

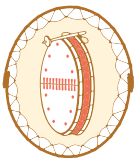
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Message from the GRAND CHIEF/CHAIRPERSON

Mandy Gull-Masty



KWEY CREE NATION

IT IS A PLEASURE TO PROVIDE MY FIRST REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF EYYOU ISTCHEE IN MY NEW CAPACITY AS THE FIRST ELECTED FEMALE GRAND CHIEF OF EYYOU ISTCHEE. I WOULD LIKE TO FIRST AND FOREMOST EXPRESS MY THANKS AND PLEASURE TO BE SERVING IN THIS NEW CAPACITY AND I WISH TO EXTEND MY THANKS TO THE MEMBERS FOR THEIR TRUST AND SUPPORT.

Photo: Katherine Dehm



I want to acknowledge the work of former Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum, who was able to lead with the Cree Health Board's leadership and team, and support of local community leadership, a clear direction in bringing the Cree Nation forward and through a very challenging time. The COVID-19 pandemic was a time of great uncertainty, and it is through these key collaborations with other Cree entities that we were able to keep Cree Nation members safe from potentially tremendous impacts on the communities. Truly, what he had endeavoured to bring forward will leave a mark of success on the Cree Nation. The decision-making shift from a zero-COVID approach was a key change that was not taken lightly by the COVID-19 Leadership Table and was intended to alleviate the restrictions and pressure the members were grappling with. As we prepare for a new phase of pandemic, we continue to ask our members to be responsible and considerate of the safety of the Cree Nation and our most vulnerable members. It is with a heavy heart that I must acknowledge my condolences to the families that have lost a loved one due to this disease. We have continued to support the families and communities who have been impacted by COVID-19. My deepest prayers and sympathies to you all.

A transition period for the Cree Nation leadership is marked by a new approach between the Office of the Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief Norman Wapachee that is intended to build a harmonious working relationship. It is



FEMALE GRAND CHIEF ELECTED

our commitment to showcase the collaboration between our two offices as one that will serve the needs of members of the Cree Nation with the highest level of support and unity. I would like to thank Deputy Grand Chief Norman for his commitment to the role. I look forward to working alongside him as we bring forward the elements that the communities and their members have clearly shown to be of great importance –the commitment and understanding that essential and precious to the core of our identity are Cree culture and Cree language. I believe that the Cree Nation members made their position loud and clear that they have an expectation of growth and sustainable development into new areas while continuing to secure and prioritize our culture and identity.



I transitioned into this new role halfway through the calendar year of 2021, during which I have spent much time focussing on informing Deputy Grand Chief Norman and following up on various Cree Nation files. The leadership had the opportunity to launch their transition through a directors' meeting with a briefing on the departments' activities. We also instituted a new mechanism of support for the Cree Nation Government through the Board/Council. As a first action, the recommendation was brought forward to expand the negotiations team with the addition of two new members; Richard Shecapio, holding portfolios in Land, Natural Resources and Sustainable Development and joined by Stella Masty, holding portfolios in Culture, Language and Economic Development. Further support was also established with the newly appointed Corporate Secretary Edna Neeposh Sr, the Corporate Legal Advisor, the Corporate Administrator and Corporate Clerk. It is the intention of this newly created legal team to enhance and expand the services to Board/Council members and the communication between the governing and administrative bodies of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and Cree Nation Government.

Some of the key events of this past year started with a visit from Premier Legault, who wished to greet the new leadership with a personal visit to the community of Mistissini. I wish to extend my thanks to the community for preparing a beautiful cultural presentation at the event for the Premier and Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs, Ian Lafrenière.

This first year of our mandate was not only a transition period but also a period in which great planning was put into place for the future of the Cree Nation Government. We also saw a number of historic events stemming from the working relationship between Cree Nation Government, regional Cree entities and other outside bodies.

The inauguration of the newly elected Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief was hosted in the community of Waswanipi and held jointly with the Cree Nation Youth Council's also newly elected Youth Grand Chief Adrian Neeposh Gunner and Deputy Grand Chief Jordan Masty. This event was held on the 46th anniversary of the signing of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA). It was a momentous occasion and we are absolutely thankful to have been able to share such a significant moment with our youth leaders as well as many guests such as our JBNQA signatories, previous Grand Chiefs, Elders, friends and family.

2021 marked an era of newly elected women leaders across the country and it was my pleasure to greet the newly installed Governor General Mary Simon alongside of National Chief Roseanne Archibald of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and Grand Chief Sky Deer of Kahnawake. In this session, leadership took the opportunity to identify common key priorities and events to help address the needs of various Indigenous peoples across Canada.

My office also had the pleasure of participating in the Grand Economic Circle hosted by the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL). The Economic panel, in which I participated and included National Chief Archibald of the AFN and Grand Chief Sky-Deer of Kahnawake, exchanged on

the economic vision for Indigenous nations balanced with sustainable development. During this session, we were successful in securing a financial commitment from the Québec government for the intended hosting of an Indigenous cultural and economic conference for an international audience. This event planned for early 2024 will be one in which the Cree Nation's participation will showcase cultural tourism as well as economic investment opportunities for sustainable green projects.

Tri-partite table of the Cree Nation Government, the Cree Health Board, and the Cree School Board met and put together a working plan on strategic collaborations for the Cree Nation. It is through this table that a commitment was established to declare 2022 the Year of Support for Special Needs members and their families in Eeyou Istchee.

With a focus on culture as a foundation for this leadership's term, a financial initiative from the Office of the Grand Chief was developed to allocate funding to Cree entities that hold a mandate pertaining to culture. An investment of over \$2M was set aside through a planning process with the participants of the Cree Trappers' Association, Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association, Cree Nation Youth Council and Nishiyuu Council of Elders. This financial commitment was put forth to enhance funding that is meant to outline and determine the needs of the Cree Nation for cultural programming and collaborative steps for the protection and preservation of the Cree way of life, Cree language, and the environment. It was very fitting that we also saw the United Nations declare 2022-2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. We are committed to continuing support for the protection of our Cree language and collaborating with the newly appointed Language Commissioner, Jamie Moses, and his team.

It was also a pleasure to see a little bit of Cree history returning to the Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute with the repatriation of the caribou hide jacket and the Gunner Beaded Hood. Chief Curtis Bosum, Deputy Grand Chief Norman Wapachee and I attended the unveiling of the caribou jacket and beaded hood in Ouje-Bougoumou, as the traditional objects finally returned home for proper care and rest within Eeyou Istchee.

As Grand Chief, I believe in the importance of building relations with other Indigenous nations of Québec. The success of the Maamuu nisisuhtimuwin, or the Cree-Innu Traditional Mutual Understanding, is one of the key events that highlights our commitment to collaboration and working towards solutions that are driven by Indigenous peoples. I would like to acknowledge the community of Chisasibi, the Elders, tallymen and their families who have been key in finding a positive outcome and helping us return to our traditional trading and relations that we have known historically. There has been much success with the implementation of this first Understanding.

Finally, one of the key events that I would like to highlight is the participation in the National Delegation of Indigenous peoples to the Vatican and inform Pope Francis on his visit to Canadian soil and of the reconciliation process addressing the impacts of residential school.

The decision to participate in this delegation was not one that I took lightly but felt was an essential one in order to advance the residential school file and its impacts on the Cree



Nation. Generations of residential school survivors struggle with the trauma created by these institutions that were further perpetuated through inter-generational cycles of harm. My participation in this delegation was to highlight and signal the importance of the impact and trauma that has been a long-suffering for many members. To move forward with the healing process, I felt it was important to signal my support to a journey of healing and support for our residential school survivors. Trauma is often said to be the root of our deepest wounds and I felt it was important for me to dedicate support to this important file. It is the decision of each and every one of our students to determine what steps they wish to take - I do intend to support our members with whichever process they wish to move forward with as part of their healing journey.

I would like to acknowledge the Cree Nation Government Directors for all of their work in assisting my office with this transition. I really look forward to the next steps to create mechanisms of change to enhance our service to members of the Cree Nation. I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of our Executive Director, Bill Namagoose who was successful in obtaining additional housing funds that he will highlight in his section of the report as part of federal negotiations. We have seen Bill transition through 40 years of service to the Cree Nation and his impending retirement is one that will surely leave an important mark on the Cree Nation. I would like to express my gratitude for all his contributions and the position that he has continuously taken in defending the rights of our Cree members and providing administrative leadership to staff throughout our organization.

This past year has been one of intensive change and hard work, and I would not be able to fulfil this role without the support of my key staff members like; Kristen M. Salt, who has been administrating my office and team from the very start and has my continued confidence, Flora Weistche, acting as Political Attaché has been key in the communications aspect of our office. The newly appointed negotiators Richard Shecapio and Stella Masty who have not only undertaken a significant workload but have learned a new role. I am pleased with the hard work of this team and everything that they have done to help bring forward our organization and service to the Cree Nation members.

I wish to thank the members of the Cree Nation for providing clear direction on the steps that they wish leadership to take. We strive to honour your guidance and continue to protect the Cree Way of life and all that it has brought us.

Most importantly, I want to thank my children and my husband, Adario Masty, for their continued love and support. The families of leadership are the ones whose sacrifice often goes unknown or unacknowledged. I would like to thank the families of our former leadership who committed their time and support just as mine does now. My family and I wish to thank everyone who has expressed their support and commitment to continued service to the Cree Nation.

ᑭᓄᓄᓄ, Miiᓄwehch, Thank you,

ᑭᓄᓄᓄ ᑭᓄᓄᓄ, Mandy Gull-Masty
Grand Chief/Chairperson

Message de la GRANDE CHEFFE/PRÉSIDENTE

Mandy Gull-Masty



KWEY NATION CRIE

C'EST POUR MOI UN PLAISIR DE PRÉSENTER MON PREMIER RAPPORT AUX MEMBRES D'EYYOU ISTCHEE EN MA NOUVELLE QUALITÉ DE PREMIÈRE FEMME ÉLUE GRANDE CHEFFE D'EYYOU ISTCHEE. JE TIENS D'ABORD ET AVANT TOUT À EXPRIMER MES REMERCIEMENTS ET MA JOIE D'ÊTRE À VOTRE SERVICE À CE NOUVEAU TITRE ET JE TIENS À REMERCIER LES MEMBRES POUR LEUR CONFIANCE ET LEUR SOUTIEN.

Je tiens à souligner le travail de l'ancien Grand Chef, le Dr Abel Bosum, qui a été en mesure de proposer, avec la direction et l'équipe du Conseil cri de la santé, et le soutien des dirigeants de la communauté locale, une orientation claire pour faire progresser la Nation crie, et ce, à travers une période de temps très difficile. La pandémie de la COVID-19 a été une période de grande incertitude, et c'est grâce à ces collaborations déterminantes avec d'autres entités crie que nous avons pu protéger les membres de la Nation crie des effets qui auraient pu être énormes sur les communautés. Vraiment, ce qu'il s'est efforcé de mettre de l'avant laissera une marque de succès sur la Nation crie. Le changement de prise de décision à partir d'une approche zéro COVID a été un changement clé qui n'a pas été pris à la légère par la table de direction de la COVID-19 et qui visait à atténuer les restrictions et la pression auxquelles les membres faisaient face. Alors que nous nous préparons à une nouvelle phase de la pandémie, nous continuons de demander à nos membres d'être responsables et attentifs à la sécurité de la Nation crie et de nos membres les plus vulnérables. C'est avec le cœur lourd que je dois présenter mes condoléances aux familles qui ont perdu un être cher à cause de cette maladie. Nous avons continué à soutenir les familles et les communautés qui ont été touchées par la COVID-19. Mes plus sincères prières et sympathies à vous tous.

La période de transition pour la direction de la Nation crie est marquée par une nouvelle approche entre le Bureau de la Grande Cheffe et le Grand Chef adjoint Norman Wapachee qui vise à établir une relation de travail harmonieuse. Nous nous engageons à mettre en valeur la coopération entre nos deux bureaux comme une collaboration qui répondra aux besoins des membres de la Nation crie avec le plus haut niveau de soutien et d'unité. Je tiens à remercier le Grand Chef adjoint Norman pour son engagement à l'égard de ce rôle. J'ai hâte de travailler à ses côtés alors que nous mettons de l'avant les éléments dont les

communautés et leurs membres ont clairement démontré qu'ils étaient d'une grande importance, soit l'engagement et la compréhension qui sont essentiels et précieux au cœur de notre identité que sont la culture crie et la langue crie. Je crois que les membres de la Nation crie ont exprimé haut et fort leur position à l'effet qu'ils s'attendent à une croissance et à un développement durable dans de nouveaux domaines tout en continuant à sécuriser et à prioriser notre culture et notre identité.

J'ai accédé à ce nouveau rôle au milieu de l'année civile 2021, période au cours de laquelle j'ai consacré beaucoup de temps à informer le Grand Chef adjoint Norman et effectuer le suivi de divers dossiers de la Nation crie. Les dirigeants ont eu l'occasion de lancer leur transition au moyen d'une réunion des directeurs avec un exposé sur les activités des départements. Nous avons également institué un nouveau mécanisme de soutien au Gouvernement de la Nation crie par l'intermédiaire du Conseil. Comme première action, une recommandation a été mise de l'avant en vue d'élargir l'équipe de négociation avec l'ajout de deux nouveaux membres : Richard Shecapio, qui détient les dossiers des Terres, des Ressources naturelles et du Développement durable, auquel se joint Stella Masty, responsable du dossier de la Culture, de la Langue et du Développement économique. Un soutien supplémentaire a également été établi avec la nouvelle secrétaire corporative Edna Neeposh Sr, la conseillère juridique corporative, l'administrateur corporatif et le commis corporatif. Le mandat de cette équipe juridique nouvellement créée est d'améliorer et d'étendre les services aux membres du Conseil et la communication entre les instances de direction et d'administration du Grand Conseil des Crie (Eeyou Istchee) et du Gouvernement de la Nation crie.

Certains des événements importants de cette dernière année ont commencé par une visite du premier ministre Legault, qui a souhaité saluer la nouvelle direction par une visite personnelle dans la communauté de Mistissini.





Je tiens à remercier la communauté d'avoir préparé une magnifique présentation culturelle lors de l'événement pour le premier ministre et le ministre responsable des Affaires autochtones, Ian Lafrenière.

Cette première année de notre mandat a été non seulement une période de transition, mais également une période au cours de laquelle une vaste planification a été mise en place pour l'avenir du Gouvernement de la Nation crie. Nous avons également été témoins d'un certain nombre d'événements historiques découlant de la relation de travail entre le Gouvernement de la Nation crie, les entités cries régionales et d'autres organismes externes.

L'investiture de la Grande Cheffe et du Grand Chef adjoint nouvellement élus a eu lieu dans la communauté de Waswanipi et s'est tenue conjointement avec le Grand Chef des jeunes du Conseil de la jeunesse de la Nation crie Adrian Neeposh Gunner et le Grand Chef adjoint des jeunes Jordan Masty. Cet événement a eu lieu à l'occasion du 46^e anniversaire de la signature de la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois (CBJNQ). Ce fut une occasion mémorable et nous sommes absolument reconnaissants d'avoir pu partager un moment aussi significatif avec nos jeunes leaders ainsi qu'avec de nombreux invités tels que nos signataires de la CBJNQ, les anciens Grands Chefs, les Aînés, les amis et la famille.

L'année 2021 a marqué le début d'une ère de femmes dirigeantes nouvellement élues à travers le pays et j'ai eu le plaisir de saluer la Gouverneure générale nouvellement installée Mary Simon aux côtés de la Cheffe nationale Roseanne Archibald de l'Assemblée des Premières Nations (APN) et de la Grande Cheffe Sky Deer de Kahnawake. Au cours de cette séance, les dirigeants ont saisi l'occasion d'identifier

des priorités et des événements clés communs pour aider à répondre aux besoins des différents peuples autochtones du Canada.

Mon bureau a également eu le plaisir de participer au Grand Cercle économique organisé par l'Assemblée des Premières Nations du Québec et du Labrador (APNQL). Le panel économique, auquel j'ai participé et qui comprenait la Cheffe nationale Archibald de l'APN et la Grande Cheffe Sky Deer de Kahnawake, a échangé sur la vision économique pour les nations autochtones en équilibre avec le développement durable. Au cours de cette séance, nous avons réussi à obtenir un engagement financier du Gouvernement du Québec pour l'accueil prévu d'une conférence culturelle et économique autochtone ouverte à un public international. Cet événement prévu pour le début de 2024 en sera un où la participation de la Nation crie mettra en valeur le tourisme culturel ainsi que les possibilités d'investissement économique pour des projets verts durables.

Une table tripartite du Gouvernement de la Nation crie, du Conseil crie de la santé et de la Commission scolaire crie s'est réunie et a élaboré un plan de travail sur les collaborations stratégiques pour la Nation crie. C'est par l'intermédiaire de cette table qu'un engagement a été convenu pour déclarer 2022 l'Année du soutien aux membres et à leurs familles ayant des besoins spéciaux en Eeyou Istchee.

C'est en mettant l'accent sur la culture comme fondement du mandat de la présente direction qu'une initiative financière du Bureau de la Grande Cheffe a été élaborée en vue d'allouer des fonds aux entités cries qui détiennent un mandat relatif à la culture. Un investissement de plus de 2 M \$ a été réservé dans le cadre d'un processus de planifi-

cation avec les participants de l'Association des trappeurs cris, de l'Association des femmes cries d'Eeyou Istchee, du Conseil des jeunes de la Nation crie et du Conseil des aînés Nishiyuu. Cet engagement financier a été mis de l'avant afin d'améliorer le financement destiné à définir et à déterminer les besoins de la Nation crie en matière de programmation culturelle et d'étapes de collaboration pour la protection et la préservation du mode de vie cri, de la langue crie et de l'environnement. Cette mesure s'est avérée tout à fait appropriée d'autant plus que nous avons vu également les Nations Unies déclarer la période 2022-2032 comme la Décennie internationale des langues autochtones. Nous nous engageons à continuer de soutenir la protection de notre langue crie et à collaborer avec le nouveau commissaire à la langue, Jamie Moses, et son équipe.

Ce fut également un plaisir de voir un peu de l'histoire crie revenir à l'Institut culturel cri Aanischaaukamikw avec le rapatriement de la veste en peau de caribou et de la coiffe perlée de la famille Gunner. Le Chef Curtis Bosum, le Grand Chef adjoint Norman Wapachee et moi-même avons assisté au dévoilement de la veste en caribou et de la coiffe perlée à Ouje-Bougoumou, alors que les objets traditionnels sont finalement rentrés chez eux pour des soins et un repos appropriés en Eeyou Istchee.

À titre de Grande Cheffe, je crois à l'importance de tisser des liens avec les autres nations autochtones du Québec. Le succès du Maamu nisituitimuwin, ou Compréhension commune traditionnelle cri-innu, est l'un des événements clés qui soulignent notre engagement envers la collaboration et la recherche de solutions à l'initiative des peuples autochtones. Je tiens à remercier la communauté de Chisasibi, les Aînés, les maîtres de trappe et leurs familles, qui ont joué un rôle clé dans la recherche d'un résultat positif et nous ont aidés à revenir à nos relations et échanges traditionnels, que nous avons connus historiquement. La mise en œuvre de ce premier accord a connu beaucoup de succès.

Enfin, l'un des événements importants que je tiens à souligner est la participation à la Délégation nationale des peuples autochtones au Vatican en vue d'informer le pape François de sa visite en sol canadien et du processus de réconciliation face aux effets des pensionnats.

La décision de participer à cette délégation n'a pas été une décision que j'ai prise à la légère, mais que j'estimais essentielle pour faire avancer le dossier des pensionnats et ses conséquences sur la Nation crie. Des générations de survivants des pensionnats indiens sont aux prises avec le traumatisme créé par ces établissements, qui s'est ensuite perpétué à travers des cycles de préjugés intergénérationnels. Ma participation à cette délégation visait à souligner et à signaler l'importance de l'impact et du traumatisme dont ont longtemps souffert bon nombre de nos membres. Pour faire avancer le processus de guérison, j'ai senti qu'il était important de signaler mon appui à un parcours de guérison et de soutien pour nos survivants des pensionnats. On dit souvent que le traumatisme est à l'origine de nos blessures les plus profondes et j'ai senti qu'il était important pour moi d'apporter du soutien à ce dossier important. C'est à chacun de nos élèves qu'appartient la décision de déterminer les

étapes qu'ils souhaitent suivre – j'ai l'intention de soutenir nos membres dans le processus qu'ils souhaitent suivre dans le cadre de leur parcours de guérison.

Je tiens à remercier les administrateurs du Gouvernement de la Nation crie pour tout le travail qu'ils ont accompli afin d'aider mon bureau au cours de cette transition. J'ai vraiment hâte aux prochaines étapes pour créer des mécanismes de changement afin d'améliorer notre service aux membres de la Nation crie. Je tiens également à souligner les efforts de notre directeur général, Bill Namagoose, qui a réussi à obtenir des fonds supplémentaires pour le logement, un résultat qu'il soulignera dans sa section du rapport dans le cadre des négociations fédérales. Nous avons vu Bill passer ses 40 années de service à la Nation crie et sa retraite imminente en est une qui laissera sûrement une marque importante sur la Nation crie. Je tiens à exprimer ma gratitude pour toutes ses contributions et la position qu'il a continuellement adoptée pour défendre les droits de nos membres cris et assurer le leadership administratif du personnel dans l'ensemble de notre organisation.

Cette dernière année en a été une de changement intensif et de travail acharné, et je ne serais pas en mesure de remplir ce rôle sans le soutien des membres clés de mon personnel comme : Kristen M. Salt, qui administre mon bureau et mon équipe depuis le tout début et qui a ma confiance continue, Flora Weistche, qui agit comme attachée politique, a joué un rôle clé dans l'aspect communications de notre bureau. Les négociateurs nouvellement nommés Richard Shecapio et Stella Masty, qui ont non seulement assumé une charge de travail importante, mais ont appris un nouveau rôle. Je suis satisfaite du travail acharné de cette équipe et de tout ce qui a été fait pour aider à faire progresser notre organisation et nos services aux membres de la Nation crie.

Je tiens à remercier les membres de la Nation crie d'avoir fourni une direction claire sur les mesures qu'ils souhaitent que les dirigeants prennent. Nous nous efforçons de respecter vos orientations et de continuer à protéger le mode de vie cri et tout ce qu'il nous a apporté.

Plus important encore, je tiens à remercier mes enfants et mon mari, Adario Masty, pour leur amour et leur soutien continus. Les familles de dirigeants sont celles dont le sacrifice est souvent inconnu ou non reconnu. Je tiens à remercier les familles de nos anciens dirigeants qui ont consacré leur temps et apporté leur soutien, tout comme la mienne le fait maintenant. Ma famille et moi tenons à remercier tous ceux qui ont exprimé leur soutien et leur engagement à continuer de servir la Nation crie.

ᑭᓄᓄᓄ, Miikwehch, Merci,

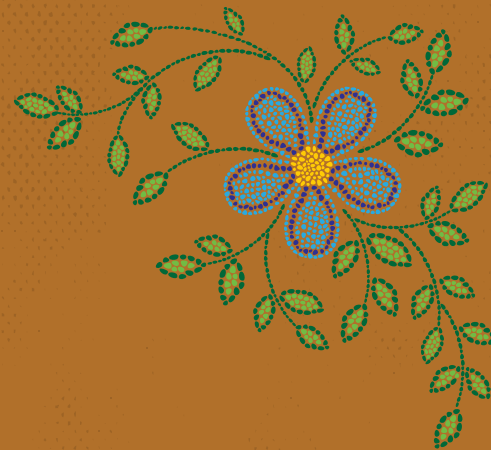
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Grande Cheffe/Présidente



Photo: Jessica Otter

Message from the DEPUTY GRAND CHIEF/ VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Norman A. Wapachee



KWEY

IT IS AN HONOUR TO PRESENT THIS 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (EYYOU ISTCHEE)/CREE NATION GOVERNMENT TO THE PEOPLE OF EYYOU ISTCHEE. THIS REPORTS HIGHLIGHTS SOME OF THE KEY ACTIVITIES/EVENTS THAT WERE CARRIED OUT FROM MY OFFICE IN CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH THE OFFICE OF THE GRAND CHIEF.

I must say that this first year has been a very rewarding experience to work with our first-elected woman, Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty. The Cree Nation, indeed, made history. When we both took office, we immediately established a close working relationship – one that promotes unity, collaboration, and transparency between our offices. This was needed to ensure good working relationship and a smooth transition into our offices.

CREE NATION GOVERNMENT ORIENTATION

It is without a doubt that this year marked a new era of Cree leadership. As Deputy Grand Chief of the Cree Nation, I must acknowledge our courageous former Cree leaders' successful efforts in the recognition and mobilization of Cree rights contributing towards a solid foundation for our leadership to continue making important strides in our decolonialization processes and in the rebuilding of our Cree Nation. It is certain that this new generation of Cree leadership will need to continue working hard to maintain the high standards set by our previous Cree leaders.

To ensure a smooth transition, we initiated a platform that allowed the transition of our rich Cree history, knowledge and understanding of our past, present challenges/successes, and future aspirations with the previous leaders to ensure the true spirit of Eeyou/Eenou is maintained throughout our leadership and beyond.

In the process, we had multiple sessions with all key Cree stakeholders. We had sessions with our pioneers Dr. Robert Kanatewat and Dr. Philip Awashish to capture the true Cree spirit and intent that fueled the negotiations that led to the signing of the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA). It was fascinating to hear that it was not about money, it was about the protection of Eeyou Istchee and the

Cree way of life. Former Grand Chiefs shared their challenges and aspirations as they moved towards the continual assertion of Cree rights since the birth of the Grand Council of the Crees and throughout the four decades of the Cree Nation. It was inspirational to hear the echoed voices of our ancestors from our pioneers and former leadership. This visit to the past and present was a rewarding experience for our leadership and team of negotiators.

In addition, our senior staff of the Cree Nation Government provided us with an abundant amount of key information of their respective ongoing and new programs/services, challenges, successes, and aspirations. This eight-month process was quite a learning experience for me.

To sum up the orientation process, it important that we maintain a close connection with all life within Eeyou Istchee and speak on her behalf as we continue strengthening Cree governance over the development and management of our lands and natural resources. It is important to maintain much enthusiasm, confidence, and resilience. As traditional inhabitants of Eeyou/Eenou, it is our responsibility to echo the voices of the past and amplify the Voice of Eeyou Istchee and all life within it.

HUNTING, FISHING AND TRAPPING COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Since my appointment, several pertinent files were brought to the HFTCC. In an attempt to protect and recover the declined caribou population, Quebec sent an invitation to HFTCC that called for Cree participation in a public consultation process by an *Independent Commission on Woodland and Mountain Caribou*. After reviewing the file, the Cree representatives made it clear that any eventual application of caribou conservation measures in Eeyou Istchee would be subject to

discussions between the Cree and Quebec. These upcoming discussions will be within the context of the Paix des Braves (PdB). Nevertheless, the Cree party agreed to share its comments to the Commission because of its mandate and the importance of woodland caribou to the Cree.

The other wildlife issue that surfaced at the HFTCC was the decline of the moose population in Zone 17, a zone that is situated within the PdB territory. To address this issue, our leadership immediately established a Moose Management Committee that would work in close collaboration with the impacted communities and tallymen. It is our objective to acquire better knowledge/understanding and establish a common approach with Quebec to ensure the protection and recovery of the moose population in the region. There is a lot of collaborative work that is required to ensure the recovery of the moose population.

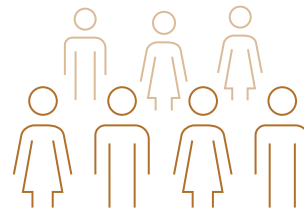
EYYOU PLANNING COMMISSION / EYYOU MARINE REGION

Earlier this year, the Eeyou Planning Commission (EPC) unit continued working on the road network infrastructure with communities and provided an update to the commissioners. Furthermore, the EPC unit had workshops on Cree land use maps and Cree planning support maps. The maps display detailed Cree land use information at a trapline level. These maps contain sites such as cultural sites, travel routes, wildlife habitats and contaminated sites. Therefore, these maps help local and regional leaderships in decision-making and planning at a larger scale. It is our goal to work in close collaboration with the Cree communities on the collection and management of Cree land use information. It is important to note that Cree land use information will empower US if we control it and interpret it for others. Our EPC team looks forward to working on land use plans soon.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Eeyou Marine Region (EMR). I had an opportunity to meet with some key players that are involved in the implementation of the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement (EMRLCA). Like other agreements, the challenges related to the implementation of the EMRLCA are harmonization with JBNQA, Cree Inuit overlaps, community participation and other implementation issues. I look forward to working in close collaboration with key players and finding ways to ensure a smooth and effective implementation process. On another note, the feasibility study to create a Marine Conservation Area within EMR is underway.

CULTURAL BASELINE STUDY

To address issues related to Grand Alliance MOU, our leadership will be undertaking a cultural baseline study to increase public awareness and understanding of the cumulative environmental changes that occurred within Eeyou Istchee since the JBNQA. In this project, we will take a closer look at the environmental and cultural impacts as it relates to forestry, mining, hydro, climate change and other resource development activities within Eeyou Istchee. It is important that we execute this first-ever undertaking to better understand the



≈18,000

**CREES ARE REPRESENTED BY THE
GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES
(EYYOU ISTCHEE)**

potential benefits and at what cost. There is preliminary work that is currently underway. You will hear more about it this summer.

CREE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Very preliminary work has been initiated to put in place a Cree Regional Research Institute (CRRI). We have assembled a small group of dedicated Cree experts. Our initial intent is to secure funding for this fall and eventually expand our team to create a short and long-term plan to realize the CRRI. The purpose of CRRI will be to promote research in areas related to Eeyou/Eenou, culture, environment, etc., and facilitate community-based research projects. CRRI will promote collaborative research projects with other stakeholders and seek inside and outside funding. I look forward to working with Cree communities, entities on this exciting project. I believe that once this project is fully realized it will facilitate a positive change on how research and resource development projects are carried out within Eeyou Istchee.

CONCLUSION

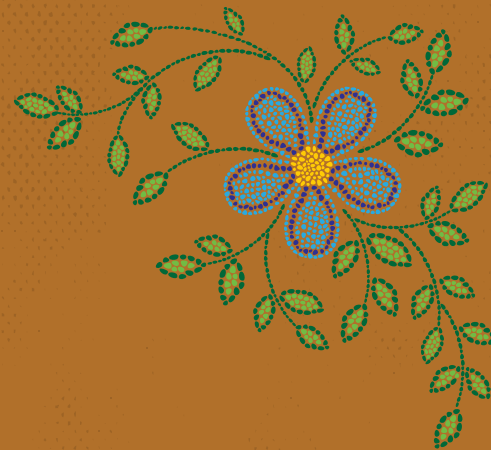
In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to the people of Eeyou Istchee for giving me the opportunity to serve you. I would like to thank our pioneers Dr. Robert Kanatewat and Dr. Philip Awashish; former Grand Chiefs, Dr. Matthew Coon Come, and Dr. Abel Bosum. I still look forward to our session with Dr. Ted Moses. I also wish to extend much gratitude to our long-serving Cree Nation Government Executive Director Dr. Bill Namagoose and all staff at the Cree Nation Government.

Meegwetch,

*Norman A. Wapachee
Deputy Grand Chief*

Message du GRAND CHEF ADJOINT / VICE-PRÉSIDENT

Norman A. Wapachee



KWEY

C'EST UN HONNEUR DE PRÉSENTER CE RAPPORT ANNUEL 2021-2022 DU GRAND CONSEIL DES CRIS (EYYOU ISTCHEE) / GOUVERNEMENT DE LA NATION CRIE AU PEUPLE D'EYYOU ISTCHEE. CE RAPPORT MET EN LUMIÈRE UN CERTAIN NOMBRE D'ACTIVITÉS ET ÉVÉNEMENTS CLÉS QUI ONT ÉTÉ RÉALISÉS À PARTIR DE MON BUREAU EN ÉTROITE COLLABORATION AVEC LE BUREAU DE LA GRANDE CHEFFE.



Je dois dire que cette première année a été une expérience très enrichissante de pouvoir travailler avec notre première élue, la Grande Cheffe Mandy Gull-Masty. La Nation crie, en effet, a marqué l'histoire. Lorsque nous sommes tous deux entrés en fonction, nous avons immédiatement établi une relation de travail étroite, qui favorise l'unité, la collaboration et la transparence entre nos bureaux. Cela était nécessaire pour assurer de bonnes relations de travail et une transition en douceur dans nos bureaux.

ORIENTATION DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA NATION CRIE

Il ne fait aucun doute que cette année a marqué le début d'une nouvelle ère de leadership cri. En tant que Grand Chef adjoint de la Nation crie, je dois reconnaître les efforts

fructueux de nos courageux anciens dirigeants cris dans la reconnaissance et la mobilisation des droits des Cris, ayant ainsi contribué à une base solide pour que notre leadership continue à faire des progrès importants dans nos processus de décolonisation et dans la reconstruction de notre Nation crie. Il est certain que cette nouvelle génération de dirigeants cris devra continuer à travailler fort pour maintenir les normes élevées établies par nos anciens dirigeants cris.

Pour assurer une transition en douceur, nous avons mis de l'avant une plateforme qui a permis la transition de notre riche histoire crie, de nos connaissances et de notre compréhension de nos défis et de nos succès passés et présents et de nos aspirations futures avec les dirigeants précédents afin d'assurer le maintien du véritable esprit d'Eeyou/Eenou tout au long de notre leadership et au-delà.

Photo: Katherine Dehm





Photo: Katherine Dehm

Au cours de ce processus, nous avons tenu plusieurs séances avec tous les principaux intervenants cris. Nous avons eu des rencontres avec nos pionniers, le Dr Robert Kanatewat et le Dr Philip Awashish, afin de saisir le véritable esprit et l'intention cris qui ont alimenté les négociations qui ont mené à la signature de la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois (CBJNQ) de 1975. C'était fascinant d'entendre qu'il ne s'agissait pas d'argent, mais plutôt de la protection d'Eeyou Istchee et du mode de vie cri. Les anciens Grands Chefs ont partagé leurs défis et leurs aspirations alors qu'ils progressaient vers l'affirmation continue des droits des Cris depuis la naissance du Grand Conseil des Cris et tout au long des quatre décennies de la Nation crie. Ce fut inspirant d'entendre, de nos pionniers et anciens dirigeants, les voix de nos ancêtres. Cette visite du passé et du présent a été une expérience enrichissante pour notre leadership et notre équipe de négociateurs.

En outre, nos cadres supérieurs du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie nous ont fourni une quantité abondante d'information essentielle sur leurs programmes et services respectifs en cours et nouveaux, leurs difficultés, leurs réussites et leurs aspirations. Ce processus de huit mois s'est avéré toute une expérience d'apprentissage pour moi.

Pour résumer ce processus d'orientation, il est important que nous maintenions un lien étroit avec tout ce qui est vie en Eeyou Istchee et que nous parlions en son nom, alors que nous continuons à renforcer la gouvernance crie sur le développement et la gestion de nos terres et de nos ressources naturelles. Il est important de maintenir beau-

coup d'enthousiasme, de confiance et de résilience. En tant qu'habitants traditionnels d'Eeyou/Eenou, il est de notre responsabilité de faire écho aux voix du passé et d'amplifier la voix d'Eeyou Istchee et de toute vie en son sein.

COMITÉ DE COORDINATION CHASSE, PÊCHE ET PIÉGEAGE (CCCPP)

Depuis ma nomination, plusieurs dossiers pertinents ont été portés à la connaissance du CCCPP. Dans une tentative de protéger et de rétablir la population de caribous en déclin, le Québec a fait parvenir une invitation au CCCPP qui faisait appel à la participation des Cris à un processus de consultation publique par une *Commission indépendante sur le caribou forestier et le caribou des montagnes*. Après étude du dossier, les représentants cris ont précisé que toute application éventuelle de mesures de conservation du caribou en Eeyou Istchee ferait l'objet de discussions entre les Cris et le Québec. Ces discussions à venir s'inscriront dans le cadre de la Paix des Braves. Néanmoins, la partie crie a accepté de faire part de ses commentaires à la Commission en raison de son mandat et de l'importance du caribou forestier pour les Cris.

L'autre problème faunique qui a fait surface au CCCPP a été le déclin de la population d'orignaux dans la zone 17, une zone située sur le territoire de la Paix des Braves. Pour résoudre ce problème, nos dirigeants ont immédiatement mis sur pied un Comité de gestion des orignaux qui travaillerait en étroite collaboration avec les communautés et les maîtres de trappe affectés. Notre objectif est d'acquiescer une meil-



ANNIVERSAIRE DE LA RÉGION MARINE D'EEYOU

leure connaissance/compréhension et d'établir une approche commune avec le Québec pour assurer la protection et le rétablissement de la population d'originaux dans la région. Il y a beaucoup de travail de collaboration qui est nécessaire pour assurer le rétablissement de la population d'originaux.

COMMISSION D'AMÉNAGEMENT D'EEYOU / RÉGION MARINE D'EEYOU

Plus tôt cette année, l'unité de la Commission d'aménagement Eeyou (CAE) a continué à travailler sur l'infrastructure du réseau routier avec les communautés et a fourni une mise à jour aux commissaires. De plus, l'unité CAE a tenu des ateliers sur les cartes crie d'utilisation du territoire et les cartes crie d'aide à la planification. Les cartes affichent de l'information détaillée sur l'utilisation des terres par les Crie au niveau du piégeage. Ces cartes contiennent des sites tels que des sites culturels, des itinéraires de voyage, des habitats fauniques et des sites contaminés. Par conséquent, ces cartes aident les dirigeants locaux et régionaux à prendre des décisions et à planifier à plus grande échelle. Notre objectif est de travailler en étroite collaboration avec les communautés crie sur la collecte et la gestion de l'information crie sur l'utilisation du territoire. Il est important de noter que l'information crie sur l'utilisation des terres nous donnera du pouvoir si nous la contrôlons et l'interprétons pour les autres. Notre équipe CEA se réjouit de travailler bientôt sur les plans d'aménagement du territoire.

Cette année marque le 10^e anniversaire de la Région marine d'Eeyou (RME). J'ai eu l'occasion de rencontrer certains acteurs clés impliqués dans la mise en œuvre de l'Accord sur les revendications territoriales de la région marine d'Eeyou (ARTRME). Comme pour d'autres ententes, les défis liés à la mise en œuvre de l'ARTRME sont l'harmonisation avec la CBJNQ, les chevauchements inuits-crie, la participation de la communauté et d'autres problèmes de mise en œuvre. J'ai hâte de travailler en étroite collaboration avec les principaux acteurs et de trouver des moyens d'assurer un processus de mise en œuvre efficace et sans heurts. Par ailleurs, l'étude de faisabilité pour la création d'une Aire marine de conservation au sein de l'RME est en cours.

ÉTUDE CULTURELLE DE BASE

En vue de traiter les questions liées au Protocole d'entente de la Grande Alliance, nos dirigeants entreprendront une étude de base culturelle afin d'accroître la sensibilisation et la compréhension du public aux changements environnementaux cumulatifs qui se sont produits en Eeyou Istchee depuis la CBJNQ. Dans ce projet, nous examinerons de plus près les impacts environnementaux et culturels liés à la foresterie, à l'exploitation minière, à l'hydroélectricité, aux changements climatiques et à d'autres activités de développement des ressources en Eeyou Istchee. Il est important que nous réalisions ce tout premier projet afin de mieux comprendre ses avantages potentiels et à quel prix. Des travaux préliminaires sont actuellement en cours. Vous en entendrez parler davantage cet été.

INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE CRI

Des travaux très préliminaires ont été amorcés en vue de mettre en place un Institut régional crie de recherche (IRCR). Nous avons réuni un petit groupe d'experts crie dévoués. Notre intention première est d'obtenir du financement pour cet automne et éventuellement élargir notre équipe pour produire un plan à court et à long terme en vue de la mise en place de l'IRCR. Le but de l'IRCR sera de promouvoir la recherche dans les domaines liés aux Eeyou/Eenou, à la culture, à l'environnement, etc., et de faciliter les projets de recherche communautaires. L'IRCR favorisera des projets de recherche en collaboration avec d'autres intervenants et sollicitera des ressources financières internes et externes. J'ai hâte de travailler avec les entités communautaires crie sur ce projet passionnant. Je crois qu'une fois que ce projet sera pleinement réalisé, il facilitera un changement positif dans la façon dont les projets de recherche et de développement des ressources sont menés à bien en Eeyou Istchee.

CONCLUSION

En terminant, j'aimerais profiter de cette occasion pour exprimer ma plus profonde gratitude aux gens d'Eeyou Istchee pour m'avoir donné la possibilité de vous servir. J'aimerais remercier nos pionniers, le Dr Robert Kanatawat et le Dr Philip Awashish; les anciens grands chefs, le Dr Matthew Coon Come et le Dr Abel Bosum. J'attends toujours avec impatience notre séance avec le Dr Ted Moses. Je souhaite également exprimer ma profonde gratitude à notre directeur exécutif du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie, le Dr Bill Namagoose, et à tout le personnel du Gouvernement de la Nation crie.

Meegwetch,

*Norman A. Wapachee
Grand Chef adjoint / Vice-président*



Message from the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Bill Namagoose



WELCOME TO THE 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (EYYOU ISTCHEE)/ CREE NATION GOVERNMENT TO THE PEOPLE OF EYYOU ISTCHEE. THE LAST TWO YEARS HAVE BEEN CHALLENGING FOR THE CREE NATION GOVERNMENT AND FOR ITS EMPLOYEES.

Even more challenging have been the issues faced by Cree citizens as they dealt with a seemingly never-ending COVID pandemic. More than 6,000 Crees were infected with the COVID-19 virus, and, unfortunately, we lost 15 members to the virus. I express my sincere condolences to all those families that have lost loved ones to the pandemic.

The most important responsibility of any government is ensuring the safety and security of its citizens. The Cree School Board's and especially the Cree Health Board's front-line workers are owed a tremendous debt of gratitude and respect for what they have accomplished during this period.

This is a particularly emotional and defining moment for me as I prepare to take my leave from the Executive Director

position of the Cree Nation Government and Grand Council of the Crees. I have been fortunate indeed to have had a long career, first with my community of Waskaganish, and then over the last 34 years with the Cree Nation Government.

I started working with the Waskaganish Cree First Nation starting in June 1978 as its Band Manager. I had the good fortune of working with great community leaders such as Chief James Blackned and the late councilors Chief Sydney Georgekish, Malcolm Diamond, Alec Weistche, David Blue-boy and Tommy Gilpin, as well as with Jimmy Trapper and Thomas Blackned, who are still with us.

Before each council meeting, they started with stories from the past and how they overcame many hardships.

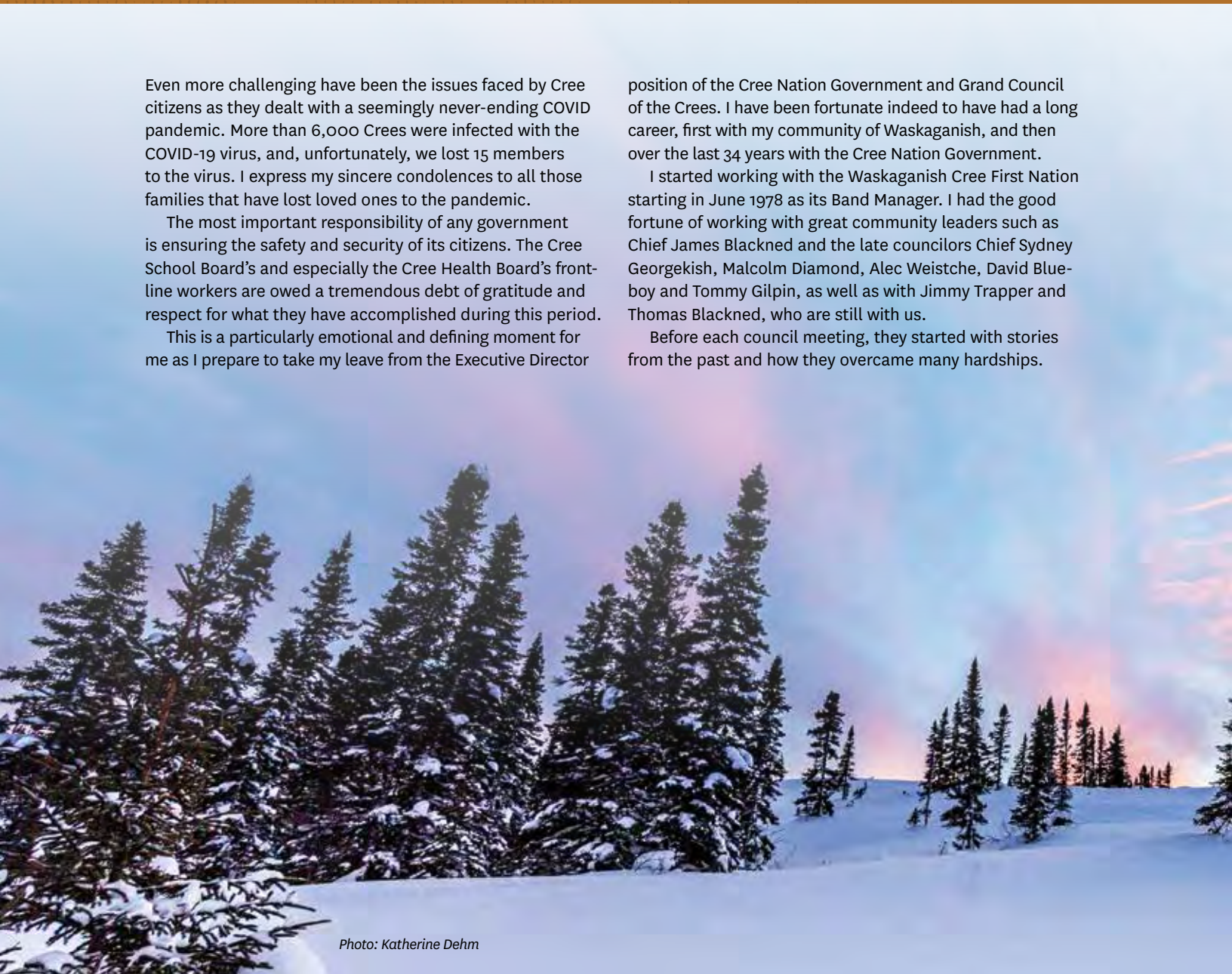


Photo: Katherine Dehm

They told many heartwarming stories about their hunting successes out on the land and their contribution to the community they cherished.

These stories were not mere complaints about governments, but they were conversations about their pride in their culture, language, and the Cree way of life back then. They had also just signed the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* three years earlier in 1975.

They felt they had signed an honorable agreement and were looking forward to receiving the benefits that Canada and Quebec had promised in exchange for sharing the Cree land and the promise of being involved in the development of the rich territory.

The governments also promised community development projects. Waskaganish at the time did not have running water, sewer services, a proper clinic or schools. We had started building houses, but, in general, the housing stock was in poor condition and very overcrowded. There were very few jobs and so unemployment was very high and poverty widespread.

Shortly after the JBNQA was signed, relations of the Cree Nation with Canada and Quebec began to deteriorate. Canada and Quebec had obtained the green light with the JBNQA to proceed with their power and other development projects and then walked away from their promises and obligations under the treaty.

Despite its written promises, the Quebec Government took the position that it had no responsibility for “Indians” and their communities, which, it maintained, were a federal responsibility. Quebec also took the position that it would not fund any community development or infrastructure projects in the Cree communities, regardless of the economic and social development promised in Section 28 of the JBNQA.

Cree workers could not fully participate in the construction of what was then the world’s largest hydroelectric project because, among other things, Canada and Quebec reneged on their obligation to build access roads to the Cree communities. The marginalization of the Cree in our own homeland was continuing.

Intense negotiating efforts with Canada and Quebec in the early 1980’s to get the JBNQA implemented, led by the late Grand Chief Billy Diamond, largely failed. The Cree Nation then decided that it would oppose further development if the benefits promised in the JBNQA were not delivered. Why should Canada and Quebec benefit from further development when the economic and social conditions in the Cree communities were continuing to deteriorate?

The battle to stop the Great Whale hydroelectric project (or Phase 2 of the James Bay hydro project) then began in the late 80s under the leadership of Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come. The political battle was intense and lasted for five years.

This battle gave rise to numerous legal proceedings against Canada and Quebec concerning not only the Great



2017

CREE NATION GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT AND CREE CONSTITUTION

Whale Project, but more generally their failure to implement their obligations under the JBNQA and over-harvesting of forestry resources with its negative impacts on the traditional Cree way of life.

The Cree were successful in our efforts to halt the Great Whale Project when we persuaded the New York Power Authority to cancel its export contract worth \$13 billion (or \$27 billion in today's dollars). That was the beginning of the end of the Great Whale Project. Premier Jacques Parizeau formally put the Project on hold in November 1994.

Another defining moment for the Cree was when we participated in the Quebec Government's 1995 referendum on sovereignty to protect our right to Self Determination. The Cree presence and participation in referendum process added to our political profile as a sophisticated and advanced political actor in Quebec and Canada.

We voted to stay in Canada if Quebecers decided to leave Canada. The subsequent Quebec referendum was narrowly lost by the PQ Government.

It appears likely that Bernard Landry, who took office as Premier in 2001, concluded that the Cree had the ability to do economic damage and may have played a decisive role in defeating Quebec's independence referendum. This may have inspired him to make peace with Grand Chief Ted Moses.

That peace, signed in 2002, was called the *Paix des Braves* or *Peace of the Brave*. This transformative agreement provided for implementation of important community development and other provisions of the JBNQA. It was unique in that it transferred to the Cree implementation of certain of Quebec's treaty obligations for a period of 50 years, together with the appropriate financial resources to carry them out. This gave the Crees greater autonomy and control in community development.

The *Paix des Braves* set the model for the 20-year *New Relationship Agreement* with Canada negotiated with Raymond Chretien and signed in in 2008. Certain federal JBNQA obligations concerning Cree community development and other matters were transferred to the Cree Nation Government for a period of 20 years along with a lump sum payment of \$1.4 billion. Negotiations on the renewal of the *New Relationship Agreement* with Canada will begin in 2026, to take effect in 2028.

These two *New Relationship Agreements* that implement and deliver some of the JBNQA promises, along with the subsequent Governance Agreements with Quebec (2012) and Canada (2017), helped to transform the Cree communities. The transformation is apparent in the extensive new facilities and services in our communities, and is helping them to become prosperous and to offer opportunities for many. However, we still have many Cree citizens who need help and we must as a nation continue to strive to improve the quality of life and opportunities for all our citizens. The Cree Nation Housing Strategy is also beginning to get some traction. The innovative way of unlocking value in private home ownership over the long term will further improve and help build wealth for Cree individuals and the Cree communities. This in turn will create other economic development opportunities for individuals.

This is my last report as the Executive Director of the Cree Nation Government and Grand Council of the Crees. I joined the Grand Council in January 1988, more than 34 years ago.

I had the honour and privilege to work with strong and visionary Cree Grand Chiefs and Deputy Grand Chiefs, as well as with many Cree Chiefs and representatives. I want to especially thank the five Grand Chiefs I worked with: Matthew Coon Come, Ted Moses, Matthew Mukash, Abel Bosum and Mandy Gull-Masty.

I was fortunate to have the best job in the Cree world and I enjoyed it tremendously. Other than the impact on my language and culture, I do not have any regrets and I am satisfied to be taking my exit at the appropriate time.

The resilience of our Cree Nation has been proven to me many times during my tenure. We have dealt with life-altering issues in a progressive and respectful manner and have kept pushing ahead. I am glad and thankful for the front row seat I had during these unforgettable moments.

The Cree Nation has a long history, including thousands of years of occupying and governing Eeyou Istchee before the arrival of Europeans. Some would have you believe that it was paradise before the Europeans and others came. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Crees survived and lived in a harsh environment.

The contemporary Cree Nation is the moment we must live in and not the past, although we should never forget the past. The past is where our culture, language and way of life, the defining characteristics of our Cree Nation, were developed and strengthened. The past is something we should all cherish.

To be successful, the Cree Nation and its leaders must have trust and have confidence in the Executive Director of the Cree Nation Government. He or she must be able to communicate with the citizens of the Cree Nation in the Cree language, our strongest and most enduring asset, and which makes us unique.

I want to thank all the Directors of Operations, Directors General, Treasurers and other community capital planning personnel for their collaboration and input over the decades. This is an important governance and sharing forum that was created in 1984.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Directors and employees of the different departments of the Cree Nation Government, and especially Lillian Loon who has been my Executive Assistant for the last 33 years.

Thank you to all the employees, advisors, legal counsel and other professionals of the Cree Nation Government for everything that you do for the Cree Nation Government and for the entire Cree Nation.

Keep up the good work.

Bill Namagoose
Executive Director



Photo: Katherine Dehm

THE CREE NATION OF WASHAW SIBI

The Cree Nation Government has continued to support the Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi to eventually construct a new village for its members where there will be no fear of losing their Cree language and culture. The Cree Nation Government continues to provide financial resources to support a basic administration to further this long-held objective.

The Washaw Sibi people have devoted considerable energy and resources over the course of a number of years to secure an appropriate site for the location of their eventual village. In a very complex environment, they have needed to navigate through the concerns of a number of parties including the Cree Nation, the neighbouring Algonquin communities of Pikogan and Lac Simon, and the Algonquin Nation as a whole. This has been challenging and difficult.

At the Washaw Sibi 2021 Annual General Assembly, the community members once again unanimously expressed the view that their preference was to pursue a potential village site that had been previously identified by community members located south of Matagami on Highway 109.

The leadership of the Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi, headed by Chief Annie Mapachee-Salt and the Council, developed a very bold initiative over the course of the 2021-2022 fiscal year to secure this potential site. This initiative, in the first instance, involved the securing of Category I lands which can be applied to this site so that construction can take place, and that eventually will make it possible to incorporate Washaw Sibi into the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*. Considerable effort has gone into ap-

proaching each of the Cree communities to make a request that they each agree to transfer a very small portion of their current Category I lands for use by Washaw Sibi. This initiative will continue into the next fiscal year, 2022-23. Important discussions will also continue in earnest during the upcoming fiscal year with our Algonquin neighbours, with Quebec and Canada, and other relevant parties.

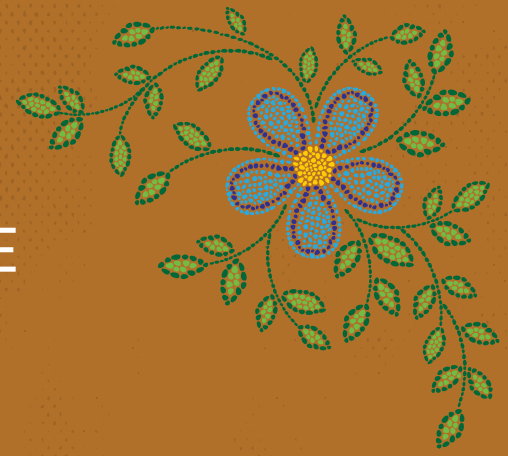
At the same time, during the 2021-22 fiscal year, Washaw Sibi has continued to work very closely with the Cree Nation Government and the Waskaganish First Nation in addressing the concerns and the opportunities related to the potential development of the Fenelon mining project by Wallbridge Mining Company. Together, the two communities have worked with the Abitibiwinni First Nation to secure a significant range of benefits for their respective communities. A very substantial percentage of the overall workforce at the Fenelon camp site is Indigenous, which includes direct employment by Wallbridge, and also, employment from Wallbridge's contractors. The approach to mining development on Cree territory by Washaw Sibi and Waskaganish, together with the Cree Nation Government, is now setting a new standard and a new benchmark for pre-development mining activities within Eeyou Istchee. Washaw Sibi and Waskaganish, working collaboratively, are contributing to the important role that the Cree Nation plays in the context of resource development within Eeyou Istchee.

Washaw Sibi looks forward to the coming year as an opportunity to advance its vision with optimism, with hope and with determination.



Message from the DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Michael Petawabano



WACHYIA! WELCOME TO THE CREE NATION GOVERNMENT 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT.

 **34**
EMPLOYEES

2021-2022 was another year marked with the challenges, adaptations, and pivots related to government operations during the COVID pandemic. During the past year, we have worked hard to assist the Cree communities with regular COVID meetings and in keeping good communications with the Cree Board of Health, Cree Nation Government, and the Public Safety Officers. This work was instrumental in keeping our members safe across the territory. Although we have had to endure another year of travel restrictions and community lockdowns, we have endeavored to keep our forward momentum and continue to progress important files and initiatives.

As Deputy Executive Director, I have the responsibility to manage and coordinate strategic operational activities, with the following departments under my supervision:

- Government Support Services
- Department of Commerce and Industry
- Child and Family Services
- Social and Cultural Development Department
- Forestry Department

In addition, I also sit on the Management Committee, as well as many other committees and boards, such as Plan Nord and the Cree-Quebec Forestry Economic Council.

I am proud to say that as a team, we have adapted and moved ahead in planning and implementing many of the important files and services we manage and provide. In the first half of the year, we continued to work on capacity building, with good departmental integration - as Apatisi-iwin Skills Development Department, Social and Cultural

Department, and the Department of Justice and Corrections all brought important contributions to the project.

We also made important progress with the negotiations on a new Cree Quebec Forestry agreement, an important part of the Cree economy, and in supporting our tallymen and land users across Eeyou Istchee. We expect to have a finalized agreement in early 2022-2023.

We continue to work with the Société du Plan Nord in our capacity as committee members, but we also meet with the SPN team independently to promote projects and explore funding opportunities.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) DEPARTMENT

As the COVID crisis continues, our team worked to provide the best possible services to Cree Nation Government's employees. It was another year where IT (Information Technology) equipment supply was a problematic, due to the global shortage of microchips. With the various COVID protocols in place, traveling to advance some of our projects was also a challenge. Not only were IT projects difficult to accomplish quickly, but many departmental initiatives were also affected.

Collaboration between IT and all departments has increased over the last year, making IT more efficient in helping us provide the services everyone needs.

This year, we welcomed 2 new full-time employees:

- Alexandre Vanier, IT systems administrator in Montreal
- Barry McRae, IT Technical Support Specialist in Montreal

We have welcomed Chester Swallow as a part-time IT Technician employed as a summer student. We also signed a contract with Gabriel Snowboy who joined us as an Eeyou Eenuu Police Force IT Technician located in Chisasibi.

IT continues to grow its service catalog and its ability to deliver essential services.

We immensely expanded our service catalog last year and this year, we focused on consolidating and securing those services, standardizing our procedures, and creating documentation. We continued to improve our monitoring solution for all the equipment across the Cree communities, giving us better alerts when services are impacted so that

we are notified of any failure in in real time. To increase our efficiency and improve user satisfaction, we have started to revise our methodologies and tools; this is the extension of last year’s Horizontal Business Analysis work that we performed with all departments.

Security

Cybersecurity awareness for all Cree Nation Government employees is essential and we monitor it closely.

New continuing education tools are used to improve our understanding of existing hazards. Various elements of our security have been reviewed and reinforced. It is important work that requires continuous attention, we continue to be vigilant in maintaining and improving our levels of protection.

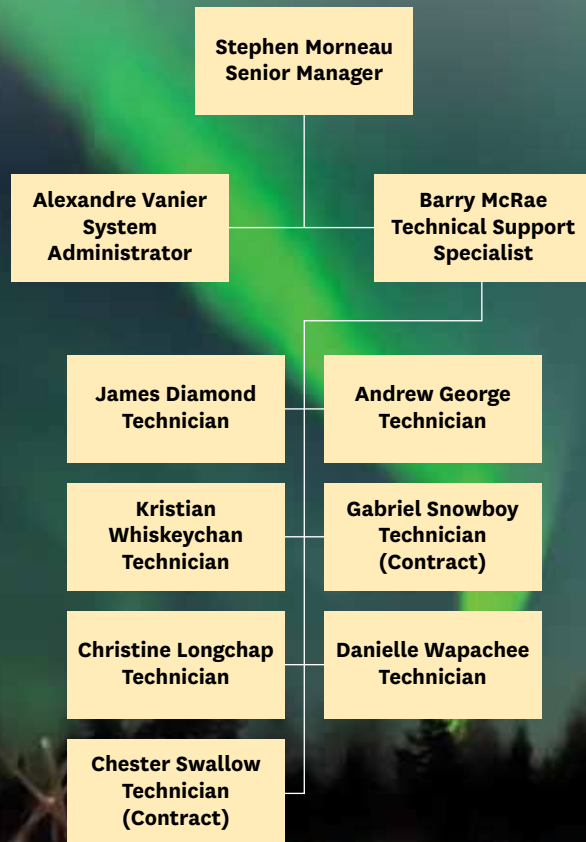
New infrastructure and VoIP service

With many COVID restrictions removed in recent months, we have accomplished a lot in a brief period, and we are confident we will be able to complete the VoIP and infrastructure upgrades for the Department of Justice and Correctional Services early this year. Shortly after, we should also be able to complete the infrastructure and VoIP upgrades for Eeyou Eenuu Police Force (EEPF).

We also have made great progress on the EEPF call center project and on several items related to telecommunications for the EEPF.

We have successfully installed the infrastructure and VoIP system for the new office of the Cree Development Corporation (CDC) in Chisasibi.

Figure 1. The organizational structure for the Information Technology Department



RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (RIM)

The Records and Information Management (RIM) department saw many exciting developments in 2021-2022. This year was marked by three significant projects: the Duplication Project, the Digitization Project, and the Records and Information Management Project.

Duplication Project – Work-in-Progress

In 2016, under the direction of the Deputy Executive Director, a major clean-up effort was recommended to eliminate duplicate records. The project began with documents in storage areas and progressed to the Documentation Center itself in 2017-2018. The result was eye-opening, as it revealed that 15 to 20% of all stored documents were duplicates. Removing duplicates involves several steps to ensure that no vital records are lost. These steps include file cleanup, preparation, digitization, quality control checks, and disposition. Today, we are 70% of the way to eliminating the initial batch of duplicate records identified.

Digitization Project

The Documentation Center currently houses approximately 4700 boxes, and we are constantly working towards cataloging, digitizing, and identifying duplicate records to reduce our storage needs, preserve vital records and improve access to information. In January 2021, the Documentation Center acquired an additional 200 boxes, which had previously been stored by the Hutchins Legal cabinet. As a result, the team embarked on a project to digitize the contents of all 200 boxes. The preparation of each document for digitization is extremely labor-intensive, but nonetheless necessary in today's modern digital age. To meet the challenge, an industrial scanner was acquired to digitize oversized maps. Furthermore, we were able to receive additional support from the Summer Student Program to meet our goals. Today, we are at nearly 50% completion with the multi-step process for the digitization of Hutchin's Legal collection and aim to finalize the project by the end of 2022.

Records and Information Management (Rim) Project

The Records and Information Management (RIM) team reports significant advancements for the RIM project over the year. 2021-2022 marked the second year of implementation for the RIM Project, where great strides have been made towards optimizing document management practices across the Cree Nation Government.

Antès Business Design Update

Antès is a company that specializes in Business Design, with strong expertise in defining the optimal use and structure of information within an organization. This is the third year of the RIM team working with Antès Business Design on the Records and Information Project at Cree Nation Government.

The past fiscal year has been dedicated to deploying the RIM project across various departments, as well as finalizing some of the early candidates.

Following the 6 steps designed by Antès in conjunction with the RIM team, over 13 departments/subdepartments have been working on designing and implementing a new document management process leveraging the SharePoint platform.

As the project continues its deployment, Antès and the RIM team have also addressed some of the specificities surrounding document management for departments such as ASD (Apatisiwin Skills Development). The core of their document activity is around their existing database, so the project also focuses on processes and policies to ensure a lean and efficient document management solution. Focusing on streamlining the different processes will also help limit the risks of falling back into old habits (i.e., closed networks, duplications) and ensure sustainability in the performance of the new document management system.

In collaboration with the IT department, the RIM Project is also taking the initiative to address the Cree Nation Government's need for a centralized intranet. This initiative incorporates feedback from across the Cree Nation Government collected through survey analysis. The feedback collected is being used to determine the design and implementation of our organizational intranet site which promotes improvements in information storage and access, communication, content creation, and an overall improvement in daily work for all.

Completion of the RIM Project will have a lasting impact on the Cree Nation Government by improving document management practices across the organization and facilitating the sharing, collaboration, and accessibility of information for all. Lastly, project deliverables will set the foundation for future archives management by leveraging the SharePoint platform to constitute the framework of organized and compliant documentation.

CREE-QUEBEC GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION AND WILDLIFE GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Implementation of the Cree-Quebec Governance Agreement

The *Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory between the Crees of Eeyou Istchee and the Gouvernement du Québec* was signed in 2012. This agreement modernizes the governance regimes in the Territory enabling greater autonomy and development of the Cree Nation through governance powers over Category II lands and shared governance between the Cree and Jamesiens over Category III lands. This includes, among other things, the planning and use of the territory and resources, as well as the exercise of jurisdiction, powers, and functions of a municipal nature under Quebec legislation.

The Role of the Cree Nation Government in Category II lands

With respect to Category II lands, the Cree Nation Government may, by resolution, declare that it shall exercise any of the jurisdictions, powers, and functions in the same manner as those attributed to a municipality or Regional

County Municipality (RCM). In cases where adaptations are required, these may be the object of a prior agreement between the Crees and Québec.

Some of the jurisdictions, functions, and powers that the Cree Nation Government may exercise in Category II lands include:

- Planning of land use and development
- Regional economic development
- Territorial development plans
- Establishment of a fund to provide financial support for operations to develop land or forest resources
- Management of watercourses and lakes
- Management of recreational leases
- Management of access
- Management of sand and gravel
- Establishment and management of regional parks
- Power
- Planning of residual matter (waste) disposal
- Any other jurisdiction, function, or power that is attributed or may be attributed from time to time to an RCM

This past year, the Cree Nation Government has been preparing to define an implementation strategy for these

responsibilities and has sought the service of expert firm Espace Stratégies to support the development of a five-year implementation action plan. The project objectives and timeline are as follows:

1. Gain a thorough understanding of the jurisdictions attributed to Regional County Municipalities (RCMs) that the Cree Nation Government could exercise under the Cree-Québec Governance Agreement (hereafter CQGA), and of the associated responsibilities and obligations.
2. Determine the gaps that might exist between the implementation of these jurisdictions and the Cree Nation Government's current structures, responsibilities, and needs.
3. Develop a five-year action plan for the implementation of the prioritized jurisdictions and functions, including organizational and budgetary requirements.

During this exercise, Espace Stratégies reviewed 16 provincial laws and identified 170 municipal and RCM jurisdictions, functions, and powers, including the responsibilities and accountabilities associated with the exercise of each jurisdiction. Interviews completed with Cree Nation Government department directors and key staff enabled a deeper understanding of departmental priorities and challenges,

Figure 2. Development of a five-year action plan

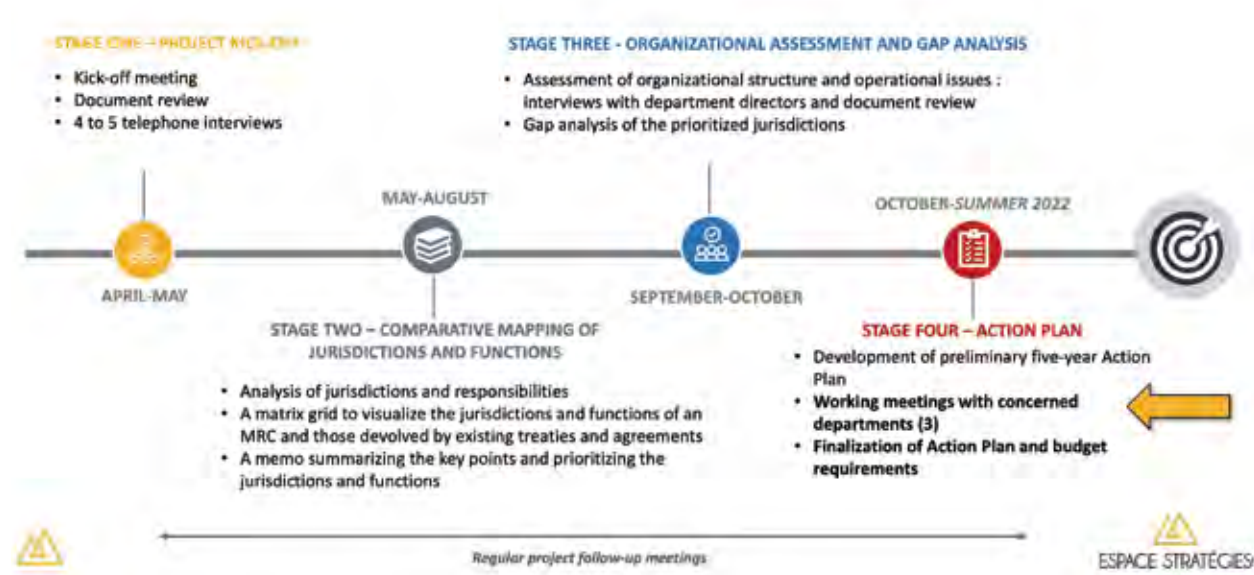


Table 1.

Theme	Responsibility
1. Land use planning and environmental protection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Land use and development plan and planning by-laws 2. Management of residual materials 3. Management of lands in the domain of the state
2. Infrastructure management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regulation and management of transportation infrastructure
3. Economic development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provision of support and assistance to private-sector enterprises

as well as the identification of jurisdictions of interest. This process resulted in the selection of five priority projects for further analysis, which correspond to three larger themes that could be addressed by exercising municipal and RCM jurisdictions, functions, and powers under the CQGA.

The exercise is intended to enable the Executive Committee of the Cree Nation Government to identify the jurisdictions, functions, and powers that would be most strategic to exercise under sections 17 and 18 of the CQGA and whether these should be negotiated with the Government of Quebec to better take into consideration the context and reality of Eeyou Istchee and of the Cree Nation Government's structure. The stages three and four of the mandate, which consist in a gap analysis to determine resource needs related to the exercise of the new or expanded jurisdictions, functions, and powers; and an action plan for the implementation of the CQGA on Category II lands, including human and financial resources, are in the progress of being finalized.

