

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mitigation And Adaptation Strategy

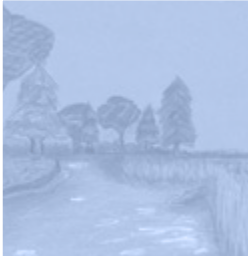
Métis Nation
of Ontario 

Acknowledgements

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the citizens, artists, storytellers, and community leaders whose contributions brought this Strategy to life and who remain dedicated to safeguarding our lands and waters for the next seven generations.

We thank the Women’s Council, Two-Spirit Council, Great Lakes Advisory Group, Veterans’ Council, and Youth Council.

We thank our writing and editing team who made this project possible.



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Art by Brooke Grego



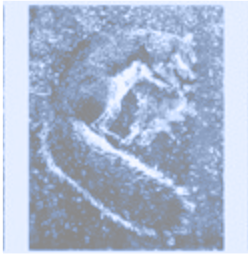
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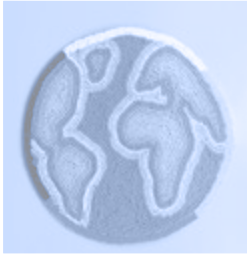
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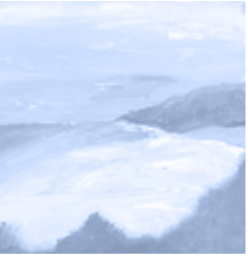
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Strategy AT A GLANCE

We are the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO).

As Indigenous peoples with a tradition of seasonal harvesting practices, we are attuned with the lands and waters, as well as their seasonal changes. We feel the effects of climate change throughout the year as we interact with the natural world. A higher average temperature is just one impact where we see tangible reverberating effects. In winter months this means the lakes are not completely freezing over, making ice fishing increasingly unsafe- and outright impossible in some years and locales. The increased temperature of lakes and waterways has changed fish habitats, spawning grounds, and ultimately negatively impacts fish populations- which not only impacts our ability to harvest but alters entire ecosystems. When winter thaws into spring, we spend time in the sugar bush where, again, we witness the impacts of climate change. The seasonal transition between winter and spring is becoming more unpredictable and variable between and within years. An earlier and shorter spring thaw, along with temperatures shooting up and down, changes how the maple sap runs and our ability to collect sufficient amounts. Harvesting is central to our Métis way of life. Harvesting encompasses

more than acquiring sustenance; it is a time and space of gathering family and community, sharing song, experience, knowledge, and stories. It is how young people learn who we are as Métis people and about our relationships and responsibilities to each other and within the natural world. For the sake of practicing our way of life into future generations, we are coming together to create direction for how we will manage and overcome the impacts of climate change.

This Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategy is a reflection of our citizens' concerns, hopes, and priorities for climate action. This Strategy will support community-based climate action through corresponding Regional Climate Action Plans developed in consultation and collaboration with each MNO Regional Consultation Committee and citizens.

Together, the Strategy and Regional Plans will illuminate a path forward for us to champion and implement Métis-led climate solutions that help reduce emissions, build resilience in our communities, and create a prosperous, healthy, and equitable MNO.

In our planning, we aim to leave no citizen behind as we collectively transition to a climate-resilient world and low-carbon economy. We embrace and celebrate the diversity of the MNO, the vibrant and intersectional identities that make up our citizen body. With this diversity comes the acknowledgement that we are all impacted differently by climate change – some more than others. It is critical to ensure equity in our climate change planning, which means that we aim to incorporate resources and supports tailored to the unique needs of citizens that may be more vulnerable than others to the impacts of climate change. We want to ensure that we meet each community, each citizen, exactly where they are at, so that we can move forward towards prosperity and sustainability together, hand-in-hand.

For an equitable transition, we must also ensure that our citizens are prepared to thrive and participate in a low-carbon economy. This is particularly important for citizens who are currently employed, directly or indirectly, in fossil fuel industries. A key goal of our planning is to ensure that citizens are engaged in the training and upskilling required to take advantage of the employment and economic opportunities created by the low-carbon transition.

Finally, an equitable and just transition also means recognizing that “green” does not always mean “good”. The climate crisis does not exist in a siloes, and is closely tied to the extractive forces of colonialism and capitalism that Métis communities, and our Indigenous kin, have borne the brunt of. The design and implementation of climate solutions is of paramount importance to ensure that they do not replicate existing injustices and inequalities, or create new ones, for our communities across the Nation. To be equitable, climate solutions must be designed to ensure that all citizens can access and adequately benefit from their implementation.

The Strategy identifies six priorities, based on consultations with citizens and their representatives, that will guide specific actions detailed in each region’s Climate Action Plans:

- ***Métis Responsibilities to Care for All Our Relations*** – How we will uphold our collective responsibilities to take care of the air, waters, lands, minerals, plants, and animals we share life with.
- ***Health and Well-Being*** – How we will mitigate and adapt to how climate change impacts the health and wellness of Métis citizens, especially our citizens who are most marginalized and vulnerable.
- ***Emergency Management*** – How we will help our citizens to prepare, mitigate, respond, and recover from climate-related disasters and hazards.
- ***Prosperity in a Low-Carbon Economy*** – How we can support our citizens to gain the skills, tools, and opportunities to participate and lead as we collectively shift to a low-carbon economy.
- ***Sustainable Energy and Infrastructure*** – How we will diversify our reliance on fossil fuels as we move towards a low-carbon future.
- ***Planning for the Seven Generations*** – How we will build a future that sets up our children and grandchildren for success, rooted in our Métis Ways of Life.

The Strategy is deeply aligned with the values in the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose: respect for all our relations, the sacred rights of the individual and the collective, pride in our heritage, honouring our families, independence, self-sufficiency, honesty, harmony, and peace. We are committed to preserving the lands and waters within our homelands for future generations. Together, we will build a brighter future for our children, the MNO, and all our relations.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 ∞ Who are THE MÉTIS?

The Métis are a unique and distinct rights-bearing community and one of the three communities of Indigenous Peoples - along with First Nations and Inuit - whose rights are recognized and affirmed under Section 35 of the Constitution Act.

The Métis are a distinct Indigenous people with a unique culture, history, and way of life who emerged in the historic Northwest—a region which stretched from the Upper Great Lakes and what are now the waterways of northern Ontario, westward to the Rocky Mountains—during the late 1700s. Throughout the 1800s, Métis communities in Ontario demonstrated their political will and agency, including the signing of petitions at Penetanguishene, Sault Ste. Marie, Rainy Lake, and Moose Factory demanding recognition as distinct Métis communities. They took action in 1839 at Penetanguishene, took up

arms at the Mica Bay in 1849, and notably in 1875, Métis in Fort Frances signed the Halfbreed Adhesion to Treaty #3, becoming the only Métis community in Canada to sign a historic treaty with the Crown. The Métis are recognized as one of the three Aboriginal peoples in Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO OVERVIEW

In 1993, based on the inherent right to self-government and self-determination held by the Métis as an Indigenous people, the MNO was established as a democratically elected Métis specific governance structure for Métis citizens and communities in Ontario. These Métis communities include the modern-day Section 35 rights-holding Métis community in and around Sault Ste. Marie that was recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada (“SCC”) in R v. Powley (“Powley”), as well as the six historic Métis communities recognized by the Government of Ontario in 2017 (Ontario, 2017; Supreme Court of Canada, 2003). These historic Métis communities are the:

- *Rainy River / Lake of the Woods Historic Métis Community (also known as the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community);*
- *Northern Lake Superior Historic Métis Community;*
- *Killarney Historic Métis Community;*
- *Georgian Bay Historic Métis Community;*
- *Abitibi Inland Historic Métis Community;*
- *Mattawa / Ottawa River Historic Métis Community*

The MNO represents the descendants of these historic rights-bearing Métis communities in Ontario, as well as descendants of Métis communities west of Ontario who now live in Ontario.

