PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
April 21, 2016

Mi’kmaq Chiefs respond to the Daniels Decision

While the Daniels Decision is a reason for celebration by the Métis Nation of Canada, Nova Scotia has always been the traditional homeland of the Mi’kmaq. While we continue to share our lands with others, Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Title of this region belong distinctly to the Mi’kmaq.

“The Daniels ruling will have major impacts for the Métis Nation, but it does not change that our Treaties were signed by the Mi’kmaq. We remain the exclusive Rights holders in this region”, said Chief Deborah Robinson, Lead Chief of Governance for the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi’kmaq Chiefs.

In the spring of 2013, at a Daniels and Manitoba Métis Federation conference, the Métis Chair and Lead Council in Powley, Jean Teillet stated: “a progressive change in language has meant that, if you are not accepted by a First Nations, they use Métis. This is the wrong definition of Métis... Métis is about distinct peoples, not a historical genealogy.”

The Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi’kmaq Chiefs recognize that the decision also impacts Non-Status individuals.

“In Nova Scotia, many Non-Status people are connected to our Mi’kmaq communities,” continued Chief Robinson. “This is why we are working to create our own process for citizenship and beneficiaries. We need to know who the Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia are, by our rules, not by the court’s or Federal government’s. Our process may include many Non-Status Mi’kmaq from Nova Scotia.”

The Assembly acknowledges the big win of the Métis and Non-Status people of Canada, but they also know firsthand that this does not mean that changes will happen overnight. “We are still waiting on implementation of the 1999 Marshall Decision,” said Chief Robinson. “There will be a long road ahead for everyone to work out the details of what this case actually means.”

The Kwilmu’kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office/Mi’kmaq Rights Initiative works on behalf of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi’kmaq Chiefs in the negotiations and consultations between the Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia, the Province of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada. KMKNO was developed by the Mi’kmaq, for the Mi’kmaq. The purpose of these negotiations and consultations is to implement our Aboriginal and treaty rights from the treaties signed by our ancestors in the 1700’s. For further information visit our website at www.mikmaqrights.com.

For more information contact:
Crystal Dorey, Communications Officer
Mi’kmaq Rights Initiative
Phone: (902) 843-3880
Cell: (902) 957-0549
E-mail: crystaldorey@mikmaqrights.com