

Mitis River invites..

invitation to gathering
invitation to naming
invitation to movement
invitation to collection
invitation to harvesting
invitation to archive

CCA

river, shoreline, land

This index was produced by Marie-Ellen Houde-Hostland, Jia Chen Mi and Hannah Thiessen as part of the first year of the three-year CCA Master student research project: River, Shoreline and Land. The index, along with a series of short films and an ongoing event series, positions the Mitis River, in Quebec's Lower-Saint-Lawrence region, as an agent of invitation and explores its role in mediation between Indigenous and settler communities.

The first hear the sound of the **Mitis River** as it hits the shoreline.

We are reminded: “Water attracts us: rivers, ponds, rainstorms, coastlines– even puddles – have an undeniable sensual charisma.” ①

The force of water hitting the shore becomes an invitation to join and listen. Tuning in captures “the intimacy between being and following: to be (anything, anyone) is always to be following (something, someone), always to be in response to call from something, however nonhuman it may be” ②

To follow this call is to be bound up instantly in relation.

Where the two rivers meet: a call to gather at the river.

The poplar trees: a call to speak of the river.

The migrating salmon: a call to move with the river.

The collection of plastics: a call to observe the river.

The exposed shore of artifacts: a call to remember with the river.

Marie-Ellen, Jia, and Hannah:

“These were the Mitis River’s initial invitations to us, visiting it for the first time in the Lower Saint Lawrence, Quebec as three masters students, settlers on this land, researching on behalf of the Canadian Centre for Architecture and the Jardins de Métis.”

Working within, between, and around two settler institutions, we followed the fluid currents of a river confronting, connecting, and transforming two grounded shores. As a traditional meeting place for Mi’qmaq and Wolastoqiyik communities, these currents are apt forces for encounter, carrying people, fish, sediment, words, and stories and bringing them in relation.

To follow this boundless medium, the Mitis River resists colonial notions of place as a static object, but becomes the stuff of and for encounter.

To follow this river as a site of research, gathering and sharing the River’s impressions, matters, and stories resists objectification and makes research of and for these encounters.

This scroll is something like an extension of the Mitis River, made up of the stories and relationships which we have been bound into. Responding to the river's initial invitations, stories which caught our eyes, ears, hands, and minds, becomes a reflection on the larger ways in which the river invites, bringing humans, non-humans, and matters together in relationship.

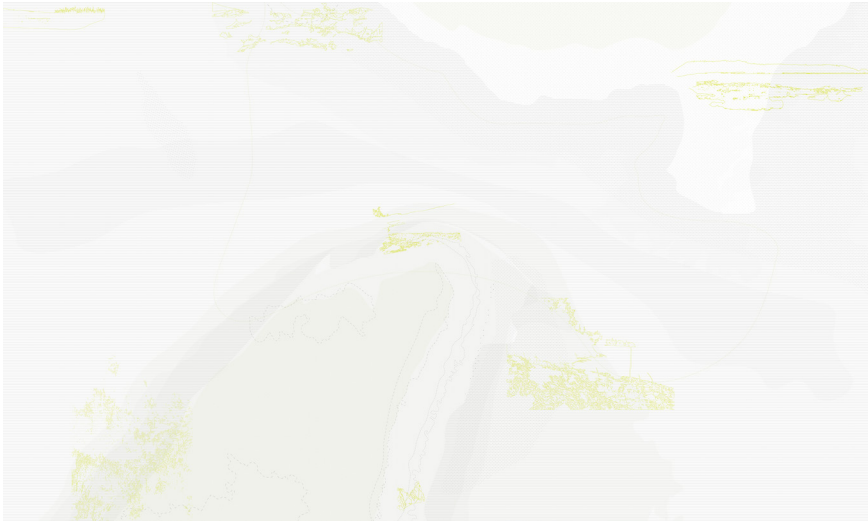
As we put various stories together, we begin to understand how certain relationships have been made, dispossessed, and sustained.

Moving between collages of various voices and more linear narratives, this scroll follows various currents, leaving gaps for contemplation and incomplete narratives. With people noted in **green** and places, names, things, and ideas noted in **blue** this scroll is meant to gather the people, places, and ideas that give shape to the Mitis River.

This research is an invitation itself. To follow this call is to be bound up in relation.



Index Layer
Gathering



1 'How Do You Call This Place'. Canvas for a collective drawing produced during a community engagement event at the mouth of the Mitis River.



2 Gathering at the mouth of the river. Hannah Thiessen.

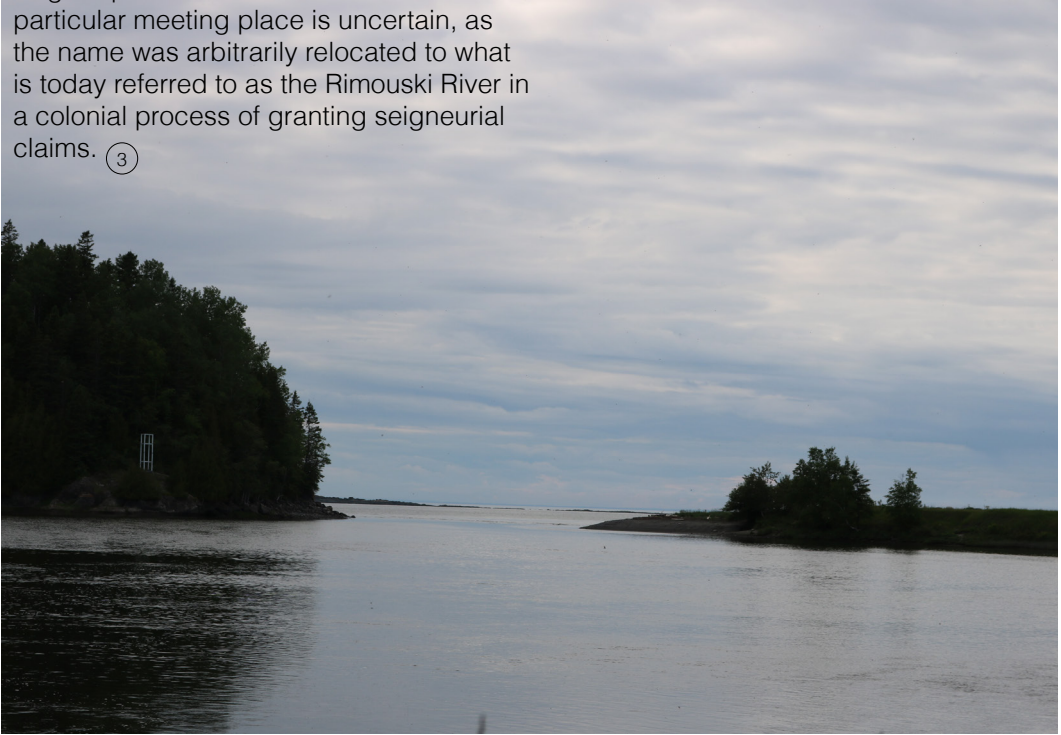
Currents from two rivers flow into one another. Saltwaters mix with fresh water streaming from a series of lakes deeper inland. The meeting of these two currents sometimes form strong tidal currents, forces acting with, against and around each other.

These currents carry fishy, sandy, murky, and familiar stories: all kinds of matters condensed through this channel.

The banks sitting on either side of the mouth provide clear and open views into both rivers, one that leads a more intimate passage towards the Chaleur Bay and one that follows the expanse of the Saint Lawrence River to the Atlantic Ocean.

Where one river ends and the other begins is not clear, but this overlap is an apt circumstance of water and topography stirring special encounters between people, fish, vegetation, and all their combined stories.

There is speculation that the name “Mitis” may come from the word “Mitoui” referring to a “meeting place” in Wolastoquey and Mi’gmaq. Whether Mitis denotes this particular meeting place is uncertain, as the name was arbitrarily relocated to what is today referred to as the Rimouski River in a colonial process of granting seigneurial claims. ③



3 Where the two rivers meet. Hannah Thiessen.

The meeting point of these two rivers was always a shared space. [The Mouth of the Mitis River](#) is a traditional gathering place for Mi’kmaq and Wolastoqiyik people who would come here during the summer months to meet, fish, and trade.

As a key stop along two water passages, one connecting to the Atlantic Ocean, and the other heading southward towards Chaleur Bay and eventually Wolastoq (also referred to as the Saint John River), these banks were points of rest, fishing and exchange of goods and stories for Mi'qmaq and Wolastoqiyik people who depended on the larger watershed network throughout the seasons.

The elevated banks offered views to both river passages, and when submerged underwater, served as an ideal passageway for catching Atlantic salmon, American eels, and Striped bass for food and ceremony. ④

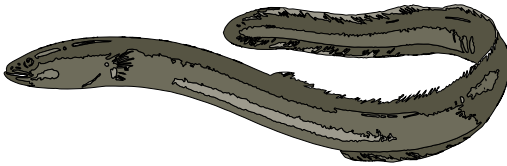
Today, the river's mouth continues to sit on overlapping territory.



