



# #TIAM *Facts*

from the Mi'kmaw point of view

We would like to let you know about the traditional harvest we are undertaking in Cape Breton Highlands National Park.

Over the next few weeks, Mi'kmaw harvesters selected by the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs and our communities, will be working in partnership with Parks Canada to use our traditional knowledge and customs to harvest a small number of moose in a small designated area of the Park.

This harvest is a one-time event.

We will then work with Parks Canada to study and monitor the area to determine if the harvest achieved the desired effect of creating a sustainable, balanced eco-system that will ultimately achieve a healthy moose population while supporting all species of animals and plants that make the Highlands unique.





# #2 **TIAM** Facts

from the Mi'kmaq point of view

The Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, through the **Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs** and **UINR–Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources**, have been working in partnership with **Parks Canada** and **Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources** for over a decade on management of moose in Unama'ki.

Each brought their own expertise and resources to ensure we all have a healthy and sustainable moose population in the Highlands.

This traditional harvest with Parks Canada was developed after years of study and discussion on the moose population in Cape Breton Highlands National Park.





# #3 TIAM Facts

from the Mi'kmaq point of view

The Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia have constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights to harvest moose in the Highlands.

The Supreme Court and various courts in Nova Scotia have long established this fact, and we have been exercising our constitutional rights to the moose harvest for over 25 years.

The courts have also been clear that the Mi'kmaq have constitutional first priority over all other users, subject to conservation, to harvest moose for food, social, and ceremonial purposes.

This has been a legal fact for over 25 years.





# #TIAM Facts

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from the Mi'kmaw point of view

From the Mi'kmaw point of view, it is vital that eco-systems remain in balance.

Moose are an important element of that eco-system, as are all animals and plants native to the Highlands.

The balance requires proper control of moose populations through predation by animals such as coyotes or, in the Mi'kmaw view, through harvest.

Many of the comments around this issue show a Euro-centric point of view placing human beings outside the eco-system.

We understand that Mi'kmaq are an integral part of the eco-system and our actions, properly governed by traditional ethics and guidelines, are vital to maintaining eco-system balance.





# #TIAM *Facts*

from the Mi'kmaq point of view

When Parks Canada indicated that it was contemplating a moose cull, we expressed concerns.

Previously Mi'kmaq have not harvested in Cape Breton Highlands National Park, even though no conservation issues have limited our constitutional rights. In this case we feel that a properly-managed harvest would promote overall conservation of the eco-system.

Parks are special places to all Canadians. When a harvest takes place it should be done in collaboration, ensuring eco-system management is a first priority and reflects both Mi'kmaq and Parks Canada's concerns for the health of the moose and their surroundings.

For Mi'kmaq, stewardship of the eco-system is just as much a right as harvesting.





# #TIAM Facts

from the Mi'kmaw point of view

The harvest of a moose is a sacred cultural event for a Mi'kmaw.

When the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs published its guidelines in 2009 on proper ethics for a Mi'kmaw harvester, it was introduced with the story of Tiam's Promise.

In time immemorial, the moose offered itself to the Mi'kmaq so that we could survive. In turn, we promised to respect the body and soul of the moose that we harvested and use it only for our cultural and physical survival. This is a fundamental Mi'kmaw law.

When we heard that a cull might take place, we couldn't support the idea of simply killing animals for sport or leaving them to rot. It was imperative that if moose were taken, they would be harvested with proper ceremonies.





# #7 TIAM Facts

from the Mi'kmaw point of view

Based on our constitutional and cultural position, we made an Agreement with Parks Canada in 2012 ensuring that the Mi'kmaw would have the first opportunity to partner with them if a cull was necessary in any National Park in Nova Scotia.

The Mi'kmaw have heard countless reports in the media that this is “not fair.” For decades, governments and citizens refused to honour our treaties. **This was not fair.** For decades, Mi'kmaw were denied access to our traditional resources while others exploited them. **This was not fair.** Mi'kmaw were forcibly removed from our traditional lands next to these resources and placed on various reserves. **This was not fair.** Mi'kmaw children were taken to residential school in order to alienate them from the cultural laws and practices that Tiam's Promise represents. **This was not fair.**

Mi'kmaw have legal priority to engage in this project and we feel that our involvement is both just and fair in reconciling our rights and responsibilities with Parks' objectives and obligations.





# #TIAM Facts

from the Mi'kmaw point of view

This project represents an initial step toward reconciling Mi'kmaw harvest rights and stewardship responsibilities with our partners.

We hope that it is a precedent for the way we go forward.

We know there will be backlash. This is unfortunate but inevitable. Partnership and collaboration, not confrontation and anger, are the only ways to truly reach reconciliation.

During this project, we reached out to non-Native partners to work with us. Many were interested, but their concerns over backlash they might face made this difficult. Our harvesters and communities have lived through the confrontation and intimidation by a small group of people over the past weeks, so we fully understand their concerns. We will, despite things that were said by some, continue to build bridges with people who want to work with us.

