

PRESS RELEASE

**ALBERTA GOVERNMENT ONCE AGAIN RECOGNIZES
MÉTIS HARVESTING RIGHTS**

(July 14, 2008) – Yesterday Métis from northeastern Alberta and northwestern Saskatchewan held a traditional Métis fish harvest and fish fry in celebration of the hunting rights victory of Métis Elder Alfred Janvier of La Loche, Saskatchewan who had been charged with killing a moose in Alberta and on March 11, 2008 having that charged dropped as the Alberta government admitted that they would have lost at trial anyway.

A net was set on the Alberta side of Garson Lake by Alfred Janvier and Tarcis Herman and a number of whitefish were harvested. According to Mr. Janvier: “It is good that our people from both Saskatchewan and Alberta can hunt and fish in Alberta without being charged. This is a big win for us, and I look forward to continue using my Métis harvesting rights in Alberta for the wild meat and fish necessary to feed my family”.

Bill Loutitt, President of Fort McMurray Local 1935 who had participated in the March 11, 2008 press conference following the victory in R. v. Janvier also participated in the days events and stated that “it is a very good feeling to know that our Métis people can set nets to catch fish to feed our families without now being charged. This also continues to confirm that our people from this part of Western Canada have rights over the lands and resources now the subject of development and the requirement that we be properly consulted and accommodated, while respecting our relationship with the land”.

Event organizer Phillip Chartier, President of the Métis Local in Buffalo Narrows, Saskatchewan was pleased with the outcome of the fish harvest and fish fry. “We have fought for many years to have our peoples’ hunting and fishing rights, not only recognized, but also respected by provincial governments. We gave proper and public notice that we were going to exercise our fishing rights by setting gill nets in Alberta waters, and the Alberta government’s inaction confirms that they acknowledge our Métis constitutional right to not only hunt, but to fish as well” stated Mr. Chartier.

Based on the success of this fish harvest, there is discussion to hold a similar fish harvest this fall or winter on another Alberta lake within the traditional territory of the Métis of northeastern Alberta and northwestern Saskatchewan.

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