



# Le Métis

∞ EST. 1871 ∞

## YOUR RED RIVER MÉTIS GOVERNMENT'S BI-WEEKLY NEWS.



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As our Citizens know, your Red River Métis Government has always stood strong in defence of our distinct identity as a Nation and a people. We left the Métis National Council in 2021 because that organization was trying to allow the Métis Nation of Ontario to introduce "new, historic communities" into our Nation, watering down our identity and allowing thousands upon thousands to claim our heroes, flags, and history, with no connection to us.

Our withdrawal from this pan-Indigenous organization was guided by a mandate we received from you, our Citizens, at our 2019 Annual General Assembly. As always, your Cabinet and I appreciate your direction, wisdom, and unity on this important matter.

Theft of our identity is a matter of national importance, and if it is left unchecked, it can do great harm to our families, villages, and Nation. It threatens everything we have fought for, both past and present. These frauds use Louis Riel as their hero. They claim our national flag as their pennant, as well as our Red River Cart, Red River Beadwork, and Red River Jig as their symbols. They appropriate the milestones of our history as their own and make efforts to change it to suit their own narratives.

Let me be clear – people who call themselves Métis with roots in Eastern Canada are not Red River Métis. They have no connection to our Homeland. They are not part of us.

Yet, their attempts to steal our identity risk serious harm to our peoples. It creates confusion among Canadians. It leaves our culture, heritage, symbols, and heroes vulnerable to misinterpretation and misuse by those who do not understand the cost our families and our Nation paid to preserve this legacy from our Ancestors. It opens the door to recognition, claims, and funding that do not rightfully belong to these groups.

This is a travesty, and it must be stopped. You can be confident that the MMF will remain the stalwart defender of the Nation. We will stand against this flood of identity colonists who are trying to swamp us from within, which was Louis Riel's greatest fear for his "Little Métis Nation."

#### Indigenous Identity Fraud Summit

To address this important issue, we have partnered with the Chiefs of Ontario to co-host the upcoming Indigenous Identity Fraud Summit on May 14 and 15 in Winnipeg, the heart of our Homeland. This historic Summit marks an unprecedented gathering of First Nations, Inuit, and Red River Métis leadership from across Canada, all of whom are bound by concerns about the wholesale theft of our respective identities, by those seeking to use them for their own purposes or gains.

For Citizens who are not familiar with the Chiefs of Ontario, their mandate is to support all First Nations in Ontario as they assert their sovereignty, jurisdiction, and their chosen expression of nationhood. They have stood firm in opposition to Bill C-53, which – if passed – would see the Métis Nation of Ontario recognized as a Métis government. The Chiefs of Ontario have commissioned reports that factually outline that the Ancestors claimed by the Métis Nation of Ontario are, in fact, the Ancestors of these First Nations. The Chiefs of Ontario correctly point out that if there had been any Métis communities in their homelands, they would have been known and been part of the stories passed down in families and communities.

We are proud to partner with the Chiefs of Ontario, led by Regional Chief Glen Hare, to address this important subject. When we act in unity, as we did in the past with our First Nations relatives, our voices are stronger, and our message clearer. Together, we can ensure that our distinct identities, our Ancestors, our cultures, and our history remain in our keeping, and our authority to speak for our Nations remains intact.

We will not allow these fraudulent organizations to use "root ancestors" or "verified family lines" to use

our heroes, flags, culture, and symbols, paired with the Ancestors of the First Nations of Ontario to create some sense of legitimacy for themselves. By taking things that rightfully belong to the Red River Métis and the Ontario First Nations and mashing them together, these identity thieves are causing harms to legitimate rightsholders, and distorting our respective history and cultures to achieve their own ends.

The announcement of the Summit has generated massive interest and excitement from all sectors of Canadian society, and even from other countries. We have heard from our Citizens Beyond Borders across all western provinces as well as those who live in Ontario, who want to know how they can clearly identify themselves as rightful inheritors of our rich culture and history. We have received calls from representatives of other levels of government, from the academic world, and from other individuals and groups who have worked hard to expose Indigenous identity fraud in their respective areas of expertise. This is a good sign, telling us that there is growing awareness of what is being done to our identity and the identity of the First Nations in Ontario. It tells us that our efforts to educate Canadians have been working. We must continue on this path, demonstrating the strength and unity that kept our Nation alive, even during the darkest times of our history.

