

KMK Newsletter

October 2024



Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuagn
Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative
Our Rights. Our Future.

MESSAGE FROM KMK

Happy Fall! We're happy to bring you the fourth issue of our seasonal newsletters for 2024. Each quarter our newsletters aim to provide updates on what our team has been working on over the past few months. This one focuses on what we've been doing since the summer.

As always, if you see anything that you'd like to learn more about, please feel free to reach out to our team!



Sable Island Visit

Chief Cory Julien and members of KMK's Consultation, Governance and Communications teams were fortunate to visit Sable Island National Park Reserve earlier this Fall.

It was an incredible day and unforgettable experience for all. The team got to see the wild horses, grey seals and experience the unique biodiversity of Sable Island.

KMK's ongoing relationship with Parks Canada, has allowed us to send groups to Sable Island National Park almost every year since 2013.



WHAT'S INSIDE?

**Summer 2024
updates from:**

PAGE 2-3

Whale Sanctuary Project
MKK Update
Toqi'maliaptmuk Arrangement

PAGE 4-5

Energy Update
Wildlife Update

PAGE 6

Governance
Forestry

Whale Sanctuary Project

KMK has been working with the Whale Sanctuary Project (WSP) for the last three years as they work to establish the first seaside sanctuary for marine mammals who have been rescued from captivity. Consultation has allowed KMK and WSP to work through topics of access, shared decision making and use of whale for cultural and ceremonial purposes.



The first in-person meeting between KMK and WSP was held on October 7 and resulted in a commitment to long-term partnerships between the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and the WSP. We are working to create space for Mi'kmaq to rebuild relationships with our magnificent whales for mutual benefit and see opportunity to participate in ceremony, end of life transitions and daily operations.

KMK wants to learn about your interest in whales and the WSP. We want to hear from you about the following things:

- Would you like to be involved in WSP operations and decision making?
- Would you be interested in harvesting from whales?
- What type of ceremonies would you be interested in participating in?
- Are there particular species of whales that most interests you?

Please reach out with any thoughts to our Marine Protected Areas Coordinator, Bec Borchert, at rborchert@mikmaqrights.com.

MKK Update

Since 2017, the Maw-Kleyu'kik Knijannaq (MKK) Team has been working with community, organizations and Chiefs to develop the Maw-Kleyu'kik Kikmanaq Customary Code for the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. This draft law is to help the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia reclaim their right and authority to exercise complete jurisdiction and governance over child and family well-being matters, both on and off reserve.

While it is still in draft form, and open for community discussion, it is being shared with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, under the protection of the *Made-In-Nova Scotia Process* so that you can see what this law will be all about. A series of videos was also developed to help explain the different aspects of the law and what MKK is working to achieve. The draft law and videos can be found on the KMK website at mikmaqrights.com (under Child Family).

The MKK team is seeking feedback from our community members on the draft Customary Code (law). If you would like to provide feedback, please follow use QR code above to access the feedback form.



The Toqi'maliaptmuk Arrangement




This summer, we issued information on the draft Toqi'maliaptmuk Arrangement. This Arrangement focuses on how we can work with Parks Canada to ensure that the implementation of our Rights is done respectfully, safely, and according to Netukulimk, Etuaptmumk, and Msit No'kmaq.

In July, we issued the poster below, and put out a video to explain the whole Arrangement. This video can be found on our YouTube page, or at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAQ2fIVUO4Q>.

The draft Arrangement has also been shared with our email distribution list, with Chiefs, Councils and Grand Council. If you missed that email but would like to obtain a copy, email us at info@mikmaqrighs.com.

While not a summer update, this fall KMK hosted a gathering discuss the final draft of the Toqi'maliaptmuk Arrangement with the 13 Chiefs and Councils from Nova Scotia. This was an opportunity for them to review and discuss the Arrangement together. Wela'liek to all to Chiefs, Councillors, presenters and guests who attended the gathering and provided critical feedback to this work. Many collaborations have led to this point and we value the input received from Chiefs, Councils, Grand Council, Elders, youth, Knowledge Holders, harvesters, cultural champions and Mi'kmaq organizations. Your voices were instrumental to what has been written.

What is in the draft document?

Shared Principle #1: Co-Management	Shared Principle #2: Important Mi'kmaq Landscapes	Shared Principle #3: Mi'kmaq Management Concepts
		



Strengthening Our Relationship with Parks Canada



On behalf of our member communities, Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn, has drafted the Toqi'maliaptmuk Arrangement with Parks Canada that outlines how our Treaty and Aboriginal Rights can be exercised in National Parks in this part of Mi'kma'ki and to have the Mi'kmaq as equal governing partners in the stewardship of Parks and Historic Sites. Toqi'maliaptmuk means "we will look after it together". The draft document focusses on how the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and Parks Canada can work together to ensure that Rights implementation is done respectfully, safely, and according to Mi'kmaq concepts like Netukulimk, Etuaptmumk, and Msit No'kmaq.

What kind of things does the Toqi'maliaptmuk Arrangement cover?

- Rights respecting access to, and management of, natural resources (i.e.: hunting, fishing, and gathering in a National Park).
- Right to care for and interpret our culture, archaeology, language and history in the National Parks and National Historic Sites.

Why is this important?

These lands are important to the Mi'kmaq. We want to help the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia.