The MNO’s Statement of Prime Purpose (“SPP”) is one of the MNO’s founding documents, and sets out the MNO’s mandate as a Métis government, our values, principles, and who it represents. Guided by the SPP, over the last 32 years the MNO has established democratically elected governance structures at the provincial, regional, and local levels to represent MNO citizens and communities in Ontario. These governance structures consist of Métis leaders that are democratically elected by the constituency of MNO citizens they represent. The MNO also has several advisory councils that represent distinct interests and perspectives within the MNO, including a Women’s Council, Youth Council, Veterans’ Council, and Two-Spirit LGBTQIA+ Council.

Today, the MNO is the only democratically elected, federally and provincially recognized¹ Métis government representing the Métis citizens and Métis communities in Ontario. MNO has over 32,000 registered citizens, employs over 500 staff, and has 30 offices throughout Ontario.

¹ For more information, see a copy of our legally binding self-government agreement with the Government of Canada MNO-Canada Métis Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement (23 February 2023), ss. 6.04-6.07, 6.09-6.11 [2023 Self-Government Agreement]; Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Act, 2015, S.O. 2015, c. 39 - Bill 153.

1.2 ∞ MNO's Statement of PRIME PURPOSE

The MNO Statement of Prime Purpose is a testament to the pride and joy that we feel in our history, heritage, and culture as Métis peoples.

It is important to us that this Strategy and Regional Climate Action Plans are embedded in our relationships with the lands and with all our kin. This is why the values embraced in the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose are braided throughout this document, and each Regional Action Plan. Importantly, the Statement enshrines

our commitment “to protect and preserve the land and waters within our homelands for future generations” – which is fundamental to the work we are hoping to do through this Strategy and Regional Plans.





We, the Métis Nation, are a distinct Nation among the Aboriginal peoples in Canada and as such our Aboriginal and treaty rights are recognized and affirmed under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. We, the Métis Nation, have the inherent right of self-determination and self-government; We, the Métis who live within the Métis Homelands of Ontario, desiring to bind our people together to collectively promote our common cultural, social, political, and economic well-being, have founded the Métis Nation of Ontario, to be our representative body with the following aims and objectives:

- *to research, publish, and promote the genealogical documentation of the Métis, and to establish and maintain a registry of the Métis Citizens of Ontario;*
- *to establish democratic institutions based on our inherent right of self-government;*
- *to encourage the full participation of all Métis in the Métis Nation;*
- *to promote and foster community development;*
- *to re-establish land and resource bases;*
- *to develop prosperity and economic self-sufficiency within the Métis Nation;*
- *to provide care and support necessary to meet the fundamental needs of the citizens of the Métis Nation;*
- *to promote the improved health and wellness of the individual, the family and the whole Métis community;*
- *to encourage academic and skills development and to enable citizens of the Métis Nation to attain their educational aspirations;*
- *to establish effective means of communication for the Métis Nation;*
- *to promote the history, values, culture, languages, and traditions of the Métis Nation and to create an awareness of our proud heritage;*
- *to ensure that Métis can exercise their Aboriginal and Treaty rights and freedoms and in so doing, act in a spirit of cooperation with other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people;*
- *to establish good relations and maintain our historic alliances with all Aboriginal peoples for the pursuit of our common interests and goals;*
- *to continue our affiliation with the Métis National Council for the representation of the interests of the Métis Nation in Ontario at the National and International levels;*
- *to gain the recognition and respect of the Métis as a Nation and a people and;*
- *to protect and preserve the lands and waters within our homelands for future generations.*

1.3 ∞ Our Climate Story & THE MÉTIS WAY OF LIFE

Although the Métis way of life is difficult to define in words, its meaning is easily felt and experienced by those who practice it.

It is, quite literally, a way of living, a way of looking at the world and placing oneself in it. It is a unique worldview that is framed by the teachings of our knowledge holders. The Métis way of life represents all aspects of 'being Métis,' including a tightly woven relationship with the environment for food, spiritual and cultural fulfillment, medicine, and ceremony. It also includes language (Michif), music, history, as well as family and community connections.

The holistic nature of the Métis way of life means that Métis communities throughout Ontario have deep connections - social, cultural, spiritual, and economic - to the lands and waters around them.

These connections lie at the core of Métis identity and culture, and the health and well-being of the land directly correlates with that of the Métis people.

There is an overwhelming need and desire to maintain these lands in order to preserve the Métis culture and way of life for future generations.

As Métis citizens, we are in a unique position to address climate change. We have a strong connection to our lands and waters, and are seeing firsthand how climate change impacts the air, waters, lands, plants, and animals we rely on to practice our Métis ways of life. We witness these changes daily and feel them deeply, because our lifeways are irrevocably tied to the rhythms of the seasons and our non-human kin. This poignant story captures the depth and expanse of that impact, a glimpse into the many ways - some tangible, some unfathomable - through which climate change is disrupting life for the Métis in Ontario.



My family continues many of the traditional Métis harvesting and foraging activities in Region 5, where our Métis ancestral bloodline began.

As a child, our family would head to our hunt camp annually to enjoy the spring pickerel harvest on the May long weekend, after the winter ice had receded and the spring rains had subsided.

Vivid memories of the snow-capped westerly shore remain etched in my mind, with the last clumps of snow lingering in the cool shade. It was common to awaken to subzero temperatures, a brittle “skiff” of ice in the minnow bucket, and the need for small cotton gloves to handle a frigid spinning reel.

While the spring pickerel harvest often supplemented our food supply, notable changes tied to climate change became evident over the years. On one of our first spring trips, there was no longer any snow on the western shore. The spring black fly hatch, which typically occurred after our return, began before the opening weekend. Dandelions had already sprouted as the moist spring soil quickly dried.

More intense weather systems began to move through the area, significantly affecting water levels and our ability to harvest, even introducing risks to my family. On one lake crossing, we encountered an unplanned weather event. Lake conditions quickly worsened, and lightning began striking. Our two boats had no choice but to forge ahead, as the high tree canopy lining the river ahead offered little safety.

My father, operating a 9.9-horsepower outboard motor, recalls a flash of light and an immediate sensation of pain. He believed the lightning struck so close to our vessel that voltage conducted through the motor, where his hand rested on the throttle. This nearly fatal encounter served as a stark reminder of how much our climate is changing from opening weekend snow and ice, to intense weather events.

The shift from normally cold May temperatures to humid early thunderstorms not only impacted the spring harvest but also jeopardized our safety.

 **Ryan Schubert**, Métis citizen



1.4 ∞ Our Climate Change STRATEGY PROCESS

Métis voices and values guide region-specific, Métis-led climate action in Ontario through culturally grounded and community-driven planning.

This Strategy is rooted in the priorities and needs of Métis citizens across Ontario, gathered through consultations, conversations, and guidance from citizens, as well as MNO Advisory Councils - the Women's Council, the Two-Spirit Council, the Great Lakes Advisory Group, the Veterans Council, and the Youth Council - and Captains of the Hunt. Through a collaborative and iterative process, we have attempted to build a Strategy that reflects the unique Métis needs in mitigating and adapting to climate change, as well as how Métis culture and values are weaved throughout our priorities and actions.

Given the diversity of our Métis Nation, this Strategy is only a guiding document. The MNO's climate change actions will be operationalized through each region's Climate Action Plan. These plans, guided deeply by the unique histories, cultures, demographics, and geographies of each region, will make this Strategy come alive through locally-specific, Métis-led climate action across Ontario.