It is worth mentioning that this exercise will eventually require a harmonized approach with the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government.

Implementation of Agreement Related to Wildlife Protection Resources

The *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA)*, the *Cree-Quebec New Relationship Agreement (CQNRA)*, and more recently the *Cree-Quebec Governance Agreement (CNGA)*, establish specific regimes and obligations distinctly related to wildlife protection resources in Eeyou Istchee. Since the signing of these agreements, some challenges have delayed the implementation of wildlife protection provisions and it is critical that the necessary efforts be made to find acceptable solutions to this matter.

In the context of ensuring proper protection of wildlife resources, especially for species of concern such as the woodland caribou and the migratory caribou, the Cree Nation

Government initiated discussions with Quebec to address issues of wildlife protection resources in Eeyou Istchee.

As part of the discussions between the Cree Nation Government and the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs, it was agreed to establish a workgroup that would provide recommendations to identify issues and measures for the proper implementation of the provisions as they relate to wildlife protection resources in the territory.

Permanent Wildlife Protection office in Chisasibi

Most recent efforts have been dedicated to securing a permanent and functional office in the community of Chisasibi for the Wildlife Protection Officers. The Cree Nation Government, therefore, engaged with the community of Chisasibi and the Société québécoise des infrastructures (SQI) to find a solution to the issue. The latest discussions between Cree Nation Government and SQI have resulted in a draft funding agreement enabling the planning and construction of the building. This file is still in progress and the Cree Nation Government is still awaiting confirmation from the SIQ on the proposed funding arrangement.

Eeyou Istchee Land Keepers – Wildlife Protection Assistants Program

The Eeyou Istchee Land Keeper and Wildlife Protection Assistant Program (EILK/WPA) was established under the Department of Government Services of the Cree Nation Government and is being coordinated by Rodney Petawabano, Coordinator of Operations for the EILK/WPA program.

This program stems from the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA)*, the *Cree-Quebec New Relationship Agreement (CQNRA)*, and most recently the *Cree-Quebec Governance Agreement (CQGA)*, which establishes specific regimes and obligations distinctly related to wildlife protection resources. This includes provisions enabling the Cree Nation Government to train and hire 19 wildlife protection assistants.



Through funds provided by the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs, this program was initiated to train and hire Eeyou Istchee Land Keepers, also designated as Wildlife Protection Assistants, to increase surveillance and monitoring of the territory.

The Cree Nation Government Services has been working diligently to continue the development and operation of the Eeyou Istchee Land Keepers - Wildlife Protection Assistant program.

In 2021, most of the activities were geared towards skill development, training, and building awareness about the program. We are establishing a collaborative network with other departments and organizations. The Eeyou Istchee Land Keepers have also been active in conducting regular operations in the field, working closely with the Wildlife Protection Officers.

The Cree Nation Government is continuing to work with the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs to secure/renew the funding for the program and for additional funds to allow hiring and training 15 additional Cree Wildlife Protection Assistants, as is foreseen under section 178 of the *Cree Quebec Governance Agreement*. Work on the next funding agreement is in progress and is expected to last for 2 years.

Development of an adapted training program for Cree Wildlife Protection Resources

The Cree Nation Government has continued its collaboration with CÉGEP de Saint-Félicien, which received funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECC) to develop a training program (Collegial Attestation Certificate) adapted for Cree Wildlife Protection Resources. A Steering Committee has been put in place by ECC and is composed of representatives from federal and provincial enforcement departments, the Cree Trappers Association, the Cree Nation Government, Cree School Board, and CÉGEP de Saint-Félicien. The program development stage was completed and a report submitted to the Ministère de l'Éducation, which has recently accepted the program. The following stage will involve planning for the delivery of the program, including the identification of potential funding partners. The Cree School Board and Apatisiwin Skills Development have also been involved and approached in this regard.

Fishing Derbies

We worked alongside the Environment Department on fishing derbies in Waswanipi and Mistissini. We also went to patrol the derby on Lake Duncan in the Chisasibi territory.

Training

We participated in the water sampling training held in Nemaska during the fall of 2021. The interesting part was the field training that we completed. We learned that our water is an especially significant resource, and we need to do all that we can to protect our water in Eeyou Istchee.

We investigated complaints from the public about the water surrounding their communities. We found that the issue often originates within the community. With this training, the people can better understand and act to help our Mother Earth and to keep our lands clean. There is a lot of work to be accomplished in continuing to focus on keeping



this territory clean, and we all need to be part of the solution to make positive changes in our own environment.

First Aid in Remote Region Training – December 2021

First Aid training is especially needed for the James Bay area; we completed this training on Highway 167 North in the wilderness with the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Patrol with WPO (Wildlife Protection Officer)

Last summer the WPOs invited us to help them with one of their interventions at Albanal Lake as overfishing was reported. This was a particularly good capacity-building experience for our team.

For most of the summer and fall, we were conducting job shadowing WPO (Richard Gunner) on his jurisdiction in the Mistissini territory. The main goal was to learn the patrol methods. During this time, we would patrol with our truck following the WPO, as we had a challenging time working alongside anyone due to the pandemic. We patrolled on the east side of Mistissini Territory. On several nights, the hunters and land users traveled into other territories, asking for their tallyman's permission. A lot of awareness needs to be communicated from the Cree Nation, and the Cree communities, about our traditional practices and Cree values.

2022 Winter December, February, March

We conducted some snowmobile excursions with tallymen and land users to understand more about the land: a few overnight trips on the north side of Mistissini lake and the east side boundary of Cree territory. With this exercise, we built our understanding of the land and issues which the tallymen and land users encounter on the territory. We received some complaints about planes and helicopters flying low and landing at Cree camps. We need to monitor these issues more closely. We understand that there is a lot to be done for Eeyou Istchee with patrolling, and we do need help from the land users.

2022 January/February Caribou Patrol in Chisasibi Territory (LG3 area)

Finally, we reached an agreement between the Innu and the Cree to monitor the Caribou hunt in Chisasibi territory. It was

exciting learning the ways of the Innu hunters and the team from EILK/WPA was able to make friends with members of the Innu Nation. Some of the communities are still using the old ways of hunting, which was interesting for the team to witness. The team had a great experience patrolling during that time.

Spring 2022

We helped the Environment department with Autonomous Recording Unit (ARU) deployment once again on Highway 167 North, north of Mistissini, to record bird species in that area. On one of the recordings last year, a rare bird was observed coming inland, when usually, it stays along the coastline of James Bay.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HUNTING, FISHING AND TRAPPING REGIME

The Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping regime provided under chapter 24 of the JBNQA establishes the Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC), which acts as an advisory body to the governments, and local and regional Native authorities on all hunting, fishing, and trapping matters. It has been given the responsibility to review, manage, and in certain cases, supervise and regulate the regimes. It also participates in the management of wildlife species in the Territory, mainly as a recommending body. However for certain species such as the moose, caribou, and black bear, the HFTCC has the decisional power to set an upper limit of kill (ULK) and make management decisions. The mandate of the Coordinating Committee is described more specifically through sections 24.4.27 to 24.4.38 of the JBNQA.

The coordinating committee is composed of representatives from Inuit, Naskapi and Cree territories as well as provincial and federal representatives. Cree members appointed to the committee are Deputy Grand Chief Norman Wapachee, Isaac Voyageur, and Nadia Saganash. Advisory support is provided by Alan Penn, Emily Sinave, Maya Longpré Croteau, and an executive member of the Cree Trappers Association, Thomas Steven.

The Senior Advisor acts as a member of the Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Coordinating Committee and participates in various files including the administrative committee, migratory caribou, moose, lake sturgeon, review of legislation and policies, and matters related to the outfitting regime.

In 2021, the main activities focused on the management of harvest of migratory caribou, the moose decline in zone 17, and the Conservation agreement between the Cree Nation Government and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on the management of Lake Sturgeon.

Migratory Caribou

The Traditional Understanding between the Cree Nation and the Innu Nation on the Harvest of Caribou

The decline of the migratory caribou over the years has been a great concern for the Cree Nation and other nations

who rely on migratory herds. After years of debate with the Quebec government, pressures from the Cree Nation have finally led to the closure of the sport hunt in 2018, since the concerns have shifted towards food security matters and management of the harvest between Aboriginal nations.

The Cree Nation has fostered relationships with neighboring nations to create the Ungava Caribou Peninsula Aboriginal Round Table (UPCART), which led to the development of a conservation strategy released in 2017 and endorsed by several nations from both Quebec and Labrador. This strategy defined the need to establish a Sharing Agreement between the nations. The Cree have continued these discussions emphasizing the health and conservation of the herd, as well as respect for the interests and concerns of the Cree, including our treaty obligations.

Since the drastic decline of the George River herd, the Cree Nation has been, for a few years now, engaged in discussions with the Innu Nation of Quebec to find solutions on how to ensure that the caribou remain an integral part of our respective cultures for centuries to come.

Following growing concerns about unauthorized hunting and an influx of hunters from Innu communities taking place in the territory of Chisasibi this last few years, the Cree Nation Government and Chisasibi formally engaged with the Innu Nation to find an acceptable solution to respond to the concerns of those of our Cree trappers impacted by this recurring situation. Numerous meetings were held with our trappers and resulted in the development of a framework that would lead to a mutual understanding with the Innu Nation. After much effort and collaboration between the Cree and the Innu, a consensus was finally reached.

On January 24, 2022, the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee and the Innu Nation of Quebec marked a historic moment by joining together to sign the *Maamuu Nisituhtimuwîn*. This understanding also referred to as the *Traditional Mutual Understanding on the Harvest of Caribou in Cree Traditional Territory of Chisasibi, Eeyou Istchee between the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee and the Innu Nation in Quebec*, establishes agreed-upon terms by which Innu communities in Quebec will be able to access caribou within the Cree traditional territory of Chisasibi, Eeyou Istchee. The Understanding, shaped by the wisdom and knowledge of our elders, outlines a framework inspired by the traditional customs and values of our ancestors. This framework is built on the core principles of sharing, sustainable harvest and respect for the animal, and the stewardship role of the tallymen. More information is available at: <https://www.cngov.ca/honouring-the-ways-of-our-ancestors/>.

Key Elements

Some of the key elements of the *Maamuu Nisituhtimuwîn* include:

- A yearly renewal process subject to the health of the caribou population and permitting the identification of issues and improvements needed
- An authorization process whereby only the local authorities may act to officially authorize the hunting activities, by means of an official letter of consent subject to

approval and other conditions that may be established by the concerned tallymen

- A hunting area defined on the Cree traditional territory (Chisasibi) and respectful of the stewardship role of the tallymen
- A total allowable harvest limit of 300 caribou for the winter season of 2021-2022 to be shared amongst the nine Innu communities
- Respect of traditional customs and values to ensure the utmost respect for the animals, the environment, and the safety and security of individuals
- The purpose of the caribou harvest shall be for ritualistic, cultural, educational, communal, and sustenance purposes and not for the purpose of sales or any act that may be for the purpose of monetary profit
- In accordance with traditional customs and values, all parts of the harvested animal shall be used; no wastage shall be left behind; no unnecessary or prolonged chasing of the animal will be accepted
- The security and safety of hunters and individuals including the proper use of firearms
- Prior authorization for use of camps, except for emergency purposes and in such case must be reported
- The obligation to be accompanied by a Cree person determined by the Chisasibi local authority or concerned tallyman
- Reporting of harvesting activities

Following the signature of the *Maamuu Nisituhtimwin*, the Innu hunt was organized for 8 of the 9 Innu communities and scheduled on a weekly basis during the month of February. For each Innu community, a group of hunters was designated to undertake the harvest of caribou for their respective communities on specific days. A letter of consent was issued for each community and included the information on the designated hunters. The 300 caribou were allocated between communities and the designated groups were all accompanied by the Cree tallymen and persons designated by him to guide the hunters and ensure the respect of the area where hunting was allowed. The Eeyou Istchee Land Keepers also provided assistance and monitoring to ensure

compliance with the terms of the Traditional Understanding. The Wildlife Protection Officers were also informed and collaborated to ensure compliance, especially for matters of security and safety.

Letter of Understanding between the Cree Nation and the Naskapi nation

A mutual understanding between the Cree and Naskapi was also achieved defining a similar protocol. The Naskapi being beneficiaries of the JBNQA, and rights defined under the JBNQA and NEQA have guaranteed levels of harvest for caribou and a defined area for caribou hunting within the Cree area of interest. However, in the last decade, access to caribou within this specified zone has been limited resulting in request from the Naskapi to access caribou from the Leaf River herd in the western part of the Chisasibi territory. Following this request, an initial understanding was reached in 2019, however due to COVID-19 restrictions, hunting by the Naskapi was postponed. This past winter, this letter of understanding was renewed and permitted the hunt of 150 caribou by the Naskapi within the Chisasibi traditional territory.

Moose Decline in Zone 17

Following several years of concerns expressed by tallymen on the decline of the moose population, an aerial survey on the moose population in zone 17 was successfully co-organized and completed in February 2021 by the Cree Nation Government, MFFP, and Waswanipi Cree First Nation. The results received by the Cree Nation Government revealed a drastic decline in the moose population in Zone 17: the population was estimated at 1036 individuals, representing a 35% decline since 2009. The recruitment rate is the lowest on record at 30 calves/100 females, as well as the male proportion in the population. Due to the low population level, it was recommended that the overall sustainable harvest not exceed more than 10% of the population estimated, representing a harvest of 104 moose in zone 17.

The JBNQA provides under subparagraph 24.6.3 d) *that if game populations do not permit levels of harvesting equal to the guaranteed level established pursuant to paragraph*



24.6.2, the Native people shall be allocated the entire harvest and may allocate a portion of this kill to non-Natives through recognized outfitting facilities. Considering that the GLH for moose in zone 17 is 158, the Cree are given the entire allocation as provided under 24.6.3 d) and may decide to allocate a portion to the sport hunt.

On October 6, 2021, the HFTCC formally established the upper limit of kill for moose at 104 in hunting zone 17 for Native people and non-Natives for the period extending from July 1st, 2022, to June 30, 2023. This upper limit of kills will be reviewed annually by the HFTCC. The sport hunt for moose in zone 17 was therefore closed following the HFTCC decision on the ULK.

A Moose Management Leadership Committee and a technical committee composed of Chiefs and representatives from the concerned communities were created at the request of the Grand Chief (GC) to propose recommendations for a conservation plan to address the moose population decline including the following elements:

1. Allocation to sport hunt
2. Engagement and consultations
3. Data availability
4. Impacts of development on moose habitat
5. Cree harvest monitoring and guidelines
6. Awareness campaign
7. Other factors influencing moose decline

Following the HFTCC decision on the ULK and the closure of the sport hunt, the mayor of Chibougamau submitted a letter to the GC inquiring about the possibility that an allocation be provided for the sport hunt to residents of the territory for fall 2022. The request was reviewed by the Moose Management Committee and Technical Committee and consultation with the tallymen and communities was initiated. Results of these consultations are still pending.

In the meantime, the Moose Management Committee has been working to develop recommendations for a moose conservation plan including guidelines to manage and monitor the Cree harvest, to ensure that the harvest is sustainable, and that it respects the established ULK.

Conservation Agreement on the Management of Lake Sturgeon

The recent addition of lake sturgeon as a “special concern” under the Species at Risk Act (SARA) triggered the obligation (under article 65 of SARA) for the Department of Fisheries and Ocean (DFO) to develop a Management Plan for this species. The unique status of lake sturgeon in the territory as a species reserved for the exclusive use by the Cree, as well as the treaty and governance regime in the territory, urged the Cree Nation government to evaluate Cree involvement in the application of the SARA and define a clear framework for the collaboration between the Cree nation and Canada when it comes to Species at Risk in Eeyou Istchee.

The initial approach undertaken by DFO was to engage the Cree through its usual consultation process; a format considered inadequate and limited given the species’ special status and territorial context. The Cree Nation has sought to pursue a collaborative framework in which the

Cree would take leadership in the development of a management plan for lake sturgeon in Eeyou Istchee.

The Cree Nation Government and the DFO have engaged in fruitful discussions enabling the creation of a negotiation table between the Cree and DFO in pursuit of reaching a collaborative conservation agreement under section 11 of the Species at Risk Act, which allows the competent minister to enter into a conservation agreement with any government in Canada, organization, or person to benefit a species at risk or enhance its survival in the wild.

The objectives of the negotiation table were to:

1. Draft a Conservation Agreement as per section 11 of SARA to provide a framework for a Nation-to-Nation collaboration between DFO and Cree Nation Government to support the preparation of a management plan for lake sturgeon/nemoo, within Eeyou Istchee territory, identifying conservation targets and establishing the concrete actions to be undertaken to address the identified threats and ensure the long-term survival of said populations of lake sturgeon/nemoo
2. Prepare the mandate and oversee the work of an Operational Working Group to work collaboratively to prepare a proposed SARA-mandated management plan for the lake sturgeon/nemoo within the JBNQA territory
3. Discuss opportunities for implementation of conservation measures
4. Ensure that the above-mentioned objectives are achieved in accordance with the Cree cultural values and consistent with the principles of conservation, as per the spirit of the JBNQA and of SARA

Several meetings have since taken place and a proposed collaborative conservation agreement, as defined under section 11 of the SARA was presented to the Executive, the CTA, and Council board during this past year. This collaborative agreement will enable the transfer of responsibility to the Cree Nation Government to lead the development of the management plan for lake sturgeon in Eeyou Istchee. In March 2022, the Conservation Agreement was finally concluded and recently signed by the parties.

The agreement only set out the terms of reference with respect to the development of the Lake Sturgeon Management Plan, however, the Cree Nation Government stressed that additional discussions will be required to clarify its role and responsibilities concerning the implementation phase of the Management Plan. These discussions will need to be pursued following the conclusion of the present conservation agreement and the adoption of the Lake Sturgeon Management Plan.

The agreement also refers to financial arrangements that may be provided by DFO; these will be set out in a separate funding agreement. Although the Cree Nation Government expressed a preference for a direct financial agreement between the DFO and Cree Nation Government to undertake these responsibilities, DFO proposed that Cree Nation Government apply for funds under the Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk (CNFASAR) considering this process would be the fastest and easiest way to secure the funds required.

After internal discussions, the Cree Nation Government agreed; however, it was expressed that it will be important to clarify the funding process for this type of agreement in the future, especially considering that other species at risk are present in the territory.

Outfitting Regime and the Negotiations on the Right of First Refusal

The Right of First Refusal is a process established in section 24 of the JBNQA in view of favoring the establishment of outfitting operations by the Cree, Inuit, and Naskapi. While in Category II land, outfitting development is exclusive to the native communities, and in Category III a process of Right of First Refusal applies to provide priority to native people in establishing outfitting operations. Indeed, the JBNQA guarantees that when an outfitting operation is to be established or transferred, the native people may exercise their right to take over such operations. This right may be exercised 7 out of 10 times and the HFTCC oversees the procedures.

The renewal of the Right of First Refusal as established by paragraph 24.9.3 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement was foreseen to expire on November 10, 2015. However, section 24.9.4 stipulates that this right shall be renegotiated prior to its expiration. Given the delays and lack of time for proper negotiation, it was agreed between the Natives parties and the government of Quebec to extend the RFR for a period of 6 years. Complementary Agreement No. 25, therefore, amended paragraphs 24.9.3 and 24.9.4 of the JBNQA to provide a 6-year extension period enabling the necessary time for Quebec, the Crees, the Inuit, and the Naskapi to negotiate the continuation of the Right of First Refusal beyond 2021, based on past experience as well as actual and future needs.

Negotiations began in 2017 and are still slowly progressing; however, it was agreed between the parties that another 3-year extension will be required to complete the negotia-

tions. As such, another complementary agreement extending the RFR until 2024 has been drafted and approved.

PROTECTED AREAS IN EYYOU ISTCHEE

In 2020, the Cree Nation Government and Quebec announced the addition of 23 new territories reserved for the purposes of protected area (TRPPA) increasing the total amount of protected areas within the Eeyou Istchee territory to roughly 100,000 sq. km. Since then, the Cree Nation Government has continued its collaboration with the Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques (MELCC) through a bi-lateral Cree-MELCC committee mandated to collaborate on the next phases required to consolidate and achieve the permanent status of these protected areas. The Manager of Protected Areas, Ms. Chantal Tetreault; the Director of Cree-Quebec Relations, Melissa Saganash; and the Senior Advisor on the Cree-Quebec Governance Manager of protected areas, Nadia Saganash, have been appointed to this table. To achieve the permanent protection status, several steps remain to be completed:

1. Writing a summary portrait of the knowledge and conservation plan of each of the protected areas
2. Establishing a procedure for assessing and reviewing environmental and social impacts
3. Surveying and legal designation process.

The MELCC and the Cree Nation Government will continue their collaboration towards the permanent status of these protected areas and will be resuming further discussions on additional protection needs considering the new 30% target to be identified by 2030, the governance and management of these protected areas, and other matters such as the Northern Conservation Territories.

*Michael Petawabano
Deputy Executive Director*



COMMUNICATIONS



The Communications Team carries out day-to-day activities related to the coordination and distribution of information on current news, issues and activities of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government to people across Eeyou Istchee and the general public. The Team is led by the Director of Québec and Indigenous Relations, Melissa Saganash, and is comprised of our Communications Advisor, Joanne Ottereyes, our Web Communications Specialist, Brendan Forward and our Multimedia Communications Specialist, Jamie Pashagumskum, who is replacing April Pachanos on leave since March 2021.

Our Team is also responsible for maintaining and updating the Cree Nation Government's website and social media accounts and ensuring that information is made available on all platforms. We also manage the distribution of press releases, coordination of the annual reports and assist in the organization of press conferences and events such as the Annual General Assembly and Livestream broadcasts. The Team also offers support and services to departments in their communications and promotional needs.

Over the past year, some of our projects have included assisting the Land Keepers of Eeyou Istchee with the design

of their new logo, collaborating with Commerce and Industry to create a new webpage for the Cree Real Estate Entrepreneurship Development Program (CREED) and preparing the online commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between the Government of Québec and the Cree Nation, commonly known as "Paix des Braves", featuring video messages from Cree and Québec leaders. We also collaborated in the promotion of the special livestream event organized for the signing of a traditional mutual understanding between the Cree and Innu Nations on sharing, sustainable harvest and respect for the caribou.

The announcement of the discovery of 215 unmarked graves in Kamloops in May 2021 caused a resurgence of pain and anguish across Eeyou Istchee and for Indigenous Peoples across Canada. As a response to the grim discovery and the possibility of a similar discovery on residential school grounds in Eeyou Istchee, a Livestream session was organized on June 14, 2021, in collaboration with the Cree School Board, Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay and Cree Nation of Chisasibi to provide the Cree Nation's response to the events that were unfolding before



@gcccra



The Grand Council
of the Crees

Photo: Katherine Dehm



us in Kamloops and preliminary information on the potential search of the residential school grounds in Fort George. Updates were provided throughout the year and special messages were shared on social media to continue to honour and support residential school survivors and their families.

Special promotional campaigns were organized on social media to promote Cree history, culture, and language: In October 2021 we celebrated Cree Women's History Month with profiles of notable Cree women, Cree Language Month in March 2022 was marked by profiles of Cree Language specialists and teachers. As well, the year 2022 has been designated by the Cree Nation as the Year of Special Needs, and the Communications Team will be putting a spotlight on the days celebrating people with special needs in Eeyou Istchee. Finally, we have also been highlighting new staff and services offered to members of the Cree Nation.

The Communications Team has also been part of the Cree Nation's COVID-19 Response Team, which was put in place to produce and distribute updates and public bulletins concerning the pandemic. Our Team has been actively collaborating with the different regional entities in a concerted effort to help keep community members in Eeyou Istchee safe and healthy. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Public Bulletin has been published to provide current information on the status of the pandemic in Eeyou Istchee and the different measures adopted to help reduce the spread of the virus in our region.

Since March 2020, we have published over 150 Cree Nation COVID-19 Public Bulletins on our website and social media, which began as a tri-weekly publication, then published on a weekly basis and is now on an as needed basis. The Team continues to update the special COVID-19 section created on the Cree Nation Government website, providing

an update of precautionary measures, directives, and an Areas of Risk map to ensure all people are aware of the unique measures in place in Eeyou Istchee. Also, special Lives-stream broadcasts were produced at three (3) key moments during the year to answer specific questions about COVID-19 (Variants, Vaccination and Testing; Emergency Leadership Session; and Deconfinement Management Protocol).

Several projects within the organization required our attention throughout the year. We continued to collaborate in the Records and Information Management (RIM) project towards optimizing our documentation management practices on our SharePoint platform. We also collaborated with our IT Department in the Cree Nation Government centralized intranet page project by helping with the design of the pages on SharePoint and providing images and files needed for the photo gallery, document templates, and logo library.

We also produce the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government's Quarterly Newsletter, which delivers news articles, and promotes events and publications in an electronic newsletter format by email for all subscribers. If you have a story or an event to share with Eeyou Istchee, we invite you to contact the Communications Team to have it included in the Newsletter. To receive the Newsletter with the latest news, information about upcoming events and other updates, you may register on the homepage of the website: www.cngov.ca



[gcccng](https://www.instagram.com/gcccng)



**Grand Council of
the Crees (Eeyou
Istchee)/Cree
Nation Government**



SOCIAL MEDIA IN NUMBERS



8.5K

Fans

↑1.3K

increase
in 2021

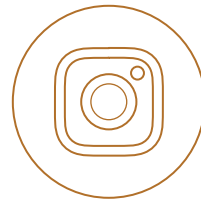


2.9K

Followers

↑141

increase
in 2021



1.1K

Followers

↑127

increase
in 2021



1.6K

Followers

↑400

increase
in 2021



326

Posts

The total number of posts that have been published on your Pages



274

Tweets

The number of tweets published from your Twitter accounts, including replies



84

Posts

The total number of posts published to your Instagram accounts



141

Posts

The total number of posts published to your Pages



22K

Engagements

The total number of interactions received



1.4K

Engagements

The total number of interactions received



773

Engagements

The total number of likes, comments, and saves received



1.5K

Engagements

The total number of likes, comments, and shares received



119K

Clicks

The number of clicks inside your posts



562

Clicks

The number of clicks on the links in your tweets



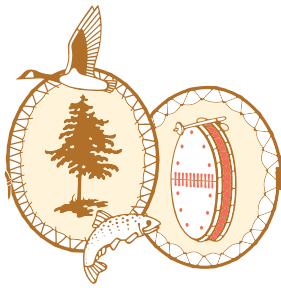
7.2K

Clicks

The total number of clicks on the posts



WEBSITE STATISTICS



VIEWERSHIP

70K

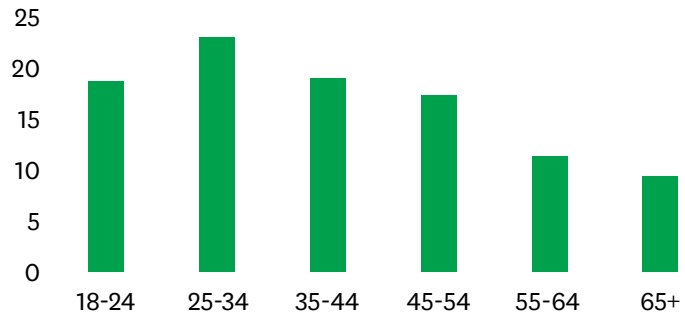
Users

113,543 Sessions

82% Canadian audience

of which 65% are from Quebec,
22% are from Ontario and
6% are from BC and Alberta

AGE OF USERS



25-34 Represents 23% of our audience

TOP PAGES

Rank	Page URL	Views	% Views
1.	/(Home)	36,849	16.26
2.	/covid-19/	20,718	9.14
3.	/resources/covid-public-updates/	12,110	5.34
4.	/services/careers/	9,686	4.27
5.	/community-culture/communities/	6,345	2.80
6.	/fr/	4,916	2.17
7.	/news-issues/	3,022	1.33
8.	/fr/gcc-ei-gnc-role-mission-vision/	2,896	1.28
9.	/communaute-et-culture/communautes/	2,896	1.28
10.	/governance-structure/	2,772	1.22

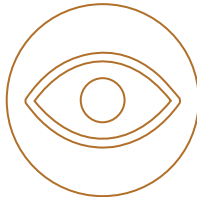
LIVESTREAM STATISTICS

MOST POPULAR BROADCAST GCC(EI)/CNG ELECTIONS

1,418 unique viewers and over 23,899 minutes of watch time



17
Broadcasts



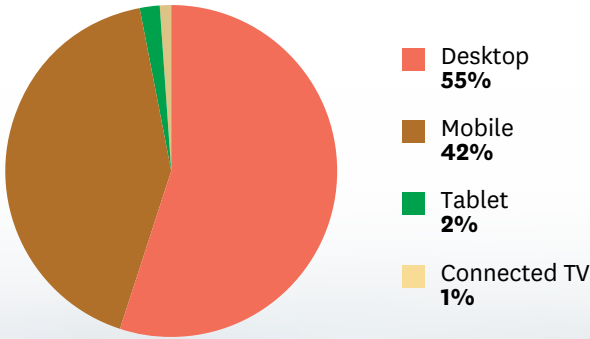
VIEWERSHIP
37,194

11K on Livestream | 36K on Facebook

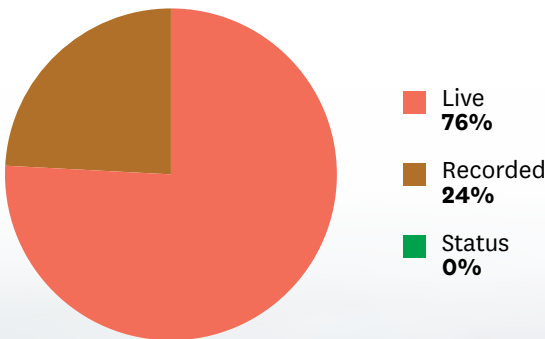


LOCATION
94%
Canadian Viewers

DEVICE PREFERENCES



MEDIA TYPE



CREE-CANADA RELATIONS



SPECIAL BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

The Cree Nation stands in a special Nation-to-Nation and treaty relationship with the Government of Canada by virtue of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA)*. This relationship has been further developed and consolidated through the *Agreement concerning a New Relationship between the Government of Canada and the Cree of Eeyou Istchee*, signed on February 21, 2008 (Federal NRA), and the *Agreement on Cree Nation Governance between the Crees of Eeyou Istchee and the Government of Canada*, signed on July 18, 2017 (Cree Nation Governance Agreement).

The Cree-Canada Standing Liaison Committee established under the Federal NRA provides a forum to strengthen relations between the Cree and Canada, to address

issues involving Cree-Canada relations and to resolve differences between them as they arise. Bill Namagoose is the lead representative of the Cree Nation on the Cree-Canada Standing Liaison Committee. His counterpart and lead federal representative on this Committee is currently Assistant Deputy Minister Heather McLean.

Ms. McLean is responsible for the Implementation Sector of the Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC). She replaced Ross Pattee who retired on June 30, 2021. Ms. McLean has a Labrador Inuit heritage and she has spent more than 20 years in the public service focusing on advancing Indigenous affairs and related issues, including as Director General of Treaties and Indigenous Government (CIRNAC) since 2017.



On July 7, 2021, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the appointment of Mary Simon as the 30th Governor General of Canada. Ms. Simon is the first Indigenous Governor General of Canada. She is Inuk from Kuujuaq, Nunavik, and she is an Inuit rights advocate and former diplomat.

FEDERAL ELECTIONS

The 2021 federal election was held on September 20, 2021. The Liberal Party, led by incumbent Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, failed to secure a majority but won enough seats in the House of Commons to form another minority government with the tacit support of the New Democratic Party led by Jagmeet Singh. Ms. Sylvie Bérubé, a candidate of the Bloc Québécois, was re-elected for the riding of Abitibi-Baie-James-Nunavik-Eeyou.

On October 26, 2021, Prime Minister Trudeau unveiled his new Cabinet. Key appointments included Marc Miller as the new Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Patty Hajdu as the new Minister of Indigenous Services.

UNITED NATION DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ACT

The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Bill C-15) came into force on June 21, 2021. The Government of Canada is carrying out consultations with Indigenous communities, and is expected to table a draft action plan by summer 2022 to achieve the objectives of the Declaration. According to the Government of Canada, there will be a further process for Indigenous peoples and Canada to work collaboratively on measures to implement the Declaration, informed by the priorities identified in the initial action plan.

Bill C-15 builds upon Bill C-262 introduced in 2016 by then Member of Parliament Romeo Saganash. The GCC(EI) and Cree Nation Government have been actively involved at the international level in drafting and promoting the passage of the Declaration for nearly 40 years.

CREE NATION HOUSING STRATEGY

For many years, the Cree Nation Government and the Cree First Nations have worked collaboratively to develop the Cree Nation Housing Strategy to address the urgent needs of community members for affordable and adequate housing. The Cree Nation Housing Strategy is a \$1.5B initiative with very significant potential for unlocking wealth for Cree individuals and stimulating the economies of the Cree communities while, at the same time,

Photo: Katherine Dehm



creating employment and solving a number of persistent social issues related to overcrowded housing.

The Cree Nation Housing Strategy is comprehensive, addressing all sectors of Cree community housing. A cornerstone of the Cree Nation Housing Strategy is the prioritization of private homeownership by the Crees. The Strategy will also address social welfare requirements and the special needs of Cree elders, trappers, disabled persons, and youth.

To be effective, the Cree Nation Housing Strategy requires partnerships between the Cree Nation and the federal and Quebec Governments, as well as with the private sector, including financial institutions, private homeowners, and investors.

Special Cree-Canada Housing Table

In early 2019, Cree and federal representatives established a special Cree-Canada Housing Table, under the aegis of the Cree-Canada Standing Liaison Committee, in order to develop a Cree-Canada partnership to support the Cree Nation Housing Strategy, in compliance with Section 28 of the JBNQA. In June 2019, Cree representatives tabled a comprehensive proposal seeking federal support for the Cree Nation Housing Strategy, particularly the social housing component.

Over the past year, the Cree Nation Government has successfully negotiated \$200 million in funding from the Government of Canada to support the social housing component of the Cree Nation Housing Strategy. This allocation of \$200 million is a very significant federal investment in the Cree Nation. Combined with other sources of funding and efforts, it offers the potential to address the current needs for social housing in the Cree communities.

This significant allocation of funding reflects years of Cree efforts and discussions with federal officials, including through the special Cree-Canada Housing Table to secure Canada's support for the Cree Nation Housing Strategy.

This new funding will be used to cover a large portion of the capital requirements for the construction of at least 750 new social housing units in the Cree communities for low-income Cree individuals and families. The Cree communities are to build these new social housing units in accordance with the Community Social Housing Program, which the Cree Nation Government developed in collaboration with the Cree communities, and approved in March 2022.

The Cree Nation Government continues to explore different options to secure additional funding, including for the remaining balance required to build and maintain these new social housing units, and to support other elements of the comprehensive Cree housing proposal previously submitted to Canada.

The Cree Nation Government has already identified and set aside certain funding that could be used to support the operation and maintenance of the new housing units. In addition, the federal Budget 2022 proposes new investments to support housing for Modern Treaty and Self-Gov-



2019

CREE AND FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVES ESTABLISHED A SPECIAL CREE-CANADA HOUSING TABLE

erning groups. Cree and federal representatives will pursue discussions to identify the portion of these new investments that Canada may allocate to the Cree Nation and that could be used, among other things, to support the operation and maintenance of the new housing units, as required, as well as other elements of the Cree housing proposal previously submitted to Canada.

Special Community Private Housing Program

The Cree Nation Government has set aside significant resources and approved a Special Community Private Housing Program to encourage and facilitate access to private homeownership in the Cree communities. In May 2021, the Cree Nation Government approved modifications to this Program to enable qualifying Cree individuals to benefit from an additional subsidy amount to finish a basement or build an extension to a new private home.

Construction of private housing has been relatively slow in the past year, likely due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and higher costs of construction for individuals. However, it is hoped that more private housing units will be built as COVID-19 restrictions ease and costs return to more normal levels in the near future.

Each year, subsidy amounts for private housing are adjusted to reflect the increase or decrease in the cost of residential construction. Based on this new indexation approach, approved in May 2021, the subsidy amounts for this year (2022-2023) have been increased by over twenty percent (20%) in order to offset the higher costs of construction. It should be noted that subsidy amounts could also decrease in the future in line with the cost of residential construction.

IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL NRA

Assumption of Federal Responsibilities

The Cree Nation Government continued to implement the key elements of the *Cree-Canada New Relationship Agreement* (Federal NRA), in particular, the assumption of federal JBNQA responsibilities.

Over the 20-year term of the Federal NRA until 2028, the Cree Nation Government assumes, with funding provided by Canada certain responsibilities of Canada under various provisions of the JBNQA. These “Assumed Federal JBNQA Responsibilities” include certain aspects of Cree community and economic development, the administration of justice and the development of Cree human resources.

Formal discussions to renew the Federal NRA will start in 2026. The way in which the Cree Nation implements the Federal NRA and carries out the assumed federal JBNQA responsibilities up until the start of these discussions in 2026 will largely determine what the renewal of this agreement will look like in 2028.

Amendment of Section 3 JBNQA – Eligibility

In 2018, Cree, federal and Quebec representatives completed discussions on a proposed Complementary Agreement to amend Section 3 of the JBNQA to clarify that the ten-year clause does not apply while Crees are outside the Territory for reasons of education, health or work on behalf of an organization whose mandate is to promote the welfare of the Cree. This Complementary Agreement will implement paragraph 5.8(a)(ii) of the Federal NRA.

The Cree leadership approved the Complementary Agreement in November 2018. Quebec appears finally ready to approve the proposed Complementary Agreement. The Cree Nation Government expects Canada to approve the Complementary Agreement as soon as Quebec has approved it.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CREE NATION GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT

Land Registry System

The Cree Nation Government has formed a Technical Working Group to review the Land Registry System for Category IA lands and to examine short-term and longer-term measures and possible changes to improve its administration and operation. The Technical Working Group will engage with the Cree communities and stakeholders with a view to formulating recommendations for the Cree leadership.

The Land Registry System was first created in 1984 under the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*, as a carryover from the *Indian Act*. In 2017, the provisions of the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act* related to the Land Registry System were incorporated into the *Cree Nation Governance Agreement* without any substantive change. At the time, Canada and the Crees committed to examine ways of improving the System, including possibly through a greater assumption of responsibilities by the Cree Nation Government for its administration and operation.

FEDERAL FUNDING

Federal Response to COVID-19

Throughout the year, the Government of Canada maintained several measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, to protect health and safety, and to support the economy in general and certain groups and sectors in particular.

The Government of Canada adopted most of these measures in 2020-2021 as part of Canada’s COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to provide support for individuals and businesses.

The Cree Nation Government and Cree First Nations received funding from Canada under some of these special measures and funds to support their efforts in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and responding to the effects of the pandemic. This includes funding:

- to support Cree First Nations (Indigenous Community Support Fund);
- to support Cree First Nation-owned businesses (Indigenous Community Business Fund);
- to build affordable modular homes (Rapid Housing Initiative);
- to address homelessness and to renovate houses (Reaching Home Program);
- to reopen community facilities (ISC Minor Capital Investments and Non-Health Activities);
- to support additional expenditures of the Eeyou Eeenu Police Force related to COVID-19;
- to support Cree youth (Youth Employment Strategy and Skills Links Program);
- to support additional programs of Apatisiwin Skills Development;
- to support Cree parents (Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Program);
- to support Cree students (Youth and Post-Secondary Students Program).

In addition, Cree individuals and Cree businesses could apply for and, where eligible, receive benefits under various special programs and measures made available generally to all Canadians and businesses. These programs include the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) for eligible employers, and the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) for eligible employees or self-employed individuals.

Access Roads

Federal funding to upgrade community access roads remains an outstanding matter that the Crees consider related to the implementation of Section 28 of the JBNQA. Canada has so far taken the position that federal responsibility for access roads is limited to Category IA lands. Cree and federal representatives have agreed to pursue further discussions and to carry out an in-depth review of all federal programs and possible sources of federal funding to upgrade community access roads.

BILL C-92

On February 10, 2022, the Québec Court of Appeal released an opinion on the constitutionality of Bill C-92, the *Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*, after being referred the question by the Government of Quebec.

Bill C-92 came into force on January 1, 2020. Among other things, it recognizes Indigenous jurisdiction and law-making power over “child and family services” (in Quebec, youth protection services) as part of an inherent Aboriginal right to self-government under section 35 of the *Constitution Act*,

1982. Bill C-92 also establishes national standards applicable to child and family services for Indigenous children.

The Government of Quebec argued before the Court of Appeal that Bill C-92 was unconstitutional because: (i) child and family services is a matter of exclusive provincial jurisdiction; and (ii) the federal government cannot through legislation (i.e. Bill C-92) unilaterally recognize Indigenous law-making power in this area without first obtaining the consent of the Province.

In fact, Quebec argued before the Court of Appeal that Indigenous law-making power could only be delegated by the federal and provincial governments, who hold between them all the legislative powers.

In an unanimous opinion, the Court of Appeal disagreed with Quebec, and concluded instead that the central part of Bill C-92 is constitutional, and that all Indigenous groups have an inherent right to selfgovernment over child and family services, recognized and confirmed under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. This inherent and “generic” right flows from the original sovereignty and historic self-governance of Indigenous peoples and the importance of children and families to Indigenous survival and identity, not from a delegation of power by the federal or provincial government.

On March 14, 2022, the Government of Quebec appealed the Court of Appeal’s decision to the Supreme Court of Canada. On the same day, the Government of Canada filed its own appeal of the decision on a narrower point regarding the mechanisms used in Bill C-92 to give relevant Indigenous laws precedence over provincial laws in certain cases of conflict or inconsistency. Among other things, the Court of Appeal found that these mechanisms were not valid or needed, given that Indigenous laws would enjoy a certain precedence in any case by virtue of section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

There was extensive media coverage of this decision, and several public communications and representations from the AFNQL. The Cree Nation is in a different position from other First Nations in Quebec in relation to youth protection due to Section 14 of the JBNQA, which recognizes Cree treaty rights to jurisdiction over youth protection services and to the related funding.

AMENDMENT OF SECTION 22 JBNQA – ENVIRONMENT

On February 22, 2022, the Cree Nation Government concluded with Canada a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding a process to amend Section 22 of the JBNQA as a way of securing Cree participation in “external” federal assessments of projects in the JBNQA territory. Cree and federal representatives are now resuming discussions in this regard.

On May 19, 2022, the Grand Chief signed an agreement with the federal Minister of the Environment and the President of the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada regarding interim arrangements for the “external” federal assessment process of the Troilus mining project North of Mistissini pending the amendment of Section 22 of the JBNQA mentioned above.

EYYOU MARINE REGION LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENT (CREE OFFSHORE TREATY)

Ten-Year Review of Offshore Treaty Implementation

Cree and federal representatives are considering collaborating on the preparation of a joint report on the review of the first ten years of implementation of the *Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement*.

This joint report would provide an opportunity for the parties to consider the renewal of certain sections of the EMR Implementation Plan and to determine the funding required to support the EMR Wildlife Board, Planning Commission and Impact Review Board during the next ten-year implementation period (2023-2033).

Bear and Grey Goose Islands

Last year, the GCC(EI) and Canada signed a Land Transfer Agreement respecting the designation of Bear and Grey Goose Islands as “Cree Lands”, in exchange for an equivalent parcel of Cree lands on South Twin Island to be transferred to Canada. Cree and federal representatives have agreed on

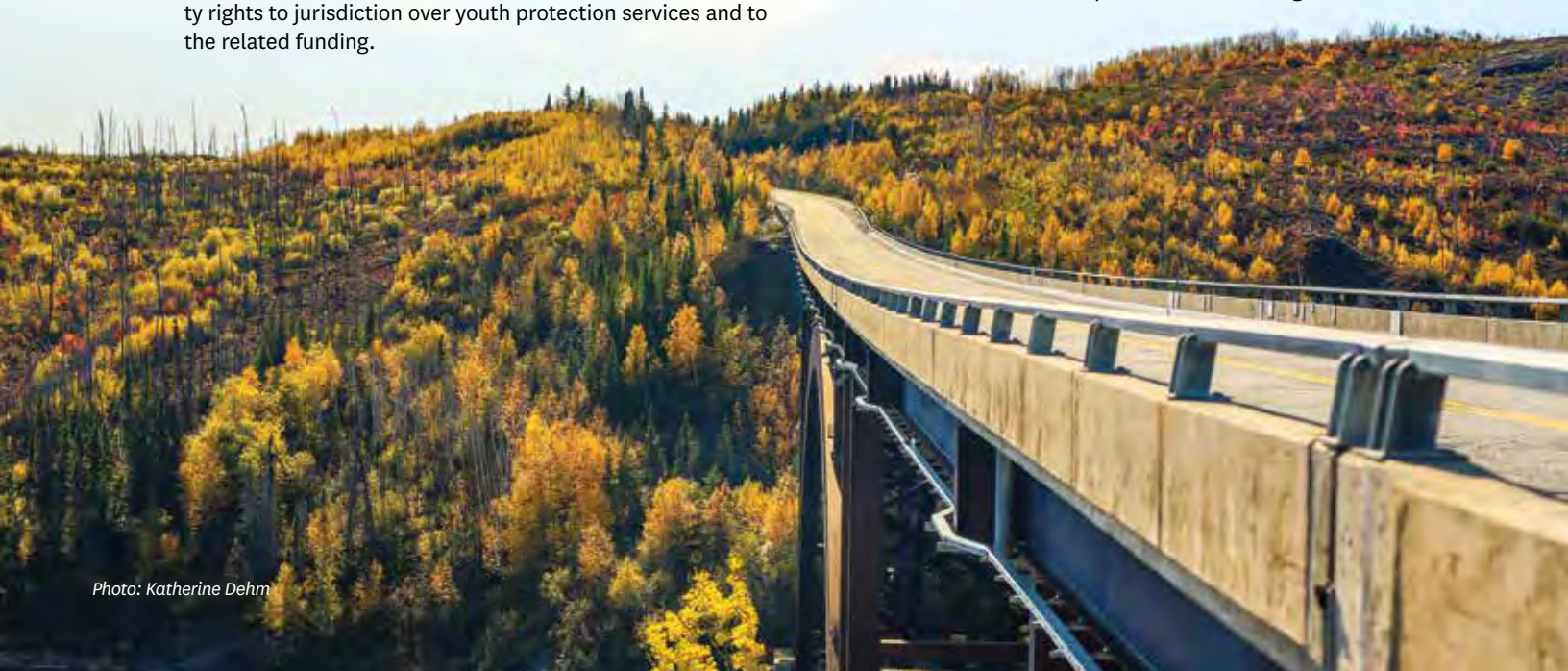


Photo: Katherine Dehm

the required consequential amendment of the EMR Agreement to give effect to this land designation. Canada is now expected to adopt an Order in Council to authorize the signature of, and give effect to, this consequential amendment.

Nunavut Devolution Agreement

The Government of Canada carried out a consultation with the Cree Nation Government on a proposed *Final Nunavut Devolution Agreement*, which contemplates the eventual devolution or transfer to the Government of Nunavut of the administration and control of “public lands” and related water rights in Nunavut.

The Cree Nation Government reviewed the proposed Agreement and concluded that it would have no material impact on Cree rights on the islands of the Eeyou Marine Region, which are technically situated in Nunavut.

The only “public lands”, or Crown lands, in the Eeyou Marine Region are situated on North and South Twin Islands. All other islands in the Eeyou Marine Region are “privately” owned by the Crees or jointly owned by the Crees and the Nunavik Inuit. The transfer of powers to Nunavut will not apply on these private lands.

The transfer of the administration of “public islands” on North and South Twin Islands will not affect any Cree rights under the EMR Agreement, for example the right to harvest and to build cabins. The provisions of the EMR Agreement will continue to apply to these “public lands” in regard to wildlife management, land use planning and development impact review.

Treaty Implementation – Authority of Wildlife Boards

In 2015, the Wildlife Boards established under the Cree Offshore Treaty and the Nunavik Offshore Treaty determined the number of polar bears that Inuit and Cree hunters may harvest annually in Southern Hudson Bay. The Boards made that determination after extensive public hearings and consideration. In 2016, the federal Minister of the Environment, acting under these two Treaties, modified the decision of the Boards and made her own determination as to how many polar bears could be harvested annually by Inuit and Cree hunters.

In 2017, Makivik Corporation filed, on behalf of the Nunavik Inuit, an application in the Federal Court for judicial review of the Minister’s decision, arguing that she had failed to properly apply the terms of the Offshore Treaties when she made her decision. The GCC(EI) also filed legal proceedings in support of Makivik’s application, and argued that the Minister had exceeded her jurisdiction in making her own determination about the number of polar bears that may be harvested by Cree and Inuit hunters.

In the Federal Court, the Attorney General of Canada defended vigorously the Minister’s decision and argued that she had, in any case, ultimate responsibility over the management of wildlife in the Offshore. On October 30, 2019, the Federal Court released its judgment. It accepted the arguments of the Attorney General of Canada and dismissed the applications filed by Makivik and the GCC(EI). Both appealed the judgment to the Federal Court of Appeal.

On September 21, 2021, the Federal Court of Appeal set aside the judgment of the Federal Court, and declared that, in participating in the decision-making process under the Nunavik Offshore Treaty to determine the polar bear quotas and other harvesting limitations, the Crown failed to interpret and implement that process in accordance with the honour of the Crown.

In particular, the Court found that the Minister was required to be forthcoming with the Wildlife Boards and to fully disclose to them her reasons for varying one of their decisions, something she failed to do in this case. The Court held that this is important so that the Boards could properly reconsider their decisions in the light of the reasons provided by the Minister, as part of the decision-making process under the Nunavik Inuit and Cree Offshore Treaties.

In deciding to exercise its discretion to grant a formal declaration in this case, the Federal Court of Appeal considered that such a declaration would help to underline the importance of the Crown’s honouring its *Constitution Act, 1982* section 35 obligations as part of the reconciliation process. It would also, in the Court’s opinion, help to avoid similar failures in the future.

MOCREEBEC AND WASHAW SIBI

Cree and federal representatives agreed to establish a special table under the aegis of the Cree-Canada Standing Liaison Committee to pursue exploratory discussions on the formal establishment and recognition of the new Cree communities of MoCreebec and Washaw Sibi. They also agreed to put in place a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding MoCreebec, as was done for Washaw Sibi, to provide a framework for these discussions and to facilitate the exchange of proposals and material between the parties.

FINAL LAND DESCRIPTIONS AND RECONFIGURATION OF LAND

Cree, federal and Quebec representatives have established two tables to address land descriptions and land reconfiguration issues:

- a table to determine the final land descriptions of Cree Category I and II lands with a view to incorporating such final descriptions into the JBNQA and related legislation;
- a table established pursuant to section 4.18 of the *Paix des Braves* for the reconfiguration of the Category I lands of Waskaganish, Waswanipi and Nemaska following the abandonment of the N.B.R. Complex, with the possible subsequent addition of Chisasibi for the reconfiguration process.

The final territorial descriptions of the Cree Category I lands will be given effect through changes to Section 4 of the JBNQA and related legislation. The parties’ recent focus has been on the land reconfiguration of Waswanipi and Waskaganish, and to some extent, Nemaska pursuant to section 4.18 of the *Paix des Braves*. The parties expect to finalize these land reconfigurations as a first step in order to include them in the final territorial descriptions of Section 4 of the JBNQA. The experience of the Ouje-Bougoumou/

Mistissini land transfer can provide a model to achieve these land reconfigurations and final descriptions.

Waswanipi

Cree, federal and Quebec representatives have exchanged proposals of a reconfiguration agreement for Waswanipi.

Negotiators have reached agreement on a proposed transitional agreement in order to secure the upcoming opening of a new waste management site, as well as the infrastructure located in front of the community of Waswanipi, which would eventually be located in Category IA lands, once the reconfiguration is completed. The Cree First Nation of Waswanipi and the Cree Nation have approved the proposed transitional agreement, which has yet to be approved by Quebec and Canada.

Finally, in view of the significant delays to deal with the matter of the “500-foot corridors”, the Cree party has requested that priority be given to the reconfiguration of a small block of lands located in front of the community, identified as Block A12.

Waskaganish

Discussions over the land reconfiguration of Waskaganish have provided an opportunity to address issues related to the so-called “Roman Catholic Mission Lands”. During this year, the Cree party has held discussions regarding these issues with federal and Quebec representatives, as well as the Amos Diocese.

Ouje-Bougoumou Recognition and Mistissini Lands

Complementary Agreement No. 22 of the JBNQA and the Final Agreement related to the recognition of Ouje-Bougoumou came into force during the 2012-2013 financial year. These agreements formally established Ouje-Bougoumou as a Cree First Nation, subject to a transitional period required for the transfer of lands and the coming into force of an amendment of the then *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act*. This amendment came into force in May 2014, when land was formally set aside by the Governor in Council as Category IA land for the exclusive use and benefit of Ouje-Bougoumou. Like the other Cree First Nations, Ouje-Bougoumou was formally constituted as a corporation under the then *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act*, and

continued as a Cree First Nation and as the same legal entity under the *Cree Nation Governance Agreement* of 2017.

In 2013, the GCC(EI), the Cree Nation of Mistissini and Quebec signed a *Final Settlement Agreement related to the Transfer of certain Lands from Mistissini to Quebec*. This Agreement provided for a specific process and schedule, which would result in the adjustment by Mistissini of certain Category I and II lands in consideration of the allocation by Quebec of an equivalent area of lands to Ouje-Bougoumou through Complementary Agreement No. 22 and in consideration of financial provisions. The said Agreement does not contemplate or affect in any way the claim in respect of the Mistissini hunting territories lying to the east of the Height of Land.

Cree, federal and Quebec representatives are now pursuing regular discussions in order to conclude the land transactions required to finalize these land transfers. Certain delays occurred in the adoption by Quebec of the required Orders-in-Council, and the adoption by Canada of the reciprocal Order-in-Council, which are required to give effect to these land transfers.

The situation has considerably evolved during fiscal year 2021-2022 in view of the adoption of various decrees and orders-in-council by Québec and Canada, as well as the adoption of the Bill 16 – *An Act to amend various legislative provisions to implement Complementary Agreements No. 22 and No. 27 to the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*.

By virtue of the decrees adopted by Québec during fiscal year 2021-2022, the new Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini Category II lands have been definitively described, Québec has approved the transfer by letters patent of the new Mistissini Category IB lands to the Mistissini Landholding Corporation and Québec has transferred the new Mistissini Category IA lands to Canada.

By virtue of an order-in-council adopted by Canada during fiscal year 2021-2022, Canada has accepted the transfer of the new Mistissini Category IA lands. Canada still has to formally set aside the new Mistissini Category IA lands for the exclusive use and benefit of Mistissini, which should be forthcoming.

Québec has yet to transfer the Ouje-Bougoumou Category IB lands to the new Ouje-Bougoumou landholding corporation.

CREE LAND AND HARVESTING RIGHTS IN ONTARIO

The traditional territory of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee – the lands that we and our ancestors have used and occupied since time immemorial – extends across the many watersheds that flow into eastern and southern James Bay. More than a century ago, however, the Quebec-Ontario border divided the watershed of the Harricana River, severing one portion of Eeyou Istchee from the rest of our territory.

Canada and Ontario have relied upon this border to deny and interfere with the exercise of Cree rights in what is now Ontario. Our members have continued to use and occupy these lands in Ontario but have faced many challenges in securing recognition of their rights and interests in these lands. Canada's laws and enforcement activities have negatively affected the Cree communities of Washaw Sibi, Waskaganish and MoCreebec Eeyoud, and these impacts continue to this day.

This is why the Cree Nation is working to obtain proper recognition of Cree land and harvesting rights in the portion of Eeyou Istchee located in Ontario.

In 2016, we filed an action in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice to obtain recognition of the Cree Nation's Aboriginal title and Aboriginal rights over lands in northeastern Ontario. The Cree Nation's action in Ontario acknowledges that other Indigenous peoples have used and occupied these lands along with the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee, both historically and today. Although we are committed to not affecting the rights that other Indigenous peoples have in these lands, some First Nations in that territory have joined the litigation.

Legal, anthropological, and historical research on behalf of the Cree Nation in support of the Ontario action will continue in the coming year. This research aims to document Cree land use in the Harricana watershed and surrounding territory, and to show how the governments of Canada and Ontario created hardships by the imposition of the border in this area. This body of comprehensive research will also be of long-term benefit to the Cree Nation, providing a rich resource for our collective knowledge base about our history, cultural practices, land, people and communities.

In addition to this litigation, we continue working to protect Cree rights by insisting that the Cree Nation, and especially the particularly impacted communities of Washaw Sibi, Waskagan-

ish and MoCreebec, must be consulted about resource development activities occurring on these lands in Ontario. In the first years after the Cree Nation filed its action, the government of Ontario repeatedly denied that it had a duty to consult the Cree Nation about mining activities occurring in the Harricana watershed. Ontario took the position that the Cree Nation's assertion of Aboriginal rights in this area was "not credible".

We challenged Ontario's consultation position, including through a judicial review application filed in 2017 regarding Ontario's refusal to consult the Cree Nation about the West Detour Project, the planned expansion of the Detour Lake Mine, which is located just west of the Quebec-Ontario border, in the part of Eeyou Istchee Ontario in which the Cree Nation asserts Aboriginal title. As a result, the government of Ontario changed its position, and has acknowledged that it has a duty to consult the Cree Nation about the West Detour Project. This represents an important achievement on the path towards proper recognition of Cree rights in Ontario, and has resulted in the Cree Nation's consultation on numerous projects located in the area in which the Cree Nation asserts Aboriginal rights and title. The Cree Nation Government also continues to monitor Ontario's consultation determinations regarding mineral exploration and mining projects occurring in the area over which the Cree Nation asserts Aboriginal rights, and has successfully raised objections when Ontario has not included the Cree Nation within consultation processes for these projects.

In 2019, a robust consultation protocol was developed with Ontario in respect of the West Detour Project. This consultation protocol was revised in 2020 to accommodate the unforeseen delays and public health measures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Pursuant to these protocols, two public consultation meetings were held in January 2020 and March 2021 to understand and address issues and concerns raised by members of the Cree Nation regarding the project, and the Cree Nation submitted its report and recommendations regarding the West Detour Project in June 2021. It is anticipated that regulatory review and permitting processes under federal and Ontario laws for the West Detour Project will continue into 2023. The Cree Nation Government Environment Department continues to engage in consultation and exchanges with the proponent Agnico Eagle Mines and the various implicated Ontario ministries.

Photo: Jamie Moses



CREE-QUÉBEC RELATIONS



INTRODUCTION

The Cree Nation continues to consolidate its responsibilities and jurisdictions vis-a-vis the Government of Québec, based on the Nation-to-Nation relationship established by our treaty, the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* (JBNQA), the *Paix des Braves* and the *Cree-Québec Governance Agreement*.

In August 2021, Mandy Gull-Masty was elected as the new Grand Chief and Chairperson of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government (GCC(EI)/CNG), replacing former Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum.

Shortly after her election, the new Grand Chief met privately with Premier François Legault. She indicated that she attaches the highest priority to the relationship between the Cree Nation and the Government of Québec based on the JBNQA treaty, the *Paix des Braves* and the *Cree-Québec Governance Agreement*.

In November 2021, the Grand Chief advised the Government of Québec of the appointment of two Lead Negotiators on behalf of the GCC(EI)/CNG in certain areas of common interest with the Government of Québec:

- Mr. Richard Shecapio will be active in Cree-Québec relations as they pertain to Land, Natural Resources and Sustainable Development;
- Ms. Stella Masty will be active in Cree-Québec relations as they pertain to Cree Language and Culture and Economic Development.

As Negotiators, Mr. Shecapio and Ms. Masty shall, within their respective spheres of activities, lead or support negotiations at the table with representatives of the Government of Québec. They will work in close collaboration with the Cree negotiation teams and other external stakeholders and partners with a view to resolving potential issues and securing mutually beneficial outcomes and agreements.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has been the greatest health crisis the world has seen in the past century. The pandemic has proved more challenging and longer lasting than many expected in March 2020, when the WHO first officially declared it. More than two years after the pandemic



Photo: Jamie Moses

took hold in Québec, the Cree communities are once again cautiously emerging from the isolation and other measures put in place to protect the population of Eeyou Istchee. This success is due in large part to the exemplary and consistent discipline and unity demonstrated by Cree citizens. The considerable efforts of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB) to continue its effective vaccination and testing programs, in close collaboration with the Cree Nation Government and Cree First Nations, has also made a critical contribution to this success.

The COVID-19 crisis posed special challenges for the Cree Nation. Overcrowded housing, underlying medical conditions, such as diabetes and high blood pressure, and limited medical facilities and services made the Cree population of Eeyou Istchee particularly vulnerable to COVID-19.

Faced with this challenge, the Cree Nation took immediate action to protect the health and security of the Cree communities and people. Starting in March 2020, the leadership of the Cree Nation Government, Cree First Nations, Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay and Cree School Board met three times a week to take stock of the public health conditions in the communities and to take measures to limit the spread of the virus.

Public Updates, or bulletins, on COVID-19 followed these leadership meetings. For more than two years, these bulletins were regularly posted on the internet, keeping the population informed about the situation in the Cree communities, regions surrounding or relevant to them, reminders about social distancing, self-isolation protocols and other public health measures. Many bulletins were issued jointly by the Cree Nation Government, CBHSSJB and Cree School Board.

In addition, public notices were posted on the internet to advise the Cree population about restrictions on non-essential travel between regions, guidelines for the spring and fall goose breaks and bush camps, and restrictions on entry into Cree communities. The Cree School Board took measures to ensure continued support for post-secondary students outside the communities as well as for their return to the communities. The Cree First Nations established control posts at community entrances and enacted laws requiring mandatory self-isolation for persons entering the communities from areas of risk. All these measures were taken in close consultation with the Public Health Department of the CBHSSJB.

The results of these efforts, combined with the discipline and cooperation of the Cree population, have been outstanding. Despite having one of the most vulnerable populations in Québec, the Cree communities of Eeyou Istchee have continued, on average, to enjoy among the lowest rates of incidence and death of COVID-19 of any region in Québec. As of this writing, the situation has improved to the extent that de-confinement has begun to resume, cautiously and progressively, enabling Crees to resume travel between the communities and outside the Territory for those who have been fully vaccinated.

The measures taken, and the resulting success in combating COVID-19, show once more the power of Cree unity. The Cree Nation Government, CBHSSJB, Cree School Board and the Cree First Nations united to fight the existential threat of COVID-19, demonstrating their capacity to act as one in effective governance for the Cree people.





**LA GRANDE ALLIANCE ENVISAGES
A TRANSFORMATIVE 30-YEAR**

\$4.7B

**INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM
IN EYYOU ISTCHEE**

LA GRANDE ALLIANCE

On February 17, 2020, Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum and Premier François Legault opened a new chapter in Cree-Québec relations by signing a Memorandum of Understanding creating “*La Grande Alliance*”.

La Grande Alliance envisages a transformative 30-year, \$4.7 billion infrastructure program in Eeyou Istchee. The program’s three phases propose to extend the transportation network (rail, road, port and airport), improve the standard of living (housing, electricity and internet) and guarantee the long-term protection of the territory (protected areas). In the spirit of the *Paix des Braves*, the objective of *La Grande Alliance* is to create the conditions required for the strategic, predictable and sustainable development of Eeyou Istchee. This program will shape and secure the future of Eeyou Istchee for generations to come.

La Grande Alliance is an initiative of the Cree Nation itself. It represents the Cree vision of infrastructure development and sustainable economic development in Eeyou Istchee. It was the Cree Nation that proposed this vision to the Government of Québec, not something imposed on the Cree from outside. This initiative flows from a choice freely made by the Cree Nation itself to implement its own vision of how development should proceed in Eeyou Istchee in a way that respects Cree values and the environment. Thus, the very critical first steps are a feasibility and pre-feasibility study of the proposed phases to ensure community engagement and direction.

La Grande Alliance embodies the original vision of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* of a partnership between the Cree and Québec for the governance and development of Eeyou Istchee. It builds on the partnership in development of the *Paix des Braves* of 2002 and the partnership in governance of the *Cree-Québec Governance Agreement* of 2015.

The infrastructure program aims to facilitate the transportation of people and goods in Eeyou Istchee, and to increase the value of natural resources by lowering their transportation costs. *La Grande Alliance* will act as a hub

in organizing and overseeing the development of infrastructure, in the common interest of the Cree and Jamésien communities and enterprises seeking to establish, consolidate or harmonize their presence in Eeyou Istchee.

On March 27, 2020, the Cree Nation Government entered into a Funding Agreement with the Government of Québec under which Québec grants the Cree Nation Government \$15 million in order to carry out the technical and financial feasibility study in relation to Phase I of the Infrastructure Program and, subsequently, to develop a pre-feasibility study for Phases II and III of the Infrastructure Program. The Cree Nation Government has committed an equal amount of its own resources for the same purpose.

As the Memorandum of Understanding of February 17, 2020 had an initial term of twelve months, the Crees and Québec agreed to extend its term for an additional twelve months and may seek to prolong this term if deemed necessary.

Feasibility Studies

On January 27, 2021, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued for the *La Grande Alliance* Phase I Feasibility Study, including the following elements:

- Upgrades to the access roads between the Billy-Diamond Highway and the Cree communities of Waskaganish, Eastmain and Wemindji;
- Upgrade to the access road between the Route du Nord and the Cree community of Nemaska;
- A railway line following, as much as possible, the Billy-Diamond Highway between the town of Matagami and KM 257 of the Highway;
- A return to service for the railway line between Grevet (Lebel-sur-Quévillon) and Chapais;
- Trans-shipment areas along the Billy-Diamond Highway and the Grevet-Chapais railway corridors, specifically one located at KM 257.
- On March 29, 2021, the RFP was issued for *La Grande Alliance* Phases II and III Pre-Feasibility Study. Phase II of the Infrastructure Program includes the following elements:
 - A new railway corridor following, as much as possible, the alignment of the Billy-Diamond Highway between km 257 (Rupert River bridge) to km 544 (Junction of Billy-Diamond Highway and Trans-Taïga road);
 - A new road corridor connecting Radisson and Whapmagoostui, over an approximate distance of 175 km;
 - Extension of Route 167 to the north to connect with the Trans-Taïga road, over an approximate distance of 125 km.
- Phase III of the Infrastructure Program includes the following elements:
 - A new railway corridor following, as much as possible, the alignment of the road corridor connecting Radisson and Whapmagoostui (Phase II), over an approximate distance of 225 km;
 - A deep-water port at Whapmagoostui / Kuujuarapik;
 - Extension of the Trans-Taïga road eastward to connect with Schefferville, over an approximate distance of 200 km.

Both the Phase I Feasibility Study and the Phases II and III Pre-Feasibility Study will build on *La Grande Alliance*’s

mission of sustainable socio-economic development by integrating aspects of social acceptability and sustainable development in its approach. The studies will apply the highest standards of public participation, and will seek to engage local actors in the vision and approach to co-design the proposed infrastructures. Cree communities and land users will play a key role throughout the Feasibility Study process. To facilitate the process, a network of Grande Alliance Community Information Officers (GACIOs) in each of the ten Cree communities will assist in the coordination of all work related to the Studies.

On April 15, 2021, the result of the Phase I Feasibility Study RFP was announced, with the award of the mandate to the “Vision Eeyou Istchee” Consortium. The consortium, comprising Stantec, Sysra and Desfor, with assistance from KPMG. The team will bring to bear solid expertise in economics, rail and road design and in social and environmental studies. It will ensure full engagement with Cree hunters, fishers and trappers as well as with the Cree communities throughout the entire Feasibility Study process. The study will be carried out with the close participation of the Grande Alliance Community Information Officers (GACIOs) and representatives of the Jamesian communities.

On June 11, 2021, the result was announced of the RFP for *La Grande Alliance* Phases II and III Pre-Feasibility Study. The mandate was awarded to WSP Canada Inc., which has worked on numerous mandates over the years in Eeyou Istchee, related to transportation infrastructure and other projects. For the study, WSP has partnered with Maamuu Consulting, a Cree-owned business specializing in community engagement, to undertake the liaison work with the communities within the study. Their team will work closely with the Grande Alliance Community Information Officers (GACIOs) to gather valuable information from communities and land users. As was the case for the Phase I study, the Phases II/III Pre-Feasibility Study approach relies heavily on the participation of all affected communities to shape a common vision for the future of the territory.

The scope of the Phases II/III Pre-Feasibility Study was developed through close collaboration between the Cree Nation and various ministries of the Government of Québec, which will continue into the future to ensure the success of the Study.

Federal Participation

In October 2020, Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum and Minister Jonatan Julien (Québec Energy and Natural Resources) met with Michael Sabia, Chairman of the board of directors of the Federal Infrastructure Bank. The Bank indicated interest in pursuing discussions since *La Grande Alliance* touches upon many of the priorities of the Bank.

La Grande Alliance initiative also matches the stated objective of the Indigenous Sector of the Federal Infrastructure Bank, which is to fund infrastructure projects capable of generating revenue that will ensure a greater role for First Nations in natural resource development. To date, there have been positive indications from the Federal Infrastruc-

ture Bank as to the possibility of a significant financial participation.

CREE-QUÉBEC STANDING LIAISON COMMITTEE

The Cree-Québec Standing Liaison Committee established by the *Paix des Braves* continues to serve as the clearing house for relations between the Cree and Québec. It provides a forum to resolve potential difficulties as they arise, and helps to strengthen relations between the Cree and Québec. The Cree representatives are Me Paul John Murdoch, Richard Shecapio and Melissa Saganash.

Ian Lafrenière serves as Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs. Patrick Lahaie has assumed the position of Associate Secretary General of the Indigenous Affairs Secretariat, replacing Me Marie-José Thomas, who has assumed responsibility for Strategic Projects, including *La Grande Alliance*, reporting directly to Yves Ouellet, Secretary General of the Council of Ministers.

