

The Métis Nation of Ontario  
500 Old Saint Patrick Street Unit D  
Ottawa, ON  
K1N 9G4

March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011

Township of Melancthon  
R. R. # 6  
Shelburne ON L0N 1S0

Enclosed you will find an introduction letter from the Métis Nation of Ontario.

The letter outlines who we are as a Nation as well as how the Duty to Consult applies to us as Aboriginal people.

We look forward to building a positive relationship with your municipality.

To get in touch with the Métis community council in your area, contact us using the information provided.

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## Consultation with Métis Communities on Official Plans

### Who are the Métis?

The Métis are a distinct Aboriginal people with a unique history, culture, language and territory that includes the waterways of Ontario, surrounds the Great Lakes and spans throughout what was known as the Historic Northwest. The Métis people have been instrumental in shaping Canada and are recognized as one of three Aboriginal peoples in Canada's Constitution.

### What is MNO?

Established in 1993 by the will of Ontario Métis, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) represents the collective aspirations, rights and interests of Métis communities throughout Ontario. The MNO has a democratic, province-wide governance structure.

The MNO has established bilateral and tripartite processes with the federal and provincial governments and in November 2008, signed an Ontario-Métis Nation Framework Agreement with the Government of Ontario. The MNO has also negotiated an accommodation agreement with the provincial government on Métis harvesting rights.

### How does the Duty to Consult apply?

As you know, the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate, in keeping with the honour of the Crown and the promise of s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, applies to the three Aboriginal peoples of Canada, one of those being the Métis. The duty requires the Crown, or a proponent acting on behalf of the Crown, to meaningfully consult Aboriginal peoples and accommodate their interests if a policy, project or development might adversely affect Aboriginal rights, interests or way of life. When a municipality makes decisions related to the traditional lands and waterways of historic, rights-bearing Métis communities, they are acting as the Crown.

When land use planning occurs in your municipal area, the local Métis community would like to determine to what extent Métis rights may be impacted; how any potential impacts will be avoided; and, in the event of projected impacts, how Métis rights will be mitigated and/or accommodated.

The MNO has created a Lands, Resources and Consultations (LRC) branch which is responsible for coordinating consultation-related activities and providing Métis communities with the necessary scientific and technical expertise required for effective engagement.

As a first step, the LRC Branch would ask to be provided with a copy of your municipality's land use plan and notified of any amendments. Please ensure that the MNO is identified as an interested party during the initial planning process.

For additional information on engaging the Métis on the Duty to Consult and Accommodate, Métis harvesting rights, Métis species of interest and Métis governance structure please visit our website at [www.metisnation.org](http://www.metisnation.org)

For any other inquiries please contact:

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500 Old St. Patrick St. Unit D  
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Overall, the Duty is designed to promote the transformation of the existing relationship between local, regional and provincial governments and the Métis people to a new relationship based on consultation, accommodation, and just settlements. Métis communities across Ontario are very interested in building relationships with all levels of approval authorities in their area. As voting tax payers with a rich culture and unique Canadian history, Métis citizens add an important voice to that of the greater community. Involving Métis citizens in your municipal land use planning processes will be of great benefit to your municipality as well as our communities!

Thank you in advance,



Melanie Paradis, M.Sc. (Planning)  
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