I know we have also received an overwhelming and positive response from Citizens about the Summit, and many questions about the ability of Citizens to attend. While we are livestreaming the event so Citizens can observe and learn about these important matters, you can also rest assured that your Cabinet and I are aware of the importance of providing you with an opportunity to interact with your government and each other, so you can also express our opposition to this wholesale fraud. This Summit is only the first step of many, and we will ensure Citizens and Local leadership continue to be engaged in this dialogue as time progresses.

Citizens can tune into our livestream of the Indigenous Identity Fraud Summit here:  
[youtube.com/@ManitobaMetisMMF](https://www.youtube.com/@ManitobaMetisMMF)

Until we meet again, I offer my prayers to all our families, Citizens, friends, and neighbours, and my deepest condolences to those who have been caused to grieve.

Meeqwetch,

*President David Chartrand, LL.D. hon. O.M. ∞*



## DEFENDING OUR CULTURE: THE MMF TAKES A STAND AGAINST IDENTITY THEFT



**“WE MUST SEEK TO PRESERVE THE EXISTENCE OF OUR OWN PEOPLE. WE MUST NOT BY OUR OWN ACT ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE SWAMPED. IF THE DAY COMES WHEN THAT IS DONE, IT MUST BE BY NO ACT OF OURS.” - LOUIS RIEL**



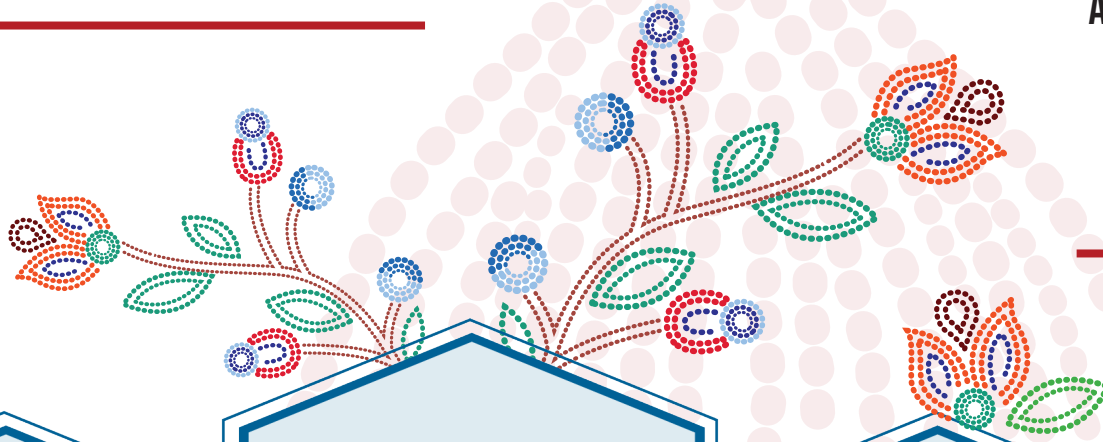
The Red River Métis are at a turning point. Across Eastern Canada, Métis identity is being misappropriated and stolen from us. What is happening right now is Métis identity theft at an unprecedented level.

People in eastern Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes are attempting to use the Manitoba Métis Federation's (MMF) recent legal and political successes to assert their rights and receive benefits. Many of these people may have legitimate claims to being Indigenous, but simply put - they are not us and we are not them. It took the Red River Métis decades in the courts and nearly 150 years of struggle to get this recognition.