- Exercise their Right to access and harvest resources from our lands, according to Mi'kmaq management principles.
- See Mi'kmaq language and history shared in the parks - in interpretation, presentation, and how the stories of the lands are told.
- Ensure that Mi'kmaq sacred sites and burial sites are protected and respected.
- Create opportunities to use the parks for community events, ceremonies, and Elder and youth camps.
- Participate in archaeological research and the development of fieldwork protocols.

We will be sharing more information about the Arrangement and looking to get your feedback on what has been developed.

www.mikmaqrighs.com



Building the New Alliance
Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative
Our Rights. Our Future.

Energy Update

AFN Climate Change Gathering

KMK's Energy Advisor, Benefits Officer and NSPI Early Engagement Officer attended AFN's Climate Change Gathering in Calgary, October 7-10, 2024. This third annual conference highlighted how Indigenous communities from across Canada that are combating the effects of climate change. This gathering gave KMK attendees an opportunity to connect with others working in the energy sector, including Regional Chief Andrea Paul—whose office kindly sponsored KMK's attendance at the conference, AECOM consultants working on the Regional Assessment with KMK, representatives from other Mi'kmaw organizations, Indigenous Clean Energy representatives and many others.



Bill C-49

On September 17, Chief Sidney Peters and KMK representatives, Patrick Butler and Jessica Ginsburg, presented to Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources, regarding Bill C-49. Chief Sidney Peters spoke about the importance of the duty to consult, especially when federal and provincial governments are developing legislation that could have impacts to our Rights and Title.

The Senate Committee appearance, can be viewed online at: <https://senparlvu.parl.gc.ca>.

Regional Assessment of Offshore Wind in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland & Labrador

The Regional Assessment on Offshore Wind is entering into it's final steps as both committees work to submit their final reports to ministers. The Newfoundland & Labrador Committee have posted their draft report on the IAAC website with Nova Scotia's Committee planning to submit their report in mid-October. KMK continues to work with AECOM to comment on both draft final reports.



we will
remember
mikwite'tisnu





DID YOU KNOW?

Tia'm (Moose) can only produce one or twin calves each year?

Moose can start to reproduce at the age of two, produce calves every year for the remainder of their life (approximately 10-12 years). This is why we protecting the cows (female moose) is key to conservation.



DID YOU KNOW?

In areas that Tia'm are heavily hunted their life span can be 4-5 years. But in areas that are not hunted as much their life span can be anywhere from 10-13 years. Some tia'm in Mi'kma'k have been known to live into their 20's.



DID YOU KNOW?

Tia'm (moose) are crucial in helping our forest and the forest's ecosystem stay healthy. When eating, Tia'm selects certain species of plants to eat and as a result, they can help shape young forest stands and keep many plant populations under control. If moose continue to decline, it will affect other species in the forest tremendously.

Wildlife Update

Fall is usually the busiest time on the ground for the wildlife file—from meetings and activities that require boots on the ground, to having important conversations with Mi'kmaq around Salmon, Bear or Moose. The Wildlife lead is also playing a role in traditional and educational camps for communities.

Bear River Youth Bear Hunt

KMK's Wildlife Lead, along with Clifford Paul of UINR, participated in a youth bear hunt and traditional and educational weekend with Bear River First Nation in mid-September. Traditional learning and hunting techniques were enjoyed by all, and a bear was harvested during this camp. This was truly a great experience and was heartwarming to see how Bear River has its roots well planted in who we are as a people.

The level of respect to the land and waters, especially from these youth show how much they dedicated to land and outdoor education. Bear River youth demonstrated an eagerness to learn and will continue to live by the concepts of Netukulimk.

Moose

In July, the Assembly announced a halt to all moose harvesting activities in Cape Breton, to work toward the recovery of the species. This decision was made after collaboration with our Moose Management Team, the Grand Chief and Mi'kmaq Grand Council members, Mi'kmaq organizations, many community members and harvesters, and the Province of Nova Scotia.

Many meetings continue to take place within the moose file with our provincial counterparts. The Minister of DNRR take part in the feast along with Chief Toney, Chief Marshall and Chief Denny. The feast moose meat was donation by Allison Bernard and fed over 300 people.

Governance

Fuel Tax Exemption Program

In November 2023, KMK supported the Assembly in requesting changes to the “Nova Scotia Indian Fuel Tax Exemption Program”, including a change in the name of the program and an increase in the base monthly exemption from 400 litres per person to 1000 litres per person. In April 2024, Service Nova Scotia responded to inform the Assembly that they would be updating the program name to “Nova Scotia Indigenous Fuel Tax Exemption Program” and would honour our request to increase the base monthly exemption limit from 400 litres to 1000 litres.

On September 12, 2024, these changes were formally implemented, and all Status Mi’kmaq registered to a Nova Scotia band automatically saw their exemption limits increase. Those who require an exemption limit above 1000 litres per month continue to be able to file a request for an increase with their Membership Clerks.

Wula Na Kinu

During their September meeting, the Assembly approved the Wula Na Kinu pilot program to be renewed for a 10 year period for existing harvester identification cards. Cardholders will now only need to renew their cards every 10 years, rather than every year. While some harvesting, namely moose, is limited this year, we know how important these cards are to people’s Mi’kmaq identity. We are very excited to announce this change!

Forestry

As the weather cools and our forests come to rest, we can start to think about winter foraging. One key principle when harvesting your winter vegetation, whether that be medicinal, food, or recreational, would be to follow Netukulimk.

Listen and get to know your foraging area. When selecting your harvest species, ensure that they too have the energy to provide.

Harvesting no more than a third of any one item will ensure sustainability for generations.



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.