



HURON-SUPERIOR REGIONAL
MÉTIS COMMUNITY

HARVESTER'S GUIDEBOOK

Huron-Superior Regional Métis Community Harvester's Guidebook

Who to Contact:

Captain of the Hunt

705-257-9067

COTHRegion4@metisnation.org

The MNR Tips Line

1-877-847-7667

The MNR tips line is not an emergency response number.

If it is an emergency, please call 911



136 John St Sault Ste Marie, ON P6A 1P1
www.metisnation.org | www.ontariometisfacts.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Messages from the Regional Councillor & the Captain of the Hunt.....4

Huron-Superior Métis Harvesters’ Code of Conduct.....6

Our Rights

Our Responsibilities

Safety

MNO Harvesting Policy.....8

Harvesting Territories Map 20

More Information.....21

Captain of the Hunt

Ministry of Natural Resources

Restorative Justice Circle info

Reporting instructions

Community Freezer Information

Harvesting Altercation: De-Escalation Cheat Sheet.....24



Message from the Regional Councillor

Relatives,

As Métis people, we know that with our rights come great responsibilities. The Powley case affirmed what our ancestors always knew — harvesting is our way of life. But our rights are not just about putting food on our own tables. They are about caring for one another, respecting the land and animals, and carrying forward the traditions that make us who we are.

Harvesting is not just for ourselves, but for our community. That means sharing with Elders and helping families in need. One way we do this is through our community freezers that give everyone access to the food we harvest. If you are able, please donate a portion of your harvest so that we can continue to look after one another, just as our ancestors taught us.

This guide is here to support you in exercising your rights with pride, responsibility, and respect.

I want to sincerely thank our elders who maintained our way of life and passed it on to us, our harvesters who continue to live it, and our Captain of the Hunt who helps manage the harvest and protect our rights.

Together, as a self-governing people, we can continue to live in balance with the land, protect our traditions, and strengthen our Nation for the generations yet to come.

Miigwetch,

Mitch Case

Regional Councillor

Huron-Superior Regional Métis Community

Message from the Captain of the Hunt

Harvesters,

As we enter another harvesting season, I want to remind all of you of both the rights and the responsibilities that come with being a Métis harvester. Our right to harvest is constitutionally protected, but it is also guided by our values of respect, balance, and care for the land. Take only what you need, use as much as you can, and remember to share with family, Elders, and community whenever possible.

Safety is just as important — let someone know where you're going, be prepared for the conditions, and always practice safe and responsible harvesting.

Most of all, I encourage you to enjoy your time on the land. Harvesting is not only about providing food — it is about reconnecting with our traditions, our ancestors, and with one another. I hope you'll also join us at community events throughout the season, where we can gather, share stories, and celebrate our way of life together.

Wishing you a safe, successful, and enjoyable harvest.

In solidarity,

Steve Gjos

Captain of the Hunt

Huron-Superior Regional Métis Community



HURON-SUPERIOR MÉTIS HARVESTERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Rights

- The Métis right to harvest is constitutionally protected.
- Harvesting is more than food — it is cultural, spiritual, and community practice.
- Our harvesting connects us to our ancestors, teachings, and traditions.

Our Responsibilities

- **Take only what you need** for yourself and your community.
- **Avoid waste** — use as much of the animal or harvest as possible.
- **Respect the seasons and life cycles** of animals, fish, and plants.
- **Protect species at risk** and avoid overharvesting in sensitive areas.
- **Avoid unnecessary suffering** when harvesting.
- **Share the harvest** — support Elders, families, and community freezers.
- **Teach youth** — pass on knowledge of harvesting, preparation, and respect for the land.
- **Respect the land** — harvesting is also conservation.

- **Report** — complete your year-end harvester survey on time, and notify the Captain of the Hunt immediately of any interactions with law enforcement, or safety/conservation concerns regarding other Métis harvesters.

Safety

- Tell someone where you are going and when you'll return.
- Always follow firearm and harvesting tool safety.
- Be prepared — carry emergency supplies, first aid, and dress for weather and terrain.
- Keep your equipment (boat, ATV, snowmobile, firearm) in good condition.
- Never harvest under the influence of alcohol or drugs.





MNO HARVESTING POLICY

This MNO Harvesting Policy came into effect on the 29th day of August 2016. As of that date it supersedes any previous versions of the policy.