- 4 A portion of Wolastoqiyik and Mi'qmaq territories where the Mi'qmaq Wolastoqey Indigenous Fisheries Management Association leads their fishing and marine programs. [Mi'qmaq Maliseet Aboriginal Fisheries Management Association \(MMAFMA\) Atlas.](#)



Ji'gaw (Mi'gmaq), **Nokahkehke** (Wolastoqey), **Striped bass** (English), **Bar rayé** (French) 5
 moves from freshwaters, to brackish, and then saltwaters of the Saint-Lawrence and Atlantic as it ages.



Kataq (Mi'gmaq), **Sakapsqehptom** (Wolastoqey), **American eel** (English), **Anguille** (French). 6

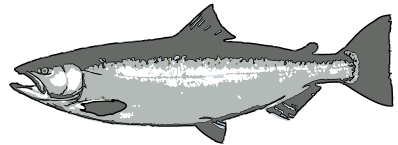
8 **Alexander Reford**, who runs the Jardins de Métis speaking along the banks of the Mitis: River:

"We had a birdwatcher come yesterday...this is the number one bird-watching place in the region. It's got 167 inventory bird species, so this is a very rich ornithological spot because of the complements of the river and estuary."

The saltier waters from the Atlantic and the freshwaters from the Mitis Lake(s) mix to generate an estuary, a particularly unique ecosystem for aquatic life. With various fish, including the Atlantic salmon and the American eel, depending on a range of different aquatic conditions throughout their life cycles, the meeting of these two rivers orchestrates a gathering of non-human people through these areas as well; gathering here is not a strictly human occasion.

Métis Anthropologist and Fish Philosopher **Zoe Todd** in her essay "Refracting the State through Human-Fish Relations" helps reframe the Mitis River not just as an ecological habitat, but as a social, legal and spiritual world in itself. These gatherings, or "habitats and ecosystems, are better understood as societies from an Indigenous point of view; meaning that they have ethical structures, inter-species treaties and agreements...non-human beings are active members of society".

5



7 **Jplamu** (Mi'gmaq), **Polam** (Wolastoqey), **Atlantic salmon** (English), **Saumon atlantique** (French) travels significant distances throughout the Atlantic ocean during its juvenile and adult years. Caught for food, medicine, craft, trade and ceremony, the Salmon is deeply embedded in Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqiyik ways of life, cultures, and spiritualities. The role that this meeting point plays for setting up encounters for different people, human and non-human, demonstrates the ways in which the ecologies of the Mitis River transforms from "medium" to "place", carrying elaborate stories and memories for Indigenous people in the region.

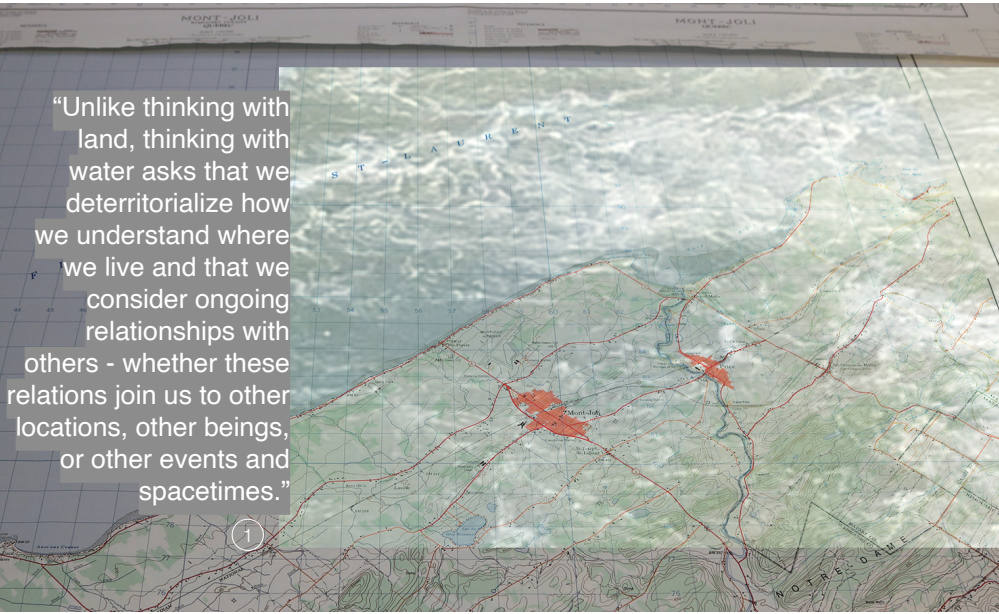
Understanding these relationships between people, fish, and the habitat of the Mitis River as not only ecosystems, but societies begins to frame gathering itself as an act of unsettling colonial notions of land and property. Engaging and affirming these relationships recalls a process that **Zoe Todd** calls “refraction” whereby Indigenous people navigate “the complex and dynamic interface between Indigenous legal orders and the State”. ⑤ The ways in which Wolastoqiyik and Mi’gmaq communities connect with the River’s complex ecologies can be recognized as an act of subverting colonial legal orders.



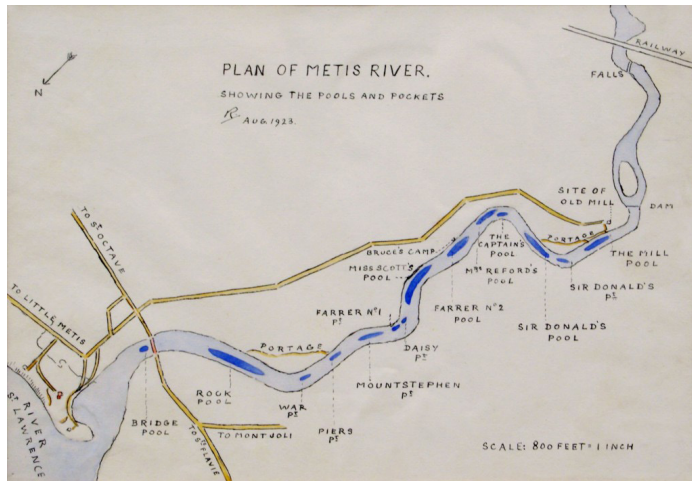
- 9 Agreements between the Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk (Maliseets of Viger) Nation and Quebec government grant the Nation communal fishing rights to catch salmon at a precise point along the Mitis River, from traps managed by the local ZEC organization sitting at the base of the Mitis Dam -II about 1 km from the mouth of the river. Mi’gmaq Maliseet Aboriginal Fisheries Management Association (MMAFMA) Atlas.

We sometimes find the water of the Mitis River itself is “refracting”, continuously defying and diffusing the static and bounded terrestrial notions of land that underpin colonial seigneurial and contemporary boundary lines.

“Unlike thinking with land, thinking with water asks that we deterritorialize how we understand where we live and that we consider ongoing relationships with others - whether these relations join us to other locations, other beings, or other events and spacetimes.”



10 Currents of the Mitis River overlaying map of the Grand-Métis region. Marie-Ellen Houde-Hostland.

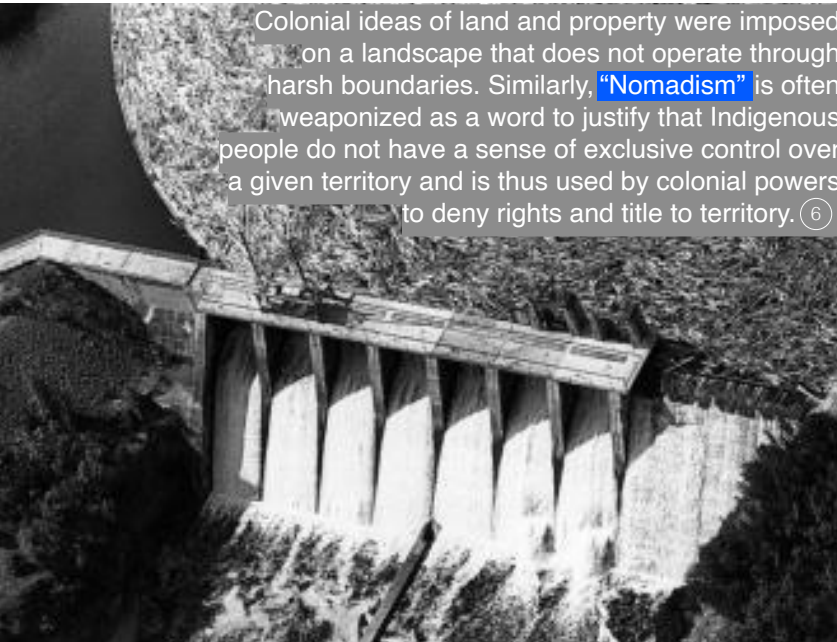


11

Map of salmon pools by Lady Aileen Roberts made in 1923. Les Amies des Jardins de Métis Collection.