**“WE ARE THE ONLY ONES THAT HAVE THE RED RIVER JIG. WE’RE THE ONLY ONES THAT HAVE THE RED RIVER CART. WE’RE THE ONLY ONES THAT ARE FLOWER BEADWORK PEOPLE. WE’RE THE ONLY ONES THAT SPEAK MICHIF. WE’RE THE ONLY ONES THAT HAVE OUR CULTURE. AND WE WILL LET NO ONE TRY TO STEAL YOUR CULTURE.” - MMF PRESIDENT**

**DAVID CHARTRAND**



### WHAT IS INDIGENOUS IDENTITY THEFT?

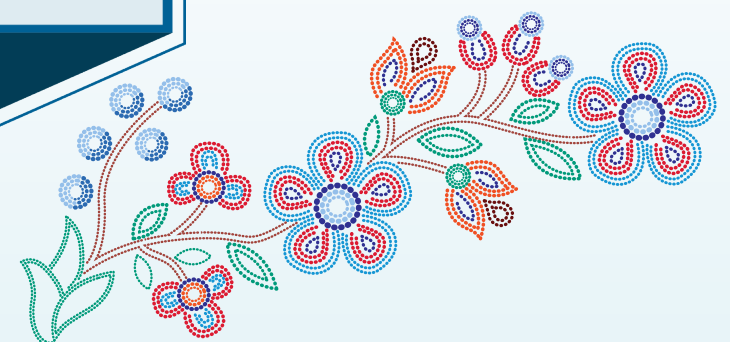
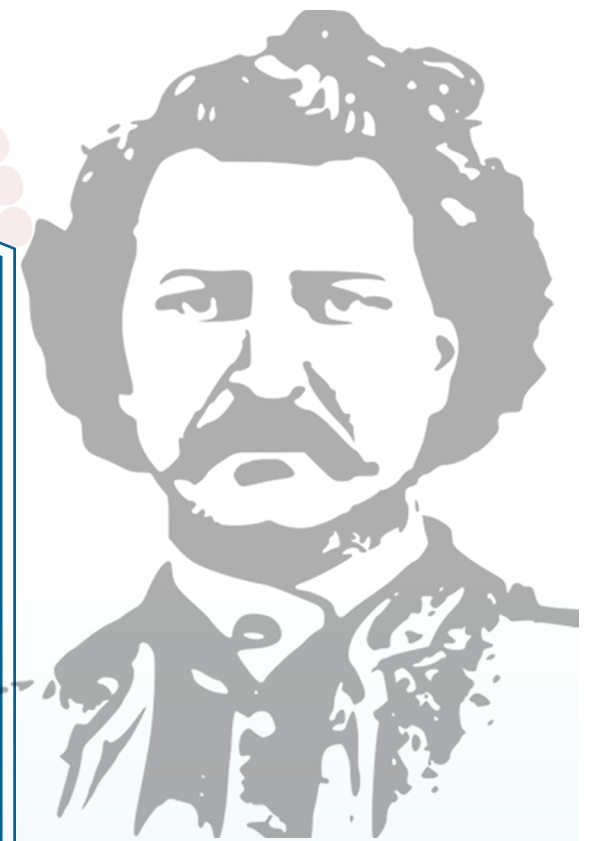
Indigenous identity theft is the fraudulent misappropriation or misrepresentation of Indigenous identity by individuals or groups who do not have legitimate connections to Indigenous communities. This act involves falsely claiming Indigenous heritage, cultural affiliation, or membership, often for personal gain, financial advantage, or exploitation of Indigenous rights and resources.

### WHAT IS BILL C-53?

According to the Parliament of Canada, Bill C-53 is an Act respecting the recognition of certain Métis governments in Alberta and Ontario to give effect to treaties with those governments and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. We believe this legislation, if passed, will reward identity theft by thousands of self-interested, like-minded individuals who have banded together under the Métis Nation of Ontario to assert an identity, rights, and benefits that do not belong to them.

### WHY WE MUST STOP IT

Canada's willingness to deal with certain pan-Indigenous organizations is an affront to the integrity of Indigenous governments and their fundamental right to define their own citizenship systems and rights-holders. It threatens to erode the hard-won rights and benefits of Indigenous peoples and divert resources away from the needs of their communities into the hands of fraudulent claimants.





## INDIGENOUS IDENTITY FRAUD SUMMIT

The MMF and the Chiefs of Ontario are hosting an Identity Summit aimed at tackling rampant identity theft faced by many Indigenous Nations in Canada.

