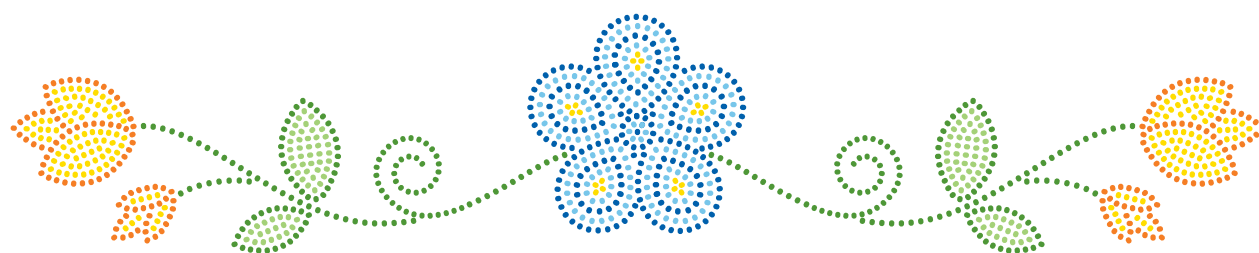




Commercial Harvesting Improvements Program (CHIP)

PILOT PROGRAM GUIDELINES – VERSION 1.0 AUG, 2023

MN-S MINISTRY OF SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE



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The Commercial Harvesting Improvements Program (CHIP) is a pilot program aimed at promoting economic opportunities for eligible Métis commercial harvesters by providing financial assistance to build, maintain or improve structures that support their commercial harvesting practices and facilitate traditional land use activities such as commercial fishing and trapping.

As part of this pilot program, a maximum of 30 applications will be accepted. Evaluation and transfer of funds must be completed by March 31, 2024. Applicants will have until Sept 1, 2024 to complete their projects.

1. Program Parameters and Mandatory Criteria

1.1 General Parameters and Criteria

- Maximum eligible funding of \$15,000 towards any Eligible Expenditure as set out in these Guidelines;
- The program is open to Métis commercial harvesters operating within the **Northern Saskatchewan Administration District (NSAD)**. A map is provided in ANNEX A;
- Applicant¹ can only participate in the CHIP once in a lifetime;
- Applicant must hold a valid commercial fishing, trapping or wild rice harvesting licence from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment;
- Applicant must hold a valid Crown lease agreement or written approval for land usage;
- Applicant must meet all eligibility criteria as set out in these Guidelines;
- The Project² building or structure must be considered an Eligible Building as set out in these Guidelines;
- The location of the Project must correlate with the Applicant's commercial harvesting licence(s) and be

¹ "Applicant" refers to the Métis citizen who applies for the CHIP program. The Applicant is responsible for all communications with MN-S.

² "Project" refers to the sum of construction or improvements to Eligible Buildings at an Eligible Project Location as part of this Program.

³ "Gross Annual Income" includes the sum of all annual earnings for the Applicant as shown on line 15000 of their Notice of Assessment or Reassessment, provided by the Canada Revenue Agency for the most recent tax year.

considered an Eligible Project Location as set out in these Guidelines;

- Applicant must submit a detailed description of the proposed Project, including intended use, location and site photos;
- Only one application will be accepted per Project site and harvesting license;
- Applicant must fully complete and submit a CHIP Application form with all required supporting documents. Incomplete application forms or missing items will not be considered;
- Applicant must provide personal information to MN-S. By doing so, the Applicant agrees and consents to the release and sharing of that information both internally with MN-S and with other institutions as required to complete the program;
- The CHIP contribution is in the form of a Forgivable Loan Agreement (FLA). The contribution is interest-free and will not have to be repaid, provided the recipient adheres to the terms of the Agreement and completes the Project before September 1, 2024;
- Applicant must be willing to sign a Promissory Note per the Terms of Forgiveness as set out in these Guidelines;
- Applicant must be willing to allow third-party inspectors, contractors or MN-S representatives onto the Project site as it relates to this program;
- Applicant wishing to hire a contractor(s) for all or part of the Project must source and manage their contractor(s) themselves throughout the entire program;
- Applicant can only hire contractors who meet the Contractor Eligibility Criteria as set out in these Guidelines;

1.2 Citizen Eligibility Criteria

- Applicant must be over the age of 18;
- Applicant must be a member of Métis Nation–Saskatchewan and provide proof by:
 - Copy of MN-S Registered Métis Citizenship Card
 - or
 - Confirmation from MN-S Registry that their application for Métis citizenship has been approved;
- Applicant must have a Gross Annual Income³ of \$100,000 or less;
- Applicant must live within 200kms of the Project site.

1.3 Eligible Project Locations

- Land within the Applicant's designated harvesting zone as stipulated on their harvesting license(s) from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment and;
- Crown resource land lease in Applicant's name or;
- Owned land with written permission if not the owner.

