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Alberta Court of Appeal Agrees to Hear Métis Harvesting Rights Case

“Métis Hunt for Justice Continues”

Calgary, AB (January 23, 2011) – In a decision released today, Madame Justice Constance Hunt, of the Alberta Court of Appeal granted leave to appeal in *R. v. Hirsekorn* – the Métis Nation of Alberta’s (“MNA”) Métis harvesting rights litigation.

The *R. v. Hirsekorn* case was initiated as a test case as a part of the Métis Nation’s “hunt for justice.” This “hunt for justice” was launched in response to the Stelmach Government’s cancellation of a province-wide Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement (“IMHA”) that was negotiated between the MNA and the Klein Government in 2004. Since the cancellation of the IMHA in July 2007, Alberta Métis have taken to the courts in order to ensure the Supreme Court of Canada’s decision in *R. v. Powley* is meaningfully implemented in Alberta.

“We are extremely pleased that the Alberta Court of Appeal rejected the Alberta Government’s arguments to deny leave to appeal and that the Court has agreed to hear this important case for all Alberta Métis. In her Reasons for Judgment, Justice Hunt clearly recognizes that this is a case about fulfilling the promise of section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982* to Alberta Métis. We wholeheartedly agree with this conclusion,” said Audrey Poitras, MNA President.

Legal counsel for the MNA and Mr. Hirsekorn will now be finalizing the appeal for a hearing before a full panel of the Alberta Court of Appeal. A hearing date has not yet been set, but it is hoped that the appeal will be heard in the Court of Appeal’s upcoming Spring 2012 session.

A copy of the decision is available at <http://www.albertacourts.ab.ca/jdb/2003-ca/criminal/2012/2012abca0021.pdf> or on the MNA’s website or at www.albertametis.com.

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