Background & Context

- In 1993, the Métis Nation of Ontario (“MNO”) was created as a Métis-specific government whose fundamental purpose is to advance Métis rights and self-government, as outlined in the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose.

- In 1994, the MNO’s centralized registry was created “to identify and register Métis citizens and harvesters who are eligible rights holders in the province of Ontario.” The MNO Registry has played a significant role in setting the MNO apart from other pan-Indigenous “groups” and “associations,” as well as advancing the MNO’s foundational aims and objectives.

- Over the last 29+ years, the MNO has worked tirelessly to build, refine, and standardize its Registry and citizenship requirements in an open, honest, and transparent manner, and in accordance with direction from its citizens and the Supreme Court of Canada in R v Powley. Further information on this history and evolution is detailed in the MNO’s Registry Review Citizen Consultations: What We Heard Report (“Citizen Consultation Report”).

- Between 2017 and 2021, the MNO launched a comprehensive, independent review—known as the Registry Review—of all MNO citizenship files to determine whether and to what extent they meet the current requirements for MNO citizenship as set out in the MNO Bylaws and MNO Registry Policy. For more information on the Registry Review process and current statistics, see the MNO’s website.

- Between May 2021 and April 2022, the MNO conducted a province-wide consultation process to gather citizens’ views on how, if at all, to implement the findings of the Registry Review to further advance its Métis self-government and rights agenda. The results of that process are outlined in the above-noted and publicly-available Citizen Consultation Report.

The Province-Wide Plebiscite

- In August 2022, the MNO Annual General Assembly (“AGA”), consistent with feedback received from citizens during the province-wide consultations, adopted resolution AGA220820-02, directing the MNO, to among other things, conduct a province-wide vote in Fall/Winter 2022 on the following question:

  Should all existing members/citizens of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and the MNO Secretariat, whose files do not meet the current requirements for citizenship as set out in the MNO Bylaws and Registry Policy, be removed as members/citizens?

- In response to this, the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (“PCMNO”) met in early November to consider the voting logistics and processes, including the adoption of formal voting guidelines, appointing a Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), setting the applicable voting period,
and confirming the available voting platforms (i.e., by telephone, electronic, and mail-in ballot). A copy of the MNO Registry Review Province-Wide Plebiscite Vote Guidelines is available on the MNO’s website, along with the Notice of Vote issued by the CEO on November 18, 2022.

- For the MNO, the plebiscite is an exercise of self-government aimed at gathering feedback and direction from all MNO citizens on next steps related to implementing the results of the Registry Review. This means that all citizens, regardless of their file status, will have an opportunity to vote in the province-wide plebiscite.

- Additional steps may be required to implement the results of the plebiscite. Consistent with the 2022 MNO AGA resolution, MNO Bylaws, and feedback from citizens, these additional steps may include calling a special General Assembly to consider amending the MNO Bylaws, the development of a reconsideration policy, etc. Further information on potential next steps will be made available if required and as they become available.

**Your Vote, Your Voice, Your Rights**

- Have your voice heard. The question at issue in the province-wide plebiscite affects all MNO citizens and could impact the future trajectory of the MNO’s citizenship requirements, self-government work, and Métis rights-related work within Ontario. This is a pivotal moment in the MNO’s history and evolution and we want to hear from you!

- Further information on the voting processes, timelines, and related logistics are included on the MNO’s plebiscite webpage, including outlined in the Notice of Vote and the MNO Registry Review Province-Wide Plebiscite Vote Guidelines. Consistent with the 2022 MNO AGA’s direction, the MNO will also be holding information sessions to further discuss the province-wide plebiscite and the findings detailed in the Citizen Consultation Report. Please visit the MNO website here to register for the upcoming Information sessions.

- In the meantime, further information, questions, or requests for support related to the province-wide plebiscite can be sent via email to rsrp@metisnation.org.