1.5 ∞ How We Developed THIS STRATEGY

We have always lived in harmony with Mother Earth and all our relations, but the climate crisis now threatens our values, ways of life, and future by severing our connection to nature and each other.

To develop this strategy, we first reviewed citizen input from previous consultations held by MNO's Lands, Resources and Consultations branch, which included:

- *The Climate Change Health and Well-being Forum and follow up survey in Spring 2022*
- *The Climate Change Action Forum in November 2022*
- *The Youth Climate Change Forum in February 2023*
- *Regional discussion sessions as part of MNO's Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Priorities Study in Spring 2023*
- *Interviews with MNO Branches as part of MNO's Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Priorities Study in Spring 2023*

With this information, we conducted engagement sessions with MNO's Great Lakes Advisory Group, Youth Council, Veterans Council, Two-Spirit Council, Women's Council, and Captains of the Hunt in Spring/Summer 2024, to gather their feedback and

guidance for the Métis Climate Change Strategy.

We gathered all of the input shared and drafted this strategy based on citizens' vision, concerns, and priorities. The creation of this strategy has been guided and revised by a review team. The review team is made up of representatives from each of our Advisory Councils (the Great Lakes Advisory Group, the Youth Council, the Veterans' Council, the Two Spirit Council, and the Women's Council) and staff from the Rights, Research and Policy Branch. Thank you to the review committee, which consisted of representatives from:

- *Women's Council*
- *Two-Spirit Council*
- *Great Lakes Advisory Group*
- *Veterans' Council*
- *Youth Council*

The stories and artwork included in this strategy come from citizens across the MNO, representing our priorities and concerns around climate change, and our hopes for the future and the world we want

to leave to the next seven generations. Thank you to our storytellers for your contributions:

- *Ryan Schubert*
- *Lindsay Rogers*
- *Sara Dolbeck*

And thank you to our artists for your significant addition to our Strategy: Jude, Brooke, Julia, Chris, Kian, Riley, Ryker, Quade, Zoé, Téla, and Ashley.

This strategy reflects all of these voices as we come together to create a brighter, more equitable, and more prosperous future for MNO citizens throughout Ontario.

Together, we have built a foundation rooted in Métis knowledge, values, and lived experiences. This collective effort ensures the strategy is not only responsive to the challenges of climate change, but also grounded in the strength and resilience of the Métis Nation of Ontario.



1.6 ∞ Purpose and VISION

As a people, we have always held sacred our relationships with the lands, the waters, and all our kin that share Mother Earth with us.

We have always emphasized the necessity of living in balance and harmony with Mother Earth, and our ways of life embody our values of protecting, restoring, and nurturing our relations.

These values, our ways of life, and the very future of our species and our kin is under threat from a rapidly changing climate. There is a deep fracture in the fabric of our society, one that has disconnected us from one another, that commodifies nature and distances her from humans, that allows injustice and inequality to run rampant. This fracture is created directly by the destructive legacies of settler colonialism and capitalism that Métis and other Indigenous Peoples continue to bear the brunt of, the same forces that have allowed the climate crisis to escalate to this highly precarious and alarming stage.


But embers of hope continue to shine through. We witness this in the perseverance of Métis people in remaining steadfastly rooted in the land, in our enduring dedication to our responsibilities towards all our relations, and in our determination to keep our knowledges, traditions, and

art alive through intergenerational guidance and learning. We witness this in the leadership shouldered by Métis and Indigenous Peoples across Canada in championing and spearheading the transitions that are so direly needed to restore balance to Mother Earth, and in building a safe, prosperous future for the next seven generations.

This Strategy is a demonstration of that leadership.

We are at the frontlines of climate change, but we are also equipped with the knowledges and value systems that can address these impacts and adapt to a changing climate. But we can't do it alone, or in a siloes, and so our purpose in developing this Strategy is to put our aspirations and intentions on paper as a call to action for the tools, resources, and support we need to empower Métis-led climate solutions.

We intend for this Strategy to be leveraged by a spectrum of stakeholders – from citizens for championing climate leadership in their communities, to the Government of Canada for structuring its relationship with us and providing



appropriate distinctions-based support in helping us achieve our self-determined priorities, to MNO leadership for mainstreaming climate action across our programs, amongst many others.

This Strategy is, more than anything, a roadmap for reconnection and healing.

This Strategy strives to bring us back to the land, back to our teachings and values, back to an economy of care where all our relations are protected, restored, and nurtured. This is a forward-looking document, but in many ways, it is also a reflection on and reparation of the historic harm and continued dispossessions faced by Métis citizens across Ontario. We bring you this document so that Mother Earth, and we as a people, may reconnect and heal.

1.6.1 VISION

The vision describes our goals and aspirations for this strategy. It sets our intentions for what we hope to accomplish in the long term for all our relations.

We are co-stewards of the lands and waters in which we call home. We sustain our Métis Ways of Life and ensure all our citizens, now and in the future, can maintain their responsibilities to care for Mother Earth. We prioritize actionable, attainable, and meaningful solutions shaped by Métis knowledges and our diverse Métis voices. We are strong leaders in climate action and aspire to work in partnership with First Nations and Inuit kin, all levels of government and other like-minded organizations.

1.6.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles are our values and beliefs that support our path toward implementing the strategy.

The following principles will guide our work:

- *Respecting each other and Mother Earth, demonstrated through protecting our homelands for future generations.*
- *Physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional wellness for all MNO citizens.*
- *Sustaining Métis Ways of Life through knowledge transfer between youth and knowledge keepers, as well as ensuring our work is rooted in our culture.*
- *Exercising and asserting Aboriginal and UNDRIP² rights.*
- *Ensuring that our work is underpinned by principles of justice and equity, bearing in mind prosperity and self-sufficiency for all*
- *Collaborating with other like-minded organizations, governments, and Indigenous Nations based on the principles of co-development.*
- *Respect for women and Two-Spirit individuals as caretakers of creation.*
- *Alignment with the values of the [MNO's Statement of Prime Purpose](#).*




² United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



2.0 CLIMATE HAZARDS AND IMPACTS

The climate hazards and impacts presented in the below sections can be found throughout Ontario. These hazards and impacts may impact some MNO Regions and/or Métis citizens more than others. Section 2.1 describes the primary hazards of climate change in Ontario, Section 2.2 explains how these hazards impact Métis citizens, and Section 2.3 discusses how climate change does not impact all citizens equally; some citizens are at higher risk of being impacted by climate change.

The following table summarizes how climate change is contributing to these hazards and impacts:

Hazard	Connection to Climate Change
 INVASIVE SPECIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Warmer temperatures allow invasive species to spread north at faster rates• Extreme weather events place stress on native species• Warmer temperatures allow invasive tree insects to travel outside of their range, killing trees
 FOREST FIRES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Warmer temperatures mean a higher prevalence of drought conditions and drier forests• Warmer temperatures result in more severe thunderstorms, increasing lightning strikes that result in forest fires
 WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Warmer air temperatures increase water temperatures impacting habitats and health of aquatic species• Floods and droughts increase the frequency and severity of water pollution

Hazard

Connection to Climate Change



AIR QUALITY

- Warmer temperatures increase allergens in the air and severity of seasonal allergies
 - Increased forest fires mean more particulate matter in the air which can cause strain on human and animal respiratory systems
 - Warmer temperatures increase ozone (a lung-damaging chemical) which can lead to long-term respiratory health issues
-



EXTREME HEAT AND DROUGHT

- Warmer temperatures increase frequency and duration of heatwaves which can cause dehydration and heat stroke in humans and animals
 - Heatwaves contribute to arid conditions including droughts
 - Milder winters mean less snowfall, so less snowmelt replenishing freshwater systems
-



FLOODING

- Warmer climate means more moisture in the air, increasing the intensity of downpours during rainfall
 - Large quantities of rainfall in short periods of time increases the prevalence and severity of floods
 - Flooding increases fertilizer contamination of freshwater supplies from industrial farming activities
-



VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES

- Warmer temperatures mean vectors (living organisms like insects) travel outside their normal range, carrying bacteria, viruses, and parasites
-



EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

- Warmer temperatures result in more frequent thunderstorms, tornadoes, windstorms, and rain and ice storms
-

2.1 ∞ Major Hazards IN ONTARIO

The following is a list of major hazards in Ontario based on input compiled during citizen engagements and Ontario-specific risks. This section does not list all of the hazards associated with climate change in Ontario, but focuses on the hazards that are of most concern to MNO citizens.