The fishing pools, a series of rock formations and water currents allowing salmon to congregate as they move up the river, are sometimes assigned to an owner, but the looser blue strokes suggest that Lady Aileen Roberts understood, at least intuitively, that the Mitis River, its waters and its salmon, resists ownership or containment.

12 Map of the Mitis Seigneurie from 1700-1850. The seigneurial system came out of an effort to attract settlers to the region, representing the ways in which gathering itself is not a neutral act, but shapes the landscape based on vectors of power, control and domination that translate these abstract boundaries into concrete legal, infrastructural, and economic barriers to the Mitis River.



Colonial ideas of land and property were imposed on a landscape that does not operate through harsh boundaries. Similarly, “Nomadism” is often weaponized as a word to justify that Indigenous people do not have a sense of exclusive control over a given territory and is thus used by colonial powers to deny rights and title to territory. ⑥

Local entrepreneur Jules Brillant, head of the Lower St. Lawrence Power Company, purchased the lower stretch of the Mitis River from Elsie Reford, creator of the Jardins de Métis, in 1942 to build the second dam along the river, Mitis II, which served as a physical impediment to the river and the salmon’s migration upriver. ⑦

13

Yet the Mouth of the Mitis River continues to be a place defined by its gathering of different peoples despite being owned and managed by the Reford family and now, the Jardins de Métis.



Fishing cabin at the mouth of the Mitis River. Hannah Thiessen. 14



15 'Foule à l'embouchure'. Comité du patrimoine de Price.



16 Recreational fishers at the mouth of the river. Hannah Thiessen.

Cecilia Chen, Janine MacLeod, and
Astrida Neimanis continue:

“Understanding waters in place helps us engage with waters and places as mutually transforming and transformative phenomena. It is neither that places contain waters: the specificity of situated waters articulated with places, with space and time, with dynamic bodies, materials, and semantic contexts can enable a more thoughtful discussion of watery relations”.

①

To gather - to bring together, to collect

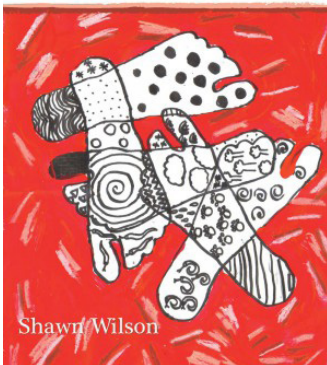
To gather together

To collect stories, objects,
names and
perspectives of a place



17 A gathering we held at the Jardins de Métis to shares stories around the Mitis River. Hannah Thiessen.

Research Is Ceremony Indigenous Research Methods



18 Research is Ceremony:
Indigenous Research
Methods by Shawn Wilson.

Shawn Wilson

“The concepts or ideas are not as important as the relationships that went into forming them”. (8)

The Mitis River as a gathering of currents, people, and stories together is similar to the process of research; following these currents becomes an invitation itself.

References for Gathering:

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- ③ Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence. "Meet the Indigenous Peoples of the Métis-Sur-Mer Area." Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence. Accessed August 22, 2023. <https://heritagelsl.ca/meet-the-indigenous-peoples-of-the-metis-sur-mer-area/>.
- ④ The Mi'gmaq Wolastoqey Indigenous Fisheries Management Association. "COMMUNAL SUBSISTENCE FISHERY: Atlantic Salmon ." *The Atlas of Marine St.- Lawrence Mi'gmaq and Maliseet Sites and Their Uses.*, n.d.
- ⑤ Todd, Zoe. "Refracting the State Through Human-Fish Relations Fishing, Indigenous Legal Orders and Colonialism in North/Western Canada." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 7, no. 1 (August 31, 2018): 60–75.
- ⑥ Gespe'gewa'gi Mi'gmawei Mawiomi. *Nta'tugwaqanminen Our Story: Evolution of the Gespe'gewa'gi Mi'gmaq*. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2016.
- ⑦ Reford Gardens. "Fish Stories: Hydroelectric Dams ." *Community Stories*, 2016. https://www.communitystories.ca/v2/histoire-de-peche_fish-stories/story/hydro-electric-dams-2/.
- ⑧ Wilson, Shawn. *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2008.

List of Figures for Gathering:

1. 'How Do You Call This Place'. Canvas for a collective drawing produced during a community engagement event at the mouth of the Metis River.
2. Thiessen, Hannah. Gathering at the Mouth of the River, Image, 2023.
3. Thiessen, Hannah. Where the two rivers meet, Image, 2023.
4. The Mi'gmaq Maliseet Aboriginal Fisheries Management Association, Atlas of marine St. Lawrence Mi'gmaq and Maliseet sites and their uses by the Gesgapegiag, Gespeg and Wahsipekuk (Viger) Nations. Screenshot, 2019. <http://atlas.ghamm.ca/>.
5. Houde-Hostland, Marie-Ellen. Ji'gaw (Mi'gmaq), Nokahkehke (Wolastoquey), Striped bass (English), Bar rayé (French). July 16th, 2023.
6. Houde-Hostland, Marie-Ellen. Kataq (Mi'gmaq), Sakapsqehom (Wolastoquey), American eel (English), Anguille (French). July 16th, 2023.
7. Houde-Hostland, Marie-Ellen. Jplamu (Mi'gmaq), Polam (Wolastoquey), Atlantic salmon (English), Saumon atlantique (French). July 16th, 2023.
8. Reford, Alexander. Alexander speaking along the banks of the Mitis River. June 25, 2023.
9. The Mi'gmaq Wolastoqey Indigenous Fisheries Management Association. "COMMUNAL SUBSISTENCE FISHERY: Atlantic Salmon ." The Atlas of Marine St.- Lawrence Mi'gmaq and Maliseet Sites and Their Uses., n.d.
10. Houde-Hostland, Marie-Ellen. Currents of the Mitis River overlaying map of the Grand-Métis region. July 2023.
11. Roberts, Lady Aileen. Plan of Metis River. 1923. Les Amis Des Jardins de Métis Collection.
12. Ballantyne, D. S. Esquisse d'une terre appartenant à Mr. McNider. Map, 1829. Les Amis des Jardins de Métis Collection.
13. Les Amis des Jardins de Métis.
14. Thiessen, Hannah. Fishing cabin at the mouth of the Mitis River, Image, 2023.
15. Comité du patrimoine de Price. 'Foule a l'Embouchure'. 1920-1980.
16. Thiessen, Hannah. Recreational fishers at the mouth of the river. June 29, 2023.
17. Thiessen, Hannah. A gathering we held at the Jardins de Métis to shares stories around the Mitis River. June 29, 2023.
18. Wilson, Shawn. Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2008. Cover.

Movement 1

One Lake. Three Lakes.

Lac aux anguilles. Lac de la Croix. Grand Lac Métis. Three lakes flowing into each other before feeding the Mitis River were mapped by Thomas Breen in 1870. When the Governor General of New France, Louis Buade de Frontenac, created a seigneurial grant in 1693 for Louis Rouer, the young son of Augustin Rouer de la Cardonnière, the grant referred to one lake called 'Mitis,' which flowed into a river of the same name. There was no attempt to exploit the lakes and the surrounding forest until the Price Brothers Company acquired the seigneurial grant in 1922 for their timber and paper business. When determining the boundaries of their land, the federal government disagreed with the Price Brothers on the wording of the initial seigneurial grant. The former believed it referred to one out of three lakes, whereas the latter thought it referred to the entire cluster. ⑨ During the legal case *The King v. Price Bros & Co. Ltd.* in 1925, the Price Brothers used a series of historical maps from 1765 to 1863 which represented the three lakes as a singular serpentine lake to show that Frontenac did not know there were three lakes in 1693 when he created the grant. Instead, he granted Louis Rouer all three lakes, thinking it was one. When the Price Brothers finished building the dam at the springhead of the Mitis River for log driving, the water level of the lakes rose, and the three lakes literally became one. The past was conjured to return. A concrete dam eventually replaced the Price Brother's timber dam. This new dam helped retain water for the two hydroelectrical plants downriver: Mitis-1 and Mitis-2. However, these plants haven't produced any energy since 2018. The water retention dam now sat without a purpose. Crumbling. ⑩

