. In large amounts, carbon dioxide directly affects the environment. In fact, carbon dioxide is considered one of the most important factors in climate change today.

Countries across the globe are working toward reducing the amount of carbon dioxide they contribute to the world – this is often referred to as reducing your carbon footprint.

As we know from our Elders and our own traditions, each of us is part of the environment, and when the land, water, and air are suffering, people and wildlife also suffer. Our traditional wisdom teaches us that we must be good stewards and ensure that

we look after our environment, so that our future generations can enjoy the beauty and bounty of nature.

I commend our Minister of Environment and Climate Change, JoAnne Remillard, for her ongoing attention to this important portfolio, as well as her active participation in international meetings about the environment, like COP environmental summits. We have also introduced the Métis Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow (MELT) program, to support our Youth as they grow into climate protectors and good stewards of the land.

#### What is the federal carbon tax?

One of the ways that countries are working to manage their carbon footprint is through taxation. It's considered one effective way of tackling it, because it applies to nearly everything we do. Steadily increasing carbon taxation puts the onus on industry to be responsible and find new and innovative ways to produce goods and offer services that reduce their carbon footprint. For example, since 2022, Canada's carbon tax has increased from \$50 per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions to \$65 per tonne. This tax will only continue to rise.

Taxing carbon emissions brings revenue to governments, which can then be put to use to find ways to support individual citizens and other institutions as they take steps to reduce their carbon footprint. This includes the carbon tax rebate program for families, to help manage the cost.

This sounds like great news for families. We can also see that gas prices are currently going down, and we expect to see the cost of groceries start to stabilize in the coming weeks and months. However, the carbon tax is not going away.

You may have heard that some federal politicians are advocating for a freeze on the natural gas carbon tax. It sounds like a good plan. But consider the fact that Canada has also been providing a rebate to help families move away from fossil fuels. What would happen to this rebate if the carbon tax was frozen or cut? Would families receive a reduced rebate, or none at all?

The reality is, Manitoba is rich in hydro energy. Harnessing the power of water through dams to produce electricity means that the vast majority of electricity produced in Manitoba is virtually emission-free. The proposed tax freeze would save the average household \$58 – just 16 cents a day.

In 2023, every Manitoba household will receive a carbon tax rebate of anywhere between \$528 to \$1,058, depending on their household size and location. That means an average Manitoba household will receive approximately \$800 in rebates in 2023, delivered in quarterly instalments of around \$200.

If the carbon tax freeze were to take place, people wouldn't have to pay the estimated \$58 increase in 2023 for natural gas on their bill. However, the push to freeze carbon tax costs doesn't address what happens to the rebate. It's logical to think that if there is no taxation, there is no rebate, but the politicians pushing this idea aren't being clear about that. The savings households would reap in reduced natural gas costs is less than eight per cent of the current tax rebate of \$800 an average Manitoba household is receiving. If this is the case, there doesn't appear to be much benefit to families in the tax freeze.

These are the details and questions behind the headlines that must be answered for Red River Métis Citizens and all Canadians. Your Red River Métis Government wants to be sure you're equipped with all the information about carbon taxes and rebates, so that when you hear politicians from all levels of government speaking about them, you understand how these decisions will impact your family.

#### How your Red River Métis Government is helping

Your Red River Métis Government understands that costs have risen for all of us, in all sectors, including the cost of heat. The good news is that we can see that gas prices are currently going down, and we expect to see the cost of groceries start to stabilize in the coming weeks and months.

To help our families during this challenging time, we have spent over \$8 million to support our eligible Citizens with the Métis Cost of Living Supplement since October of 2022, which we've extended into March of 2024. The program has been well received by thousands and thousands of our Citizens, and we're pleased to see that it's made a difference.

Your Red River Métis Government is contributing to carbon reduction, with support from Canada, by undertaking a retrofit of our Home Office to reduce the carbon footprint of the building. This includes solar panels and energy efficient windows. We also frequently partner with Efficiency Manitoba to help our Citizens find ways to reduce the carbon footprint of their homes.





With an additional \$3.1 million in funding from Canada, and a \$1.7-million investment by the MMF, we are building 26 Level 3A vehicle charging stations across Manitoba, which can charge cars in a half hour, as well as another 24 Level 2 charging stations for apartments and malls.