2.1.1 INVASIVE SPECIES

Climate change has caused the introduction and spread of invasive species to occur at faster rates (Invasive Species Centre, n.d.-a, n.d.-b) across Ontario. Extreme weather events, such as droughts and floods, cause stress to native species and create an opportunity for invasive species to move into the area when native species are most vulnerable. The introduction of invasive species into ecosystems is resulting in native species being unable to compete for resources it once had full access to, thus disrupting ecosystems that the Métis people rely on for cultural, economic, and subsistence practices. The round goby is one of many examples that outcompetes native bottom-dwelling fish, reducing populations of walleye and other species central to Métis diets, while also contaminating food webs through toxin accumulation. Similarly, the

parasitic sea lamprey devastates lake trout, whitefish, and sturgeon species vital to traditional Métis fishing and ceremonies. Other invasives, such as Asian carp, threaten to destabilize inland fisheries, while the emerald ash borer kills black ash trees, undermining Métis craftsmanship like basket-weaving and snowshoe-making. Invasive plants like wild parsnip and phragmites choke out medicinal plants and wild rice, further limiting access to traditional foods and medicines. The invasive species above all have direct impacts however some invasives may have secondary impacts such as zebra and quagga mussels that filter plankton and starve native fish larvae, reducing fish stock. These ecological disruptions, compounded by multiple invasions in an ecosystem and climate-driven extreme weather, challenge Métis food security and cultural transmission. In response, Métis communities are engaging in monitoring, habitat restoration, and advocacy for Indigenous-

led conservation to protect their rights and restore balance to these threatened ecosystems. Collaborative efforts that integrate Métis traditional knowledges with scientific management are crucial to mitigating these growing threats.

2.1.2 FOREST FIRES


As our climate changes and temperatures increase, the land and forests become drier. Increasing temperatures allow for invasive tree insects to travel outside of their usual range, killing and damaging trees, resulting in very dry and/or dead wood. Hotter temperatures also promote more severe thunderstorms with strong winds and lightning. While thunderstorms bring rain, they cause lightning strikes to the dry and dead trees potentially igniting fires in a forest that is already dry from droughts and invasive insects. With more dry fuel comes more intense fires that result in lasting long-term impacts to ecological processes such as forest regeneration and recovery (Flannigan, n.d.; Climate Atlas of Canada, n.d.-b). While some ecosystems require fire as a source of regeneration (i.e Red Pine trees), the fires cause many other species to be displaced as well as impacts communities that are located near. In 2023, Canada's wildfire season caused the most damage that has ever been recorded; 6,000 fires burned, expanding over 15 million hectares of land. In a typical year, approximately 29 wildfires can be expected, only burning over 100,000 hectares (Natural Resources Canada, 2024). The spread of wildfires has the potential to enter into all

communities due to all of the external factors discussed above causing destruction and displacement for Métis citizens nationwide.

Climate change is transforming Ontario's forests into tinderboxes, creating a dangerous cycle of ecological disruption and greenhouse gas emissions. Rising temperatures are drying out the land while enabling invasive insects like the emerald ash borer and mountain pine beetle to expand beyond their traditional ranges, leaving behind vast stands of dead, highly flammable timber. These hotter conditions also fuel more intense thunderstorms, while they bring much-needed rain, their lightning strikes often ignite fires in drought-stressed forests already weakened by invasive pests.

The resulting megafires create a devastating feedback loop for climate change. As forests burn, they release enormous quantities of stored carbon dioxide (CO₂), the primary greenhouse gas driving global warming. These intense fires also emit, Black carbon (soot) that darkens ice and snow when deposited, accelerating melting, Methane (CH₄) a greenhouse gas 28-36 times more potent than CO₂ over 100 years, Nitrous oxide (N₂O) with 265 times the global warming potential of CO₂, and Carbon monoxide (CO) that contributes to atmospheric ozone formation.

The record-shattering 2023 fire season, with 6,000 fires consuming over 15 million hectares, compared to the typical 29 fires burning 100,000 hectares, demonstrates this alarming new reality. Scientists estimate Canada's 2023 wildfires released nearly 2 billion tons of CO₂, triple the country's annual emissions from all



other sources combined (Natural Resources Canada, 2024). For Métis communities, these megafires represent a triple threat, immediate danger to homes and traditional territories, cultural crisis as sacred sites and harvesting grounds are destroyed, and long-term climate impacts from the released greenhouse gases that will fuel more warming and future fires.

The carbon released from these fires isn't just lost to the atmosphere, it represents centuries of accumulated forest growth that may take generations to recover. This undermines Canada's climate goals and creates what scientists call a "climate-fire feedback loop" where warming causes more fires, which cause more warming.

As climate change continues to intensify this destructive cycle, the need for Indigenous-led land management, fire prevention strategies, and climate adaptation has never been more urgent. Métis traditional knowledges of controlled burns and forest stewardship may hold key solutions for breaking this dangerous cycle before more carbon, and cultural heritage goes up in smoke.

2.1.3 WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY

While climate change causes air temperatures to rise, it also causes water temperatures to rise. Warmer waters in lakes, rivers and streams, coupled with floods and droughts, increases the severity of water pollution from pathogens, contaminants, and sediments. Increased water events also lead to wastewater and stormwater

overflow events due to treatment plants being unable to support large inflows of water.

The temperature of water bodies as well as the pollution in water has a direct impact on the health of animals and also encourages the growth of harmful bacteria such as algal blooms. As water becomes more polluted, MNO citizens may be unable to use water for recreational, cultural, or harvesting practices. Heavily polluted water and unexpected increases in water due to flooding will also put pressure on drinking water and wastewater treatment infrastructure, putting them at risk of damage, and risking access to clean drinking water (United Nations, n. d.; Environmental Protection Agency, 2024).

2.1.4 AIR QUALITY

Air quality that we, and all our relations, rely upon, is influenced by climate change events such as extreme heat, extreme weather events, and forest fires. These events, paired with existing air pollution from industry and human development, decreases air quality and puts our health at risk. Additionally, clear cutting of forests impacts the amount of carbon dioxide being taken out of the air and replaced with clean oxygen. Warmer air temperatures cause an increase in ozone (a lung-damaging chemical), allows for more particulate matter from forest fires to float around in the air, and causes more allergens such as pollen, mildew, and mould to enter the air (Climate Atlas of Canada, n.d.-a).

2.1.5

EXTREME HEAT AND DROUGHT

We are already feeling the impact of extreme heat, where hot days are becoming hotter and occurring more frequently. Warmer temperatures are causing heat waves to become more common and frequent. Hotter days and longer periods of intense heat contribute to droughts, causing an increase in water evaporation, lower surface water levels, and drying out soils and vegetation. Additionally, winters are becoming warmer, with less snowfall, and, in the spring, less snowmelt to refresh the soils and water systems. Droughts can impact agriculture and food quality and also the time of harvesting. Warmer weather makes harvesting more difficult when aiming to avoid food spoilage when processing (Centre for Climate and Energy Solutions, n.d.-a, n.d.-b).