WHEREAS the Métis are one of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada and are recognized as such in the Constitution Act, 1982;

WHEREAS on September 19th 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed in R. v. Powley, that Métis exist as an Aboriginal people and have existing harvesting rights within the meaning of s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982;

WHEREAS harvesting renewable resources has traditionally been and continues to be integral to the Métis way of life;

WHEREAS harvesting renewable resources has traditionally been and continues to be organized by the Captains of the Hunt for the benefit of the Métis community;

WHEREAS in the Statement of Prime Purpose it is an objective of the MNO to ensure that Métis can continue to exercise their Aboriginal and treaty rights;

WHEREAS the Statement of Prime Purpose further states that it is an objective of the MNO to work towards developing economic self-sufficiency within the Métis

Nation and Métis have traditionally harvested renewable resources for that purpose;

WHEREAS the Métis Nation believes that conservation of renewable resources is important and that they have a responsibility to preserve and protect those resources for the benefit of future generations;

WHEREAS the citizens of the MNO wish to exercise the Métis harvest within a management regime which is self-governed and which recognizes and respects their existing harvesting rights;

NOW THEREFORE the MNO declares the following to be the MNO Harvesting Policy:

1.0 Policy Name

1.1 This policy shall be called the MNO Harvesting Policy.

2.0 Interpretation

2.1 In this policy the following definitions shall apply:

- a) “Métis harvest” or “Métis harvesting” means the taking, catching or gathering for reasonable personal use in Ontario of renewable resources by MNO citizens. Such harvesting includes plants, fish, wildlife and firewood, taken for heating, food, medicinal, social or ceremonial purposes and includes donations, gifts and exchange with Aboriginal persons. For greater certainty such Métis harvesting is for reasonable personal use only and does not include harvesting for commercial purposes;

- b) “Captain of the Hunt” means an MNO citizen who has been duly appointed by the President of MNO to manage and administer the Métis harvest in his or her region;
- c) “Métis community” means a group of Métis who live together in the same geographic area. For greater certainty a Métis community may include more than one settlement, town or village in an area;
- d) “MNO citizen” means a person who is interested in furthering the objects of the MNO and who is Métis within the definition adopted by the MNO in accordance with the Métis National Council, and:
 - i) self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation;
 - ii) is ordinarily resident in the Province of Ontario;
 - iii) is not registered as an Indian under the Indian Act, as an Inuk on an Inuit registry, or on another Aboriginal registry whose objects are inconsistent with MNO’s; and
 - iv) who’s application for MNO citizenship has been registered by the MNO Registrar;
- e) “MNO” means the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Inc;
- f) “ordinarily resident” means a person who lives or has lived the majority of the past year

in Ontario excluding temporary absences for reasons including but not limited to, travel, education, medical treatment, military service or incarceration, provided the person was ordinarily resident prior to such temporary absences; and

- g) “traditional territory” means the geographic area that a Métis community in Ontario has historically relied on and continues to rely on for the Métis harvest.

- 2.2** In this policy, unless the content otherwise requires, words importing the singular shall include the plural, and vice versa.
- 2.3** This MNO Harvesting Policy does not create any new Aboriginal or treaty harvesting rights, nor does it limit or expand the existing Aboriginal or treaty harvesting rights of MNO citizens.
- 2.4** This MNO Harvesting Policy does not apply to MNO citizens who harvest outside the Province of Ontario.
- 2.5** Nothing in this policy precludes an MNO citizen from purchasing a hunting or fishing license from MNR or from applying for and using a harvesting tag issued by a First Nation.
- 2.6** This MNO Harvesting Policy applies only to MNO citizens who hold valid Harvesters Certificates.

3.0 Objectives

- 3.1** It is an objective of the MNO to encourage conservation practices during the Métis harvest so that the species are preserved for future

generations. MNO citizens who participate in the Métis harvest will:

- a) make best efforts not to destroy or damage fish or wildlife habitat;
- b) not harvest species of special concern, threatened or endangered species;
- c) not waste or spoil wildlife or fish;
- d) not harvest in fish sanctuaries or in waterfowl sanctuaries; and
- e) make best efforts not to harvest lactating sow bears with or without cubs.

3.2 It is an objective of the MNO to develop wildlife management practices based on traditional Métis values of cooperation and respect and to encourage MNO citizens to harvest in a safe manner. MNO citizens who participate in the Métis harvest will:

- a) practice safe hunting by taking special care and consideration of other persons, wildlife and property in the area in which they are hunting;
- b) use firearms safely at all times; and
- c) take particular care near road corridors, forestry or mining operations.

