

KMK Newsletter

May 2025



MESSAGE FROM KMK

Happy Spring! We're working to continue our quarterly newsletters again this year, with this being our second issue of 2025.

Our newsletters 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!



Nationhood 2025 Re-cap

Our annual Nationhood Conference took place on February 26-27, in Membertou. This important gathering brought together Chiefs, Councils, Grand Council, youth, Mi'kmaw organizations and KMK staff to reflect on the past year's progress, set priorities, and shape a collective path forward for our Nation.

This year's conference focused on Justice, with discussions and presentations on Indigenous policing, community-based policing, by-laws and the broader justice system. We heard from several guest speakers including Senator Prosper, Naomi Metallic, (Dalhousie University) Dr. Jane MacMillan (St. Francis Xavier University), the RCMP, and had a panel discussion with the Mi'kmaw Legal Support Network, KMK, and Tajikemik. Discussions on Justice, Health and Well-being will continue in June at another conference.

Wela'liek to all who attended and provided valuable input.



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CHAT Conference

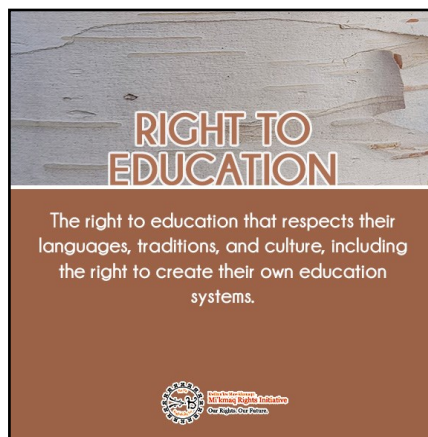
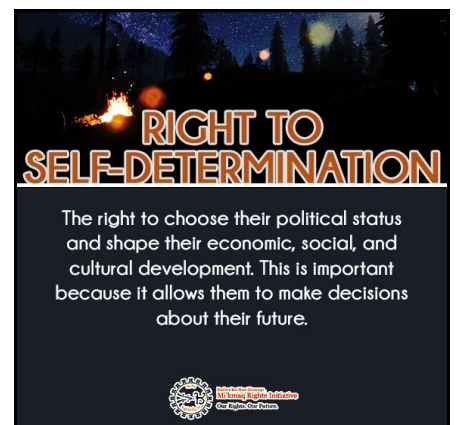
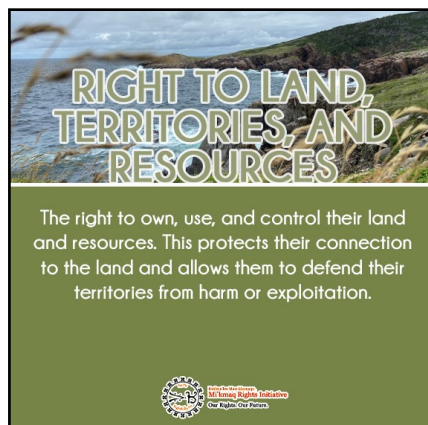
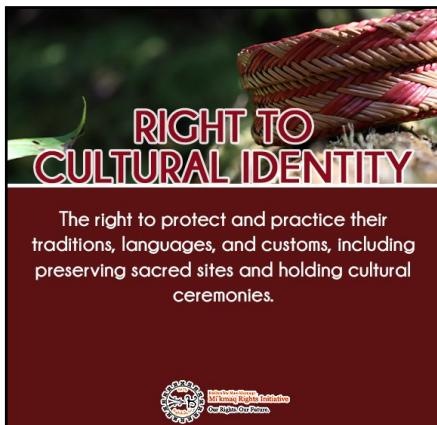
On March 18 and 19, KMK brought together Council members, Mi'kmaq organizations and community members in Truro for a gathering on Culture, Heritage, Archaeology, and Tourism. This event created space for meaningful dialogue and knowledge-sharing to help develop a strategic plan that will ensure the protection of our Nation's culture, heritage, and archaeology.

Wela'liek to all the speakers and participants who guided these discussions and generously shared their expertise and experiences. Your contributions are vital to shaping a strong and cultural future for our Nation.

UNDRIP

As part of an educational series on the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP), our Governance and Communications Teams developed posters highlighting specific articles that emphasize the fundamental rights of Indigenous peoples. These were posted on our social media page. But some may ask:

Why is UNDRIP important for the Mi'kmaq? UNDRIP provides Indigenous peoples in Canada the opportunity to reaffirm our rights and gain recognition for our culture, land and governance systems that have been ignored in the past. It recognizes our inherent individual and collective rights. Below are some of the key rights that are outlined under UNDRIP.