2.1.6

FLOODING

Extreme rainfall events are projected to increase in frequency and severity as climate change continues. A warming climate allows for more moisture to stay in the air, increasing the intensity of downpours during rainfall. This extreme rainfall leads to an increase in flooding events, where large quantities of rainfall in short periods of time cause rivers and natural drainage systems to overflow. Flooding becomes more frequent when there is less natural ground for the water to drain into; when there are intense rainfalls in areas that are primarily concrete, the water has nowhere to go, and thus causes more risk to infrastructure and properties. Flooding can also negatively impact agricultural fields by damaging the crops and limiting harvesting capacities (Fan, 2023).

2.1.7

VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES

While climate change brings changes to land, water, and air, it also brings changes to the spread of diseases. Vector-borne diseases are illnesses caused by bacteria, viruses, and parasites that are carried by a vector (living organism), such as mosquitoes and ticks, and transmits the illness from animals to humans or between humans (World Health Organization, 2020). Warmer temperatures allow vectors, such as insects, to travel beyond their natural range to new, typically more northern, places that now have suitable temperatures for their survival. Warmer temperatures allow insects to live longer, become more active, reproduce faster and produce more offspring, causing an increase in the number of insects that could spread disease (SVS, 2022). Insects, such as ticks that carry Lyme disease, pose health risks to both Métis citizens and to animals on the land.

2.1.8

EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS

As the climate warms, communities will experience hotter and extreme temperatures as well as intense rainfall events on a regular basis that could last for extended periods of time. With warmer temperatures and intense rainfall come more extreme weather events such as frequent and intense forest and wildfires, thunderstorms, droughts, floods, tornadoes, severe windstorms, and rain and ice storms (SVS, 2022). These extreme events put all life at risk. They also result in weather patterns being harder to predict resulting in preparations being more difficult over time.



2.2 ∞ Climate Change-Related Impacts ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

As Métis in Ontario, we experience the physical impacts of climate change through illness, injury, and even death from extreme heat events, flooding, and vector-borne diseases (JF Consulting, 2020).

Métis citizens are at risk of heat related illnesses such as heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke (JF Consulting, 2020). Citizens face respiratory illnesses from smoke in the air from forest fires and allergens. This can put citizens who have existing health issues such as asthma at an increased risk of illness or death.

There are lower income citizens in the same locales who are at higher risk of experiencing negative impacts of heat and air quality because they do not have air conditioning or access to cooling spaces. Furthermore, these factors result in Métis citizens limiting their time outside and being on the lands and waters to prevent the exacerbation of health issues, including those listed above as well as Lyme disease (SVS, 2022). In reducing time spent on the lands and waters, Métis are spending less time engaging in cultural practices, and younger generations are thus receiving less exposure to Métis stories and teachings, which results in a reduced ability and opportunity for cultural knowledge transmission from one generation to the next.

We feel impacted emotionally and spiritually when we are unable to spend

as much time teaching and laughing with our children and their cousins. We feel the impacts of our children having less and less opportunity to taste the first maple run in the sugar bush, to learn how to find where morels grow and the location of all the secret berry patches, or be shown the best places and times to catch pickerel.

We are watching major changes to the plants and animals taking place within the lands we call home (solastalgia); grieve our losses and anticipated losses through short- and long-term changes to our environment (ecological grief); face stress and anxiety of our experiences with and knowledge of future environmental changes (eco-anxiety); and experience the feeling of hopelessness, like we are unable to do anything about climate change (eco-paralysis) (JF Consulting, 2020).

We feel impacts psychologically through anxiety disorders, stress, post-traumatic stress disorders, depression, suicide, and substance abuse as we try to navigate and live through the environmental changes caused by climate change (JF Consulting, 2020). Our citizens have to live with the trauma

from their experiences with environmental changes, such as forest fires and flooding, which have destroyed homes, communities, and cultural and spiritual areas (SVS, 2022). Métis citizens have experienced stress and anxiety around climate change impacts on future generations and how the planet is not being taken care of (SVS, 2023). Métis citizens also have experienced depression and sadness as climate change is impacting their ability to be out on the land with loved ones (SVS, 2022).

We feel cultural impacts as it becomes more difficult to participate in our cultural and traditional practices such as harvesting, teachings, and ceremonies. Droughts caused by climate change will dry out the land and waters and also increase the likelihood of diseases and pollution in water and the animals within (JF Consulting, 2020). We may have a difficult time harvesting the medicines and the foods we rely on, particularly due to invasive plant species taking over native species, and

are at risk of disease from poor water quality and contaminated fish.

We also face the risk of traditional foods decreasing and of becoming food insecure (SVS, 2022). A changing climate now also shifts our harvesting window times. Less snowfall and milder winter temperatures have impacted our ability to harvest fish in the winter months, as our lakes are freezing later in the season or not at all. Early springs with warmer temperatures have also shifted the timing of the growing season for plants and medicines, making harvesting windows shorter and unpredictable. The wildlife we harvest are also experiencing changes to their migration routes and their habitat range as the climate warms. Métis citizens are losing their ability to pass on Métis knowledge, culture, and ceremony to the next generations as the lands and waters continue to change (SVS, 2022).





2.3 ∞ Recognizing Intersectionality and **DIFFERENTIAL VULNERABILITIES**

MNO citizens, given our rootedness in the land as the source of life, food, livelihoods, and culture, combined with the destructive legacies of settler colonialism and its enduring harms, are already disproportionately impacted by climate change.

SAME STORM, DIFFERENT BOATS

It is critical to recognize, however, that although we may be in the same storm, we are not all in the same boat. All of us do not have the same tools and resources that we need to combat the impacts of climate change, to adapt to changing conditions, or to take advantage of the opportunities created by climate action. We are a diverse MNO, and accounting for this diversity in climate change strategies and planning is paramount to ensure that no citizen is left behind, and the climate transitions we undertake are underpinned by principles of justice and equity.

This means recognizing the reality that citizens' lived experiences of climate change may vary widely, and some citizens may bear disproportionate burdens based on a plethora of demographic variations or vulnerability factors. These unequal impacts within Métis communities require us to

embrace an intersectional approach, where our differences are not only recognized and honoured, but practically incorporated into our policies, plans, and programming. This Strategy envisions creating an ecosystem of support to achieve equitable outcomes for citizens who may be more vulnerable than others, and who may require more targeted resources to adapt to a changing climate or prosper in a transitioning world.

PAYING ATTENTION TO HOW WE TRANSITION

In the same vein, it is critical to acknowledge that many climate solutions are not equitable or just. We understand the urgency to take rapid climate action better than most. And yet, we are cognizant that this urgency cannot, and must not, overshadow our responsibility to ensure that these transitions do not exacerbate existing (or create new) inequalities and injustices for vulnerable populations. As Métis, it is our responsibility to ensure that

we undertake climate transitions in a good way such that we are able to not only build a climate-safe future, but do it in a manner that brings us back to the land, to our teachings, and to our relationships with all our kin.

We must pay particular attention to the design, structure, and implementation of climate solutions. Too often, vulnerable communities, such as low-income groups, are unable to take advantage of climate solutions because of a number of accessibility barriers, leaving them ill-equipped to adapt. Some solutions may also exacerbate existing inequalities if differential vulnerabilities and unique accessibility needs are not taken into account in their design and implementation. For example, government programs to subsidize solar panels, electric cars, or home retrofits still remain inaccessible for low-income populations, denying access to mitigation and adaptation solutions for these communities.

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR DIFFERENCES

What does differential vulnerability look like?

