

KMK Newsletter

January 2024



MESSAGE FROM KMK

Pusu'l Puna'ne! Happy New Year!

We're working to continue our seasonal newsletters again this year, with this being our first issue of 2024.

Our newsletters will provide updates on what our team has been working on over the past few months, so if you see anything that you'd like to learn more about, as always, please feel free to reach out to our team!



IPCA Webinar Series

KMK, in partnership with the Mi'kmaq Conservation Group, Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Oceans North, is continuing our series of webinars about Indigenous Conserved and Protected Areas (IPCA) and specific management tools available to communities to protect and self govern land and sea.

Each of our webinars has featured new experiences and includes a discussion amongst Mi'kmaq community members afterwards. Past webinars are available for viewing on the KMK YouTube page.

This month we have Melissa Labrador and Gabrielle Beaulieu joining us to talk about Pemsik Mawa'tasikl Anko'tum'kl-Nukumi's teachings.

We hope you can join us on Zoom on January 22 at 10 am to hear about their work!

PEMSIK MAWA'TASIKL ANKO'TMU'KL - NUKUMI'S TEACHINGS

A webinar series to share knowledge about marine-based IPCAs. Open to all, with the last 30mins reserved for Mi'kmaq participants only.

MELISSA LABRADOR
Pemsik Mawa'tasikl Anko'tmu'kl lead, Senior L'nu Advisor on Conservation & Climate Change for Ocean's North

GABRIELLE BEAULIEU
Project Manager, Marine Establishment, Parks Canada

JAN 22 / 24
10 - 11:30AM AST

LINK TO JOIN
https://us06web.zoom.us/join/registrer/MW_lpcRuIneRyZzZA:WA9NHf0

DOOR PRIZES!

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Governance Update

Justice

Between June 2022 and December 2023, the KMK Justice Team conducted community engagement to hear about Mi'kmaw experiences with the Canadian justice system to identify common issues. From this, the Justice Team prepared a report and recommendations, highlighting to Justice Canada how they can improve the justice system to better meet the needs of the Mi'kmaw through the upcoming federal Indigenous Justice Strategy. The report and recommendations were approved by the ANSMC on December 14, 2023.

In the coming months, the KMK Justice Team will continue to engage with justice professionals, community members, leadership, and their advisory committee to work toward the development of a self-governed Mi'kmaw justice system. We thank all those community members and organizational staff that participated in our engagement process. Your input has helped form our recommendations to Canada on how to improve the justice system.

Beneficiaries, Membership and Citizenship

Craig Paul, KMK Beneficiaries Advisor, has completed background research on the development and improvement of Mi'kmaw beneficiaries, membership and citizenship processes. Over the coming months, Craig will be visiting Mi'kmaw communities across Nova Scotia to hear perspectives about who is Mi'kmaw to help further develop strong membership and citizenship processes.

Assembly of First Nations

From December 4-7, 2023, the Governance Team supported the AFN Regional Chief's Office and the ANSMC during the Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA) in Ottawa.

During the SCA, the ANSMC put forward three resolutions which were unanimously accepted by the AFN. Topics included the implementation of UNDRIP and support for the implementation of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' recommendations.


Research Update

Our legends, stories, and folklore not only give us life lessons and guidance, but they also often describe the Mi'kmaw way of life. They offer an invaluable insight into how we believe our natural world has evolved the way it has, and tie us all to our home, Mi'kma'ki. These stories are not just tales but are a big component of our identity and culture.


Recently, KMK started the process of collecting and documenting Mi'kmaw legends. At this time, the focus has been on legends of Kluscap, especially those that are linked to present day locations that can be mapped. Our team has been slowly combing through numerous resources, including audio and video interviews of our Elders, archived newspaper articles, and collections of historical documentations. Each legend is then brought into a GIS database.

Our goal in this project is to grow our collection and preserve our stories and offer a way to ensure they are a part of reinforcing our Rights and Title to our home.





