

# **Northwest Territory Metis Nation Presentation for Gold Win Ventures 05RB-C0005 and Sidon International Resources 05RB-C0006**

Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board Yellowknife, April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2007

## **Introduction**

On August 29, 1996, the Northwest Territory Metis Nation took a major step in rebuilding our nation by signing a Framework Agreement with Canada and the Northwest Territories to begin negotiations on a Northwest Territory Métis Nation Land and Resources Agreement.

In June 2002, the Northwest Territory Métis Nation signed an Interim Measures Agreement (IMA) with Canada and the Northwest Territories. Under the pre-screening process, Section 3, it states under sub-section 3.1 e) *“The Northwest Territory Métis Nation will base their response in relation to one or more of the following grounds:*

- I. Environmental impacts;*
- II. Socio-economic impacts;*
- III. Impacts on heritage resources; and*
- IV. Any other reasonable grounds they deem relevant.”*

## **History**

Drybones Bay is one of the Historical sites our people have used. This is our home territory and we lived here as a Métis Society or Peoples for the past 300 years, our ancestors governed themselves before Canada became a country.

Our Métis ancestors established meat posts on the Thelon River. They gardened and raised cattle on the Salt River and sold salt from the nearby plains. They trapped and traded as far west as Fort Simpson, NT and as far north as Deline, NT, formerly known as Fort Franklin, NT, and south and east of Red River through to Montreal. Our ancestors have had a trading post located in this area know as Talthelli Narrows. They guided explorers like Sire John Franklin to Great Bear Lake and the Coppermine River. They brought the first priest north of 60, by canoe. Our ancestors were very involved in building the country that was to become Canada.

Our ancestors faced a lot of challenges, cultural oppression, colonization, racism, lack of educational and economic opportunity and bureaucratic interference with our rights, our land, and our identity as individuals and families, and as a people. The Northwest Territory Métis Nation resisted and survived and gradually began to organize politically.

## **Concerns**

Our Northwest Territory Métis Nation interests are as follows:

- Title and access throughout our territory which we have traditionally used and occupied, to allow us to practice our Aboriginal Right to harvest plants, animals and fish as we always have.
- Our own government within Canada to look after the things that concern us most such as our lands, resources and environment; our languages and culture and programs and services for our people.

To date, we do not have the capacity to keep up with the First Nation Tribal Councils. We do not receive core funding for administration, yet the demands on the Métis are the same as First Nation Tribal Governments. This is why we insist that the developer cover all costs for consultation. Perhaps you would like to do your jobs without resources.

All other regions are booming with oil, gas, diamonds and gold. Our region is economically stagnant. However, our territory will not grow or reach its potential without the involvement of our people. For example, if we were partners in exploration and development of our resources, we would all have the same goals.

### **Points of concern (items that may be affected)**

1. Hunting, trapping, fishing and gathering
  - a) species of wildlife (including migratory birds) and fish
  - b) seasonal harvesting practices
  - c) gathering of materials to assist harvesting
  - d) harvesting sites
  - e) sites which families have traditionally harvested
  - f) fishing
  - g) traplines or trapping areas
  - h) snaring area for small game
  - i) camps, cabins and sites used
2. Use of resources
  - a) wood for building or firewood
  - b) construction materials, sand, gravel, rocks for building
  - c) plants and trees for cultural, medical or spiritual purposes
  - d) berry picking sites
3. Sites of recreational or other significance
  - a) sites where families camp or seek recreation
  - b) tourism
  - c) timber
  - d) sand beaches
  - e) campsites
  - f) special areas (family significance, valuable areas for any purpose, e.g. the area's presence and beauty)
  - g) unique sites
  - h) fishing
  - i) traditional trails

#### 4. Water

- a) water quality
- b) impact on land to flora and fauna

#### **Current Situation**

The federal government recognized the Inherent Right as an existing Aboriginal Right protected by the Constitution Act 1982. Recognition of the Inherent Right is based on the view that the Aboriginal People of Canada have the right to govern themselves in relation to matters that are internal to their communities, integral to their unique cultures, identities, tradition, languages and institutions, and with respect to their special relationship to their land and their resources.

The scope of negotiations under policy provides for a broad range of subject matters, including *inter alia*, land management, natural resources, management, and hunting, fishing and trapping on Aboriginal lands. A Federal policy called "Gathering Strength" speaks to a commitment for a new relationship with Aboriginal People (which Métis are a part of, as defined in Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution). The Inherent Right Policy speaks to the governance side, which contains law making, lands and environmental stewardship, land and resource management, community support, and implementing self-government. As the NWTMN has stated all along; we are not against development, we may support development that contains good stewardship of the environment, and that the Metis membership benefits economically, socially, and culturally.

These are just some of the issues we have. We have other issues that we can bring forward if we obtain a meeting with Gold Win Ventures and Sidon International Resources.

In attendance:

Kara King – President Fort Resolution Metis Council  
Pete King – Vice-President Fort Resolution Metis Council  
Gary Bailey – Community Negotiator Fort Resolution Metis Council  
Chris Heron – Environment Manager Northwest Territory Metis Nation