Despite the disruption of COVID-19, the Standing Liaison Committee met periodically in 2021-2022, although somewhat less frequently than in past years. The Committee focused on certain priority issues, including the following, some of which are discussed in greater detail below:

- (a) *La Grande Alliance* between the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee and Québec regarding infrastructure development, environmental conservation and protected areas in Eeyou Istchee, discussed above;
- (b) Inter-ministerial coordination with various Québec Government Departments, including the Secretariat for Indigenous Affairs, Treasury Board, Health and Social Services, Education, Justice, Public Security, Municipal Affairs, Energy and Natural Resources, Forests, Wildlife and Parks, Transport, and others;
- (c) Section 28 JBNQA issues, including contracting and tendering procedures, Cree priority in contracting, definition of “Cree enterprise”;
- (d) *Cree-Québec Governance Agreement*
 - i. Review of Governance Agreement;
 - ii. Representation on Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government
 - iii. Renewal of funding arrangements for Cree Nation Government:
- (e) Legislative review:
 - i. Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay;
 - ii. Cree School Board;
- (f) Sector tables:
 - i. Cree Trappers Income Security Board;
 - ii. Protected areas;
 - iii. Land reconfiguration (Chisasibi and Waswanipi);
 - iv. Caribou – Modernization of Section 24 JBNQA;
 - v. Cree Nation Housing Strategy;
 - vi. Customary adoption;
 - vii. Childcare;
 - viii. Youth Protection;
 - ix. Forestry.

CREE – QUÉBEC GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT

Implementation continues for the *Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory* signed with Québec on July 24, 2012 (Governance Agreement).

Cree Nation Government

The Cree Nation Government is continuing to implement its governance functions on Category II lands and is adjusting its organizational and human resources in light of these responsibilities. In consultation with the Cree First Nations and other Cree stakeholders, the Cree Nation Government continues to put in place the structures, personnel and processes needed to assume its governance responsibilities and to enable Cree leaders to assume their new functions both on the Cree Nation Government and on the Regional Government.

The Land Use Planning Unit of the Cree Nation Government Department of Environment and Remedial Works is advancing the work of the Eeyou Planning Commission. The Commission is responsible to prepare, in consultation with the Cree First Nations and other stakeholders, a regional land and resource use plan for Category II lands. The Commission is working, in consultation with the Cree communities, on draft policies, principles and objectives to guide

the development of the regional land and resource use plan for Category II lands. These draft policies, principles and objectives will be submitted to the Cree Nation Government for approval and then to the Government of Québec for its concurrence.

Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government

The Governance Agreement established the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government to replace the former Municipalité de Baie-James. The primary mission of the Regional Government is to serve as a partnership between the Crees and Jamésiens in the governance and development of the Category III lands in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay territory. To meet this objective, the Regional Government has jurisdiction over municipal management, regional development and land and resource use planning on Category III lands.

On January 1, 2022, Madame Manon Cyr, Mayor of Chibougamau, commenced a two-year term as Chair of the Regional Government. Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty now serves as Vice-Chair.

The Council of the Regional Government is composed of 22 representatives, half Cree and half Jamésiens. The Cree representatives are the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Cree Nation Government and the Chiefs of the Cree First Na-

Photo: Jamie Moses



tions. The Jamésien representatives include elected mayors, councillors and officials of the municipalities and territory.

The Council of the Regional Government meets every second month, after the meeting of the Council/Board of the Cree Nation Government/Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee). Meetings are held alternately in the Cree and Jamésien communities.

Each year, the Regional Government must adopt a budget that is consistent with the provisions of the Governance Agreement, and taking into account funding allocations provided by Québec.

The Regional Government is working on clarifying its roles and responsibilities under the Governance Agreement in respect of governance and regional development on Category III lands. This exercise takes into account the respective responsibilities of the Cree Nation Government on Category II lands and of the James Bay Regional Administration with respect to the Jamésiens.

The Grand Chief is working with Regional Government Chair Manon Cyr and with senior officials of the Government of Québec to establish a process to assist in clarifying these roles and responsibilities under the Governance Agreement. The process is also to assist in releasing funds committed

under the Governance Agreement to enable the Regional Government to carry out practical projects, such as the regional integrated resource and land development plan (PRDIRT) in respect of Category III lands, for the mutual benefit of Crees and Jamésiens.

This work to clarify roles and responsibilities becomes increasingly important in light of two key factors. The first is the provision of the *Governance Agreement* calling for the review of the representation and voting rights of the Crees and Jamésiens on the Council of the Regional Government by the ninth anniversary of its start of operations, that is, by January 1, 2023. This review is to be based on resident population in accordance with a formula to be agreed by the Crees and Québec based on democratic principles and demographic realities.

The second factor is *La Grande Alliance* and the emerging role of the Cree Nation in shaping the future of development in Eeyou Istchee. Both factors emphasize the need to strengthen communications and collaboration between the Cree and Jamésien partners in the Regional Government with a view to raising awareness of the benefits of the partnership for both populations.



Funding

Funding for the Cree Nation Government in relation to the Governance Agreement is addressed in paragraph 11.3.17 of the JBNQA and in section 73 of the Governance Agreement. These provisions state that Québec shall fund the Cree Nation Government in accordance with five-year funding agreements. The first five-year funding agreement, for the period from April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2018, is set out in Chapter VI of the Governance Agreement. In accordance with section 164 of the Governance Agreement, the funding provided to the Cree Nation Government in financial year 2017-2018 was renewed for the subsequent financial year 2018-2019.

The Cree Nation Government and Québec had intended to enter into a five-year funding agreement, for the period from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2024, but were unable to do so within the time limits provided. They therefore decided to enter into two Funding Agreements, the first for financial year 2019-2020, concluded on March 27, 2020, and the second for financial years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, concluded on March 30, 2021.

These agreements provide for annual payments of \$5 million from Québec to the Cree Nation Government, which may allocate the funding as it deems appropriate to the different components provided for the Cree Nation Government in Chapter VI of the Governance Agreement.

Section 9 of the Funding Agreement concluded on March 30, 2021 provides that the Crees and Québec are to meet as soon as possible, but not later than December 1, 2021, in order to negotiate a five-year funding agreement for the financial years 2022-2023 to 2026-2027 in accordance with paragraph 11.3.17 of the JBNQA and section 73 of the Governance Agreement.

Review

The Governance Agreement provides that its implementation will be reviewed after five years of its coming into force on July 24, 2012. Since work focussed on setting up the institutions and processes necessary to implement the Governance Agreement, the first five-year review has not yet been carried out.

In the Funding Agreement concluded on March 30, 2021, the Crees and Québec undertook to initiate discussions as soon as possible, in accordance with sections 203 and 204 of the Governance Agreement concerning the review of its implementation, in particular on the following subjects:

- (a) Representation and the distribution of votes on the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government in accordance with section 85 of the Governance Agreement and section 37 of the Act establishing the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government (chapter G-1.04);
- (b) Sections 44 and 45 relating to energy on Category II lands;
- (c) Planning processes on Category II and III lands, taking into account the evolution of programs and the current context and other related questions;
- (d) Other implementation issues.

These discussions are to take place at the same time as five-year funding discussions mentioned above, and the

parties will try to conclude agreements on these subjects by December 31, 2022.

Regionalization of Services

(a) Commission de la construction du Québec (CCQ)

The Governance Agreement provides for the regionalization of certain Government of Québec services and offices. A first priority was the Commission de la construction du Québec (CCQ), with the objective of constituting a new CCQ region for the Eeyou Istchee James Bay territory. A special table has been established in this regard, with representation of the Cree Nation, the Jamésien, the Government of Québec and the CCQ. This new CCQ region is vital to ensure fair access for Cree and Jamésien workers for jobs on construction projects in the region.

After a hiatus due to COVID-19, discussions are to resume with the CCQ with a view to reviving the proposal that had been developed with CCQ representatives:

- Development of a CCQ region that matches the administrative map of Eeyou Istchee and the JBNQA;
- Prioritization of Cree labour in the region;
- Adaptation of the CCQ program to ensure Cree access to the construction industry with adjustments to ensure that Cree candidates have access to the necessary training programs to acquire and keep their status;
- The provision and adaptation of administrative resources to ensure that Cree workers receive the proper support that they need to remain current with the regime through the CCQ or through partnership with entities such as Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD).

The good working relationship established with representatives of the CCQ and with Madame Carole Arav, the Deputy Minister of Labour (and former Associate Secretary General of the Treasury Board), are positive indications for the outcome of the discussions.

(b) Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ)

Another priority for the regionalization of services is the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ). Previously, the SAAQ had no office or point of service in any of the Cree communities. Its only points of service were located in Chibougamau, Lebel-sur-Quévillon, Matagami and Radisson.

The Cree Nation of Chisasibi sought the support of the Cree Nation Government and the Regional Government for the establishment of a SAAQ office in Chisasibi. This initiative has been successful in securing an SAAQ point of service in Chisasibi.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

COVID-19

The Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB) has continued to play a pivotal role in protecting and promoting the health and welfare of the Cree communities and population since the beginning of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Chairperson Bertie Wapachee, Executive Director Daniel St-Amour and the Public Health

team have played central roles in providing guidance and collaborating with the communities to respond effectively to this crisis, and in a manner adapted to the realities of the Cree context.

The energetic and expert direction provided by the CBHSSJB, in partnership with the Cree Nation Government and the Cree First Nations, has made possible the exceptional response to managing and limiting the spread of COVID-19 in the Cree communities. This matter is also discussed at section above.

Renewal of Funding Framework for Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay 2019-2024

The CBHSSJB continues to implement the five-year Health Agreement and Funding Framework entered into with the Government of Québec for the period 2019-2024. This Agreement provides \$60 million in new recurrent development funding over five years to further develop the services offered to the Cree communities of Eeyou Istchee, including specialist services such as gynecology and obstetrics, oncology and mental health. The development of these services in Eeyou Istchee will reduce the need for Crees to travel to the south. The CBHSSJB will also continue to advance its work to incorporate traditional Cree healing practices and to provide a culturally safe setting for service delivery to Cree clients.

The current Funding Framework also provides more than \$600 million of new capital funding over five years for the construction of new health and social services facilities, including the new Regional Health Centre in Chisasibi as well as birthing centres, seniors' centres, respite resources for the elderly, and mental health resources in the Cree communities. It also provides \$44 million for information technology assets.

This Agreement and Funding Framework provide the CBHSSJB with the tools to implement the priorities identified in consultations with the Cree communities and clients and set out in our Strategic Regional Plan. Among other things, this Plan emphasizes the development of Cree culturally safe spaces and practices as well as partnerships with the Cree First Nations for long-term care and transition services, mental health and birthing homes.

For an overview of the services and organization of the CBHSSJB, please consult its most recent annual report, for 2020-2021, available online.¹

New Eeyou-Eenou Regional Health Centre

On October 7, 2019, in Chisasibi, former Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum and former Chairperson Bella Moses Petawabano joined with former Québec Health Minister Danielle McCann and former Indigenous Affairs Minister Sylvie

D'Amours to announce the construction of a new Eeyou-Eenou Regional Health Centre in Chisasibi. Funding for the project is provided by the Québec Government, and is linked to the new five-year Funding Agreement that was signed the same day as the Health Centre announcement. The CBHSSJB will manage the project and will own and operate the new Centre.

The new \$300 million, 20,000 square metre facility will combine a 52-bed hospital for the population of Eeyou Istchee, and a Community Miyupimaatisiun Centre (CMC), offering frontline services and community health for the local population of Chisasibi. The new Regional Health Centre is scheduled for completion by 2025.

This new facility will replace an outdated hospital in Chisasibi, open since 1980, and community health services that are now housed in trailers. The current hospital has no surgical capacity and very limited space to serve a growing community of 5,000 people in Chisasibi, as well as the other Cree communities that rely on Chisasibi for hospital services.

The new Eeyou-Eenou Regional Health Centre will be equipped with state of the art medical, telemedicine and diagnostic technologies to serve the population in the region. The nearest hospital centre is almost 1,000 km away, in Val-d'Or, making Chisasibi an important regional hub for medical services.

Non-Insured Health Benefits

The CBHSSJB has continued exchanges with the Ministry of Health and Social Services in 2021-2022 on an administrative framework for the Cree Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program, including reporting and accountability for expenses relating to the delivery of NIHB services.

The CBHSSJB and the MSSS are currently in discussions to finalize an amended version of the Cree NIHB Program Management Framework proposed by the CBHSSJB. This Program Framework includes management and control mechanisms of the program, as well as related CBHSSJB policies and procedures. Formal approval of the Program Framework is expected shortly, and in the interim the framework is being applied by the CBHSSJB.

Legislative Review

The CBHSSJB is continuing to review its governing legislation, the *Act respecting health and social services for Cree Native persons*², on a priority basis.

An important objective is to ensure that the CBHSSJB's governing statute reflects its character as an institution of Cree self-governance in health and social services. In addition, the Board wishes the Act to take better account of the Cree language, culture and context, including the integration of Cree traditional healing practices within the

¹ https://www.creehealth.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/CBHSSJB%20AR%202020-21%20FINAL_web.pdf

² CQLR, c. S-5.

Board's operations. Under the leadership of Chairperson Bertie Wapachee, the CBHSSJB has created a Cree working group composed of Cree stakeholders, including Elders, to provide guidance on Cree traditional healing practices for the purpose of developing the new legislation.

The review is also intended to modernize the Act, taking account of developments in health and social service legislation over the past 30 years. As this matter affects Cree Nation rights under Section 14 of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*, the CBHSSJB is coordinating this work with the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government.

The CBHSSJB has appointed former Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum as its chief negotiator for a highlevel table with Québec to review and adapt the legislative framework applicable to the CBHSSJB.

The CBHSSJB prepared a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formally establish the table and set out the legislative review process. The MOU was approved by resolutions of the CBHSSJB Board of Directors and of the Grand Council/Cree Nation Government in the summer of 2021. Since transmitting the MOU to Minister Christian Dubé of MSSS in the fall of 2021, the parties have reviewed and reached broad consensus on the text.

Although there has been some delay due to demands of the COVID-19 pandemic on senior MSSS officials, it is expected that the MOU will be signed soon, taking into account the National Assembly elections expected for the fall of 2022, kicking off substantive discussions on the legislative review.

The CBHSSJB proposal for new “Cree health and social services” legislation is already well advanced. The intention is for this proposal to be further revised based on the input of the Cree working group on Cree traditional healing practices. In due course, the proposal would be finalized with the Chairperson in collaboration with Executive Director Daniel StAmour, for approval by the CBHSSJB Board of Directors and by the GCC(EI)/CNG Board/Council.

It is expected that this work, and related discussions, with Québec will continue to advance significantly in 2022-2023.

EDUCATION

COVID-19

The Cree School Board collaborated actively with the Cree Nation Government, the CBHSSJB, the Cree First Nations and other Cree authorities in responding to the COVID-19 public health crisis. The Chairperson, Dr. Sarah Pashagumskum, former Director General Abraham Jolly and current Director General Caroline Mark took part in the thrice-weekly meetings of the Cree leadership to review the status of the Cree communities and make joint determinations on action to be taken.

The Board took prompt measures to close the schools in the Cree communities and to extend special support to Post-Secondary students unable to return to their home communities. As noted above, this close collaboration among the Cree government institutions made it possible to restrict the spread of COVID-19 in the Cree communities, with one of the best records in Québec. As of this writing,



Photo: Unsplash

the pandemic appears largely under control due to effective social distancing and close supervision by the Public Health Department of the CBHSSJB.

Budgetary Rules 2019-2020 to 2023-2024

The Cree School Board successfully concluded negotiations with the Governments of Québec and Canada on the *Budgetary Rules of the Cree School Board for School Years 2019-2020 to 2023-2024*. These negotiations were conducted under paragraphs 16.o.22 and 16.o.23 of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*, which state that the funding to be provided to the Cree School Board shall be in accordance with a formula to be determined by Québec, Canada and the Crees.

Since the negotiations on the Budgetary Rules of the Cree School Board concern the treaty rights of the entire Cree Nation under the JBNQA, they were conducted jointly by the Cree School Board, led by the former Vice Chair Teddy Wapachee and former Director General Abraham Jolly, and the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, represented by Bill Namagoose, Executive Director.

These Budgetary Rules represent a major achievement for the Cree in that, not only was the base funding of the School Board protected, certain elements were improved or increased. Significant new or enhanced funding was secured for Adult Education (including a new in-community student assistance program), Information Technologies, Students with Special Needs and the Cree Teacher Training Program. The Budgetary Rules have also finalized an agreement on the remuneration of the Chairperson and Commissioners, another long-outstanding matter.

The Budgetary Rules have been approved by the Government of Québec, the Council of Commissioners of the Cree School Board and the Grand Council/Cree Nation Government. The Government of Canada is also expected to approve these Budgetary Rules.

Legislative Review

The Cree School Board has undertaken a review of its governing legislation, the *Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons*. An important objective is to ensure that this legislation better reflects the Cree School Board as a specifically Cree institution of self-governance in education, makes more room for Cree language instruction and better reflects Cree culture and way of life.

During the year 2021-2022, the Cree School Board presented to Québec a first series of short-term legislative amendments in order to fulfil certain commitments of the Cree and Québec over the years and to address other matters of immediate concern.

Earlier this year, the Grand Chief and the Chairperson of the Cree School Board agreed with Québec to establish a Special Joint Table to review the proposed amendments. Québec's representatives are led by Mme Marie-José Thomas, who reports directly to the Secretary General of the Government, and by Mme Marie-Josée Blais, Assistant Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Education of Québec (MEQ). The

Cree team is led by Abel Bosum as chief negotiator of the Cree School Board, Caroline Mark, Director General of the Cree School Board, Melissa Saganash, appointed representative for the Cree Nation Government, and Stella Masty, Cree Negotiator reporting to the office of the Grand Chief.

In the near future, the Cree School Board intends to carry out, in collaboration with the Cree Nation Government and the Government of Québec, a more in-depth revision of the *Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons* insofar as this Act applies to the Cree and the Cree School Board. This Act has remained essentially unchanged in regard to the Cree since 1978, and a modernization of its provisions in regard to the Cree and the Cree School Board is overdue.

A modernized Education Act for the Cree would better recognize the Cree School Board as an institution of Cree self-governance in education and would lay the foundation for a renewed relationship between the Cree and Québec in education.

INCOME SECURITY PROGRAM FOR CREE HUNTERS AND TRAPPERS

It has been agreed with Québec to establish a negotiating table with representatives of the Ministry of Labour, which is responsible for the administration of the Income Security Program for Cree Hunters and Trappers. The negotiations would address two potential questions. The first relates to raising the cap on the total number of remunerated person-days, and hence the maximum amount payable, under the Income Security Program under the JBNQA.

The second important objective would be to examine the possibility entrusting the administration of the Income Security Program to the Cree Nation Government. While the program is efficiently administered, an issue exists in that participants are penalized through "clawbacks" of amounts received from programs to compensate them for damage done to their traplines. Cree administration of the program could be explored as a way to better honour the pursuit of the traditional way of life as a critical element in protecting and maintaining Cree culture, rather than treating it as an alternative welfare program.

There is reason to be optimistic about the discussions as the Deputy Minister involved would be Mme Carole Arav, formerly of the Québec Treasury Board. Mme Arav is well versed in the JBNQA, and has proven to be an individual who focuses on innovative solutions.

CHILDCARE SERVICES

A multi-year *Child Services Agreement* was signed by the Cree and Québec in 2014, providing a greater governance role for the Cree Nation Government, more delegation of powers from the Ministry of Families and increased, stable funding to account for the Cree context. The increased funding helped to implement northern allowances to attract and retain qualified and competent childcare personnel in Eeyou Istchee.

Since this Agreement expired in 2019, the Cree Nation Government and Québec engaged in discussions to resolve outstanding issues and conclude a new Agreement. During

these negotiations, Québec continued to fund childcare services in Eeyou Istchee.

A new 7-year Cree-Québec Childcare Agreement was signed in 2022 for the period of 2019-2026, with a projected value of almost \$140 million. This Agreement continues to build on the previous one, including a further delegation of powers from the Ministry of Families, more regional support for Cree childcare centres and enhanced funding mechanisms for salary increases of Cree childcare personnel.

This new Agreement also addresses retroactive salary increases that were an outstanding issue for the previous period, and represented an important question of fairness for the Cree Nation Government. The funding mechanisms in the new Agreement will help to attract and retain qualified and competent childcare personnel for Cree childcare centres in the years to come.

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND PUBLIC SERVICES

Establishment and Mandate

In October 2015 the media reported on allegations by Indigenous women in Val-d'Or of serious misconduct by members of the Sûreté du Québec, including so-called "Starlight Tours", sexual misconduct and provision of drugs and alcohol. The Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee, together with the Assembly of First Nations of Québec and Labrador (AFNQL) and the Algonquin First Nations of Pikogan and Lac-Simon, called on Québec to establish an independent judicial Commission of Inquiry with a very focused mandate. Intense discussions took place with Québec throughout 2016.

These efforts were successful. On December 21, 2016, Québec adopted Order-in-Council 10952016, creating the *Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: Listening, Reconciliation and Progress* ("Commission"). The mandate of the Commission is to investigate carry out analyses to make recommendations concerning remedial measures to prevent or eliminate any form of violence, discriminatory practices or different treatment in the provision of certain public services to the Indigenous people of Québec: police services, correctional services, justice services, health and social services as well as youth protection services.

Québec appointed retired Superior Court Justice Jacques Viens as the President of the Commission.

Final Report of the Commission

On September 30, 2019, the Commission released its Final Report in Val-d'Or, the place where the events leading to the creation of the Commission took place.

The Report is comprehensive, issuing 142 Calls for Action to eliminate and prevent discrimination and differential treatment in relations between Indigenous peoples in Québec and the six public services covered by the Commission's mandate: police, justice, correctional services, health and social services and youth protection.

The Report makes a finding of systemic discrimination towards Indigenous peoples in these public services. This

discrimination seriously affects the quality of services provided to Indigenous peoples or simply denies them any service at all.

The Calls for Action lay out a road map for reconciliation between Québec and Indigenous peoples. They offer detailed, practical measures to improve relations between public service providers and Indigenous peoples, including the following:

Public Apology: Many Indigenous witnesses stated that there can be no reconciliation until the wrongs of the past are acknowledged. The Commission has heard their voice, and has called on the Government of Québec to make a public apology to members of First Nations and Inuit for the harm caused by laws and policies, standards and the practices of public service providers.

UNDRIP: The Commission calls on the Government of Québec to work with Indigenous authorities to enact legislation to guarantee that the provisions of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Québec* (UNDRIP) will be taken into account in its legislation, a measure long sought by the Cree Nation.

Housing: The Commission states that the Indigenous housing crisis has emerged at the epicentre of many of the issues faced by the First Nations and Inuit. The Commission calls on Québec to work with the federal government so that both financially support the development and improvement of housing in all Indigenous communities in Québec.

The Cree Nation applauds this key finding of the Commission; it supports our own recommendations made before the Commission. Until the housing crisis in Indigenous communities is addressed, no lasting progress will be made in addressing the social, health and economic issues facing Indigenous peoples. We are ready to work with Québec and Canada to meet this challenge.

Justice and Police: The Cree Nation strongly supports Calls for Action 46 and 48 to stop the incarceration of vulnerable and homeless persons for non-payment of fines for municipal offences. We also support Call for Action 38 to extend the time limit for complaints of police misconduct from one to three years.

Implementation Monitor: The Cree Nation strongly supports the Commission's Call for Action to mandate the Québec Ombudsman to monitor the implementation of the Report's Calls for Action to ensure that they do not simply gather dust.

Culture: Many deficiencies in public services are caused by a lack of knowledge of Indigenous reality. We welcome the Commission's recommendation to raise awareness of Indigenous reality and improve cultural safety for Indigenous persons through education and training in the schools, professions and public services, including the police.

Specific Sectors: The Commission's report sets out concrete Calls for Action for specific service sectors, including the police, justice, corrections, health and social services and youth protection. Many of these recommendations concern cultural attitudes and the need to train service providers in Indigenous realities.

For the first time in Québec, the Commission's report recommends implementation and followup measures. One such measure would entrust the Québec Ombudsman with the responsibility to assess and monitor the implementation of all proposed Calls for Action. The Commission also recommends that the summary of its report be translated into Indigenous languages, and be used in a cultural mediation exercise that incorporates the oral tradition of Indigenous peoples.

Follow-up by the Québec Ombudsperson

On March 12, 2021, Madame Marie Rinfret, Québec's Ombudsperson, wrote to former Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum and other Indigenous leaders, regarding the follow-up on the implementation of the various calls to actions set out in the Commission's final report.

Mme Rinfret was seeking the involvement of Indigenous representatives, through the creation of an advisory committee whose composition and operation remain to be determined. The committee would be apolitical and representative of the diversity of Indigenous Peoples.

The Cree Nation Government agreed to participate in the works of the advisory committee, provided that it is fully involved both in assessing the information provided by the various departments identified in the Commission's calls for action and in formulating recommendations for follow-up and remedial actions.

CREE NATION HOUSING STRATEGY

A clear relation exists between housing and economic, social and community development. The Cree Nation Government is now working with the Cree First Nations on the Cree Nation Housing Strategy. This strategy will propose concrete, specific actions to increase the supply and quality of housing in the Cree communities. It will take into account the *Cree Economic, Social and Community Development Plan* as it advances.

The Grand Chief has raised with Premier Legault the desirability of a Cree-Québec partnership to implement the Cree Nation Housing Strategy, with special reference to the housing needs of Cree elders and persons with disabilities or special needs. The Cree Nation Housing Strategy is discussed in greater detail in this annual report under the heading of Cree-Canada Relations.

CONTRACTING AND TENDERING

The tender and contracting rules imposed under Québec legislation conflict at times with the Cree priority in contracts and employment provided for in Section 28 of the JBNQA. They also do not take account of the special status and autonomy of the Cree Nation under the JBNQA and of the special northern context of Eeyou Istchee.

Former Grand Chief Abel Bosum raised this matter with Premier Legault at their meeting of December 10, 2018. It was agreed to establish a special Working Group of Cree representatives and procurement officials of the Québec Treasury Board to address this matter under the Cree-Québec Standing Liaison Committee. Its mandate is to develop a proposal to adapt public contracting rules to the realities and needs of the Cree communities, the CBHSSJB and the Cree School Board, taking into account the Cree priority provisions of Section 28 of the JBNQA.

This Working Group held its first meeting at the offices of the Treasury Board in Québec City on June 5, 2019 and has met on several times since then. The Working Group invited Chief Davey Bobbish of the Cree Nation of Chisasibi and Daniel St-Amour, Executive Director of the CBHSSJB, to make presentations on their needs and expectations. Good progress is being made at the Working Group.

Meetings have resumed with Québec Treasury Board to discuss the implementation of Section 28 of the JBNQA especially as it pertains to priority for Cree enterprises and workers in procurement for entities such as the Cree School Board and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services.

The strategy at this table is twofold. In light of the backlog of capital projects at the CBHSSJB and the Cree School Board, there is insufficient time to develop and implement a permanent legislative solution as originally envisioned. An expedited process is therefore required to allow these entities to secure derogations from Québec from the normal call for tender requirements.

The second objective is to secure a long-term legislative solution that ensures proper implementation of Cree contract and employment priority as provided for in Section 28 of the JBNQA. Discussions with Treasury Board have been positive; it appears open to Cree prioritization under the draft *Cree Nation Free Trade Agreement* for companies that invest in a Cree community, local human resources and have a real connection to the communities of Eeyou Istchee, regardless of their legal status or structure: corporation, joint venture, partnership and so on.

ENERGY

The Cree Nation Government is following closely the orientations of the Government of Québec and Hydro-Québec regarding energy development in Northern Québec, including the effects of proposed energy exports to New England and New York. Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty has met with the CEO of Hydro-Québec, Madame Sophie Brochu, and they had a positive exchange.

EYYOU COMMUNICATION NETWORK

Eeyou Communication Network ("ECN") is a not-for-profit telecommunications corporation that provides broadband carrier services for the Cree communities of Eeyou Istchee and municipalities of the James Bay region. ECN delivers advanced, reliable and cost-effective network access for the benefit of communities, populations, businesses, organizations and governments.

ECN has 24 employees, including seven Crees, located throughout Eeyou Istchee (Waskaganish, Wemindji, and Ouje-Bougoumou), James Bay (Chibougamau and Chapais), Val-d'Or and Montréal.

Fiber-to-the-Home Project (“FTTH”)

In 2021, ECN continued developing its FTTH network to new neighbourhoods throughout the region. Furthermore, ECN began implementing the required infrastructure to support multiple vendors of its FTTH service to provide more choices to the region's Internet subscribers in the near future, through an “open-access” network.

Northern Backbone Upgrade Project in Partnership with Kinwapt Cable Inc.

To help improve service to the community of Chisasibi through its ISP Kinwapt Cable Inc., ECN submitted an application to federal and provincial programs for a \$1.1M joint project between ECN and Kinwapt. The project was approved, and ECN improved the capacity of its backbone network from kilometre 381 to Chisasibi, while Kinwapt modernized its distribution network, improving greatly the service to the community. ECN also used this opportunity to invest \$250,000 in upgrading the backbone network to Wemindji and Eastmain at the same time.

Overall Network Backbone Upgrade

With the traffic increasing significantly over the ECN backbone with the increase of FTTH subscribers, ECN has been planning to overhaul its whole backbone for the last two years. After months of design optimization for performance and costs, ECN settled on a design in 2021 to be implemented in 2022.

To improve the cost efficiency of this overhaul, ECN entered partnerships with Telus and the Réseau d'Informations Scientifiques du Québec (“RISQ”) to help them improve their connectivity to Abitibi, while improving ECN's connectivity to Montreal and funding a significant portion of the cost of this network overhaul.

This backbone overhaul is also necessary to transport the traffic that will soon be coming from Nunavik, through Chisasibi, towards Montreal.

Through this major backbone overhaul, ECN will be transitioning from multiples of 10 gigabit Ethernet technology to multiples of 100 gigabit Ethernet technology, which will be able to sustain the growth of traffic on the network for the foreseeable future.

Furthermore, within this project, ECN is also establishing a second point of presence (“POP”) in Montreal at Cologix's MTL-4 facility in Anjou. Having this second point of presence removes a “single point of failure” in the eventuality of issues at the first ECN POP in downtown Montreal.

This overhaul beginning in 2022 consists of an investment of more than \$5M over the next five years, including more than \$2M in 2022 alone.

Billy Diamond Highway

Renovation works continued on the Billy Diamond highway in 2021, with again over 115 dig-up sites. By refining of the

work processes in the field, ECN was able to significantly improve the cost efficiency of managing these works, while decreasing the amount of fiber cable breaks from four in 2020 to two in 2021.

Mistissini - Ouje-Bougoumou Network Redundancy

In 2020, ECN secured \$4M in funding to implement a redundant network link between Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini. The design phase was completed in 2021 and the project will be built in 2022, including a new telecommunications tower along Highway 167 towards Mistissini, which will also be used to improve cellular coverage in the area.

This link will provide a lifeline to keep critical telecommunications services up and running when fiber optic cable breaks occur, and will benefit the communities of Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou and Chibougamau by creating a network “ring” with these three communities.

Other redundancy projects are being considered for the future, such as a submarine network interconnecting the coastal communities, and fiber optic redundancy for the communities of Nemaska, Chapais and Radisson.

Réseau Gouvernemental de Télécommunications Request for Proposals

ECN has been providing the Government of Québec with telecommunications services throughout the region in partnership with Telus since 2013 within the program called “RITM” of the Québec government. Among others, the facilities of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay and Cree Justice are using these critical services. This program comes to an end in 2022 and the Government of Québec launched a request for proposals in mid 2021 to renew these services under the name *Réseau Gouvernemental de Télécommunications* (“RGT”).

ECN responded to the request for proposals in partnership with Telus and after months of work on the final proposal, ECN and Telus were awarded the contract once again. Through this process, ECN secured an important revenue source for seven to ten years while maintaining the critical service being provided.

Furthermore, Telus won the bid for the rest of the province of Québec, which means that it will keep a significant team on this matter, which bodes well for the operational efficiency of Telus throughout the contract.

Telus and the Government of Québec have complimented multiple times the quality of ECN's service as well as the professionalism of ECN's team.

Eeyou Mobility

Eeyou Mobility is a new project from ECN in partnership with the James Bay Eeyou Corporation and SSI Canada Inc. to deploy mobile cellular service throughout Eeyou Istchee James Bay. The intent is to cover all communities as well as most roads of the region and provide the best cellular connectivity service of the region at an affordable price over a 4G-LTE network. Although logistics and supply chain issues due to COVID-19 significantly affected the construction of this

infrastructure, Eeyou Mobility has launched commercially in the communities of Ouje-Bougoumou, Nemaska, Mistissini, Waswanipi, Chapais, Chibougamau and Whapmagoostui and will have launched in all Eeyou Istchee James Bay communities by summer 2022. Eeyou Mobility has also secured \$58M in funding to build 53 cellular sites along the highways to cover most or all of the following roads:

- Billy Diamond highway
- Access road to Chisasibi
- Access road to Wemindji
- Access road to Eastmain
- Route du Nord from Billy Diamond highway to Nemaska
- Access road to Waskaganish
- Road 109 from Matagami to 49th parallel
- Road 113 from Lebel-sur-Quévillon to Chibougamau
- Road 167 from Chibougamau to Mistissini

This project is to be completed by the first quarter of 2025 and will go a long way to improving the safety of the population traveling the roads in Eeyou Istchee.

Société de télécommunications Atikamekw-Crie

ECN has entered into a limited partnership with the Atikamekw communities of Opitciwan, Wemotaci and Manawan in deploying and operating a fiber optic network between the Hydro-Québec power stations of Chamouchouane close to Lac St-Jean, and Judith-Jasmin in Terrebonne and onwards to the Cologix MTL-4 datacenter in Anjou, Montreal. Most of the fibers used are fibers purchased from Hydro-Québec on their optical ground wire (“OPGW”) over the new Chamouchouane Bout-de-L’île high voltage power line, although there is also 40 kilometres of new fiber cable being built between Terrebonne and Anjou.

This project increases ECN’s autonomy by operating its own fiber optic network all the way to Montreal, without needing to depend on third-party suppliers in Abitibi or Lac St-Jean to get transport to Montreal, although ECN will maintain its third-party connectivity from Amos to Montreal for robustness purposes.

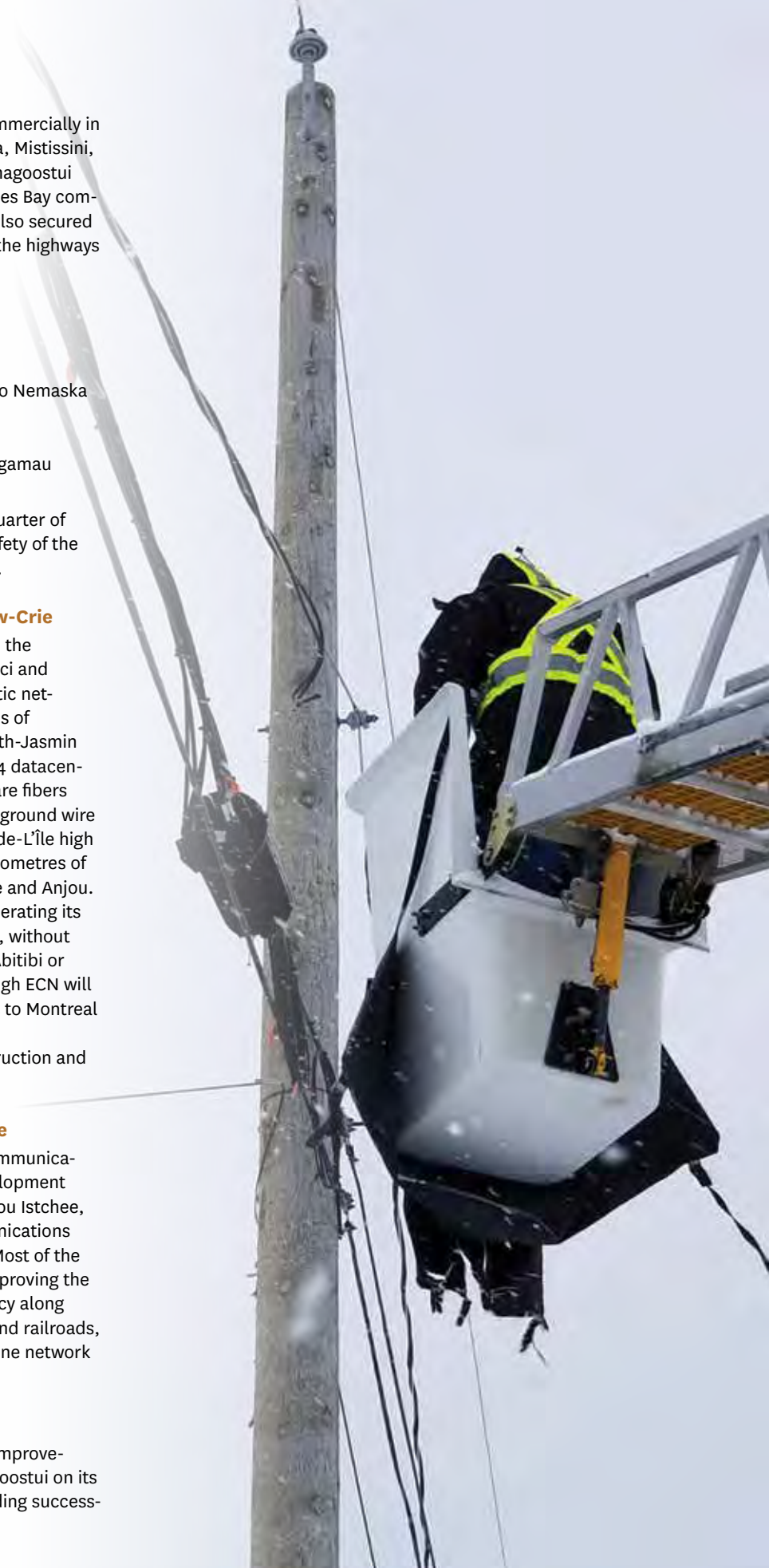
This \$11M project is in its last phase of construction and should be completed before the end of 2022.

Grande Alliance Telecommunications Table

ECN participated at the Grande Alliance telecommunications table, presenting its vision for future development projects to improve telecommunications in Eeyou Istchee, as well as to be a partner in solving telecommunications issues other entities of the region might have. Most of the projects which ECN presented are related to improving the reliability of the network, by building redundancy along planned infrastructure projects such as roads and railroads, as well as through the deployment of a submarine network along the coast.

Whapmagoostui Connectivity

ECN has made all necessary preparations and improvements to integrate the community of Whapmagoostui on its high-speed telecommunications network including success-



ful end-to-end testing of the connectivity between Chisasibi and Whapmagoostui. Network services through ECN will start being offered in the community in near future.

FORESTRY

Agreement to Resolve the Baril-Moses Forestry Dispute

On February 7, 2002, the Crees and Québec signed, in parallel with the *Paix des Braves*, the “Baril-Moses Agreement”. This Agreement extended many of the forestry provisions of the Adapted Forestry Regime created by the *Paix des Braves* onto the Cree traplines east of the boundaries of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*.

On July 13, 2015, the Crees and Québec signed the *Agreement to Resolve the Baril-Moses Forestry Dispute*. This Agreement provides for the implementation of the Baril-Moses forestry standards in the affected territory until June 30, 2020. For the period after July 1, 2020, Québec and the Cree will work together on possible improvements of these standards.

The Agreement provides for certain funding by Québec for the enhancement of Cree traditional activities as well as for the implementation of the Collaborative Forestry Management Regime set out in sections 66 and 67 of the *Cree-Québec Governance Agreement*.

The Agreement establishes the Broadback River Protected Area as a biodiversity reserve with an area of 9,134 square kilometres. This measure will help to protect environmentally sensitive areas, including woodland caribou habitats. A joint Cree-Québec task force will work to identify possible additional protected areas in the JBNQA Territory.

On February 7, 2018, Québec adopted Order-in-Council 72-2018, which approved the establishment of temporary protected status for the proposed biodiversity reserve of Chisesaakahikan-Broadback River, aquatic river reserve of Waswanipi Lake and biodiversity reserve of Assinica as well as the preparation of conservation plans for these areas.

The Agreement provides that the Innu of Mashteuatsh (also known as the First Nation of Pekuakamiulnuatsh) may participate in the processes regarding forestry standards and woodland caribou if they wish to do so. The Pekuakamiulnuatsh Nation has confirmed its participation in the Cree-Innu-Québec joint forestry working group to propose consensual measures on forestry in the Baril-Moses territory.

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* is significant as it aims to secure the harmonization of forestry operations with Cree hunting, fishing and trapping activities in the Baril-Moses area. It provides a process for the Cree and Québec to work together on forestry measures to ensure this harmonization over the long term.

Forestry Harmonization Agreement

In June 2009, Québec tabled new forestry legislation, the *Sustainable Forest Development Act* (Bill 57), to the National

Assembly. The purpose of this Bill was to reform the forestry regime as of 2013. Québec felt it was necessary to plan this reform ahead in order for the changes to be reflected in the planning scheduled to take effect on April 1, 2013.

The *Cree – Québec Governance Agreement* contains measures relating to the harmonization of the Adapted Forestry Regime and the *Sustainable Forest Development Act*. It also provides for the establishment of a collaborative forestry management regime on the territory mentioned in Chapter 3 of the *Paix des Braves*.

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* also provides for negotiations between the Cree and Québec in order to conclude an agreement respecting the harmonization of the Adapted Forestry Regime set out in Chapter 3 of the *Paix des Braves* and the *Sustainable Forest Development Act*.

Québec and the Crees have agreed to:

- (a) an Agreement amending the *Paix des Braves* in order to replace the existing Cree Adapted Forestry Regime by a new one;
- (b) a new *Paix des Braves* Chapter 3 and new Schedules thereto;
- (c) through a new Complementary Agreement to the JBNQA, amendments to Section 30A of the JBNQA which incorporates the Cree Adapted Forestry Regime into the JBNQA; and
- (d) amendments to the Confidentiality Agreement between Québec and the Cree to ensure that the Cree traditional knowledge shared during the preparation phase of the forest planning is kept confidential.

Consequently, as of February 2018, the Cree and Québec signed Amendment No. 6 of the *Paix des Braves* to replace Chapter 3 dealing with the Cree Adapted Forestry Regime, Complementary Agreement No. 25 to amend Section 30A of the JBNQA dealing with the Forestry Regime and a new Confidentiality Agreement to protect Cree traditional knowledge.

Complementary Agreement No. 25 came into force in March 2019. Amendment No. 6 to the *Paix des Braves* has been published in the *Québec Official Gazette* on December 11, 2019.³

The Cree Nation Government has submitted to Québec proposed amendments to the *Sustainable Forest Development Act* in order to implement Amendment No. 6 of the *Paix des Braves*. The process contemplated by Amendment No. 6 with respect to such legislative amendments remains pending with Québec.

Collaborative Forestry Management Regime

The *Cree-Québec Governance Agreement* provides for the establishment of a collaborative management regime for the forestry resources on the Category II lands situated in the territory contemplated by Chapter 3 of the *Paix des Braves*. This collaborative management regime will consist of collaboration between Québec and the Cree Nation

³ Order-in-Council 1158-2019 of November 20, 2019, G.O.Q., Vol. 151, No. 50, pages 3065 ff.

Government in order to develop the integrated forestry management plans concerned.

This collaboration has as its objectives to ensure that Cree interests and concerns are taken into account, to determine local objectives for the sustainable development of forests and to agree on measures for the harmonization of uses. This collaboration is to be carried out after the consultations by the Cree Nation Government with the Cree tallymen and other Cree stakeholders concerned.

The collaborative management regime proceeds in two five-year phases. During the first five-year phase, Québec assumes primary responsibility for forestry planning and management, while involving the Cree Nation Government and providing it with financial and technical support to develop additional forestry planning and management capacity. During the second five-year phase, the Cree Nation Government assumes primary responsibility for forestry planning and management, with the technical and financial support of Québec.

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* provides for funding by Québec for the implementation of the Collaborative Forestry Management Regime set out in the Governance Agreement over the five years 2016-2017 to 2020-2021. The Agreement also provides for the negotiation of successor agreements regarding funding for implementation of the Collaborative Forestry Management Regime for the five-year period 2021-2026 and then the ten-year period 2026-2036. Negotiations have not yet been completed and thus, as of March 31, 2022, the successor agreement had not yet been completed.

The Cree Nation Government has established a Forestry Department which will, among other things, carry out the forestry planning and management work.

Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* provides that Québec and the Cree Nation Government shall each make annual contributions under the *Agreement regarding Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement* concluded on July 11, 2013 for the five-year period 2016-2017 to 2020-2021. They are to work together to develop guidelines concerning eligible uses and activity reports in respect of the funding provided for under the Enhancement Agreement.

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* provides that the parties are also to negotiate by April 1, 2020 a successor agreement to the Enhancement Agreement, taking into account the average funding level provided for in previous years. Negotiations have been completed and the proposed agreement was approved by the Cree Nation Government. Québec still has to finalize its approval process in order for the parties to proceed to the signature of the Agreement. Thus, as of March 31, 2022, the successor agreement had not yet been completed.

PADF Agreement

The Cree Nation Government and the Minister of Forest, Wildlife and Parks signed in early 2018 the *Delegation*

Agreement for Management of the Sustainable Forest Development Program of the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs in the Nord-du-Québec Region (PADF Agreement) for the period 2015-2018.

The purpose of the 2015-2018 PADF Agreement was to delegate to the Cree Nation Government the management of the PADF program, and to provide it with related funding. The Cree Nation Government has concluded with Québec similar agreements for the periods 2018-2021 and 2021-2024.

ENVIRONMENT AND PROTECTED AREAS

Cree – Québec Table on the Environment and Protected Areas

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* establishes the Broadback River Protected Area as a biodiversity reserve with an area of 9,134 square kilometres. This measure will help to protect environmentally sensitive areas, including woodland caribou habitats.

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* calls for a process to identify possible additional protected areas in the JBNQA Territory. It has been agreed at the Standing Liaison Committee to establish a special joint Cree – Québec Table on the Environment and Protected Areas. This Table is to act as a high-level forum to discuss any issues related to the environment and protected areas in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory. It is to carry out its functions under the Standing Liaison Committee, and is not to duplicate the functions of the environmental bodies established under Section 22 of the JBNQA.

Terms of reference have been developed for this Table on the Environment and Protected Areas and submitted to Environment Québec. As proposed by the Cree, this Table could address the following matters, among others:

- (a) implementation of Cree Regional Conservation Strategy;
- (b) identification of additional protected areas;
- (c) relationship between protected areas and the fight against climate change, including the potential use of the boreal forest for sequestration of atmospheric carbon dioxide and for carbon storage;
- (d) implementation of measures for the recovery of woodland caribou habitat and of the precautionary approach for the interim protection of woodland caribou habitat;
- (e) integrated management mechanism for water resources on the basis of hydrological units, including watersheds, sub-watersheds and groups of watersheds;
- (f) environmental emergency communications protocol;
- (g) such other matters as Québec and the Cree Nation Government may agree upon from time to time.

This table met in May and November 2018. At the November 2018 meeting, the Cree Nation Government presented various community proposals for protected areas in Eeyou Istchee.

On February 7, 2018, Québec adopted Order-in-Council 72-2018, which approved the establishment of temporary protected status for the proposed biodiversity reserve of the Chisesaakahikan-Broadback River, the aquatic river reserve of

Waswanipi Lake and the biodiversity reserve of Assinica as well as the preparation of conservation plans for these areas.

The question of protected areas is a key component of *La Grande Alliance*, which is to address it in a holistic fashion, having regard to the need to promote interconnected corridors for wildlife habitat, especially for woodland caribou.

On December 17, 2020 that, through *La Grande Alliance* partnership the Cree Nation Government and the Government of Québec, the latter will protect more than 20% of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory in the Nord-du-Québec region. In addition, 23 new territories reserved for the purposes of a protected area (TRPPA) were designated which will bring to 23% the proportion of protected areas in the territory. The addition of the new territories brings the total to roughly 39,000 km², equivalent to the area of Switzerland.

Gazoduq Pipeline Project

On November 22, 2018, the GCC(EI)/Cree Nation Government received a project notification from Gazoduq Inc. concerning the proposed construction of a natural gas pipeline of approximately 750 km that would extend from northeastern Ontario to a future natural gas liquefaction, storage and export facility in Saguenay, Québec. The preliminary study area identified in the project notification passed through Cree traditional territory, in the “rights area” of the territory

claimed in the context of the Ontario Aboriginal title and Aboriginal rights legal proceedings as well as through the southern portion of the Waswanipi traplines known as the “Senneterre traplines”.

On January 18, 2019, the GCC(EI)/Cree Nation Government notified Gazoduq that this project engaged both the federal and provincial environmental and social impact assessment and review processes set out in Section 22 of the JBNQA as well as the constitutional duty of the Governments of Canada, Québec and Ontario to consult and accommodate the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee.

On February 4, 2019, the GCC(EI)/Cree Nation Government notified both provincial and federal authorities of the applicability of Section 22 of the JBNQA to the Gazoduq project, given the overlap between the identified preliminary study area and the Senneterre traplines. On April 4, 2019, the Minister of Natural Resources of the Government of Canada, Amarjeet Sohi, responded that the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee would be included in the consultation process prepared by his ministry, but that the issue of the application of Section 22 of the JBNQA fell within the purview of his colleague, Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

On May 2, 2019, Marie-José Thomas, then Associate Secretary General of the Secrétariat aux Affaires autochtones,



responded that Québec takes the position that Section 22 of the JBNQA does not automatically apply to the Senneterre traplines.

Subsequently, following discussions with the Cree Nation Government, Gazoduq decided to modify its planned study area, removing any overlap with the Senneterre traplines in order to avert the jurisdictional dispute relating to the trigger of Section 22 of the JBNQA. The detailed project description filed by Gazoduq with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada showed this modified study area. Gazoduq similarly advised provincial authorities that it intended to rely upon this modified study area for the purposes of the planned review under title 1 of the *Environment Quality Act*.

MODERNIZATION OF SECTION 24 JBNQA

Serious concerns have arisen concerning over-harvesting of migratory caribou in the JBNQA Territory by certain members of the Innu Nation. Former Grand Chief Abel Bosum wrote to, and met with, Minister Dufour (MFFP) and Minister Lafrenière (SAA) in February 2021 on this matter. He proposed the establishment of a special table to negotiate a modern Implementation Plan of Section 24 of the JBNQA.

These discussions would include possible adaptations to the existing legislative framework to provide greater respon-

sibility for the Indigenous parties and collaboration between the Government of Québec and the Cree Nation Government for the purpose of ensuring effective wildlife management, in particular and in priority, the migratory caribou of the JBNQA Territory.

Both Ministers have responded and named representatives to the negotiating table. The long-term solution would likely be the delegation of greater responsibility for wildlife protection to the Cree Nation. This is consistent with the broad trend since the signature of the JBNQA and the Paix des Braves.

It is anticipated that other files of concern with the MFFP may be addressed at this table such as Right of First Refusal (RFR) for outfitting, which has now been extended to November 2024.

EYYOU EENOU POLICE FORCE

Funding

On November 26, 2018, the Cree Nation Government, Québec and Canada concluded, in accordance with Section 19 of the JBNQA, a significant tripartite agreement concerning the operational funding of the Eeyou Eenou Police Force for the period from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2028.



Photo: Katherine Dehm

However, the parties required more time to finalize discussions on various financial matters, including funding for major capital and the transport of accused persons. At the time, it was agreed that the parties would pursue negotiations on these matters with the objective of reaching an agreement by March 31, 2019, but no agreement was reached by then.

However, the Parties did reach an agreement during fiscal year 2020-2021 by which the tripartite agreement was amended to add distinct funding, apart from operations funding, for certain major capital infrastructure projects for the EEPF, to be undertaken between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2025. The Parties however agreed that the tripartite agreement was concluded without prejudice to their respective positions with respect to funding for the transportation of accused persons.

The Parties also reached additional amending agreements during fiscal years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, to add nonrecurring exceptional funding for such fiscal years in light of the specific situation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic response.

Modalities Agreement, Court Security, Education and Special Constables

Cree-Québec discussions took place regarding:

- (a) the renewal of the Modalities Agreement, which relates to the EEPF's primary jurisdiction, the level of its police services and hiring requirements of its police officers; and
- (B) certain training components for future officers as well as other issues, such as the provision of Court security.

In the meantime, and further to a joint Cree-Québec effort, various special constables have been appointed in view of certain retention and recruitment issues. These special constables are in addition to the members of the EEPF who are full-fledged police officers.

Efforts are also ongoing in order to address, with Québec and the education institutions, the recruitment and retention issues of the EEPF. An agreement was reached with the École Nationale de Police during fiscal year 2021-2022 in this respect.

CREE CUSTOMARY ADOPTION AND YOUTH PROTECTION

Changes to Québec law came into effect in 2018 to clearly reflect the legal effects of Indigenous customary adoption and guardianship. This is done through a certification process by interested Indigenous Nations and communities, and require a Nation to opt in by designating a "competent authority".

In January 2019, the Board-Council of the GCC(EI)/Cree Nation Government designated the Cree Nation Government to act as the Cree competent authority to certify certain Cree customary adoptions and guardianships, effective June 1, 2019. This will be done in collaboration with local committees set up by interested Cree First Nations.

Work continues with Cree communities to establish their local committees, with a view to allowing their members to

have Cree customary adoptions and guardianships certified, for the benefit of Cree children, families and communities. Several communities have set up these committees, and are working to identify and orient committee members, or have already done so. The Cree Nation Government is also collaborating closely with the CBHSSJB on the certification process, and plans to finalize the administrative documents shortly.

The Québec Registrar of Civil Status included the Cree Nation Government in its register of Indigenous competent authorities in November 2019. This allows the Cree Nation Government to officialise an existing Cree customary adoption or guardianship, on request, if the relevant local committee has been set up and the adoption or guardianship meets the requirements of the Cree certification process. The Cree Nation Government will also collaborate with the CBHSSJB as part of this certification process.

Cree representatives are seeking on-going funding from the Government of Québec to support the Cree customary adoption and guardianship certification process. The section of this report of the Department of Social and Cultural Development provides more information on this certification process.

RECONFIGURATION AND FINAL LAND DESCRIPTIONS FOR CREE COMMUNITIES

Two tables have been established with Québec and Canada concerning Cree land issues:

- (a) One table deals with determining the final land descriptions for Cree Category I and II lands with a view to incorporating such final descriptions into the JBNQA and pertinent legislation;
- (b) Another table created pursuant to section 4.18 of the *Paix des Braves* concerns the reconfiguration of the Category I lands of Waskaganish, Waswanipi and Nemaska following the abandonment of the N.B.R. Complex.

Changes to Section 4 of the JBNQA and to other related provisions of the JBNQA will be made in order to incorporate the final territorial descriptions of the Cree Category I lands. The recent focus has been on the land reconfiguration of Waswanipi and Waskaganish, and to some extent, Nemaska pursuant to section 4.18 of the *Paix des Braves*. The plan is to finalize these land reconfigurations first in order to include them in the final territorial descriptions of Section 4 of the JBNQA.

The experience with respect to the Ouje-Bougoumou / Mistissini land transfer should pave the way for a process to achieve these land reconfigurations and final descriptions.

Drafts of a proposed Waswanipi reconfiguration agreement have been exchanged between Cree, Canada and Québec representatives. A proposed transitional agreement has been agreed to by the negotiators in order to secure the upcoming opening of a new waste management site as well as the infrastructure located in front of the community of Waswanipi, which would eventually be located in Category IA lands, once the reconfiguration is completed. The transitional agreement has been approved by Waswanipi, and the approvals of the Cree Nation Government, Québec and

Canada are being sought. Finally, attempts are being made to agree with Québec and Canada to prioritize the reconfiguration of a small block of lands located in front of the community, identified as Block A12.

The Waskaganish reconfiguration discussions also provide the opportunity to the parties to regularize various areas such as the so-called “Roman Catholic Mission Lands”. The parties have started working on options in this respect. Discussions were carried out with Québec, Canada and the Catholic Diocese of Amos during fiscal year 2021-2022, and are continuing.

With respect to Chisasibi, discussions are to take place on the need to reconfigure Category I lands in relation to the transportation corridor that transects the community.

The Government has been informed that a land reconfiguration issue may also arise for the community of Washaw Sibi in the near future, subject to the development plans of the community.

OUJE-BOUGOUMOU RECOGNITION AND MISTISSINI LANDS

Complementary Agreement No. 22 and the Final Agreement were signed in Ouje-Bougoumou on November 7, 2011. Complementary Agreement No. 22 received its final signature on February 3, 2012 and came into force during the year 2012-2013. These agreements have the effect of legally securing the status of Ouje-Bougoumou as a Cree First Nation under the JBNQA and related legislation, with the same powers, rights and responsibilities as other Cree First Nations, subject to a transitional period necessary to allow for the transfer of lands and the coming into force of amendments to the *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act*.

The *Act to amend the Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act*, adopted in 2009, amended the *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act* in order, among other things, to recognize Ouje-Bougoumou as a Cree Band. These amendments came into force on May 15, 2014, the date on which land was formally set aside by the Governor in Council as Category IA land for the exclusive use and benefit of Ouje-Bougoumou pursuant to the Complementary Agreement. Ouje-Bougoumou, like other Cree bands, constituted as corporations under the *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act*, was continued as a Cree First Nation and as the same legal entity under the *Cree-Canada Governance Agreement* of 2017.

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and the Cree Nation of Mistissini concluded negotiations with Québec and Canada and, in September 2013, signed with Québec the *Final Settlement Agreement Related to the Transfer of Certain Lands from Mistissini to Québec*. This Agreement provides for a specific process and schedule which will result in the adjustment by Mistissini of certain Category I and II lands in consideration of the allocation by Québec of an equivalent area of lands to Ouje-Bougoumou through Complementary Agreement No. 22 and in consideration of financial provisions. The Agreement does not contemplate or affect in any way the claim in respect of the Mistissini hunting territories lying to the east of the Height of Land.

The Cree Nation Government, Québec and Canada are in regular communications in order to conclude the land transactions needed to finalize the land transfers. The situation has considerably evolved during fiscal year 2021-2022 in view of the adoption of various decrees and orders-in-council by Québec and Canada, as well as the adoption of the Bill 16 – *An Act to amend various legislative provisions to implement Complementary Agreements No.22 and No.27 to the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*.

By virtue of the decrees adopted by Québec during fiscal year 2021-2022, the new Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini Category II lands have been described, Québec has approved the transfer by letters patent of the new Mistissini Category IB lands to the Mistissini Landholding Corporation and Québec has transferred the new Mistissini Category IA lands to Canada.

By virtue of an order-in-council adopted by Canada during fiscal year 2021-2022, Canada has accepted the transfer of the new Mistissini Category IA lands. Canada still has to formally set aside the new Mistissini Category IA lands for the exclusive use and benefit of Mistissini, which should be forthcoming.

Bill 16, now chapter 1 of the 2002 Québec laws, notably creates the Ouje-Bougoumou Landholding Corporation, which acts as a trigger to finalize the land transfer with respect to Ouje-Bougoumou Category IB lands. Québec still needs to adopt the decree authorizing the issuance of letters patent to the Ouje-Bougoumou Landholding Corporation and then to transfer the Ouje-Bougoumou Category IB lands to the Ouje-Bougoumou Landholding Corporation by letters patent.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH MINING COMPANIES

Newmont/Goldcorp – Éléonore Project

On February 21, 2011, Les Mines Opinaca, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Goldcorp, signed the Opinagow Collaboration Agreement with the Cree Nation of Wemindji, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and the Cree Regional Authority (now the Cree Nation Government).

The purpose of the Opinagow Collaboration Agreement is to establish measures for the future operation of the project, which protects Cree traditional activities, and to ensure Cree benefit from various employment, business and training programs. It also ensures that the project will proceed in a sustainable and environmental manner and that it respects all provisions of the JBNQA.

Opinaca estimates that there is a need for approximately 75 to 100 jobs during the exploration phase of the Éléonore project, 200 to 600 jobs during development and construction and 300 to 600 jobs during operation. The estimated life of the project is 15 to 20 years, with potential for an extended life if future exploration is successful.

On April 18, 2019, Goldcorp merged with Newmont Mining Corp., creating Newmont Goldcorp Corp., the world's largest gold-mining company. In early January 2020, as part of a branding exercise, the company simply changed its name to Newmont Corp.

On March 13, 2020, Newmont was forced to shutdown its activities at the Éléonore Mine in light of the Orders in Council and Ministerial Orders issued by the government of Québec to face the COVID-19 pandemic. In mid-April 2020, Newmont resumed its operations at the Éléonore Mine, after consultation and collaboration with the Cree Nation Government on a COVID-19 management plan.

Stornoway Diamond Corporation – Renard Project

On March 27, 2012, Stornoway Diamonds (Canada) Inc. (“Stornoway”) signed the Mecheshoo Agreement with the Cree Nation of Mistissini, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and the Cree Regional Authority.

The Mecheshoo Agreement, which will be in effect for the life of the mine, contains various provisions regarding Cree involvement in the development of the Renard Diamond Mine, including employment and business opportunities and training and education initiatives. Moreover, the Mecheshoo Agreement aligns the parties’ respective interests in the economic success of the project and ensures that the Cree will receive financial benefits through different payment mechanisms and participation in the profitability of the mine.

All Cree representatives have been appointed to the various committees created under the Mecheshoo Agreement, including the Renard Committee, the committee responsible for the implementation of the Mecheshoo Agreement. The Renard Committee has met on a quarterly basis since the signature of the Mecheshoo Agreement.

In April 2014, Stornoway announced a \$944M financing package to fund the construction of the Renard Project, which began in June 2014.

In September 2019, Stornoway sought before the Superior Court of Québec protection under the *Companies’ Creditors Arrangement Act* (“CCAA”) in order to restructure its business and financial affairs, in light of financial difficulties.

In October 2019, the Québec Superior Court approved a

transaction by which Diaquem Inc., Osisko Gold Royalties Ltd., CDPQ Ressources Inc. and 10782343 Canada Ltd., the secured creditors of Stornoway and of certain of its affiliated entities, would acquire by way of a share purchase agreement all of the assets and properties of Stornoway and certain of its affiliated entities, other than excluded assets expressly identified and designated as such in the share purchase agreement.

On November 1, 2019, Deloitte Restructuring Inc, in its capacity as monitor to Stornoway under the CCAA proceedings, issued a certificate confirming that all of the conditions of the share purchase agreement had been satisfied and the closing of the transaction had occurred.

On March 13, 2020, Stornoway was forced to shutdown its activities at the Renard Mine in light of the Orders in Council and Ministerial Orders issued by the government of Québec to face the COVID-19 pandemic. While the Government of Québec allowed mining companies to resume their operations in mid-April 2020, Stornoway had decided not to immediately resume its operations at the Renard Mine, given the difficult conditions of the diamond market (caused in part by the inability to travel which prevents buyers from traveling to Antwerp, Belgium, where the diamonds are traded). Underground operations at the Renard mine resumed on August 1, 2020 and ore processing operations resumed on October 3, 2020.

BlackRock Metals Inc. – BlackRock Project

In January 2011, BlackRock contacted the Cree community of Ouje-Bougoumou to begin discussions on the BlackRock project. The company is carrying on exploration and predevelopment activities to mine an iron ore deposit located approximately 50 km east of the community of Ouje-Bougoumou.

BlackRock filed its Notice of Project with Environment Québec in July 2010 and the company received in December 2010 the directives for the drafting of the Environmental and Social



Impact Assessment from the COMEV. BlackRock filed its Environmental and Social Impact Assessment in January 2012.

In January 2012, the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government and BlackRock signed a Pre-Development Agreement. On June 20, 2013, the parties signed the BallyHusky Agreement. Since the execution of this Agreement, the parties have appointed their respective representatives to the Implementation Committee, which has met on four (4) occasions. The Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation and BlackRock have engaged in negotiations on the terms of various contracts which could be awarded to Ouje-Bougoumou during the construction phase of the BlackRock project.

On April 26, 2016, the Cree Nation Government invested an amount of \$1.67M in Nemaska Lithium, and the *Administration régionale Baie-James* invested an identical amount. On the same date, the SDBJ also invested a first amount of \$1.5M. On June 8, 2016, pursuant to Order-in-Council 479-2016, the SDBJ invested an additional amount of \$166,667.

Throughout 2017, BlackRock prepared and carried out consultations regarding its proposed ferrovanadium plant in the port of Grande-Anse (Saguenay).

On January 30, 2019, BlackRock Metals Inc., the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation and the GCC(EI)/Cree Nation Government signed a memorandum of understanding in connection with discussions with the Governments of Québec and of Canada, local municipalities and the Canadian National Railway (“CNR”) regarding the possibility of constructing a 26 km railway spur from the BlackRock mine site to connect with CNR’s railway network as well as that of the Roberval and Saguenay Railway linking Chibougamau, Chapais and the Saguenay port in order to transport the iron ore from the mine site.

On April 11, 2019, following consultation with the Section 22 Review Committee (COMEX), the Deputy Minister of the Environment of Québec delivered to BlackRock Metals Inc.

its amended certificate of authorization for the operation of the iron ore mine, which notably authorized an extension of the duration of the operation of the mine from 13 years to 42.5 years and authorized, for a maximum of five years, the transportation of iron ore by truck on existing forestry roads between the mine site and the existing railroad linking Chibougamau Chapais to Lac Saint Jean.

In late 2018, BlackRock Metals Inc., the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation and the GCC(EI)/Cree Nation Government were engaged in a dispute with regard to the implementation of the provisions of the BallyHusky Agreement pertaining to the preferential awarding of sole source contracts to Cree enterprises and Ouje-Bougoumou Cree enterprises. This dispute was settled in June 2019, through the conclusion of a Charter for the Implementation Committee which notably provides for the unbundling of contracts so as to ensure that contract opportunities are accessible or available to Cree Enterprises and Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Enterprises.

In late December 2021, BlackRock Metals Inc. filed court proceedings for protection under the Companies’ Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) in order to restructure its business and financial affairs, in light of financial difficulties. These proceedings entail a Sale or Investor Solicitation Process (SISP) to seek buyers or investors for BlackRock Metals Inc. The restructuring proposed by BlackRock involves the acquisition of all of BlackRock’s issued and outstanding shares by Investissement Québec (“IQ”), Québec’s economic development agency, and by OMF Fund II H Ltd. (“Orion”), a New York private equity firm. Both Orion and IQ recognize the importance of the Crees for the BlackRock project to proceed. In fact, the agreement proposed by IQ/Orion provides for the assumption of the BallyHusky Agreement, in compliance with its terms and conditions regarding change of control.

On May 31, 2022, the Québec Superior Court approved the proposed transaction with IQ and Orion, which transaction was closed on June 2, 2022.



Nemaska Lithium Inc. – Whabouchi Project

In 2009, Nemaska Lithium Inc. acquired from Golden Goose Resources a property in Nemaska traditional territory, located approximately four kilometres north of Hydro-Québec's Alanel substation. While the original intent of Golden Goose was to operate a nickel mine, Nemaska Lithium intends to focus on the exploration and possible commercial production of a lithium ore body discovered on the site ("Whabouchi Project").

Nemaska Lithium Inc. approached the Cree community of Nemaska to develop a memorandum of understanding. Discussions in late 2009 focused on the purchase of shares of Nemaska Lithium Inc. by the Nemaska Development Corporation, which ultimately resulted in Nemaska Development Corporation investing \$600,000 in Nemaska Lithium Inc.

The Cree Nation of Nemaska, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government and Nemaska Lithium Inc. have engaged in negotiations on an Impacts and Benefits Agreement (IBA). In April 2014, the parties achieved an agreement-in-principle on the financial matters of the final agreement being negotiated. Finally, in November 2014, the parties signed the Chinuchi Agreement, for the development, construction, operation and closure of the Whabouchi Project.

Since the signature of the Chinuchi Agreement, Nemaska Lithium has focused its activities on building a pilot plant in Shawinigan and securing financing for the construction and commission of the mine in Nemaska and the final plant in Shawinigan.

On May 30, 2018, Nemaska Lithium announced the completion of its \$1.1B project financing, through notably a \$280M public offering of common shares, an \$80M private placement of stock with the Québec government and a US\$350M bond sale. While this financing was to allow for the construction of the Whabouchi Mine in Nemaska and the lithium hydroxide and carbonate production facility in Shawinigan, Nemaska Lithium announced in February 2019 that another \$375M was needed to enable the company to complete construction of the Whabouchi Mine and the production facility.

In late December 2019, Nemaska Lithium filed court proceedings for protection under the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act* (CCAA) in order to restructure its business and financial affairs, in light of financial difficulties. After a Sale or Investor Solicitation Process (SISP) to seek buyers or investors for Nemaska Lithium, a transaction was approved by the Court.

As a result of the restructuring, the "new" Nemaska Lithium is now equally owned by Investissement Québec and Québec Lithium Partners ("QLP"). In turn, QLP is equally owned by Livent, a lithium technology company with a portfolio of products for electric vehicles, other energy storage applications and lithium alloys, and by a wholly-owned subsidiary of Pallinghurst Investment Fund, a leading investor in the metals and natural resources sector with a key focus on battery materials.

On May 6, 2022, Livent announced that it would acquire the interest of the subsidiary of Pallinghurst Investment Fund and, therefore, QLP would now be a wholly-owned

subsidiary of Livent. As a result, Livent would then have a 50% ownership of Nemaska Lithium, the other 50% shareholder being Investissement Québec.

As part of the restructuring conducted under the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act*, the "new" Nemaska Lithium has assumed all the obligations set out in the Chinuchi Agreement.

Critical Elements Lithium Corporation – Rose Lithium-Tantalum Project

Critical Elements Corporation ("CEC") holds mining claims, exploration and other permits on lands located approximately one hundred and sixty (160) kilometres east of the Cree community of Eastmain, in Eeyou Istchee, in Category III lands under the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*.