**MI'KMAW
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROTOCOLS**



JAN. 31, 2024 6:30PM
ZOOM: [HTTPS://US06WEB.ZOOM.US/J/84488736532](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84488736532)

Join us on January 31st to learn how the Mi'kmaq Archaeological Protocols will help ensure proper management and care for Mi'kmaq heritage.

We hope you can join us to hear more and learn the about next steps in the drafting process.

Archaeology Update

The KMK Communications Team will be joined by the Archaeology Research Team to share information on the Mi'kmaq Archaeological Protocols which were drafted to help ensure proper management and care for Mi'kmaq heritage.

At this session, Mi'kmaq audiences will be able to review what the protocols are and give feedback on each section of the document. We are hoping that you can join us for these sessions to give your feedback on how we can ensure that our archaeological heritage and resources are to be preserved and protected

Join us on Zoom on January 31 at 6:30pm for session 1 of the protocol review: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84488736532>.

GIS Update

In October, KMK team members Emily Pudden, Kevin Camp and Mike Drover, along with Lauren Douglas from NSCC's Applied Geomatics Research Group (AGRG) and Jeremiah Johnson from Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR), conducted underwater survey work as part of an ongoing project in the Bras d'Or Lakes. Following a topobathymetric LiDAR survey, conducted from an airplane by the AGRG, four areas that would benefit from more-detailed investigation were identified.

The team ventured out in KMK's new dive boat, with AGRG's underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) and UINR's ROV operator, to capture photos and video of the lakebed. Among the objects captured by the ROV's camera were marine species and cultural material, and useful details on the physical characteristics of the bottom of the lake. Information collected will help inform upcoming 2024 fieldwork.



Photo top: Lauren Douglas, AGRG
 Photos bottom: Jeremiah Johnson, UINR

Cultural Tourism - Mi'kmawitasik

Work continues on the development of the pilot phase for *Mi'kmawitasik*, our cultural tourism brand certification trademark. This brand will serve to preserve and promote Mi'kmaw culture and traditions while providing meaningful and authentic cultural products and experiences to visitors in Nova Scotia.



As this project has unfolded, it has become clear that this is much more than just a “marketing brand.” Mi'kmawitasik is an assertion of Mi'kmaw Nationhood, guided by the principles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*.

Mi'kmawitasik members will consist of Mi'kmaw artisans, craftspeople, performers, cultural experience providers, and entrepreneurs who want to showcase our cultural heritage and traditions to a wider audience. Membership approval will be based on three key elements:

- **Weta'pek'sin** - Verification of Mi'kmaw family roots and ancestral connection to community.
- **Cultural Authenticity** - Transparency regarding cultural knowledge and creative expression and a willingness to continue to learn about Mi'kmaw culture and share our teachings.
- **Nationhood** - As a member of Mi'kmawitasik, you become a Cultural Ambassador for the Mi'kmaw Nation and commit to upholding the Rights and Responsibilities of membership.

We anticipate the pilot program will launch in early spring. Under this phase of the pilot project, Mi'kmawitasik membership will be open to individual Mi'kmaw community members with a verified ancestral connection to one of the 13 Mi'kmaw communities within Nova Scotia and Mi'kmaw community-owned cultural tourism entities. At this time, Mi'kmawitasik eligibility will not include regulated, commercial industries such as fisheries, forestry or cannabis.



MKK Strategic Planning

On December 11-12 2023, the MKK team held a Strategic Planning Session with the 13 Chiefs and Councils. Through a series of presentations and discussions, Chiefs and Councils heard where the MKK team currently is, and received directions for what to do next.

The Assembly created the MKK Initiative to develop their own Mi'kmaw Law to resume jurisdiction and decision-making authority for our children. This is why it is so important that we have these important discussion so we build a Mi'kmaw-focused model to child welfare - one that takes into consideration our cultural practices and Mi'kmaw ways.

The MKK team thanks everyone that attended for their valuable contributions and input.

Mi'kmaw Forestry Initiative (MFI)

Bio-cultural Indicators Project

The MFI would like to develop a biocultural indicators framework to inform and direct Mi'kmaw forest stewardship, formalizing a process where community values/indicators guide activities and approaches on the land. UINR led previous work on bio-cultural indicators and has agreed to lead this project to support MFI development with KMK's Elizabeth Jessome as the project manager. Academic partners include Dr. Faisal Moola and Dr. Jeffery Wall at the University of Guelph and the Westwood Lab at Dalhousie led by Dr. Alana Westwood.