UNDRIP vs UNDA

Goal is to help community members learn about the differences of UNDRIP and UNDA and how these concepts apply to their daily lives.

UNDRIP

Unvited Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

UNDRIP is an international document that outlines the rights of Indigenous peoples, such as their rights to culture, identity, work, health, and education, wherever they live. It is not legally binding, meaning it doesn't directly change laws in countries.

UNDRIP applies to the Rights of all Indigenous people around the world, no matter what Nation has power over the land they live on today.

UNDRIP applies to all Indigenous Nations globally, but it is up to the colonial governments of those countries to make it into law and implement it.

UNDRIP was adopted by the United Nations in 2007, yet Canada didn't fully support UNDRIP until 2016.

UNDRIP is used to set an international standard and shared understanding of the inherent Rights of Indigenous peoples around the globe.

UNDRIP must be incorporated into each country's laws to have real impact. Indigenous Nations typically use it to push for the recognition of their internationally recognized rights.

WHAT

WHO

WHEN

WHY

HOW

UNDA

United Nations Declaration Act

UNDA is Canada's law that brings UNDRIP's principles into federal laws, policies, and regulations. It's Canada's official way of recognizing and applying UNDRIP's rights.

UNDA recognizes and implements the Rights of Indigenous Peoples who live in what is now Canada.

It applies to federal laws, policies and regulations and the work that the federal government is responsible for.

It does not have any impact on provincial laws, meaning, laws, policies, and regulations made by the provincial government don't need to apply the principles and Rights of UNDRIP.

UNDA became law in Canada on June 21st, 2021.

UNDA is used to formally recognize and implement UNDRIP into Canadian law.

UNDA requires the Government of Canada to ensure that all its laws, policies, and regulations respect Indigenous rights and follow the principles of UNDRIP. This means existing laws must be reviewed to align with UNDRIP, and new laws must protect Indigenous rights.

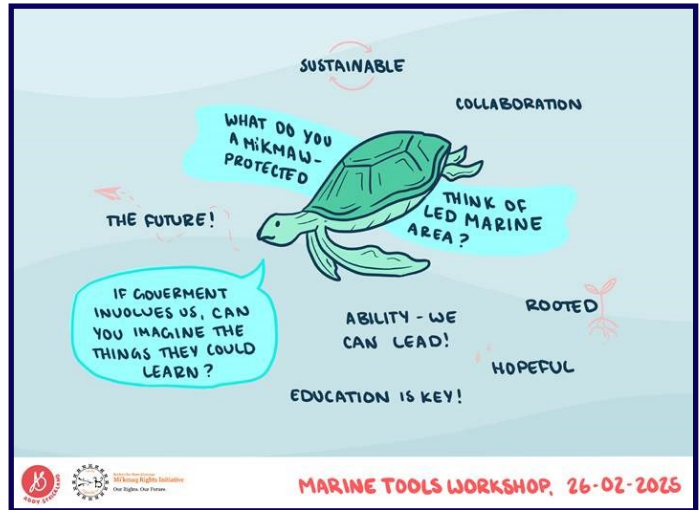
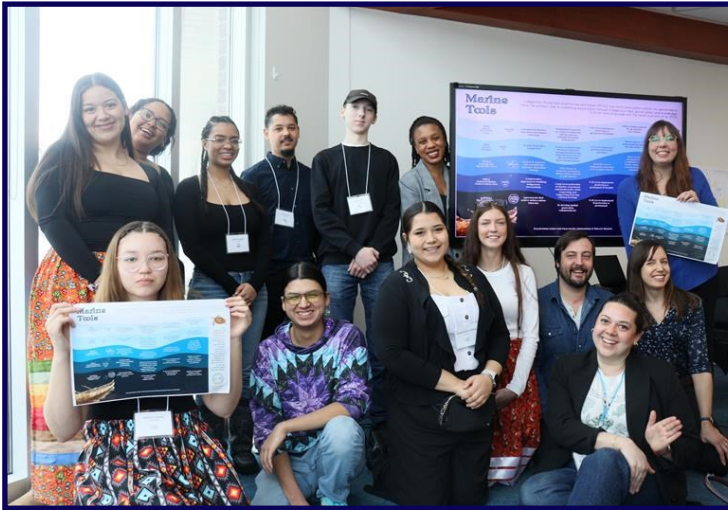


Kwilmu'kw Maw-khusuagn
Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative
Our Rights. Our Future.