CEC has carried out exploration on the mining claims for spodumene, a source of lithium, and tantalum in this area which has been named and is known as the "Rose Lithium-Tantalum Project". CEC is currently engaged in the environmental impact assessment process for the Rose Lithium-Tantalum Project.

Representatives of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee), the Cree Nation Government, the Cree Nation of Eastmain and CEC and their respective advisors have negotiated an agreement in respect of the Rose-Lithium-Tantalum Project (Pihkuutaau Agreement), which provides for, among other things, the establishment and development of various processes and committees during the construction, commercial production and closure phases of the Rose-Lithium Tantalum Project in a manner that benefits all parties and accommodates their respective interests.

The Pihkuutaau Agreement, signed in July 2019, addresses certain matters of common interest, such as employment, training, business opportunities, social and cultural matters, environmental matters (including progressive rehabilitation, restoration and closure) and financial commitments, and establishes processes for addressing these matters.

In February 2021, the Environmental and Social Impact Review Committee ("COMEX") proceeded to hold virtual public hearing sessions in mid-February in Matagami, Eastmain, and Nemaska. The Government of Canada runs a parallel permitting process to that of the Province of Québec. In August 2021, the Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change rendered a favourable decision in respect of the proposed Rose Project. In a decision statement, which included the conditions to be complied with by CEC, the Minister confirmed that the Project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects when mitigation measures are taken into account.

The final remaining step in the project's approval is the completion of the provincial permitting process, which runs parallel to the federal process. Pursuant to the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*, the provincial environmental assessment is conducted jointly by the Cree Nation Government and the Government of Québec under the COMEX. The provincial assessment is advanced and has undergone several rounds of questions from COMEX.

Other Mining Projects

In recent years, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government and various Cree communities have signed a number of predevelopment agreements with other mining companies, which should lead to discussions to conclude IBA's. However, like other regions, Canada and Québec have seen a slowdown in mining investment owing to the global decline in commodity prices. As a result, these discussions have either slowed or been temporarily suspended, pending a more favourable economic climate. These discussions include:

- (a) the Montviel project (rare earths) of GeoMega Resources in the territory of the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi;
- (b) the Fenelon project (gold) of Wallbridge Mining Company Ltd. in the territories of the Cree First Nation of Waskaganish and the Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi;
- (c) the Moblan project (lithium) of Lithium Guo Ao Ltée in the territory of the Cree Nation of Mistissini;
- (d) the Windfall Lake project (gold) of Osisko Mining in the territory of the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi;
- (e) the Croteau Est and Waconichi projects (gold) of Northern Superior Resources in the territory of the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation;
- (f) the Corner Bay project (copper) and other mining properties of Doré Copper Mining Corporation in the territory of the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation;
- (g) the Iron Hills project (iron ore) of Barlow Mine Inc. in the territory of the Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi;
- (h) the Monster Lake project (gold) of Iamgold/Tomagold in the territory of the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation and the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi;
- (i) the Troilus Extension project (gold and copper) of Troilus Gold in the territory of the Cree Nation of Mistissini.

CONCLUSION

The relationship with Québec remains one of central importance to the Cree, both as members of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee and as citizens of Québec and Canada.

Since the signature of the *Paix des Braves* in 2002, the Cree-Québec relationship has provided significant benefits for the Cree Nation. The funding provided pursuant to the *Paix des Braves*, the significant funding for Cree Health and Social Services, Education, Police, Justice, Childcare Services and the Adapted Forestry Regime all bear witness to an important and fruitful relationship. The *Cree-Québec Governance Agreement* of 2012 has consolidated Cree governance under Québec laws over extensive Category II lands and, for the first time, made it possible for the Cree to act as equal partners in the governance of Category III lands.

More recently, the signature in February 2020 of *La Grande Alliance* with Québec, at the initiative of the Cree Nation Government, marks its recognition by Québec as a full partner and mature government in planning and coordinating infrastructure and resource development in balance with environmental protection in Eeyou Istchee.

The on-going response of the Cree Nation Government, Cree First Nations, CBHSSJB and Cree School Board to the COVID-19 public health emergency has clearly demonstrated their capacity, as mature government institutions working in partnership with Québec, to protect the health and welfare of the Cree citizens of Eeyou Istchee.

The Cree-Québec relationship will continue to play a critical role in the political, social and economic development of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee and of the entire region of Eeyou Istchee James Bay.

Photo: Jamie Moses

INDIGENOUS RELATIONS



The Cree Nation Government has undertaken an important initiative to engage directly with Indigenous groups across the country in order to share the experience and the history of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee. We do this out of a sense of responsibility, and to respond to requests from other Indigenous groups seeking to secure recognition of their rights.

More specifically, this initiative saw the importance and benefits for all involved of engaging with our neighbours and with whom there are a wide range of issues of common concern. Our approach in this initiative is to strengthen and to build new relationships based on our shared Indigenous histories and values, and to conclude arrangements that are in keeping with our cultures and traditional ways of relating to one another.

CREE-NASKAPI-INUIT RELATIONS

Over the recent years, several discussions and exchanges were held by our past leaders to address common issues and to identify ways to address these. As a result, a proposed memorandum of understanding for the creation of a Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Forum was developed. In general the Forum will address political issues such as our respective rights under the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA)* and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*; and also specific

issues, such as caribou management and infrastructure. Moreover, this proposed MOU will identify our common objectives on the health, conservation, management and harvest of caribou populations. The signature of the MOU is anticipated to take place in early Spring.

CREE-INNU OF PEKUAKAMIULNUATSH NATION RELATIONS

The Maammu Wiicheutuwin Agreement, an agreement concluded in 2018 between the Pekuakamiulnuatsh Nation and the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee, established a foundation to address issues of mutual concern including land title, forestry management, economic development, wildlife management, protection of the environment and the promotion of our respective languages and cultures. Despite the challenges due to the pandemic and the changes in members, the committees established to address wildlife management, economic development, and forestry have continued their dialogue and exchanges throughout the year. They continue the efforts to complete their respective mandates including a memorandum of understanding on economic development, an agreement on traditional and wildlife activities and to agree on a new forestry regime with the provincial government in the Peschitaskau common area. This treaty promotes positive inter-indigenous relations.



CREE-INNU NATION RELATIONS

The decline of the migratory caribou herd populations continues to be a challenge throughout the territory. The Cree Nation Government, the Cree Trappers Association and the Cree Nation of Chisasibi have engaged in discussions with the Innu Nation for several years in an attempt to find an acceptable solution to enable access to caribou while ensuring that any actions ensure and prioritize the health of the herds and the respect of Cree rights and interests.

In recent years, as an expression of good faith, the Cree Nation Government offered a symbolic gesture of gifting caribou to the Innu Nation and the Naskapi Nation. This gifting was also done in anticipation of a future cultural exchange followed by discussions towards reaching common objectives and recommendations for long-term solutions.

The discussions between the Cree and the Innu unfolded to find solutions to provide access to caribou for the Innu People while ensuring that the Nations peoples' interests and concerns are considered, and that the health and sustainability of the caribou was prioritized.

Following several meetings between the Cree, Innu and Naskapi leaders and representatives, the affected tallymen, land-users and other stakeholders, the Maamuu Nisituhtimuwin-Traditional Mutual Understanding on the Harvest of Caribou in Cree Traditional Territory of Chisasibi, Eeyou Istchee between the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee and

the Innu Nation in Quebec (Winter 2022) was concluded and signed on January 24th, 2022. The traditional understanding establishes mutual terms in which Innu communities in Quebec will have access to caribou within the Cree traditional territory of Chisasibi, Eeyou Istchee. Our understanding was guided by the wisdom and knowledge of our Elders, and based on our traditional customs and values of sharing, promoting sustainable harvest and respect for the animal.

The result of the caribou harvest for the Winter 2022 was a success, thanks to the Cree Nation of Chisasibi, the concerned tallymen and other representatives involved in the successful implementation of our traditional understanding.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER INDIGENOUS GROUPS

In the context of La Grande Alliance, there have been presentations made to the Naskapi Nation Chief and Council and the Makivik Corporation representatives. These meetings produced very positive exchanges.

The Cree Nation Government will continue to work to develop positive and mutually beneficial relations with other Indigenous groups with whom we have begun exchanges in recent years. These include the Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation Tribal Council, the Atikamekw and the Illwuk Nations.

We look forward to ongoing discussions leading to the development of further positive Indigenous-to-Indigenous relations.

Photo: Katherine Dehm

NATURAL RESOURCES



ADAPTED FORESTRY REGIME IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) under Chapter 3 of the *Paix des Braves Agreement* continued to improve this past year with the added capacity of Cree Nation Government's Forestry Department. Under the Environment and Remedial Works Department, the Forestry unit consisted of 3-4 full time staff members. This far exceed the unit's capacity to affectively implement several key provisions of the AFR at the field or trapline level, particularly if active monitoring was required. The Forestry Unit's capacity was further challenged by the ongoing requirement of the team to participate in high level negotiations such as the *Baril-Moses Agreement* or the Amendment six of Chapter 3. Under these conditions, the best the Unit could do at the field level was to coordinate with the Cree local Joint Working Group members in a more passive fashion.

However, this situation has improved since the launch of the stand-alone Cree Nation Government Forestry Department. In the past two years, the Department has ramped up its capacity with 10 employees covering key facets of implementation such as extensive field level monitoring and investigation, active conflict management and resolution, updating and correcting mapping related to overlapping biological refuges, Cree areas of interest and Cree areas of wildlife interest. The added capacity has also allowed for active collaboration with the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP) on the development of consultative implementation guides to ensure a consistent application of the consultation process for tallymen and land users. To further the reach and collaboration in Waswanipi, William Saganash, a field monitor with the Department, was also named as an active Joint Working Group representative in Waswanipi.

Another key implementation initiative that the Forestry Department undertook in the past year was on the collaboration with the MFFP for the development of a set of Wildlife

Habitat Directives to further reduce the impact forestry has on key wildlife species. The Wildlife Habitat Directives have remained as an unfulfilled provision of the *Paix des Braves Agreement* since it was signed in 2002. Over the years several attempts have been made to complete these Directives, but the parties could never come to agreement over a finished product.

In 2018 a joint Cree/MFFP technical committee was established to develop the long-awaited Wildlife Habitat Directives. Unfortunately, COVID-19 and personnel shortages within the MFFP have impeded the committee's progress, with the MFFP recently requesting a further extension of the project until 2024. In response, the Cree members of the Wildlife Habitat technical committee volunteered to take the pen and complete a set of "interim directives" that could be readily implemented within the next 5-year planning cycle. The MFFP accepted this proposal, and it is expected that the Cree Nation Government will table a set of interim directives in June of 2022. These directives will be in place until the MFFP and the Cree Nation Government agree on a full set of Wildlife Habitat Directives in 2024.

COLLABORATIVE FORESTRY REGIME CATEGORY II LANDS

Although these are positive aspects of the Cree Nation Government progress forestry implementation, there have been some areas where the momentum has been slow. The 2012 Governance Agreement with Quebec set out a series of provisions that created what is known as the Cree/Quebec Collaborative Forestry Regime for Category II lands. Under these provisions the Cree Nation Government and MFFP were to work in concert towards a specific forest management regime on Category II lands within the commercial forest zone. The regime was to have two 5-year phase in periods. In the first 5 years the Cree and MFFP were to share knowledge and experience such that, in the second 5-year



phase, the Cree Nation Government could prepare the forest management plans for these lands. The schedule and funding for the Collaborative Regime was set out in the 2015 *Baril-Moses Agreement* as were funding renewal provisions.

Unfortunately, the implementation schedule set out in the *Baril-Moses Agreement* was hindered due to the Quebec Government's delay in fully adopting the sixth amendment to the *Paix des Braves Agreement* which harmonized the Sustainable Forest Development Act with the AFR. Without this harmonization, the legality of Quebec's key forestry legislation was in doubt. The Government of Quebec fully adopted Amendment Six in 2018 which paved the way for work to begin on the Collaborative Regime. This also coincided with the creation of the Cree Nation Government's stand-alone Forestry Department.

Between 2018 and 2020 the parties began laying the foundations for phase one of the Collaborative Regime; however, by 2021 and in accordance with the *Baril-Moses Agreement*, it was necessary to renew the funding for the regime—this is where our momentum was lost. In 2020 and 2021 the MFFP and the Cree Nation Government attempted to reach a settlement on funding renewal for the Collaborative Regime based on the formula set out in the *Baril-Moses Agreement*. Unfortunately, the Government of Quebec has not been willing to abide by this funding formula and the negotiations have stalled. Attempts were made to revisit this impasse in the fall of 2021 without success and so the Cree Quebec negotiator has tabled this matter with the Standing Liaison Committee.

The lack of resolution to this impasse has forced the parties to pause further implementation of the Collaborative Regime due to the uncertainty of future funding.

CREE-QUÉBEC FORESTRY BOARD

Despite COVID restrictions, the Cree-Québec Forestry Board continued with its four annual (virtual) meetings over the past year in fulfillment of its mandate to oversee the implementation of the Adapted Forestry Regime of the *Paix des Braves Agreement*. Key areas of focus were the further implementation of a comprehensive monitoring framework for the provisions of the AFR, and assistance in the development of Joint Working Group Internal Operations Rules, a guide on harmonization measures and one directed at conflict management. The Board's Secretariat assisted the parties in the development of these Joint Working Group tools.

The Board also continued with its Moose Habitat Assessment project that began several years ago in the form

of a case study. Over the course of the past year, the members of the Board elected to attach the habitat assessment project (with funding) to a larger moose study being conducted by the University of McGill. The Board's focus for the study is on assessing the impacts that the mosaic forest management matrix has on the long-term viability of moose habitat. Work this project is scheduled to carry into the following year.

TERRITORIAL ACCESS

As part of the Cree Nation Government's ongoing efforts to manage access to Eeyou Istchee, our ongoing coordination with the Ministère de l'Énergie et des Ressources naturelles (MERN) and the Cree communities to identify, verify and prosecute illegal non-native cabins continued. Each year the MERN prepares a list of suspect illegal cabins that require investigation. This list is forwarded to the Chiefs of each affected community and to the Cree Nation Government. It is then incumbent upon the community representatives to verify that the cabins on the list do not belong to Cree beneficiaries. Cabins that are owned by Cree are then removed from list and those verified as illegal are then prosecuted and dismantled.

While this process remains in place, COVID-19 has impeded the progress on addressing the problem of illegal cabins because some of the Cree communities have not responded to the MERN's annual list. This means that the MERN cannot move to the prosecution phase of the process because they do not want to remove any cabins that could be owned by Crees. With the end of COVID-19 restrictions, it is hoped that this important process can be restored to its former efficiency.

FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND SECTION 22 HARMONIZATION

In the absence of an amendment which clearly and permanently establishes the Crees role in external federal environmental impact assessments, the Cree Nation Government has been negotiating stand-alone agreements over how these assessments are to be conducted. The first of these agreements was for the Rose and James Bay Lithium mines in 2019. Late last year, the Troilus mining project triggered another federal assessment in the territory which also triggered another round of negotiations between the Cree Nation Government and the Federal Government of Canada to determine how the Crees will participate in the review of this project. The parties expect to conclude an agreement on this project early in the new fiscal year.

Photo: Katherine Dehm



INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



In 2021-2022, COVID-19 continued to prevent in-person meetings internationally and in Canada. Although work continued through Zoom meetings, progress at times proved to be more challenging.

1. AN ACT RESPECTING THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Efforts to achieve a federal law on the *UN Declaration* began in 2014 with Romeo Saganash's Private Member's Bill C-641.¹ The road to achieve a federal law was a challenging one. It took years of hard work by Romeo and many others across Canada to finally succeed with federal legislation.

Building on Romeo's work, Paul Joffe was one of a number of lawyers² in Canada that drafted the new federal Act on the *UN Declaration*. This Bill was then negotiated with federal government representatives.

The new Act was adopted by the Parliament of Canada in June 2021. A crucial purpose of the new Act is to "affirm the Declaration as a universal international human rights instrument with application in Canadian law" (s. 4(a)). This should lead to higher standards in future decisions by Canadian courts.

Since the *UN Declaration* provides for "effective remedies for all infringements" of Indigenous peoples' rights (article 40), the Supreme Court of Canada will need to adjust its rulings accordingly. To date, Canada's highest Court allows infringements of Indigenous peoples' human rights. In addition, the new minimum standard in the *Declaration* is "consultation and cooperation" with Indigenous peoples – and not merely "consultation" as in the past.

As now affirmed in federal legislation, Canada "must, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, take all measures necessary to ensure that the laws of Canada are consistent with the Declaration" (s. 5). This must include a review of existing federal laws. This must also include the preparation of an "action plan" to achieve the objectives of the Declaration (s. 6(1)).

The Act includes 22 preambular paragraphs, which have legal effect. "Colonialism" and "doctrines of "superiority", such as "discovery" and *terra nullius* (lands belonging to no one), are repudiated. Racism and other forms of discrimination are also prohibited.

Justice in terms of Indigenous peoples' human rights will still take time. However, the continuous efforts to ensure respect for these fundamental rights remains a most worthwhile endeavor.

Following is a summary of progress made during the past year.

2. UN PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES (PFII)

The UN Permanent Forum in New York held a virtual session in April 2021, which enabled participation by Indigenous peoples and others from different regions of the world. The theme of the session was "Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16".

Key concerns that were raised and addressed included the following: "the lack of observance and implementation of indigenous peoples' rights, as enshrined in the *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)*, the *American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples."

These are ongoing concerns that the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples seeks to address – especially the two Declarations referred to above. The GCC(EI) and Cree Nation Government are members of the Coalition and involved in its ongoing work.

3. EXPERT MECHANISM ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (EMRIP)

The 14th session of EMRIP took place from 12-16 July 2021. Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the session was

¹ *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, (Private Member's Bill C-641), House of Commons, 2nd sess., 41st Parl., First reading (Introduced by Romeo Saganash on December 12, 2014; defeated by Conservative government at Second reading on May 6, 2015).

² In regard to the Assembly of First Nations, the other lawyers were Chief Wilton Littlechild and Professor Mary Ellen Turpel Lafond. The two other national Indigenous organizations also had their respective legal teams.

virtual. Four regional meetings took place with the purpose of receiving oral comments on EMRIP's draft reports. These documents included the following:

- Draft report on achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with a focus on self-determination
- Draft study and advice on the Rights of the Indigenous Child under the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

A draft report was also prepared on “The Militarization of Indigenous Land: A Human Rights Focus”. Paul Joffe contributed to the contents of this crucial report.³

4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

In March 2022 – in a virtual Conference on Sustainable Development organized by the University of Waterloo – EMRIP Expert Member UBC Professor Sheryl Lightfoot and Paul Joffe participated in a dialogue relating to sustainable development. The crucial issue of climate change was also discussed. Questions were also posed online by individuals in the virtual audience.

In addition, in the Assembly of First Nations Virtual Forum – “Defining a First Nations Pathway to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” – Jennifer Preston (Quakers) and Paul Joffe made a presentation. A series of questions were then posed by the moderator of the event.

³ EMRIP member, Professor Sheryl Lightfoot (University of British Columbia), played a lead role in preparing a draft for this report.

5. ACTIVITIES OF THE COALITION FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The GCCEI/Cree Nation Government continues to be an active member of the Coalition. During the past year, Coalition members regularly engaged in conference calls with the Government of Canada – particularly with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNA).

The Coalition had a year-long project on the relationship between the *UN Declaration* and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. Part of the project was a series of virtual meetings with experts to gather information leading up to an expert symposium. Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty was one of the experts presenting on Cree work on sustainable development.

The ongoing Coalition meetings enable member organizations and Indigenous nations to participate on an ongoing basis, as well as draft press releases, joint statements and participate in meetings around advancing the *UN Declaration* and the new federal legislation on this key international human rights instrument, especially the federal legislation on Bill C-15. Such resources continue to be added to the Coalition's website at: www.declarationcoalition.ca

Photo: Katherine Dehm

As highlighted in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *What We Have Learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation*, 2015, at 3 (Principles of Reconciliation):

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada believes that in order for Canada to flourish in the twenty-first century, reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canada must be based on the following principles.

[Principle] 1

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is the framework for reconciliation at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.

Federal Legislation That Refers to UN Declaration*

To date, there are 10 federal laws that refer to the *UN Declaration*:

See, generally, *An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, S.C. 2021, c. 14, where measures to implement the UN Declaration are referred to repeatedly in the preamble and operative provisions.

In regard to climate change, see *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*, S.C. 2021, c. 22, preamble:

Whereas the Government of Canada is committed to advancing the recognition-of-rights approach reflected in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* and in the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** and to strengthening its collaboration with the Indigenous peoples of Canada with respect to measures for mitigating climate change, including by taking **Indigenous knowledge** into account when carrying out the purposes of this Act;

And s. 9(5):

9(5) When establishing a greenhouse gas emissions reduction plan, the **Minister must take into account the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, the submissions provided by the advisory body under section 13 and advice it provided in its report under subsection 22(1), and any other considerations that are relevant to the purpose of this Act.

See also “Whereas the Government of Canada is committed to implementing the **United Nations Declaration** on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” in the following laws:

Canadian Energy Regulator Act, S.C. 2019, c. 28, s. 10, preamble

An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act, S.C. 2019, c. 28, s. 1, preamble

First Nations Land Management Act, as amended in *Budget Implementation Act*, 2018, No. 2 (S.C. 2018, c. 27), s. 352, preamble

An Act respecting Indigenous Languages, S.C. 2019, c. 23, preamble

An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families, S.C. 2019, c. 24, preamble

Department for Women and Gender Equality Act, S.C. 2018, c. 27, s. 661, preamble

Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Act, S.C. 2019, c. 29, s. 337, preamble

Department of Indigenous Services Act, S.C. 2019, c. 29, s. 336, preamble

An Act to amend the Indian Act in response to the Superior Court of Quebec decision in Descheneaux c. Canada (Procureur général), S.C. 2017, c. 25, preamble

*From “Legislation in Canada Referring to UN Declaration” by Paul Joffe (March 6, 2022).



Photo: Katherine Dehm

PROTECTED AREA NETWORK



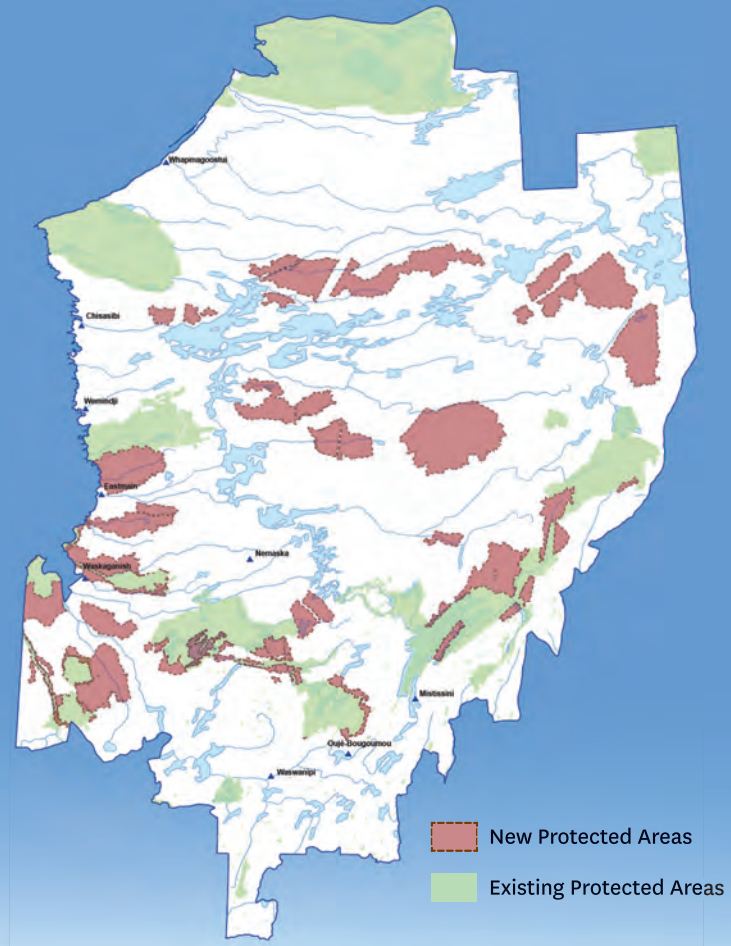
Protected areas are lands and waters that are recognized, dedicated and managed, in law or through other effective means, to ensure the long-term protection and maintenance of natural and cultural values. Most protected areas are places where no industrial development (commercial forestry, mining, and hydroelectricity) is allowed.

Crees can practice their traditional activities in protected areas because Cree rights to hunt, fish and trap come above all protected areas laws. The two most common types of protected areas found in Eeyou Istchee are Quebec National Parks and Biodiversity Reserves.

OVER
20%

of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay area officially set aside for protection bringing the total of the future Protected Area Network to approximately 100,000 km²

THE 39,000 KM² OF NEW TERRITORIES RECENTLY ADDED TO THE PROTECTED AREA NETWORK IS ROUGHLY EQUIVALENT TO THE ENTIRE COUNTRY OF SWITZERLAND.



CREE-QUEBEC
DESIGNATION OF

23

new 'Territories Reserved for
Protected Area Purposes'



On May 21, 2021 the Government of Quebec and the Cree Nation Government acknowledged the official designation of the 23 new Territories Reserved for Protected Area Purposes (TRPAP), announced in 2020. This expansion of legal protection within the James Bay region was an important milestone, creating new opportunities to preserve biodiversity and the Cree way of life within Eeyou Istchee. The designation of these new protected areas increases the proportion of protected areas in the territory from 15% to 23%.



**OFFICIALLY RECORDED IN
THE QUÉBEC REGISTER OF
PROTECTED AREAS**



**KNOWLEDGE
ACQUISITION AND
PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS**



**DRAFTING OF
CONSERVATION PLANS**

HIGHLIGHTS:

1. The 23 TRPAPs in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay region are officially recorded in the Québec Register of Protected Areas as of March 31, 2021. Their official designation allows for the protection of the territories concerned, in particular by prohibiting any natural resource exploitation activities (forestry, mining, and hydro activities).
2. Next steps include:
 - a. knowledge acquisition and public consultations to finalize the boundaries of the protected areas;
 - b. the drafting of conservation plans;
 - c. an assessment of the impacts on the natural and social environments stemming from the obligations under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement.
 - d. The ultimate objective is for the TRPAPs to be legally designated as Biodiversity Reserves. Some of these areas could also be designated as Quebec National Parks.
3. In particular, the realization of these protected areas helps to achieve the joint objectives of the parties as agreed to in the 2015 agreement to resolve the Baril-Moses forestry dispute.
4. Inspired by the Paix des Braves Agreement and made possible through the collaboration of the Government of Québec and the Cree Nation Government, the Grande Alliance represents a Nation-to-Nation partnership vision that will, over a period of 30 years, support infrastructure development in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay region, better connect communities, and protect the territory.



20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE PAIX DES BRAVES

On February 7, 2022, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee), in collaboration with the Government of Quebec celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Signing of the Paix des Braves. The day featured video messages from Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty, Québec Premier François Legault, Former Grand Chief Dr. Ted Moses, and Ian Lafrenière, Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs. These video statements can be viewed on our website: www.cngov.ca/20th-anniversary-of-the-signing-of-the-paix-des-braves/

The 20th Anniversary of La Paix des Braves marks an important milestone in our relationship with the Government of Québec. The Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Between the Cree Nation and the Government of Québec signed on February 7, 2002 marked a turning point in the relationship between the Crees and the Government of Québec.

"In the past 20 years we've achieved much. It is my goal, to take on the opportunity to work with Premier Legault and evaluate the success that this Agreement has created for our two nations. It is also my goal to sit down and evaluate with him in mutual collaboration the next 30 years and to see where this Agreement will take both of our Nations.

It is important to extend a hand in the spirit of collaboration and respect for the Cree and Québec nations to mark a historic new path into the future."

- GRAND CHIEF MANDY GULL-MASTY

"Exactly 20 years ago, two courageous men took up a bet to pool their shared strengths to enhance relations between their peoples. Former Premier Bernard Landry and Former Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees Ted Moses are pioneers.

Clearly focused on the future, they signed La Paix des Braves agreement, which to this day epitomizes a win-win partnership with the Indigenous nations. The agreement has facilitated the advancement of several questions. It has created long-term prosperity for our peoples. Broader autonomy has enabled the Cree Nation to pursue rapid development."

-QUÉBEC PREMIER FRANÇOIS LEGAULT

"On the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of La Paix des Braves I wish to acknowledge the vision, willingness, and courage of the late Bernard Landry to walk with me to work in partnership with Québec to share the land and define the collaborative ways to ensure the continued development of all our peoples.

Since the signing of La Paix des Braves we have seen many benefits coming towards the Cree Nation, such as the development of our communities, which has generated jobs and contracts and now allows us to enjoy the long-term benefits of the Paix des Braves."

-FORMER GRAND CHIEF DR. TED MOSES

"La Paix des Braves is of considerable historic importance since it initiated an unprecedented collaboration between the Québec government and an indigenous nation on the strength of its unity and language and proud of its culture that transmits the ancestral traditions attached to the vast James Bay Territory.

By establishing genuine Nation-to-Nation relations and ensuring that future generations will not experience the discord of the past, the Québec government and the Cree Nation have created the starting point of enhanced cohabitation that hinges on mutual respect and trust."

-MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS IAN LAFRENIÈRE



Photo: Katherine Dehm

HONOURING THE WAY OF OUR ANCESTORS

Due to the concerning dwindling numbers of the Leaf River caribou herd, it was apparent to all parties involved that a harvesting agreement was necessary to manage the herd's wellbeing.

A Traditional Mutual Understanding was established between the Cree Nation and the Innu Nation of Quebec. The MAAMUU NISITUHTIMUWIN / MATINUEU-MASHINAIKAN ATIKU E UAUINAKANIT which translates to "mutual understanding" was established and the virtual signing ceremony took place on January 24, 2022.

In February 2002, a group of Innu hunters were hosted by John Pachano on his trapline off the Trans-Taiga Road. The Innu hunted alongside their Cree cousins harvesting 300 caribou (as agreed annually) to bring back to the Innu Nation.

This agreement is the result of years of collaboration, delegation and cooperation between the Cree and Innu Nations and is a tribute to the values of sharing and respect maintained since the time of our ancestors. Also known as the Traditional Mutual Understanding on the Harvest of Caribou in Cree Traditional Territory of Chisasibi, Eeyou Istchee between the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee and the Innu Nation in Quebec, this Understanding sets a precedent of mutual respect between the Cree of Eeyou Istchee and our Innu brothers and sisters.

Learn more about the agreement on our website: www.cngov.ca/honouring-the-ways-of-our-ancestors/





Photo: Katherine Dehm

THE REPATRIATION OF THE GUNNER HOOD AND CARIBOU JACKET

The existence of the beaded Gunner hood came to the attention of the Crees almost ten years ago. It was brought to the Anischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute (ACCI) in 2016 on loan from the Lachine Museum and to Mistissini where it was reunited with the Gunner family. After negotiations and discussions back and forth with the Mayor of Montreal Valerie Plante, the decision was made that the hood should be returned permanently to the Cree people. Although the process was slowed by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the repatriation process was finalized in February 2021 and the hood arrived home to Cree territory later that summer.

The hand-painted Caribou hide jacket was repatriated from the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery in Bristol, England. With the British government's approval, the Crees signed a repatriation agreement with the Bristol City Council. After a 2 to 3-year process, the jacket was shipped to Canada and received by ACCI in the fall of 2021.

Anischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute is hoping to host an unveiling ceremony in the near future to re-introduce the Cree Nation with these valued links to our past.



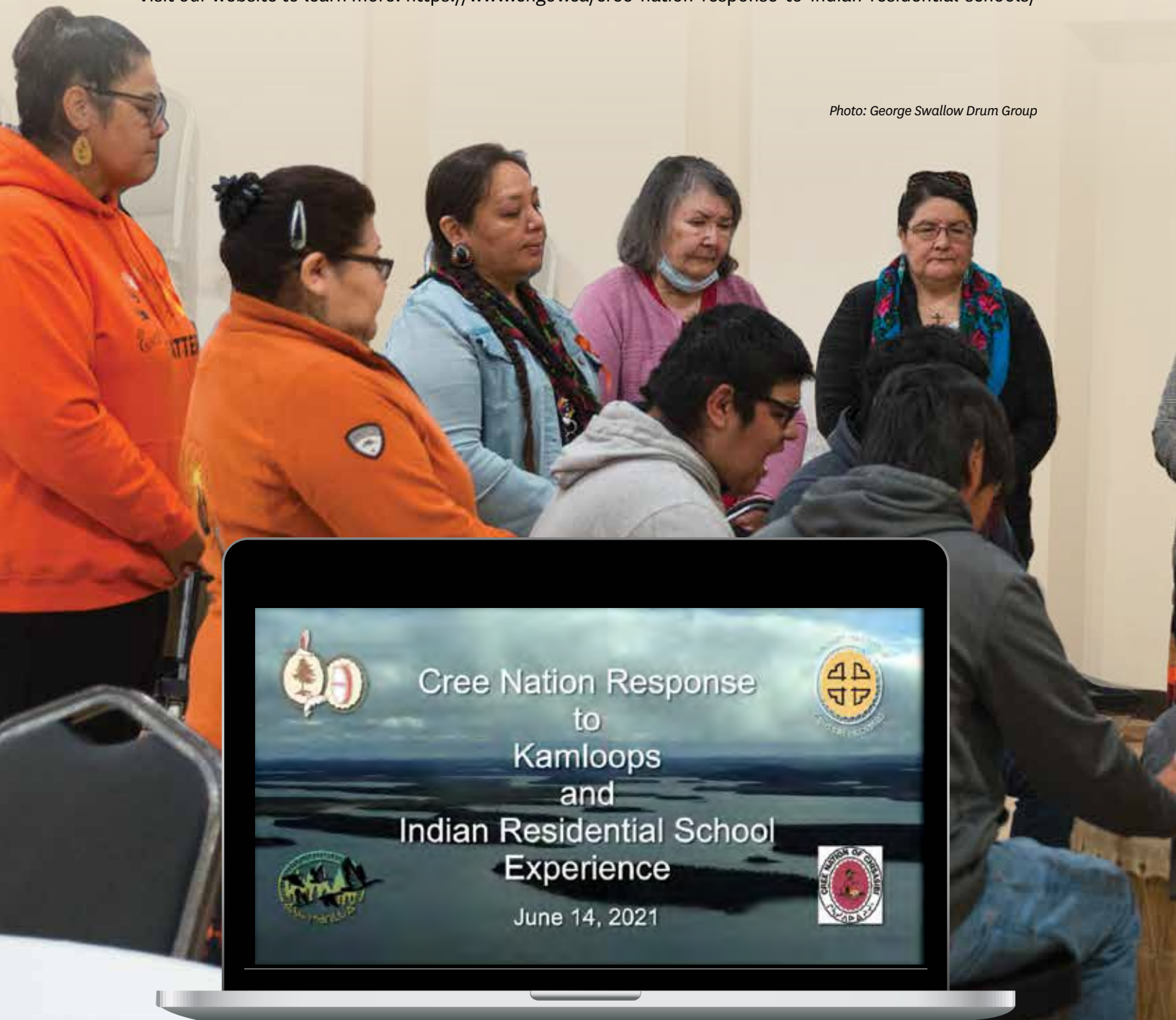


CREE NATION RESPONSE TO INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

On June 14, 2021, leadership from the Cree Board of Health, Cree School Board, Cree Nation of Chisasibi and Cree Nation Government presented the Cree position on the legacy of residential schools following the grim discovery of 215 unmarked graves on the grounds of the Kamloops Residential School. The demands for action presented were aimed at governments and organizations to support the healing of the deep scars caused by the impacts of residential schools on our many relatives and fellow community members who are survivors. Several actions for government and religious authorities focused on the following themes: Recognition of Indigenous Realities, Collaboration in Healing, and Health. The Cree Nation leadership also committed to provide support to the local groups that will be leading the investigation of the 2 former Indian Residential Schools grounds in Eeyou Istchee.

Visit our website to learn more: <https://www.cngov.ca/cree-nation-response-to-indian-residential-schools/>

Photo: George Swallow Drum Group





Left to right: George E. Pachano, Elder Clara Napash, Chief Daisy House, former Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum, CSB Chair Dr. Sarah Pashagumskum, CBHSSJB Chair Bertie Wapachee.



Former Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum speaking at event.



***Please note if you or someone around you is experiencing pain or distress as a result of residential school experience, the Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line is available 24-hours a day for anyone who needs to talk: 1-800-721-0066**

Photo credit: Gerardo Salazar

THE ROLE OF THE CREE NATION OF EYYOU ISTCHEE IN PROMOTING THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



Photo credit: Don Alexander



GOVERNMENT OF CANADA ENDORSES AGAIN THE UN DECLARATION

Federal Government under leadership of Justin Trudeau announces that it “is now a full supporter of the Declaration, without qualification” (May 2016) and makes a formal announcement at the United Nations (May 2017).

UN WORKING GROUP ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS (WGIP)

Representatives of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) participated in discussions on a possible UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

PARLIAMENT MOTION TO “FULLY IMPLEMENT” THE UN DECLARATION

Canada’s House of Commons adopts motion calling on Parliament to “fully implement” the standards in the *UN Declaration*.

BILL C-641, UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ACT

MP Romeo Saganash introduces Private Member’s Bill C-641 on December 12, 2014 and the Bill is defeated by Conservative government at 2nd reading on May 6, 2015.

|1983-2007| |2007| |2008| |2010| |2014-2015| |2016| |2016-2017|

UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

After more than two decades of negotiations, the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was adopted by the UN General Assembly on September 13, 2007. Canada was one of only four countries that refused to support *UN Declaration*.

CANADA ENDORSES THE UN DECLARATION

After intensive meetings with and lobbying by the Grand Council of the Crees and other Indigenous peoples’ organizations and civil society organizations, Canada endorses the *UN Declaration* without agreeing to implement it.

BILL C-262 TO IMPLEMENT THE UN DECLARATION

Introduced by Romeo Saganash, Bill C-262 aims to set up a collaborative process through which the federal government would work with Indigenous peoples to identify those federal laws that need to be reformed to fulfill the requirements of the Declaration.



The Cree Nation began its involvement in the international arena in the early 1980's under the leadership of Grand Chief Dr. Billy Diamond. This work was undertaken with a view to raising the standards related to Indigenous rights internationally in order to protect Cree and Indigenous rights.

This initiative was furthered when the Grand Council of the Crees appointed Dr. Ted Moses to take on the role of Ambassador to the United Nations. During the time that he was in this role, the Cree Nation secured recognition by the United Nations as a registered NGO, and serious work was undertaken, together with other international Indigenous leaders, to draft and promote the adoption of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

For many decades, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and the Cree Nation Government have been actively involved in negotiating the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* at the United Nations and ensuring its implementation in Canada.



HOUSE OF COMMONS AND SENATE COMMITTEES

Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum urges passage of Bill C-262 at the House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs (July 2017) and the Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples (May 2018).

CANADA ANNOUNCES PLAN FOR THE UN DECLARATION

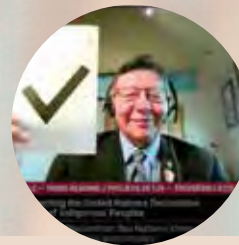
Justice Minister David Lametti and Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Carolyn Bennett announce the government's plan to bringing forward new government legislation based closely on C-262.

BILL C-15, AN ACT RESPECTING UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

On December 3rd, Justice Minister and Attorney General David Lametti tables Bill C-15 that, if passed into law, would create the legal framework for the federal implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

ADOPTION OF BILL C-15, AN ACT RESPECTING UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

On June 16, Parliament of Canada passes *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Bill C-15) and *An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* receives Royal Assent and becomes law on June 21st.



| 2017-2018 | | 2018-2019 | | 2019 | | 2020 | | 2020 | | 2021 | | 2021 |

BILL C-262 IS DEFEATED

Although Bill C-262 was debated in Parliament and passed in the House of Commons in 2018, passage into law ultimately failed. The Bill dies on June 21, 2019, National Indigenous Peoples Day.



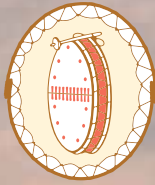
PROMOTION OF UN DECLARATION LEGISLATION

Throughout 2020, the Cree Nation works closely with the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples to conduct further research, lobbying and promotion of the passage of legislation to implement the *UN Declaration*.

HOUSE OF COMMONS AND SENATE COMMITTEES

Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum addresses House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs on the importance of Bill C-15 (March 2021) and gives testimony to Senate Committee on Aboriginal peoples (May 2021).





Cree Nation Government
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Photo: Katherine Dehm



FINANCE AND TREASURY

Message from the Treasurer
Matthew Swallow



THE 2021-2022 FISCAL YEAR WAS A CHALLENGING PERIOD FOR ALL CREE ENTITIES AS WE HAD TO CONTINUE TO FIND NEW AND INNOVATIVE WAYS TO ADMINISTER OUR AFFAIRS, NOT UNLIKE MOST OF THE WORLD. I BELIEVE WE HAVE MANAGED TO CONTINUE TO MOVE FORWARD DURING THIS PERIOD DESPITE THE SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES WE HAVE ALL FACED AS A RESULT OF THE PANDEMIC.



12 EMPLOYEES

Over the past year the Cree Nation Government continued its efforts with the Government of Canada to streamline funding arrangements to respect the Cree Canada Governance Agreement and financial reporting mechanisms inherent with the Cree Constitution.

We have come along way in having Canada and Quebec recognize our rights of self-government and how we must manage our affairs consistent with those rights and responsibilities. These efforts are becoming ever more important as we move towards the last phase of the implementation of the Cree Canada New Relationship Agreement and the start of renewal discussions which will commence in 2026.

We continue to work with all communities and the various Cree entities to ensure the Cree Nation meets all reporting obligations to both Canada and Quebec pursuant to the New Relationship Agreements signed separately with Canada and Quebec.

Fiscal year 2021-2022 continued to be particularly challenging because of the pandemic. The Cree Nation Government was able to secure \$11.7M for the communities to address urgent challenges as part of the response to COVID-19 issues. In addition, resources were provided to the Cree School Board and Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay.

In addition to the above funding, the Cree Nation Government also secured additional COVID-19 funding for the Eeyou Eenou Police Force, Childcare and housing initiatives.

We are also pleased to announce that we have also concluded negotiations regarding the renewal of the Cree-Quebec Childcare Agreement for a seven-year period (2019-2026) with projected funding for the period of \$139M.

Housing has always been a Cree priority and this year, after many years of negotiations, the Cree Nation was finally able to secure funding in the amount of \$200M to support the social housing requirements of the Cree Nation Housing Strategy. Further negotiations are continuing with respect to additional capital requirements and funding to support long-term operation and maintenance costs.

The leadership of all entities and all communities have worked diligently to address the needs of the population during the pandemic and our job in finance was to ensure that resources were available and that we continued to function in the challenging environment we were all faced and continue to address at present.

New challenges await us all and we will continue to find innovative ways to address evolving needs, particularly the challenging economic environment we find ourselves in at present.

The resources now under the administration of the Cree Nation Government and other Cree entities entrusted with the implementation of the JBNQA are significant. For the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the Board/Council of the Cree Nation Government allocated \$397,291,347 for various programs, services, and responsibilities either under its administration or under the administration of other entities established pursuant to the JBNQA and related entities. These funds are exclusive of the budgets for the Cree School Board and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay as well as several other Cree entities.

As a final note, I wish to express my continuing appreciation to all staff of the Department of Finance and Treasury who devote their time and extensive efforts to ensuring that we can meet the significant responsibilities entrusted to us by our leadership. Your commitment and efforts are very much appreciated.

Sincerely,
Matthew Swallow, Treasurer

AN OVERVIEW OF CERTAIN OF THE FUNDING FLOWING THROUGH THE CREE NATION GOVERNMENT INCLUDING FUNDS ALLOCATED BY THE CREE NATION TRUST AND EENOU-EEYOU LIMITED PARTNERSHIP

The Cree Nation Government and the Eenou-Eeyou Limited Partnership act as Recipients of Funding pursuant to many agreements with Canada and Quebec. Pursuant to the New Relationship Agreement with Canada all payments, to the exclusion of the Community Specific Agreements, are made to the Cree Nation Trust which provides annual disbursements to the Cree Nation Government which is entrusted with the implementation of the Assumed Obligations and Responsibilities. The Cree Nation Government has also negotiated many funding agreements for the Cree Nation where the funding flows to the Cree Nation Government, which then reallocates the funds in favor of the local communities and/or in conformity with Agreement guidelines.

The following summarizes certain of these arrangements for 2021-2022:

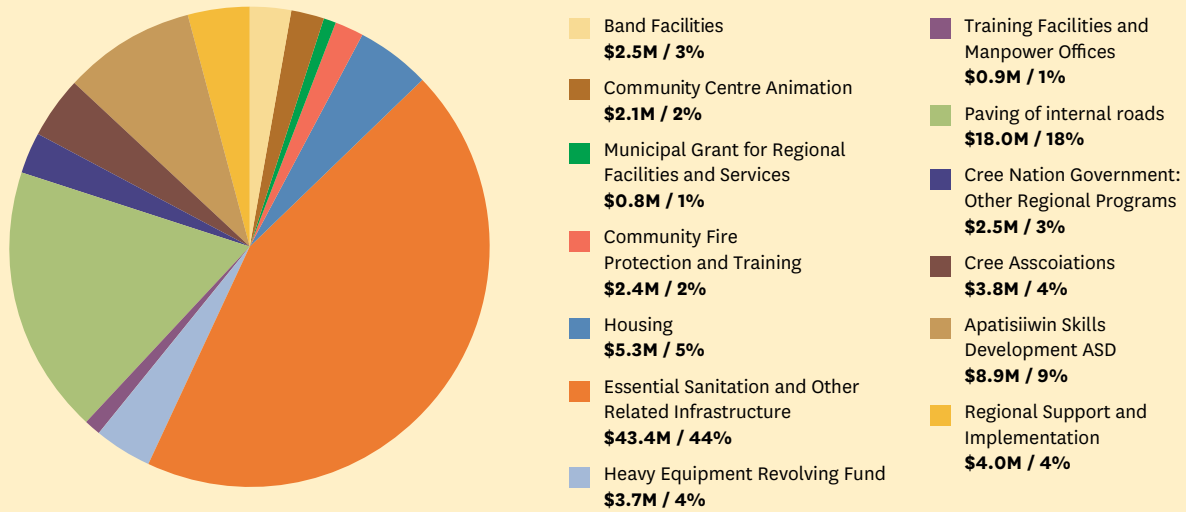
Table 1.

Government of Canada	
Cree Act Operation and Maintenance Funding	\$111,499,051
Federal Capital A Base Funding	\$20,891,093
Agreement respecting the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Program and Related Services	\$4,868,306
Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program Funding Agreement	\$4,751,927
Canada / Quebec Joint Funding	
Policing Services Agreement	\$27,093,794
Government Of Quebec	
Agreement Concerning a New Relationship - Annual Payment	\$103,522,521
Agreement Concerning the Administration of Justice	\$21,174,655
Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee Territory	\$5,000,000
Cree Nation Trust	
Implementation of Assumed Obligations and Responsibilities	\$98,490,000

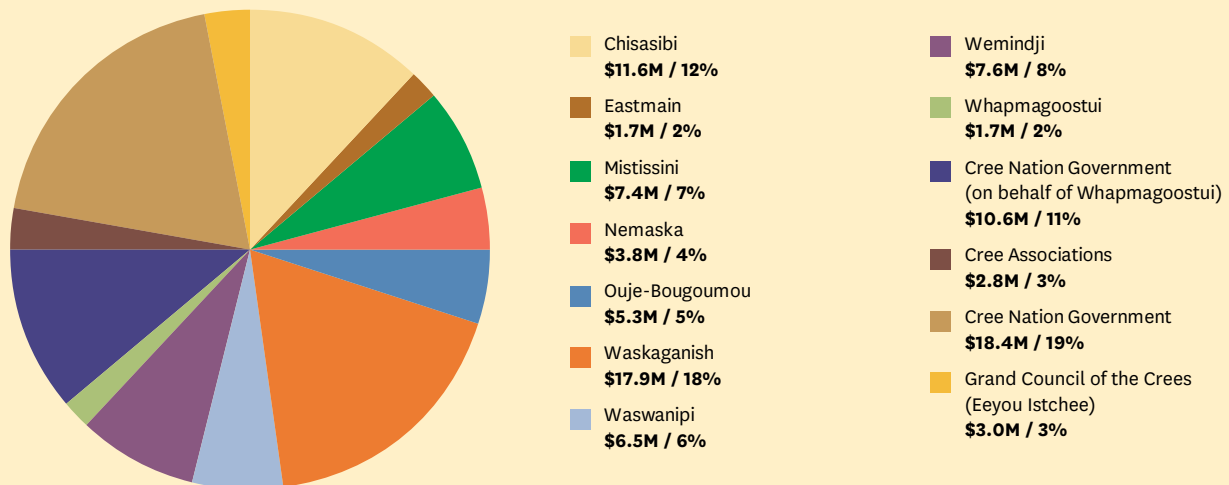
In addition to the funding described above, both Canada and Quebec provide funding in relation to Cree Education to the Cree School Board and Quebec provides funding for Health and Social Services to the Cree Board of Health and Social Services. Many other program funding arrangements exist between Canada, Quebec and the Crees to implement other special and regular program funding arrangements.

The following series of graphs provides a general overview of the allocation of certain funding arrangements and provides information as to the distribution amongst the various communities and other Cree Entities:

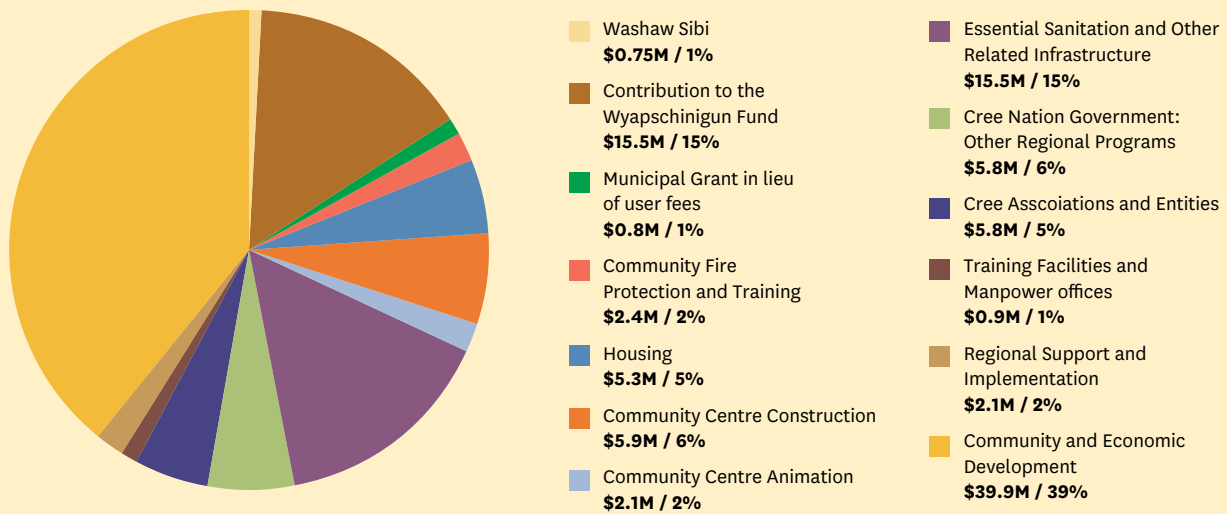
Graph 1. New Relationship Agreement CANADA Funding Allocation 2021-22 by Program
\$98.4 Million



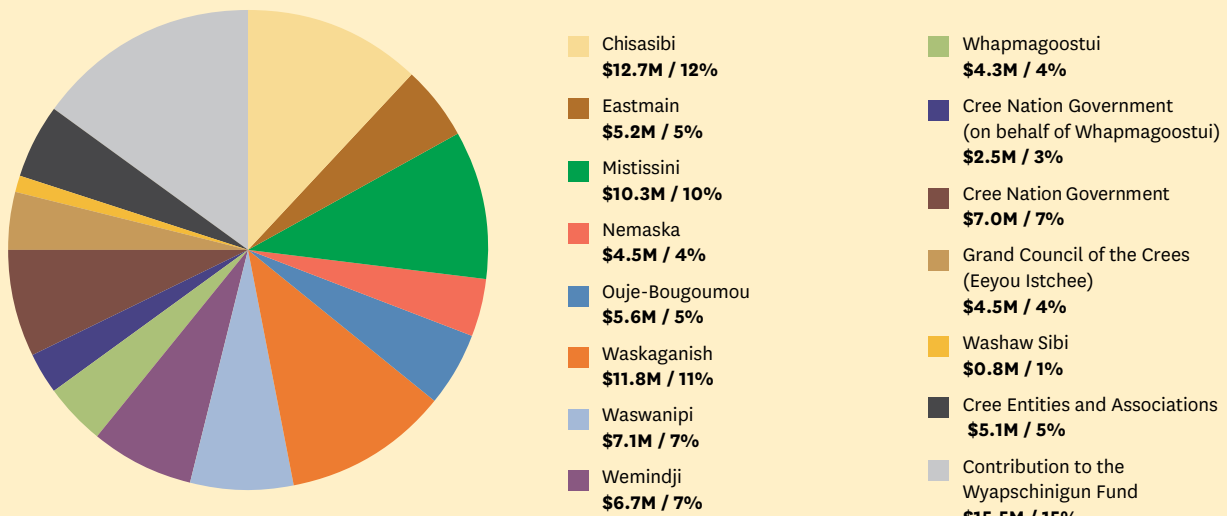
Graph 2. New Relationship Agreement CANADA Funding Allocation 2021-22
\$98.4 Million



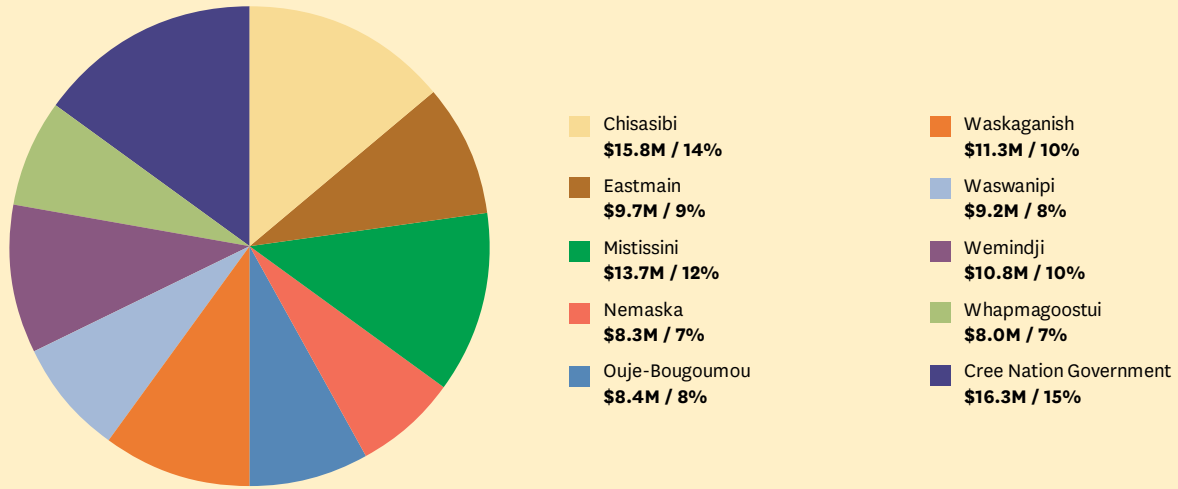
Graph 3. New Relationship Agreement QUEBEC Funding Allocation 2021-22 by Program
\$103.5 Million



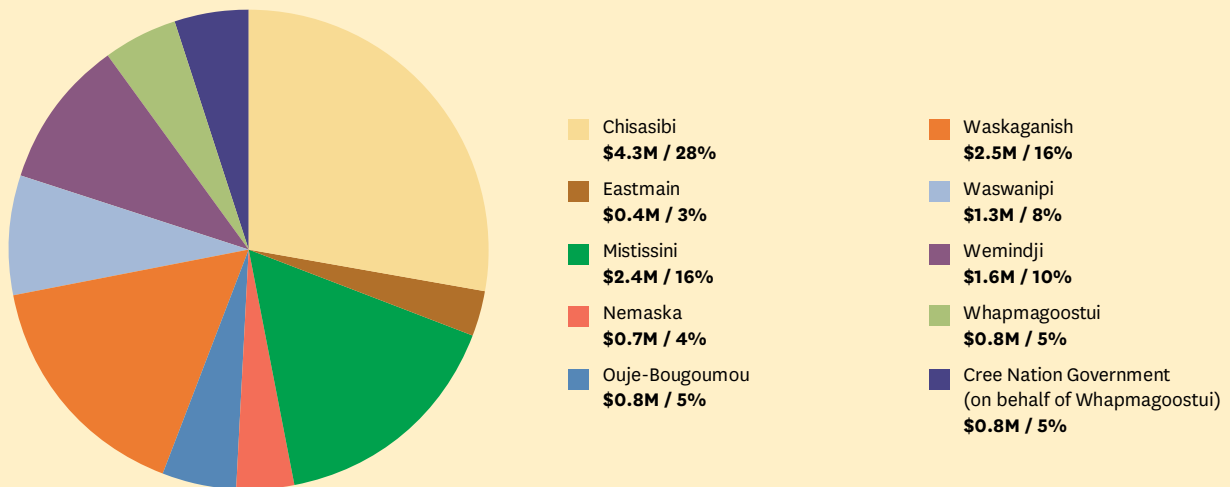
Graph 4. New Relationship Agreement QUEBEC Funding Allocation 2021-22
\$103.5 Million



Graph 5. O&M Funding Allocation 2021-22
\$111.5 Million



Graph 6. Capital Funding Allocation 2021-22
\$20.9 Million





HUMAN RESOURCES

*Message from the Director
Nancy Bobbish*



WELCOME TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT. I AM PROUD TO PRESENT AN OVERVIEW OF HR'S HIGHLIGHTS THIS PAST FISCAL YEAR AND SHARE THE EXCELLENT PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS OUR STRATEGIC PLAN.



Over the past year we have talked about struggles, challenges, opportunities, and perseverance. But, as we reflect on this past year, it seems appropriate to once again acknowledge what a year it has been. The HR team has shown great dedication, drive and determination. They are talent-seekers, advocates, coaches, resource experts, mediators, negotiators, out-of-the-box thinkers, strategists, and change managers. All of HR is committed to make working lives easier and better by delivering an exceptional employee experience to our colleagues.

The year 2021-2022 was another unprecedented year for our government and for the people who support the services in our communities, as we continued to manage through the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our human resource efforts related mainly on pandemic response, monitoring and planning. Moreover, we focused on a full spectrum of

activities, such as: introduction of new employee benefits, development of new performance assessment tools, development of a new AEC Police Technology / Special Constables Program, and most importantly, the implementation of a new payroll/HR system. What the HR and Finance employees were able to accomplish is remarkable. It brings positive change to the entire employee life cycle. I am particularly proud of the work delivered by the human resources and the payroll team.

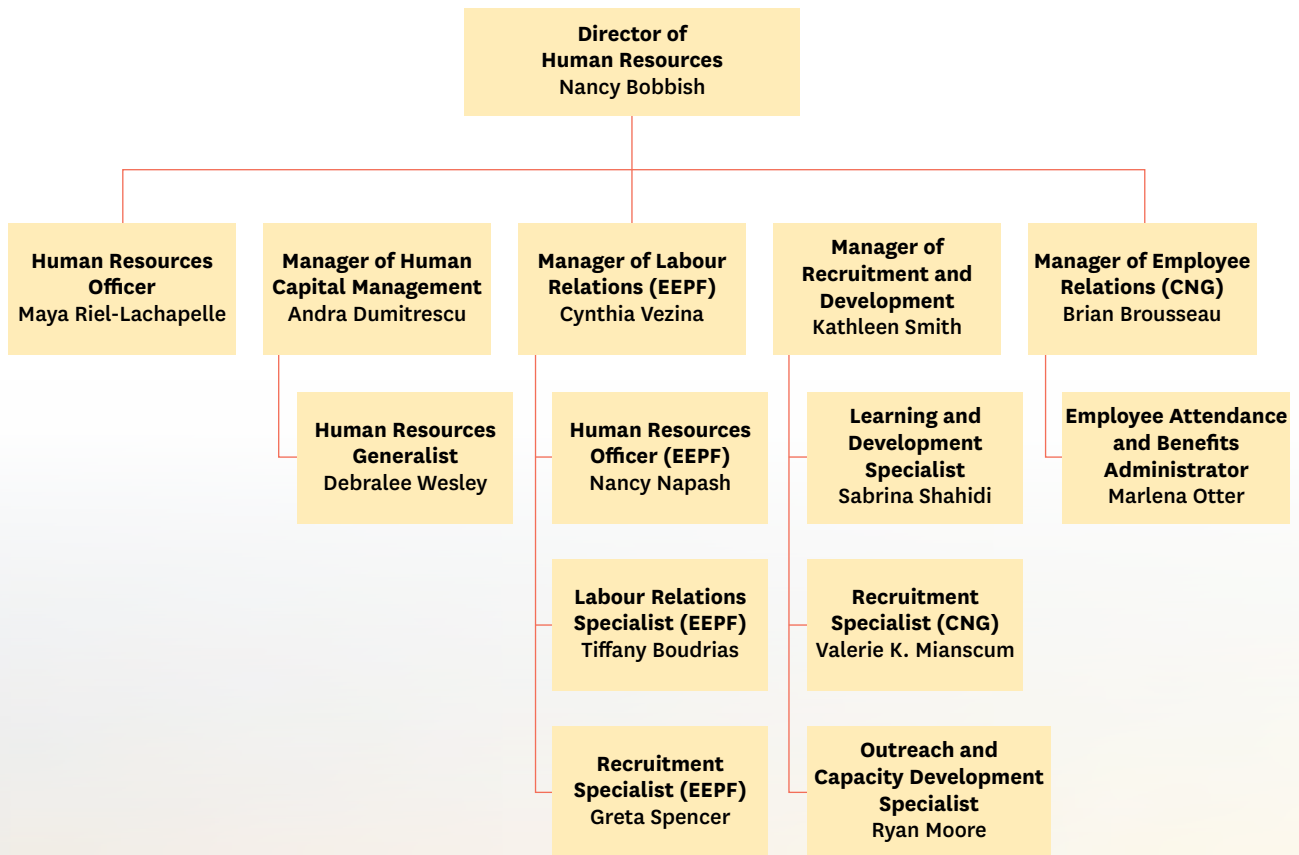
The HR transformation journey will continue well into the next year and beyond. The upcoming year will be a focus on the changing nature of the workplace, including a culture shift into a more flexible working environment. While we continue navigating through change, we promise to proactively understand and plan for the needs of the Cree Nation Government's workforce, while always listening to concerns and questions. We strive to address every question, provide opportunity for direct input, and keep service decisions in mind. Your goals are our goals.

I invite everyone to celebrate our successes and recognize the contributions of our fellow team members and I look forward to the new heights our HR team will reach in 2022-2023.

*Nancy Bobbish
Director of Human Resources*



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES PER DEPARTMENT

31 
APATISIIWIN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

2 
EXECUTIVE OFFICE

12 
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

34 
GOVERNMENT SUPPORT SERVICES

5 
GRAND COUNCIL


14 
HUMAN RESOURCES

53 
CAPITAL WORKS AND SERVICES

3 
SENIOR MANAGEMENT

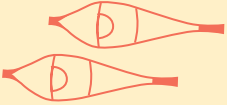


29 
ENVIRONMENT AND
REMEDIAL WORKS

79 
JUSTICE AND
CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

12 
FINANCE AND TREASURY

10 
FORESTRY

11 
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT

11 
COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY

80 | **30** 
non-civilians | civilians
EEOU EENUU POLICE FORCE

  **416**
TOTAL EMPLOYEES

MANPOWER AND RECRUITMENT

For 2021-2022, the Cree Nation Government had 416 approved civilian and non-civilian positions. See figure 1 for the average number of active employees during the reference year.

The Human Resources department has hired 55 civilian employees. We filled 44 vacant permanent positions and 11

Table 1. Number of employees per department

Department	Number of Employees
Apatisiwin Skills Development	31
Capital Works and Services	53
Child and Family Services	12
Commerce and Industry	11
Eeyou Eenou Police Force	80 non-civilians and 30 civilians
Environment and Remedial Works	29
Finance and Treasury	12
Forestry	10
Government Support Services	34
Grand Council	5
Human Resources	14
Justice and Correctional Services	79
Social and Cultural Development	11

contractual positions of a duration of six months or more (see Figure 2).

We hired patrol officers in different communities throughout Eeyou Istchee: we conducted 20 interviews and hired 19 contractual officers.

Civilian employees are distributed across a vast geography as follows: Amos (1), Chisasibi (55), Eastmain (11), Mistissini (63), Montreal (51), Nemaska (35), Ottawa (12), Ouje-Bougoumou (15), Quebec (2), Val d'Or (21), Waskaganish (23), Waswanipi (21), Wemindji (18) and Whapmagoostui (9) (see Figure 3).

EEPF had 106 approved positions which are distributed between the nine communities, our Officers are primarily based in Chisasibi (27), Mistissini (18), Waskaganish (17), and in Eastmain (6), Nemaska (6), Ouje-Bougoumou (6), Waswanipi (10), Wemindji (7), Whapmagoostui (7) and Amos (2) (see Figure 4).

From the 337 civilian employees, 51 represent male employees and 122 represent female employees in Support/ Technical positions. Professional & 1st Level Manager roles are held by 47 male employees and 76 female employees. Senior Professional & 2nd Level Manager roles are held by 30 male employees and 11 female employees (see Figure 5).

As for our Officers, 70 represents male employees and 10 represents female employees (see Figure 6).

The majority of civilian, permanent employees are Cree Beneficiaries (257). The remainder of employees comprise First Nation (19) and Non-First Nation (61) (see Figure 7).

The majority of non-civilian permanent and contractual Officers are Cree beneficiaries (51), followed by Non-First Nations (22), and First Nations (7) (see Figure 8).

