

Preface to the Affidavit of Marilyn James

January 2011

I have invited the Mir Center of Selkirk College to publish my Affidavit, sworn in support of the Sinixt application to quash the Provinces issuance of a logging license and road building permit in the absence of consultation with the Sinixt. It is my wish to assist learners in understanding what being an Indian in today's world entails. Understanding is complex and difficult in the best of times. Here on this landscape there is an extra layer to understanding as the Sinixt peoples of the region have been declared extinct by the federal government of Canada since 1956. Being an extinct Indian in today's world offers an extra layer of challenges on top of all of the others. This Affidavit is in answer to the B.C. Attorney Generals challenge to the standing of the Sinixt representatives (named in our filing for a Judicial Review of timber sales licenses on Perrys Ridge) in BC Supreme Court.

The Sinixt have traveled a long journey in our territorial communities and I am especially proud of the sharp learning curve that many of our community members are undertaking. I am proud of the way that they continue to ask why. I am proud of the way the adults and children have soaked up our history/social/cultural stories and want more. I know that the complexities and social/political correctness are barriers to understanding some of the issues. It is also difficult to ask some of the questions in public or even private forums if the levels of understanding are not there to guide questions that will lead to deeper understanding. I believe that my Affidavit points to some of those very complexities and can lend some assistance in beginning to understand some of the underlying issues.

There are seven (7) volumes of evidence that attach to this Affidavit and are only a drop in the bucket of what could have been submitted. This body of evidence was produced as an example of venues that the Sinixt have engaged in their commitment to the culture/community/landscape. The seven volumes of evidence are available through Selkirk College library in the local history archives. The digital version will be posted with the affidavit as soon as it is available. I hope this helps in growing understanding of Sinixt peoples and the issues they are challenged with.

Lim limpt (thank-you)

Marilyn James
Appointed Spokesperson Sinixt Nation
Aboriginal Coordinator, Selkirk College