3.3 It is an objective of the MNO to respect the private property rights of landholders. MNO citizens who participate in the Métis harvest will not harvest on posted, fenced or visibly occupied private property unless they have received the prior written or oral consent of the landholder.

3.4 In order to better preserve renewable resources for the future, it is an objective of the MNO to gather information on all aspects of the Métis harvest. MNO citizens who participate in the Métis harvest are encouraged to report to their Captain of the Hunt on their activities including but not limited to the following:

- a) areas and species harvested;
- b) the health and numbers of the species harvested;
- c) any encounters with enforcement officers;
- d) any problems or observations which may be relevant to the species, habitat or other Métis harvesters; and
- e) environmental concerns which may affect the species, habitat or Métis harvesters.

3.5 Captains of the Hunt are appointed to enable the effective management of the Métis harvest. The MNO believes that community consultation is a key element of this effective management regime. Captains of the Hunt shall consult with the MNO communities in their region before making recommendations, which may in any manner limit the Métis harvest.

3.6 This policy does not apply to MNO citizens who are harvesting for commercial purposes.

3.7 All other parts of this policy are to be interpreted consistently with the objectives in this part.

4.0 Harvesters Certificate

4.1 For purposes of participation in the Métis harvest, the Chief Captain of the Hunt may issue an MNO Harvesters Certificate which shall be considered proof that the holder has been verified by the MNO Registrar as having provided sufficient documentation to support a claim to an Aboriginal or treaty right to harvest.

4.2 An MNO citizen, or a child or youth eligible to be an MNO citizen, may apply to a Captain of the Hunt for an MNO Harvesters Certificate. An applicant shall provide a Captain of the Hunt with demonstrable proof of the following:

- a) if the applicant intends to use firearms or a bow in the Métis harvest, he or she must demonstrate sufficient knowledge of firearms or bow hunting safety or completion of a firearms safety course; and
- b) that he or she is ordinarily resident in and intends to participate in the Métis harvest in his or her community's traditional territory; and
- c) that he or she is Métis within the definition in 2.1(d)(i).

4.3 The term of validity of the Harvesters Certificates and any applicable fees shall be as set out in Schedule "A," which is attached to and forms part of this MNO Harvesters Policy. MNO may amend Schedule "A" at its discretion from time to time.

- a) The MNO shall establish a "Métis Rights Conservation Trust". The purpose of the Trust shall be to fund all activities of the MNO

towards conserving and protecting Métis rights. All fees paid for Harvesters Certificates shall go towards that Trust.

4.4 MNO citizens who hold an MNO Harvesters Certificate shall harvest in accordance with the objectives in section 3 of this MNO Harvesters Policy.

4.5 Captains of the Hunt shall advise MNO citizens to carry their MNO Harvesters Certificate along with their MNO citizenship card when participating in the Métis harvest and to show it to enforcement officers.

4.6 Each MNO citizen who holds an MNO Harvesters Certificate has an obligation to:

- a) keep the MNO Registrar informed with up-to-date contact information;
- b) in a timely manner report to his or her Captain of the Hunt any incident with a Conservation Officer;
- c) on request give permission to the Conservation Officer to speak to the Captain of the Hunt or MNO about all aspects of an incident; and
- d) if charged with an offence, report the charge and provide a copy of the summons and/or information to his or her Captain of the Hunt as soon as possible upon receipt of that summons and/or information.

4.7 An MNO citizen who holds an MNO Harvesters Certificate and who does not comply with the obligations in 4.6 will be deemed to have waived

any claim for legal support from MNO in the event he or she faces harvesting charges.

5.0 Métis Harvest

5.1 The Métis harvest shall be throughout the year with the exception of moose and deer harvesting which shall only be harvested from September 1st to December 31st.

5.2 A Captain of the Hunt may recommend to the Chief Captain of the Hunt that:

- a) the season for any species, be abridged in his or her region for conservation or safety reasons;
- b) the season be extended in his or her region, for moose or deer; or allocations or limitations on the Métis harvest be made for conservation reasons.

5.3 MNO Harvesters Certificate holders may harvest with persons who have lawfully obtained licenses and tags issued by MNR or by a First Nation.

5.4 Harvesting which is carried out in violation of this policy may result in withdrawal of the MNO Harvesters Certificate or a refusal by the Chief Captain of the Hunt to renew the MNO Harvesters Certificate.