Figure 1. Number of Active Employees per Department (Civilian and Non-Civilian Employees - Total of 416)

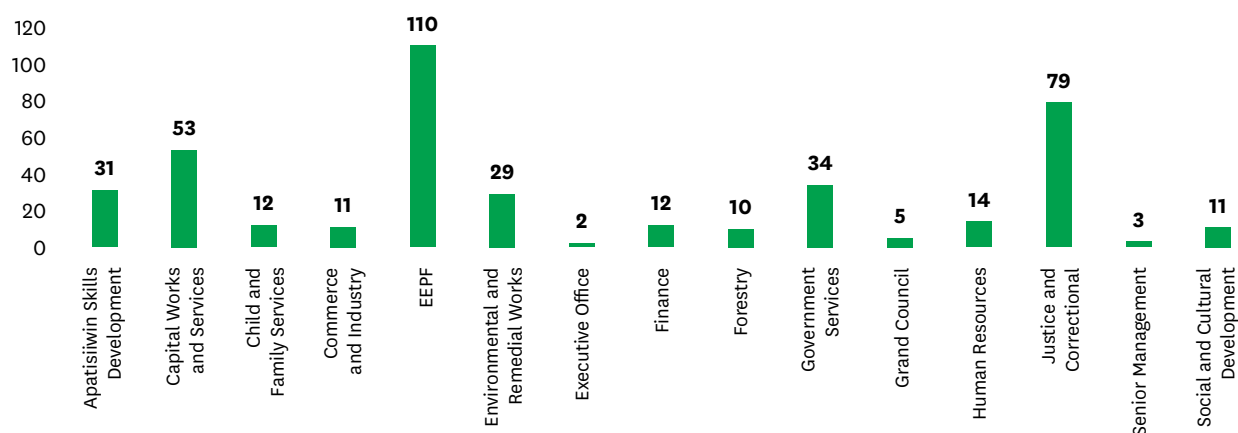


Figure 2. New Civilian Employees Recruited

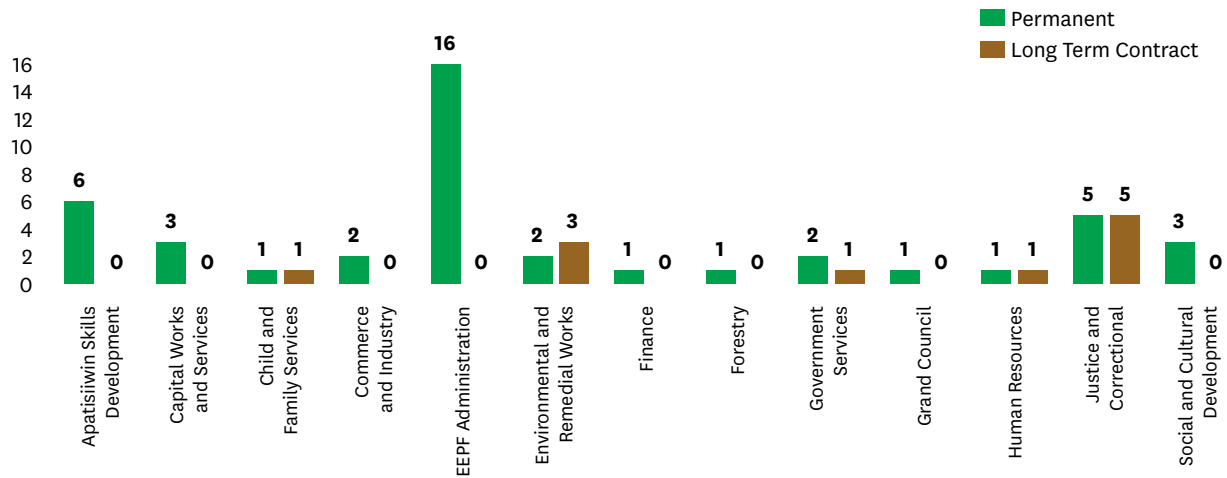


Figure 3. Distribution of Employees by Community/Location of work (Civilian employees)

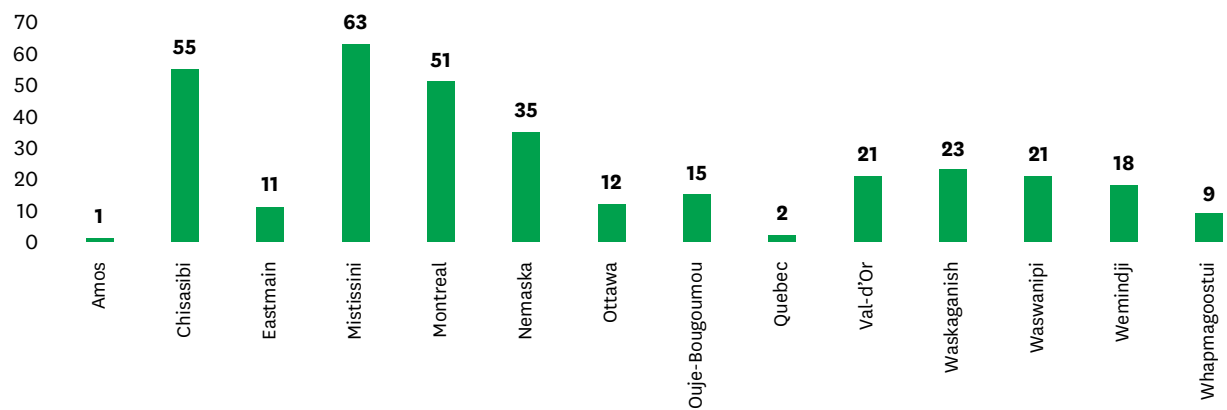


Figure 4. EEPF - Distribution of Non-Civilians per Community

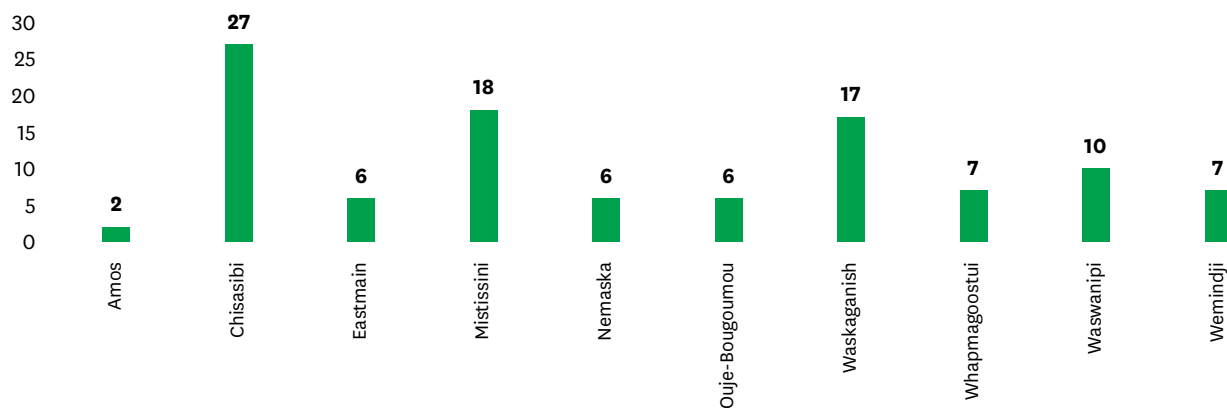


Figure 5. Gender Distribution (Civilian Employees)

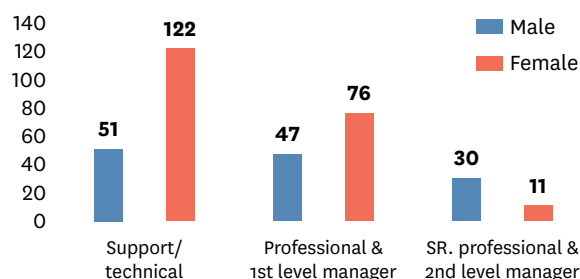


Figure 6. EEPF - Gender Distribution (Non-Civilian Employees)

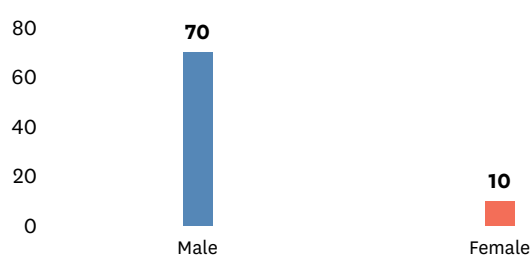


Figure 7. Ethnic Demographic (Civilian Employees)

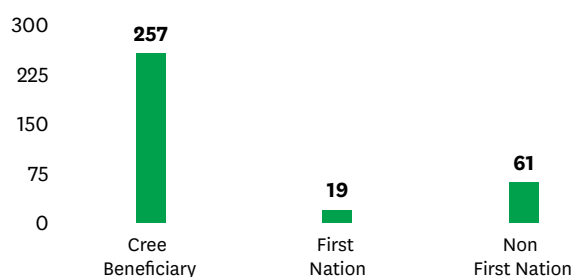
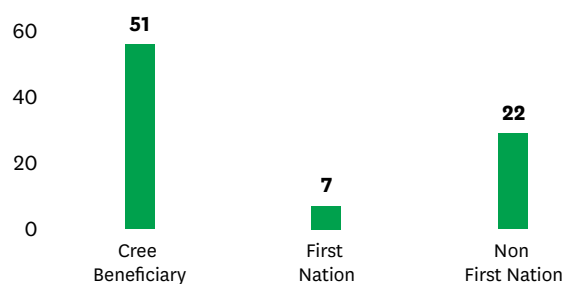


Figure 8. EEPF - Ethnic Demographic (Non-Civilian Permanent and Contractual Officers)



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Our vision is to empower employees to realize their full potential through job-related and meaningful training opportunities, professional development and career planning.

The Cree Nation Government offers various training and development opportunities to employees at all levels of the organization. HR is working on revisiting our training and development policy and has met with all the directors to identify training needs that would enable us to work towards building capacity, skills, excellence, and professionalism of employees and allow them to contribute effectively and creatively to our government's mission.

EEPF HR Strategy and Initiatives

Currently, the region of Quebec is facing a major labour shortage of Police Officers, which is directly affecting the Eeyou Eenou Police Force with the recruitment and retention of Officers. We had 44 resignations, of which 39 were contractual employees, and 5 were permanent employees. Our contractual officers leave EEPF as other police forces hire them closer to their hometowns.

We have been working to find innovative solutions and strategies to address the workforce shortage.

- We developed and implemented an Employee Referral Program (ERP) that allows employees to recommend qualified individuals from their network for possible recruitment and receive monetary incentives for their referral.
- We offer a recruitment and retention bonus to new and current police officers.
- We organized and delivered 10 virtual information sessions at École nationale de police du Québec (ENPQ) to recruit officers who have already graduated or would soon graduate from the ENPQ.

Furthermore, the Cree Nation Government asked for the collaboration and support of the Ministry of Public Security (MSP), l'École nationale de police du Québec (ENPQ), and the Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue, to revise the Attestation d'études collégiales (AEC) Police Technology program and ensure it meets EEPF's recruitment needs.

The objective is to train Police Officers from Cree communities quicker while maintaining a high-quality level of training. On February 10, 2022, all parties officially approved this revised program. This new program is currently offered to Cree Beneficiaries only.

The new AEC Police Technology / Special Constables Program combines:

1. Special Constable training program at ENPQ
2. An on-the-job training experience working as Special Constable for EEPF
3. AEC program provided by modules
4. First Nation Basic Program in Police Patrolling certificate from ENPQ

The new program provides an exciting learning experience for all our students. Academic studies combined with hands-on experience give students the skills and knowledge they will need to further their goals of obtaining a career in law enforcement. At the same time, while students are working as Special Constables, it will provide manpower for EEPF.

We organized a community tour to promote the new AEC program and recruit Cree candidates interested in law enforcement. On March 9, 2022, fifteen (15) Cree candidates enrolled and began the new AEC Police Technology / Special Constable program.

Additionally, we had six (6) students who graduated from the regular AEC Policing Technology Program. Four (4) obtained their First Nation Basic program in police patrolling certificate from ENPQ and are now full-fledged officers employed by EEPF.

COVID-19

The Human Resources Department continued to follow the protocols of the Cree Nation Government in counsel with the bands and Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay. The tools developed in the previous fiscal year remained available and in use for the whole of the Cree Nation Government during the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

We understand that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused staffing pressures, particularly on our law enforcement officers. Therefore, a monthly Temporary Pandemic Incentive was issued to Senior Officers, Officers, and Special Constables to reward their efforts in providing continuous essential policing services during this pandemic.

Performance Management Program

The performance evaluation program which had been in place since 2013 no longer fulfilled the needs of the organization.

In the summer of 2021, the Human Resources Department developed a new and improved Performance Management Program for the Cree Nation Government and EEPF. Eight (8) new forms were developed: new performance evaluation forms for the different job categories in the Cree Nation Government (Administrative and Technical Support staff, Professional staff, Senior Professional Staff, and Management); and end of probation evaluation forms were also developed for each job category.

Feedback was received from directors in November 2021. In January of this year, training was developed and provided for all employees at different levels (administrative and support staff, managers, and directors). A tool guide was developed to assist managers and directors in understanding the purpose and importance of the annual performance

evaluation as well as providing advice on how to complete the evaluations with their employees.

Updated HR Policy and Procedures

With the ongoing pandemic over the course of the year and the impact it had on the employees and our work environment, Human Resources recommended strategies to re-engage current staff, all while boosting employee morale. The Cree Nation Government implemented three (3) permanent changes to employee benefits. They are:

- The holiday break was increased by one (1) week for a total of three (3) weeks off during the Christmas and New Year holidays.
- The work schedule of most employees was reduced to 32.5 hours per week on a permanent basis. The work schedule is now Monday to Thursday: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM with a one-hour lunch break and Friday: 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM with no lunch break.
- September 30, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was introduced in 2021 by the Federal Government and added to the Cree Nation Government's statutory holidays.

Dayforce

In collaboration with the Finance department and with the support of a trusted third-party consultant, we have officially deployed Dayforce for all Cree Nation Government employees, including the Eeyou Eenou Police Force, in February 2022. This comprehensive Human Capital Management software was previously only used for timekeeping and employee record maintenance for Cree Nation Government employees.

The recent launch has brought several enhancements to the existing program, as well as crucial new features such as Payroll, Benefits, Recruiting, Onboarding, Compensation, Performance, and various employee self-service options. Employees now have the ability to access their HR and pay-related information in one place, submit changes to their personal data, in addition to recording their work hours and absences. Managers are now more engaged in managing their teams with the updated organizational structure, they can review their open positions and work with the HR team on their recruiting needs. Future releases will enable both employees and managers to complete their performance evaluations in the system, review and sign company policies, and more.

The HR team can now produce and analyze more complex reports to track key employee data on a regular basis, send and collect communications such as employment letters and onboarding documentation from candidates and existing employees, manage compensation and talent modules, as well as store employee records - all in one centralized system.

This large-scale project was an excellent opportunity to review and optimize internal policies and processes, as well as validate HR and pay-related employee data with the goal of maintaining accurate records.

More exciting features are planned for the near future as we strive to continue optimizing the program and further improving the employment experience for our staff, as well as facilitate the work of our Human Resources and Payroll teams.



APATISIWIN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

*Message from the Director
Abel J. Trapper*



I AM PLEASED TO PRESENT THE APATISIWIN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021-2022.



29
EMPLOYEES

Despite all the challenges COVID-19 has brought on us, our offices in every community remained open on a staggered schedule to continue providing much-needed services for our people. During the year, new challenges and opportunities emerged within our department. We had some staff turnover and we had to find new recruits to replace the employee that left the organization on good terms.

After a long successful career with Cree Nation Government, our former Director, Ms. Louisa Saganash retired in the fall of 2021. Louisa was with Cree Nation Government/ ASD for many years and has been very instrumental in building the ASD department. We would like to take this time to thank Louisa for her dedication in fulfilling the mission and vision of ASD. I would also like to mention the retirement of Mr. Thomas Blackned, former Coordinator of Finance for ASD who also served many years with the Cree Nation Government. Ms. Christiane Michaud, former Administrative Technician for ASD, and Ms. Maria Kawapit for serving her community as an employment counsellor. We want to wish all of them a happy retirement!

Our longtime colleague Ms. Denise Brown, former Manager of Services, left to pursue an opportunity with her community to serve as the new Director General for the Cree Nation of Eastmain. We wish her well in her new role as the number one administrator for her community.

New opportunities emerged for some internal staff members and recruits. I was promoted to lead the organization as the new Director for ASD. We also hired Ms. Laurianne Iserhoff as the new Coordinator of Finance and promoted a

few members within the department. Mr. Stephane Petawabano was promoted to lead a team of program officers as the new Manager of Programs and hired two new program officers: one in Chisasibi and another in Wemindji. Mr. Roger Lacroix was hired as the new Manager of Services to lead a team of employment counsellors. We hired two new employment counsellors over the year: one in Whapmagoostui and another in Mistissini. There will be some vacancies to fill due to a planned retirement and a staff member leaving to pursue other opportunities to further their careers with other organizations.

Both of our divisions under ASD, the Program division and Employment Services division, made themselves readily available to serve the clientele and still planned for meetings throughout the year via Zoom or MS Teams. We had scheduled to start having our in-person meetings, but most of them turned into virtual due to the pandemic. As a result, it was challenging to hold online meetings; nevertheless, we managed to pull through.

I am excited to move forward with our new management team under ASD and the new incoming staff. I know they will be coached and integrated well by our current dedicated team. Stay safe, and thanks!

*Abel J. Trapper
Director of Apatisiwin Skills Development*



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

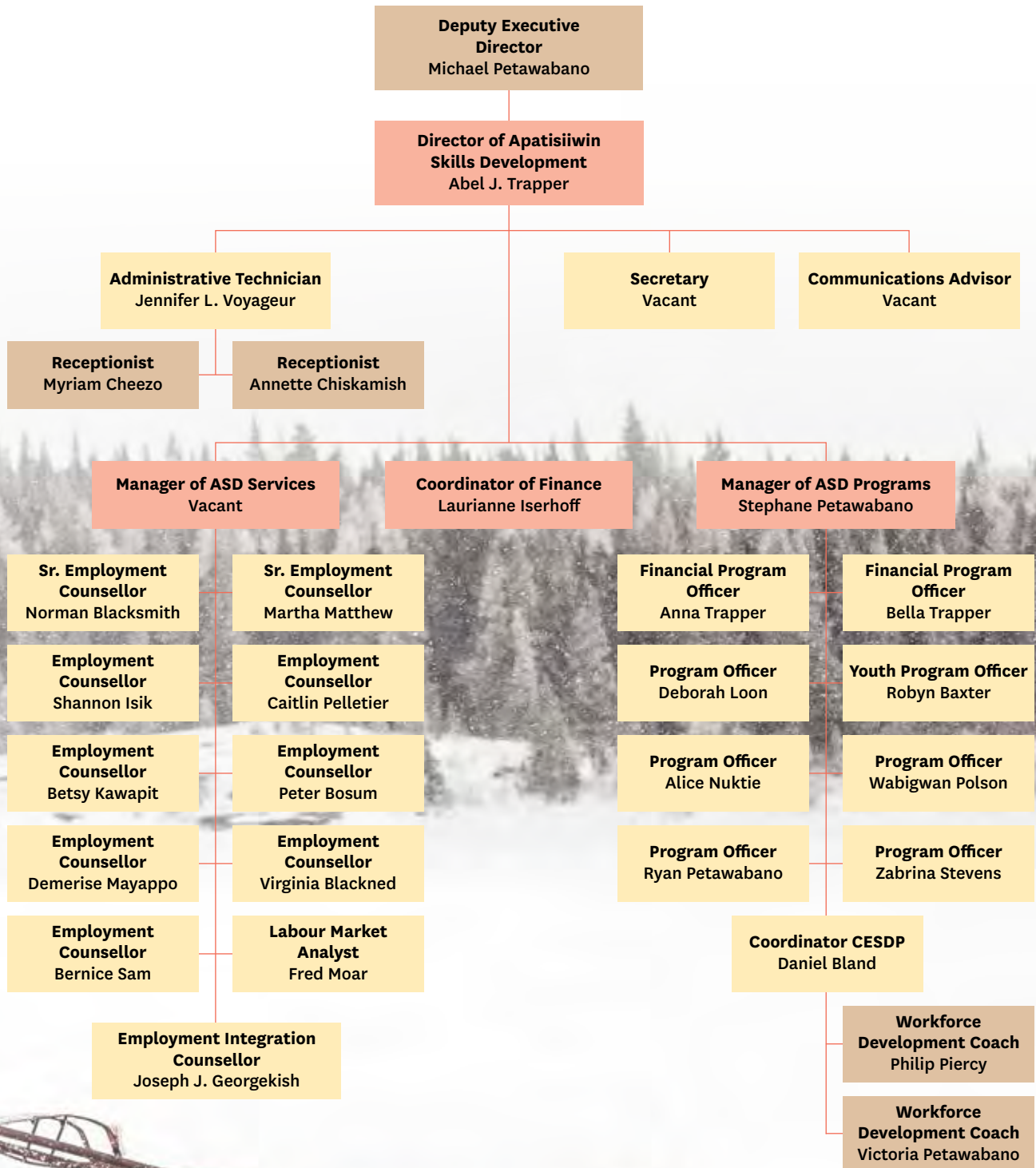


Photo: Katherine Dehm

OUR VISION

To equip and empower individuals with the skills and knowledge to achieve meaningful and sustainable employment and personal success.

OUR MISSION

Help build a qualified and professional workforce to fill employment needs in Eeyou Istchee. We are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of future generations.

OUR VALUES

ASD is committed to working together in providing excellent services to Eeyou Istchee based on integrity, trust, fairness, and respect. ASD values its investment in the personal success of our people.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Our Communities are our Greatest Asset

Apatisiwin Skills Development exists to support the people of Eeyou Istchee; to aid individuals in their search for sustainable employment and career development. We prepare them through skills development, job readiness programs, training, and special projects that increase our people's employability and labour market readiness. Our communities and the people that live within Eeyou Istchee are our greatest assets. Their success is our success as a department.

ASD's mandate is:

- To help provide skills development, training programs, and services in the Cree communities and throughout the territory.
- To provide support and financial assistance to help individuals improve their job skills, gain work experience, upgrade their skills and vocational education, start their own business, and encourage employers to hire them.
- To support employers in creating opportunities for Cree and non-Crees in the Cree communities and throughout the territory.

ASD fulfills this role by acting as a liaison between employers and the Cree labour force, offering employment training programs and services targeting sustainable employment.

ASD TEAM

ASD has a dedicated staff of 29 individuals who oversee and implement local and regional programs and services to clients, including job seekers and potential employers, throughout Eeyou Istchee.

ASD has an office in each of the 10 Cree communities, with two other offices outside of the region, one in Ottawa and another in Gatineau, which help provide training and employment programs and services.





Congratulations on your Retirement

Louisa Saganash, Apatisiwin Skills Development Director

Louisa was first hired by the Cree Nation Government as a Secretary, and worked her way up to Administrative Assistant, a Program Officer, Coordinator, and finally, the Director of Apatisiwin Skills Development (formerly known as CHRD). ASD thanks you for your outstanding commitment and dedication over the past 22 years.

May your retirement be filled with love and happiness.

Thank you for inspiring us at work every day. You are missed by many!

“Thank you for all your hard work and dedication. Congratulations on your retirement!”

- Martha Matthew, Senior Employment Counsellor

“Happy retirement Louisa. I want to wish you lots of health and happiness for the future and enjoy travelling.”

- Benjamin Look, Program Officer



Photo: Katherine Dehm

PLANNING SESSIONS

ASD held two planning sessions this past year. These meetings are held bi-annually to ensure that the team can meet to synergize and ensure all staff is aware of updates and any new initiatives discussed or implemented. It is integral to connecting with our team and establishing a shared direction as a department.

Summer Planning Session

Our Summer Planning Session was held in person at the Apatisiwin Skills Development office in the community of Mistissini on July 20-21, 2021. The ASD Director did her welcoming and opening remarks on its Annual Activities Plan and the Cree Nation Government Annual Report for 2020-2021. The Services and Programs Managers did a presentation on updates for each of the services. They also provided updates on the Guidebook. The Capital Works and Services Department did a presentation and gave updates on future projects under its department. Records and Information Management provided training on the new SharePoint service that ASD has recently started using within our daily activities.

On Day 2, the Special Projects Fund presented a special video project that the team had been working on with English and Cree narration. The Manager of Services and Manager of Programs gave an update on the Guidebook. We then continued team-building exercises and acknowledgments to wrap up the Summer Planning Session with closing remarks by the Director.

Winter Planning Session

The Winter Planning Session was held virtually via Teams on December 14-15, 2021. New ASD Director Abel J. Trapper made his welcoming remarks and opening prayer to start the planning session. Program Policy update was given by Marie Claude Picard, Legal Counsel, Sophie Mathers, Career Development Consultant, and Robert Langlois, Program Division Consultant. In addition, Aamuu Consulting provided a review of the Strategic Plan.

Day 2 of the Winter Planning Session was the Services Québec and Service Canada Information Session. Given by Catherine Michaud, Conseillère – Stratégie Autochtone, Roger Lacroix, Services Québec Liaison, and Ionut Grigore, Service Canada Representative, and we ended the Winter Planning Session with a prayer from Director Abel J. Trapper.

CONFERENCES

CANNEXUS

Canada's Career Development Conference (CANNEXUS) is an annual event designed to promote the exchange of information and explore innovative approaches in the areas of career counselling and workforce development. This year, the event was held virtually due to the COVID-19 restrictions on travel, from January 24-26 and February 4, 2022.

TEAM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Micro-Program Employability and Career Development in Aboriginal Context - UQAT

Certificate Program

The objective of this program is to fully equip the Employment Counsellors serving Eeyou Istchee communities, so they can support their clients using a professional and holistic approach rooted in Cree culture and its values.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

ASD continues to implement its new five-year action plan, a plan to achieve results in critical areas of importance while at the same time respecting the values of Honesty, Transparency, and Integrity towards client-driven programs and services. The Strategic Plan 2018-2023 is focused on positive changes toward improving service delivery and innovative approaches to program funding. We also realize the need to drive our organization through Labour market data and work closely with the Cree communities to understand employment and training needs towards the demand. This new plan provides the blueprint to move us forward to accomplish organizational improvement in the following areas:

1. Realignment of ASD Department Structure – To better serve our clients and stakeholders.
2. Labour Market Information – To put in place better mechanisms to collect, analyze and react to Labour Market Information.
3. ASD-CSB Partnership – To develop a revitalized working relationship with our most important partner, the Cree School Board
4. Communications Plan – To create and implement a new communications plan for the department.
5. Partnership Development – Bringing together partnerships that bring dialogue and perspective on industry standards, training needs, and Labour market information.
6. Program Development and Monitoring – All programs require feedback and monitoring on outcomes and deliverables. This requires new partnerships and internal capacity to meet this need.

We look forward to the continuous realization of this five-year plan that will better position our department to serve the employment needs of Eeyou Istchee.

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

External Communications

We continue to focus on getting our information online. We achieve this throughout our social media accounts. We are on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. With twice-weekly social media posts of potential employment opportunities within Eeyou Istchee and other events and opportunities for future growth. This year, we have shifted our focus to a more digital presence in all our external communications, digital surveys, digital PDF forms, and social media posts.

Internal Communications

We are continuing to transfer from paper documents within the department to a digital format so that employees can easily access these documents for clients to use that cannot meet in-person due to COVID-19 restrictions.

PARTNERSHIPS

Cree School Board SAES

Sabtuan Adult Education Services (SAES) and the Post-Secondary Student Services have agreed to establish a sustainable partnership that will enhance collaboration at all levels better to meet the needs of the students and clients. To offer an aligned approach to external stakeholders (students/clients, bands, employers) to provide simple, effective, and consistent processes and services for the students and clients by avoiding duplications/contradictions, particularly for data and information requests.

In the same spirit, an official partnership agreement with the Cree School Board's Sabtuan Adult Education Services was signed last December to strengthen collaboration between the two organizations and provide the best possible support to the students in accessing employment opportunities. This ASD/SAES Agreement sets out, in particular, processes and standards for information sharing, confidentiality, consultation, and community relations.

Cree School Board PSSS

Another partnership agreement with the Post-Secondary Student Services (PSSS) of the Cree School Board is also being developed in the same spirit to maximize the resources and assistance offered to PSSS students in their transition to the Eeyou Istchee Labour market.

Choosing a hands-on approach, ASD experimented in the field by reaching out to employers to discuss their workforce needs and by contacting post-secondary students to gather information on their field of studies and their interest in pursuing internship opportunities with employers.

ASD prioritizes creating partnerships with other entities, communities, and educational institutions.

Cree Nation Government Engagement Sessions

Cree Nation Government sessions were held in all the communities. Four Cree Nation Government departments (Apatisiwin Skills Development, Commerce and Industry, Social and Cultural Development and Justice and Correctional Services) were to tour the communities to present their programs and services and to work more closely with them in identifying their needs and to help understand how both can improve their services, however due to COVID-19, the sessions were held virtually.

Cree Nation Government Departments

Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD) made considerable progress in advancing the Capacity Building Framework for Eeyou Istchee.

Early in 2021, under the direction of the Office of the Deputy Executive Director, four departments of the Cree Nation Government formed a working group on Capacity Building.

The departments of Commerce and Industry, Justice and Correctional Services, Social and Cultural Development and Apatisiwin Skills Development joined forces to reflect on Capacity Building collectively and coordinate their efforts, within their respective mandates, to work on a Capacity Building model for the future.

ASD is actively participating in this working group and has recently awarded service contracts to two experienced economists who will conduct a socioeconomical study of Eeyou Istchee, at a regional and community level, for the development of a Capacity Building Framework.

Service Canada Outreach Program

ASD and Service Canada have a collaborative partnership to ensure clients receive the best service possible in their community. Service Canada maintains two service centers located within the territory, one in Mistissini at the ASD head office, and the other in Chisasibi located at the ASD Chisasibi office. The outreach program was created so other communities can get access to their services.

Throughout the year, Service Canada provides scheduled and mobile outreach services. The services offered are assisting with EI applications, Old Age Security information, checking the status of EI and OAS claims, ROE verification and SIN application/confirmation, and Passport applications.

This past year, no visits were made to the communities due to the pandemic's restrictive travel from the red zones.

CREE-CANADA RELATIONS

Under the terms of the New Relationship Agreement with Canada, and with funding provided under that Agreement, the Cree Nation Government, through Apatisiwin Skills Development, assumes Canada's responsibilities under Section 28 of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement for training courses, job recruitment, and placement related to the "territorial programs" and "enhanced delivery structure."

As part of the conditions to assume these federal JBNQA responsibilities, Canada must continue to provide to the Cree Nation Government additional funding for training programs and facilities, and job recruitment and placement services on terms reasonably comparable to those in place at the time of signing the New Relationship Agreement.

In 2019, the Cree Nation Government and Canada agreed on long-term arrangements until 2028 in regard to the additional funding that Canada must provide. Under these arrangements, the additional federal funding to support Apatisiwin Skills Development for the period 2019-2028 is provided to the Cree Nation Government as a "grant," which provides greater flexibility and reduces administrative requirements. However, the indexation of such additional federal funding remains an outstanding matter. Consequently, these arrangements provide that the federal funding levels for the entire period of the New Relationship Agreement (2008-2028) remain an outstanding matter and that the parties maintain their respective positions as to whether such funding levels comply with section 4.12 of the New Relationship Agreement, the whole without prejudice to Cree rights and claims.

Formal discussions to renew the New Relationship Agreement will begin in 2026. The way in which the Cree Nation Government implements the New Relationship Agreement and carries out the assumed federal JBNQA responsibilities up until the start of these discussions in 2026 will largely determine what the renewal of this agreement will look like in 2028.

In 2019, the Cree Nation Government and Canada have also concluded a companion contribution agreement for Employment Insurance funding for the period 2019-2029. Federal funding to support childcare is provided through this contribution agreement until such funding is transferred through the new ASD funding arrangements mentioned above. Cree and federal representatives are pursuing discussions in this regard.

Cree and federal representatives are pursuing discussions regarding additional funding to support the Crees living in MoCreebec, who no longer received their share of federal funding to implement their skills and employment development programs. This federal funding had been administered and managed on their behalf through third-party organizations in Ontario for the past several years. Cree representatives had initially secured with Canada a short-term solution on behalf of MoCreebec, pending discussions on longer-term funding arrangements.

During the 2021-2022 financial year, the Cree Nation Government successfully negotiated additional funding for ASD as a Cree share of a new federal envelope to support human resource and skills development. Canada had previously announced this new funding envelope in its 2020 Fall Economic Statement.

ASD POLICY ON PROGRAMS

Amendments to the Policy establishing the conditions applicable to our Programs were finalized and approved, effective as of April 1, 2021. The review of this Policy was conducted with the objective to better reflect the needs of employers and individual clients in accessing funding for their projects and ensure it meets the evolving needs regarding skills development, training programs and services, and employment insurance services in the Cree communities and Eeyou Istchee.

ASD COMMITTEES

Two committees were established to review the Officer's assessment and make recommendations to the ASD on all projects reviewed. Their mandate is determined as follows.

- a) Technical Group: for projects under \$25,000.
- b) ASDAC: for projects of \$25,000 and over.

Technical Group

The Technical Group consists of the Coordinators and meets at least once a month.

ASDAC

The Apatisiwin and Skills Development Advisory Committee (ASDAC) consists of one representative from each of the following organizations:

a) Voting members

- 9 members appointed by the Chief and Council of each of the 9 communities of Eeyou Istchee
- Cree Nation Government
- Cree Nation Youth Council
- Cree School Board

b) Non-voting members

- Director of ASD
- Washaw Sibi appointed member
- Canada representative

The ASDAC meets typically quarterly or at any other time deemed necessary thereafter during the financial year concerned.

The ASDAC has the following mandate:

- A) ensure that the proposals promote employment for Cree beneficiaries and other residents, where applicable, including training for the purpose of enhancing development of work skills necessary to support employability of the client;
- B) ensure that proposals promote, as much as possible, full-time employment as criteria priority;
- C) ensure that the increasing of the employment rate of the Cree population be monitored and promoted through all projects supported;
- D) respect the monitor process and implementation of the ASD training plan when recommending projects;
- E) monitoring of annual programs initiative targets and target results such as eligible clientele, eligible enterprises, job integration, and meeting of program objectives and funding components when recommendations are determined;
- F) support in addressing and promotion of issues to be addressed to Canada for support of client analysis and skills development in regard to all programs managed by ASD.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Labour Market Development

To provide resources to help recipients with their projects through strategic plans, development of the curriculum and delivery of employment services, and provide assistance needed to implement human resource development programs and services.

Example of projects:

- Partnerships such as job fairs and conferences related to capacity building
- Labour market survey
- Coaching, workshop
- Support of development of community profiles

Skills Development Program

To assist a person without employment to acquire the competencies and essential skills required for a given job or receive institutional training leading to a form of accreditation.

Example of projects:

- Early childhood educators (AEC)
- Coaching, workshop
- Regional or local programs
- Culture and Language acquisition

Employment Program

To encourage employers to hire and train new personnel in a specific job position. To provide productive employment for unemployed persons by creating jobs that would not otherwise exist and offering them the opportunity to maintain or increase their skills. To assist individuals seeking to secure self-employment through implementing a business by providing them with financial assistance support throughout their entrepreneurial process.

Example of projects:

- CESPCAP: Community Employment Skills Partnership Action Program
- Mentorship program for persons with disabilities
- Adult/summer students' program
- Creation of new jobs
- New business implementation project
- Apprenticeship

Youth Program

Create summer employment opportunities to gain valuable work experience for secondary and post-secondary students and allow students to gain experience through part-time jobs when studying. Develop life skills and provide work experience to better shape their future.

Example of projects:

- Science and Technology
- Career Promotion and Awareness
- Youth Work Experience
- Student Summer Employment

Cree Internship Program

Increase work experience and employability of post-secondary graduates in their field of study in Eeyou Istchee. ASD will subsidize the intern's salary for 12 months. Once the intern completes the program, ASD can continue to support the employer by subsidizing a percentage of the salary for the next three years under the employment program. The internship can be off territory (within Canada) if an internship opportunity is not available in Eeyou Istchee.

To increase the number of post-secondary students in the database, we launched a post-secondary student survey. A

total of 87 post-secondary students participated in the survey providing their information, including what they are studying, where they are studying, expected completion date of current program, any prior completed post-secondary programs, and their completion date, and contact information/community of origin. These students will be easily accessible as potential candidates for the possible pilot project with MITACS.

Cree Employability Skills Development Program (CESDP)

The CESDP project finished on March 31, 2022. It was originally expected to end a year earlier, but because of the COVID-19 situation, we were given a year's extension.

We used most of this final year to consolidate our online work with new employees receiving ASD wage subsidies in different workplaces. In addition, our team developed a number of new training videos addressing some of the needs we heard from workers – understanding taxes and typical paystub deductions, for example, and the importance of basic budgeting for individuals and families.

A series of materials on what we call 'work readiness' was also completed for new workers in workplaces throughout the territory, as well as for participants in 'Community Employment Skills' and 'Youth Work Experience' programs. These were designed to support workers, help them understand and adapt to new workplaces, and include workshops on work ethics, zero tolerance, time management, and effective communication.

Overall, it was a successful program. Despite the challenges we faced because of pandemic restrictions, we not only reached but surpassed our targeted deliverables in terms of the number of essential skills assessments we administered, the number of skills upgrading and work readiness workshops our team delivered, and the number of Crees we worked with who secured employment.

Our work also confirmed the importance of working closely with employers and continuing to develop training materials and innovative and creative ways to support Cree workers in the workplace and put them in the best possible position to succeed in their jobs.

Photo: Katherine Dehm

SUCCESS STORIES



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

This year's feature under the Skills Development Program is Mr. Rock Sheshamush from Whapmagoostui, who participated in the "Advanced Bush Pilot Training" offered by Air Tunilik, a seaplane transport service in the province of Quebec that is based in Laval, Quebec. Two of the main objectives for Mr. Sheshamush were to fly the DHC-2 Beaver and DHC-3 Otter aircraft in order for him to become an experienced bush pilot with aspirations of owning his own airline in the near future to offer transport services to hunters and trappers in Eeyou Istchee.

"I would like to thank Apatisiwin Skills Development for its financial support to make this project a success. And, of course, my dad Elijah Sheshamush. He made financial contributions to attain my float rating."

YOUTH PROGRAM

Cree Nation Government's Social and Cultural Development Department and the Cree Nation Youth Council are currently funded by Apatisiwin Skills Development Department for their training program with Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue; it is an accredited program in Undergraduate Certificate in Indigenous Governance which will take 2 ½ years to complete. This program aims to acquire knowledge related to the Indigenous governance; ensure a better understanding of the issues associated with Indigenous cultural diversity and development involving Indigenous peoples; develop a critical sense and an openness to face Indigenous realities; to facilitate relations and exchanges between Indigenous and non-Indigenous; and develop inter-personal communication skills. The goal is to develop members of the Cree Nation that understand facets of the governance as a leader, work within the government systems, and have the skills required to communicate, act and lead.

Photo: Jamie Moses



EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

This year's feature under the Employment Program belongs to CreeActive Flair Salon, a beauty salon and spa located in Mistissini owned and operated by Ms. Deanna Petawabano and Ms. Kaylee Swallow. Both Deanna and Kaylee are aspiring and inspiring Cree entrepreneurs who provide services that range from hair care, facials, manicures, etc., to their clientele. Despite the challenges some of our young entrepreneurs' face during their start-up phases, Deanna and Kaylee acknowledged the support they have received amidst the situation we all faced over the year and offered a piece of special advice to those who wish to pursue entrepreneurship.

"We had all kinds of support during our journey, especially during the pandemic, we had support from the band, Cree Nation Government, we cannot forget Apatisiwin Skills Development for helping us with our employees and our families for always being there for us when we needed them. The advice we would give to others today would be to not give up! Even when it feels like there is no way out. There will always be someone that will be there to help no matter the situation".

- Deanna Petawabano and Kaylee Swallow



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

This year's feature under the Internship Program is Mr. Connor Zephyrine from Chisasibi. In 2020, Mr. Zephyrine was hired as an intern to be a junior consultant by Sagacia Consulting, a firm based in Montreal, Quebec, after obtaining his Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario. After completing his internship with Sagacia Consulting, Connor was offered full-time employment with the firm and currently maintains the position as a junior consultant. As an organization, we wish Connor a successful transition from post-secondary education to sustainable employment.

**ASD ANNUAL REPORT STATISTICS
FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022**

Projects and Participant Training Interventions / All ASD Programs

Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD) in collaboration with Cree nation authorities, institutions and employers continues promoting partnerships creating employment opportunities throughout Eeyou Istchee. The department maintains its focus on helping individuals prepare for, find and keep employment through its programs delivered throughout the Territory.

ASD received several projects submissions in 2021-2022. A total of 259 projects receiving support from ASD carried out training activities throughout the communities and territory during the fiscal year. There were 2,154 participant interventions in these projects.



259

**PROJECTS RECEIVED
SUPPORT FROM ASD**

Table 1. Overall Disbursement of Funds

	Employment	%	Skills Development	%	Youth	%	Cree Internship	%
	\$ 5,214,429	100	\$ 1,672,960	100	\$ 2,455,629	100	\$ 59,924	100
Chisasibi	579,773	11	44,929	3	391,518	16		
Eastmain	72,305	1	30,762	2	39,704	2		
Mistissini	925,093	18	16,026	1	252,691	10		
Nemaska	119,964	2			6,991			
Ouje-Bougoumou	270,931	5	12,334	1	145,565	6	30,355	51
Washaw Sibi	31,494	1			12,940	1		
Waskaganish	126,395	2	140,766	8	378,999	15		
Waswanipi	534,298	10	5,350		334,011	14		
Wemindji	92,841	2	25,611	2	301,319	12	19,229	32
Whapmagoostui	120,024	2	150,699	9	89,474	4		
Regional	175,467	3			370,325	15		
Territorial	2,140,868	41	1,101,534	66	130,202	5		
Other	24,976	0.5	144,949	9	1,890		10,340	17

Table 1. Overall Disbursement of Funds (continued)

	Special/ Disability	%	Market Development	%	Total	%
	\$ 85,646	100	\$ 98,216	100	\$ 9,586,804	100
Chisasibi			26,472	27	1,042,692	11
Eastmain					142,771	1
Mistissini	52,009	61	28,425	29	1,274,244	13
Nemaska					126,955	1
Ouje-Bougoumou					459,185	5
Washaw Sibi					44,434	0.5
Waskaganish					646,160	7
Waswanipi	33,637	39			907,296	9
Wemindji					439,000	5
Whapmagoostui					360,197	4
Regional					545,792	6
Territorial			43,319	44	3,415,923	36
Other					182,155	2

Photo: Jamie Moses

Table 2. Disbursement of Project Funds – Chisasibi

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Auberger Maanitaaukimikw	Assistant General Manager – 2nd Year	21,560
BakeCree Inc	Start up Business and Employment(8) – 1st Year	63,857
Chisasibi Auto Repairs Services	3rd Year – New Employment 4 Positions – Garage	18,614
Chisasibi Business and Development Group Inc	Third Year – Delivery Drivers & Cashiers	4,672
Chisasibi Business Service Center Inc	Administration Technician Position	25,444
Chisasibi Business Service Center Inc	3rd Year – Administrative Assistant Position	23,369
Chistapitin	Business Start up and Employment 1st Year	53,268
Chistapitin S.E.N.C	2nd year – Business Start-up and Employment	30,194
Cree Nation of Chisasibi	Community Employment Skills Partnership 2020	62,136
Cree Nation of Chisasibi	Community Employment Skills Partnership 2021	106,957
DK Renovation	Capacity Building – Epoxy Training	23,516
Retro Daze Cafe	Third Year – Salary Subsidy	27,757
Saskounan Excavation	2 full-time positions – 2nd and 3rd Year	10,982
Thunder Trucking	Construction Truck Drivers	107,447
		579,773
Skills Development Programs		
Child and Family Services	Special Needs Educator	19,266
Chisasibi Telecommunications Association	Project Management, Accounting, and Financial Management	4,350
Hank House	Professional Certificate in Management Skills	7,628
Kinwapt Cable Inc.	Cost Accounting and and Financial Management	10,715
Taauchiiwaatin Driving School	Driver Monitor Training	2,970
		44,929
Youth Programs		
Cree Nation of Chisasibi	Summer Students Employment	112,917
Chisasibi Eeyou Resource	Research Assistant Trainee	15,670
Cree Nation of Chisasibi	Youth Work Experience	262,931
		391,518
Labour Market Development		
Chisasibi Business and Development Group Inc.	Dayforce Ceridian Project	26,472
		26,472
	Total	\$1,042,692

Table 3. Disbursement of Project Funds – Eastmain

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Stajune Construction	Heavy Machinery Mechanic	22,206
Cree Nation of Eastmain	Smart Cities Challenge Pilot Project	13,256
Stajune Construction	2nd Year – Two permanent positions	29,697
Wabannutao Eeyou Development	New job position – Accounts Manager	7,146
		72,305
Skills Development Programs		
Cree Nation of Eastmain	2nd Year – Hydrogeology and GIS Technician Positions	30,762
		30,762
Youth Programs		
Cree Nation of Eastmain	Summer Work Experience	39,704
		39,704
	Total	\$142,771

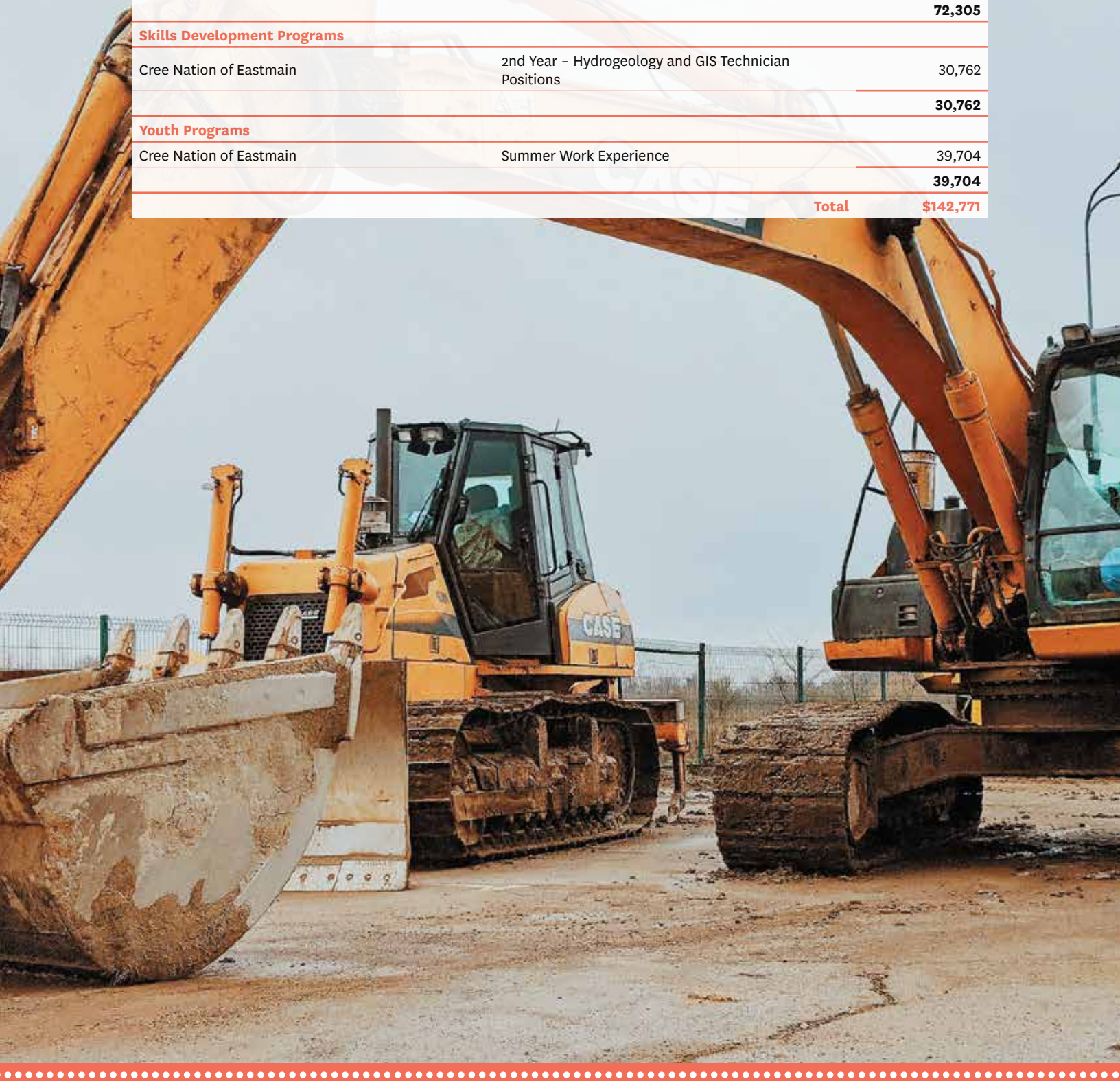


Table 4. Disbursement of Project Funds – Mistissini

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Addy's Corner Store	Business Start up and Employment	80,434
Awessha Store	Business Start up and Employment	34,712
Awessha Store	Business Start up and Employment 2nd Year	5,000
Big Rock Barber Shop	Business Start up and Employment 1st Year	25,776
Cree Nation of Mistissini	Training and Development Coordinator	5,993
Cree Nation of Mistissini	Economic Development Training	15,225
Cree Nation of Mistissini	Community Employment Skills Partnership	145,506
Cree Nation of Mistissini	Initial Enlarged First Responder and Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator	32,588
Cree Nation of Mistissini	Public Administration and Governance Training	81,491
Cree Nation of Mistissini	Office Administrative Certificate	25,589
Cree Nation of Mistissini	Public Administration and Governance Training	76,805
CreeAtive Flair Salon	Business Start up and Employment 1st Year	28,777
Eenatuk Forestry Corporation	Forestry Coordinator	22,634
Lakeview Restaurant	Business Venture – Restaurant 2nd Year	65,284
Lakeview Restaurant	Business Venture – Restaurant 3rd Year	35,203
Makaahiikan Construction Inc.	Apprenticeship – Construction Trades 2nd Year	144,830
Matoush Tire Shop	Service Advisor – Trainee Position	26,917
Mats Electric Inc.	Apprenticeship – Electrical Trades	16,234
Mistay Enterprises Inc.	Mistay Job Creation – 4 new jobs 1st Year	56,095
		925,093
Skills Development Programs		
Cree Nation Government	Eeyou Istchee Land Keepers and Wildlife Protection Assistant	13,426
Mats Electric Inc.	Administration Work Skills	2,600
		16,026
Youth Programs		
Cree Nation of Mistissini	Summer Work Experience	92,940
Cree Nation of Mistissini	Youth Work Experience	131,658
Meechum Reg'd/Chiiwetin Reg'd	Summer Work Experience	28,093
		252,691
Special/Disability Programs		
Cree Nation of Mistissini	Disabilities Program 2021-2022	52,009
		52,009
Labour Market Development		
Cree Nation Government	Eeyou Istchee Land Keepers	19,500
Government Services – IT/Cree Nation	Office 365 Training Development	8,925
		28,425
	Total	\$1,274,244

Table 5. Disbursement of Project Funds – Nemaska

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Cree Nation of Nemaska	Creation of Seven New Positions	64,345
JR'S Garage	Business Start up and Employment	28,847
Nemaska Development Corporation	Training New Chefs	26,772
		119,964
Youth Programs		
Cree Nation of Nemaska	Summer Student 2021	6,991
		6,991
	Total	\$126,955

Table 6. Disbursement of Project Funds – Ouje-Bougoumou

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Construction Transport GH & Sons Inc.	Forestry Road Construction	38,909
Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association	Administrative Assistant	14,150
Larouche Construction	Apprenticeship – Construction Trades	15,076
Maamuu G.P.	Creation of One New Position	6,800
Maamuu G.P.	Business Start up and Employment	10,000
Mianscum Solidarity Coop	Creation of 2 New Positions	29,053
Minipro Cree Inc.	Business Implementation 2nd Year	9,773
Mushk	Business Start up and Employment	10,191
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Community Employment Skills Partnership	9,515
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Creation of Three New Positions	8,227
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Sports Activity Coordinator	6,431
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Adult Summer Student Employment 2021	27,320
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Community Employment Skills Partnership	75,858
Nation Wapachee Woodwork	Creation of Four New Positions	9,628
		270,931
Skills Development Programs		
Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association	Digital Animator Coaching 3rd Year	4,599
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Animal Care and Control Officer	7,735
		12,334
Youth Programs		
Aanischaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute	Summer Student Program 2021	3,947
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Winter Work Experience	21,818
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Ouje-Bougoumou 3rd Annual Career Fair	10,000
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Student Part-time Program 2020	19,938
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Part-Time Student Program	6,583
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Summer Student Work Experience 2021	63,788
Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation	Winter Work Experience 2021-2022	19,491
		145,565
Cree Internship Program		
Aanischaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute	Cree Intership Program – Collection Officer	30,355
		30,355
	Total	\$459,185

Table 7. Disbursement of Project Funds – Washaw Sibi

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi	Communication IT Coordinator 3rd Year	3,126
Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi	Finance Clerk (3rd Year)	8,769
Washaw Sibi Development	On-Site Supervisor and Administrative Assistant	19,599
		31,494
Youth Programs		
Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi	Summer Student Program 2021	12,940
		12,940
	Total	\$44,434

Table 8. Disbursement of Project Funds – Waskaganish

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Blackned Excavation	Heavy Equipment Operators	17,925
Cree Nation of Waskaganish	Community Employment Skills Partnership 2020	8,214
Cree Nation of Waskaganish	MAPAQ Food Safety Training	5,875
Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association	Hospitality training for new Creetopia site	13,745
Eeyou Adventures	Start up Business and Employment (5) 1st Year Business	6,137
Eeyou SP Mechanics Services	Startup and Employment 1st Year Business	36,000
GMoar Transport	Startup and Employment 1st Year Business	9,901
Nanaakatheth Corporation	Director General	10,769
Pro-Stream Auto Detailing Services	Business and Car Detailing Training	3,983
Wiinipaakw Tours Solidarity Cooperative	Employment Subsidy (Director of WTSC 3rd Year)	13,846
		126,395
Skills Development Programs		
Cree Nation Government/Child and Family Services	ENCS Training	140,766
		140,766
Youth Programs		
Cree Nation of Waskaganish	Summer Work Experience	160,023
Cree Nation of Waskaganish	Youth Work Experience	196,560
Cree Nation of Waskaganish	Part-time Work Experience	12,173
Cree Nation of Waskaganish	Cree Internship Program	10,243
		378,999
	Total	\$646,160

Table 9. Disbursement of Project Funds – Waswanipi

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Amiisk Excavation Inc	Excavation and Road Maintenance	44,285
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Ventilation Technician/Electrician	16,198
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Creation of New Employment 6 positions	70,593
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Project Technician Position 2nd Year	25,000
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Community Employment Skills Partnership	65,439
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Creation of Registrar Technician Position	5,745
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Community Employment Skills Partnership	73,830
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Purchasing Assistant Clerk 3rd Year	5,104
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	ENPQ Pump Operator Training	4,286
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	First Responder Certification	19,115
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Creation of Registrar Technician Position	2,462
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Purchasing Agent	1,204
Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee	Business Development Coordinator	28,044
Eenou Eeyou Construction	Assistant Project Manager	14,108
Eenou Eeyou Construction	EEC Employment	61,599
Eenou Eeyou Construction	Project Manager and Administrator	52,503
Eenou Welding Inc.	Welding Equipment Manufacturers	35,910
Howard Blacksmith	Heavy Equipment Operator	8,873
		534,298
Skills Development Programs		
Mishtuk Corporation	Training and Development of HR Initiatives	5,350
		5,350
Youth Programs		
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Youth Work Experience 2021-2022	177,076
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Summer Work Experience	118,649
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Student Part-time Work Experience	7,133
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Adult Summer Student Employment	8,921
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Record Keeping Project Rental Housing Dept.	22,232
		334,011
Special/Disability Programs		
Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Limited Ability Work Experience	33,637
		33,637
	Total	\$907,296

Table 10. Disbursement of Project Funds – Wemindji

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Cree Child and Family Services	Special Needs Educator	9,277
Cree Nation of Wemindji	Program Manager and Facilitators (4)	42,859
Nomad Rezwear	Business Start up & Employment 1st Year	9,614
Tawich Business Development Corporation	1st year – Maintenance	11,418
Tawich Development Corporation	Third Year – Salary Subsidy	6,150
Tawich Development Corporation	Corporate Training	9,980
Waptum– Community Development Consulting	Community Engagement Liaison New Position	3,543
		92,841
Skills Development Programs		
Patrick Masty	Master of Public Safety 1st Year	7,089
Patrick Masty	Master of Public Safety 2nd Year	3,522
Waptum – Community Development Consulting	Project Management Training	15,000
		25,611
Youth Programs		
Cree Nation of Wemindji	Summer Student Employment	105,543
Waptum – Community Development Consulting	Assistant Project Manager – Summer Intern	12,925
Cree Nation of Wemindji	Youth Work Experience	182,851
		301,319
Cree Internship Program		
Cree Nation of Wemindji	Cree Internship Program	19,229
		19,229
	Total	\$439,000

Table 11. Disbursement of Project Funds – Whapmagoostui

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Whapmagoostui First Nation	ComptTIA Network upgrade skills	1,575
Whapmagoostui First Nation	Community Employment Skills Partnership	14,796
Whapmagoostui First Nation	Community Employment Skills Partnership 2021	103,653
		120,024
Skills Development Programs		
Cree Nation of Eastmain	ENCS Training	109,298
Whapmagoostui First Nation	Diagnostic of Electronic Caterpillar Engine Training	16,054
Whapmagoostui First Nation	Truck Driving – Class 3	25,347
		150,699
Youth Programs		
Whapmagoostui First Nation	Summer Work Experience	31,885
Whapmagoostui First Nation	Youth Work Experience	27,589
Whapmagoostui First Nation	Summer Student Program 2021	30,000
		89,474
	Total	\$360,197

Table 12. Disbursement of Project Funds – Regional

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Cree Nation Government	Summer Employment	41,251
Cree Woman of Eeyou Istchee Association	Creation of Three New Positions	35,761
Cree Woman of Eeyou Istchee Association	Creation of Three New Positions 2nd Year	37,435
Eeyou Istchee Sports & Recreation	Recreation Training for all 9 Communities	61,020
		175,467
Youth Programs		
Cree Woman of Eeyou Istchee Association	Youth and Politics Training	25,000
Cree Woman of Eeyou Istchee Association	Youth Work Experience – 2 Admin Assistants	28,020
Elephant Thoughts	ASD Elementary Science Tour	91,664
Youth Fusion	Program in CSB Schools 2021	225,641
		370,325
	Total	\$545,792



Table 13. Disbursement of Project Funds – Territorial

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Cooper Gilbert Construction	Heavy Equipment Operators	1,119
Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay	Cree Medical Bush Kit Program 1st Year	47,906
Cree Nation Government	5 Positions – Wage subsidy 1st Year	46,527
Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association	Marine Captain Training	47,527
Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association	Hospitality Training for General Managers	3,623
Cree School Board	Administrative Support Staff Training	152,306
Dawn Ottereyes Lacasse	Land Based Instructional Support Services	28,000
Gestion ADC/Miyuu Kaa/Bonterra	Camp Services – Job Creation 1st Year	45,872
Gestion ADC	Camp services 1st year – Hydro camp	17,006
Gestion ADC	Camp services 2nd year – Hyrdo camp	31,121
Gestion ADC/Kiskinchiish	Camp Services – Job Creation 3rd Year	269,389
Gestion ADC/Miyuu Kaa	Camp Services – Job Creation 3rd Year	265,157
Gestion ADC/Miyuu Kaa/Bonterra	Camp Services – Job Creation 2nd Year	20,161
Gestion ADC/Nannakaatech Corporation	Camp Services: Wallbridge & Fenelon Project 1st Year	171,936
Miyuukaa Corp	Underground Mining Development	185,887
Miyuukaa Corp	Surface Works	46,478
Miyuukaa Corp	Geological Technicians	66,908
Miyuukaa Corp	Surface and Underground Drilling	71,373
Miyuukaa Corp	Underground Mining Development	81,478
Miyuukaa Corp	Surface and Underground Drilling	69,435
MoCreebec Eeyoud	Client Interventions for MoCreebec	48,634
Nanaakatheth Corporation	Core Technicians	35,052
Nanaakatheth Corporation	Water Plant Operators	52,184
Nanaakatheth Corporation	Core and Geological Technicians	133,050
Nanaakatheth Corporation	Heavy Equipment Operators	36,779
Neeposh Entreprises Reg'd	Forestry Road Construction and Wood	77,179
Nibiischii Corporation	Albanel-Mistassini-Waconichi Wildlife Sanctuary	8,131
Plomberie E.P.	Plumber/Ventilation Technician	9,365
Stornoway Diamond (Canada) Inc.	Hiring of Cree Workers	48,595
Wabun Taxi	New Business – Wabun Taxi Service 1st Year	9,459
Wiinipaakw Tours Solidarity Cooperative	Employment Subsidy – Director of WTSC 2nd Year	11,074
Wiinipaakw Tours Solidarity Cooperative	Seasonal tour boat operators	2,157
		2,140,868
Skills Development Programs		
Air Tunilik	Advanced Bush Pilot Training	7,553
Apatisiiwin Skills Development/Cree	ASP Health and Safety Course	17,542
Cegep de Saint-Felicien/CECC	CSA Mineral Resources Geology	147,697
Cegep de Saint-Felicien/CECC	CSA Mineral Resources Geology 2nd cohort	26,650
Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association	Microprogram in Aboriginal Tourism Management	12,446

Table 13. Disbursement of Project Funds – Territorial (continued)

Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Skills Development Programs		
Cree School Board	Welding and fitting	350,000
Cree School Board	Construction Equipment Mechanics	341,428
Eeyou Ilnu Construction	Mechanic and Crushing Plant Management Training	113,770
Mishtuk Corporation	Forestry Road Construction Training	9,568
Service aux Entreprises et aux	Management of Hotel and Restaurants 1st year	74,880
		1,101,534
Youth Programs		
Apatisiwin Skills Development	Regional Career Fair	38,463
Cree Nation Government/Human Resources Dept.	Cree Internship	19,007
Cree Nation Government/Social & Cultural Development Dept.	Certificate in Indigenous Government – UQAT 1st Year	32,733
Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay	Dental Assistant Training	39,999
		130,202
Labour Market Development		
Apatisiwin Skills Development	Labour Force Survey	25,500
SKY Development Services	10 Workshops – 12 months	11,168
Apatisiwin Skills Development	ASDAC Meetings 2020 and 2021	6,651
		43,319
	Total	\$3,415,923

Table 14. Disbursement of Project Funds – Other

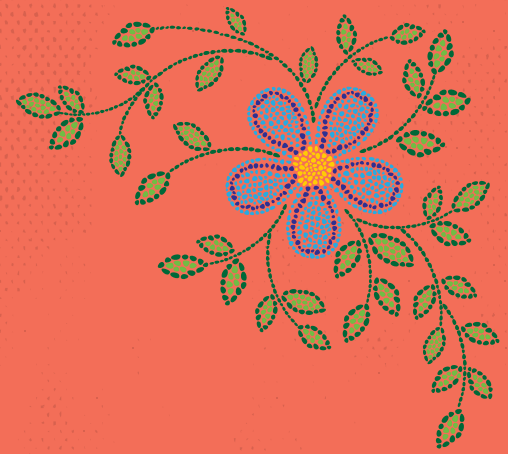
Applicant/Recipient	Project Title	Amount
Employment Programs		
Blais Industries Inc.	Apprenticeship – Electrical Trades	13,527
Quality Inn & Suites Val-d'Or	Cree employment – 1st Year	11,449
		24,976
Skills Development Programs		
McGill School of Continuing Studies	Certificate in Indigenous Business Management	1,335
Apatisiwin Skills Development	Cree CICR Conflict Resolution Training	12,099
Cree Nation Government/ ASD	Employability and Career Development in Aboriginal Phase 1	10,502
Cree Nation Government/ ASD	Employability and Career Development in Aboriginal 2nd Year	52,440
International Indigenous Entrepreneur	Empower, Motivate, Build with After Care Program	68,573
		144,949
Youth Programs		
La Boîte Glacée	Mobile Ice Cream Stand – Summer Employment	1,890
		1,890
Cree Internship Program		
Sagacia Consulting	Cree Internship Program	10,340
		10,340
	Total	\$182,155

Note: some projects (5) include participants allowances \$248,638



COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

*Message from the Director
Anthony MacLeod*



GREETINGS TO ALL. WE ARE PLEASED TO PRESENT THE ANNUAL REPORT SECTION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DCI) OF THE CREE NATION GOVERNMENT. THE 2021-2022 YEAR WAS NOT WITHOUT ITS CHALLENGES. MANY OF THE CREE COMMUNITIES WERE EXPERIENCING PAUSED AND/OR DELAYED PROJECTS. THE OVERALL CONFIDENCE IN BUSINESS START-UPS WAS AT A LOW POINT.



Despite the COVID-19 issues, the Department of Commerce and Industry progressed many files and issues throughout Eeyou Istchee. Substantial work was completed on the Cree Business Registry and the Communications study. Additionally, we moved the Cree Nation Prioritization Agreement file closer to the finish line.

The Department of Commerce and Industry continued promoting and disbursing funding under the Social Economy (CSERT) file. The CSERT program was moved from Montreal to Eeyou Istchee. We felt it was a critical realignment. The result successfully worked with our regional not-for-profit entities across Eeyou Istchee. The Cree Entrepreneurship Assistance Fund was also busy; although new business applications were not received in the normal volume, we pivoted in the second year of COVID to provide additional relief grants to existing entrepreneurs that were feeling the loss during the pandemic.

Mining, Forestry and Construction are important sectors within the territory in the Department of Commerce and Industry. We continued to play a critical role in these sectors throughout the 2021-2022 year. Moving forward in 2022-2023, we anticipate engaging with communities through community visits and disseminating materials to better assist them with sectoral development.

In the past year, we have added a new Benefits and Financial Program Officer position to provide financial advice

to our members across Eeyou Istchee. The Commerce and Industry Department has finalized preparations to include a Consumer Protection Agent in our department in 2022-2023.

Overall, we have had a very busy and progressive year. We continue to develop more statistical and analytical capacity in support of growing the Eeyou Istchee economy.

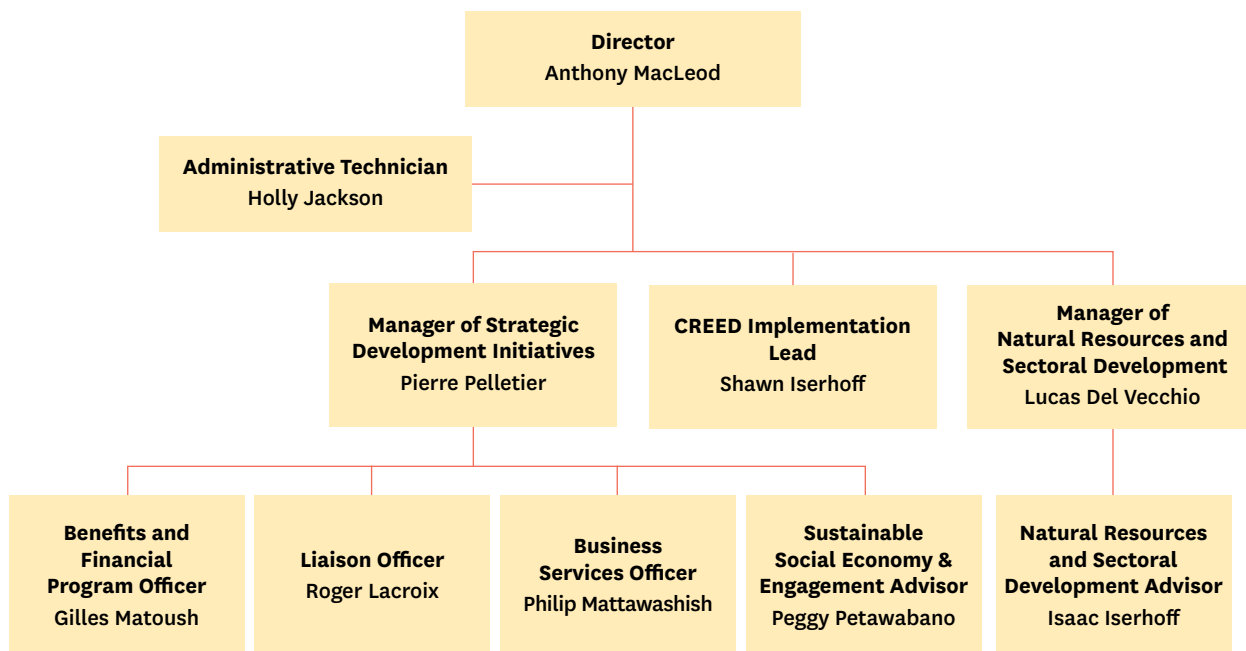
2022-2023 promises to be an exciting year as the territory deconfines. There will be a lot of catching up and many new projects to realize. We are ready to meet the challenges and continue to progress the economic agenda for Eeyou Istchee.

I want to thank the dedicated staff of Commerce and Industry for their hard work during the past year. I appreciate the conscientious effort and professional approach they have shown over the past year.

Meegwetch.

*Anthony MacLeod
Director of Commerce and Industry*

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY STRUCTURE



New Employees

This year we added several new employees to our team. Holly Jackson joined our team as our Administrative Technician. Gilles Matoush took on the newly created Benefits and Financial Program Officer position and Peggy Petawabano joined our team as the Sustainable Social Economy & Engagement Advisor.

Yvette Coonishish, Melinda Martin, Philip Mattawashish and Roger Lacroix left our team this year. We would like to wish Yvette, Melinda, Philip and Roger all the best and thank them for their contributions to the DCI.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Mandate

To diversify and stimulate economic growth in Eeyou Istchee.

Mission and Vision

To take on a strategic role in the development and implementation of economic initiatives throughout Eeyou Istchee. To support the economic growth and well-being of Eeyou Istchee so all Eeyouch and Eenouch may benefit from this prosperity without compromising our culture and values.

Pillars

The Department of Commerce and Industry is driven by 3 economic pillars:

1. Local Enterprises
2. Natural Resource Development
3. Cooperative and Sustainable Economies

NATURAL RESOURCES AND SECTORAL OVERVIEW

Mining

The DCI team continued to play an important role in mining within Eeyou Istchee. This year the team continued to represent the Cree Nation Government on the Implementation Committees of the Opinagow, Mecheshoo, Ballyhusky and Chinuchi Agreements. Our team also sits on the business opportunity sub-committees of the Impact and Benefits agreements in the mining sector.

The Natural Resources team meets on a weekly or bi-weekly basis with proponents and affected communities of several projects that are in development. These meetings ensure communication between the mining companies and the affected Cree First Nations. We met with Galaxy Lithium and Cree Nation of Eastmain, Wallbridge Mining Limited, Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi, Cree Nation of Waskaganish, Nemaska Lithium, and Cree Nation of Nemaska. The Department of Commerce and Industry Natural Resources team has been requested to attend these tables to provide support to the affected Cree First Nations. The opportunity allows us to monitor these projects' progression in development closely.

Forestry

The Director of Commerce and Industry is a member of the Cree-Québec Forestry Economic Council (CQFEC). The CQFEC is composed of equal members appointed by Québec and the Cree Nation Government with the mandate to promote the development of economic and business opportunities for the Crees in forest development activities.

The update of the forestry portrait in Eeyou Istchee completed in 2014 was updated this fiscal year. This exercise will

help our department and the CQFEC in orienting ourselves to better support and promote Cree involvement and benefits from the Forestry sector.

The Cree members of the CQFEC held several working sessions with local representatives appointed by the Cree Nation of Waskaganish, the Cree Nation of Nemaska, the Cree Nation of Waswanipi, the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation and the Cree Nation of Mistissini throughout the year. The local representatives made recommendations on ways to maximize Cree benefits and further promote their involvement in all aspects of forest development activities.

The local representatives and the CQFEC provided recommendations to maximize the Cree involvement and spinoffs from the forestry industry in Eeyou Istchee. Notably, the recommendations touched on training and employment, raising awareness of the forestry regime and industry, and developing beneficial partnerships and inter-community collaboration.

Cree Nation Business Registry

This year, the Commerce and Industry Department has made significant progress on the development of the Cree Nation Business Registry. The project is nearing completion of the second stage, and we expect the online platform to be live in the second quarter of 2022-2023. The second phase of the Cree Business Registry is focused on promotion of business opportunities. This aspect has been in conjunction with the department's work on the Cree Nation Economic Prioritization Agreement (Previously known as the Cree Free Trade Agreement).

The next and final phase of the registry is expected to start in July 2022. It will incorporate the advertising of opportunities section. This will allow registered businesses to receive email and text notifications on contracts and purchasing from entities across Eeyou Istchee. This transpar-

Table 1. Amounts Approved per Sector under the CEAF

Sector	Projects Approved	Amount Approved
Construction	3	\$273,120
Retail & Resto	1	\$100,000
Services	5	\$188,863
Transport	3	\$160,880
Total	12	\$722,863

Table 3. Statistics for the CEAF

Community	Projects Approved	Amount Approved	Estimated Job Creation
Mistissini	7	\$323,923	10
Nemaska	1	\$100,000	5
Ouje-Bougoumou	1	\$100,000	2
Waskaganish	3	\$198,940	6
Total	12	\$722,863	23

ency will assist in growing and expanding the private sector and in connecting businesses with opportunities.