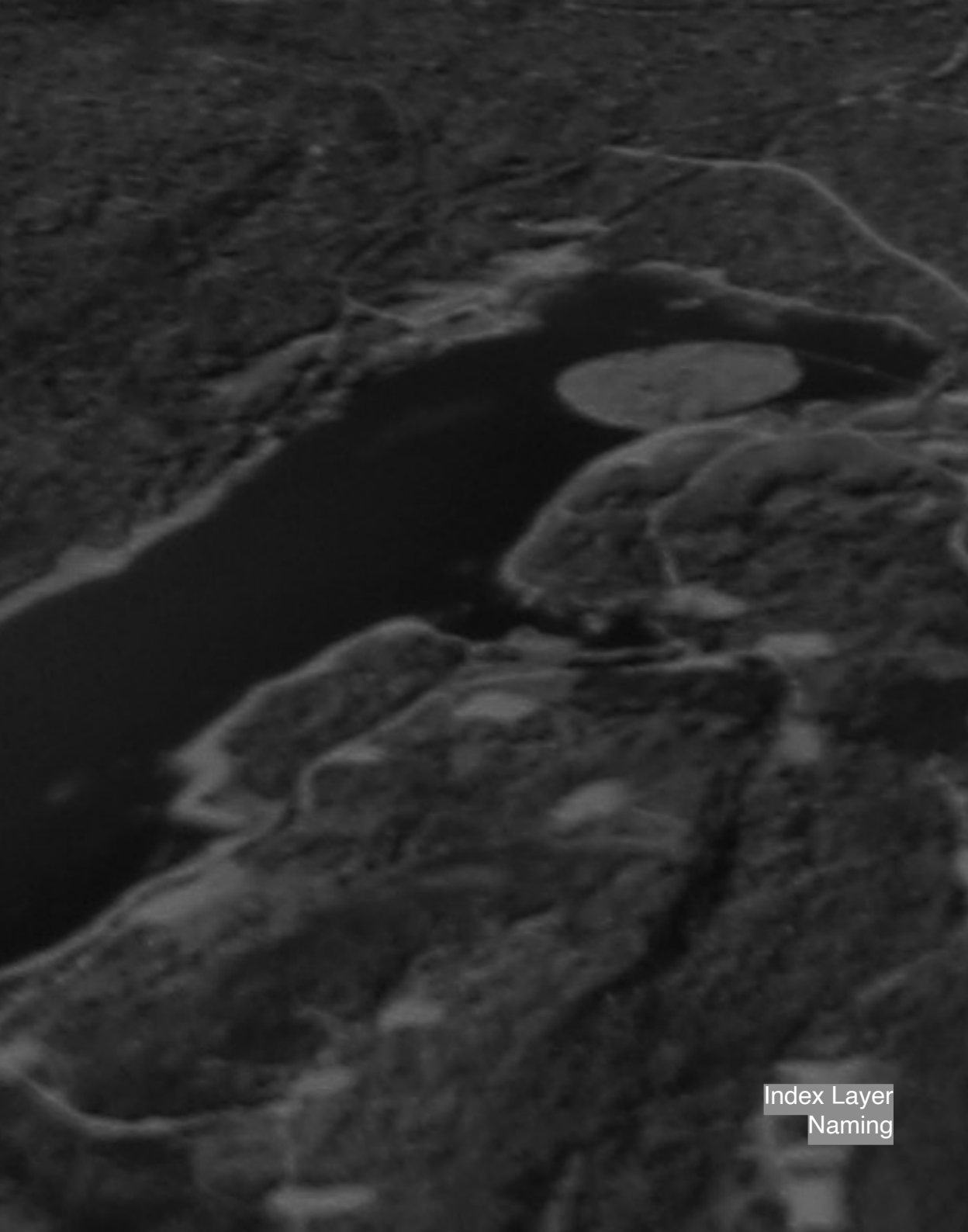
Sitting in the cartotheque of the Université du Québec à Rimouski, behind heavy stereoscopes, we listened to cartographer **Kati Brown** tell us the story of Lac Métis with excitement. She fished at the lake almost every year and looked forward to returning the following week to stay at one of the many lakefront chalets available for short-term rent. From the young proprietor Louis Rouer, who never got to grow old, to the clever Price Brothers, to Solifor, the current proprietor, we slowly pieced together the long series of exchange of ownerships and transformations of the lake that was once three. At the end of her story, Kati laughed and said:

“You know, they might eventually remove the dam at the lake. If they do, the lake will become three lakes again. The lakefront chalets, they won’t be so lakefront anymore.”

19

Cartotheque at the Université
du Québec à Rimouski.
Hannah Thiessen.





Index Layer
Naming

WHAT DO YOU CALL THIS PLACE?



Métis (and therefore Mitis)

may originate from the word **Mitisk**

meaning little birch to Mi'gmaq people and little poplars to Wolastoqiyik people. These trees border the Mitis River.

20

'La Pointe'. Where the two rivers meet.
Hannah Thiessen.

The second possible origin is from the Mi'kmaq word **metiouli** or **mitiwee** meaning "meeting place", in relation to the gathering of Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik, and settler people.

(11)

21

'La Pointe'. A Place of many names.



Fleuve in French

doesn't translate directly in English. A fleuve may be defined as a large river leading to the sea, but it is described in Métis-sur-Mer via personal connection and sentimental intuition.

“We were curious what fleuve means to you and how you would translate that to English.”

Mario Bélanger

“Well fleuve is bigger than a river, that’s what we say you know. The fleuve is like a big river. But us, when we were kids and a lot of people still today, they say on va à la mer. They don’t say we are going to the St. Lawrence or to the fleuve or to the river. They say la mer. La mer is like the ocean.”

“Do you think its the salt water or the fact we can’t see the other side?”

Mario Bélanger

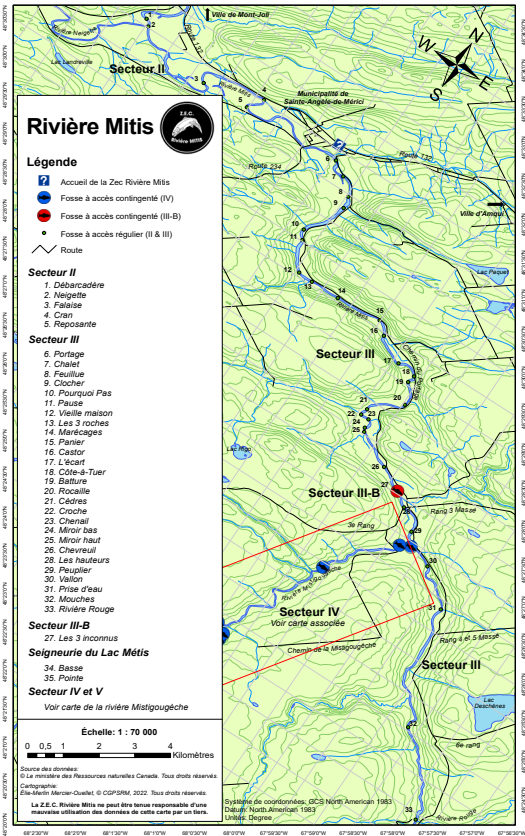
“Probably, the saltwater and it’s so big. It doesn’t feel like a river. It feels like an ocean. So we always call it **La Mer**”

- pemijajiga'sit** - move along the shore
- pempega's'g** - start to rise (of tide)
- pempegitg** - flow along (12)

Pourquoi pas - why not
L'écart - the gap

"Rivière Mitis has 33 pools divided into 2 public sectors (II & III) and 1 restricted draw sector (III-B)." (13)

- 131. **pagq'si**
seaweed
- 132. **paqtlusg'teg**
extremely low tide
- 133. **pemamgw'e'get**
pole along
- 134. **pema'q**
swim along
- 135. **pemagteget**
sail along
- 136. **pemijajiga'sit**
move along the shore
walk along shore
- 137. **pemijajigisugwit**
paddle along the shore
- 138. **pemijimet**
paddle along
row along
- 139. **pemisawagteget**
sail along by
- 140. **pemisugwit**
paddle along
- 141. **pemitg**
flow along
- 142. **pemij'malat**
paddle along
row along
- 143. **pemij'matg**
paddle along
row along
- 144. **pemij'met**
paddle along
row along
- 145. **pempa'q**
rise (of tide)
- 146. **pempega's'g**
start to rise (of tide)
- 147. **pempegitg**
flow along
- 148. **pemq'gwet**
float along
drift along



22 "water" category in Mi'gmaq-Mi'kmaq talking dictionary project
<https://www.mikmaqonline.org/>

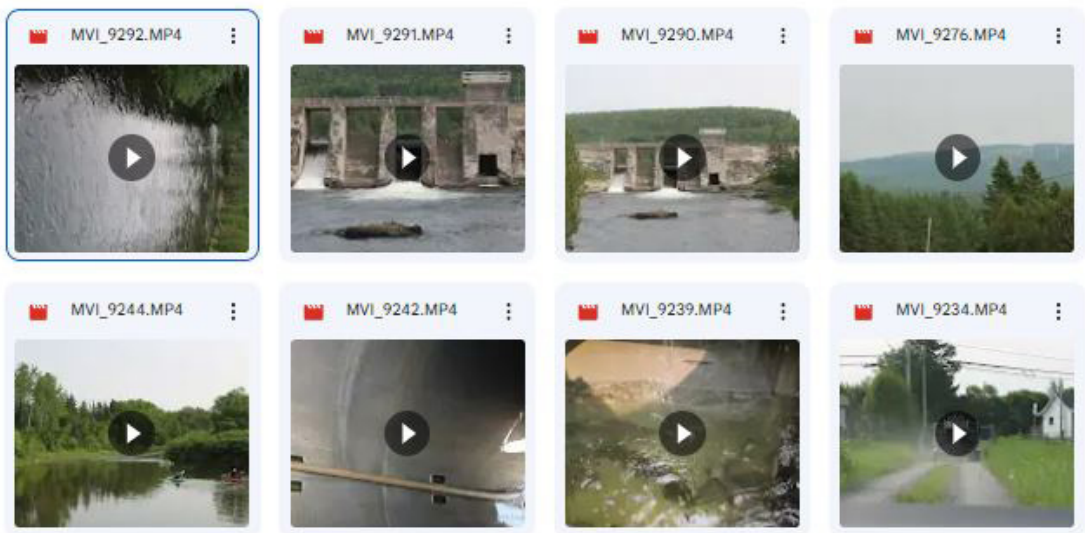
23 ZEC map of fishing zones related to permit requirements.