For MNO citizens living in rural or remote areas, it could mean lower accessibility to climate change mitigation and adaptation programs and resources than their urban counterparts, curtailing their ability to adapt or participate in a low-carbon economy. It could also mean greater food insecurity, and consequently, more severe physical and mental health impacts, given rural citizens' relationship with the land for harvesting traditional foods and medicines.

For MNO citizens grappling with socio-economic stressors, such as unemployment,

lack of adequate or consistent income, chronic illnesses, steady housing, or lack of strong community connection, it could mean disproportionate vulnerability to climate change impacts which are often exacerbated by these socio-economic burdens and stressors.

For MNO women and Two-Spirit folk, who are often severely underrepresented in decision-making spaces, it could mean further marginalization from participation and ownership in designing and implementing climate solutions. The impacts of this exclusion reverberate across the community - women and Two-Spirit people have always been traditional stewards of the land, and are keepers of knowledge around conserving and protecting all our relations. When these voices are marginalized, Métis needs, priorities, and values as a whole suffer underrepresentation and exclusion.

For MNO Elders and young children, it could mean disproportionate health burdens, as health vulnerabilities are exacerbated by climate change-induced impacts such as wildfire smoke, extreme heat, or vector-borne diseases.

Successful climate action is just and equitable climate action, and this can only be achieved by ensuring that marginalized voices are adequately represented in decision-making processes. This Strategy, for example, is a product of several consultations with and reviews by Métis citizens who are representatives of diverse communities and intersectional identities. Through this process, we have worked to establish a path forward that all citizens can traverse. We will leave no one behind.



3.0 CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION PRIORITIES

As the impacts we bear and the narratives we own are unique, so will be our climate action story. We will be beacons of hope and harbingers of transformation in a world that still insists on Métis and Indigenous erasure, on extracting ruthlessly from Mother Earth, on pedestalizing profit and wounding communities. We will do things the right way, repairing and healing as we go along, strengthening our bonds, sustaining our culture and ways of life, honouring our teachings, and taking care of each other. All our priorities and actions listed in this section will be guided by two key acknowledgements:

ONE: Many MNO citizens currently depend on fossil fuel industries for their livelihoods, and may be economically impacted as we undertake low-carbon transitions. Our actions must necessarily incorporate plans to mitigate these impacts for our kin, such as skill building and vocational programs to help them transition into low-carbon jobs, in order to ensure an equitable transition that leaves no one behind.

TWO: “Green” does not necessarily mean “good”. Many decarbonization technologies function within the same extractive paradigms as fossil fuel economies, commodifying nature, usurping Indigenous lands, and benefiting only a select elite. Further, many climate “solutions” run the risk of exacerbating existing inequalities and vulnerabilities, further widening socio-economic gaps. We must fight these forms of oppression and erasure, particularly through place-based and regionally-appropriate action, with a focus on participatory solution-making and community ownership of these solutions, rooted in Métis culture and worldviews.

With these principles in mind, our priorities are:

- *Métis Responsibilities to care for all our Relations*
- *Health and Well-Being*
- *Emergency Management*
- *Prosperity in a Low-Carbon Economy*
- *Sustainable Energy and Infrastructure*
- *Planning for Seven Generations*

These priorities also guide the framework for our Regional Action Plans: see Appendix A for more information.

ECOLOGICAL GRIEF

"The long term emotional consequences of anticipated or actual environmental changes... The mourning of the loss of ecosystems, landscapes, species, and ways of life is likely to become a more frequent experience around the world" - Comtesse et al. 2021

LOW-CARBON ECONOMY AND JOBS

These strategies reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate change. This includes multiple sectors including: education, construction, manufacturing, scientific, and technical. Low carbon jobs have economic and social benefits- creating opportunities, income, and health benefits.

In June 2024 Bill C-50 the Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act became law, which confirms the Government of Canada's commitment to supporting low-carbon economy and creating low-carbon jobs in Canadian industries.

SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

"Sustainable Infrastructure Systems are those that are planned, designed, constructed, operated, and decommissioned in a manner that ensures economic and financial, social, environmental (including climate resilience), and institutional sustainability over the entire infrastructure life cycle. Sustainable infrastructure can include built infrastructure, natural infrastructure or hybrid infrastructure that contains elements of both." - UN Environment Programme 2017

3.1 ∞ Métis Responsibilities to Care FOR ALL OUR RELATIONS

As MNO citizens, our connection with and responsibilities towards all our kin is at the heart of our culture and ways of life.

Our relationship with Mother Nature and the world around us is based on respect, care, reciprocity, and an understanding of the interconnectedness of all life. In the face of climate change, and its impacts on all our relations, it is our collective responsibility to protect and support the air, waters, lands, minerals, plants, and animals we share life with.

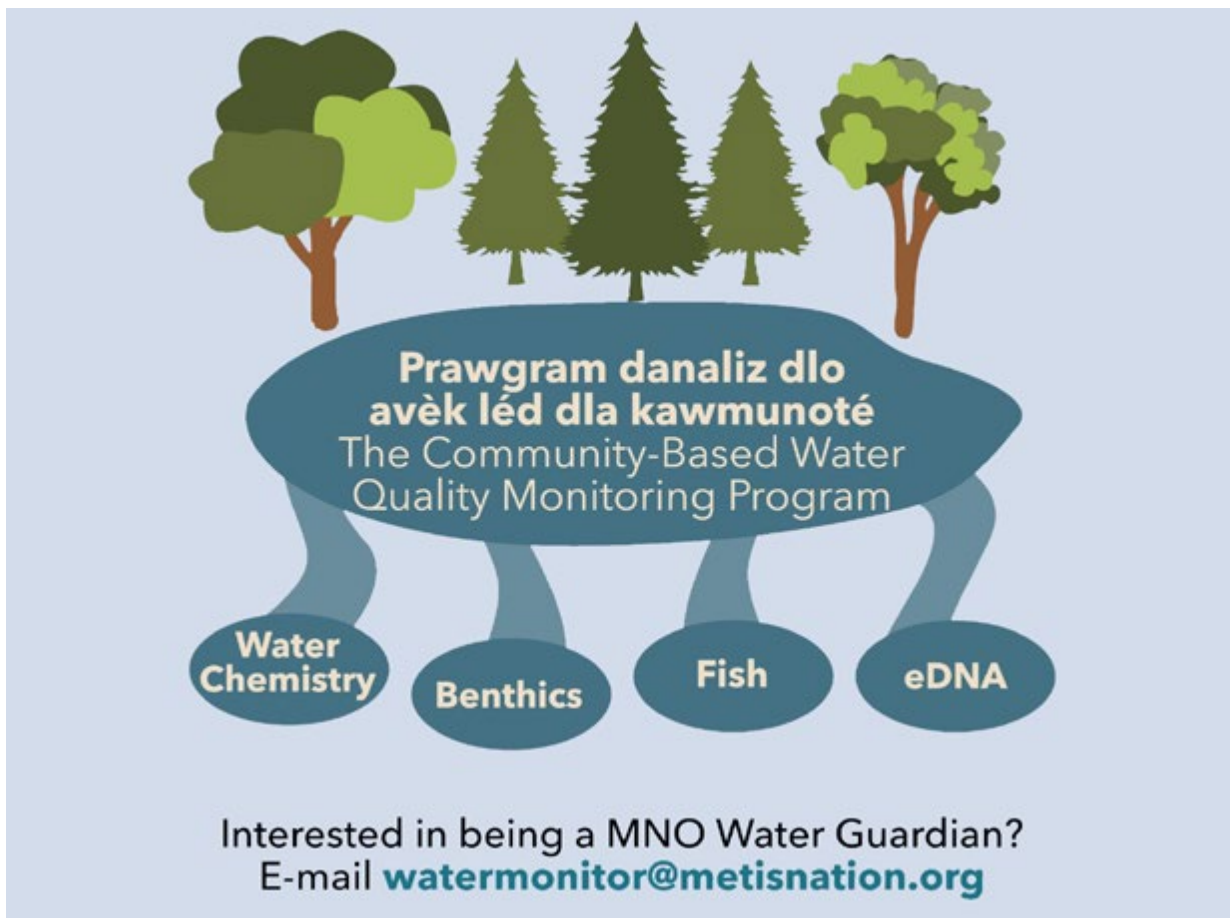
OUR GOAL: RESILIENCE FOR ALL

A future where life and ecosystems thrive with support from our collective stewardship of the lands, and which, in turn, enables us to practice our culture and ways of life

How will we uphold our responsibilities to this priority?

