

NWTMN TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE POLICY

BACKGROUND:

- A. Métis Heritage Resources, Archival Records, and Traditional Knowledge are of cultural, historical, social and educational significance to the continuation of the NWTMN(Metis) way of life.
- B. Métis Heritage Resources, Archival Records, Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Knowledge Data provide:
 - (a) evidence of Métis use and occupancy of the traditional territory; and
 - (b) evidence of Métis culture, lifestyle and traditions.
- C. The NWTMN has the responsibility to collect, document and preserve Métis cultural, historical, and Traditional Knowledge for the benefit of members and for future generations.
- D. The NWTMN undertakes TK projects, which include mapping of traditional use, interviews of elders and knowledgeable members, and traditional use and occupancy research.
- E. The NWTMN are the custodian holders of certain Archival Records, Métis Heritage Resources and Traditional Use Data.(does not include what is held by the PoWM).
- F. Traditional Knowledge facilitates the accommodation of Métis aboriginal rights in projects and assists in developing positions to protect Métis aboriginal rights;
- G. The 2007 and 2010 NWTMN Annual Assemblies passed resolutions directing the NWTMN to develop a policy for the management of traditional use knowledge research, including intellectual property, and the advancement and retention of the Michif, Chipewyan and Cree languages.

THEREFORE the Board of Directors of the NWTMN hereby adopts the NWTMN Traditional Knowledge Policy:

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the follow definitions apply:

“Archival Records” means a document made in time past that has historical value and includes unpublished manuscripts, correspondence, photographs, audiovisual materials or other multimedia, cartographic and pictorial materials regardless of the form in which they are preserved.

“Heritage Resource” means:

- a) archaeological and ethnographic objects of historical, scientific, and cultural significance and includes human remains and associated grave goods; or
- b) a site in the traditional territory of historical or cultural significance and includes a burial site.

“Métis Heritage Resource” means a Heritage Resource which is directly associated with the culture or history of the Indigenous Métis descendant from Fort Resolution, Fort Smith or Hay River and areas.

“Traditional Knowledge” or “TK” means the beliefs and knowledge about the Indigenous Métis traditional way of life and observations about the environment, which has been transmitted from generation to generation by (oral or written) communication.

“TK Data” means the Métis Heritage Resource and Traditional Knowledge information data documented or incorporated into various mediums, including audio and video tapes, digital storage, literature, reports, researcher field and interview notes, transcripts, GIS data, photographs, slides, maps, Archival Records, reports, journal articles, manuscripts and books.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The management of Archival Records, Métis Heritage Resources, and Traditional Knowledge or TK Data will be conducted in a manner that:

- a. allows future generations to benefit and learn from Traditional Knowledge;
- b. ensures that informed consent occurs between researchers and Métis members in the process of Traditional Knowledge research;
- c. assists the NWTMN to restore and maintain control over the protection and management of Traditional Knowledge, recognizing that the NWTMN are the stewards of these resources;
- d. ensures the participation of the Councils in Traditional Knowledge research activities, including reporting the results of research activities in an appropriate manner and format back to the Councils;
- e. ensures respect for holders of Traditional Knowledge and the ethical use of Traditional Knowledge in research;
- f. ensures that research dealing with Traditional Knowledge conducted within the traditional territory of the NWTMN gives equal weight to NWTMN Traditional Knowledge to western science;
- g. supports the use, retention and preservation of the Michif, Cree and Chipewyan languages; and
- h. supports the ethical use of Traditional Knowledge in resource management.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

This NWTMN Traditional Knowledge Policy applies to all TK projects and studies respecting NWTMN Archival Records, Métis Heritage Resource, Traditional Knowledge or TK Data.

Board Approval of TK Projects

The Board of Directors must approve any proposal to study, research, use or collect NWTMN Archival Records, Métis Heritage Resource, Traditional Knowledge or TK Data. Before approving a project, the Board of Directors must be satisfied that they have been fully informed as to the scope and purpose for the use of the Traditional Knowledge and that the TK project is in the best interests of the NWTMN.