6.0 Captains of the Hunt

6.1 The President of MNO shall be the Chief Captain of the Hunt, and shall have the overall management of the Métis harvest within the Province of Ontario and the coordination of the regional Captains

of the Hunt. The President may at his discretion delegate the office of Chief Captain of the Hunt to another MNO citizen.

6.2 The President of MNO may appoint a Deputy Chief Captain of the Hunt who shall be responsible to implement this policy throughout the province in accordance with the objectives in article 3. The President may at his discretion delegate some or all of the management of the Métis harvest to the Deputy Chief Captain of the Hunt.

6.3 The President of MNO shall appoint a Captain of the Hunt in each MNO region who shall be responsible to implement this policy in accordance with the objectives in article 3.

6.4 Captains of the Hunt shall determine the appropriate management of the Métis harvest and shall evaluate its progress on an ongoing basis and no less than twice a year shall report to the Chief Captain of the Hunt.

6.5 Pursuant to 3.4, Captains of the Hunt shall make best efforts to collect and disseminate harvest information obtained from MNO citizens who are participating in the Métis harvest.

6.6 Captains of the Hunt may, after consultation with the Chief Captain of the Hunt, withdraw MNO Harvesters Certificates, on written notice with reasons, to the certificate holder. Persons whose MNO Harvesters Certificates have been withdrawn may appeal such decision to the Chief Captain of the Hunt.

6.7 Despite the seasonal limitations in article 5.1, Captains of the Hunt may designate a person or persons to harvest for the benefit of the MNO citizens in a particular Métis community. The proceeds of such harvest may be used for, among other things, sharing, social or ceremonial purposes

6.8 A Captain of the Hunt may appoint a liaison to assist them in managing the Métis harvest. Such liaison shall hold that office at the discretion of the Captain of the Hunt and shall report to the Captain of the Hunt.

7.0 Communications

7.1 Every incident that takes place between an MNO citizen with a Harvesters Certificate and a Conservation Officer should be reported by that citizen to his or her Captain of the Hunt. Such information should include, among other things, the location, date and nature of the incident and the name and badge number of the Conservation Officer.

7.2 In the event of an incident between an MNO citizen with a Harvesters Certificate and a Conservation Officer, the MNO citizen should obtain the name and badge number of the Conservation Officer.

7.3 If charged with an offence, the MNO citizen should report the charge and provide a copy of the summons and/or information to his or her Captain of the Hunt as soon as possible upon receipt of that summons and/or information. In the event that a

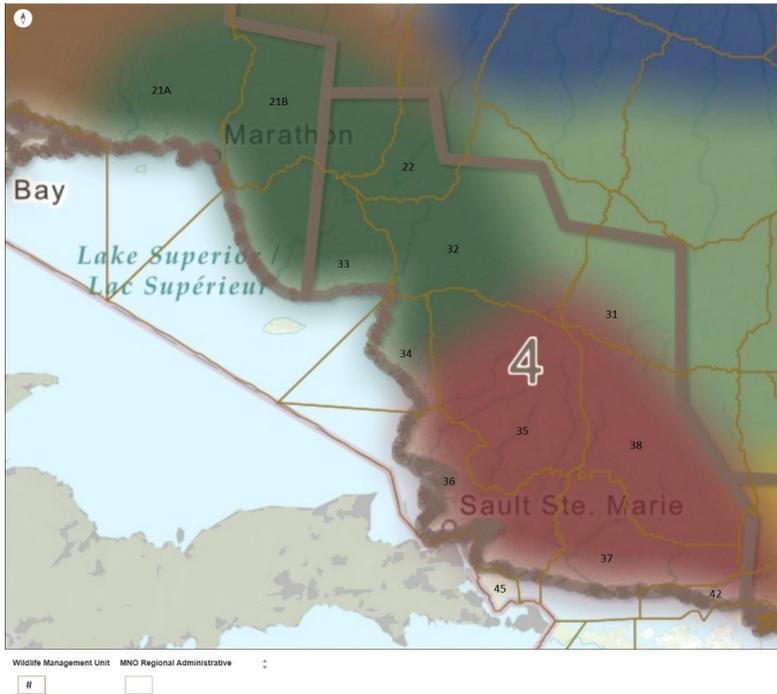
Captain of the Hunt is unavailable, the MNO citizen should contact the Deputy Chief Captain of the Hunt. If the Deputy Chief Captain of the Hunt is not available, call MNO at the 1 800 phone number printed on the back of the Harvesters Certificate.