Learning the grammar of animacy could well be a restraint on our mindless exploitation of land. (14)

“English doesn’t give us many tools for incorporating respect for animacy. In English, you’re either a human or a thing. Our grammar boxes us in by reducing a non-human being to an “it,” or if it must be gendered, inappropriately a “he” or a “she.” Where are our words for the simple existence of another living being.” (14)

“The animacy of the world is something we already know. But, the language of animacy teeters on extinction, not just for native peoples, but for everyone.” (14)

Animate: beyond being alive or acting, it is to be full of thought, desire, contemplation, and will. It is the literal embodiment of the feminine of First Woman, by which many Indigenous origin stories find their inception. (15)



24 Video Recording as documentation of the River.

Place-Thought: “the non-distinctive space where place and thought were never separated because they never could or can be separated. Place-Thought is based upon the premise that land is alive and thinking and that humans and non-humans derive agency through the extensions of these thoughts.” - **Vanessa Watts**

15

Ideas form through encounters with specific times and places. Places and landscape attributes can be utilized as reference points for communicating knowledge, acting as an archive for social memory.

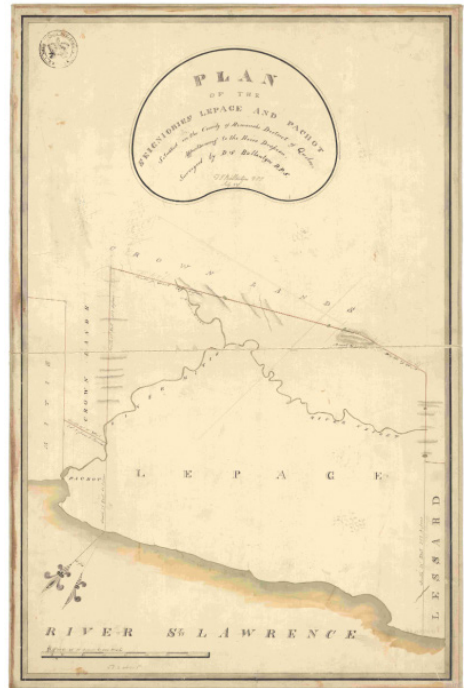
Porous knowledge terms, regularly understood as static, timeless, and isolated:

Local Knowledge
Traditional Knowledge
Ecological Knowledge

The words used when negotiating land claims are deceptively contested, meaning different things to the involved parties- “terms like “land,” hunting,” resources,” and “property.” The groups develop their understanding of “common sense,” yet only some participants have the power to write these understandings into legal agreements. 16

There is “widespread misapprehension that, with the signing of comprehensive land claim agreements, colonial relations were somehow resolved, in that Indigenous peoples were “given” parcels of land by the state. This is not so. Comprehensive land claim agreements in northern Canada are premised on the state’s recognition that Indigenous peoples hold a primary and unceded claim to their lands, as acknowledged in the Royal Proclamation of 1763. The property relations, institutions, and interactions that are formalized through land claim agreements are not gifts from a benevolent state; the agreements require Indigenous signatories to formally cede their claims to the land in exchange for specific types of compensation, title, and the establishment of forms of governance that might more substantially account for their interests than existing structures” (17)

Emilie Cameron



25 Map of Seigniorial Grant including the Mitis River. Duncan Stephen Ballantyne.

...“institutions established through land claim agreements often reinforce and perpetuate colonial relations”

(17)

Littoral

“Do you think you could describe in English what it means?”

Émile Forest

“When the, I would call it the sea, when the St. Lawrence River meets land. You have this small piece of land that is so much influenced by the sea that sometimes it becomes the sea, sometimes it is land.”

Mi'kmaq scholar **Margaret Robinson** explains the Mi'gmaq relationship between humans and animals, including their reciprocal exchange through hunting rituals. Robinson describes Mi'qmaq worldviews being intrinsically connected to non-human animal relationships.

“Humans and animals both experience our lives in the first-person, overcoming fears, having adventures, falling in love, raising families, vanquishing enemies, and having a relationship with Kisu'lk, the Creator”

The objectification of animals “is reflected in our treaties with settler governments, and has codified an instrumental view of animals as if it were an inherent aspect of Mi'qmaq culture”

(18)

English	Mi'kmaq	Literal meaning
January	Penamujuiku's	Frost fish runs
February	Apuknajit	Snow blinding month
March	Siewkesiku's	Forerunner of Spring
April	Penatmuiku's	Egg hatching time
May	Etqujuiku's	Frog croaking time
June	Nipniku's	Leaves are budding time
July	Peskewiku's	Animal fur thickens time
August	Kisikwekewiku's	Ripening time
September	Wikumkewiku's	Mate calling time
October	Wikewiku's	Animal fattening time
November	Keptekewiku's	Frost month
December	Kesikewiku's	Winter month

26 Mi'kmaq names for the months of the year, referring to the experience of animals during that time.



27 Collection of Death in the Sea. Institut Maurice Lamontagne. Hannah Thiessen.



28

Jardins de Métis
between the Mitis and
St Lawrence River. Les
Jardins de Métis.

“While land ownership boundaries shifted between French and English settler, Mi’kmaq Nation maintained its understanding of land, dividing the spaces into seven districts

1. **Kespukwitk** - Lands End
2. **Sipekni’katik** - Wild Potato Area
3. **Eskikewa’kik** - Skin Dressers Area
4. **Unama’kik** - Land of Fog
5. **Sikniqt** - Drainage Area
6. **Kespek** - Last Land (the Miramichi, Restigouche Rivers watersheds in New Brunswick and the Gaspé Peninsula in Québec)
7. **Epekwitk Aqq Piktuk** - Laying in the Water and The Explosive Area” (19)



29 Map of New France (1688). Vincenzo Coronelli.

European settler cartographers have combined Indigenous geographical knowledge with their own observations since the 16th century

“The French made do with a profusion of native names which was not incompatible with their imperial pretensions: naming and mapping the territory, even in a foreign language, also meant appropriating it metaphorically.”

(20)

Psi-te ntolonapemok

All of my relations

Jaqala'sit

ruée
rush

Kakawi

It flows fast,
there is a strong current

Kolhikon

loqte'gn
trappe
trap

“The presence of native names is in a way a proof for the French that they knew the places and their inhabitants before other rival Christian powers.” (20)

macessu

bouge
physical movement

polamuwok

plamu'g
saumons
salmon

ela'q

swim toward

Kpihikon

dam
barrage

kihkan
iga'taqan
garden

skicinuwatu

parle comme un Autochtone
speak like an Indigenous
person

The Jardins de Métis will serve as a space of dialogue and community engagement. Located on the eastern shore of the Mitis River, and so on the ancestral territories of the Wolastoqiyik and the Mi'gmaq, the Jardins de Métis will host the participating students for a one-month research residency (21)

to fish
pêcher

amjimoqtessg

caught and stuck

ekehkimut
étudiant

Wolastoquey (22)

Mi'gmaq (12)

Français
English

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Movement 2

Changing Myths

In July 2023, Bruno Paradis, mayor of Price and the MRC la Mitis prefect, announced his ambition to create a touristic ‘utopia’ centered around the decommissioned Mitis-1 dam. Dreaming about bistros and walkways offering direct views of the concrete barrier, the mayor depicts the hydroelectric dam as a monument of significance. ⁽²³⁾ The deep sense of pride that the nearby community feels towards it can be traced to its inception in the 1920s. Jules A. Brilliant, the founder of the Compagnie-du-Pouvoir-du-Bas-Saint-Laurent, which built Mitis-1 and two decades later Mitis-2, represented the growing Francophone upper class in the early twentieth century. ⁽²⁴⁾ The purchase of the Mitis River waterfalls from wealthy horticulturist Elsie Reford also marked a period of increase in land ownership by Francophones in the Lower St-Lawrence. The oral and written history of the Mitis dams is often told as a story of the empowerment of the Québécois people.