MPA Youth Session

During the Nationhood Conference, KMK's Marine Protected Areas Coordinator hosted a Marine Tools Workshop with Mi'kmaw youth. We brought together youth from eight communities, along with federal marine conservation practitioners. The group discussed Mi'kmaw interests and access to collaboratively manage and govern marine conservation areas in Mi'kma'ki.

When asked how youth feel about a Mi'kmaw-led marine designation we heard words like 'access,' 'education' and 'sustainability'. Wela'liek to the youth who attended and shared their perspective with us. For more information on how to approach a Mi'kmaw-led marine protection please visit <https://ipcaknowledgebasket.ca/ipca-faq/> or reach out to the KMK office.



Mi'kmawitasik

We are proud to officially launch the website for *Mi'kmawitasik: Mi'kmaw Made* which celebrates and protects Mi'kmaw art, culture and traditions. Mi'kmawitasik is the first-of-its-kind cultural trademark that not only showcases our rich culture but also builds economic opportunities while honouring our heritage. Artists and cultural hosts can now proudly display their work with a mark of authenticity that comes from deep community roots!

Check it out at mikmawitasik.ca

Facebook and Instagram accounts for Mi'kmawitasik were also recently launched and these pages will be a place to share the story of Mi'kmawitasik, highlight our amazing Mi'kmaw members, and showcase the wonderful work they have created.

 Facebook.com/mikmawitasik
 Instagram: @mikmawitasik



Archaeology Update

Spring has sprung and archaeology fieldwork has begun! Stemming from discussions at the Mi'kmaq-Parks Canada Collaborative Archaeology table, members of KMK's archaeology team worked alongside Parks Canada archaeologists last week in the Port Royal National Historic Site.



Parks Canada is replacing utility lines in a roadway, which resulted in digging and an opportunity for an archaeological investigation. Finds included in this dig included lithic flakes, pottery from the late 1700/early 1800's and trade beads!

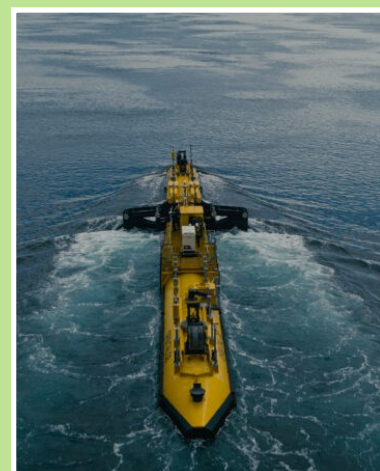
Our team is especially excited to find out more about what these beads are made from and to learn more about the Mi'kmaq-settler relationship at one of the earliest European settlements in North America.



Mi'kmaq delegation visits Scotland to learn more about greener energy solutions

Several Chiefs and KMK technical staff were part of a Mi'kmaq delegation that visited Orkney, Scotland this month to learn about an in-stream tidal energy device at Orbital Marine Technologies.

Planning for this visit began nearly a year ago and was organized in collaboration with the Fundy Ocean Research Centre for Energy (FORCE), as part of a knowledge-sharing effort. This visit is about the Mi'kmaq exploring possibilities for greener energy solutions, for sustainable economic development, and for innovation that respects both the environment and our way of life. The future must be green if it is to be enjoyed by generations to come!



With no commercially operating in-stream tidal devices currently in Canada, this visit offered firsthand insights into the economic, environmental, and cultural implications of this emerging industry. The Bay of Fundy is one of the most unique and powerful tidal environments in the world and this visit allowed us to see how this marine technology could perform here.



Although, the Bay of Fundy presents exciting energy potential, approaching these ideas with much care, and drawing on the knowledge and experience of those leading the way in sustainable marine innovation was essential. We are excited to provide more about the trip in the next newsletter!

Chiefs Fight NS Stance on Hydraulic Fracturing

On March 7, members of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs (Assembly) met with Premier Houston and Minister Martin to discuss concerns with, and opposition to, Nova Scotia lifting bans on hydraulic fracturing. Following that meeting, Premier Houston publicly commented to the media that a meeting occurred, leaving the public to speculate that the Mi'kmaq were properly consulted and/or on board with these recent provincial decisions. These implications are inaccurate and skirt the truth about how discussions with the Mi'kmaq are really going.