Your Red River Métis Government has also made the commitment to plant two million trees across the Red River Métis Homeland through the “Make Our Homeland Green Again” initiative. Trees play an important role in the environment, but each tree needs five to 10 years from planting to start being able to help fight climate change. But every tree planted helps combat climate change and helps

remove harmful pollutants from the atmosphere to improve overall air quality. In 20 years, with the help of Citizens, we will have planted 50 million trees in our yards, in parks, business green spaces, and in forested areas. We look forward to all of us working together to reach this goal and to help restore balance in the environment.

I want to encourage our Citizens to participate in this tree planting initiative, which is why we'll be holding a contest to see how well these trees have grown over the years – it won't be a short contest, but the prizes will be big ones, so make sure you keep an eye on our social media and listen for updates on my weekly *Métis Hour* report.

## FUNDS FOR FUR: RED RIVER MÉTIS FUR COMPANY SEEKS TRAPPERS' PRODUCTS



To sell furs to the RRMFC, you must be a Red River Métis Citizen and hold your provincial trapping licence in the same name as your MMF Citizenship Card.

The Red River Métis Fur Company is coming to a region near you to buy furs from Métis Harvesters.

Established in 2022 by the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF), the Red River Métis Fur Company (RRMFC) aims to promote sustainable and ethical fur harvesting practices and create economic opportunities for Red River Métis communities in Manitoba. Since its inception, the RRMFC has purchased \$125,000 of products from Red River Métis trappers, with 2,000 individual species obtained.

Jason White, Director of RRMFC, shared his team's excitement in travelling across the province to purchase furs from Harvesters.

“It more or less channels the same sort of run as we've done in the past, except for this year, we're implementing (a stop) at Turtle Mountain Local,” he said. “There is a large abundance of Métis trappers that were once travelling into the Brandon area to sell their fur.”

However, the RRMFC encourages Citizens to trap species that will bring more dollars into their pocket, including wolverines, wolves, beavers, and sables/pine martens.

“Wolverines, wolves, and the beaver market is very strong. It's not for traditional garments per se. It's now back to when the beaver market was established over 300 years ago for felt, which is now driven by the TV series *Yellowstone*, for cowboy

Until we gather again, I send my well wishes to Citizens who are honouring our traditions by harvesting from our Homeland to feed family and community. Stay safe and remember – your Red River Métis Government has your back.

I also offer my prayers to all our families, Citizens, friends, and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve.

Meeqwetch,

*President David Chartrand, LL.D. hon. O.M. ∞*

hats. It's so in fashion right now that there's a shortage of beaver felt in the world to produce all these hats in demand,” White said.

White encourages Red River Métis trappers to utilize fur-treating techniques to get top dollar for them.

“If you've taken the time to comb out the burrs and grease, washed out the blood, sewn any skinning holes or shot holes from a gun, that will impress the buyer to the utmost degree,” he said.

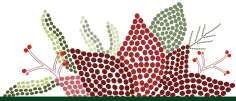
The RRMFC purchases furs from trappers for 25 per cent above market value, which White said is a great way to entice trappers and help keep Red River Métis heritage and culture alive.

“Like any industry, if we don't have the Youth involved for the future, then that industry will die. So to have that young kid (sell us a fur), put extra dollars in their pocket, show something out of it at the end of the day, and put that smile on their face to buy whatever they want from their hard work, I think is nothing but a great success,” he said. “Not only for the Youth or trapper themselves, but it shows the MMF is doing the best they can to provide to their Citizens.”

As the company has continued to host fur runs, they've grown in clientele, and many satisfied trappers return with more goods.

“We know (the trappers who sell to us) by name and face. That connection and relationship have built trust. They have options. They don't need to sell to the MMF. They could roll the dice,” White said. “They could put it on a global auction and see what happens, but yet they're getting cash in hand, paid on the spot, and walking away with peace of mind they got the top dollar for their product with RRMFC.”

The fur company launched a program at the MMF's Annual General Assembly (AGA) this year to provide tanned furs and leathers to artisans at no charge. The program helps support the cultural heritage of the Red River Métis and promote traditional Métis



artwork, which is sold to the public at the MMF's Red River Métis Marketplace. White said it was positive to see an overwhelming response.

“Approximately 40 artisans had consumed product at the AGA, and like anything else, they informed their family and friends that this program is available,” he said. “Since then, the emails and phone calls have been nonstop with inquiries.”

The RRMFC also supplies financial incentives of up to \$1,000 to replace damaged or illegal traps.

One of the fur company's main goals is to ensure Red River Métis people can continue practicing their traditional way of life and earning a living through fur harvesting and trading. White hopes to see the younger generations take an interest.