When hydroelectric companies were consolidated into Hydro-Québec during the Quiet Revolution in the 1960s, the dams took on the more significant narrative role of showing that Québécois people became “Maîtres chez nous” (Masters in Our Own Home). The hydroelectrical energy production increase in post-WWII Québec coincided with a nationalist movement leaving behind race-based discourses of nationhood proposed by 1920s nationalist thinkers such as Lionel Groulx and Benjamin Sulte. Hydro-Québec’s vast network of plants was the perfect story to support the refreshed founding myth that describes the Québec nation as a collective that emerged from the symbiotic

⁽²⁵⁾

relationship with the landscape of Québec. The dams were the looms that helped weave the story which entangled the Québécois people, the governmental apparatus, and the many rivers and falls of the province. Through these massive pieces of infrastructure, a nation could communicate both ownership and dependence on the landscape of a 'homeland.' The 'low-emission' qualities of this form of energy and the amount produced relative to other provinces also ensured the perenity of a sense of Québécois exceptionalism.

It is evident that these nationalist narratives around hydroelectricity, because of their political purpose, are difficult to reconcile with the substantial disruption of life for indigenous communities that have harvested and gathered around these rivers long before the arrival of European settlers. The flooding and fauna disappearance are often filtered out of the oral history of dams. If these imposing monuments represent a Québécois claim on the landscape, they are also architectural silencers of indigenous land claims. How will Québec nationalist narratives evolve moving forward? Can such narratives avoid using unsubstantiated claims of collective descentance from indigenous peoples as a response to discomfort? Is it possible to talk about the right of Québécois people to self-governance without threatening the freedom of self-governance of Indigenous nations?



30

Métis-1 Hydroelectric dam.
Price Heritage Society.

Movement 3


On the Topic of Race-Shifting

In Eastern Quebec, racial identity is undergoing accelerated movement. According to the Canadian census, from 2006 to 2016, the number of self-reported “Métis” in the province increased by 147%. (26) This astonishing figure begs us to ask what it means to shift one’s identity from that of a settler to that of an Indigenous person. Undoubtedly, the shift takes on a different meaning to different people. There are certainly people who are, as Mi’gmaq author Daniel N. Paul calls, “opportunists” who wish to benefit from the treaty rights of First Nations and government programs aimed at first nations. (27) Others may mistakenly believe, similarly to Elizabeth Warren, that having a distant Indigenous ancestor equates to being indigenous. Others, like activists Sacheen Littlefeather and, more recently, Andrea Smith, may naively feel that identifying as Indigenous allows them to advocate for the rights of Indigenous people more effectively. (28)

Unlike the examples above, many self-reported Métis do not claim membership of a specific nation, such as the recognized Métis nation of Canada. Instead, they are part of political groups such as the Métis Nation of the Rising Sun (MNRS) based in Gaspésie and Lower-Saint-Lawrence, which advocates for recognition and fishing rights for its members. These groups, almost always funded by registration and annual membership fees, are based on self-reported ancestry and do not have a structure to verify applicants. Therefore, it is impossible for these groups to demonstrate a distinct culture as a people. (29)

With the increase in this phenomenon, sometimes called 'race-shifting' by scholars such as Darryl Leroux, the questions around the rivers of Eastern Quebec will also increase in complexity.⁽³⁰⁾ In recent years, cases such as that of Eric Parent, a member of the MNRS who took legal action with the support of his organization to argue that the fines he received for exceeding his fishing quota near the Bonaventure River in Gaspésie did not apply to him due to his Metis identity, suggest that difficult conversations around racial identity are urgent.⁽³¹⁾ However, Canadian author Thomas King has provided warnings in his stories of using 'Indian Status' as the only metric of Indigeneity. The classification originating from the Indian Act has often been used to exclude and dismiss people who wished to build relationships with a community they have been removed from.⁽³²⁾

In what ways can the current mobilization and activism from the Eastern Métis groups threaten the treaty rights and land claim of the Innu, Mi'gmaq, and Wolastoqiyik communities in Eastern Quebec? What actions need to be taken to prevent that?



Index Layer
Collection



31 Stéphanie Béliveau's Depuis le rivage. Stéphanie Béliveau.

Stéphanie Béliveau describes the physical challenge she overcame to carry buckets of soft clay from the Fleuve St Lawrence to dry land. She regales us with stories of intimate exchange between her and the water, including proclamations of forgiveness to a place that holds onto her most painful memories. An enclosed case appears filled with an authentic sea collection, a mound of sea sponges and coral. Examined closer, the collection reveals itself as an arrangement of foams, plastics, and decontextualized synthetic materials that found one another via "l'embouchure du fleuve."

River as active collector, its mouth holding onto our pasts, storing our decisions until we understand them.

In 2014, McGill researchers scooped and sorted high concentrations of polyethylene microplastics from the St Lawrence River.

The amounts are similar to the most highly contaminated ocean sediments in the world.

“It was previously assumed that floating microplastics are flushed through rivers to the sea. Now we have evidence that rivers can act as a sink for this pollution.” (33)



32 Microplastic beads found in St-Lawrence. Rowshyra A. Castañeda,, Suncica Avlijas, M. Anouk Simard, and Anthony Ricciardi.



33 Collection found at shore of St Lawrence. Hannah Thiessen.

The surface of these beads attracts chemical pollutants, like PCBs-carcinogenic compounds used in industrial and consumer products until 1977, when production was banned in Canada. PCBs still participate in environmental contamination, as small organisms absorb PCBs via habitat exposure. The contaminated organisms are consumed and transfer PCBs up the food chain.

(34)

River as collection, framing what we claim important



34

35

Mouth of Mitis River
during different storm
events (19), via Reconyx
(example, left, 21)



36

Stills from our unreleased Mitis sur
Mer horror movie, featuring Rose
Côté's shoreline collection. Hannah
Thiessen.

The mouth of the river has especially fertile soil, encouraging agricultural activity west of the river. (35)

Water sampling suggests that the current agricultural practices in this area present a risk to water quality. Nitrite, nitrate, and phosphorus levels were found to be abnormally high when sampled- threatening the health of aquatic life by allowing heightened algae growth. (35)

Agricultural zones near the river have minimal trees, likely removed in favor of annual crops or due to over-grazing. (36)

The lowest quality riparian buffers (areas with trees, shrubs, plants that limit excess sediment in water) include Mitis 1 and Mitis 2 dam facilities and the salmon capture station. (35)



37 Salmon transport.
Hannah Thiessen.

**River as collaborator,
collecting based..**

on our collections

Seals, seabirds, aggressive striped bass all congregate at the mouths of rivers, capitalizing on the migration of salmon.

Dam structures and water management programs significantly impact salmon and salmon habitat, affecting factors like flow rate and temperature. Predatory risks increase when salmon have to wait in estuary zones before moving up/downstream. (37)

Sealice move through cages, preying on trapped salmon. (37)

framing research through the perspective of landscape may describe place's role beyond human associations,

but it could also conceal human directives- suggesting states of degradation/contamination as natural or essential

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Movement 4

Broken Journey

At eight o'clock on a late June morning, we watched the first salmon transport of the day at the mouth of the Mitis River. On their long journey inland to lay their eggs, a dozen Atlantic salmon arrive in their mechanical waiting room. If allowed to continue their climb, they would soon be confronted with the reality that the pathway to their destination, precisely mapped in their bodies, has long been broken by an insurmountable obstacle. The Mitis-2 hydroelectric dam built in 1947 by local hero Jules A. Brilliant's Compagnie du Pouvoir du Bas-Saint-Laurent stands taller than any fish can jump. (24) The cage is closed. The more they are, the more likely they hurt each other in their confused state. The half-submerged cage tied by four chains to a bright yellow crane is lifted above a shiny metal drum at the rear of a truck. The drum is opened from the top allowing the fish to be poured into the container. The dark passage begins.

A salmon feeds for years in the ocean to gather the energy they need for the tiring journey to spawn. For many, it would be the last trip of their life. However, for the Mitis River salmon, their expedition's narrative is marked by a 15-kilometer blur. The strong red body they have built is suspended in the air and rattled by a turbulent ride in complete darkness. The salmon float past the two immense concrete structures that disrupted their yearly ritual, never to see them. When they finally perceive light again, it is through a tube that dispenses them back to the river, where they can continue their trip.

This operation is the results of the careful planning of the Zone d'Exploitation Controlée (ZEC) Mitis., part of a network of wildlife management organizations funded by the Quebec Government. In 1978, these zones replaced the old lease system, which viewed fauna management as the responsibility of the many private hunting and fishing clubs that leased the rivers and lakes of the province. The clubs' conservation strategy was often based on making hunting and fishing available only to a secretive elite and their distinguished guests. In their attempt to make fishing more accessible, the ZECs maintain fish counts, grant a limited number of permits, and sometimes chauffeurs groups of fish who can no longer accomplish their journey alone. The river invites the Atlantic salmon back to its birthplace every year, but our extractive relationship with water severed the place from their memories. Each salmon transport trip is another guilty post-script to our invitation to extinction. (38) (39)

38

Atlantic salmon in the salmon transport tank.
Hannah Thiessen.