- *Protection of lands, waters, air, minerals, plants, and animals*
- *Community-based monitoring of changes to the land*
- *Incorporating nature-positive climate solutions*





The Community-Based Water Quality Monitoring Program tracks the effects of climate change and pollution on important waterbodies across the MNO.

Métis Guardians are trained to sample water bodies under Spring, Summer, and Fall conditions annually. Currently, thirty sites have been identified as monitoring locations for the Program. Guardians will monitor these sites for basic water quality parameters such as pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, temperature, turbidity, and more.

The Program also includes site specific laboratory analysis of water samples to test for

nutrients, hydrocarbons, and metals, including methylmercury (MeHg) as well as baitfish laboratory analysis for MeHg. MeHg is a form of mercury that can travel through the food chain and bioaccumulate in fish tissue and subsequently in humans that consume them.

Climate change has the potential to affect MeHg levels in aquatic environments, so it is important to track any fluctuations over time.

For more information on the Program and to join our waiting list for future training workshops for MNO citizens, please email:

watermonitor@metisnation.org

“ Métis Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ individuals, historically were highly regarded for their unique perspectives and significant roles that they played as stewards of the land and protectors of the water.

Métis Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ individuals, historically were highly regarded for their unique perspectives and significant roles that they played as stewards of the land and protectors of the water. As a Two Spirit individual myself, I feel deeply rooted in my connection with Mother Earth. I am fiercely protective of our waterways and the Four-leggeds, two-leggeds, winged ones, swimmers, crawlers, plant and rock people. I am a Water Guardian with the MNO; regularly cleaning the shoreline along the Bay of Quinte and sampling the water. I also believe in carrying the old ways forward and protecting all of our relations. Therefore, I decided that I must act in protecting our Turtles. All eight of Ontario's native freshwater turtle species are listed as at-risk federally. Turtles are crucial to a healthy ecosystem. Each season, I monitor the turtles, protect their nests after the females have laid their eggs, release hatchlings, help turtles cross roadways in high risk areas and bring injured turtles to the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre. I believe that every small action can ripple into a wave of change.

∞ **Lindsay Rogers**, President, Highland Waters Métis Council



3.2 ∞ Health AND WELL-BEING

Climate change impacts our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health and well-being.

Many MNO citizens spend time on the land and are witnessing firsthand how changes are disrupting ecosystems and biodiversity, and with that, our ways of life. Citizens are experiencing disruptions in their ability to harvest traditional foods and medicines not only for themselves and their families, but also for community members whom they care for, including Elders and the disabled. The impacts of climate change can also impact citizens' psychological wellness, particularly youth, who face eco-anxiety, ecological grief, and feelings of hopelessness in regards to the future. Ultimately, our health and well-being are inseparable from the health of our planet and all our relations.

OUR GOAL: ACCESS FOR ALL

Strong and resilient MNO communities that have built the capacity to adapt to a changing climate, and are able to access clean water, harvest traditional foods and medicines and maintain food sovereignty, and access robust mental health and community supports

How will we uphold our responsibilities to this priority?

- *Community-led programs that support citizens to cope with climate change impacts on health and build community cohesion*
- *Land-based healing practices that promote adaptation, resilience, and cultural well-being, including cultural gatherings or traditional food harvesting projects*
- *Investing in mental health programs, particularly for youth and those impacted by climate-induced emergencies*
- *Supporting knowledge transfer between knowledge keepers and youth as a means to revitalize or sustain our connection to the land and traditional practices*
- *Supporting research into unique health and well-being impacts of climate change on MNO communities, and integrating these concerns and voices into decision-making*



3.3 ∞ Emergency MANAGEMENT

Emergency management is the ongoing process of preventing, planning for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies.

As climate-related disasters and extreme weather events such as wildfires, floods, and heatwaves escalate across Ontario, it is critical for MNO citizens to be prepared for these emergencies when they come, as well as build long-term resilience to their impacts. Further, we have to make sure that our emergency management efforts are aligned with, and supportive of, our values, cultures, and traditions, and we are able to access culturally-appropriate resources and support in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies.

OUR GOAL: EQUIPPING COMMUNITIES

Communities equipped with culturally appropriate resources, tools for mitigation, and proactive planning to effectively respond to, recover from, and reduce climate-related emergencies.

How will we uphold our responsibilities to this priority?

- *Preparing citizens for climate emergencies, including sharing emergency management resources*
- *Identifying climate hazards that may require emergency responses*
- *Building capacity to respond to emergencies*
- *Supporting citizens and Métis businesses through climate disaster recovery*
- *Advocating for our citizens' needs to be included in municipal, provincial, and national emergency management plans, policies, and strategies*

3.4 ∞ Prosperity in a LOW-CARBON ECONOMY

To create a prosperous MNO, our citizens must have the opportunity to benefit from a low-carbon transition.

This includes developing citizen skill sets to succeed in low-carbon jobs. Métis people are disproportionately impacted by climate change and are traditional stewards of the lands – they must also be active agents of change in ushering in a low-carbon economy and fully participating in its growth

OUR GOAL: LOW-CARBON TRANSITION

A thriving and prosperous MNO where citizens can fully participate in the low-carbon transition and the benefits of these transitions are shared equitably amongst citizens.

How will we uphold our responsibilities to this priority?

- *Investing strategically, e.g., in low-carbon energy projects*
- *Building a skilled workforce for clean energy and circular economies*
- *Creating a supportive ecosystem for local Métis businesses*
- *Divesting from institutions and companies that actively support and/or invest in activities that exacerbate climate change*

3.5 ∞ Sustainable Energy AND INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to support a more sustainable future for all our relations, the MNO needs to prioritize sustainable energy and infrastructure.

Sustainable energy refers to renewable, non-emitting sources of electricity. The use of fossil fuels is directly linked to climate change, causing impacts to the environment and our well-being. By reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, we can reduce these negative impacts and support a brighter future for ourselves and the environment.

OUR GOAL: SUSTAINABLE TRANSITION

Progressively less reliance on fossil fuel-powered infrastructure within MNO communities and increased advocacy, research, and investment for sustainable energy and infrastructure

How will we uphold our responsibilities to this priority?

- *Building energy-efficient homes, office buildings, and infrastructure*
- *Exploring renewable energy alternatives - both at the MNO by investing in clean energy projects and at the community level through decentralized community-led renewable energy projects*
- *Prioritizing local and sustainably made materials in new MNO infrastructure*

The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Solar Panel Program can provide eligible MNO citizens with a one-time forgivable loan of up to \$25,000 towards the installation of a 5kw rooftop solar system on their home. To earn full forgiveness of the loan, the citizen must maintain ownership of the home as their primary residence for a full 2-year term.

Applicants are encouraged to conduct their own research on solar panels to determine if their household would benefit from this program prior to applying. Solar panels need adequate sunlight to be effective and may require ongoing maintenance throughout their lifespan. The MNO does not provide assistance with ongoing maintenance needs to successful applicants. The purpose of this program is to help Métis Citizen homeowners reduce their carbon footprint and electricity bills.