“(We'd like to collaborate with) Youth camps to get more Red River Métis Youth involved to see and continue the cultural and heritage aspect of trapping. I'm looking at putting on a traditional smoke tan workshop in the spring,” he said. “There have been a lot of inquiries from people who want to tan their own moose, elk, and deer hide, or even turn that into tanning their wild fur species.”

To learn more about the company's programs and fur run dates, visit the RRMFC's recently launched website at [rrmfc.ca](http://rrmfc.ca).



### FIND THE RRMFC ON ITS UPCOMING TRIP:

| DECEMBER |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |  |  |  |  |
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| 17       | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |   |  |  |  |  |
| 24       | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |   |  |  |  |  |
| 31       |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |  |  |  |  |

- ∞ Thompson – December 15 (9:30 – 11 a.m.)
- ∞ The Pas – December 15 (4 – 6 p.m.)
- ∞ Swan River – December 16 (11 a.m. – 1 p.m.)
- ∞ Dauphin – December 16 (4 – 6 p.m.)
- ∞ Brandon – December 17 (12 p.m. – 1 p.m.)
- ∞ Metigoshe – December 17 (3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.)
- ∞ St. Laurent – December 19 (12 p.m. – 2 p.m.)
- ∞ St. Malo – December 20 (12 p.m. – 2 p.m.)
- ∞ Winnipeg by appointment anytime

### MMF BRINGS CHRISTMAS CHEER TO ALL



On December 1, the MMF kicked off the holiday season with the lighting of our newly acquired 200 Main building. The ceremony featured a magical installation of a merry Red River Métis Santa in his Red River Cart, laden with gifts, pulled by three mighty bison. We presented \$50,000 to the Christmas Cheer Board, the largest public donation of the year for the organization, which has offered food and toys to families in need for over 100 years. The MMF prides ourselves on over 20 years of continued support to help ensure everyone gets to celebrate Christmas.

### MMF CUTS RIBBON ON NEW CHILD CARE CENTRE IN ST. LAURENT



On November 30, the MMF, in partnership with the Interlake Métis Association, held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the grand opening of Li Pchi Pwayson, a 40-space, culturally focused child care centre in St. Laurent. The centre will serve infant and pre-school aged children as a complement to the existing school-aged care centre the MMF is already operating in the historic Red River Métis community, providing a total of 70 culturally focused child care spaces. This represents an economic capital investment of \$2.3 million by the MMF into St. Laurent, with 21-25 people employed across both centres.

### RIDING IN A WINTER WONDERLAND



The MMF Clinical Services Mobile Clinic van and a little Red River Métis wagon were decked out in holiday cheer as part of the Dauphin Christmas Parade of Lights on November 26. Thanks to MMF Health & Wellness Department Project Coordinator Crystal St. Germain, as well as Brent and Erin St. Germain, for combining your Red River Métis pride with Christmas cheer!

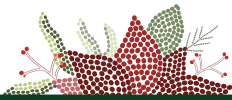
### MMF ANNOUNCES NEW SUPPORTS FOR RED RIVER MÉTIS BUSINESSES



The MMF held a sold-out Red River Métis Business Expo on December 7, which included 270 registered participants representing 122 Red River Métis businesses. It was the largest business conference ever hosted by the MMF, with several key announcements to advance collective economic interests and support over 1,000 Red River Métis business owners and entrepreneurs:

- ∞ Introduced the Red River Métis Business Development Corporation, a proud new Affiliate of the MMF, which will offer equity financing, and now holds all of the assets of the former Métis Economic Development Fund.
- ∞ Launched the Red River Métis Business Association with a commitment of \$150,000
- ∞ Established a new Procurement Advisory Service that will support up to 40 Red River Métis businesses with technical procurement-related assistance at no cost.





**We need YOUR Red River Métis Knowledge!**



**ARE YOU** Red River Métis?

**DO YOU** have connection to the lands or waters in one of the Northern places in the Thompson Region?

**DO YOU OR YOUR FAMILY** have Métis Knowledge you are willing to share?

**WE** want to learn more about Métis history and land use around Churchill, Brochet, South Indian Lake, York Factory, Lynn Lake and Gillam.

To schedule a Métis Knowledge interview, please contact **Jessica Lagimodiere**,  
**EMAIL:** [jessica.lagimodiere@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:jessica.lagimodiere@mmf.mb.ca) **PHONE:** (204) 899-9179