Index Layer
Harvest

From the mouth of the Mitis River, we drove inland, through heavy air tinted red by ongoing fires, following the same path as the yearly salmon run. That morning, the long chain of calls, referrals, and forwarded e-mails finally gave us permission to retrace the water back to its origin. Of the riverhead, we know little – only from stray whispers and fragments from the past. A court case involving a pulp and paper company and a map drawn in the seventeenth century. Holiday stories from a Rimouski cartographer. Pages from a boastful fishing log. Hasty sketches by a sentimental land surveyor. When we arrived at what can be called the river's beginning, a narrow stream pouring through a dam in ruins, we found ourselves amidst a dizzying landscape of resource extraction. A panorama far from picturesque.



39 Dam at Lac Métis. Hannah Thiessen.

We walked toward the comma-shaped lake which births the river sharing its name. The pathway under our feet marked the edge of a newly cut forest hedged by tall pyramids of fir trunks. The mountains of logs observed our movements like the hundred eyes of the giant Argus. Where will all this wood go to? Another mass timber building crowned with awards, perhaps. The rapid lumbering of the Lower Saint-Lawrence transformed the identity of these forests. Centenary coniferous trees gave way to young deciduous trees. Feeding on the immature leafy branches, rich in nutrients, the moose population reached unprecedented levels. As the headcount increases, so does the likelihood of mass death from starvation and disease. Fearing that the grazing may prevent the harvested forest from ever repairing itself, every summer, the proprietor of the seigneurie welcomes groups of hunters here, tasking them to replace the packs of wolves, natural predators of these woods who have long disappeared. Harvesting calls for more harvesting. (40)



40

Stacks of logs at the seigneurie du Lac Métis. Hannah Thiessen,

Reaching Lac Métis, we were welcomed by an electric red warning sign marked with a white circle pierced by a thunderbolt, iconic symbol of Hydro-Quebec. Behind the placard, the sickly backside of the dam is exposed, twisted rebars shooting out of its open wounds. Two workers walked around the dying structure to assess its uncertain future. During this time, what would become of the hydroelectric infrastructure on the Mitis River was still a closely guarded secret. First erected to facilitate the movement of logs downstream, the Mitis dam's purpose changed many times. Built and rebuilt. Always for harvest. Possibly waiting to be rebuilt once more.

41

Backside of the decaying dam at Lac Métis.
Hannah Thiessen.





42 Map the seigneurie du Lac Métis.
Hannah Thiessen.

At last, we made our way to the network of trails leading to the numerous fishing lodges. We could hear behind us the fading rumble of a truck loaded with timber driving away while stirring up a dense cloud of dust. In front of us was a map of the seigneurie on a wooden structure coiffed with a shingled hat. One of many along the paths on which the ink began to fade from the bottom up. Like ghosts, the three original lakes that formed Lac Mitis existed on the map as small, printed names in parenthesis. The tortuous pathways in the forest, drawn like a mesh of axons, were impossible to understand. How many paths still existed, as illustrated by the faint dashed lines?

Disoriented, we walked on, following the curves of the water.

Mario Bélanger

My grandfather used the river to transport timber, my father used the river to produce electricity. I guess that's why I feel a connection to the river.

43



Institut Maurice-Lamontagne is a research institute of Oceans and Fisheries Canada conducting research related to aquatic ecosystems management of the St-Lawrence River and Estuary, the Saguanay Fjord and Hudson's Bay.



44

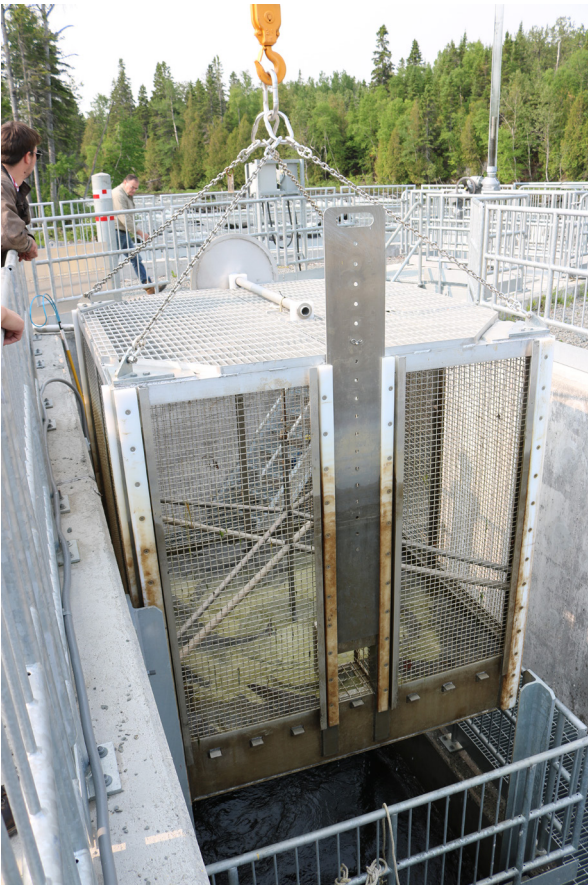
Laboratory space at the Institut Maurice-Lamontagne. Water tanks are available for researchers to rent in their study of various aquatic species.

45

One of the tanks is used for the study of the Saint-Lawrence redbfish. This species, previously depleted from overfishing, saw a rebound in population and body mass. While the institute is interested in permitting redbfish fishing once again, it recognizes that policy change will take time. The results of the return of this fish to the Canadian diet are also unclear.



The Zone d'Exploitation Contrôlée (ZEC) Mitis manages the salmon transport from the mouth of the Mitis River to Sainte-Angèle-de-Merici. During every trip, the number of salmon is precisely counted. The ZEC believes the salmon transports helps a threatened salmon population grow.



46 When a dozen or so fish enter the cage, it is lifted up to allow the transfer of the salmon to the truck.



47 The crane places the cage on top of the transport truck where the fish is dispensed into the steel drum.

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Movement 5

Fishing and Dispossession

Many historical accounts attempt to explain the dispossession of the Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqiyik from their traditional territory in the Gaspé Peninsula. Fishing settlements and changes in fishing laws had an important role in the forced migration of their communities from the Lower Saint-Lawrence. The following quotes provide fragments of explanations.

Many gaps of knowledge remain.

From Nta'tugwaqanminen: Evolution of the Gespe'gewa'gi Mi'gmaq, a history of the Mi'gmaq nation in the Gaspé Peninsula :

“Before 1763, the Mi'gmaq were the only permanent inhabitant in Gespe'gewa'gi. European fishers, and only a few hundreds of them, came during the cod fishing season only and camped at various fishing posts. After the arrival of the British, the European settlements' growth was alarming. The Acadian refugees were the first to arrive in 1755. Thirty years later, other refugees, loyalists this time, moved into the area.” (6)

“The once bountiful stocks [of fish] essential to our subsistence were threatened by the British merchants' aggressive fishing technique.”

(6)

From **Wildlife, Conservation, and Conflict in Quebec, 1840-1914**, by Darcy Ingram.

In 1857, the Montreal Fish and Game Protection Club wrote the following message to the colonial government.

“We are of the opinion that their privilege, which allows them a latitude of with they have shown themselves unworthy, should be abolished and that they should be brought down to the level of other citizens. In fact the tenderness shewn, and the exclusive rights granted, act as incentives on the Indians, to persist in their present idle, useless and uncivilized modes of life.” (41)

From the **1858 Lower Canada Fishery Act**:

“[...]prohibited is the fishing for, taking, and killing of any Salmon or Sea-Trout by aid of torch-light or other artificial light, and by means of spears, harpoon (n’egog), jigger-hooks, or grapnel.”

(41)

From **Autochtones de l’Est du Québec**, by Serge Goudreau.

“Les derniers Micmacs du Bas-Saint-Laurent se sont vraisemblablement intégrés à la bande Malécite de l’île Verte (Famille René) où sont retourné vivre en Gaspésie” (42)

According to Goudreau, Between 1870-1900, exogamous marriages involving Wolastoqiyik people begin to increase. In the 36 marriage records involving Wolastoqiyik people dated to this period, 24 were exogamous. Approximately 50% of Wolastoqiyik marriages in the Lower Saint-Lawrence were exogamous.

(42)



How does the Mitis River invite memory?



48 Walking towards the exposed shore.
Hannah Thiessen.

Intensifying waters creep inland and, along with strengthening rainfalls, work away at the soil layers making up the shoreline.

Soils erode and older soils are exposed.

Soils, rocks, clays holding objects, artefacts, stories, and memories; the stuff of history.

This eroding shoreline makes this history a matter of the present: a self-exposing archive.

In their own way, the fluctuating rivers act as calls to remember.

Shards of glass from a picnic that day.

Grasses

Topsoil, Roots.

The leftover stones of a building foundation recalls a Mitis River once used as the Price Brothers' wood mill.

Soil,

Organic matter, mussel shells and fish bones, decomposed.

Time, there is history here too, but it is not perceptible to all eyes and memories.

An arrowhead brought here by Mi'gmaq travelers from the late Middle Woodland (1500 to 1000 years BC), made of stone carried all the way from what is today known as Labrador.

