



You are here : [Home](#) > [People](#) > [Aboriginal Peoples of the RMWB](#) > **The Metis People**

[RAMP](#)
[RIVER](#)
[PEOPLE](#)
[RESOURCES](#)
[ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT](#)

## The Metis People

The arrival of the Métis in what is today considered the RMWB is not defined by a single event in history. Rather, gradual Métis settlement of the area, as in the rest of Canada, occurred “when intermarriages took place between traders and native women” during the fur trade era (Sawchuck et al. 1981:1, Coutu 2004) and other events in Canadian history such as the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CPR) (Goulet and Goulet 2005), the gold rush in the early 18th century (Brady 1994), the migration of the Métis people west after the Red River uprisings (Sawchuck et al. 1981) and an influx of trappers spurred by high fur prices during World War II. Métis families in the region hail from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds including: Cree, Dene, French, Scottish and English, in addition to Ukrainian, German, Swede and Norse (FMA 2007). Métis ancestry is rooted in the both European and Aboriginal cultures, incorporating knowledge and traditions held since time immemorial. Métis families settled along major transportation routes in the RMWB, including the Athabasca River, and in places such as Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, Fort McMurray, Anzac, Chard, and near major trade and transportation centres such as Lac La Biche where there was a CPR station.



**Fort McKay Metis Leaders**

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[Next page: The Traditional Lifeways](#) ►

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