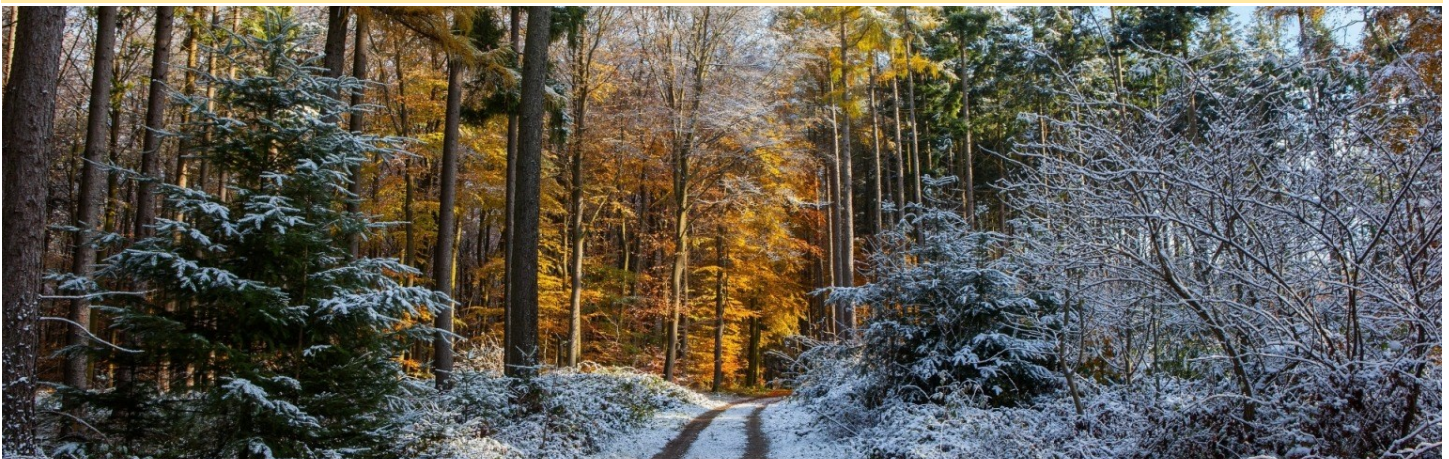
Archaeology in Forestry Project

The MFI-KMK teams established the MFI-KMK Archaeology in Forestry Working Group to develop some best practices in forestry planning and operations to mitigate impacts to Mi'kmaw archaeological heritage. As part of this process, MFI is submitting a multi-year project to Research Nova Scotia that employs a combination of desktop analysis, field verification and exploration, as well as post harvest assessments to understand the differences between predicted risk versus recovery of artefacts. This project will be led by KMK.

Post-harvest assessments will generate data that helps measure the impact on the land and inform risk management. Project partners include the Mi'kmaw Earth Keepers, Westfor, Port Hawkesbury Paper, Medway Community Forest Cooperative, and Boreas Heritage Consulting. It is the intention to support some intern positions for Mi'kmaw youth as a part of this project. Working together with the province, this team will contribute to the development of a streamlined process to support NS forestry and protect Mi'kmaw archaeological heritage.

NSCC Centre of Forest Innovation Collaboration

KMK will be working with the L'nuk Nipukt Coordinator at the NSCC Centre of Forest Innovation, on relationship building and knowledge-sharing activities with communities, and to share values related to forests and land through a series of knowledge-sharing sessions, workshops, training, outreach, and social media efforts. The MFI team, under the direction of the Assembly, is meant to support the Centre's development. Currently in the works is: curriculum development, a tree marking course and a knowledge-sharing event.



N'multis aqq Wela'lin

To stay up to date, check out our website at www.mikmaqrights.com, find us on Facebook @Mi'kmaqRights Initiative or follow us on Instagram @KMKNO1752.