For more information about eligibility and application: **[Solar Panel Program - Métis Nation of Ontario](#)**



3.6 ∞ Planning for SEVEN GENERATIONS

In order to support a more sustainable future for all our relations, the MNO needs to prioritize planning for the next seven generations.

To ensure that our priorities are carried out in the long-term, we need to plan for the next seven generations. Providing the next seven generations with a better future requires that we mitigate climate change, and adapt.

OUR GOAL: PLANNING ACTION

Long-term, sustainable planning and action that can enable the MNO to advance systemic and holistic solutions within MNO communities for climate change, health, food security, and economic and cultural sovereignty.

How will we uphold our responsibilities to this priority?

- *Continued climate change education for all citizens*
- *Sustained funding for MNO climate change initiatives and programs*
- *Advocating for Métis inclusion in federal and provincial climate change policies*
- *Grassroots-level citizen involvement in climate action*
- *Monitoring the implementation effectiveness of the climate change strategy across MNO's programs and projects*
- *Building relationships with institutions researching climate change mitigation and adaptation and ensuring Métis ways of knowing and priorities are included in collaborative projects*
- *Remembering our kinship ties and partnering with First Nations on shared responsibilities to protect all our relations*



Climate change, and protecting our environment has always been important to me and my family.

I am fortunate to have served on the Board of Directors for the Friends of MacGregor Point Park organization for many years, including holding the presidential position for 2 years. During my time volunteering, and as they currently operate, it was imperative to protect the land, honour and respect the past and future. Having a park and working with people that I did, is an honour as a Métis Citizen. I continue to always think of the land and how we use resources as I continue my journey outside of MacGregor Point Provincial Park. Thank you MNO for recognizing the significance of our natural environment and the effects of climate change. It affects our way of life and I am grateful.

 **Sara Dolbeck**, Métis citizen



4.0 WHAT'S NEXT

The next step in our collective mission to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change is to implement this strategy. The following steps outline what comes next:

1. The climate change team at the MNO will work with staff across all branches of the MNO, the Advisory Councils, Captains of the Hunt, and PCMNO to determine how the strategy will impact their roles and responsibilities. They will identify which existing MNO initiatives and projects align with MNO priorities, which ones can be adjusted, and what should be deprioritized.
2. Within a year of adopting the strategy, each MNO Region will have a regional action plan to realize the strategy within their specific context. The action plans will identify high, medium, and low priority actions.
3. Within two years of adopting the strategy, the Métis communities should have their high priority actions achieved and/or underway.
4. Within five years of adopting the strategy, the Métis communities will reassess their action plans for cohesion with the strategy, and any updates that have been made.

The MNO Rights, Research and Policy team will monitor the strategy, and will convene an annual meeting to discuss progress and measure success. The team will support coordinated efforts with Métis communities across the Métis Nation. The team will also identify other potential partners and collaborators to ensure Métis voices are heard in climate change discussions across the country.

This Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategy is the start of our journey toward a brighter future. This document will act as the MNO's road map, directing our future work and ensuring we stay true to our vision, our guiding principles, and our priorities. This strategy belongs to all of us, and we will need every MNO citizen to support our goals in order to realize them. Together we can leave this world a better place for our children.

WE ARE NATURE

We, the Métis are a people of the lands which gave rise to our history and tradition and culture. We call these lands the Métis Homelands. The Homelands stretch from the rivers of Ontario; prairies; traverse the British Far

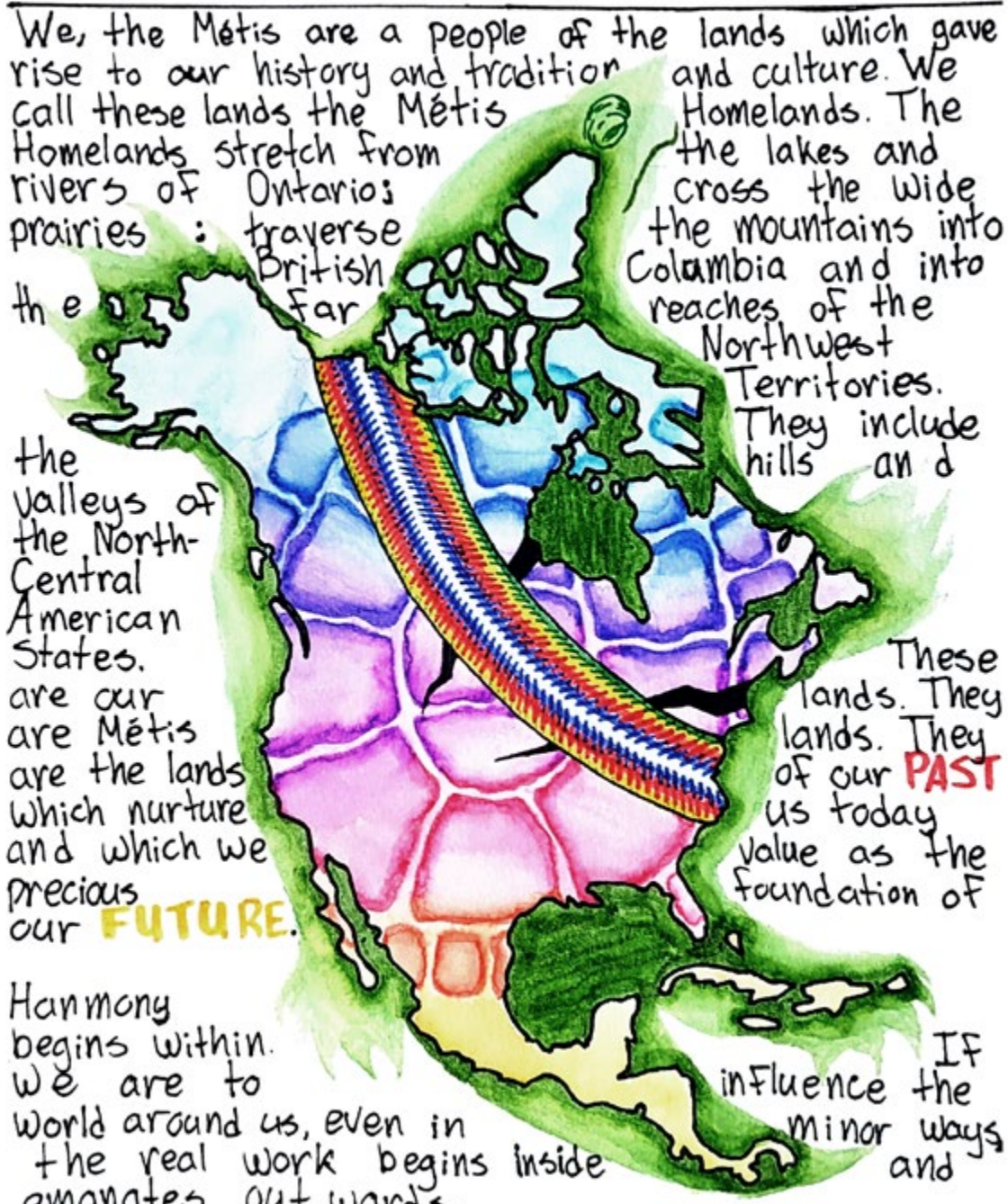
the lakes and cross the wide the mountains into Columbia and into reaches of the Northwest Territories. They include hills and

the valleys of the North-Central American States. are our are Métis are the lands which nurture and which we precious our **FUTURE**.

These lands. They of our **PAST** us today value as the foundation of

Harmony begins within. We are to world around us, even in the real work begins inside emanates outwards.

IF influence the minor ways and



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