Métis Cultural Institute

The Métis Cultural Institute may assume the role of the NWTMN in respect to the implementation of any aspect of this Policy, particularly when MCI secures operational funding.

The NWTMN will support the MCI in its effort to secure grant funding.

Duties of Staff:

The Executive Director shall oversee the administrative implementation of this Policy, including the development of appropriate informed consent forms, non-disclosure and confidentiality agreements, assignment of copyright agreements, research agreements and research guidelines.

Staff of the NWTMN will carry out the following responsibilities:

Knowledge Keepers

- a) work with the Councils to identify Métis members who possess Traditional Knowledge and who are interested in documenting TK information;

Inventory

- b) maintain an inventory of TK Data;

Storage

- c) ensure that all TK Data stored by the NWTMN is securely stored and backed-up, including having copies stored off-site;

Authorized Use

- d) ensure that TK Data information is only used to advance the interests of the NWTMN;

Ethical Research

- e) ensure TK research is conducted in an ethical manner;

Review

- f) review all TK research requests by third parties for compliance with this Policy;

Research Agreement

- g) negotiate Research Agreements with researchers who wish to carry-out research concerning TK;

Collaborative Research

- h) encourage collaborative TK research methods with outside organizations and researchers;

Informed Consent

- i) ensure that interviewees provide informed consent prior to commencing an interview;

Intellectual Property

- j) ensure that the NWTMN is the copyright owner of all TK information collected or documented by researchers. Researchers must agree to assign their copyright in writing to the NWTMN;

Sharing of Information

- k) ensure that documented TK Data is provided to the NWTMN and participant interviewees;
- l) ensure research results are presented or displayed in culturally appropriate and creative ways.

TK Data Management

The NWTMN will be responsible for collecting, cataloguing, managing and storing TK Data in a confidential, safe and secure manner.

Access to TK Data

The NWTMN will ensure that access to the TK Data will be limited to those employees, contractors, directors and authorized third parties who require access in order to carry out TK work, provided confidentiality conditions are followed.

Sharing of TK Data

The NWTMN will take steps to share non-confidential TK Data with Métis Members through newsletters, publications and internet.

Informed Consent

Prior to a TK study or project proceeding, the manager of the project shall ensure the informants provide informed consent to the collection, use and disclosure of TK information by following the following procedures:

- a. providing information to the appropriate Métis organizations about TK project, including the names of proposed informants;
- b. providing written information to the prospective informants about the TK project setting out the purpose of the TK project and how the TK information will utilized and incorporated into the TK project, and who will have access to the TK information; and
- c. obtaining a signed "Consent to Interview" form before interviewing the informant.

Contributions of those persons who provide Traditional Knowledge information must be acknowledged in any report or publication that may arise out of the research project.

Researchers and contractors must agree to assign their copyright in writing to the NWTMN prior to undertaking any TK project work.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The NWTMN must establish the degree of confidentiality that will apply to the TK information before the TK project starts.

- a.
- b.
- c.

CONDITIONS FOR A TRADITIONAL USE PROJECT BY A THIRD PARTY

A researcher wishing to research Traditional Knowledge must enter into a Research Agreement with the NWTMN.

All persons proposing to do research on NWTMN Traditional Knowledge must obtain the appropriate government authorizations.

The NWTMN supports and encourages the use of collaborative research methodologies in all research activities respecting TK through the utilization of fieldworkers, knowledgeable staff and an advisory body.

RESEARCH REVIEW

The product of the research containing or derived from Traditional Knowledge must be reviewed by the NWTMN and the affected Council before distribution to a third party. The product will ordinarily be reviewed within 30 days of receipt. The review process is meant to provide the NWTMN and affected Council with an opportunity to comment on the findings, identify gaps and make corrections before the research is made public or disclosed to third parties.

REPORTING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

As part of the follow-up process, all researchers working with Traditional Knowledge shall return to the community in which research was conducted to present the findings of their research. Research results could be presented or displayed in the NWTMN communities in culturally relevant and creative ways.

POLICY REVIEW

This Policy may be reviewed and amended from time to time by the Board of Directors.