Clay,

and Rock.



49

Marking out archeological objects of interest.
Hannah Thiessen.



50

Objects of interest are noted, measured and captured in their context. Nicolas Beaudry, Université du Québec à Rimouski, Laboratoire d'archéologie et de patrimoine.

Marie-Ellen: "Jia, what did we learn today?"

Jia: "Today we learned that you should not touch archeological material with your bare hands". (43)



51 Arrowheads and cutting tools belonging to indigenous people who visited the Mouth of the River as early as the Middle Woodland period. Collected and stored in the grounds around the river, they become artifacts during an archeological dig lead by Les Amis des Jardins de Métis from 2012-2014. They have been since stored in their archives.

These artifacts recall how both Wolastoqiyik and Mi'gmaq people stayed on the banks of the Mitis River making tools, trading, and hunting. Durable stones maintain this history in the settler archive, but stripped of their context, they do not capture the stories, words, and lessons that circulated with these tools. (44)

91. DdEa-2 / 1H-11 / Pointe de flèche

52 Archiving at the Jardins de Métis involves a system of coding archeological material. Marie-Ellen Houde-Hostland.



53 Archival holdings at the Canadian Centre for Architecture are stored in a controlled, concealed and secured environment. Gabor Szilasi.

We visited the archives at the Jardins de Métis : an enclosed room with shelves of the Reford's house objects, books, paintings, maps and pieces found at the Mouth of the Mitis River.

CCA:

//

Collection

We see our collection as a repository of ideas, provocations, inspirations and trials and errors. Made up of both archival holdings and the output of our activities, our collection is both a base of materials for research and a body which new readings and contexts are tested. (45)

//

Ange Loft an interdisciplinary performing artist from Kahnawà:ke, in her excerpt featured in "Water, Kinship, Belief: Toronto Biennial of Art 2019-2022" :

"An archive is defined as 'a collection of historical documents'...But archives of this kind are incomplete and biased towards power. Where then are the gaps?...What if we treated the gaps in the archive as openings for escape?" .

(46)



54 Elsie Reford's fishing log, stored at the Jardins de Métis archives, paints a record of the state of the salmon from the point of view of elite settler sport fishers. Hannah Thiessen.

DIVISION I

DEFINITIONS

1. In this Regulation, unless otherwise indicated by the context,

(1) **ecofact** means a material relic from the animal, vegetal or mineral kingdom that was not made by man but testifies to human occupancy, including bones, seeds or coal;

(2) **“archaeological operation”** means the excavations and surveys for the purposes of finding archeological property or sites including monitoring, trial excavation and collecting activities;

(3) **person in charge of the archeological operation** means any natural person who supervises the operation on the site and takes part in the carrying out of that operation and in the drafting of the archaeological research report.

M.O. 2013-01, s. 1.

For a river that shapes and takes shape according to its relationship with people, human and non-human, what then counts as an “ecofact”?

Apple trees have now grown near the older archeological sites becoming testaments to human occupation. Human occupation often becomes part of the landscape.

Belonging to the Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqiyik people who carried these artifacts to the River, these artifacts explicitly challenge colonial “properties and sites”.

The River exposes layers of older soils without permission from the Quebec government; it initiates its own process of exposing and remembering.

The Mitis and St. Lawrence Rivers move through the gaps of Quebecois legal structures. Intensifying tides eroding at the coastline, they challenge the colonial archive, serving as an invitation to remember with and through them.

The river, and landscapes generally, “are places of remembrance ... [which] may provide a kind of archive where memories can be mentally stored”.

16



56 The archives at the Jardins de Métis.
Marie-Ellen Houde-Hostland.



The Mitis River during low-tide. 57
Hannah Thiessen.

Ange Loft continues...

“Archives can exist in other forms, in other living things, as incomplete, indeterminate, and ever-changing. Trees, rocks, ice, rivers, lakes, and so much more are archives of a particular kind. The earth remembers; water remembers; all living things are records of the worlds they help create and encounter”. (46)

While the concept of the “Anthropocene” defines a specific era in which human, particularly colonial, activities have geologically altered the earth and landscapes, [Zoe Todd](#) and [Heather Davis](#) in their essay “On the Importance of a Date, or, Decolonizing the Anthropocene” remind us that for many Indigenous peoples, waters, soils, humans, and non-human kin have always been intertwined:

“What settler colonialism, and its extensions into contemporary petroculturalism, does is a severing of relations. It is a severing of relations between humans and the soil, between plants and animals, between minerals and bones. This is the logic of the Anthropocene”.

(47)

The Anthropocene not only represents a shift in the geological makeup of the earth's soils, but also marks a rift in the waters, bodies, and minds that have long been shaping one another.



58 The eroding shoreline along the St. Lawrence river as a record of the river's changing ecologies. Hannah Thiessen.



59 A ladder to support habitat connectivity for the American eel is currently placed at the pond at the Jardins de Métis. Hannah Thiessen.

As the River reacts to large-scale climatic changes, what happens to the memories that it stores?

As **Kataq** (Mi'gmaq) or **Sakapsqehtom** (Wolastoqey) or **American Eel** (English) face barriers in their migration to their breeding sites up along the Mitis River, these ladders installed by The Mi'gmaq Wolastoqey Indigenous Fisheries Management Association (MMAFMA) help eels come back to the River year after year.

49

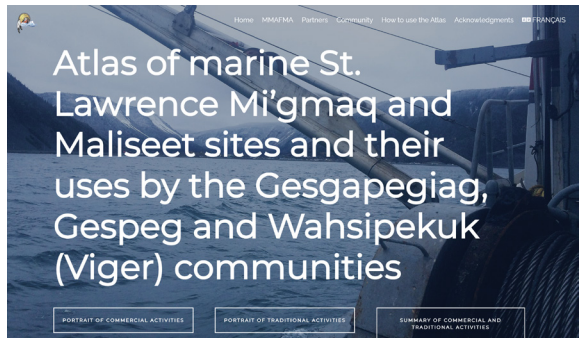
Nta'tugwaqanminen: Evolution of the Gespe'gewa'gi Mi'gmaq:

“the Mi'gmac way of thinking...sees creation as an everlasting process where everything is constantly transforming and where the only power human beings have is the power to learn and transform themselves along with an ever transforming world” .

6

The Atlas of Marine St.- Lawrence Mi'gmaq and Maliseet Sites and Their Uses by the Gesgapegiag, Gespeg and Wahsipekuk (Viger) communities

is a record of Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqey traditional and contemporary knowledge based along marine environments of the Lower Saint Lawrence, including the Mitis River. Meant specifically for Mi'gmaq and Wolastoqey Gesgapegiag, Gespeg, and Wahsipekuk communities, this Atlas keeps record of important places and activities so that members can continue to taking part in these practices.



MMAFMA's Atlas home page. 60

Wolastoqiyik Lintuwakonawa is an album by **Jeremy Dutcher**, a Wolastoqey musician from the Tobique First Nation (Neqotkuk) in New Brunswick. This work came out of Jeremy discovering 110 year-old archived recordings of Wolastoqey songs long held at the Canada History Museum, to which he responds and integrates back into his own compositions. The song **Eqpahak** begins with a conversation with Wolastoqey and Passamaquoddy Elder, Knowledge Keeper, and Song Carrier **Maggie Paul** as transcribed here:



Jeremy Dutcher in the cover for his **61** album *Wolastoqiyik Lintuwakonawa*.

“I think about that sometimes, I’d like to bring back all the songs that the people sang here. I’d like to listen to those and sing those. People will be singing, you know, there’s not only me, there’s a lot of people bringing those songs back. And when you bring the songs back, you’re gonna bring the dances back, you’re gonna bring the people back, you’re gonna bring everything back” .

(50)

Passamaquoddy-Maliseet Language Portal:

“Eqpahak

noun locative (verb ii participle 23)

at head of tide on river or inlet; (cap., Ma) in, at, to old village just upriver from Fredericton, New Brunswick

Notes: (literally, where the tide stops coming in)”. (51)



The Mitis River as tides retreat. **62**
Hannah Thiessen.

“We listened to this album during our research, and spent some time trying to understand why it reminded us so much of the work the River does. There was something important that we felt but could only begin to understand when we placed these lessons together. Tracing the meaning of this song title is not to conflate the name of this place to the tides along the Mitis River, but captures the way we as researchers, people looking, reflecting, and learning understand through the relationships between different voices. Placing these voices next to each other, we begin to understand intuitively something much greater;

There is something that happens in the gathering.

Here, there seemed to be some kind of commonality in Dutcher's song, the word “Eqpahak” as we have understood it, and the tides of the Mitis River, gathering, collecting, storing, and remembering the histories of the people who visit and listen to it. To take part in this gathering of voices, words, images, lessons, stories, activities of people between, along, and beyond the River, a version of the river begins to form, and continues its call to remember and gather.

To remember, to listen, is also an invitation to follow.”

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