



Onion Lake Cree Nation

TREATY NO.6 TERRITORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(February 16, 2022, Onion Lake Cree Nation, SK – Treaty No. 6 Territory) Onion Lake Cree Nation has always taken action to protect our Treaty rights and we will continue to, especially with the passing of Bill No. 40, An Act to amend *The Trespass to Property Act* on January 1, 2022. Okimaw Lewis of Onion Lake Cree Nation stated “The amendments to the trespass law are a direct attack to our Treaty right to livelihood by the Government of Saskatchewan. We remind the Saskatchewan Government that Treaty 6 is an international Treaty that guaranteed we would continue to practice our way of life forever without interference”.

When enforced, the new law will result in band members being fined up to \$25,000 or incarcerated for up to 6 months for carrying out activities they have always done and activities guaranteed under Treaty. “Our peoples understand what their treaty rights are and they will continue to carry out activities essential to their livelihood, guaranteed by the Crown in our Treaty” said Okimaw Lewis.

The Government of Saskatchewan’s re-writing of the law of trespass is a clear and direct effort to get around the recognition that treaty rights can be exercised throughout the Province on all lands that are not put to a visible and incompatible use. Not only is the government’s course of action dishonourable, but it is also unconstitutional and inconsistent with international law and Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action.

The commonality of the Government of Saskatchewan’s Bill 40 and the Government of Alberta’s Bill 1 is an attack on our Nations Treaty rights. As a reminder, our Treaty existed before the provinces did and there is a legal obligation by the Crown to uphold our Treaty. Onion Lake Cree Nation attended the Government of Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly on December 7, 2021 to express our disapproval of the Government’s blatant violation of our Treaty rights, through their legislation without our free, prior and informed consent.

Onion Lake Cree Nation stands with all Treaty First Nations in the defence of our treaty rights and we call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately repeal these amendments to *The Trespass to Property Act*.

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