Our registration campaign will start this summer across Eeyou Istchee.

Cree Nation Prioritization Agreement

In parallel with the Business Registry, the department has been working on the framework that will allow local businesses to receive priority on local contracts. The working title for the framework is the Cree Nation Prioritization Agreement. This agreement will ultimately help implement Section 28 of the JBNQA to prioritize local enterprises within the territory. Due to COVID-19, planned in-person consultations on the agreement with the Cree First Nations were either postponed or done virtually.

PROGRAMS

Cree Entrepreneurship Assistance Fund (CEAF)

The Cree Entrepreneurship Assistance Fund (CEAF) provides grants for new Cree Business start-ups, as well as funds for existing Cree businesses to expand, modernize and upgrade their equipment and operations. The purpose of the

Table 2. Projects Approved under the CEAF

Community	Projects Approved
Mistissini	Purchase of His & Hers Flair Salon
Mistissini	Purchase of Barber Shop from Flair Salon
Mistissini	Fresh Tracks Transport
Mistissini	Tina Matoush Event Planner
Mistissini	Nistiwiitaa Rental & Services
Mistissini	D. Coon-Come Transport
Mistissini	Grizzly Excavation and Snow Removal Reg'd
Nemaska	Nemaska Gas Station Expansion
Ouje-Bougoumou	Construction Transport G.H. & Sons
Waskaganish	Moose Excavation
Waskaganish	Eeyou SP Mechanics
Waskaganish	Blackned & Sons Transport
Waswanipi	Howard Blacksmith Transport
Waswanipi	Amisk Excavation Inc.



CEAF project that was funded in 2021-2022, Scott Stevens and Patrick Wiechold from Waskaganish.

investments is to support one of the key economic pillars of Eeyou Istchee, Cree-owned local enterprises.

The program also provides investment in developing businesses to allow for Cree entrepreneurs to gain experience and realize new services for the communities and the region. The circulation of funds and the trickle-down effect of small business is important throughout Eeyou Istchee.

This year, there were twelve (12) projects approved for a total of \$722,863. These twelve projects created approximately twenty-three (23) jobs (see tables 1, 2 and 3). This significant decrease from last year is due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 4. Amounts Approved per Community under the EERP

Community	Projects Approved	Amount Approved
Chisasibi	2	\$21,752
Eastmain	2	\$21,752
Mistissini	1	\$10,876
Ouje-Bougoumou	3	\$32,628
Whapmagoostui	1	\$10,876
Total	9	\$97,884

Table 5. Amounts Approved per Projects under the RDF

Project	Sector	Amount
Nibiischii Corporation	Tourism	\$1,000,000
Maquatua - Modernization	Tourism	\$200,000
Feasibility Study for Data Center (ECN)	Study	\$20,000
Telecommunications Project (ECN) 2021-2022	Services	\$153,113
Contribution for Social Economy 21-22	Social Development	\$12,222
Contribution to Elder's Assistance Programming	Social Development	\$165,534
Contribution to FARR	Regional Study	\$160,688
Annual Contribution to Secretariat	Business Development	\$100,000
Fostering Indigenous Small-Scale Fisheries for Health, Economy, and Food Security (FISHES) Year 3	Study	\$30,000
Total		\$1,841,557

Eeyou Economic Response Plan (EERP)

The fund's goal was to help Cree businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a successful campaign to support the entrepreneurs of Eeyou Istchee during the difficult pandemic. This past year, the final nine (9) projects were approved. There are currently thirteen (13) projects that are in the process of being finalized (see table 4).

Regional Development Fund (RDF)

The objective of the Regional Development Fund (RDF) is to finance economic diversification projects and regional development projects that benefit the territory of Eeyou Istchee. The Regional Development Funds was created with the intent of supporting the expansion of Cree economies within Eeyou Istchee. Generally, these funds are implicated in large scale projects (see table 5).

Regions and Rurality Fund (RRF)

The Commerce and Industry Department oversees the Regional Rurality Fund. This fund has replaced the FARR program beginning in April 2021. The RRF program is open for application for projects from Eeyou Istchee. Any project with regional outreach that will impact more than one Cree community and contribute to achieving regional priorities is eligible for this program.

The Eeyou Istchee regional priorities are:

1. Development and implementation of a strategic housing plan to provide tangible solutions addressing the critical housing shortage.
2. Raising economic and employment activity through the private sector.

\$1,841,557

TOTAL AMOUNT COMMITTED UNDER THE RDF

3. Supporting Cree-Owned businesses.
4. Developing the workforce.
5. Fostering connections and partnerships within Eeyou Istchee.
6. Tying economic development with nation-building.

In 2021 -2022 the DCI had completed the restructuring from FARR to RRF and completed the closure of approved FARR programs. The transferring of existing FARR applications into the new RRF format has also been completed. In the second quarter of the year, we began to process applications from Eeyou Istchee and have seen programs approved under the new RRF structure.

Approved RRF programs include:

1. Cree Trappers Community Freezer Project
2. Cree Nation Government – Consumer Protection Officer
3. Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee – Business Enterprise Conference and Training
4. Cree Nation of Nemaska – Non-Commercial Forestry Products
5. Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association – Commercial Hide Tanning Study

Funding for the Regional Rurality Fund is allocated to Eeyou Istchee through the Quebec Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and Housing (MAMH). Applications are reviewed by the Cree Nation Governments RRF Review Committee and recommended to MAMH. The MAMH makes final approval for programs for all Eeyou Istchee applications.

For the 2022-2023 year, we expect to have increased application levels with new applications arriving from Eeyou Istchee Sports and Recreation, James Bay Cree Communications Society, Cree Nation Business Registry, Waswanipi Hotel, and Winnipac Tours.

Cree Social Economy Regional Table (CSERT)

The Department of Commerce and Industry oversees the Social Economy funding agreement between the Cree Nation Government and the Government of Quebec. The funding is intended to support economic activity with social aims carried out in the framework of enterprises whose activities

comprise the sale or exchange of goods or services, and which are operated according to the following principles:

- The goal of the enterprise is to satisfy the needs of its members or of the community.
- The enterprise is not controlled by the decisions of one or public entities.
- The rules applicable to the enterprise provide for democratic governance by its members.
- The enterprise aspires to economic viability.
- The rules applicable to the legal person operating the enterprise provide that, in the case of dissolution, the remainder of its property must be allocated to another legal person having similar goals.

One of our primary goals is to create jobs while promoting and upholding traditional Cree activities and culture to ensure that it continues into the future.

The Chantier de l'économie sociale (Chantier) is the provincial resource hub for social economy. The Chantier helps to inform the 22 regional organizations, known as Poles, about social economy resources and provincial-wide activities. The "Cree Pole represents Eeyou Istchee". Provincial entities that fund social economy enterprises, such as RISQ (Réseau d'investissement sociale du Québec) or CSMO/ESAC (Comité Sectoriel de main-d'oeuvre) that provide training, are working with the Cree Pole to identify opportunities for socially engaged projects.

The Cree Pole is being represented at various conferences and meetings such as CANDO (National Indigenous Economic Development Organization), First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Economic Development Commission (FNQLEDC), Cree Social Alliance Committee, and the Cree Nation Youth Council's "Inspiring Hope" Summit. In this unprecedented time, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the Canadian, Quebec and Cree economies. Businesses are forced to find new operating methods to meet consumer wants and needs. Social Economy may offer dynamic, greener, socially responsible, sustainable, collective solutions to deal with the pandemic fallout. The Cree Pole is there to help Eeyouch/Enouch get involved, think collectively, and inspire our people to meet society's needs and create equal opportunities.



Peggy Petawabano assisting to the virtual conference "Standing Together"



One project was prolonged due to COVID-19 and was completed in March 2022. Cree Outfitters and Tourism Association (COTA), Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association (CNACA), and the DCI combined efforts to take the next step of the Cree Story. Social economy programming supported the Visitor Experience project. The project will provide Cree artists with training opportunities to best share their culture with visitors upon completion. Artists will act as ambassadors for their community by sharing local points of interest. They will share insights about their art, such as traditional sewing, beading, snowshoe-making, painting or decoy making. Visitors will get an opportunity to purchase authentic Cree products and services directly from the Cree artists. Funds were earmarked for a local economic development conference to highlight the social economy of Cree and Inuit communities. Essential work was undertaken, including arranging conference speakers and preparing presentations on cooperatives.

Whapmagoostui First Nation Standing Together Virtual Conference

We contributed to the virtual conference with Whapmagoostui for the two local governments have decided to work together to come up with possible joint ventures where each community would benefit from basically the same service/project/business, etc. instead of building two of the same desirable futures.

Cree Native Arts & Crafts Association (2 projects)

The Authentic Product Pricing Project 2022 is a five-year strategic plan. This project will grant the Cree Nation but mainly the local Arts & Crafts committee a guideline to follow for the grading of products to sustain their lifestyles as an artist.

A second CNACA project is the Wachiya online store. The online store offers traditional Cree arts and crafts and

Table 6. Amounts Approved per Project Under the CSERT

Name of Enterprises	Amount
COTA Visitor Experience	\$ 6,720
Dabwetamun Academy	\$ 18,750
Mianscum Solidarity Coop	\$ 18,375
James Bay Cree Communication Society	\$ 22,500
Whapmagoostui First Nation	\$ 32,700
Cree Native Arts & Crafts	\$ 42,933
Cree Native Arts & Crafts	\$ 15,000
Total	\$156,978

Indigenous multimedia products to the global audience. The aim is to establish CNACA as a leader in Social Economy by curating its members’ apparel, accessories and crafts. It will also increase long-term revenues through e-Commerce.

James Bay Cree Communications Society

As content is the key, we must invest in the infrastructure to produce Cree content. The Cree Media Studio is the next step in realizing Cree television. The grant provided funding for the a television studio’s architectural drawings (preliminary design).

Mianscum Solidarity Cooperative (2 projects)

Funding was used for the start-up and construction costs of a workshop dwelling where participants can clean their hunt harvest, prepare hides and make some craft work (wood carving, drum making and much more). The second project included funding for a solar panel system and an extra workshop building.



Mianscum Solidarity Coop



Dabwetamun Academy

The grant funds were for purchasing various electronic equipment for their learning tools. The programs include culturally integrated learning materials, tutoring, cultural programs in Dabwetamun Academy.

This past year, seven (7) projects were approved under the CSERT with a committed amount of \$156,978.00. Projects from:

- 2 projects from Mistissini (1 Regional JBCCS)
- 4 projects from Ouje-Bougoumou (3 Regional CNACA & COTA)
- 1 project from Whapmagoostui

Cree Real Estate Entrepreneurship Development Program (CREED)

In alignment with the Cree Nation Housing Strategy, the Cree Real Estate Entrepreneurship Development (CREED) Program was soft launched on March 17, 2022. The program provides start-up grants and supports capacity building for

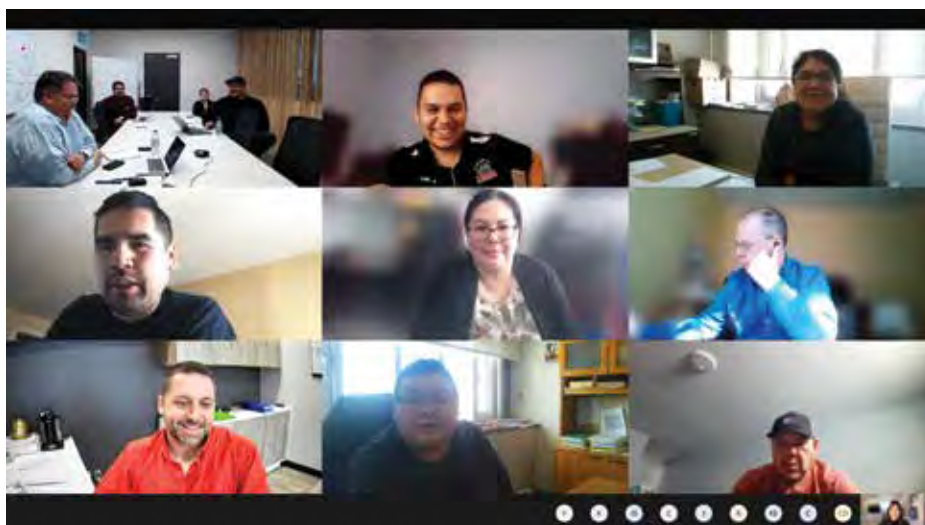


Cree entrepreneurship in the areas of renovations, construction of private homes, and commercial real estate projects in Eeyou Istchee. We are currently in discussions to continue to run this program on a multi-year basis.

Another important aspect of the program is the Cree Nation Government's Department of Commerce and Industry (DCI) potential partnership with Apatisiwin Skills Development and Cree School Board Sabtuan Adult Education Services. Discussions have begun amongst these entities to explore potential housing and real estate education and training opportunities for our entrepreneurs. The exchanges



CREED Information Session with Entrepreneurs, March 2022.



CREED Information Session with Local EDOs / Coordinators, March 2022.

have been very promising, and discussions will continue in 2022-2023 to collaborate and develop plans for the future.

In the next few years, significant investments are expected to advance social and private housing in the Cree Nation. As a result, the Cree Nation Government is inviting the Federal Government to work together to expand the CREED Program for the next ten (10) years. The ultimate goal is to maximize the social and economic opportunities in Eeyou Istchee.

Communications

As part of the launch of this new program, the DCI was proud to have developed a logo that represents the program’s vision. The roof symbol is indicative of the housing and commercial projects that the program aims to fund and doubles as an upward arrow to indicate growth. The integrated “D” reflects the program’s integration within the Cree communities and acts as a building block to reference the program as an essential and vital program for our people.

The CREED Program’s tag line was also created to convey the program’s important goal: “BUILD our Future. Envision,

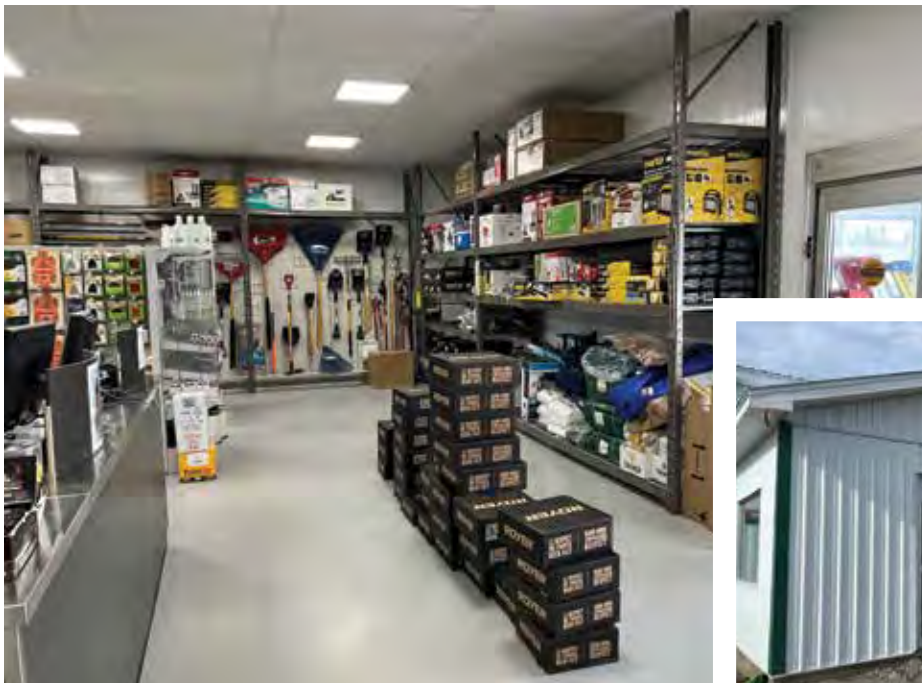
develop, innovate.” Other methods of communication included a public notice, emails with local economic departments and entrepreneurs, a web advertisement with The Nation magazine, and social media posts. Further information on the program was made readily available on the Cree Nation Government DCI webpage. Efforts to promote the program will continue in 2022-2023.

Virtual Information Sessions were also held with Local Economic Development Officers (EDOs) / Coordinators and entrepreneurs. The sessions provided more information on the program goals, grant amounts, and application process. It also allowed stakeholders to engage in a Q & A with the DCI employees directly. The sessions were well-received, with more than thirty (30) participants.

In 2021-2022, the Cree Nation Government allocated \$300,000 in grant funding under the CREED Program. In the short amount of time that CREED was launched, three (3) projects were approved in the amount of \$242,124, with \$232,124 spent (see table 7).

Table 7. Grant Funding under the CREED Program

Proponent	Community	Project Cost	Amount Spent
Keith’s Woodworking & Custom Furniture	Waskaganish	\$47,500	\$47,500
Spencer Landscaping Services	Eastmain	\$94,624	\$94,624
Richard Iserhoff Real Estate	Mistissini	\$100,000	\$100,000
Total		\$242,124	\$232,124



Richard Iserhoff Real Estate



Interest in the CREED Program among Cree entrepreneurs is significant. It highlights the importance of having a program like this in Eeyou Istchee. It is important that we continue to prepare Cree entrepreneurs for the housing boom. At the leadership table, the *Cree Nation Economic Prioritization Agreement* will further address the significance of Cree entrepreneur prioritization so that social and economic benefits can be maximized in our communities.

SERVICES

JBNQA Beneficiary List

The department manages the JBNQA Beneficiary lists. There have been 51 requests regarding the beneficiary lists this year. The DCI has been working with the Commission de la Construction du Québec by confirming the Cree membership status of the application. Thus, validating their eligibility in applying for a CCQ card. Here is a summary of the requests received this year:

- Election requests: 17
- Regional requests: 13
- Statistics requests: 4
- Beneficiary confirmation requests: 17

Benefits and Financial Programs

The Benefits and Financial Program Officer (BFPO) was hired this year in the third quarter. Since starting, the BFPO has developed an action plan and worked with external consultants to prepare the delivery of workshop material that will help increase financial literacy within Eeyou Istchee. In the last quarter of the year, the BFPO delivered five online workshops. More sessions are scheduled in the evenings due to popular demand.

Saving and Budgeting

The workshop focused on the topic of Saving and Budgeting. During the registration period, 115 people registered. But due to last-minute commitments, only 45 participants from all over the Cree Nation attended the workshop.

The topics discussed were:

- Income vs. expenses
- Wants vs. needs
- Resource recommendations
- Tracking your cashflow
- Surplus vs. deficit
- Paying yourself
- Emergency funds

Table 8 shows the number of people who registered from each community.

Debt and Borrowing

The workshop focused on the topic of Debt and Borrowing. There were 48 people who registered for the event (see table 9). A total of 33 participants from all over the Cree Nation were able to attend the workshop.

The topics discussed were:

- Types of debts
- Secured loans vs. unsecured loans
- Good debt vs bad debt
- The 5 Cs of credit
- What is a credit score?
- What is a credit report?
- Rebuilding your credit
- Debt consolidations and consumer proposals
- Co-signing a loan

Table 8. Saving and Budgeting Workshop Registration Numbers per Community

Community	Number of registrations
Whapmagoostui	10
Chisasibi	16
Wemindji	12
Eastmain	5
Waskaganish	7
Nemaska	2
Waswanipi	19
Ouje-Bougoumou	7
Mistissini	35
Washaw-Sibi	2
Total	115

Table 9. Debt and Borrowing Workshop Registration Numbers per Community

Community	Number of registrations
Whapmagoostui	4
Chisasibi	9
Wemindji	2
Eastmain	2
Waskaganish	10
Nemaska	3
Waswanipi	8
Ouje-Bougoumou	0
Mistissini	9
Washaw-Sibi	1
Total	48

Photo: Katherine Dehm

Housing

The goal of this workshop was to make the buyers aware of all the costs of purchasing a home, such as the down payment, interest on a mortgage, users fees, closing costs, mortgage insurance, and other costs associated with buying a house.

One week prior to the workshop, a representative from the Cree Nation Government's Housing department was asked to attend the workshop and answer any questions the participants might have regarding the application process and the housing subsidy. Due to other commitments, the Regional Housing Coordinator was unavailable for the workshop.

There were a couple of questions regarding the costs of owning a home. But there were more questions on how the housing subsidy can be used.

Topics discussed:

- Renting vs. owning
- The true cost of homeownership
- Down payment requirements
- Types of real estate loans
- Community Private Housing Initiative (Cree Nation Government housing department website walk-through)
- Rental properties

Table 10 shows the number of people who registered from each community.

Investing

The Investing workshop aims to help individuals understand why people invest, what are the goals of investors, what bank accounts can be used for investing activities, and

how a person can get started in investing (see table 11). A disclaimer was used in the first slide to inform the participants that the workshop is for educational purposes only. A licensed financial advisor must offer any investment advice.

Topics discussed during the workshop:

- Why invest?
- Types of investments
- Types of investment accounts
- How the stock market works
- Behavioral investing
- Long-term vs. short-term investing
- Important considerations
- Fees

Service Quebec Liaison

As of March 31, 2022, Services Quebec has realigned its funding agreements, mainly the Services Quebec Liaison officer for Eeyou Istchee via its service outlets. The role of the Liaison officer was to provide information from Services Quebec to the Cree Nation Government and increase the accessibility of Services Quebec in the Cree Communities. All information is currently available on the Services Quebec website at www.quebec.ca.

This past year, the Liaison officer supported entrepreneurs in obtaining RBQ licenses, bonding, appropriate permits, and insurance. A community tour with Services Quebec was planned but unable to complete due to COVID-19 restrictions. There was one community session on November 8, 2022, in Eastmain. Presentations were also made to Eeyou Economic Group and the Directors of Housing.

Table 10. Housing Workshop Registration Numbers per Community

Community	Number of registrations
Whapmagoostui	5
Chisasibi	33
Wemindji	5
Eastmain	6
Waskaganish	8
Nemaska	10
Waswanipi	8
Ouje-Bougoumou	2
Mistissini	36
Washaw-Sibi	0
Total	113

Table 11. Investing Workshop Registration Numbers per Community

Community	Number of registrations
Whapmagoostui	2
Chisasibi	4
Wemindji	1
Eastmain	0
Waskaganish	4
Nemaska	2
Waswanipi	1
Ouje-Bougoumou	2
Mistissini	3
Washaw-Sibi	0
Total	19



ENVIRONMENT AND REMEDIAL WORKS

*Message from the Director
Isaac Voyageur*



AS DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND REMEDIAL WORKS, I AM PLEASED TO OFFER THIS REPORT ON OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2021-2022.

 **23**
EMPLOYEES

Several projects initially stalled by COVID-19 were launched this year, including site visits to verify data for the Clean-Up of Abandoned Mining Exploration Sites and training sessions for our Community-based Ice Monitoring Program. This was the first year the Cree Nation Government had staff dedicated solely to work on climate change issues. Thanks to the assistance of our Climate Change Coordinator, monitoring priorities have been identified and community-based projects are forthcoming with newly secured funding.

Throughout the year, in collaboration with other departments, other governments, Cree entities, and the Cree communities, we worked toward long-term territory-wide achievements while simultaneously realizing immediate on-the-ground projects. Our Protected Areas Unit, for example, supported dozens of community conservation projects by administering the Challenge Fund, while also working to achieve permanent legal status for 23 new Territories Reserved for Protected Area Purposes in Eeyou Istchee. Our geographic information system (GIS) Unit produced mapping and analytics to support projects

across the territory, while also progressing into the second phase of the Geospatial Strategy, which will enhance the capacity of the Cree Nation Government for years to come.

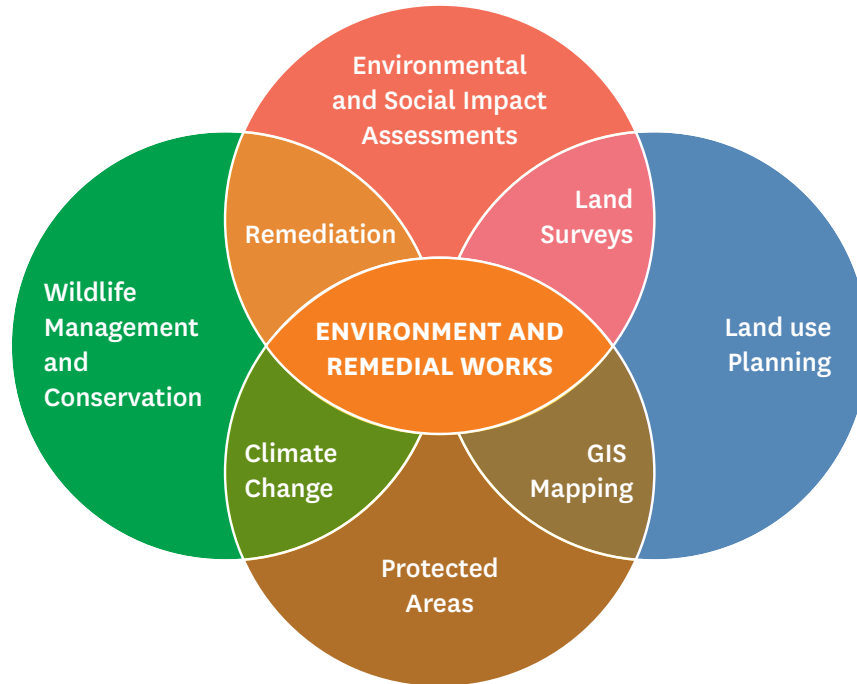
Our work this year exemplified the stronger leadership role being taken by the Crees in the protection of our territory and our rights. Thanks to our Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Unit, the Cree Nation Government had a successful collaboration with Canada in our first experiences on the Joint Assessment Committee. Thanks to our Land Use Planning Unit, the Eeyou Planning Commission is well into the second phase of developing the *Regional Land and Resource Use Plan* for Category II lands. Thanks to our Wildlife Unit, the Cree Nation Government is working with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) on a Cree-led Management Plan for Lake Sturgeon in the territory, an important milestone in intergovernmental collaboration on species conservation in Eeyou Istchee.

Leadership, expertise, and collaboration are at the core of this Department's work in 2021-2022. As moose populations decline and the impacts of climate change increase, we will need this leadership, expertise, and collaboration to meet the challenges the future will bring to our territory. I am proud to lead this Department into that future.

Meegwetch.

*Isaac Voyageur
Director of Remedial Works*

*Chisasibi at sunset
Photo Credit Louie-René Kanatewat*



INTRODUCTION

The Environment and Remedial Works Department (ERWD) is responsible for implementing Sections 4, 5, 8, 22, 24, and 30A of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA)*, pertaining to lands and land management, hydroelectric development, environmental policy and impact assessment, and wildlife management. It is our mission to protect the air, lands, and waters of Eeyou Istchee for the benefit of all Cree people, today and tomorrow.

The Department's 23 staff work mainly from the Mistissini, Waskaganish, and Montreal offices. Our team includes biologists, analysts, engineers, administrators, technicians, planners, project coordinators and management specialists, supported by our administrative assistants, Whitney Blacksmith and Sharon P. Matoush.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (ESIAs)

The Department's ESIA Unit participates in the assessment and review of all projects submitted to the ESIA procedure established by Section 22 of the *JBNQA*. The Unit is comprised of our ESIA Coordinator, Kelly LeBlanc, and our Environmental Analysts, Erica Guth and Kaitlyn Lloyd, who took maternity leave in Fall 2021 and was replaced by Anna Krupa. We work in collaboration with our departmental colleagues, with contributions from other departments and regional organizations, and with the support of the Cree communities.

The ESIA team maintains the Cree Nation Government ESIA Secretariat and collaboratively produces the necessary analyses for Cree-appointed members on the Evaluating Committee (COMEV), the Provincial Review Committee (COMEX) and the Cree Nation Government-Impact Assessment Agency of Canada's Joint Assessment Committee (JAC). This year, we were particularly busy collaborating with the federal government on the JAC, and we had a successful first experience with the *Agreement Concerning the Environmental Assessments of the Rose Lithium – Tantalum and James Bay Lithium Mine Projects*.

Projects under Section 22 ESIA Review in 2021-2022

We assessed 15 projects in the first stages of the ESIA Procedure (Preliminary Information & Directives) for COMEV this year. Detailed information and documentation is available on the COMEV website: <http://comev.ca/en/>. Six of the 15 projects were exempted from ESIAs; 8 remain under analysis; and one was given an updated directive to proceed with an ESIA. See table 1 on the following page.

We assessed another 14 projects this year at the second stages of the ESIA Procedure (ESIA Statement Review & Follow-up) for COMEX. Detailed information and documentation are available on the COMEX website: <http://comexqc.ca/en/>. Notable highlights are:

Rose Lithium-Tantalum Mine

The Project was allowed to proceed by the federal Minister of Environment, given mitigation measures. The

proponent must comply with 221 legally binding conditions including those to protect fish and fish habitat, migratory birds, wetlands, woodland caribou, bat species at risk and the current Cree use of lands and resources. The project is still under review by COMEX.

James Bay Lithium Mine

Galaxy Lithium responded to information requests from COMEX and the JAC regarding this proposed mine on Eastmain territory. The optimization of the project and a revised ESIA report were submitted in July 2021; analysis of the project resumed with multiple questions for both processes. Public hearings will be held next year.

Wind Energy Project

Kuujjuaraapik Whapmagoostui Renewable Energy has worked diligently toward developing the first hybrid power plant in Eeyou Istchee with an installed capacity of 3.0 MW of wind power (two turbines). The goal is to supplement the current power supply (diesel plant) using a local renewable energy source. COMEX held public hearings in February 2022.

In total, 2 of the 14 projects before COMEX in 2021-2022 were authorized; 3 requests for modification were authorized; 4 projects were monitored for follow-up on conditions of their Certificates of Authorization; and 5 projects and modification requests remain under review.

Special Projects of the ESIA Unit in 2021-2022

We assisted the Cree representatives on the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment in organizing the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) inquiry and public hearing on the "Current Status and Management of Final Waste" in Quebec. We secured funding for a new project, *Assessing the Effectiveness of Fish Habitat Compensation in Eeyou Istchee: Cree and Scientific Perspectives*, which began in 2021 in collaboration with the CTA and the Université du Québec in Outaouais and Abitibi-Témiscamingue. We are also participating in a pan-Canadian team on a Genome Canada research project that uses environmental DNA to identify species present in a habitat. We will work with researchers and tallymen to plan an eDNA water sample campaign this summer.

Mining IBAs

The ESIA Unit represents the Cree Nation Government on the Environmental Follow-Up Committees created under Impact and Benefit Agreements (IBAs) signed with mining companies and Cree First Nations. Among the highlights of the year was the Summer 2021 presentation of recommendations of the Opinagow Environment Committee's Lake Sturgeon Literature Review at a consultation with land users and families in Wemindji.

Table 1. Select New Projects (10 of 15) assessed by the ESIA Unit before COMEX in 2021-2022

Project	Proponent	Status	Cree Territories
Bulk Sampling Project at the James Bay Mine Project Site	Galaxy Lithium Canada Inc.	Under Review - Recommendation of Exemption	Eastmain
Installation of a New Hydrometeorological Station at Winsh Lake	Hydro-Québec	Exempted	Mistissini and Ouje-Bougoumou
Improvement of the Boat Ramp Upstream of the Weir on the Rupert River Project	Cree Nation of Nemaska	Exempted	Nemaska
Site Development and Ramp Sinking Project - Gladiator Project	Bonterra Resources Inc.	Under Review - Recommendation of Exemption	Waswanipi
Windfall Lake Mine Project	Osisko Mining Inc	Adjustments to the Directive	Waswanipi
Galaxy Lithium Inc. Coniagas Tailings Reclamation Project	Galaxy Lithium Inc	Under Review	Waswanipi
Quarries			
Expansion/operation of quarry and bituminous concrete plant at km 254 Billy-Diamond Road	Société de développement de la Baie-James	Exempted	Nemaska
Expansion/op of SOC-1 quarry at km 5.3 LaGrande-4 Road	Hydro-Québec	Exempted	Chisasibi
Sand pit/concrete plant for maintenance of Billy-Diamond Hwy at km 323	Construction Norascon inc.	Exempted	Waskaganish
Expansion of quarry and reopening of sand pit at km 58 Rte 19900	Ministère des Transports du Québec	Under Review	Waswanipi

CLIMATE CHANGE MONITORING

Our Climate Change Coordinator, Pernilla Talec, manages the “Eeyou Istchee Climate Monitoring Project for a Resilient Future” and assists the Cree Nation Government, the Cree communities and Cree entities in reviewing the climate change sections of various policies and projects. A long-term vision guides this work, aimed at ensuring climate change resilience in all domains. Here are some highlights from 2021-2022.

Eeyou Istchee Climate Monitoring Project for a Resilient Future

In 2021, we received federal funding for this 3-year program. An advisory committee was created with representatives from the Cree communities and Cree departments and entities. The following projects are underway.

- **Creation of a Database/Access Portal and a Networking Platform for Climate Change information in Eeyou**

Istchee. Consultants will assist in deciding our technical options.

- **Data Gap Analysis and Determination of Priorities for Collaborative Climate Monitoring.** Monitoring priorities have been identified, as have the datasets to spatially represent them. A needs-index exercise and gap analysis will follow.
- **Meteorological Station Pilot Project.** This project will begin once we finalize our goals.

Green Economy Plan: Delegation of Funding

In June 2021, Quebec presented its *2030 Plan for a Green Economy* and corresponding *Five-year Implementation Plan (2021-2026)*, encompassing Cree concerns raised at an Ouje-Bougoumou meeting in 2019. An envelope of approximately \$2.5 million over 3 years was announced for the Cree Nation Government to develop a program supporting community-based projects for climate change adaptation.

Table 2. Projects assessed by the ESIA Unit before COMEX in 2021-2022

Project	Proponent	Status	Cree Territories
Recommendations			
Nibiischii National Park Project	Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs	Authorized Request for modification	Mistissini
New Wastewater Treatment Plant	Cree Nation of Wemindji	Authorized	Wemindji
New Waste Disposal Project in Wemindji	Cree Nation of Wemindji	Authorized	Wemindji
Permanent Road Access to New Landfill Site	Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Authorized Request for modification	Waswanipi
Renard Diamond Mine	Stornoway Diamond (Canada) Inc.	Authorized Request for modification	Mistissini
Transmission of Questions and Comments			
Whapmagoostui-Kuujuaraapik Hybrid Power Plant Project	Kuujuaraapik Whapmagoostui Renewable Energy Corp	ESIA Under review	Whapmagoostui
Processing of Gold Ore at Bachelor Site + increase in Milling Rate	Ressources Métanor Inc. (Bonterra Resources)	ESIA Under review	Waswanipi
Rose Lithium-Tantalum Mine Project	Critical Elements Corporation	ESIA Under review	Eastmain, Nemaska, Waskaganish
James Bay Lithium Mine Project	Galaxy Lithium (Canada) inc.	ESIA Under review	Eastmain
Construction of forest access roads H-W & I	EACOM Timber Corporation	ESIA Under review	Waswanipi
Monitoring			
Domestic Waste Landfill Site	Cree First Nation of Waswanipi	Follow-up of a condition of Authorization	Waswanipi
Troilus Mine-Dewatering of J-4 & 87 Pits	Troilus Gold Corp.	Follow-up of a condition of Authorization	Mistissini
Renard Diamond Mine	Stornoway Diamonds	Follow-up of a condition of Authorization	Mistissini
Éléonore Mine	Les Mines Opinaca Ltée (Newmont)	Follow-up of a condition of Authorization	Wemindji

Collaborative Monitoring Initiative

Environment and Climate Change Canada has established the Collaborative Monitoring Initiative to strengthen national capacity to monitor climate through increased collaboration among governments, academia, indigenous organizations, and the private sector. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to guide our participation in this collaboration is under legal review.

Hydrometric Stations

An agreement is in development between Hydro-Québec (HQ), Niskamoon, UQAM and the Cree Nation Government regarding the maintenance of hydrometric stations installed in major rivers along the Eastern James Bay. These stations will help us monitor ecosystem health and quantify climate changes at the regional and continental scales. Under the 5-year agreement (2023-2027), HQ will cover professional costs associated with station maintenance (room, board, salary, etc.), while Niskamoon and the Cree Nation Government will contribute to the costs of helicopter flights and UQAM fees to process data.

REMEDIATION

The Department Director, Isaac Voyageur, is the Regional Environmental Administrator for Category I lands, assisted by our Manager of Environment, Cameron McLean; our Environment Management Coordinator, Flora Weistche; our Environmental Advisor, Kristy Franks; our Senior Science Advisor, Alan Penn; our Ice Monitoring Coordinator, Sammy Blackned; and our Coordinator for the Clean-up of Abandoned Mining Exploration Sites, Adario Masty.

The team provides technical guidance on issues of contaminated site management and remediation, carries out Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessments, monitors the annual inventory and cleanup of former Hydro-Québec sites and camps, and participates in drinking water quality monitoring in the Cree communities in collaboration with the Capital Works and Services Department. In 2021-2022, some activities were limited due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, while others were performed in adapted capacities.

Hydro Québec/SEBJ-James Bay Region Site Clean-Up

Following years of soil characterization and water sampling to inform a remediation plan, 9 sites were cleaned up near Chisasibi, Eastmain, Nemaska, Waswanipi and Wemindji in September 2021. From these sites, over 9,040 kg of waste materials and over 1,000 kg of residual materials were removed, and over 15 metric tonnes (8.5m³) of contaminated soil were cleaned.

Mid Canada Line

Efforts to clean up the former military sites are underway. Canada classified 36 sites; an additional 7 sites are under Quebec's responsibility, in collaboration with the Cree, Inuit, and Naskapi Nations. These 7 sites are located near water bodies and were used to supply fuel and materials for military activities. They have now been characterized and assessed for residual materials and contaminated soils and we are collaborating on a remediation workplan.



Ice Monitoring Trainers Andréa Paquette and Yann Cameron with Participants Nathaniel Saganash, Thomas Shem Sr., Gerald Mark, and Marc-André Roy, March 2022

Sea and Fresh Water Ice Monitoring

Climate change is impacting how the Crees are able to access the territory, and safety on ice in a changing climate is a critical cause for concern. The Department leads the federally-funded “Eeyou Istchee Community-Based Sea Ice and Freshwater Ice Monitoring Program” to assess and adapt to changes in ice formation.

This program was delayed for two seasons due to COVID-19, but we were able to begin formal ice monitor-

ing training in March 2022. A team from Lasalle NHC—a company with extensive experience in ice monitoring in Northern Quebec—conducted classroom sessions and field training—including surface monitoring, ice thickness measurement, data recording, and safety—in Wemindji and Mistissini. Community turnout was lower than we had planned for; however, the training sessions were enthusiastically appreciated by those in attendance, largely members of community public safety.



Training in Safe Movement on Ice Cover, Wemindji, March 2022



Ice Monitoring Classroom Training, Wemindji, March 2022



Evaluating Ice Thickness, Wemindji Field Training, March 2022



Summer 2021 site characterization/cleanup, Trapline M17C (Mistissini AMES Cleanup Coordinator, Adario Masty, at left).



Clean-Up of Abandoned Mining Exploration Sites

Over the past year, the Department has been busy implementing the 11-year, \$11-million *Agreement for the clean-up of abandoned mining exploration sites*. Although access to the territory was limited due to COVID-19, we were able to make significant progress.

In summer 2021, 49 sites were visited by our Program Coordinator, accompanied by tallymen and land users. These sites were located in the Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou and Whapmagoostui traditional territories, and ranged from small prospecting camps to large worksites. The visits confirmed the need for clean-up of 25 sites. One site containing a small number of empty drums was cleaned by the Coordinator at the time of the visit. The remaining 23 sites were removed from our clean-up list due to a lack of content.

Also this year, data verification work was undertaken in Mistissini in collaboration with EnviroCree, a local environmental consulting company, to validate sites originally inventoried in 2007-2008. Interviews were carried out for 10 traplines and upwards of 50 sites were verified directly with land users. Data was organized using an ArcGIS application and a user dashboard was developed to allow stakeholders to visualize the progress of clean-up work.

In November 2021, we submitted our Clean-Up Strategy for 2022-2026, aiming to clean up as many as sites as possible, as early as possible.

LAND SURVEYS

The Department is responsible for land regime issues that arise while implementing the JBNQA. This work is led by our Senior Science Advisor, Alan Penn, and our Manager of Environment, Cameron McLean, in collaboration with the Cree First Nations and the federal and provincial governments, with Gowlings as our legal advisor.

Reconfiguration of Category I Boundaries

The boundaries of Category I lands are undergoing a long review process which is expected to result in a Complementary Agreement to the JBNQA. Still in the early stages of drafting, this Agreement will for practical purposes replace

Section 4 of the JBNQA, with links to plans of survey and Quebec Orders-in-Council that will provide legal definitions of the boundaries of Category I and II lands.

Some of these boundaries are currently undergoing review and adjustment pursuant to the Quebec-Cree New Relation Agreement of 2002. This is the case for Waswanipi, Waskaganish, Chisasibi and Nemaska. In addition, there are some unresolved issues involving Makivik and the Nunavik Inuit in Whapmagoostui/Kuujuaaraapik, as well as Chisasibi. Discussions are ongoing and should result in the relevant legal changes to boundaries in the next few years.

Category II Land Regime Files

We have prepared a review of outstanding issues for Category II lands. The longstanding work on the Mistissini-Ouje-Bougoumou land transfer agreement is almost complete and should be finished this year. We are seeking an opportunity for a regional-level review of Category II land boundaries. The affirmation of Cree jurisdiction within Category II lands pursuant to the Governance Agreement has not yet been addressed.

The Eeyou Marine Region Land Claim Agreement (EMRLCA)

The EMRLCA took legal effect on November 11, 2011; a 10-year implementation review is now underway. The Nunavik Inuit Land Claim Agreement and the EMRLCA together include the waters and islands in the eastern half of James Bay and Hudson Bay. There is a substantial overlap between the Cree and Inuit territories, extending from Chisasibi to the Nastapoka Islands. An Overlap Agreement establishes the working relationships between the Cree and the Inuit which will guide the implementation of their land claims agreements.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) SERVICES

The Department's GIS Coordinator, Jonathan Elkhoury, and our GIS Analyst, Maxine Mark-Stewart, support all our files and assist other departments, Cree entities, and Cree com-

munities with mapping and GIS data management needs. This year, we welcomed Maverick Loon-Swallow as our newest GIS technician. Maverick has been hired on contract to support work related to Protected Areas.

Following are select achievements of the GIS Unit in 2021-2022.

Geospatial Strategy

We are working with other departments and with Esri Canada to develop a Geospatial Strategy to improve Cree Nation Government GIS capabilities. The Strategy consists of a Discovery phase to assess and portray the current state of our GIS capabilities; a Vision and Strategy phase to establish the desired future state of our GIS; and a Roadmap phase to recommend initiatives to bring GIS capabilities to their desired future state.

The Discovery Phase of the Strategy is now complete. Following departmental presentations, workshops, and surveys in 2021, Esri Canada analyzed and compiled the information into 1 organizational and 7 departmental current-state

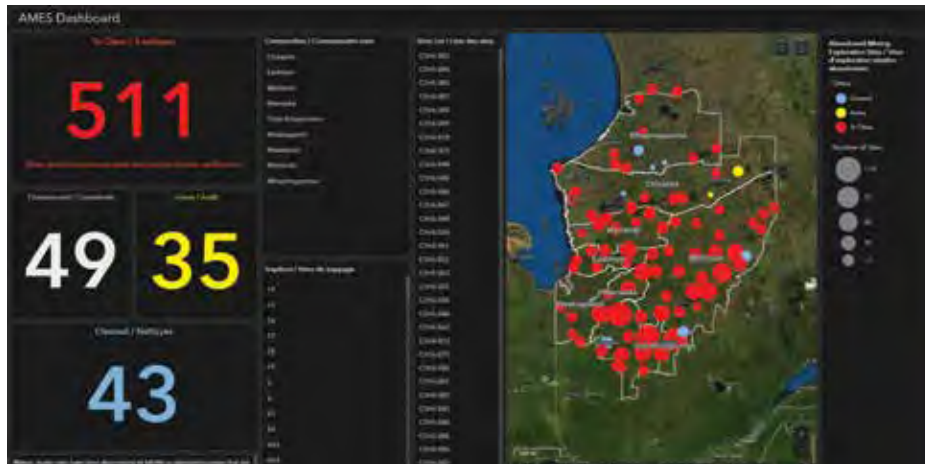
reports. Work on the Vision and Strategy Phase began in March 2022. Strategic recommendations and a roadmap are expected to be finalized this summer.

Mapping and Analytics

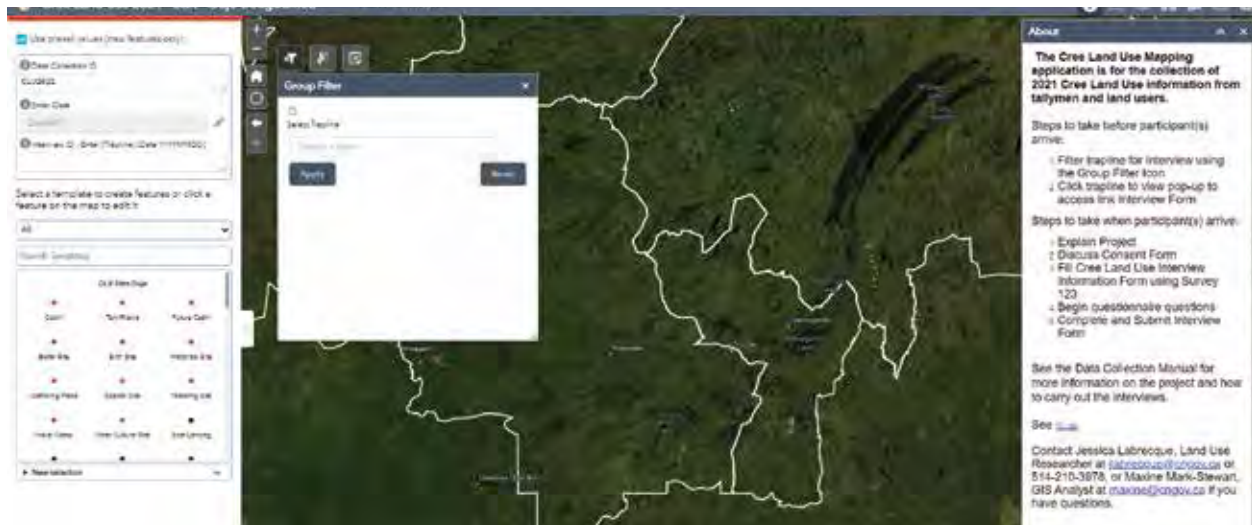
We conduct a range of mapping and analytics to support the files of this Department and other Cree Nation Government departments. Recent work includes COVID-19 Areas of Risk mapping; La Grande Alliance feasibility study maps; Traditional Ecological Knowledge mapping for the Lake Sturgeon management plan; Woodland Caribou Road Restoration maps; and digitizing of Protected Areas consultation maps.

GIS App Development

We develop mapping applications and tools to facilitate the use of GIS to support multiple projects, including the *Cleanup of Abandoned Mining Explorations Sites (AMES) Dashboard* and the *Cree Land Use Mapping app*, which the LUP team used extensively in Ouje-Bougoumou in 2021-2022 and which will soon be deployed in other communities.



The AMES Dashboard



CLUM Application for Ouje-Bougoumou

GIS Training and Support

As the initial point of contact for Esri products in Eeyou Istchee, we manage the Esri Enterprise License Agreement and make ArcGIS software and licenses accessible to the Cree Nation Government and the Cree communities. We also provide technical support and training opportunities to our GIS users. We also coordinate with Cree entities such as the Cree Trappers' Association on matters related to the *Trapline Registry* and advise them on best practices for data management.

LAND USE PLANNING

The Department's Land Use Planning (LUP) Unit acts as secretariat and staff support for the Eeyou Planning Commission (EPC) and supports Cree participation in land use planning across Eeyou Istchee. The LUP Unit is composed of Christopher Beck, Manager of Land Use Planning; Sarah-Anne Brochu-Hébert, Land Use Planning Advisor; Jessica Labrecque, Land Use Specialist; and Merlin Whiskeychan, Land Use Planning Officer. We provide advice and technical support to the Cree Nation Government and the Cree communities, and we facilitate the collaborations required to advance Cree interests in land use planning. Here are some highlights.

Eeyou Planning Commission (EPC)

In the fall of 2021, Deputy Grand Chief Norman Wapachee was confirmed as the new EPC Chairperson. Online EPC meetings were held in December and February, and the first in-person meeting in over 2 years was held in April 2022. Our work focused on developing the *Regional Land and Resource Use Plan* (RLRUP) for Category II lands.

We collaborated with the firm BC2 to complete Phase 1 of the RLRUP: background research, data gathering, and development of an action plan. The document is now under review by the EPC, Cree Nation Government Departments, and Cree entities. The full RLRUP will be developed over the next 2 years, and BC2 will continue to assist. Phase 2

(identification of the scope and structure of the RLRUP, and potential new municipal planning tools and regulations) is scheduled for completion in June 2022.

Cree Land Use Mapping (CLUM)

A major initiative is underway to map Cree Land Use for all the Cree communities. Working with the Department's GIS Unit, we completed CLUM work for the Ouje-Bougoumou territory this year, collecting Cree land use information and developing Cree land use maps and prototype Cree planning support maps. We will continue collecting Cree land use information for the traplines of the remaining Cree communities. As well, we are working with the EPC and coastal communities to frame a land use mapping initiative for the Eeyou Marine Region (EMR). We are also working with the EPC and others to develop a governing framework for Cree land use information, one that places Cree First Nations at the center of their own data and its access.

Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission (EMRPC)

The EMRPC has a mandate to develop and implement a land use plan for the EMR. We are collaborating with the firm BC2, which submitted a preliminary Background Report/Regional Portrait in February 2022. Donovan Moses was hired as (permanent) EMRPC Director in fall 2021, and a Land Use Planner is being hired to work on this file in 2022-2023.

Kativik Master Plan and Zoning Bylaw

The Kativik Master Plan for Land Use, originally developed in the 1990s, applies to the area north of the 55th parallel, which includes the majority of Whapmagoostui's hunting territory. The Aboriginal Advisory Committee composed of Makivik, Naskapi Nation, and the Cree Nation Government was revived in February 2022 so that it could offer its input on a bylaw to enact the Master Plan. A lack of Cree land use information in the Master Plan needs to be addressed.



Eeyou Planning Commission Meeting in Gatineau, April 2022

James Bay and Kativik Public Land Use Plans (PATPs)

The Cree-Quebec Participation Table for the James Bay Region completed its work this year, providing input for the drafting of the PATP for Category II lands. The Participation Tables for the James Bay Region Category III lands and for the Kativik Region completed their work as well. Based on their input, Quebec will produce a final consultation PATP document for the James Bay and Kativik Regions and hold stakeholder consultations in late 2022 or 2023.

PROTECTED AREAS AND CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

The Department's Protected Areas (PA) Unit is made up of Chantal Otter Tétreault, Protected Areas and Conservation Specialist; Lindsay Notzl, Challenge Fund Administrator; Robin Campbell, Conservation Program Officer; John Shecapio, Environmental Program Officer; and Sarah Biron, Financial Program Officer. The team works with the Cree communities, Cree entities, federal and the provincial governments, and other partners to develop protected areas and other conservation initiatives in the territory.

The Protected Areas Network in Eeyou Istchee

There has been little rest for the PA Unit since the December 2020 announcement by the Cree Nation Government and the Government of Quebec, establishing the next steps for the existing PA network and the 23 new Territories Reserved for Protected Area Purposes (TRPAP) in Eeyou Istchee. There are still several steps to be taken by 2025 before these areas are granted permanent legal status, including knowledge acquisition and public consultations to finalize the boundaries, fieldwork to verify boundaries as well as ecological and cultural values, drafting of conservation plans, and conducting ESIA's under Section 22 of the JBNQA.

Meanwhile, Quebec and the Plan Nord Society continue the work to identify 30% of land north of the 49th parallel as Northern Conservation Territories, a new designation under the amended *Natural Heritage Conservation Act*, by conducting a pre-consultation with various stakeholders on the draft mechanism. The Cree Nation Government will ensure that this initiative respects our inherent rights within the JBNQA and that any development within these areas is compatible with conservation goals.

The Challenge Fund

We continue to administer the Challenge Fund, which supports Cree communities, Cree entities, and other partners on projects to establish new protected areas and undertake their long-term management. Challenge Fund projects focus on one of three streams: Cree culture, water, and wildlife. Here are some highlights from 2021-2022.

Marten Monitoring

The Cree First Nation of Waswanipi continues to monitor wapistan (American marten) populations using photographic bait stations at 54 sites. This year, spy cameras were installed at 31 sites within existing and proposed PAs, four new weather stations were installed to monitor climate data,

and the analysis and classification of 50,000 photos taken during the first survey plan (2016-2021) was completed.

Waswanipi Guardians

The Waswanipi Guardians continued their training to become autonomous field technicians, combining scientific and Cree knowledge and trapping skills learned from Elders and tallymen. Two Guardians are in their third year of training, and 3 new trainees joined the team this year.

Cultural Heritage Resources

We continue to support the Cree Nation of Chisasibi's project to collect key cultural information for the new TRPAPs. Public awareness, community engagement, and presentations to local Chief and Council are ongoing.

Water Quality Monitoring

In September 2021, the Cree Nation Government, the Cree Nation of Nemaska, and Water First NGO collaborated on a water quality monitoring project for Dana and Evans Lakes in the Chisesaakahikan and Broadback River Biodiversity Reserve. A 3-day training program was delivered to community members and then applied by tallymen and land users in sampling lake water. Lab analysis indicated that turbidity and suspended solids were an average of 5 times higher in Lake Dana than in Lake Evans. While none of the Canadian guidelines for drinking water safety were exceeded in either of the lakes, levels of iron, aluminum and phosphorus were above the Canadian Guidelines for Protection of Aquatic Life (PAL) in both lakes.

Chisesaakahikan Documentary

Local Cree filmmakers Timeless Studios documented the historical, cultural, and sacred values and sites in the Chisesaakahikan and Broadback River Biodiversity Reserve for the Cree Nation of Nemaska. The project included field visits and on-camera interviews with Elders. The Old Nemaska Post featured heavily in the documentary, as this site is deeply significant to the community.

Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems

The Cree Nation of Eastmain is partnering with the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT) on a project to identify Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems throughout their territory. The project will amass information on environmental and cultural values in the Coldwater-Juneshew-Sibi and Namewaakamiishtikw-Piskuchitishu-Siipii TRPAPs to be used in the upcoming ESIA, and it will support the identification of additional areas requiring conservation.

Breeding Bird Monitoring

In Spring 2021, the Cree Nation Government partnered with the Canadian Wildlife Service to deploy four Autonomous Recording Units (ARUs) in Nibiischii National Park, Mistissini, to survey breeding songbirds. Preliminary results identified 36 nesting bird species, including 3 Species at Risk (Olive-sided Flycatcher, Rusty Blackbird, and Common Nighthawk). A further ten ARUs were deployed by the CTA and the EMRWB along the Wemindji coast, where 83 bird species were iden-

tified, including 5 Species at Risk. A Cree-language training video on ARU installation and use is in development.

Regional Land Stewardship

We continued to support the Eeyou Istchee Land Keeper/Wildlife Protection Assistant Program this year, as well as the CTA's Eeyou Ituun Program, a land stewardship training program that will be completed in June 2022.

Youth Initiatives

We supported several projects that engage youth in traditional activities, including a video of the 2021 snowshoe journey coordinated by the Cree Nation Youth Council and Whapmagoostui First Nation; a PA Youth Ambassador Program modeled after Parks Canada's program but tailored to the context of Eeyou Istchee; and a traditional snowshoe walk in March 2022, the Aashuumiih ("pass it to me") Winter Journey from Waskaganish to the Jack River in the Boatswain Bay TRPAP, in which 30 youth participated.

PA Communications Strategy

Maamuu Consultants conducted a public opinion survey in Chisasibi and Mistissini this year and discovered that 38% of respondents had not heard about protected areas in Eeyou Istchee, but 94% wanted to learn more. Recommended pathways of communication include radio, social media, and community discussions. Results of the survey will be used to direct future outreach strategies. In the meantime, the Cree Nation Government and partners created interim products including posters, pamphlets, comics, infographics, videos, and a stylized map by a young Cree artist printed on placemats.

WILDLIFE

The Department's Wildlife Unit supports the conservation of wildlife resources and biodiversity in Eeyou Istchee and safe-

guards Cree rights and interest. We ensure the implementation of the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Regime (Chapter 24) of the JBNQA, Part III of the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claim Agreement (EMRLCA), and other agreement provisions related to the management and conservation of wildlife in Eeyou Istchee. We provide support, advice and representation on wildlife matters to the Cree Nation Government, the Cree communities, and various internal and external organizations.

The Wildlife Unit is led by our Manager of Environment, Cameron McLean, and includes our Environment Management Coordinator, Flora Weistche; our Wildlife Administrators, Emily Sinave (on maternity leave in 2021) and Kristy Franks (maternity leave replacement); our Wildlife Biologist, Maya Longpré-Croteau; our Wildlife Technician, Anderson Jolly; and our Senior Science Advisor, Alan Penn. Every year, we respond to a multitude of wildlife issues at local, regional, provincial, and federal levels. Here are some highlights from 2021-2022.

Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC)

The Wildlife Unit supports the Cree members of the HFTCC, an advisory body that reviews, manages and regulates the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping regime provided under Chapter 24 of the JBNQA. Important files addressed this year include the Outfitting Regime, the federal Fish and Fish Habitat Program, Migratory Caribou management (Leaf River and George River Herds); Woodland Caribou monitoring (Boreal population); and Moose monitoring and conservation in Zone 17.

Moose Management

A 2021 Cree-Quebec aerial survey confirmed a significant moose population decline in the southern part of Eeyou Istchee. The survey found the lowest productivity level of females and the lowest number of males ever recorded in Zone 17. At the current population, a 10% "sustainable rate of har-

*Across the community of Mistissini, in the Nibiischii park
Photo credit: Aamuu Solutions*



vest” could not support the guaranteed level of Cree harvest. The Cree Nation Government pressed for immediate action to implement moose recovery measures, and the HFTCC requested an immediate closure of the sport hunt to give effect to the Cree Priority of Harvest. In response, Quebec closed the moose sport hunt in Zone 17 for the fall 2022 season. A Moose Management Committee and a Moose Technical Committee were created to establish guidelines for Zone 17.

Moose Habitat Quality Index

This project is a collaborative effort between McGill University, the Cree Nation Government, the Cree Trappers’ Association, the communities of Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini, and Quebec. The goal is to evaluate moose habitat quality within the Adapted Forestry Regime territory in Eeyou Istchee by analysing location data from moose collars deployed in traplines affected by forestry, as well as a planned redeployment of collars in the Broadback region beyond the northern limit of commercial forestry. Cree knowledge will inform the analysis of collar data and the broader assessment of moose habitat quality.

In the fall of 2021, interviews with 56 tallymen and land users in Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou, Mistissini, and Nemaska confirmed that moose habitat is changing in drastic ways, and so is the relationship that Crees have with moose. A complex web of forces have contributed to the decline in quality habitat and moose populations, from modern hunting practices to forestry, mining, hydro, changing weather patterns, increased predation, and increased access for sport hunters.

Lake Sturgeon Management Plan

The Southern Hudson Bay-James Bay population of lake sturgeon has been listed in the federal *Species at Risk Act* as a “Species of Special Concern” requiring a management plan. As this species is reserved for exclusive use by the Crees within Eeyou Istchee, we are collaborating with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada on the development of a Cree-led Management Plan. *The Species at Risk Act Section 11 Conservation Agreement for Lake Sturgeon (southern Hudson Bay - James Bay populations)* is an important milestone in Cree-Canada collaboration on wildlife conservation.

The Wildlife team toured the 9 Cree communities that are home to lake sturgeon and engaged with tallymen and land users to understand the species’ status on Cree territory, to gather traditional knowledge and hear community concerns regarding the conservation of fish and fish habitats, and to discuss opportunities for community stewardship.

Eeyou Coastal Habitat Comprehensive Research Program

In 2016, the Cree Nation Government, Niskamoon Corporation and Hydro-Québec agreed to launch an independent research project on the effects of environmental changes in coastal marine ecosystem and their impact on Cree hunting activities. For five years, research studies were undertaken pertaining to coastal oceanography, rivers inputs, eelgrass beds, waterfowl, and Cree coastal land use activities. Onsite research concluded



Interviews with land users on lake sturgeon in Waswanipi

in December 2021 and one last year remains in the program. The public can now access research highlights, preliminary results, an interactive map, and Cree testimonials on the program website (www.eeyoucoastalhabitat.ca). Program results will be presented at the Coastal Habitat Research Symposium in September 2022.

Industrial Research on Northern Biodiversity in a Mining Context

As part of the wetland compensation plan for mining companies, a research Chair was created to increase knowledge on northern biodiversity in order to reduce the potential impacts of mining while integrating scientific and traditional knowledge. The Department represents the Cree Nation Government on the committees governing the Chair. In 2021-2022, following four years of data collection, we worked on assessing and integrating the data. A Biodiversity Atlas is one of the products in development.

FISHES

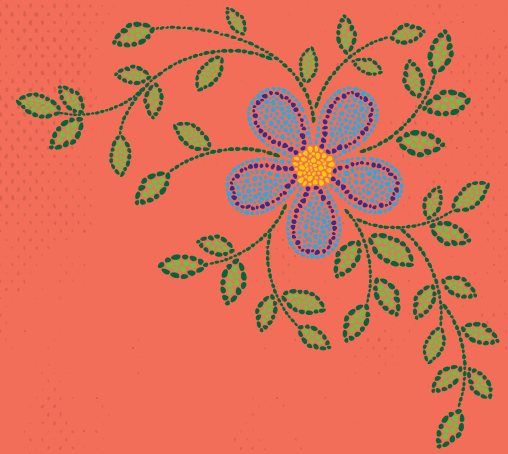
We are collaborating with the University of Concordia and Université Laval on the federally funded FISHES project: *Fostering Indigenous Small-scale Fisheries for Health, Economy, and Food Security*. In cooperation with the Cree communities, we are integrating Genomics and Fisheries Science with Indigenous Knowledge to address the challenges and opportunities related to food security and fisheries. This year, a U-Laval FISHES team visited Eastmain to sample three anadromous species on the James Bay coast (brook trout, lake whitefish, cisco). Another team visited Waskaganish to sample community catches of ciscoes. A Concordia team worked with the Cree Nation of Mistissini, the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi and the Nibiischi Corporation to collect hundreds of walleye, speckled (brook) trout and lake trout samples across four lakes and ten tributaries. Fin clips and biological data are currently being analyzed to investigate source population and mixed stock structure, as well as temporal changes for all three species.

These are just some of the Environment and Remedial Works Department’s proud achievements in 2021-2022.



CAPITAL WORKS AND SERVICES

*Message from the Director
John Longchap*



GREETINGS TO THE CREE NATION AND ALL READERS! I HAVE HELD THIS OFFICE FOR A FULL YEAR NOW. I MUST SAY THAT I ENJOY WORKING WITH MY NEW COLLEAGUES AND TO BE WITH THE CREE NATION GOVERNMENT SERVING THE COMMUNITIES. I STILL HAVE MUCH TO LEARN AND MY COLLEAGUES ARE INDISPENSABLE IN MY LEARNING.



This year was challenging again due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Restrictions were still enforced but laxed a bit to allow for economic activity to resume. Some projects put on hold last year did not happen as we had hoped. The surge in construction prices caused by the disruption in supply chains has still not fully abated and costs exceed the budgets approved by the Cree leadership. This, despite an increase in budgets to meet the estimated costs for construction.

Since the announcement of the New Social Housing fund to build 750 social units for the Nation, we have been working very hard to set up the program. It is now in place and communities will begin construction in the summer of 2022. We have had excellent cooperation from the communities who have also been working hard to establish their five-year housing plans. The program provides a 75% grant for the construction of a unit and the balance required would be the responsibility of the communities. However, the Cree Nation Government continues to attempt to secure more funding and further reduce the amounts the communities must finance. The Cree Nation Government has been making good progress on this front.

Another important file we have been reviewing is the Community Private Housing Initiative (CPHI) Subsidy Program. The program has received fewer applications than expected. One reason for this is the substantial increase in construction costs because of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also uncovered other

factors that prevented people from applying and are currently working on an action plan. The Cree Nation Government has also adjusted the subsidy amounts to meet the increases caused by the pandemic.

The value of the projects we manage has been overwhelming. To meet our needs and maintain our level of services, we have proposed 4 new positions: Senior Housing Advisor, Project Manager for Capital Projects, Coordinator of Capital Projects and a Coordinator of Solid Waste and Diversion.

A challenge regarding staffing our department is that it seems that the Cree Nation Entities are all competing for the limited pool of qualified resources available in the Cree Nation!

A positive note about our department is that we never refuse assistance when communities request our help for their projects and programs.

Lastly, I owe a big thank you to all my staff for their understanding while I am pursuing my EMBA course; it allows me to keep a peace of mind when I am away from work.

I wish everyone the best and I look forward to more collaborations as we continue to build the Cree Nation.

In conclusion, I will end with our Mission Statement, towards which we will continue to work together as a team:

“Ensuring that the Eeyou/Eenou local and regional governments’ infrastructure and related services enhance people’s quality of life”.

*John Longchap
Director of Capital Works and Services*

OVERVIEW

Over the last years, Capital Works and Services (CWS) has worked on the integration of staff and managers by holding quarterly meetings and by diligently following up on activities. For the next fiscal year, as our department is now fully staffed and is well integrated, we will continue our strategic planning. This will include determining departmental values, our visions for each of our sections for the next years, and our planned vision until the end of the current New Relationship Agreement (NRA) with Canada in 2028.

Moving forward, we will continue to work on our current projects, while directing all the required efforts to assist in:

- Facilitating the implementation of the Private Homeownership program
- Ensuring, through the Technical Committee's assistance, all of the required infrastructure as per the NRA program structure is recommended for funding by the Board/Council
- Developing housing and town planning standards
- Training and supporting the Local Housing Inspectors
- Ensuring that the local fire departments have the proper facilities and equipment and that the local firefighters are sufficiently trained so that the Cree assets are well protected
- Ensuring that the Capital Assets of the local and regional Cree governments are properly maintained

The following report presents the activities and files that we have worked on throughout the year.

750 

**SOCIAL UNITS TO BE BUILT UNDER
THE NEW SOCIAL HOUSING FUND**



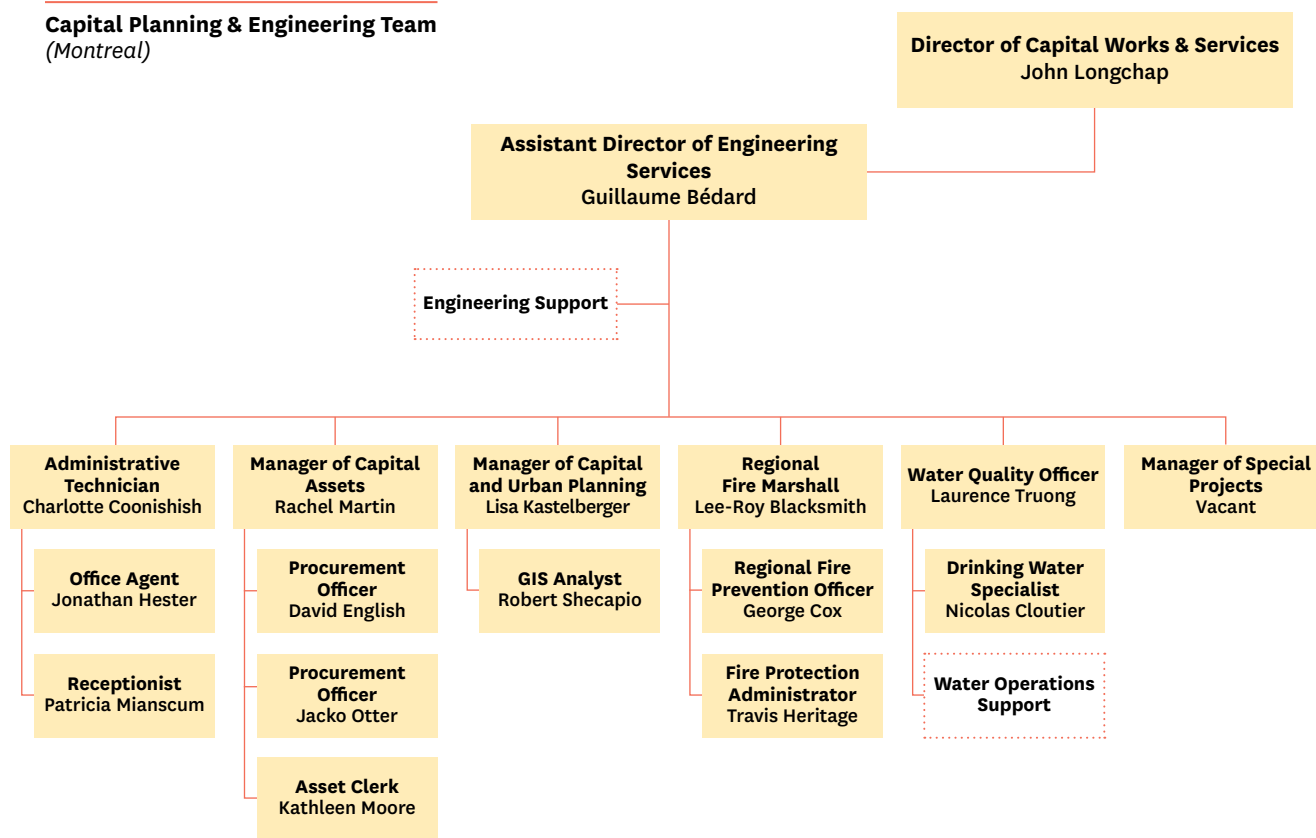
HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION

The organizational structure of the department personnel reflects the two main divisions of the department:

1. Capital Planning and Engineering Services
2. Regional Capital Works Programs and Services

The department has been divided between two offices for efficiency purposes with partial decentralization to Val-d'Or as shown below in figures 1 and 2, "Organizational Diagram: Approved Personnel Structure for 2021-2022".