7.4 The Captain of the Hunt should inform the Deputy Chief Captain of the Hunt about all incidents and charges and forward in a timely manner all copies of the summons and/or information to MNO Head Office.

Schedule "A"

- 1.** Harvesters Certificates shall have a term of validity of 3 years, which term shall begin from the date of issue.
- 2.** The fee for a Harvesters Certificate shall be \$60 (\$20 per year) with the fee being waived for anyone 65 years of age or older.
- 3.** An Application for renewal of a Harvesters Certificate shall be sent to the applicant's Captain of the Hunt, who shall sign the renewal application form and forward it to MNO for processing.

Traditional Harvesting Territories Map from the 2017 Framework Agreement



*Harvesting Area of Huron-Superior Regional Métis Community.
Dark Green Area is Michipicoten. Red is Historic Sault Ste. Marie*



MORE INFORMATION

Captain of the Hunt

Region 4 – Historic Sault Ste. Marie Traditional Harvesting Territory

Steve Gjos

Phone: 705-257-9067

Email: COTHRegion4@metisnation.org

Region 4 – Liaison

Art Bennett

Phone: 705-785-3508

Email: COTHLRegion4@metisnation.org

Ministry of Natural Resources

Sault Ste. Marie Office

General inquiry: 705-949-1231

Email: MNRF.SSM@ontario.ca

Address: 64 Church St Sault Ste. Marie,
Ontario P6A 3H3

Blind River Office

General inquiry: 705-949-1231

Email: MNRF.SSM@ontario.ca

The MNR Tips Line: 1-877-847-7667

The MNR tips line is not an emergency response number.

Restorative Justice Circle Information

In order to facilitate an inclusive, culturally respectful, and restorative approach to addressing harvesting offences, the Restorative Justice Circle has been established to integrate Métis legal traditions and Western justice practices. The Huron-Superior Regional Métis Community is the first Regional Métis Government to implement such an approach. Contact your Captain of the Hunt for more information.

See Also:

<https://www.metisnation.org/registry/harvesting>

<https://www.metisnation.org/registry/harvesting/captains-of-the-hunt/>

<https://www.metisnation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/MNO-Harvesting-Policy-2023-AGA-Amendments.pdf>

Reporting instructions

All MNO Citizens who participate in the harvest should report their activities to the Captain of the Hunt using the survey provided. Please include all relevant sections, and note any other information you think is important to your COTH.

Community Freezer Information

The Huron-Superior Métis Community Freezer Program is a local initiative managed by the community to support food sovereignty, food security, and cultural preservation by providing access to traditional, often hunted or harvested, foods stored in communal freezers. The food is **shared**, especially with Elders, families in need, and those who may not be able to hunt or harvest themselves. To contribute, access, or to learn more about the community freezer program, please contact your Captain of the Hunt, or Cultural Events Coordinator.

Steve Gjos, Captain of the Hunt

Phone: 705-257-9067

Email: COTHRegion4@metisnation.org

Shelby Storozuk, Cultural Events Coordinator

Phone: 249-525-6500

Email: ShelbySt@metisnation.org

HARVESTING ALTERCATION: DE-ESCALATION CHEAT SHEET

An argument in a harvesting situation can be extremely high-risk if firearms are involved, and should be approached with caution. Your first priority should always be personal safety and the safety of others. Here's a general breakdown of how to respond if you find yourself in or near such a situation.

1 Stay Calm and Assess the Situation

- Is the person emotional, armed, or under the influence?
- Speak slowly and calmly. Avoid sarcasm, aggressive gestures, or direct accusations.

2 Use Clear, Respectful Communication

- Suggest stepping back to cool down.
- Ask rather than demand.

"Can we talk for a second?"

"Is everything okay?"

3 Acknowledge their Concerns and Clarify the Situation

- Explain your presence and actions calmly.

"I understand you're concerned about safety/property/the environment, but I'm legally hunting here with S.35 rights, during the approved season and following all rules."

4 De-escalate or Exit

- If tension continues, disengage.

"I'll leave the area for now. We can talk later if needed."

5 Document and Report (if necessary)

- If threats or violations occur, document safely.
- Report to the COTH, MNRF officers or local authorities as needed.
- If you are in immediate danger call 9-1-1.

Tip: Always look for exits and stay aware of your surroundings.





HURON-SUPERIOR REGIONAL
MÉTIS COMMUNITY

HURON-SUPERIOR REGIONAL MÉTIS COMMUNITY
HARVESTER'S GUIDEBOOK