

## **Newly Created Mi'Kmaq Band Welcomes Federal Government Announcement**

**For Immediate Release – September 26, 2011**

The interim Chief of the Qalipu Mi'Kmaq First Nation Band welcomes the announcement by the Government of Canada that the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Band has been formed. This has created the opportunity for thousands of Mi'Kmaq to become status Indians. Chief Brendan Sheppard believes that while the announcement was a long time in the making, it is welcome news.

“There are many people who have worked hard and never lost belief that this day would arrive”, stated Chief Sheppard. “The members of the newly recognized Qalipu Mi'Kmaq First Nation Band are proud of their heritage as Mi'Kmaq people. We believe that this recognition signifies the start of a dynamic future. We are looking forward to creating true partnerships with the governments of Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the other Provinces and Territories to create that future.”

On September 26, 2011, the Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, announced on behalf of the Government of Canada the official formation of the Qalipu Mi'Kmaq First Nation Band. It was created as a landless band meaning that it will not have a reserve. The Band will have offices in St. Georges, Grand Falls-Windsor, Glenwood and Corner Brook, NL.

The Qalipu Mi'Kmaq First Nation Band was created with a membership of 21,429 people. The membership enrolment process will continue until November 30, 2012. It is anticipated that the final membership numbers could result in the new Band being the largest aboriginal band in Canada. The majority of these people live on the island of Newfoundland with others living primarily throughout Canada.

An agreement signed in 2008 set out a process that would lead to the establishment of the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Band and the recognition of its members as status Indians under the Indian Act. The agreement also sought to settle legal claims begun by the Federation of Newfoundland Indians and individuals seeking status under the Indian Act. The announcement by the Government of Canada realizes these objectives.

Contact: Chief Brendan Sheppard  
Telephone: (709) 647-3033 or 649-1659  
E-mail: [bsheppard@qalipu.ca](mailto:bsheppard@qalipu.ca)  
Web Site: [www.qalipu.ca](http://www.qalipu.ca)

# Background Information: Qalipu Mi’Kmaq First Nation Band

- Qalipu is the Mi’Kmaq word for caribou. In English it is pronounced hal-lay-boo.
- The Band does not have land specified as “reserve lands” in the agreement. This does not mean that the Band cannot pursue land claims with federal and provincial governments in the future.
- The OIC created the Qalipu Band with 21,429 members
- The functioning of the Band is guided by the Indian Act.
- The Federation of Newfoundland Indians is made up of members of nine non-status Mi’Kmaq Bands.
- The Board of Directors of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians forms the first Band Council of the Qalipu Mi’Kmaq First Nation Band for the transitional period.
- Brendan Sheppard, as the President of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians, becomes the interim Chief of the Band.
- Elections will be held no later than 18 months following the band’s formation to elect the Chief and Council of the Band.
- No aboriginal people were recognized as status Indians under the Terms of Union between Newfoundland (now the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador) and Canada in 1949.
- The Mi’Kmaq people have a long history in the Atlantic region with first recorded European contact in the 16th century.
- The Mi’Kmaq language is an Eastern Algonquian language spoken by nearly 11,000 Mi’kmaq in Canada and the United States.

For more information please visit [Qalipu.ca](http://Qalipu.ca) and [Canada.ca](http://Canada.ca).