Figure 1. Organizational Diagram, Approved Personnel Structure 2021-2022 (Montreal Office)

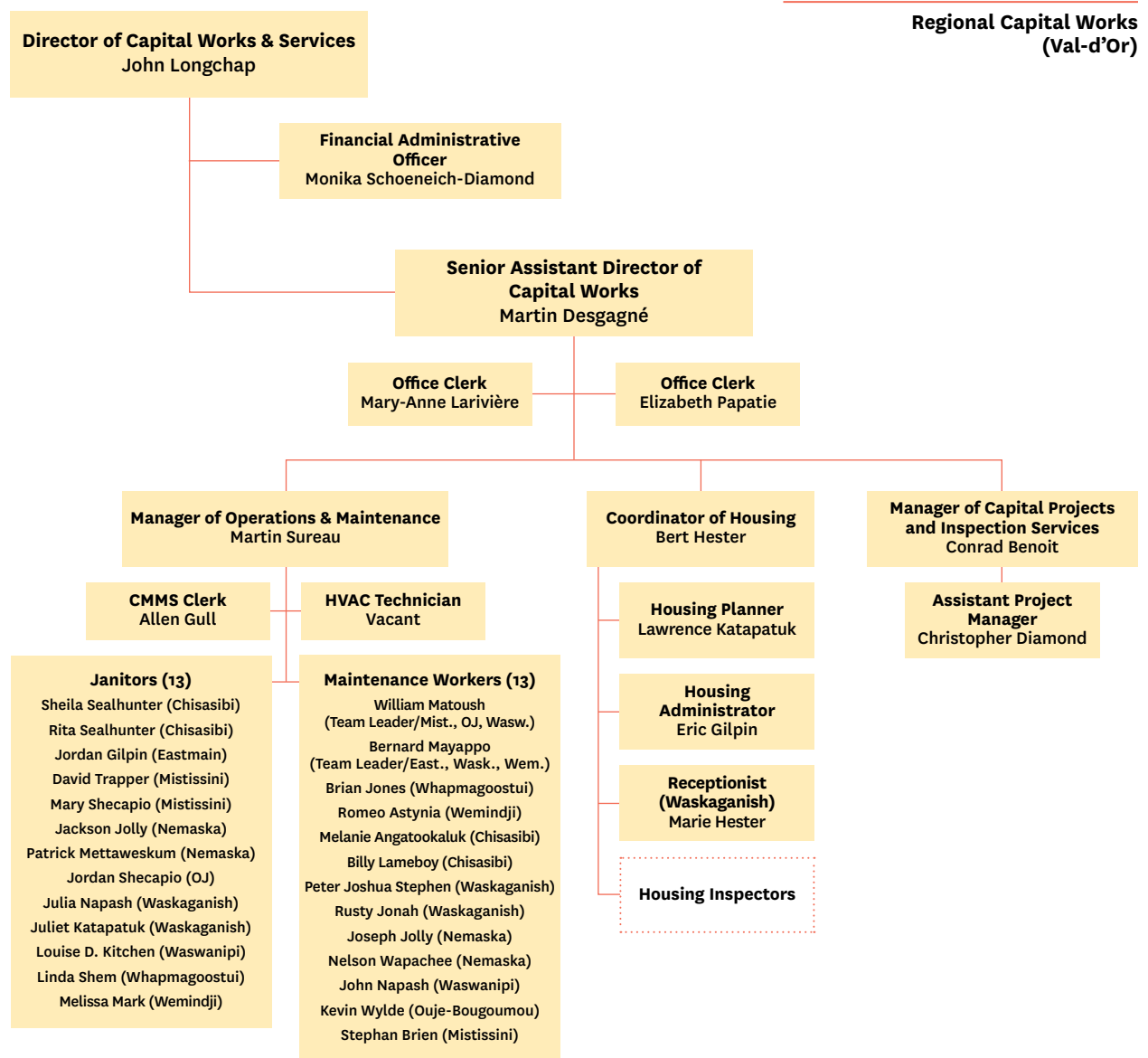


Legend:

Permanent Position

Contractual Service

Figure 2. Organizational Diagram, Approved Personnel Structure 2021-2022 (Val-d'Or Office)



Legend: Permanent Position Contractual Service

CAPITAL PLANNING AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

Capital Planning Activities

CWS has been actively planning and monitoring the capital projects carried out at the local administration level through funding provided by the Canada-Cree New Relationship Agreement (NRA) since 2008.

CWS manages the administration and annual update of the NRA Five-Year Capital Plan, incorporating local government projects from all nine Eeyou Istchee communities. The team ensures that technical standards are respected for each project, prior to the recommendation of projects for funding. The final budget is approved by the Board/Council of the Cree Nation Government in December of each year for the upcoming fiscal year's projects. A total of \$120,460,168 worth of projects for all nine communities was approved for 2021-2022, as shown in table 1 and figure 3.

Geographic Information System (GIS)

In order to provide useful mapping information about the existing nine Cree communities, GIS technologies are a

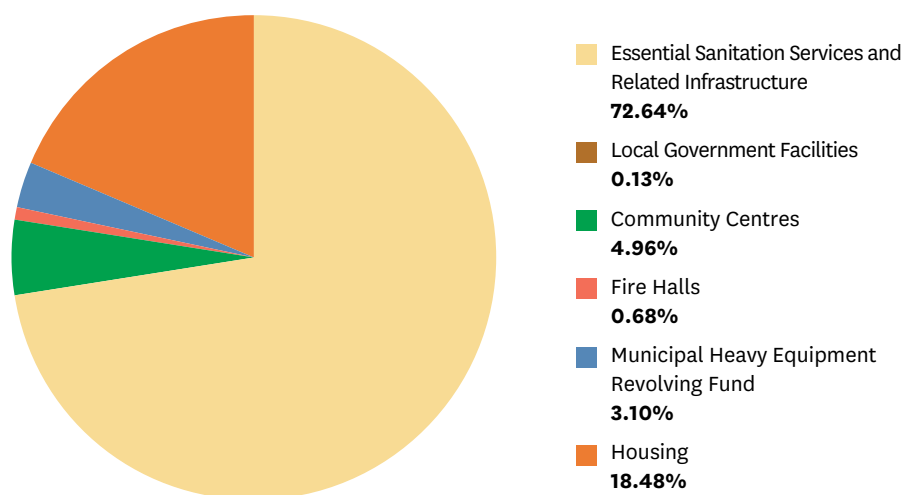
practical solution in the development and delivery of spatial data, maps and information products concerning essential sanitation services and related infrastructure data. In 2021-2022, the community maps were updated using the latest digital mapping data (see link provided below). Furthermore, the community maps will be maintained whenever new data is received to reflect changes happening at the local level. The goal of these efforts is to create a digital platform which integrates spatial data from a range of public and private sources. In the future, the spatial data and maps will be useful to build local knowledge about community growth and development. In addition, this process will also provide a framework in the ongoing acquisition, management, analysis, and display of geographic information.

Working in collaboration with the GIS Working Group was itself a major accomplishment. GIS services have been in high demand, which has created collective challenges for the organization at large. Therefore, the GIS Working Group was formed to act as an advisory group to Cree Nation Government upper management concerning technical issues related to GIS services. The group consist of in-house GIS

Table 1. Approved 2021-2022 NRA Local Projects, per Program

Program	2021-2022
Local Government Facilities	\$162,000
Essential Sanitation Services and Related Infrastructures	\$87,506,996
Community Centres	\$5,980,386
Fire Halls	\$820,141
Municipal Heavy Equipment Revolving Fund	\$3,734,537
Housing	\$22,256,108
Total	\$120,460,168

Figure 3. Summary of Approved 2021-2022 NRA Local Projects





staff currently employed by the Cree Nation Government. Subsequently, facilitated by an external organization, the GIS Working Group collaborated with several stakeholders to develop a collaborative strategy of GIS services at the organizational level.

Project Reporting and Monitoring

CWS is responsible for maintaining an ongoing record of all capital projects realized with NRA funding. This entails keeping an inventory of supporting documentation for all projects funded through the NRA, including copies of contracts, proposals, cost estimates, tender and as-built plans and specifications, final completion certificates, etc. The information collected will support the renewal negotiations with an accurate and detailed account of how NRA funds were used. The collection of reporting documents is an ongoing task for CWS.

In addition to collecting reporting documents, CWS conducts a Community Tour of all NRA-funded facilities each year. The purpose of the tour is to ensure proper execution and maintenance of the capital projects. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions, an in-person tour of the communities was not possible, therefore a virtual “tour” through Microsoft Teams was conducted, whereby each community was asked to prepare a picture slideshow of ongoing capital projects.

WATER SUPPORT SERVICES

This year again, the Water Support Services (WSS) of the Cree Nation Government promoted the regional sampling program and local water testing. Specialized laboratory analysis services were supplied along with all the wa-

ter-testing kits for onsite testing. The purpose of these activities is to allow the communities to track the water quality, promote safe drinking water and environmental protection.

Water Support Services Assistance

Table 2 presents the files related to WSS projects between April 2021 and March 2022.

New Water Initiative

A new water initiative project was implemented to improve remote assistance services. Due to the present sanitary situation and travel restrictions, the WSS initiated the project to fulfill the need for remote assistance and reliable data collection. The main goals of this new initiative are to:

- Improve remote assistance for drinking water and wastewater local teams
- Allow 24/7 access to operational data for troubleshooting purposes
- Ensure safe water for the population of the community
- Ensure the preservation and integrity of the land and the environment



Table 2. Water Support Services Assistance

Community	Date	Description
Nemaska	July 2021	Leak detection of the drinking water network with Innovlogic
Waskaganish	July 2021	Leak detection of the drinking water network with Innovlogic
Ouje-Bougoumou	February 2021	Leak detection of the drinking water network with Innovlogic
Mistissini	August 2021	Leak detection of the drinking water network with Innovlogic
Wemindji	May 2021	Leak detection of the drinking water network with Innovlogic
Eastmain	October 2021	Leak detection of the drinking water network with Innovlogic
Chisasibi	June 2021	Leak detection of the drinking water network with Innovlogic
Waswanipi	October 2021	Leak detection of the drinking water network with Innovlogic
Chisasibi	May 2021	COVID-19 wastewater monitoring – Installation and training
Waskaganish	February 2022	COVID-19 wastewater monitoring – Installation and training
Eastmain	March 2022	Clogged wells sampling and instrumentation installation

SPECIAL PROJECTS

CWS provides project management services to local governments upon request and works on various regional files for the Cree Nation Government in support of the implementation of the NRA and other agreements. In 2021-2022, these activities included the following:

Support to Local Governments

Project management support continued to be provided to the Whapmagoostui First Nation for all projects approved for funding through the NRA since 2008-2009.

After a halt in 2020 caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, construction resumed in 2021 and many projects saw significant advancement including the residential northern lot development expansion, the production of aggregates in preparation for paving and the community storm drainage system.

Additional support was also provided to the local capital works team for the 2022-2023 NRA funding applications.

New Relationship Agreement (NRA) Capital Planning and Program Development

To work towards fulfilling all of the NRA obligations prior to the renewal of the Agreement in 2028, CWS continues to update a long-term NRA draft scenario scheduling all foreseen capital investments required in the nine (9) Cree communities.

Wemindji Access Road Paving

In 2021-2022, the pavement of 23 km of the Category I access road to Wemindji was completed.

Regional Waste Management Coordination

CWS mandated Chamard Environmental Strategies (now Stratzer) to review the current waste management practices in each community and to produce an action plan for both the local and regional administrations. The final reports were distributed to each community.

FIRE PROTECTION ACTIVITIES

The implementation and enforcement of the Regional Fire Protection By-Law has experienced setbacks due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. For the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the CWS Fire Protection Team has pivoted to a virtual method to support local training, meetings and equipment purchases for the nine (9) local Fire Departments. The CWS Fire Protection Team continues to adapt training initiatives with the École nationale des pompiers du Québec (ENPQ) and the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC). The Fire Protection Team has introduced the Fire Underwriters Survey with the objective of establishing the local community's Dwelling Protection Grade by assessing the Fire Protection Services and related Water Infrastructure. The Dwelling Protection Grade is necessary to determine insurance premiums for local private homeowners. Furthermore, two (2) new fire trucks were purchased for two (2) local Fire Departments and delivered to Ouje-Bougoumou and Nemaska.

Equipment Purchases

All Fire Department equipment must follow a public tendering process through the CWS procurement division. The Fire Marshall reviews all documents and specifications alongside local Fire Department personnel and procurement consultants prior to recommending purchases.

Fire Apparatus

For the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the purchase of fire trucks was approved for two (2) communities. An aerial ladder was purchased for the Nemaska Fire Department and a pumper truck was purchased for the Ouje-Bougoumou Fire Department. Ghyslain Roberts, a fire equipment procurement consultant, works in close collaboration with the Regional Fire Marshall by producing the plans and specifications for all fire apparatus purchases.

Local Fire Department Equipment

For the fiscal year 2021-2022, the Fire Marshall procured and delivered Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBAs) with Cylinders and Hydraulic Rescue Tools for various local Fire Departments. The procurement of fire protection equipment for the local fire departments is ongoing in efforts to maintain well-equipped local fire protection services for the communities.

Local Fire Department Personnel Training

Due to the pandemic, the training program has experienced setbacks and research into a virtual method for fire protection training presented challenges, given the physical nature of the training requirements.

The CWS Department Fire Protection team will continue to invest in local fire protection capacity by offering NFPA 1001 training through training providers like Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC) and École nationale des pompiers du Québec (ENPQ). The Fire Marshall will continue to accept training cohorts during the pandemic, offer more virtual training support, and respect local community pandemic protocols. The aim is to maintain a minimum level of fifteen (15) trained and certified Fire Department personnel in each Local Fire Department. Trainings were postponed until the new fiscal year (2022-2023).

Fire Department Management Software

For the fiscal year 2021-2022, the Fire Marshall highlighted the importance of maintaining local Fire Department coordination / collaboration through the regionalized Fire Protection Management Software known as BeeOn. The BeeOn software platform serves in the monitoring of personnel and equipment needs for all nine (9) Fire Departments. The platform is important as it will serve as a real-time link to all local Fire Departments, facilitate future procurement and CWS Fire Protection budget projections. Each Fire Department will be receiving new laptops with BeeOn Fire Department Management Software to re-establish coordination/ collaboration between the Regional Fire Protection Team and local Fire Departments.

Fire Prevention Activities

In 2020-2021, CWS provided fire prevention programs virtually for the local Fire Departments. CreeCO, which administers the umbrella Insurance Program, stated that fires still represent the highest monetary losses for the Cree Nation Communities and therefore, the fire prevention team

is working diligently on trying to reduce the frequency of fire losses by developing and implementing the Cree Nation Fire Prevention Program. CWS supports the local band administration by providing yearly funding to hire local Fire Prevention Officers to implement and coordinate prevention activities across all nine Cree communities.



Regional Fire Protection Community Tours

The Regional Fire Marshall had to re-schedule community tours to visit each fire department to gather information and to assess local Fire Department operations. The Regional Fire Protection file is closely monitored by having bi-weekly meetings between the Regional Fire Marshall, the Regional Fire Prevention Officer, and the Fire Protection Administrator. Quarterly meetings with the local Fire Officers and regional CWS Fire Protection support staff are held virtually. The purpose of these meetings is to provide updates and to ensure the continuing progression of various files. The pandemic has shifted these visits online with the use of Microsoft Teams, whereby the CWS Fire Protection Team can continue to offer support to the local Fire Departments in real time.

Emergency Preparedness and Planning – COVID-19 Pandemic

CWS continues to collaborate with various stakeholders in the development of emergency preparedness and response plans on behalf of the nine Cree communities. The COVID-19 pandemic required a coordinated Public Health response and resulted in the creation of a Regional Emergency Core Group, whose tasks are to exchange information with health professionals and to assist local first responders on how best to serve the public. The Fire Protection Team participates in various briefings via conference call to effectively disseminate information across department lines. The communities have received federal funding to assist Local Government's efforts in mitigating the COVID-19 threats to public health, either through additional training or with the purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE). Furthermore, the local Public Safety Officers (PSO) have started to use the BeeON Software to assist in creating a real-time database of travellers leaving and entering their respective communities to support Public Health initiatives with contract tracing protocols.

\$24.8M

**PURCHASE ORDERS WERE ISSUED
BY CWS FOR GOODS, SERVICES,
AND CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS**

Fire Underwriters Survey for Private Homeowners' Insurance

The CWS Fire Protection Team have introduced the Fire Underwriters Survey with the objective of establishing the local community's Dwelling Protection Grade by assessing the fire protection services and related water infrastructure. The Dwelling Protection Grade is necessary to determine insurance premiums for local private homeowner's insurance. The Fire Underwriters Survey is nearly completed and will assess the insurance classification for private homeowners' insurance. The goal is to reduce the insurance premiums paid by community private homeowners. CWS' role is to provide all relevant data pertaining to each of the nine Fire Departments' capacity in terms of fire apparatus and training levels of local personnel, as well as identify local infrastructure such as fire hydrant locations and other community assets.

PROCUREMENT & ASSET MANAGEMENT

CWS is responsible for managing procurement activities, leasing agreements, and the tracking of assets for the Cree Nation Government. The procurement team is responsible for the acquisition and delivery of goods and services, as well as the tendering of construction projects. In 2021-2022, over \$24.8 million in purchase orders were issued by CWS for goods, services, and construction contracts.

Figure 4. Breakdown of Purchases Made

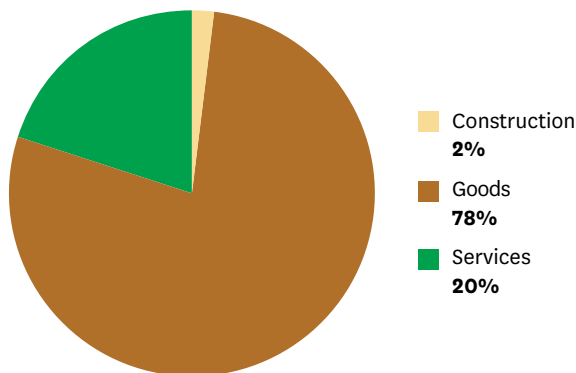


Figure 5. Percentage of Purchases Made Per Cost Bracket

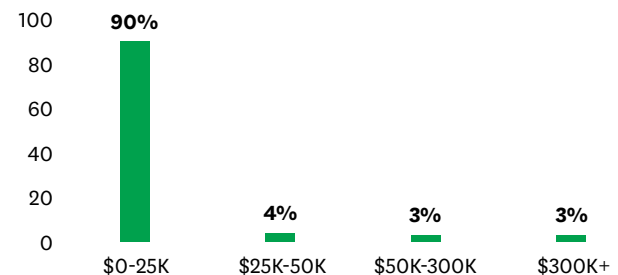


Table 3. List of Call for Tenders in 2021-2022

Department and Project	Value of Winning Bid	Department and Project	Value of Winning Bid
Eeyou Eenuou Police Force (EPPF)		Department of Justice and Correctional Services	
EPPF radio communications system upgrade	N.Y.A	Community Wellness housing Mistissini	Cancelled
EPPF housing triplex Waswanipi	\$1,579,923.43	Community Wellness Chisasibi	Cancelled
EPPF duplex Chisasibi	Cancelled	Community Wellness Waskaganish	\$2,597,597.01
EPPF triplex Chisasibi	Cancelled	Community Wellness Waswanipi	\$3,505,418.00
EPPF triplex Chisasibi	Cancelled	Fencing for YCF and land base program	\$319,000.00
EPPF duplex Nemaska	Cancelled	Equipment for Justice	Cancelled
EPPF police extension Waswanipi	\$1,739,887.26	Tiny homes	N.Y.A
EPPF police extension Wemindji	\$1,567,900.00	Family rooms Chisasibi, Waskaganish, Wemindji, Whapmagoostui	N.Y.A
Devis Bâtiment préfabriqué pour bateau sauvetage EPPF Mistissini	\$85,078.00	Family rooms Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou, Waswanipi	N.Y.A
EPPF Vehicles 2022	\$646,550.20	Architecture for Men's Shelters	N.Y.A
Nemaska - Pavage stationnement poste de police	\$121,020.00	Policies and procedures guidelines	N.Y.A
Sale of EPPF Tahoes	\$37,809.00	Almshouses in Waswanipi and Chisasibi	N.Y.A
Fire Protection Services		Apatisiwin Skills Development	
Extraction tools	\$147,638.98	Ouje-Bougoumou Training Center	N.Y.A
Pumper truck	\$1,078,000.00	Department of Forestry	
Aerial ladder truck	\$1,354,298.25	Forestry building, Waswanipi	\$5,949,301.00
SCBA	\$94,030.00	Cree Nation Government	
Cree Development Corporation		Ottawa Office Furniture	\$106,152.11
CDC Chisasibi office furniture	\$69,638.71	Whapmagoostui First Nation	
Capital Works and Services		WFN arena renovations	N.Y.A
CNG housing triplex Waswanipi (A)	Cancelled		
CNG housing triplex Waswanipi (B)	Cancelled		
CNG housing triplex Mistisstini	Cancelled		
CNG justice triplex Waskaganish	Cancelled		
CNG triplex - Justice, Env. Wild, Chisasibi	Cancelled		



REGIONAL CAPITAL WORKS DIVISION

The Capital Works Division of CWS oversees the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and the construction of the facilities and housing required by the various departments of the Cree Nation Government. The division also has a support team for the housing file in the Cree communities.

Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Activities

By March 31, 2022, the Capital Works Division oversaw the O&M of 22 public buildings (approx. 240,000 square feet), 1 warehouse, and 97 housing units (approx. 150,000 square feet), for a total of 124 facilities in the Cree communities, as per table 4 below.

In order to carry out the O&M works, there is a team of:

1. Fifteen (15) Janitors
2. Thirteen (13) Maintenance workers (two acting as team leaders)
3. One (1) Heating, Ventilation, and Air conditioning Worker (HVAC) (vacant position due to pandemic)
4. One (1) Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) Clerk
5. One (1) Manager dedicated to that work

The types of O&M activities that are carried out by the Maintenance Workers can be classified in three major maintenance categories: Preventive, Corrective and Predictive.

Since April 2016, the O&M team has been using a CMMS and has over 1100 preventive maintenance templates for the buildings' equipment. Over the length of this fiscal year, over 650 work orders have been produced in all categories

Table 4. Assets under the responsibility of CWS for Operations and Maintenance (O&M)

	Quantity of Facilities
Regional Buildings	
Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD) Office	1
Cree Nation Government Head Office	1
Cree Nation Government Office	1
EEPF Detachment	9
EEPF Headquarter	1
Justice Facilities	9
Warehouse	1
Sub-Total	23
Housing Units	
Cree Nation Government Housing Units	34
EEPF Housing Units	67
Sub-Total	101
Total	124

combined. CWS' O&M staff also answered emergency maintenance calls for the 16 daycare centres in the Cree communities. This is subsequent to an agreement established between the Cree Nation Government's Department of Child and Family Services and CWS. As of December 1, 2021, the Cree School Board is overseeing activities of the ASD Training Centers, and over the course of next year the maintenance will be fully given over to the Cree School Board.

Capital Projects Activities

The CWS department also has a team in charge of construction activities, as per the table 5. Projects were executed for the Cree Nation Government's Departments of the Eeyou Eenu Police Force (EPPF), Justice and Correctional Services (JCS), the Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD) and the Cree Nation Government Administration. Furthermore, CWS is providing technical support to the Child and Family Services Department for the renovations of the daycare centres in the Cree communities.

Figure 6. Cree Nation Government Buildings Work Orders

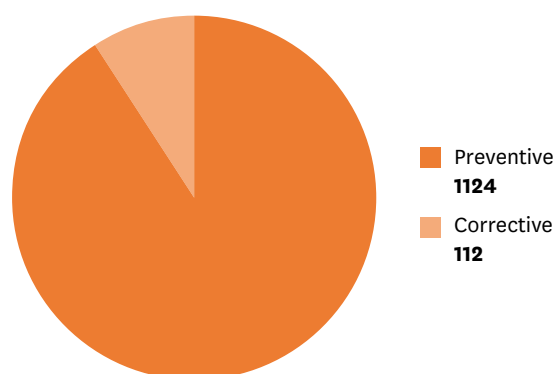


Figure 7. Childcare Centres Work Orders

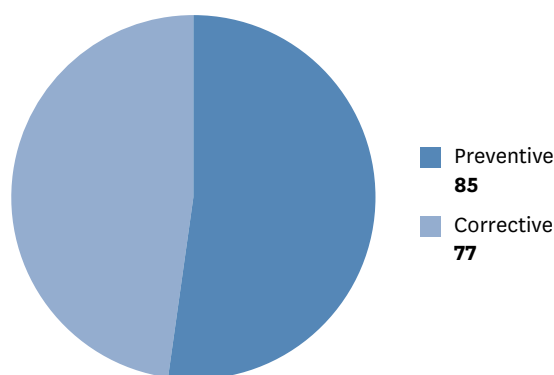


Table 5. Construction Activities of Regional Capital Works

Project	Value of Contract	Advancement				Delivery Date	Contractor
		Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	Q3 2021/22	Q4 2021/22		
EEPF Housing with Transit Eastmain	\$760,201	5%	5%	54%	60%	June 2022	Naococane
EEPF Chisasibi Duplex	\$1,032,238	54%	54%	54%	54%	June 2022	Niigan
CNG Waswanipi Triplex and Housing Unit	\$2,482,653	11%	43%	53%	70%	June 2022	Naococane
CNG Nemaska Staff Housing Renovations	\$635,000	60%	70%	80%	85%	July 2022	Project Management Approach
CNG Nemaska 5AB Fox Trail	\$180,419	60%	100%	-	-	June 2021	Qualinet
EEPF Eastmain Vehicle Impound	\$220,484	5%	5%	58%	80%	June 2022	Naococane
EEPF Waswanipi Vehicle Impound	\$ 297,893	9%	9%	60%	80%	March 2022	Naococane
ASD Chisasibi Office Renovations	\$227,000	18%	90%	90%	95%	January 2022	CBCC
EEPF Triplex in Mistissini	\$1,150,000	60%	60%	89%	89%	June 2022	Makaahiikan
Cree Nation Government Triplex in Mistissini	\$1,150,000	60%	60%	89%	89%	June 2022	Makaahiikan
Cree Nation Government Duplex in Mistissini	\$750,000	60%	60%	89%	89%	June 2022	Makaahiikan
Justice Facility Warehouse Expansion Projects	\$1,178,400	90% (Mist.) 73% (Others)	90% (Mist.) 73% (Others)	95% (Mist.) 95% (Others)	90% (Mist.) 95% (Others)	June 2021	Kesi (Mistissini) VCC (Ouje, Wasw., Wem., Chis., Wask.)
EEPF Detachment Lifescan Interrogation Room in Whapmagoostui	\$100,000	50%	90%	100%	100%	August 2021	Project Management Approach
EEPF Detachment Lifescan Interrogation Room in Ouje-Bougoumou	\$30,000	90%	90%	100%	100%	August 2021	Project Management Approach
Community Wellness Housing Phase 1 Chisasibi	\$901,700	95%	95%	95%	95%	June 2021	Chee Bee Cree
Community Wellness Housing Phase 1 Waskaganish	\$1,037,010	54%	95%	95%	95%	September 2021	Naococane
Community Wellness Housing Phase 2 Waskaganish	\$2,597,597	-	-	21%	21%	December 2022	Construction de l'Avenir
EEPF Waswanipi Housing Triplex	\$1,739,887	-	2%	2%	47%	July 2022	Waswanipi Eenouch
EEPF Wemindji Duplex	\$902,230	-	-	33%	52%	July 2022	Naococane
Youth Custody Facility Mistissini fencing	\$319,000	-	-	87%	87%	July 2022	Naococane
EEPF Mistissini Rescue Boat dome	\$85,078	-	-	95%	100%	October 2021	Dufour Construction
EEPF Wemindji Detachment expansion	\$1,567,900	-	-	-	1%	December 2022	VCC
EEPF Waswanipi Detachment paving	\$1,739,887	-	-	31%	36%	July 2022	Naococane
EEPF Nemaska Detachment paving	\$125,195	-	-	-	100%	December 2021	Nemaska Eenou JV
Total	\$14,276,139						

Professional Services Activities

The Capital Works Division mandates professional firms of architects and engineers to prepare plans and specifications for various construction projects, to assist in the supervision of construction works, as well as to develop a preventive maintenance program. In-house, work is being carried out to electronically archive all the construction and O&M documents for further integration into an information management system.

The Capital Projects staff and O&M staff also provides technical advice to the Cree local administrations on matters related to call for tenders, project management, building construction and O&M, and housing construction and operations.

CREE NATION HOUSING FILE

CWS provides housing support and services in the Cree communities. The *Coordinator of Housing*, the *Housing Data Administrator*, and the *Regional Housing Planner* are all dedicated to the Cree Nation housing file. Their respective activities are summarized below.

Coordinator of Housing

Update on Community Social and Rental Housing

The community social and rental housing program with the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC) housing projects went well, with minor delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the communities have completed or are in the final stages of completing their Section 95 projects and are now preparing to work on new projects for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Reaching Home Program (RHP)

Within the government of Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan (ERP), funds were dedicated to building additional permanent bedrooms and sanitation facilities to serve 22 Cree individuals in the Cree communities. The program created 40 bedrooms and 16 sanitation facilities that served 33 clients, and a final report was submitted on November 29, 2021, to the Department of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).

As a continuation, a new program has been launched to build additional permanent bedrooms or sanitation facilities for 28 Cree individuals in the Cree communities.

Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI)

The Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) addresses the urgent housing needs of vulnerable populations by rapidly building new affordable housing to support people experiencing homelessness or living in temporary accommodations. The Cree communities will be getting 55 housing units in the form of 5-plex modular housing units built within a year. These modular units are being constructed in manufacturing settings due to the nature of the rapid housing project. The delivery for the units is planned for the summer of 2022. The local governments will build the foundations for these modular housing units planned for the end of the year. A few communities already have tenants occupying these units.

Other Activities

Housing staff attended regular meetings for Cree Nation Government housing files via virtual Microsoft Team. Follow-ups for the CHMC's section 95 housing files were done for each Cree community.

Housing Data Administrator

Inspection Services for the CMHC Mamuitun Program

The housing team is supported by four (4) housing inspectors from the communities who perform inspections on social housing on behalf of the CMHC on a part-time basis. The inspectors carry out inspections for the new social housing units being built under the CMHC Section 95 program.

CMHC Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program Projects (RRAP)

The housing team assisted the Cree communities in work descriptions and cost estimates for housing modifications required to meet the tenants' needs. This also included the final inspection of the housing units. Several housing units received funding through the RRAP.

CMHC Physical Condition Review (PCR)

The housing team assisted in inspections on Physical Condition Review with Conseil Tribal Mamuitun. These consisted in on-site inspections and online reporting on the CMHC website server for the Cree communities. This fiscal year, several housing units were inspected in the Cree communities for the PCR.

Table 6. Details the Regular meetings for the housing file

Meetings	Location	Dates
Eeyou Miichuwaap Quarterly Meetings	MS Teams	Quarterly
CWS Val-d'Or Coordination Meeting	MS Teams	Monthly
Director General and Treasurers meeting	MS Teams	When required
CWS Special Monthly Staff Meeting	MS Teams	Monthly
Coordination Meeting for the inspection services provided by the Cree Nation Government to CTM	MS Teams	Monthly

Inspection Services for the Board of Compensation (BOC) Insurance File

No cost estimates were prepared for house repair in 2021-2022.

Urgent Housing Renovation Mold

Major housing renovations were performed in several communities. The renovation projects included windows and exterior doors, sidings, and roofing shingles. Most work took place on the exterior of the housing units because of the COVID-19 safety measures set by the Public Health.

Regional Housing Planner

Cree Regional Housing Action Plan

A public information campaign continued concerning housing issues, and the housing planner distributed essential information to promote homeownership in the Cree communities. With the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting travelling restrictions set by the provincial, regional, and local governments, there were less conferences, general assemblies, or meetings held in person. Most in-person gatherings were done virtually. Regardless, promotional items were sent to each community to distribute at the local stores and public buildings.

Regional Radio Show on Housing

Through the James Bay Cree Communications Society (JB-CCS), the Regional Housing Planner hosted a 30-minute radio

show each month concerning current and future homeowners and other related issues.

Eeyou Miichuwaap Quarterly Meetings

The Regional Housing Planner coordinated and chaired meetings with the support of the Housing team for the Eeyou Miichuwaap regional forum of exchange among the communities. Four meetings were held virtually via Microsoft Teams throughout the fiscal year 2021-2022. The Eeyou Miichuwaap meetings were full days to discuss and follow up on the Cree housing issues in the communities. The sessions were held in March, June, September, and December.

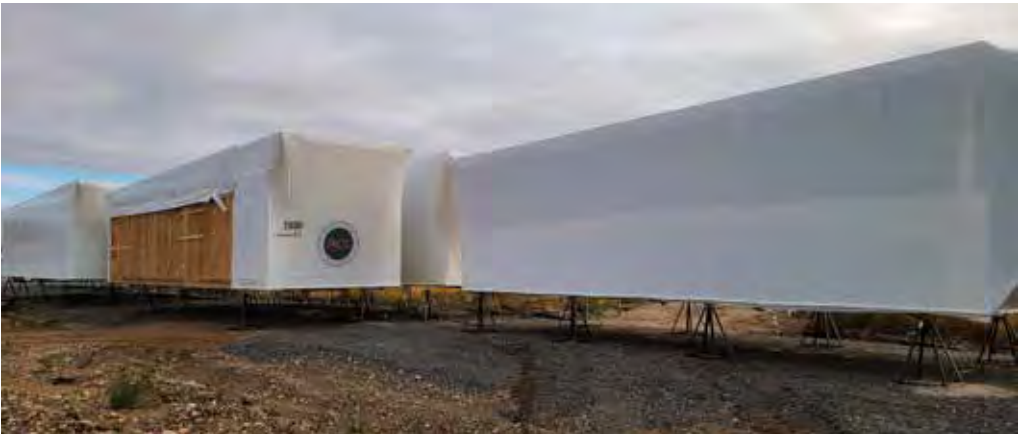
Community Private Housing Initiative

The Regional Housing Planner participated in the Cree Nation Government Housing File meeting with CWS department and HCN Group to discuss the Community Private Housing Initiative. CWS is working on the communication plan to inform the housing departments, individuals and corporations concerning the new housing initiative. An email address was also created for community members and corporations to obtain information and ask questions (privatehousing@cngov.ca). A web page within the Cree Nation Government website was also created to promote and inform the Cree Nation on this private home ownership initiative (<https://www.cngov.ca/community-private-housing/>). To date, 65 subsidies to Cree individual owners in the Cree Nation have been approved, as shown in table 7.

Table 7. Community Private Housing Initiative - Subsidy Disbursements

By Community and Fiscal year	Number of Applications	Total for Housing Subsidy	Total for Service Connection	Approved Subsidy Disbursements
Chisasibi	18	2,394,442	194,400	2,588,842
2019-2020	16	2,119,800	172,800	2,292,600
2020-2021	2	274,642	21,600	296,242
Mistissini	16	1,761,149	129,600	1,890,749
2019-2020	14	1,533,500	113,400	1,646,900
2020-2021	1	100,240	8,100	108,340
2021-2022	1	127,409	8,100	135,509
Nemaska	5	505,500	54,000	559,500
2019-2020	5	505,500	54,000	559,500
Ouje-Bougoumou	11	1,493,924	89,100	1,583,024
2019-2020	7	751,600	56,700	808,300
2021-2022	4	742,324	32,400	774,724
Waskaganish	5	656,281	54,000	710,281
2019-2020	2	259,600	21,600	281,200
2020-2021	3	396,681	32,400	429,081
Waswanipi	5	558,500	40,500	599,000
2019-2020	5	558,500	40,500	599,000
Wemindji	5	649,000	54,000	703,000
2019-2020	5	649,000	54,000	703,000
Grand Total	65	8,018,796	615,600	8,634,396

MODULAR UNITS



Delivery of modular units



Modular units' foundation



Modular units being installed on the foundation

Table 8. Approved 2021-2022 Department Budget

	2021-2022
Department Direction	\$586,886.00
Regional Capital Works	\$664,938.00
Technical Committees And Related Support	\$77,600.00
Capital Planning And Engineering Services	\$791,015.00
Housing Support Services (Recovered From Housing Action Plan)	\$0.00
Regional Fire Prevention Support	\$158,280.00
Fire Protection Training And Other Initiatives	\$600,000.00
Operations And Maintenance Of The Facilities Of The Cree Nation Government (Recovered From ASD, Police, Justice Agreement)	\$ 0.00
Operations And Maintenance Of The Childcare Facilities (Recovered From Childcare Agreement)	\$ 0.00
Fire Protection And Emergency Measures Plan Implementation (Recovered From Fire Protection Program)	\$ 0.00
Waskaganish Office	\$39,547.00
Water Support Services (Recovered From ISC Water Initiatives, NRA And EELP)	\$0.00
Grand Total	\$2,918,266.00



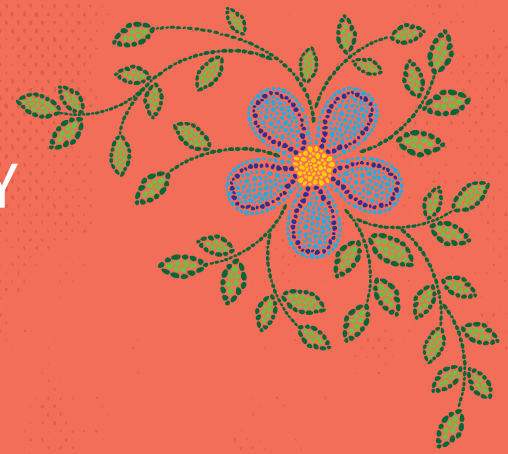
Interior of Module Unit (left) and the kitchen of the modular units (right).





CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

*Message from the Director
Kelly Pepabano*



ON BEHALF OF THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES DEPARTMENT OF THE CREE NATION GOVERNMENT, IT IS A PLEASURE TO SHARE WITH YOU ALL THE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR TEAM FOR 2021-2022.



**12
EMPLOYEES**

First and foremost, we would like to recognize and acknowledge all childcare staff members who continually commit to improving childcare services, and who form the backbone of our network. Without this group of dedicated professionals, we would not be able to play such an important role in stimulating the development of our young children in Eeyou Istchee.

We would also like to acknowledge our regional and local partners, in Eeyou Istchee and within the province, who have provided support in our objective to offer the best overall developmental opportunities for our children aged 0 to 5.

This year, like all other departments of the Cree Nation Government, we continued to focus a lot of our attention on preventing the spread of COVID-19, while ensuring the best possible services to our clientele. This could not have been possible without the support of Public Health and Public Safety authorities, locally and regionally, so a huge special thanks to them as well.

Wide range of activities at the CFSD

In addition to providing ongoing childcare services, our Department also manages other programs related to children and families. These programs are made possible through two specific agreements:

- The Health Canada agreement for both the Head Start and Maternal and Child Health Programs;
- The agreement between Service Canada and Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD), for the implementation of the First Nations Child Care Initiative (FNCCI) and the

Employment and Social Development Canada initiative known as the “Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework (IELCC)”.

Because of our ability to manage numerous programs at the regional and local levels, our Cree childcare centres continue to offer more integrated services than most centres across Canada. They include childcare services, Head Start programs, services dedicated to children with special needs and services for families.

We continued to strengthen our relationship with the Maternal and Child Health program staff at the Cree Board of Health and Social Services, with the goal to foster positive collaboration between the two programs, and to avoid duplication of services provided to the communities. This work continues to go smoothly, and we are confident in the process of working more collaboratively.

In closing, we would like to say that all these achievements would not have been possible without the support of our Cree leaders, who continue to endorse our mandate to promote the development and well-being of our children and families throughout our territory. On behalf of all families in Eeyou Istchee, we wish to acknowledge and show our gratitude to them.

Chiniskuumidinaan mishtee.

*Kelly Pepabano
Director of Child and Family Services*

OUR VISION

Ensuring a strong early childhood foundation to foster a stronger future in Eeyou/Eenou Istchee

OUR MISSION

We support and empower all early childhood programs in Eeyou/Eenou Istchee



Photo: Willy Bosum

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PERSONNEL

Our Department is based in Mistissini, with three full-time employees working out of our main office. The rest of our team is, much like our services, spread all over our territory and beyond. One employee is based in Waskaganish, one in Waswanipi, three are based in Montreal, one is in Quebec City and finally, four are working out of our Chisasibi office. We are proud that our team is represented in many communities, enhancing our presence and visibility throughout our territory.

The Cree Nation Government's Child and Family Services Department team has the mandate to manage and administer the Cree Nation Government's obligations under the funding agreement with the Ministère de la Famille (MF), to implement and to oversee all Cree childcare services in Eeyou Istchee. This involves monitoring the quality of services provided in all Cree childcare centres and ensuring that all acts and regulations are adhered to and respected.

Our goal is to empower the childcare centres and to build a strong network of childcare management leaders and professionals through the Cree Child and Family Services Centres Association.

The Child and Family Services Department's team provides support to childcare centres in Eeyou Istchee. We listen, guide, and communicate, so that children and families may get quality services that respect our Cree values, culture, and language.

At the end of 2021-2022, over 450 Crees were employed in child and family service centres, most of them in permanent full-time positions, with some as replacement educators. More than two-thirds of the persons working as educators now hold college-level diplomas.

Centres providing childcare services and Head Start programs each hire one director who looks after management (human resources, finance, materials, administration, and services). Directors are assisted by coordinators for each of our 16 facilities, as well as by administrative assistants. Each centre employs several educators (including special needs educators and in some cases, home visit educators). All centres also have cooks and janitors on their regular staff. Finally, some centres have pedagogical counselors as well as coordinators for their Head Start programs. With COVID-19, the childcare centres hired new safety officers to help implement the measures recommended by Public Health.

IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR ACTION PLAN

For fiscal year 2021-2022, the activities of the Child and Family Services Department have included the following.

A. Programs and Agreements

This year again our Department channelled funds from a number of programs and agreements to local childcare centres, in order to support their operations. These programs and agreements have a significant impact on the economic vitality of our communities, as they injected 25 million dollars into local services, renovation projects and training programs.

- The Agreement respecting Childcare Centres between the Government of Québec and the Cree Nation Government gives us various responsibilities, including renewing childcare centres' permits, implementing our own budget rules, carrying out inspections, facilitating the implementation of background inquiries for all staff and board members of childcare centres, dealing with local and regional complaints, and providing technical and professional support to the centres.

In 2021-2022, the negotiations with MF and CNG ended with all parties agreeing to a new agreement. Our negotiating team consisted of Melissa Saganash, David Heritage, Matthew Sherrard, Michael Petawabano, Kelly Pepabano, Pamela Norquay and Christine Duff.

- The Cree Childcare Program is funded through an agreement between Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD) and Service Canada for the First Nations Child Care Initiative (FNCCI). This program allows local childcare centres to improve the ratio of children to educators, thus enhancing the quality of services.
- The Employment and Social Development Canada initiative known as the "Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework (IELCC)" is also funded through an agreement between ASD and Service Canada. This program is designed to support projects which aim to



Photo: Katherine Dehm



Photo: Katherine Dehm

improve high-quality early learning and childcare that are based on Indigenous culture, language, and traditional practices.

- The *Cree Head Start Program* is funded through an agreement with Health Canada. Through this program, educators facilitate educational activities within childcare facilities or through home visits for families of children who do not attend the childcare centres. Home visits are a great way to introduce developmental activities for young children and to help children and parents alike discover the joys of ‘learning through play’. Other activities offered through the Head Start program included services for children with special needs, various stimulation activities for children, parent-child playgroups, parenting workshops, nutrition workshops, first aid training for parents and various events to highlight the special bond that connects the Cree communities with young children.
- The *Maternal and Child Health Program* is also funded by Health Canada. This program allows us to establish a partnership with the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay to facilitate the delivery of health promotion services to children and families, through the *À Mashkûpimâtsît Awash* program.

B. Support to Childcare Centres in the Nine Cree Communities

- In 2021-2022, we continued to support the nine existing child and family services centres’ management teams, as well as local boards of directors. We assisted local boards in the supervision of the operations of their childcare programs and services.
- We provided technical and professional support to all directors and staff members of the centres involved in childcare and Head Start programs, including on matters dealing with legal aspects, building maintenance and repairs, material, human and financial resources, training, educational activity programs, promotion, general coordination of the centres and assistance in problem-solving.
- We reviewed and updated childcare information from various sources (governments, associations, agencies) and distributed relevant documents and information to childcare centres.
- We developed new tools and systems to assist the directors in the supervision of programs and services.
- We monitored regular maintenance needs and services for our sixteen childcare facilities to ensure that they function to their best capacity.

C. Accessibility and Affordability of Child and Family Services

- At the end of fiscal year 2021-2022, there were 1,208 subsidized childcare spaces available in the nine communities. Free spaces were also available to children whose parents or guardians received social assistance benefits and/or were recipients under the income security program. Each childcare centre also provided two spaces for children covered through Youth Protection services.
- With the Head Start program, families whose children do not attend the childcare centres on a regular basis also benefitted from various services. The Head Start program was designed to meet the needs of low-income families and families with children who have special needs.

D. Training and Development

In order to promote the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of children while incorporating Cree heritage and culture in the programs, it is important for the Department to provide opportunities for the training and development of staff members and other persons who wish to pursue a career in early childhood development.

Here is an overview of the measures taken in 2021-2022:

College-Level Training Programs

Each childcare centre is required to meet the provincial Act and Regulations ratios, which stipulate that two out of three educators working in childcare centres need to have

completed college-level training programs. In addition, numerous graduates of the programs that we sponsor also find employment in the Cree School and Health Board organizations.

This year, three graduation ceremonies took place in Eeyou Istchee and Ottawa.

Special Needs Education - Aboriginal and Inuit Children

- Eleven students from the Cree First Nation of Wemindji and sixteen students from the Cree Nation of Chisasibi graduated from the CÉGEP de St-Félicien's college-level program: Special Needs Education – Aboriginal and Inuit Children, in April and May 2021.

Management in Childcare Centres

- In November 2021, the fifteen students of the Management in Childcare Centres program, also facilitated through CÉGEP de St-Félicien, were finally able to have their graduation ceremony in Ottawa.

The Educators in Native Childcare Services training (ENCS) is now known as Education in Childhood Services (ECS)

Education in Childhood Services

- Eighteen students from the Cree First Nation of Waskaganish are presently enrolled in the CÉGEP de St Félicien's Education in Childhood Services training program, which started in the fall of 2021.



- Thirteen students from the Whapmagoostui First Nation are currently taking the CÉGEP de St-Félicien's Education in Childhood Services training program, which also started in the fall of 2021.

Management in Childcare Centres

The management training program has seen delays this year, but it is scheduled to start again in April 2022. Seventeen students registered for this program, including three members of the CFSD.

The ENS, Special Needs and Management training programs are still very much in demand throughout Eeyou Istchee, as local needs for trained educators, special needs educators and management-level employees in the communities are high.

Much appreciation goes to Apatisiwin Skills Development, the Cree Nation Government and CÉGEP de St-Félicien, all of which are very generous in supporting the delivery of these important programs in Eeyou Istchee. We also need to thank the CÉGEP instructors, who are making an important contribution by inspiring not only their students, but all childcare workers to become true professionals.

Congratulations to all our graduates who, thanks to their commitment and dedication to the well-being and education of young children, have acquired their diplomas and are now recognized as qualified educators, special needs educators and childcare managers.

Financial Administration and Bookkeeping

Our very efficient regional finance team continued to provide support to all administrative employees in charge of the financial administration of childcare centres. Team members also spent countless hours preparing the financial statements for the year-end audits.

Inspection of Facilities and Programs

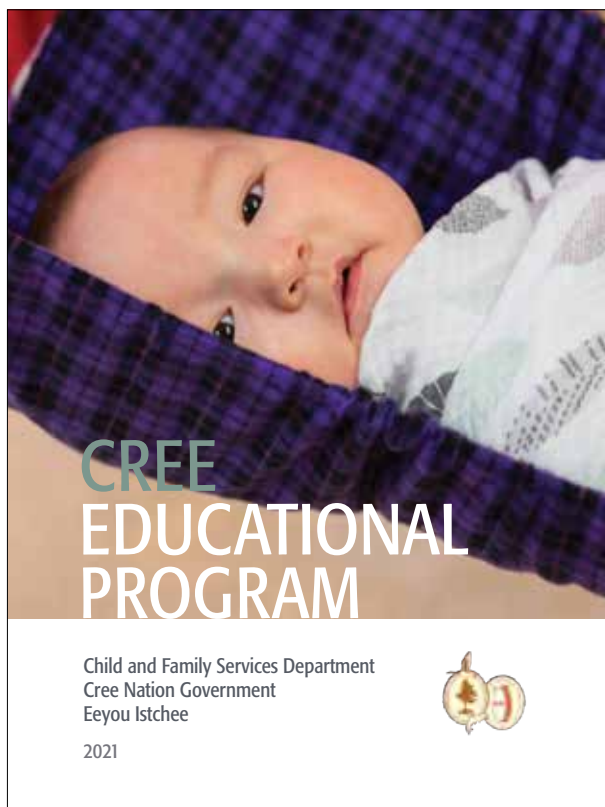
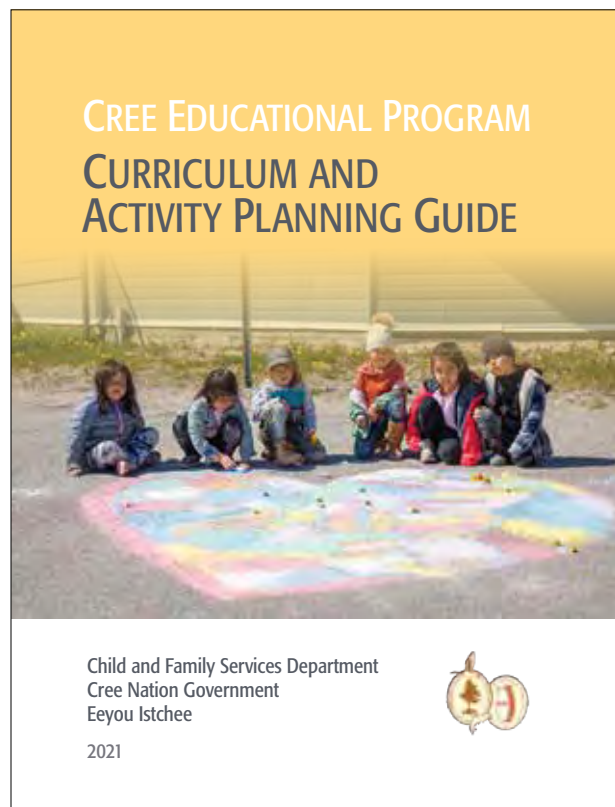
Our Inspection Officer carefully reviewed the operations and facilities within our network of Child and Family Services Centres. She also provided recommendations for changes and improvements as required. Not all programmed inspections were carried out in 2021-2022 due to COVID-19 restrictions. Our inspector carried out full inspections of the childcare centres in Mistissini, Waswanipi, Nemaska, Eastmain and Whapmagoostui. She ensured follow-up on all the inspections that were carried out during the fiscal year.

IELCC Funding

Cree Educational Program

This year has once again been an exciting one for our educational program.

In February 2021, the new Cree Educational Program and Activity Planning guide was presented to the staff of the Child and Family Services Department, the Childcare Centre Directors, and the Pedagogical Counsellors. We are now





happy to announce that the Educational Program and the activity guide are ready to be implemented in 2022-2023.

In the winter of 2021, we developed even more educational materials for our childcare centres. We are in the final process of having our recipe cards, white board calendar and a new dice board game titled “Adventures in Eeyou Istchee” printed, which should be finalized by the summer of 2022.

In the winter of 2019, we had launched a call for stories for Cree children’s books. Delays were experienced due to the pandemic, but the books were already printed and are scheduled to be shipped to the communities by early June 2022. We are planning to have the collection of seven new children’s books distributed free of charge through our childcare centres and Cree Health Board’s Awash services in the summer of 2022.

On World Children’s Day, November 20, 2021, we participated in activities that reminded us that children have the right to be respected and to grow up in an environment that allows them to reach their full potential. World Children’s Day coincides with Quebec’s Early Childhood Week, and 2021-2022 marked our fifth year of involvement in these activities.

Finally, our Pedagogical Advisor continued to provide necessary support on the educational program for educators within our childcare centres.

Under the IELCC funding, we created a new program that allows us to fund special projects within our childcare centres and beyond. Through the IELCC funding, we were able to provide six childcare centres with funding for projects such as hiring a pedagogical counsellor, implementing more Cree culture and language activities, and providing the Nurturing Program. We have also provided funding to eight community entities for locally-driven initiatives; some notable projects in 2021-2022 were the creation of a Library at the clinic, Walking out outfit making, Healthy cooking workshops, Wake-up Program, and more.

Head Start Program

Our Regional Head Start Advisor has been involved in a variety of projects this year and is taking the leadership in the implementation of the Nurturing Colleges program, which is gradually being rolled out to all communities. Our Advisor has been working very hard with the second phase of the Nurturing Program, which will be ready in the fall of 2022.

Special Needs Program

Our Special Needs Advisor was very busy this year with her visits to the childcare centres to provide support to all Special Needs Educators (SNEs) and Shadows. She has also facilitated workshops and specialized training for SNEs and Shadows.

Our Advisor continued her involvement in the Kate Sharl Foundation, which aims to raise funds to financially support children with special needs in achieving opportunities that would otherwise be out of their reach, because of their levels of need and of the high cost of specialized equipment.

Maintenance of our Facilities

We are continuing to work in close collaboration with the Department of Capital Works and Services so that their team may assist us with the maintenance and repair of our sixteen childcare facilities. However, in 2021-2022, we did not carry out any major maintenance or renovation projects.

COVID-19

Child and Family Services COVID-19 Best Practice Guide

This year, the Child and Family Services Department launched a guide intended for the Cree childcare centres in Eeyou Istchee, dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. This was developed in accordance with provincial guidelines set by Quebec Public Health, Ministère de la Famille, and CNESST, as well as with regional orientations provided through the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of

James Bay and the Cree Nation Government. During the year, we also developed more directive tools as the pandemic progressed and the situation evolved.

Directive Tools

This year, we developed FAQ documents for parents and staff members of the childcare centres. These local COVID-19 measures and protocols were updated to maintain the best level of service possible during COVID-19 outbreaks.

We also developed a poster (algorithm) to instruct our network on how and when to use a rapid test to detect the presence of COVID-19.

Health Survey App

Our Health Survey was implemented in all centres. The website helped parents and childcare centres decide if they should admit a child or not, based on various health indicators.

Emergency COVID-19 Funding

All 16 facilities received \$35,000 of additional funds in 2021-2022 to cover the cost of extra janitor/cleaning supplies, and to support the salaries of their safety protocol officers.

The centres gratefully accepted this new influx of funds, which assisted in ensuring that COVID-19 measures and protocols would be implemented as efficiently and safely as possible.

Coordination with Ministère de la famille for Safety Equipment and Cree Health Board for Rapid Tests

We coordinated with the Ministère de la Famille to ensure the provision of required safety equipment, including disposable masks and reusable visors.

We also collaborated with the Cree Health Board, which provided our centres with rapid tests to be distributed to each child monthly.

Maternal and Child Health Program

In partnership with the Cree Health Board, the Maternal and Child Health Program allows us to participate in the delivery of health promotion services to children and families, through the À Mashkûpimâtsît Awash program.

This year, with the COVID-19 pandemic, part of our funding went to the OLO program, which provides weekly coupons to the pregnant women of Eeyou Istchee to support their purchases of healthy foods. The program is available to all women living in the communities.

We also worked in collaboration with the Youth Councils to offer Goose Break Bundles for young families, to encourage them to go out on the land. This year, we are happy to announce that Washaw Sibi received funding for the first time.

E. Liaison

- We planned and coordinated regional meetings throughout the year with members of the Cree Child and Family



Photo: Katherine Dehm

Services Centres Association. The Association represents a means for local Child and Family Services Centres to cooperate on issues of common interest, including the renewal of the collective agreement in two unionized childcare centres.

- We also provided technical support to the Cree Child and Family Services Centres Association in its operations.
- We acted as liaison with other First Nations organisations on childcare matters and issues and ensured concerted and informed actions.
- We continued to network and build strong partnerships with the Cree Nation Government, local Cree Nation Administration offices, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services, Community Miyupimaatisiun Centres, the Cree School Board, local schools as well as with the Provincial and Federal Governments to provide inclusive, comprehensive, and flexible childcare programs for Cree children, including children living with special needs.

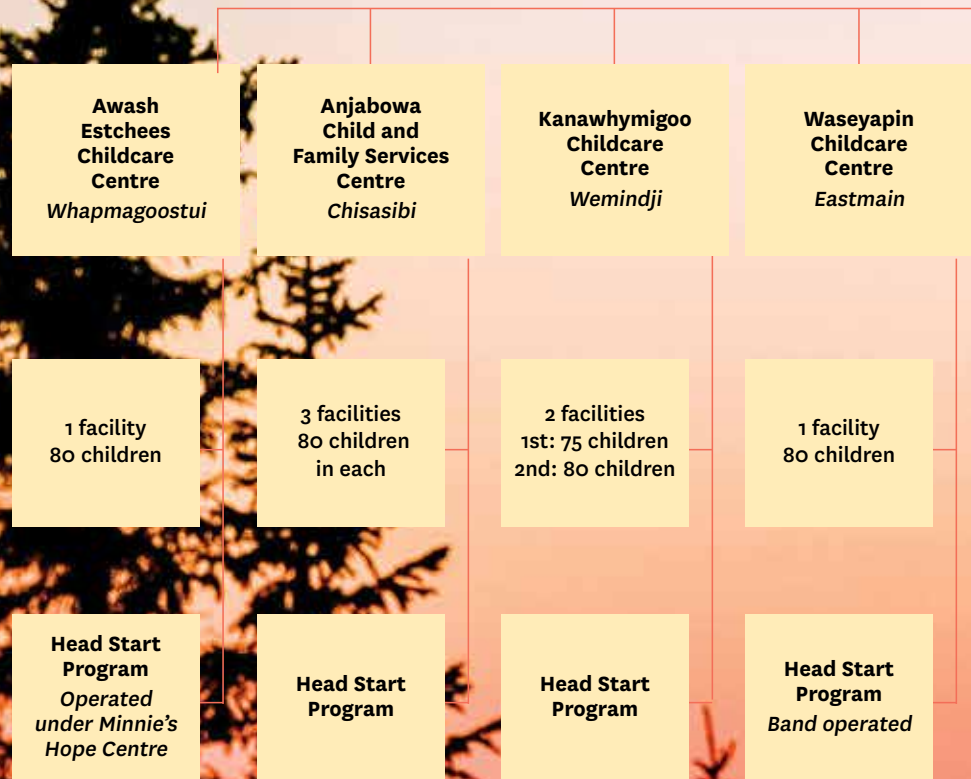
2. Support and monitor the progress of all early childhood programs.
3. With the support of Capital Works & Services, continue to ensure that all local childcare centres meet the safety standards and quality maintenance of their facilities.
4. Support the implementation of the collective agreements for the unionized childcare centres in Ouje-Bougoumou and Nemaska.
5. Continue to provide training for our local childcare staff as required.
6. Continue to foster a positive relationship with our funding agencies, including the Ministère de la Famille, Health Canada, Service Canada, and other sponsors.

With the support of Apatisiwin Skills Development and the CÉGEP de St-Félicien, continue to deliver the following CÉGEP training programs for people in our network who require them: Education in Childhood Services, Special Needs Education – Aboriginal and Inuit Children, and Management in Childcare Centres.

7. We will continue to provide support to the Kate Sharl Foundation, which was created to assist Cree children living with special needs in Eeyou Istchee.

F. Our challenges for 2021-2022

1. Offer increased support to the members of the Child and Family Services Department so that the members of the Department may meet their objectives efficiently.



OUR NETWORK OF SERVICES, 2021-2022

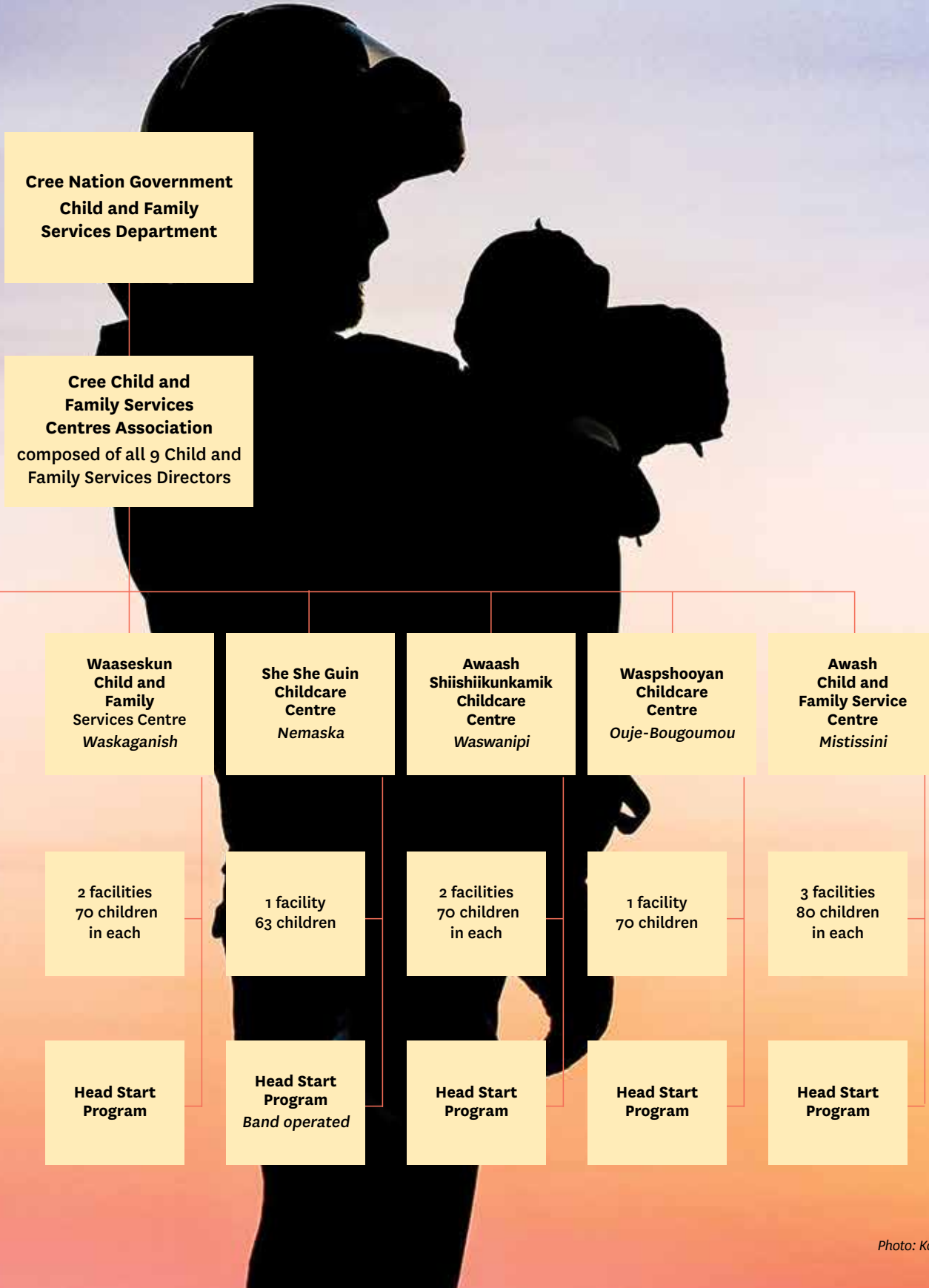
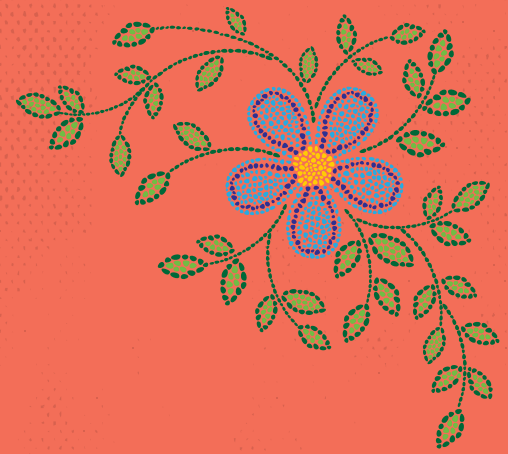


Photo: Katherine Dehm



JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Message from the Director
Donald Nicholls, B.A., LL.B., B.C.L., LL.M



THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES OF THE CREE NATION GOVERNMENT WELCOMES YOU TO OUR SECTION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT. IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE WORK THAT HAS BEEN DONE OVER THE PAST YEAR, AND THE PLANNING FOR WORK AHEAD.



While the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our ability to proceed with the construction of planned facilities and infrastructure, it has allowed us to meet with communities and key stakeholders to review the needs and plan for more services. We have continued to add to our staff and our capacity to deliver more programming.

One of our key programs for our clientele is the transitional housing facilities, also known as the tiny home communities. Since before the pandemic, we have planned extensively with the Cree-Quebec Judicial Advisory Committee and with the communities on the realization of this valued initiative. This year we have four communities, Waskaganish, Chisasibi, Waswanipi and Mistissini with lots allocated and capital infrastructure, ready to start building the main structures. We have been in discussions with the other communities over obtaining local lots and developing the professional plans so this project can be realized across all 9 communities. We have also awarded a contract for the development of a number of tiny homes to be ready for installation in the fall.

As a part of this initiative, we have included workshops and cultural buildings to do programming in the community for our clientele locally. We have incorporated workshops in the transitional housing lots, but have requested from the Cree communities separate lots for cultural buildings. We have met with each Cree First Nation's administration and presented them with five possible designs for local cultural

buildings where programming can include traditional skills teachings, promotion of Cree language and the preparation and sharing of traditional foods. Two communities, Eastmain and Waskaganish, have designated lots and picked designs for cultural buildings so we can look at building these in the current fiscal year.

Further, the Department has met with the Cree communities to discuss another form of transitional facilities, known in the JBNQA as almshouses, for Cree clients facing socio-economic challenges. We have had lots designated by Chisasibi and Waswanipi, and have had professional designs made and met a number of times with these communities to start building these needed resources in the Cree communities. We have met other Cree communities to discuss their needs as well, and are working on lots and designs. We have



Mistissini children remember those lost at Residential Schools

also hired a professional to develop protocols for the operation of these facilities with the local communities.

Another area of development has been to start building more housing units for staff and professionals related to the Department delivering services to the Cree communities. There are a number of new programs and positions requiring more expertise in the Cree Nation. Priority is always given to local persons but there is a realization that some professionals need to travel between the communities to provide specialized services. The housing units can also be valuable for the use of the court when needed, during the pandemic the local hotels were used for isolation of local people as safety measures so the court personnel did not have enough rooms to attend court dates in the communities.

The courts were hosted primarily by video conference throughout the past year. The courts returned to the Cree communities in February 2022 for in-person hearings. The use of new platforms and technologies has led the Department to put upgrades this year into the Cree facilities to better serve the public and allow for greater accessibility to timely justice. The upgrades will allow more reliable and clearer interactions with various parties while enhancing the ability of the facilities to deliver virtual hearings with parties in multiple locations. The Department has worked collaboratively with Justice Quebec and the Cree Nation Government IT personnel to coordinate new systems.

During the year, with the pandemic and safety measures in place, it became increasingly difficult to have reliable and timely Gladue reports prepared using outside parties. Therefore the Department concluded an agreement with the Ministry of Justice Quebec to hire two full-time Gladue writers to become part of the internal staff. This measure will ensure timeliness and quality of reports in the future. Gladue reports help the court when sentencing to look at the circumstances of an Indigenous offender and available options besides detention in order to reduce the high incarceration rates of Indigenous Peoples in the prison system.

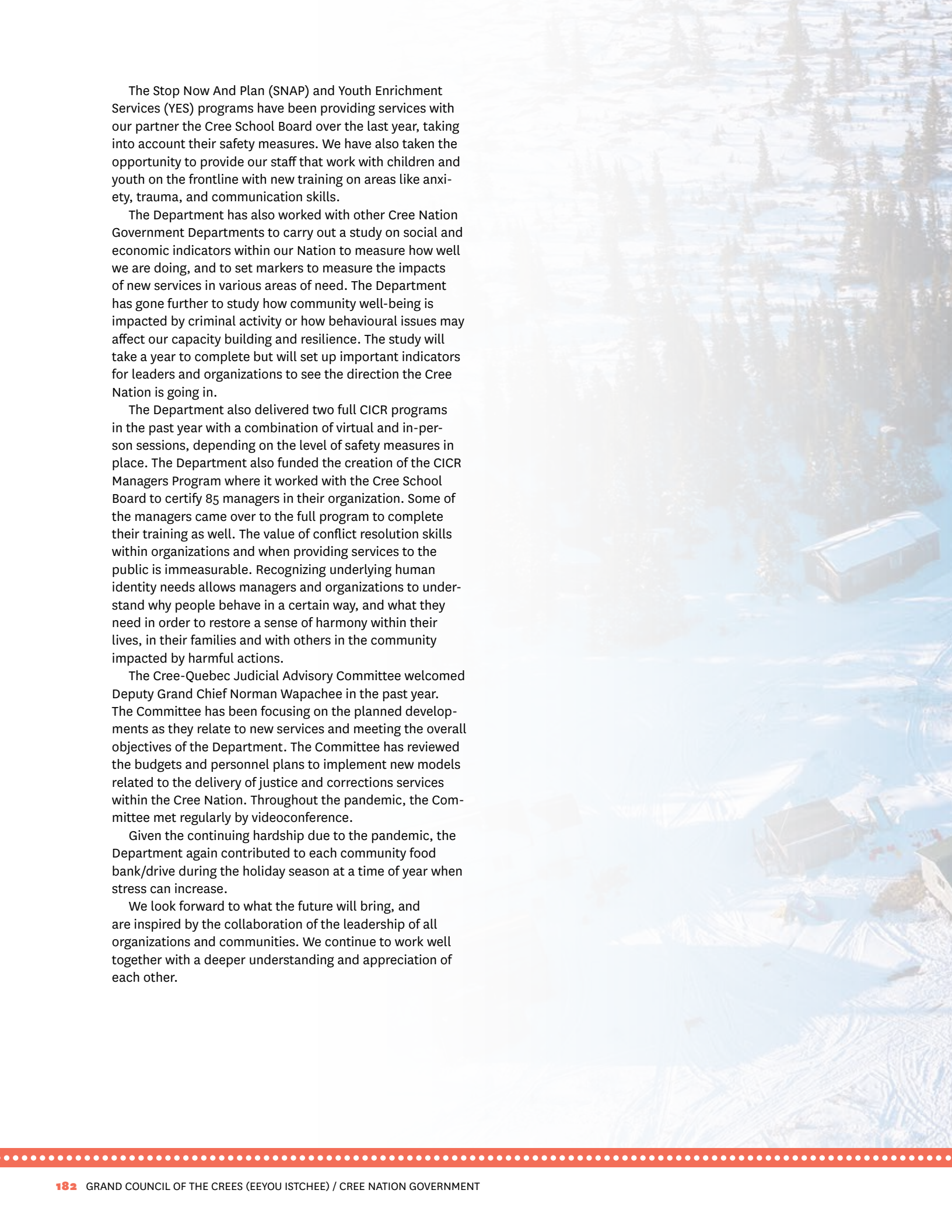
Of note, the fastest growing population in prisons is Indigenous women, who now represent fifty percent of female inmates in federal custody.