"We have made it clear to the Premier that the Mi'kmaq have always opposed hydraulic fracturing and that there has been no meaningful consultation on provincial decisions to reverse bans on hydraulic fracturing," said Chief Michelle Glasgow, Co-Lead of Health, Wellbeing and Elders portfolio for the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs.

The Assembly met and reaffirmed a resolution passed in 2014 which stated that, "the Assembly of Nova Scotia does not support any hydraulic fracturing activity in Nova Scotia and will continue to oppose any and all hydraulic fracturing activity until such time all environmental concerns have been addressed adequately with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia"

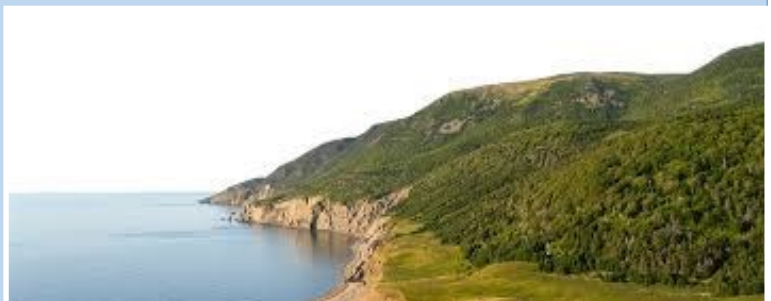
At their meeting, the Assembly had in-depth conversations on their concerns that Nova Scotia has been dismissing the self-governing rights of the Mi'kmaq and that decisions are being made about the lands and waters in the unceded and traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq, without any real consideration of the Rights holders. As a result, the Assembly is now looking into filing an injunction into Nova Scotia's law-making process on hydraulic fracturing and uranium mining.

"Environmental racism is a real thing. The Province of Nova Scotia and Premier Houston are making decisions and moving at a speed that appears to be rooted in racist and colonial practices. They continue to marginalize the voices, position and concerns of the Mi'kmaq," continued Chief Glasgow.

"Although Nova Scotia has publicly said they are open to having conversations with stake holders, they are forgetting to have conversations with Nova Scotia's stake owners - the Mi'kmaq," said Chief Terrance Paul, Fisheries Co-Lead for the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs.

The Assembly also has grave concerns about what this could mean for project sites that they have already fought to protect in the past, such as the Alton Gas and Lake Ainsley sites. "If technology has changed, as Premier Houston claims, we invite him to share that evidence and data with the Mi'kmaq," continued Chief Paul. "Until then, we will continue to be against fracking in our territory."

"Over a decade ago, the Assembly worked hard to ensure that safeguards were put in place to protect the interests of everyone who calls Mi'kma'ki home. Fracking is a destructive, irreversible and exploitative industry, and the moratorium put in place kept this harsh practice out of our lands and waters. It is our responsibility to use our Rights and Title claim over these lands and waters to help protect it from this harmful industry," said Chief Glasgow.



Marine House

In March 2025, a former DFO office building was sold to the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre (MNFC) with plans to transform it into much needed affordable housing in the HRM area. The building, known as Marine House, is a six storey, 5,708 square metre building located at 176 Portland Street in downtown Dartmouth.



This building will help address affordable housing needs and is a consequential development for community members in a central location, that will provide access to more than 60 wrap-around programs.

With the potential to affordably house over 200 individuals, Marine House will support social and economic inclusion for residents.

The redevelopment of Marine House aims to create at least 61 units, with half of them being considered affordable housing costing less than 80% of the average market rent. The project will also include spaces for the various services offered by the MNFC with the goal of helping residents and supporting their needs.

The Assembly helped make this possible by seeing the building's potential and supporting the MNFC through the process. The sale happened through the Federal Lands Initiative (FLI), through consultation with KMK, Public Services and Procurement Canada and in partnership with MNFC, and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Chief Sidney Peters, Co-Chair of the ANSMC and Co-Lead for the Housing and Infrastructure portfolio recognizes the roles each of the partners achieved through such a project, "Housing is critical and a basic human right. We are pleased to have acquired another property through the Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia Canada Consultation Process, which we are providing to the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Society to help address their pressing urban Indigenous housing needs. We recognize Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn and the Government of Canada for supporting us in providing safe, warm homes for our urban community members in need."

Work on the building is expected to be completed in February 2027.



N'multis aqq Wela'lin

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