1.4 Ineligible Project Locations

- Residential, commercial or industrial lots;
- Owned land with dwellings or other structures over 500ft²
- Ecological Reserves;
- Regional, Provincial and National Parks;
- Heritage sites.

1.5 Eligible Project Buildings

- Commercial fishing or trapping cabin;
- Smoke shack;
- Ice storage shack;
- Boat dock;
- Outhouse;
- Outbuildings or other detached shelters.

1.6 Eligible Expenditures

- Construction materials directly related to the building, maintenance, or improvement of the Eligible Project Building, including:
 - Framing and building envelope materials;
 - Roofing;
 - Windows & doors;
 - Flooring;
 - Prefabricated structures;
 - Hardware;
 - Fixtures;
 - Solar panels;
 - Generators;
 - Water collection systems
 - Labour costs from a licensed contractor(s).

1.7 Ineligible Expenditures

- Travel expenses to and from the Project site;
- Expenses related to site clearing or preparation, such as: excavating, grading or landscaping;
- Tools and equipment purchases, rentals or replacements;
- Securing land through purchase, lease or rental;
- Creation of construction drawings or any site or building plan;
- Furniture & housewares
- Tools and equipment directly related to harvesting (i.e., fishing nets, traps, boats, clothing etc.)

1.8 Contractor Eligibility Criteria

- Contractors must be licensed and registered in the work's jurisdiction.
- It is the contractor's responsibility to obtain all required permits for the work being performed.
- Contractors must provide GST and PST numbers. If the contractor is exempt from collecting GST or PST, they must provide a formal exemption certificate or letter signed by the contractor.

2. Evaluation and Approval Process

- The review and approval process begins once MN-S receives a fully completed CHIP Application Form and all required supplementary documentation;
- All eligible applications will be reviewed and approved on a first-come, first-serve basis unless the number of applications exceeds available funding. In this case, MN-S will conduct a program suitability review to determine which applications to approve. Program suitability will be based on factors such as demonstrated need, alignment with program objectives, locations, economic potential, and experience;
- MN-S may contact the reference provided by the Applicant to verify commercial harvesting activities, location and suitability for the program;
- Approved applicant will receive written approval, followed by a Forgivable Loan Agreement that outlines the terms and conditions of the funding, as well as the responsibilities of the recipient;
- Rejected applicants will be notified in writing with an explanation for the denial;
- Applicants will be provided a deadline to submit acceptable quotes to MN-S for review. Deadlines that are not met will result in the application being cancelled.

MN-S reserves the right to use discretion when reviewing and approving all applications.

Program approval is conditional on available funding and may be withdrawn at any time.

3. Transfer of Funds

- MN-S will pay vendors and/or contractors directly up to a maximum of \$15,000 per approved Applicant;
- Approved Applicant must submit a valid quote from a licensed vendor or contractor, which includes a detailed breakdown of materials, supplies, travel and labour;
- MN-S will provide a Forgivable Loan Agreement stipulating the approved quotes and the Applicant's responsibilities in accessing the funding;
- Once executed, MN-S will coordinate with the Applicant and their selected vendor(s) and/or contractor(s) to arrange the purchase of construction materials or supplies. All invoices must be submitted to MN-S by March 31, 2024.
- MN-S will require the Applicant to sign a Request for Payment Form to ensure the work was completed satisfactorily;
- MN-S will pay vendors and contractors directly within 30 days upon receiving acceptable invoices and signed Request for Payment forms;

Please refer to our Contractor Guide for details on contractor quotes, invoicing, and payment requirements.

4. Terms of Forgiveness

The CHIP contribution amount will be provided in the form of a Forgivable Loan Agreement that will be forgiven entirely upon the Applicant successfully fulfilling all the program conditions by September 1, 2024.

The Applicant will be required to legally agree to the terms and conditions of the program and be required to sign a Promissory Note.

Promissory Note

The promissory note will require that the Applicant legally promises to repay the total value of the forgivable loan contribution if the terms are not met.

The following conditions, while not inclusive, may trigger a default of the terms and conditions for CHIP, resulting in a requirement to repay the contribution amount in full:

- Any statements or representations made by the Applicant or by a contractor on the Applicant's behalf in relation to the Agreement or the Applicant's MN-S CHIP Application are found to be false;
- MN-S determines that any portion of the Forgivable Loan was not used for its intended purpose;
- The Applicant misrepresents the information disclosed in the MN-S CHIP documentation or fails to provide information as required by MN-S; and
- The Applicant does not complete the Project by September 1, 2024.
- The Applicant obtains their Bill C-31 First Nation Status under the Indian Act prior to the completion date of the Program and subsequently revokes their Métis citizenship in accordance with the policies of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan.

ANNEX A

NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN ADMINISTRATION DISTRICT (NSAD)