Fort Garry Hotel  
Winnipeg

May 14 - 15  
2024

Many First Nations, Inuit, and  
Red River Métis leaders  
across Canada attending

The event will be  
live-streamed

Visit [indigenousidentityfraud.org](https://indigenousidentityfraud.org) for more information.



## WHO ARE THE RED RIVER MÉTIS?

We are a vibrant Indigenous collectivity with our own identity, language, culture, institutions and way of life throughout the historic Northwest, also called the Red River Métis Homeland, centred in the Red River Valley. Despite our many names such as Bois Brûlés; flower beadwork people; Otipemisiwak; Louis Riel's people; and, as we call ourselves in our own language - Michif - from the beginning we have always been the Red River Métis.

## WHERE IS THE RED RIVER MÉTIS HOMELAND?

Our Homeland is West Central North America, which is the historic Northwest and part of Rupert's Land, brought into Confederation under the leadership of Louis Riel and others. Our People have a strong, distinct identity and share a common history in the great western plains centred in the Red River Valley that is entirely our own.



## WHAT IS RED RIVER MÉTIS CULTURE?

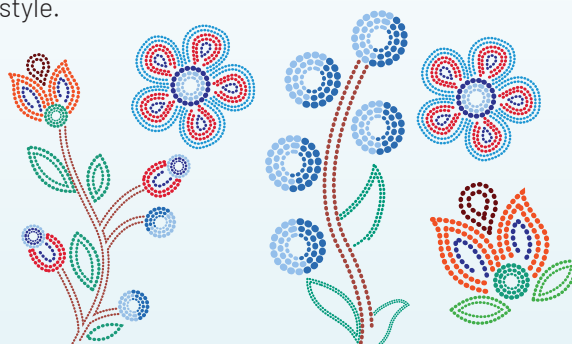
### Michif language

Our language is called Michif, spoken only in our western prairie homes. Michif is the root of Red River Métis culture and serves as a connection to land, traditional knowledge, and stories. Michif is a term that encompasses three traditional and uniquely Métis languages: Michif French, Northern Michif, and Southern Michif. Today, fewer than 1,000 people can fluently speak Michif.



### Beadwork

Known as the flower beadwork people, the Red River Métis drew inspiration from combining First Nations beadwork with the floral embroidered patterns introduced by French-Canadian nuns working in the Roman Catholic mission schools. Techniques and patterns of floral silk embroidery traditions from France were incorporated into traditional Aboriginal porcupine quill work designs, which progressively began to reflect our distinctive style.



### Red River Cart

The Red River Cart was created out of necessity by the Red River Métis to transport goods through the challenging prairie terrain. Before the cart's creation, goods had to be transported by York Boat (another Red River Métis innovation) or, in areas with smaller rivers and streams via canoe.





RED RIVER MÉTIS FUR COMPANY IS COMING TO A COMMUNITY NEAR YOU TO PURCHASE FURS FROM MÉTIS CITIZENS FOR 25%+ OVER MARKET VALUE!

- THOMPSON: THOMPSON REGIONAL OFFICE - MAY 22, 9-10AM
- THE PAS: THE PAS REGIONAL OFFICE - MAY 22, 3-4PM
- NORTHWEST: ELBERT CHARTRAND FRIENDSHIP CENTRE - MAY 23, 9-11AM
- SOUTHWEST: SOUTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE - MAY 24, 10-11AM
- INTERLAKE: ST. LAURENT YOUTH CENTRE - MAY 27, 12-1PM
- SOUTHEAST: CENTRE JEAN DESROSIERS - MAY 28, 12-1PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [MMF.MB.CA](http://MMF.MB.CA) OR CALL JASON WHITE AT 431-336-0465.



# Calling all Red River Métis BIRDERS



**DATES**  
**MAY**  
 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>



The MMF's Métis Community-Based Climate Monitoring Program (MCBCM) is offering a series of Guided Birding Walks in May, around the MMF's Winnipeg Region.

**OPEN TO ALL RED RIVER MÉTIS CITIZEN SCIENTISTS**

*Honorarium will be provided to all participants. Binoculars will be available for use during the event.*



For more information and to register, please contact Tanner Barlow at [tanner.barlow@mmf.mb.ca](mailto:tanner.barlow@mmf.mb.ca)