



# Shuswap Nation Tribal Council

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December 8, 2020

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**The Premier**

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**The Honourable David Eby**  
**Attorney General and Minister responsible for  
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**VIA EMAIL**

**Re: Assertions of Métis rights in Secwépemc Territory**

Dear Sirs / Madams:

This letter is written and supported by the Kukukwpi7 (Chiefs) of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council regarding great importance to the Secwépemc Nation. The Métis Nation British Columbia ("MNBC") and the BC Métis Federation ("BCMF") have made unsubstantiated and disrespectful assertions to rights in Secwépemc'ulcw.

The Kukukwpi7 sends a message to the Government of Canada, the Métis Nation of British Columbia, and the BC Métis Federation that their historical assertions are incorrect, potentially prejudicing the Secwépemc Nation, and infringing on our title and rights. The continued protection of Aboriginal title in the Secwépemc Nation will be protected and defended by the Kukukwpi7 in a coordinated strategic manner.

As set out in the Secwépemc Nation Unity Declaration signed by the Kukukwpi7, our people have lived in our homelands, the Secwépemc'ulcw, for so long that the time of occupation extends beyond the reach of memory. The Secwépemc Nation has never ceded, sold nor surrendered our title and rights and will continue to uphold our sacred responsibilities as Kukukwpi7.

We have continued to resist colonial encroachment in the Nation. We will continue to do so with the establishment of MNBC and BCMF and the Métis seeking to establish rights in Secwépemc'ulcw. The Métis, who are from east of the Rocky Mountains, are unlawfully seeking to undercut Secwépemc law and legal systems of governance by leveraging a stretched and self-serving interpretation of colonial law and appealing direction to Crown governments and its proponents.

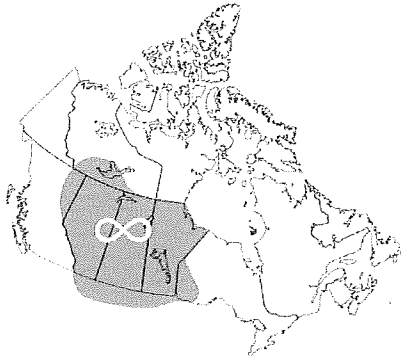
We perceive this behavior as a direct attack on our inherent Aboriginal title and rights and the Secwépemc Nation's integrity. There is absolutely no basis for any assertion that the Métis have any rights in the Secwépemc Nation, regardless of how the MNBC and the BCMF choose to define Métis.

In 2019, the Métis National Council released a map detailing the Métis homeland to identify people with historical ties to the Métis Nation. This map was adopted in resolution by the Métis National Council. The boundaries within this map encompass Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, and northeastern British Columbia and southern North West Territories. While the purpose of the map was used to identify who are members of Métis and not lay claim to the territory to the lands, this map clearly depicts that any assertion that Métis peoples rights in



British Columbia is inconsistent with the Métis National Council and MNBC is one of the governing members of MNC.

The physical boundaries of the Homeland of the historic Métis are depicted below.:



While we understand that the BCMF is not in agreement with the MNC on the Métis Homeland boundaries, the BCMF's assertions are equally baseless. No individual or community of mixed ancestry descended from our Secwépemc Nation is Métis. The only Aboriginal rights to land, harvest, fish, hunt, etc., that exist within Secwépemc Territory are the Secwépemc Nation's rights.

We take no issue with the MNC, Métis organizations, or the Métis Nation generally asserting Métis rights within the Métis Homeland. However, the MNBC and the BCMF are not Nations. They are representative advocacy organizations that purport to represent Métis who have settled in British Columbia, and they operate primarily outside of the Métis Homeland. They have no right to assert any interest in Secwépemc Territory west of the Rocky Mountains and, to the extent that they do so, their claims should be given absolutely no credence.

The MNBC and the BCMF appear to have decided to ignore historical reality and our laws and jurisdiction. We believe that this behavior has been enabled by the actions of the Government of Canada. For example, the BCMF has thanked your government for funding and supporting the "Métis Land and Life Project," which will "explore how to recognize existing Métis practices along the TransMountain Pipeline Extension corridor and how to appropriately protect existing Métis harvesting and living pattern."<sup>1</sup>

We have no choice but to vigorously defend our Nation and rights and the integrity of Secwépemc Territory against these baseless and disrespectful claims and those who enable them. We fully expect that the Government of Canada will cease engaging or consulting with any Métis individuals or organizations of any description on any matters relating to assertions of Métis rights in the Secwépemc Nation.

Should the MNBC and the BCMF's assertions of Métis rights within Secwépemc Territory are taken seriously by your government, and the Government of Canada continues to fund, engage or consult with them based on their baseless claims, your government's relationship with Secwépemc Nation will be deeply damaged. It is in the interests of both governments to avoid that outcome.

<sup>1</sup> <https://bcmetis.com/2019/09/metis-land-and-life-project-bc-metis-federation-terrestrial-study-project-brief/>



We look forward to your prompt and explicit confirmation that the Government of Canada does not acknowledge the existence, or potential existence, of Métis rights within Secwépemc Nation, including those asserted in MNBC's recent report "A Tale of Two Nations," and will cease enabling those who make such assertions. <sup>2</sup>

Please direct any inquiries concerning our letter to Chief Wayne Christian, Tribal Spokesperson of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, by email [kukpi7\\_christian@splatsin.ca](mailto:kukpi7_christian@splatsin.ca) or phone 250-503-7072.

Sincerely,



Chief Wayne Christian, Wenecwtsin, Tribal Chief

CC: Regional Chief Terry Teegee c/o [Victoria.austin@bcfn.ca](mailto:Victoria.austin@bcfn.ca)  
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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mnbc.ca/news/2020/a-tale-of-two-nations/>

