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## **Métis Nation - Saskatchewan Takes Legal Action Against the Province of Saskatchewan**

**Saskatoon, Saskatchewan:** Métis Nation – Saskatchewan ("MN-S") has turned to the courts to address the Government of Saskatchewan's ("Province's") continuing use and reliance on the 2010 First Nation and Metis Consultation Policy Framework ("2010 Policy").

The MN-S is asking the Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan for several declarations, including that the 2010 Policy is invalid and that the Province's reliance on the 2010 Policy to avoid its duty to consult is dishonourable.

The MN-S is also seeking an order that the Province identify and disclose all matters since 2010 that the Province should have given notice and consulted on, but didn't because of the 2010 Policy, as well as costs, damages, and other appropriate relief.

In its claim, MN-S outlines how the 2010 Policy is inconsistent with the Province's constitutional duty to consult and fails to uphold the "honour of the Crown" – an important constitutional principle and obligation necessary for reconciliation. The claim specifically mentions the Province's refusal to consider Métis land rights and commercial harvesting rights when making decisions that could impact Métis communities and their lands and resources. The Province's refusal to consult when issuing mineral interests within asserted Métis lands is also raised, as is the Province's notice and consultation policies which are inconsistent with the MN-S Constitution.

MN-S President Glen McCallum stated:

The Crown's duty to consult and the obligation of the Province to uphold the honour of the Crown are fundamental constitutional principles provided to guide all Canadians towards reconciliation. The Province cannot opt-out of its constitutional obligations. Likewise, the Province cannot create policies and processes which circumvent true and meaningful consultation.

The rights and concerns of Saskatchewan Métis have been marginalized for too long. The 2010 Policy has perpetuated this harm and has denied Saskatchewan Métis the



rights and protections they are owed by Section 35 of the Constitution. This must and will change.

We call on the Province to reject the 2010 Policy, and to treat Métis with the respect and dignity they deserve as Canadians and as a rights-holding people.

The claim represents another step by the MN-S to protect and advance the rights and interests of Saskatchewan Métis, and follows the recent MN-S claim brought against NexGen Energy Ltd.

In 2019, MN-S and the Government of Canada signed the "Metis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement", which, among other things, recognizes that MN-S is mandated to represent the Métis of Saskatchewan. The 2018 Framework for Advancing Reconciliation between MN-S and Canada provides for, among other things, establishing processes to recognize and respect Métis rights and land claims.

The claim is anticipated to have implications for all Saskatchewan First Nations, as they also face obstacles to consultation under the 2010 Policy.

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