

# Beaverhouse First Nation Declaration of Rights

## Preamble

We are Beaverhouse First Nation (“BHFN”) - an Anishinaabeg-Algonquin people.

We possess the inherent and inalienable right of *inaaknigewin* (self-governance). This includes the right of *inaaknigewin* (self-government) and autonomy over Members, our community, and our territory.

Flowing from our inherent rights, we possess the jurisdiction to make BHFN *naaknigwenan* (laws) for the exercise and protection of our rights and the fulfillment of our responsibilities throughout our territory.

This jurisdiction has always been held by our people. It has never been surrendered or given up. It continues to inform how we live and relate to each other according to Anishinaabe *Mino-Bimaadziwin*, or “living the way of a good life.”

We recognize that in exercising our right to *inaaknigewin* (self-governance), that we have the right to autonomy or *inaaknigewin* (self-government), in matters relating to our internal and local affairs. We recognize the need of the Crown to respect and promote our inherent rights, which derive from our political, economic, and social structures, and from our culture, spiritual traditions, histories, and philosophies, especially our rights to our lands, territory, and resources beyond the rights set out in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

We look to our Anishinaabek roots to guide our vision for the future, led by the Seven Grandfather Teachings of Humility; Bravery; Respect; Wisdom; Honesty; Love; and Truth, so that we continue to strive to be a strong, caring, connected membership who respects the Earth’s gifts and protects the environment for seven generations; past, present, and future.

## Fundamental Rights and Responsibilities

### 1. Humility:

- a. We have the responsibility of being accountable to each other for our actions and decisions.
- b. We have the right to be treated with dignity at all times.

### 2. Bravery:

- a. We have the responsibility of taking measures that protect our rights and maintain our traditions for the good of future generations.
- b. We have the right to determine who belongs to our community, and the responsibilities that come with belonging.

**3. Respect:**

- a. We have the responsibility of determining how we will relate with other communities, governments, and peoples.
- b. We have the right to pursue our social, political, cultural, and economic advancement as a community.

**4. Wisdom:**

- a. We have the responsibility to make laws in the exercise and protection of our rights and fulfilment of our responsibilities throughout our territory.
- b. We have the right to determine for ourselves, according to Beaverhouse customs and traditions, how we will govern ourselves.

**5. Honesty:**

- a. We have the responsibility to be honest with one another in our words and actions.
- b. We have the right to be informed of important community decisions and to transparency from our leaders.

**6. Love:**

- a. We have the responsibility to care for one another.
- b. We have the right to determine what reparations or acts of restoration are required should a member of our community be found to not be honouring their rights and responsibilities.

**7. Truth:**

- a. We have the responsibility to speak and act truthfully with one another.
- b. We have the right to speak openly and freely with each other about our concerns and to have our voices heard in seeking community consensus on decisions affecting our community and our territory.

These rights and responsibilities are held by all members of our community, equally and without discrimination. They can only be limited where, and to the extent, necessary to advance and protect the collective rights and interests of our community and as justified according to our laws and in a free, fair, and just society.

We adopt this Declaration of Rights, as a solemn promise to ourselves and our future generations that sets out the way in which we wish to live.