In the past year, we, as well as the rest of Canada, awoke to the news of unmarked children's graves at former residential schools across the country. The numbers kept growing as each week passed. Healing and reconciliation must be a priority moving forward. These children needed to be acknowledged, and returned to their homes. The atrocity of this era in Canadian history needs to be addressed. Despite the Truth and Reconciliation Commission work, the Canadian public was still largely in the dark of this history as the story unfolded. The public needs to be educated; and Indigenous and residential school history needs to be added to school curriculums in an age-appropriate manner. We continue to work towards a day when we, as Nations, can start healing from this tragic period. To heal, we must take actions to continue to identify those children still buried in areas around former residential schools in this country.

The year was marked by a focus on more land-based and values-driven programming than ever before. We built programs that engage present and future generations in honouring our past and reclaiming our identity. Our Department therefore hired more Cree individuals to support our programs and service delivery, for example, tallymen, workers, services and Elders. The COVID-19 pandemic has allowed us to focus on our own people and take the time to reconnect clients with culture, language and traditional skills while working on healing, rehabilitation, and personal development. Tent-making, stove-making, parka-making, and sewing clubs are just a few of the traditional activities we do with our clientele in the communities throughout the year. We have also partnered with other Cree organizations to deliver healing programs, and workshops on reducing conjugal/domestic violence. We have also engaged a new domestic liaison worker to further support these important relationships and initiatives.



Tiny Home Site in Waskaganish

An aerial photograph of a snowy landscape. The ground is covered in a thick layer of snow, with several evergreen trees scattered throughout. In the lower right quadrant, there is a small, rectangular wooden building with a dark roof. The overall scene is bright and serene, with a soft, hazy atmosphere.

The Stop Now And Plan (SNAP) and Youth Enrichment Services (YES) programs have been providing services with our partner the Cree School Board over the last year, taking into account their safety measures. We have also taken the opportunity to provide our staff that work with children and youth on the frontline with new training on areas like anxiety, trauma, and communication skills.

The Department has also worked with other Cree Nation Government Departments to carry out a study on social and economic indicators within our Nation to measure how well we are doing, and to set markers to measure the impacts of new services in various areas of need. The Department has gone further to study how community well-being is impacted by criminal activity or how behavioural issues may affect our capacity building and resilience. The study will take a year to complete but will set up important indicators for leaders and organizations to see the direction the Cree Nation is going in.

The Department also delivered two full CICR programs in the past year with a combination of virtual and in-person sessions, depending on the level of safety measures in place. The Department also funded the creation of the CICR Managers Program where it worked with the Cree School Board to certify 85 managers in their organization. Some of the managers came over to the full program to complete their training as well. The value of conflict resolution skills within organizations and when providing services to the public is immeasurable. Recognizing underlying human identity needs allows managers and organizations to understand why people behave in a certain way, and what they need in order to restore a sense of harmony within their lives, in their families and with others in the community impacted by harmful actions.

The Cree-Quebec Judicial Advisory Committee welcomed Deputy Grand Chief Norman Wapachee in the past year. The Committee has been focusing on the planned developments as they relate to new services and meeting the overall objectives of the Department. The Committee has reviewed the budgets and personnel plans to implement new models related to the delivery of justice and corrections services within the Cree Nation. Throughout the pandemic, the Committee met regularly by videoconference.

Given the continuing hardship due to the pandemic, the Department again contributed to each community food bank/drive during the holiday season at a time of year when stress can increase.

We look forward to what the future will bring, and are inspired by the collaboration of the leadership of all organizations and communities. We continue to work well together with a deeper understanding and appreciation of each other.



WHERE HEALING TAKES PLACE

We know that a fair and equitable justice system is one that represents the Nation it serves. This is the focus of our work, creating a system that mirrors the values of our people. Playing a lead role in this endeavour is the land. It is our belief that it is from the land that we will also find the source of healing for our clients and our communities. It is through the land that we will succeed in building healthier and stronger communities.





CHARACTER

TRADITIONS

RESPECT SELF-CARE DIGNITY

IDENTITY CONNECTEDNESS

TOOLS FORGIVENESS FAMILY

CORE VALUES THE LAND

REINTEGRATION BALANCE

CULTURE HEALING ENGAGING

WELLNESS COMMUNITY

TEACHINGS UNDERSTANDING

WISDOM ELDER

REHABILITATION

OUR INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE

We have continued to build personnel capacity regionally and locally over the course of 2021-2022. This is the foundation of the work we do with and for clients. Notably, our Youth Enrichment Services expanded to a fourth community and responded to a call for service at the Regional Youth Healing Centre in Mississauga, adding four employees.



Our **DEPARTMENT** with its



EMPLOYS a total of



We have a diverse set of positions:

REGIONAL POSITIONS

- Director
- Coordinators
- Managers
- CAVAC Officers
- Administrators
- Native Parajudicial Workers
- Court Liaison Officers
- Corrections Liaison
- Correctional Release Support Worker
- Financial Program Administrator
- Financial Agent
- Other Specialists

LOCAL POSITIONS

- Receptionists
- Community Reintegration Officers
- Prevention Program Officers
- Community Justice Officers
- Primary Youth Workers
- Prevention Program Assistants



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

To meet the varying needs of clients and our communities, we have invested in mental health counselling training for all front-line employees over the past two years. Plans for the coming year include refresher training in Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder and Suicide Prevention.

More than **THREE QUARTERS OF OUR STAFF** are now trained so they could put these skills to use on a daily basis as employees meet with clients at various points in their healing journeys. Some of those skills are:



Motivational Interviewing



Responding to Trauma



Walking Through Grief

Our employees also gained important operational training provided by the **CREE NATION GOVERNMENT**:



Training in workflow using the new **DAYFORCE SYSTEM**. This training took place over the fall and winter before the spring launch of the new system.

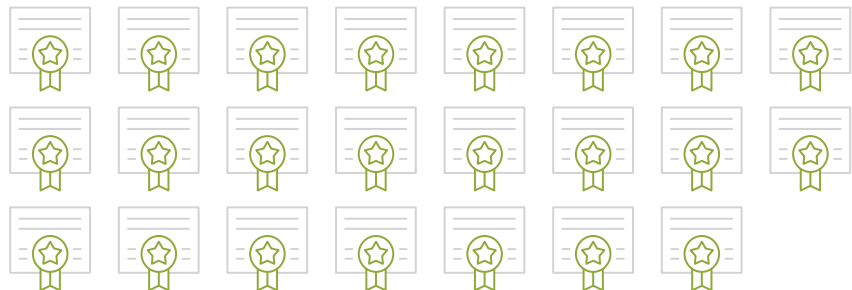


Our staff also took training in **ONLINE SECURITY** to reduce the risk especially in regard to phishing emails.

Lastly, this year we prioritized providing our staff with skills for supporting our clients with mental health difficulties by enrolling them in the **MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING SKILLS CERTIFICATION**

STAFF TRAINED THIS YEAR:

23



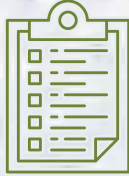
PREVENTION PROGRAMS

We know that many of the issues facing our clients have their roots in intergenerational trauma, which has disrupted the traditional family unit and created a need to reconnect with our cultural identity.

Like adults in our communities, our **YOUTH ALSO FACE** issues that hinder their growth, which is why we focus on:



MENTORING



COACHING



ENGAGING

We address these ongoing needs by focusing on the youth and providing them with **CULTURALLY RELEVANT** and inspired programs.



Our hope is that, by mentoring, coaching, and engaging our youth, we are preparing for a **SAFER, HEALTHIER TOMORROW FOR ALL OF US.**



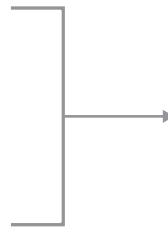
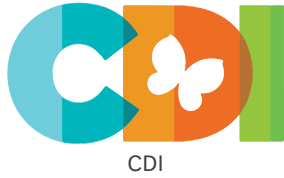
While the pandemic forced school visits to be cancelled and prevented much face-to-face activity, especially in some communities, **OUR YOUTH PROGRAMMERS** remained active by presenting online workshops and running programs in **CULTURAL SETTINGS** and **ON THE LAND** whenever possible.



STOP NOW AND PLAN®

Stop Now And Plan®, engages youth from the early stages to teach them unique ways to manage their emotions. Fear, anger, frustration and anxiety can be overwhelming for young children, but by coaching youth to recognize their feelings, snap their fingers, to stop and plan an acceptable course of action, we are setting them up for bigger challenges they face later in their lives.

PARTNERSHIP is key to the success of this program:

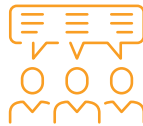


Even with the limitations that COVID-19 posed on our access to schools, **OUR STAFF** found ways to provide **SUPPORT TO STUDENTS** and offered over



123

ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS



1099

CLASS SESSIONS



37

PARENT SESSIONS

Our SNAP workers also went above and beyond to reach the **YOUTH IN THEIR COMMUNITIES** by offering programs like:



AFTER-SCHOOL READING



HEALTHY COOKING

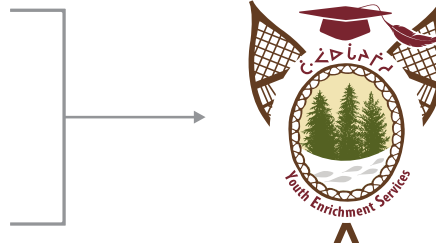


FIDDLE DANCING

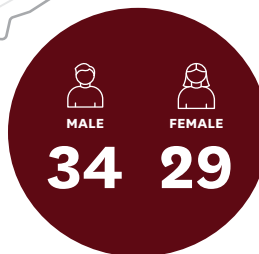
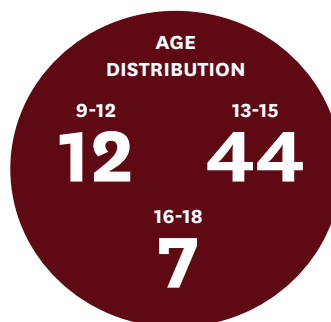
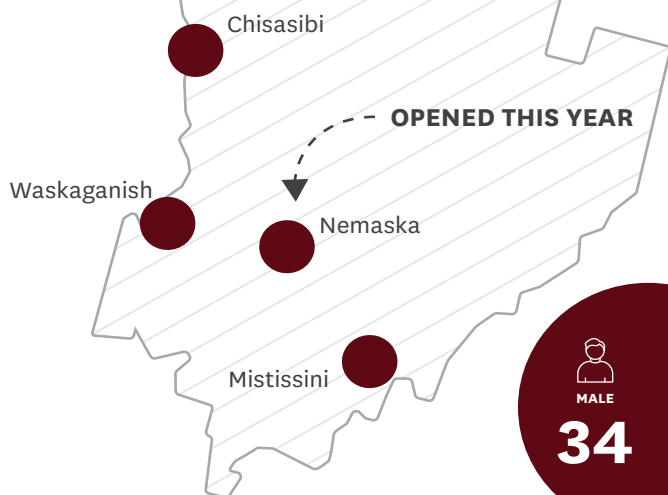
YOUTH ENRICHMENT SERVICES

Youth Enrichment Services (YES) offers a menu of services for older youth in our communities. Students are referred by the schools to our youth workers when they need an opportunity to reset, refocus, and regain control. Our staff coach and mentor them with individual and group workshops designed to build their self-confidence and skills.

PARTNERSHIP is key to the success of this program:



63 CLIENTS THIS YEAR IN THESE COMMUNITIES

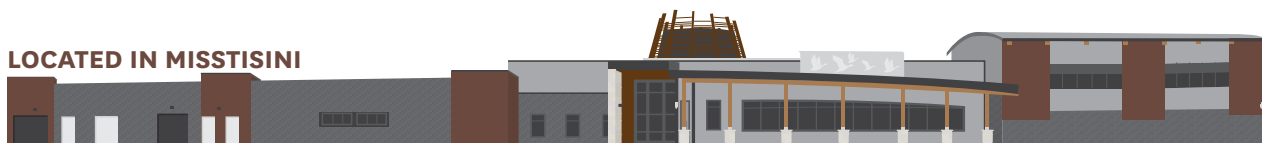


Our staff also organized **WORKSHOPS** like:

Snowshoe Making Paddle Making

The **CREE SCHOOL BOARD** approached us to support students at the **REGIONAL YOUTH HEALING CENTRE**. These students face unique challenges that can be supported with individual attention. **YES** was particularly suited to this environment, and with just a few modifications, we have been able to meet this need.

LOCATED IN MISSTISINI



YOUTH OUTREACH

Our front-line youth programming staff also runs programming to reach at-risk youth. This year, they ran 26 programs in our communities, ranging from after-school beading instruction, to summer camp-outs.

EASTMAIN

Our programming staff facilitated a two-month medicine walk to promote healthy lifestyles. The walk helped them to maintain a healthy lifestyle with reduced stress while improving their mood and cognition.



WASKAGANISH

13 boys had the opportunity to attend a six-day campout where they disconnected from social media and technology and focused on nature and traditional summer life skills taught by the tallyman and Elders at Kilometre 48.



MISTISSINI

A week-long learn-to-paddle camp offered 12 young campers the chance to learn water safety and paddling skills as well as emotion regulation, techniques to handle bullying, and the meaning of respect. Cree values are an important component of our youth's education and life-skills development.



WEMINDJI

More than 45 youth participated in a basketball training and tournament. The first two days were dedicated to building team confidence by training together with local basketball players. The final day involved a tournament with four teams. It was described as intense, and exciting!



WASWANAPI

The CJO in Waswanipi developed a traditional reconnection program that provided youth an opportunity to take part in activities on the land. Programming varied from snowshoe-making and moccasin-making to hunting, trapping, and stretching pelts.



CHISASIBI

Snowshoe-making helps engage our youth with peers and Elders to build trust and friendship through traditional activities. Snowshoe-making fosters patience, focus, creativity, culture and language.



CREE CICR

Our 10th and 11th groups of the ongoing conflict resolution training partnership with the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution graduated during the 2021-2022 fiscal year, representing an additional 28 individuals in the Cree Nation now trained in facilitation of Community Dialogues. A further 85 employees of the Cree School Board also received the new CICR Managers Program.

The **CREE CICR TRAINING PROGRAM** is only possible thanks to our valued and lasting **PARTNERSHIP**

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
AND CORRECTIONAL
SERVICES



CANADIAN INSTITUTE
FOR CONFLICT
RESOLUTION

Our program not only continued this year but also **EXPANDED** into a program for managers within the **CREE SCHOOL BOARD**.

2021 STATISTICS



28

CICR TRAINING
GRADUATES



142

CICR TRAINING
GRADUATES SINCE 2011



73

JULY CSB PROGRAM
GRADUATES



12

NOVEMBER CSB
PROGRAM GRADUATES

Due to COVID-19 our training sessions had to be facilitated through **ZOOM** but they still continued and we are very excited about the **PARTICIPATION** and **FUTURE** of this program.



At the request of the Voyageur Memorial High School and hosted by the Mistissini Band Council, we facilitated a **COMMUNITY DIALOGUE IN MISTISSINI** following a period of difficulty at the high school.



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION DAY

Thursday September 30, 2021 marked the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in Canada. While it was not observed by the Quebec government, our offices in each community created safe and nurturing spaces for people to gather and share. Each community's effort was slightly different, to respect their unique needs. Most communities collaborated heavily with other entities.

Our **DEPARTMENT** distributed



This **EVENT REACHED** approximately



COMMUNITY JUSTICE COMMITTEES

At the centre of each of our communities is the Community Justice Committee (CJC), a group of volunteers dedicated to ensuring fair and relevant remedies for Cree clients who come into contact with the justice system.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY JUSTICE COMMITTEES

Our Justice Committees serve a **VITAL ROLE** in justice delivery for our people. The Court can decide many types of sentences or combinations of penalties, and often a portion of this **SENTENCE WILL INVOLVE THE JUSTICE COMMITTEE**.

A client might be required to check in regularly with their Justice Committee, for example. They might also be required to attend Justice Committee programming. The Community Justice Committees also play a role in selecting participants for programs, as well as counselling and mentoring clients. This role is crucial to ensure Cree individuals receive **FAIR** and **CULTURALLY ADJUSTED** sentences when indicated.

To show the impact of the Justice Committee, in 2019, the Court of Quebec recognized an expanded role for the Justice Committee and placed **IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES** on it, on par with the probation officer.

In a case involving two Cree individuals, the Court ordered that the Justice Committee take part in establishing and implementing probation measures for the two convicted individuals. So, recommendations from the CJC hold substantive weight with the Court that must be **RESPONSIBLY** and **THOROUGHLY** carried out.



7 OF OUR COMMUNITY JUSTICE COMMITTEES



This year our CJs **CONTINUED THEIR WORK** by overseeing:



118

**REFERRED
CASES**

71

**ALTERNATIVE
MEASURES**



CJC PROGRAMMING

Our Community Justice Committees also answer the needs of our communities with regular land-based and culturally informed workshops. These activities bridge a gap between community members and provide a healing space for clients to build confidence and connection. This year CJsC administered 116 programs focusing primarily on increasing Cree culture, identity, and healing.





CREE JUSTICE FUNDS

This year, we continued to organize our funding for community initiatives in two categories: Youth Engagement and Crime Prevention. Our Justice Funds provide financial support to community members who wish to provide programming to support our mandate. This funding model builds new relationships in support of healthier and safer Cree communities.

2
FUNDS



CRIME PREVENTION FUND
A fund to prevent and combat crime and support the creation of safer communities.



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT FUND
A fund to empower the Cree youth while promoting their general welfare.

9
PROJECTS SUPPORTED THIS YEAR

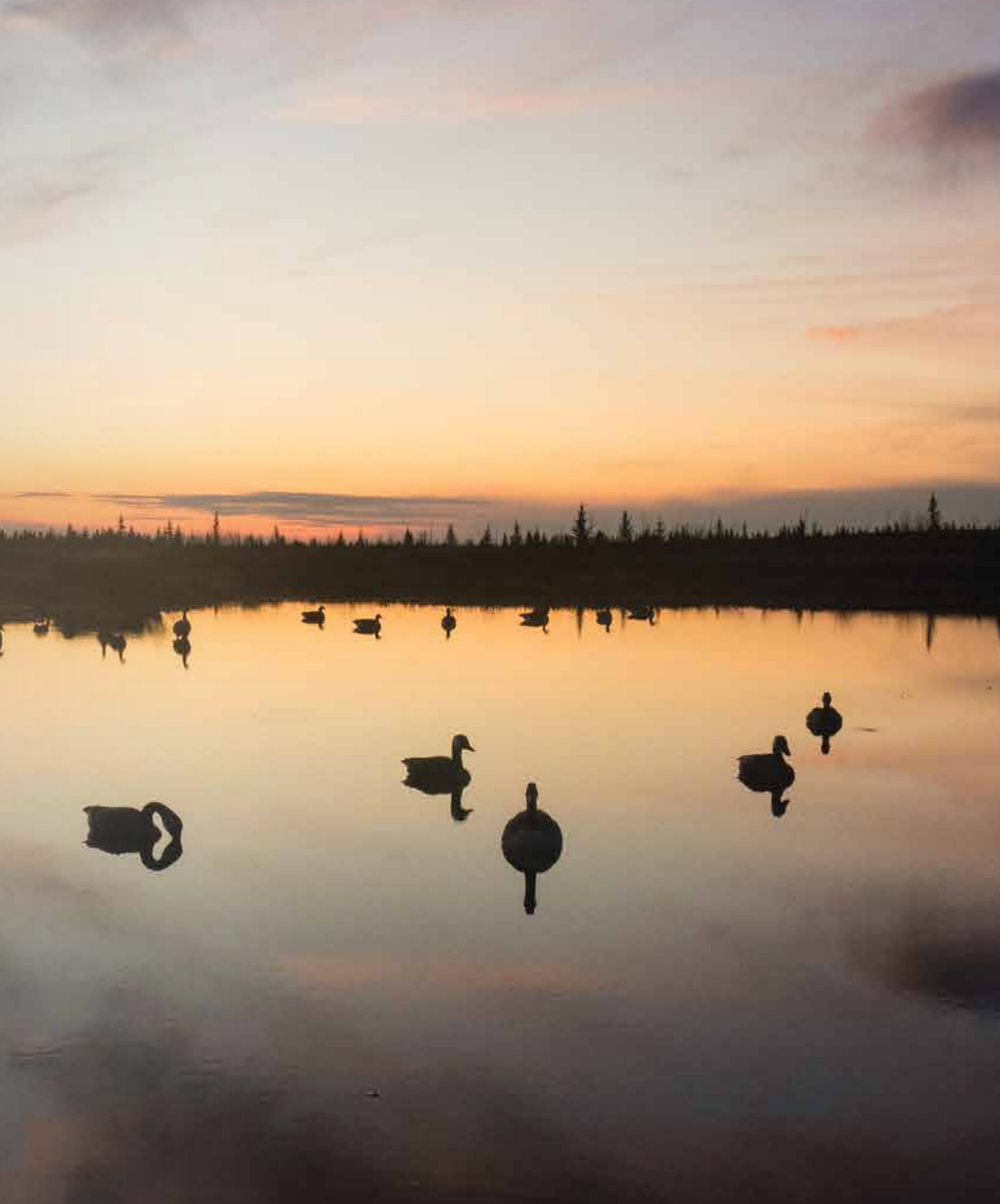


THOSE PROJECTS REACHED

+190
PARTICIPANTS

OUR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION THIS YEAR TOTALED

+\$322K



SERVICES TO VICTIMS AND WITNESSES

Our Cree CAVAC services provide victims and witnesses of crime the tools and support to heal. This year, we added staff to ensure that our clients were well-served.



Our **CREE CAVAC OFFICERS** offer a wide range of services to community members that have been **VICTIMS OR WITNESSES OF CRIMINAL ACTS**.



Help can be obtained in the **CREE LANGUAGE** and is always kept **CONFIDENTIAL**

This year our **CREE CAVAC OFFICERS** responded to:

28

**COURT
REFERRALS**

17

**COURT
ACCOMPANIEMENTS**

75

**INFORMATION
DELIVERY**

7

**POST-TRAUMA
INTERVENTION**

TOGETHER,
RESPONDING TO

505

CAVAC INQUIRIES

JUNE 15TH

In an effort to help reduce the victimization and neglect of our **ELDERS**, our department collaborated with communities by participating in activities on **WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY**.

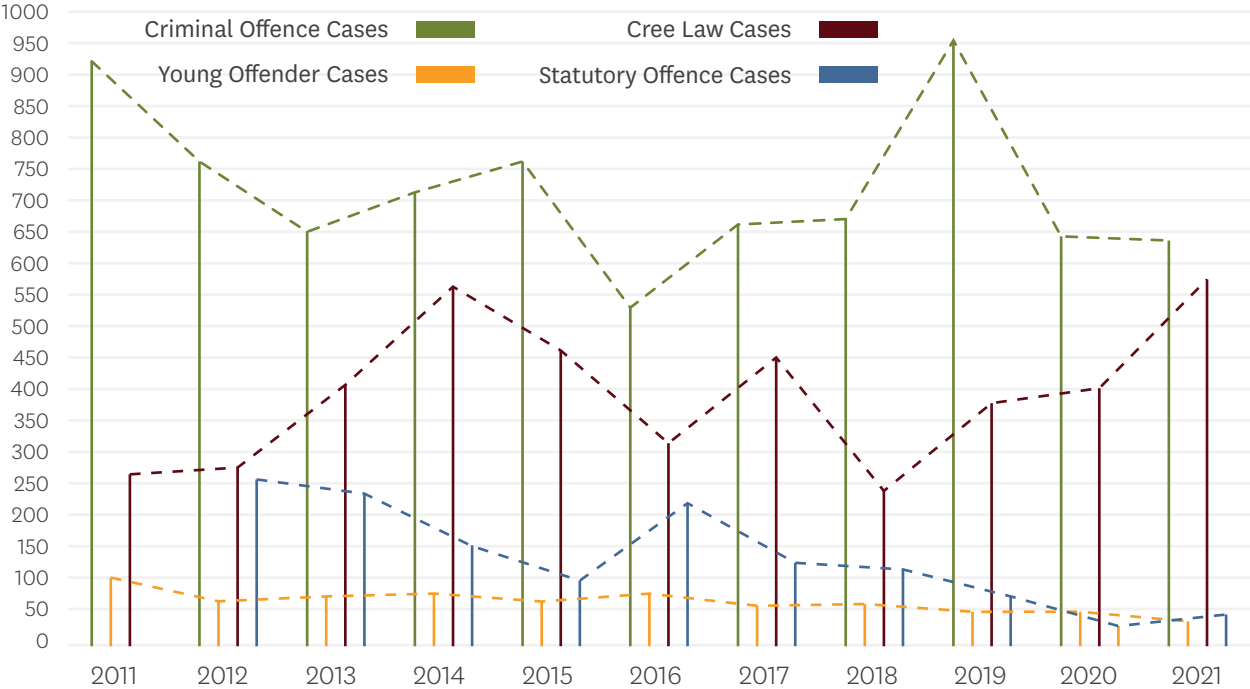


COURT STATISTICS

Each year we look at the court statistics for the whole Cree Nation, and by community, to see the level of activity. With the second year of the pandemic, the court was again using video conferencing to host the vast majority of hearings until February 2022 when they returned to the Cree communities for in-person hearings. The statistics see an upward trend in Cree law cases, as there were new measures related to public safety being applied by the Eeyou Eenou Police Force. The criminal case numbers may also reflect new approaches during the pandemic to lesser offences.

 <h2>639</h2> <p>CRIMINAL OFFENCE CASES</p>	 <h2>575</h2> <p>CREE LAW CASES</p>	 <h2>39</h2> <p>YOUTH OFFENDER CASES</p>
 <h2>182</h2> <p>PROVINCIAL CASES</p>	 <h2>222</h2> <p>MUNICIPAL BY-LAWS</p>	 <h2>83</h2> <p>YOUTH PROTECTION</p>

YEARLY EVOLUTION OF NUMBER OF CASES BY TYPE



GLADUE REPORTS

The Supreme Court of Canada interpreted the Gladue principle for the first time in a landmark decision R. v. Gladue. The Gladue decision led to the preparation of “Gladue Reports” to inform the court about the unique circumstances of an Indigenous individual and to provide alternatives to imprisonment.

ABOUT GLADUE REPORTS?

WHY	HOW	WHAT	WHO
It stems from a Supreme Court decision in 1999 and section 718.2 (e) of the Criminal Code of Canada.	It looks at the impact of historical trauma on the culture, identity and lived experiences of Indigenous offenders.	It offers alternatives to incarceration for consideration by the court.	Gladue Reports are prepared by writers trained in research, interviewing and the requirements of this process.

A REPORT CAN TAKE

60 HOURS
TO COMPLETE



Sometimes longer when pandemic restrictions are in place preventing face-to-face meetings.

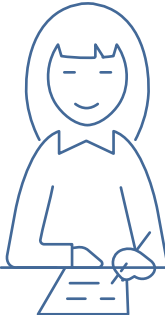
2021-2022 GLADUE REPORTS REQUESTED

36



2021-2022 GLADUE REPORTS WRITTEN

20



Over the past several years, we have trained **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** to be Gladue writers. We currently have an active roster of a dozen writers, and, due to demand, we will be adding **TO OUR DEPARTMENT**

+2

FULL-TIME GLADUE WRITERS THIS YEAR



CORRECTIONS

We continued to invest in Cree communities by supporting individuals along their healing journey through the application of Cree knowledge, customs, and traditions. While some of our visits in detention were sidelined due to pandemic restrictions, our frontline staff continued to respond to needs of clients both during incarceration and post-release.

Corrections staff still managed to provide **SUPPORT TO CREE CLIENTS IN DETENTION** and as they transition back into their community by providing



66

**COUNSELLING
SESSIONS**



22

**FEDERAL & PROVINCIAL
FACILITIES VISITS**



23

**RECORD SUSPENSION
GUIDANCE**

Our department **PSYCHOLOGIST** continued to provide services to clients this year through

19

THERAPY SESSIONS



We are also planning to build a **HALFWAY HOUSE IN VAL-D'OR** that will help fill the gap in the healing journey of many of our clients who wish to **RETURN** and **REINTEGRATE** to their communities and families and need specialized services first.



C.R.E.E. PROGRAM

The C.R.E.E. Program supports community members to break the cycle of reoffending by reintegrating them into the community and providing them with tools and support to restabilize and realize their potential as productive community members.

The program offers **MENTORSHIP**, **TRAINING**, and **JOB PLACEMENT** opportunities to participants who possess a strong desire to achieve **POSITIVE CHANGE** along with a continued willingness and motivation to actively **PARTICIPATE AND GROW**.

WE SUPPORTED

20



PARTICIPANTS THIS YEAR

TOGETHER
THEY
WORKED

+8900 HOURS



The C.R.E.E. Program is made possible by the partnership of **APATISIWIN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**, as well as the commitment and dedication of **EMPLOYERS** who generously embark on this adventure **WITH OUR PARTICIPANTS!**



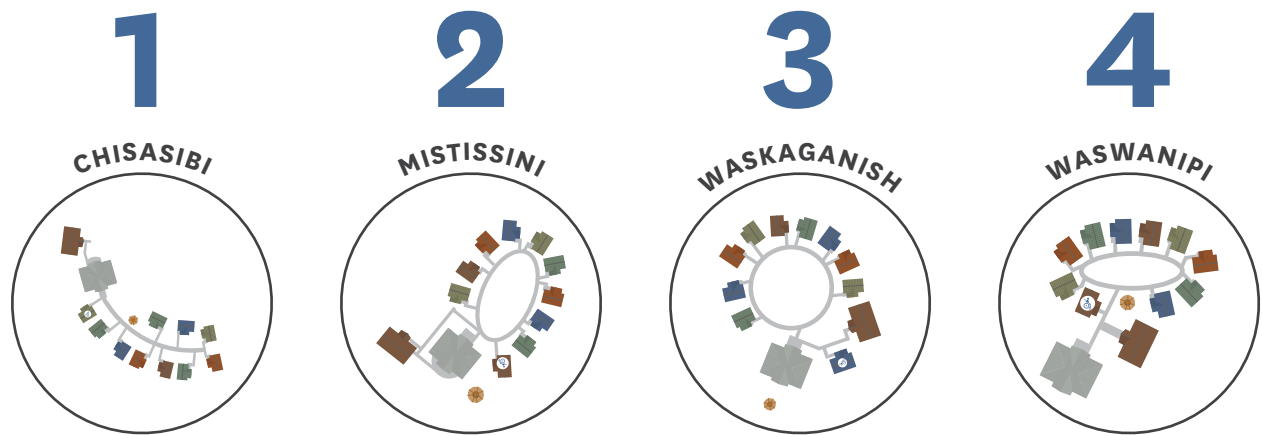
TINY HOME COMMUNITIES

As a part of the journey we walk through with our clients in the criminal justice system, we are building our Tiny Home project to help provide support to individuals after they first return to their community. Each of these sites have tiny homes for our clients to re-establish some independence while living in a community supported with social and health services and assistance to reconnect with their Cree identity.

Our residents will benefit from a **VARIETY OF SERVICES**, such as:



Our Tiny Home project has **CONTINUED TO PROGRESS**, despite building challenges during the pandemic, with four sites currently under construction. Ultimately, the goal is for Tiny Home communities to be built throughout **ALL CREE COMMUNITIES**.



MAIN BUILDING

Each community will include a facility where clients can come to in order to take part in various programs and to help them in their reintegration process.



TINY HOME

Every client will also be given a safe independent living space that they can call home while they are with us.

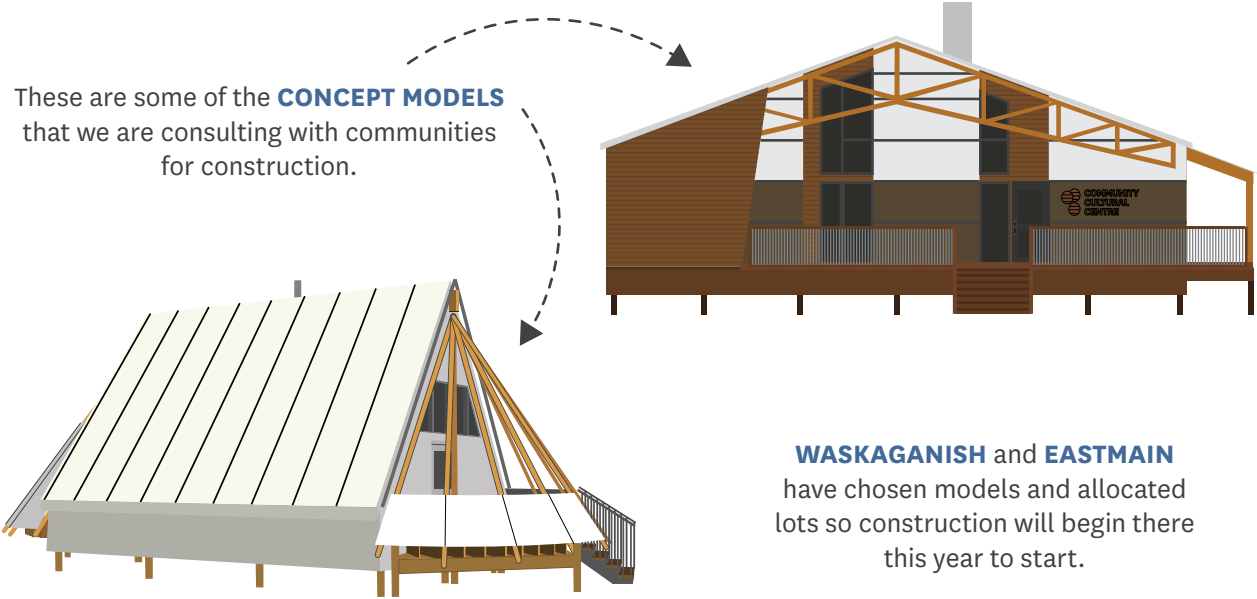


OTHER DEVELOPMENT

Focusing on Cree culture, identity and customs is embedded in all the work we do. Often clients and community members gather in our courtroom for traditional activities that promote cultural identity and healing.

In recognition that the courtroom is not the ideal location for our **CULTURAL PROGRAMS**, we have plans to build a **CULTURAL BUILDING** for use by our staff and partners in **PROGRAMMING WITH CLIENTS**.

These are some of the **CONCEPT MODELS** that we are consulting with communities for construction.



WASKAGANISH and **EASTMAIN** have chosen models and allocated lots so construction will begin there this year to start.

To support people who may need housing or other types of support, we have undertaken to build **ALMSHOUSES** in two communities. Early designs are **BEING FINALIZED** as this project begins to take root.



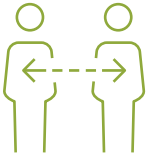
FACILITIES

Despite the adjustments needed to accommodate COVID-19 measures, our foresight in the design and development of our justice facilities gave us capacity to continue providing essential services to all Cree communities. Our established videoconferencing system made it easier for us to transition and our facilities had the capacity to meet the changing needs during the pandemic and we continue looking for ways to further optimize our physical spaces and maintain a high standard of service in Eeyou Istchee.

Clients could still **MEET** with staff either through **ZOOM, TEAMS**, or **BY PHONE** to get help and support with their case or file.



In exceptional circumstances we also met at one of our **CONFERENCE ROOMS** which was fully retrofitted to **ENSURE SAFETY**.



Since the designing phase of all of our facilities, technology has been vital in the delivery of **QUALITY SERVICES**. This became evident **DURING THE PANDEMIC** where we provided:



As part of our continued **ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES** we are now planning the upgrade and design of



COURTROOM AUDIOVISUAL SYSTEMS

The audiovisual systems were used extensively throughout the pandemic, the Department will now modernize them for better service.



MEDIATION ROOM CONFERRING SYSTEM

The mediation room design made audiovisual systems more complicated, so we have invested in new equipment and room design to make them more functional.



RECEPTION AREA SCREENS

An investment in the reception area screens will allow us to provide regular updates to the public on the docket, visits of professionals and courts, programming, and our latest videos.

COVID-19 MEASURES

Safety measures within the Cree Nation persisted throughout most of the last fiscal year. To comply with local laws, and best practices, the justice facilities continued to promote these measures. It was not until February 2022 that court personnel returned to the Cree communities for in-person hearings. A staggered schedule was continued for staff as a part of local measures. As traveling resumed for essential workers, the best safety practices were still employed to reduce risk to individuals and communities overall.

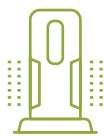
We had a variety of **SANITARY MEASURES** so everyone would feel **SAFE AND PROTECTED**.



MASKS THROUGHOUT THE FACILITIES



HANDWASHING STATION AT ENTRANCES



STRATEGICALLY PLACED AIR PURIFIERS



HAND-SANITIZING SOLUTIONS



REMINDERS ON THE GROUND AND ON WALLS



PLEXIGLASS PROTECTORS THROUGHOUT FACILITIES



LEGISLATION



UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (UNDRIP)

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Bill C-15) became law and came into force on June 21, 2021. The Government of Canada is currently consulting with Indigenous communities, and is expected to table a draft action plan by summer 2022 to achieve the objectives of the Declaration. According to the Government of Canada, there will be a further process for Indigenous peoples and Canada to work in cooperation on measures to implement the Declaration, informed by the priorities identified in the initial action plan.



ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC RACISM IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

In December 2021, the Government of Canada re-introduced legislation to amend the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act to repeal mandatory minimum penalties for certain offences, in order to address the disproportionate impacts on Indigenous and Black offenders, as well as those struggling with substance use and addiction (Bill C-5). This Bill was previously introduced in the last session of Parliament as Bill C-22. Data shows that the proportion of Indigenous offenders admitted with an offence punishable by a mandatory minimum penalty has almost doubled between 2007-2008 and 2016-2017, from 14% to 26%. The proposed changes would also allow for greater use of conditional sentence orders (serving time in one's community under strict conditions) and require police and prosecutors to consider other measures for simple possession of drugs such as diversion to addiction treatment programs. At the time of writing, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights was reviewing the Bill.



REMOTE PROCEEDINGS AND INCREASING EFFICIENCY OF CRIMINAL PROCESS

Bill S-4, introduced by the Government of Canada in February 2022, would enhance and clarify rules for remote criminal proceedings, including appearances by videoconference or audioconference, and would expand the current telewarrant process to allow police or specific public officers to apply remotely for judicial authorizations in a wider range of circumstances. Other changes include amendments to the Criminal Code and the Identification of Criminals Act to allow fingerprinting to occur at a later time than is currently permitted to deal with circumstances such as those caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bill was previously introduced to the House of Commons as Bill C-23, and it is currently being reviewed by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs.



CHANGES TO QUEBEC'S YOUTH PROTECTION ACT

In response to the Final Report of the Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and Youth Protection (the "Laurent Commission" Report), Quebec is amending the Youth Protection Act via Bill 15. The revised Act, which came into force on April 26, 2022, affirms that the interest of the child is a primary consideration when making decisions under the Act, creates a National

Director of Youth Protection and a province-wide directors forum, and includes a new chapter specific to Indigenous children, among other modifications. The chapter on Indigenous children sets out additional factors that must be taken into account when determining the best interest of an Indigenous child, prioritizes foster family placements within a child's family and community, and enables the formation of family councils to inform certain youth protection decisions, in accordance with Indigenous customs or practices.



SPECIALIZED COURT FOR SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In November 2021, the Government of Quebec enacted the Act to create a court specialized in sexual violence and domestic violence (Bill 92), creating a division of the Court of Quebec specialized in sexual and domestic violence. Judges in this division will be required to complete a professional development program providing education on the realities of sexual and domestic violence. A consultation service will be set up for victims of sexual or domestic violence. The specialized division will be implemented in at least five judicial districts in an initial pilot project stage.



INDIGENOUS CHILDREN WHO WENT MISSING OR PASSED AWAY IN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

In June 2021 the Government of Quebec enacted legislation requiring health and social service institutions and religious bodies or congregations to communicate personal information to family members that could shed light on the circumstances under which an Indigenous child went missing or passed away (Bill 79). The Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs must assist any person in making such a request and following up on it, and assist any person charged with providing access to the documents. The Minister can also conduct investigations where information is not communicated as requested, and a complaints procedure will be established.



INDIGENOUS YOUTH PROTECTION

In February 2022, the Quebec Court of Appeal released an opinion on the constitutionality of the federal Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families (Bill C-92), after being referred the question by the Government of Quebec. Quebec argued that Canada does not have the constitutional power to legislate on youth protection matters, but the Court of Appeal disagreed, finding the federal law to be complementary to provincial youth protection laws. Furthermore, the Court of Appeal concluded that Indigenous groups have an inherent right to self-government over child and family services (referred to as youth protection in Quebec), and this right is recognized under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Quebec is appealing this decision to the Supreme Court of Canada. For the Crees, youth protection is subject to the special jurisdiction and funding framework of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB) and the provisions of Section 14 JBNQA and related legislation.

CLOSING MESSAGE

We look forward, together, to what lies ahead. We envision the realization of many new projects, programs, and initiatives. Some of these include the tiny homes communities, the workshops, cultural buildings, and, importantly, almshouses to address homelessness. These initiatives will start in the next year, and make an incredible difference to the well-being of individuals and communities. With each new initiative, there will also be new positions in each of the communities.

The path looking forward will also see developments in terms of new programming and services, as well as long term planning for further implementation of necessary and key resources for adults and youth. Throughout the pandemic, the Department has worked closely with other Cree organizations and departments, and met regularly with local Cree governments, and we will continue to keep up these valuable relationships, building capacity together to make healthier and stronger Cree communities.





SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

*Message from the Director
Rodney Mark*



ON BEHALF OF OUR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TEAM, IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE TO SUBMIT OUR REPORTS TO THE CREE NATION.

 **11**
EMPLOYEES

The past two years have been a real challenge to manage and implement projects, programs, events and our funding programs due to COVID-19. Supporting our communities with their projects has not been easy for us, and likewise, for the communities, we want to acknowledge our communities for their dedication and perseverance in realizing their projects.

Highlights this past year is working in collaboration with Regional Cree Trappers' Association (CTA) on the community freezers proposal, and we were able to obtain these funds for the local CTAs to implement. The other major partnership with Public Health Cree Health Board was organizing four-day Zoom food engagement sessions with all the communities. As a result, a report will be coming forward to the

communities from these sessions with a lot of great ideas on food security. We want to thank CTA and CHB of their continued effort to work with us on many fronts.

The other highlight is working with the Chisasibi Council and their team to build and develop a proposal for the residential school file.

Working with the Cree Language Commissioner's office has been a great endeavour. Reaffirming the importance of our language in Eeyou Istchee is one of the most exciting files we are involved in. I would like to thank Mr. Jamie Moses for his leadership and his team for moving this file forward.

Our team, like everywhere else, became Teamed or Zoomed out, as the new saying goes. I wish to acknowledge the team for their diligent work these past years. I know it has not been easy for many working in isolation.

On a personal note, I did take some time off for three months for family-related reasons, and I would like to thank Mr. Alex Moses for continuing the momentum and leadership with our team; awesome job Alex.

*Rodney Mark
Director of Social and Cultural Development*



Photo: Katherine Dehm

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE AND PERSONNEL

Over the year, we have seen minor changes within the department positions. These changes will enable our department further to support social and cultural development in Eeyou Istchee.

Figure 1. New personnel in their positions

Introducing Our Growth

The Department of Social and Cultural Development welcomes our personnel changes.

NELLIE WAPACHEE
CULTURAL LIAISON OFFICER

Nellie has been with the Organization for 10 years in another role however, today transitioning to a new position. The position will provide great support to cultural pursuits of our organization and of our partners.



MELISSA WHISKEYCHAN,
PROGRAM TECHNICIAN

Melissa has been with the organization for 4 years in another role. Today as the program Technician, she'll be overseeing funding programs Cree Youth Development Fund and Elders Funding Program.



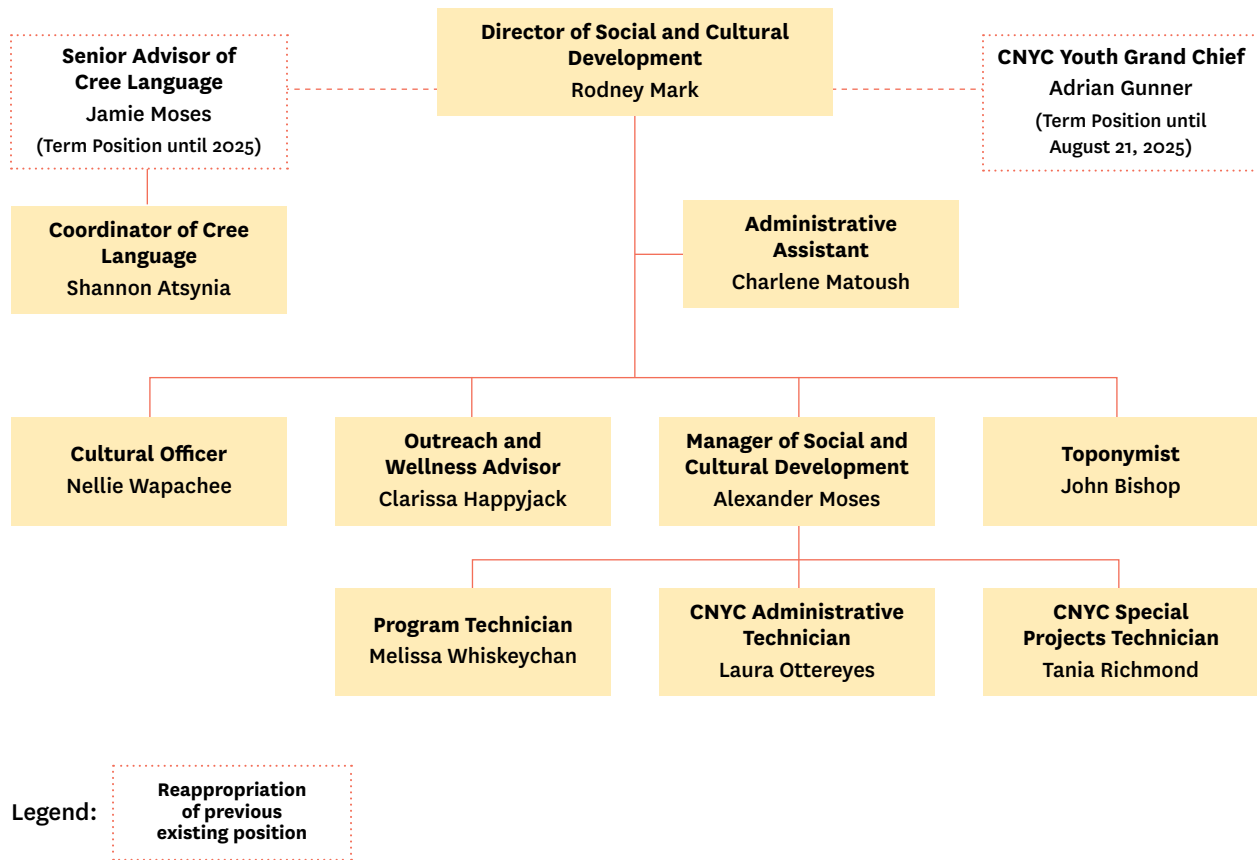
LAURA OTTEREYES
ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNICIAN

Laura is new in the organization, we believe she'll provide us with great support in administrative services to the department and to the Cree Nation Youth Council.



Figure 2 shows the Social and Cultural Development department structure, permanent positions, and contract positions for specific files.

Figure 2. Department of Social and Cultural Development Work Chart, 2021-2022



FUNDING AGREEMENTS

The Department negotiates and manages agreements from several provincial ministries and makes funds available to Cree organizations and communities through the application process, agreement implementation, providing support and reporting.

The Department committed funding to over 50 local and regional programs and projects across Eeyou Istchee. We have three major funding programs within Social and Culture to support these initiatives through a call for proposal process, review, and recommendation to our management committee.

Following are the funding programs; Program objectives/pillars, the list of programs and projects, and the amount of financing.

Cree Alliance for Solidarity

The Cree Alliance for Solidarity is a new funding program for the Department of Social and Cultural Development that is now operational for its 3rd year. The Alliance for Solidarity responds to the Government's desire to support the deployment of regional and local actions to fight against poverty and social exclusion. It aims to:

- establish a partnership with all the partners who are concerned with the development of communities and the fight against poverty and social exclusion in order to ensure coherence of actions;
- establish a shared vision with its partners on the efforts to be made to ensure that the interventions that will be supported are well anchored in the communities and meet the priorities that they have established in respect of their specificities;

- ensure the participation of people living in poverty and social exclusion in the implementation mechanisms of the agreement;

Cree Youth Development Fund

The Cree Youth Development Fund is part of a Funding Agreement with the Secrétariat à la Jeunesse (SAJ), Cree Nation Youth Council and Department of Social and Cultural Development.

The Cree Youth Development Fund is a Youth programming funding program that is expected to facilitate positive youth development in the following six areas:

1. Education and Support
2. Health and Active Living
3. Culture and Tradition
4. Business and Employment
5. Personal and Social Development
6. Citizenship and Participation

This is the final year for the current agreement with SAJ and Cree Nation Government/CNYC. The Youth Grand Chief and the Manager of Social and Cultural Development and Youth support staff met with Secrétariat à la Jeunesse (SAJ) to discuss the renewal of the funding agreement for another five years (2 million contributions). With the consultations conducted by CNYC through Online surveys, Community Tour and regional events, CNYC developed the "Cree Youth Strategic Action Plan 2021-2026, which was delivered in February. SAJ supported the Cree Youth Strategic Plan by awarding the new funding agreement for 2021-2026.

Figure 3. Cree Solidarity Alliance
Administrative agreement regarding the management of the Fonds québécois d'initiatives sociales (FQIS) within the scope of the Alliances for Solidarity, 2021-2022

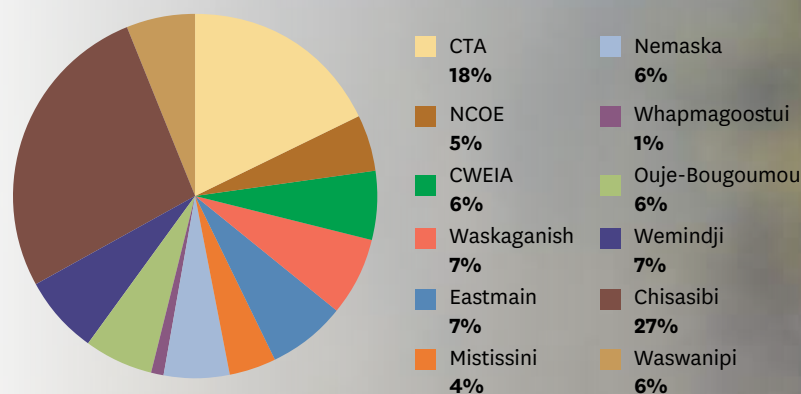


Table 1. Cree Alliance for Solidarity – Programs and Projects Committed, 2021-2022

Project Name	Community/Organization	Approved Amount
Cree Land Stewards-Training Program	CTA	\$50,000.00
Eastmain Sports Development	Eastmain	\$50,000.00
Mistissini Hangry Lunch Program	Mistissini	\$30,000.00
Nemaska Sport & Recreation	Nemaska	\$40,000.00
Sport Development	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$40,000.00
Waskaganish Student Engagement Initiatives	Waskaganish	\$50,000.00
Wemindji Sports Academy	Wemindji	\$25,000.00
Harvesting of traditional food for MSDC	Whapmagoostui	\$10,000.00
Wemindji-Secondary 5 Driving School	Wemindji	\$25,000.00
Tea & Bannock With Elders	NCOE	\$40,000.00
Sport for School Support	Waswanipi	\$40,000.00
Chisasibi Wellness-Inshiyuu Miyuupimatisiun	Chisasibi	\$43,550.00
Community Freezers	CTA	\$78,295.00
Story Telling	Chisasibi	\$47,940.00
Women Conference 2022	CWEIA	\$46,420.00
Driving School Incentives	James Bay Eeyou School-CSB	\$50,000.00
Bear Den Harvest	Chisasibi	\$50,000.00

Figure 4. Cree Youth Development Funds, 2021-2022

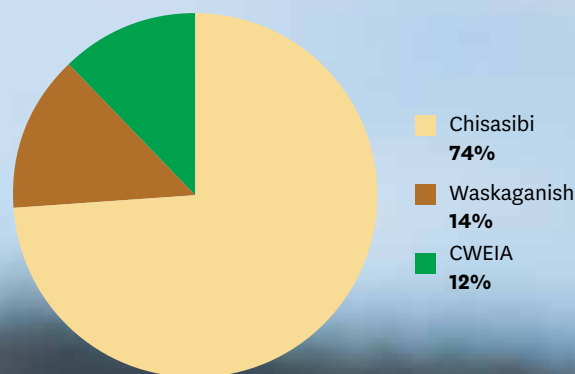


Table 2. Cree Youth Development Fund (SAJ) – Programs and Projects Committed, 2021-2022

Project Name	Community/Organization	Approved Amount
Bear Teachings	Chisasibi	\$20,000.00
Community Spirit	Chisasibi	\$7,000.00
Men's Retreat	CWEIA	\$12,000.00
Ice Fishing	Chisasibi	\$6,275.00
Ladie's Retreat	Chisasibi	\$20,000.00
Waskaganish Climbing Gym	Waskaganish	\$15,000.00
Boys Cultural Retreat	Chisasibi	\$23,900.00

Photo: Katherine Dehm



Elders Program Funding - The Regional Adaptation to Enhance Seniors' Living Conditions in the Cree Communities

The Department of Social and Cultural Development administers Cree and Quebec funding agreements that allocate funding for Elders programming in Eeyou Istchee.

The Social and Cultural Department's objectives for the Elder's Program funding,

Under the umbrella of these categories, the funding objectives are organized into five main pillars, which are the foundation of this 5-year action plan:

1. Direct Assistance for Elders
2. Participation in community
3. Healthy lifestyles
4. Creating safe and welcoming environments
5. Traditional knowledge, skills, and language

Figure 5. Elders Funding
Cree Nation Government and the Government of Quebec for the Regional Adaptation to Enhance Seniors Living Conditions in the Cree Communities Nord du Quebec Region, 2021-2022

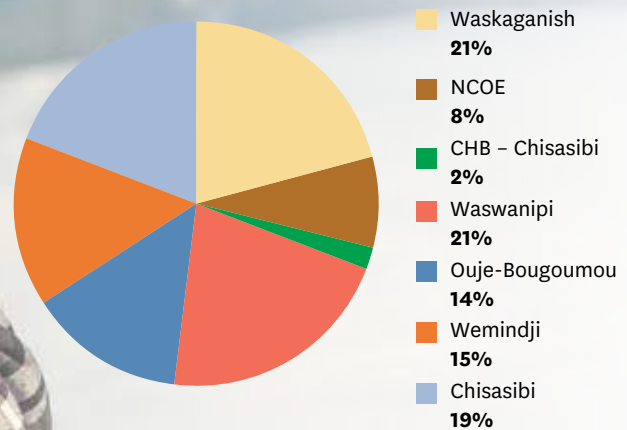


Table 3. Elder's Funding Program- Programs and Projects Committed, 2021-2022

Project Name	Community/Organization	Approved Amount
Wood Program & Chimney Cleaning 2021	Waskaganish	\$50,000.00
Tea & Bannock with Elders	NCOE	\$37,700.00
Elders Mistreatment Awareness Tool	CHB-Chisasibi	\$9,998.00
Elders Assistance Program	Waswanipi	\$50,000.00
Elders Transfer of knowledge	Waswanipi	\$50,000.00
Wemindji Cares 2021	Wemindji	\$20,000.00
Elders Snow Removal	Wemindji	\$50,000.00
Elders Outreach	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$50,000.00
Chisasibi Wellness Elders Program	Chisasibi	\$48,670.00
Chimney Cleaning for Elders	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$15,000.00
Hide Tanning	Chisasibi	\$42,320.00
Elders Lunch and Teachings	Waskaganish	\$50,000.00

Photo: Katherine Dehm

Cultural Sector

The past year has seen our department solidify its partnerships and collaboration with regional entities and other Cree Nation Government departments. Ongoing work on the place names database continues, with the continued production of Cree language reference maps and work on the place names data gathered to date. We look forward to resuming interviews with elders in the coming months.

We have been collaborating with Marc Dunn, Niskamoon, and Hydro-Québec to repatriate Cree materials held by Hydro-Québec. Two legal agreements were signed that saw significant transfers to the care of the Cree Nation Government. The first included over 200 cassettes of recorded interviews with Cree elders and land users from Chisasibi, Wemindji, Eastmain and Mistissini. These interviews were conducted as part of the 2002 East and West Sector studies of the impacts of the La Grande Hydroelectric Development on Cree land use in affected traplines. We are currently collaborating with Niskamoon and Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute (ACCI) to digitize and safeguard the materials. We will launch an initiative to return the information to families and tallymen once digitization is complete. The second agreement saw Hydro-Québec turn over its archaeological data to the Cree Nation Government and ACCI so that the information could support the feasibility studies for the Grande Alliance as well as ACCI's archaeology program.

We also worked with ACCI and Dr. Kevin Brousseau to publish an illustrated third edition of his lexical research on Cree names for flora and fauna. We published a two-box set of flashcards and are currently working on the publication of a companion book.

Our department also collaborated on a number of initiatives with the Cree Nation Government's Environment department. We worked with the Protected Areas Team on developing a prototype for a protected area knowledge portrait – in this case, the proposed Waswanipi Lake Aquatic Reserve. We also provided maps and place names information for projects in Whapmagoostui and Nemaska that were funded by the Challenge Fund. We are also working with the Protected Areas Team to support the Chisasibi Heritage and Cultural Centre's Commemorative Integrity Project.

We have been participating in the Cree Nation Government's GIS Working Group where we have been working closely with ESRI to conduct a GIS needs assessment and develop a roadmap for improving the Cree Nation Government's GIS resources and capabilities. We are confident that the results of this work will improve public and community access to the Cree place names data, as well as data relating to cultural sites. We are excited about beginning work to implement the roadmap (which is being finalized and will be presented to leadership soon). We have also begun collaborating with the Cree Nation Government's Forestry Department on identifying and protecting burial sites in Forestry affected areas. Further, we have been supporting leadership in their work on a Social and Cultural Development Action Plan. This work will serve as the basis for nation-to-nation negotiations with the province. Our department's work on

the development of a Cultural Policy will be re-invigorated in the context of this work.

Finally, we have been working to support Chisasibi in their efforts to investigate the Fort George Residential School sites.

CREE CUSTOMARY ADOPTION AND CUSTOMARY GUARDIANSHIP

Background

After changes to the *Civil Code of Québec* in 2018, the Cree Nation Government was designated as the Cree competent authority to certify certain Cree customary adoptions and guardianships, as of June 1, 2019.

A combined regional-local approach was developed for Eeyou Istchee following the recommendation of a Cree Customary Adoption Working Group made up of representatives of the GCC(EI)/Cree Nation Government and the CBHSSJB, and consultations with the Cree First Nations and regional Cree entities.

The Cree certification process will be carried out by the Cree Nation Government, working with local committees set up by interested Cree First Nations, and also with the collaboration of the CBHSSJB. The Cree Nation Government has engaged James Bobbish as the interim Regional Coordinator to assist with these matters, given his experience.

The Quebec Registrar of Civil Status has included the Cree Nation Government in its register of Indigenous competent authorities. This allows the Cree Nation Government to officialize an existing Cree customary adoption or guardianship, on request. This depends on the relevant Cree First Nation setting up a local committee, and on the customary adoption or guardianship meeting the necessary requirements.

Status

The Interim Regional Coordinator met with representatives of different Cree First Nations last year to explain the background and approach for certifying Cree customary adoptions and guardianships. He has now met with the leadership of most Cree communities to promote establishment of local committees. At present, five communities have created their local committees, and at least one community has also appointed members.

These committees will play an important role in the certification process. The Regional Coordinator will continue to work with interested communities to help them to establish a committee, and select and orient committee members. Interested Cree First Nations who have not yet created a local committee are encouraged to contact James Bobbish.

The Cree Nation Government has developed tools and a guide to help Cree First Nations to set up these local committees. These tools and other implementation documents are expected to be finalized for publication shortly.

Overview of the Cree Certification Process

Cree families are not required to have a customary adoption or a customary guardianship certified by the Cree Nation Government; it is optional. Cree traditional adoptions and

guardianships may continue to be practiced in the customary way without having to be certified.

However, certification helps legal effects be recognized more easily, including by provincial or federal government authorities, as certification has a similar effect to a court order for an adoption or guardianship.

- At the request of the customary adopters/guardians or the child, the Cree Nation Government can make the customary adoption or guardianship of a Cree child official, without these persons having to go to court. The Cree Nation Government does this by issuing a certificate confirming that a customary adoption or guardianship of a Cree child has taken place.
- The certification process applies to a customary adoption/guardianship that has already taken place. It is not a process to place a child with a family, either on a permanent or temporary basis.
- The decision to carry out a customary adoption/guardianship is made according to Cree custom, generally by the biological parents, the adopters/guardians, and sometimes the child and extended family members.
- The customary adopters/guardians or the child fill out an application with the Cree Nation Government to have the customary adoption or guardianship certified.

Key Aspects of the Cree Process for Certifying Customary Adoptions or Guardianships

For the Cree Nation Government to certify a Cree customary adoption or guardianship under the Cree Certification Process:

- The child must have been a minor (under 18) at the time of the customary adoption, or be a minor at the time of application for certification of the customary guardianship;
- The child must be registered as a Cree JBNQA beneficiary;
- At least one adopter/guardian must be a member of a Cree community that has set up the relevant Cree local committee;

- Both the child and adopters/guardians must currently live (be “domiciled”) in Quebec; and
- The biological parents, the adopters/guardians and the child must have been domiciled in Quebec at the time of the customary adoption or customary guardianship.

A Cree First Nation has to set up its local committee for its members to be able to have a customary adoption or guardianship certified.

The Cree Nation Government collaborates with the families and the local committee to decide if the customary adoption or guardianship can be certified, including to make sure that:

- It was carried out according to custom;
- It is in the child’s interest;
- All the required consents have been given; and
- The child is in the care of the adopters or the guardians.

If the Cree Nation Government certifies a Cree customary adoption, the Quebec Registrar of Civil Status changes the child’s birth certificate, and the child is then legally considered to be the child of the adopters.

If the Cree Nation Government certifies a Cree customary guardianship, the certificate is given to the guardians, who can use it to prove that they are the legal guardians (“tutors”) of the child and have parental authority. A copy of the certificate is also provided to the Quebec Registrar of Civil Status for record-keeping.

Someone interested in having a customary adoption or a customary guardianship of a Cree child certified can contact the Cree Nation Government Regional Coordinator at creeadoption@cngov.ca for more information.

If needed, the Regional Coordinator can provide an application form and help the adopters/guardians or the child complete it.



Photo: Katherine Dehm



YOUTH SECTOR UPDATE

Message from the Grand Youth Chief

Wachiya. First of all, we are truly honoured to present the Cree Nation Youth Council's Annual Report now that we are close to completing our first year as the newly elected chairs of the CNYC.

We are truly thankful for Chishemanituu for giving us the strength and courage to continuously move forward in the betterment of the Youth of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee throughout this pandemic. We are excited as our nation begins to re-open which will facilitate bringing our youth together again.

We would like to recognize all our Youth for their best efforts to pursue their dreams and aspirations while inspiring hope throughout our territory and beyond. Witnessing their growth and achievements is what motivates us to keep on this path. We would also like to take this time to recognize the local Youth Councils, the CNYC Board of Directors our CNYC support staff for their hard work and valuable contributions to youth development.

The CNYC would also like to extend its appreciation to the Cree Nation Government, Secrétariat à la jeunesse, De-

partment of Social and Cultural Development, and external partners for supporting our vision and helping pave the way for our Youth.

Together, continue delivering the best interests and priorities of our Youth to continue empowering them today and tomorrow.

Mikwetch,
Adrian N. Gunner
Jordan Masty

Administrative

The Cree Nation Youth Council (CNYC) is a governing body led by a Board of Directors comprised of young elected leaders from each of the 10 Cree communities and their local youth coordinators. Together, they work on the development of CNYC led initiatives that aim to foster the growth of youth as the future leaders of the Cree Nation.

In respect of the COVID-19 measures in place throughout Eeyou Istchee, the CNYC conducted over 60% of its meetings virtually.

Meetings, 2021-2022

Executive Committee

Virtual Meeting	May 27, 2021
Val-d'Or, Qc	November 3 & 4, 2021
Virtual Meeting	January 26, 2022
Virtual Meeting	February 22, 2022
Chibougamau, Qc	March 15 & 16, 2022

Board of Directors

Virtual Meeting	April 6, 7 & 8, 2021
Rouyn, Qc	July 7 & 8, 2021
Cree Nation of Chisasibi	September 28, 29 & 30, 2021
Virtual Meeting	November
Virtual Meeting	February 8, 9 & 10, 2022



Group Picture taken in April 2022. Missing communities due to travel restrictions: Washaw Sibi, Wemindji and Ouje-Bougoumou

Our Team

The CNYC's agreements, programs funding and administration of special projects are carried out under the responsibility and supervision of the Social and Cultural Development department. Our administration focuses on proposing meetings, trainings, planning sessions, communications as well as implementing and promoting our programs, projects, and organization mandate.

In addition to the internal changes within the permanent staff, we are also excited to welcome the addition of two contractual positions to our team in the upcoming new fiscal year to help us carry out our activities.

The Co-Chairs

Adrian N. Gunner – Youth Grand Chief
Jordan Masty – Deputy Youth Grand Chief

Current Staff

Tania Lariviere – Special Projects Technician
Laura Ottereyes (as of May 2022) – Administrative Technician
Melissa Whiskeychan (as of May 2022) – Program Technician

Upcoming additions

Multi-Media Communications
Special Projects Assistant

7 PROJECTS
funded through the Cree
Youth Development Funds

Highlights

In a nutshell, here are some of the highlights from our year:

- During their September meeting, the CNYC Board of Directors had the opportunity to create connections with the Qarjuit Youth Council. Together, Inuit and Eeyou celebrated Truth & Reconciliation Day in Chisasibi
- We received a total of 135 nominations for the 2nd edition of our Inspire Hope Awards
- The entirety of our programming and events was done virtually
- A great focus was put on governance and knowledge of the JBNQA
- We were able to support 7 projects through the Cree Youth Development Funds
- We renewed our agreement with the Secrétariat à la jeunesse for the next 5 years!
- Our Deputy Youth Grand Chief will have a full-time salary to facilitate their work for the CNYC
- Our team will be growing with the addition of new contractual positions in the next fiscal year



Group picture with the last remaining Eeyou Signatories taken in June 2022 during the in-person intensive Eeyou Eenou Governance course at the UQAT campus in Val-d'Or.

Programming and Events

CNYC Treaty Simulation

April 26-29, 2021

Virtual Event

In partnership with The Gordon Foundation and with the support of the RBC Future Launch and Community Foundations of Canada

During this three-day event, a total of 21 youth gathered to carry out a treaty negotiation simulation based on the Mishigamish protected area proposal. The participants split into three teams and given the roles of either the Indigenous (Cree Nation Government), Provincial (Québec) or Federal governments to carry out the simulation and negotiate terms that were given to them based on their role. This hands-on exercise allowed the youth to get a practical feel and sense of how our leaders advocate for their treaty rights and our relationship with non-Indigenous governments.

In addition to giving the youth these roles to develop their budding leadership skills, the participants also had the opportunity to be coached by and exchange with key people and leaders of the CNG (Mandy Gull-Masty, Deputy Grand Chief at the time; Chantal Tetreault, Protected Areas and Conservation Specialist; Paul John Murdoch) the Québec side (JBACE – Graeme Moring, Environmental Analyst) and the Federal side. Finally, the youth had the opportunity to hear from James O'Reilly, one of the writers of the JBNQA.

CNYC Elections

May 15 – August 17, 2022

After a total of 9 nominations combined for both offices, a final total of three candidates for the Office of Youth Grand Chief (Stacy Anderson, Heather House and Adrian N. Gunner) and three candidates for the Office of Deputy Youth Grand Chief (Nikita Mayappo, Andrea McLeod and Jordan Masty) accepted their nomination. During the entirety of the summer, these six young leaders reached out to the youth through personal social media campaigns, community visits and livestreamed candidate debates.

Ultimately, the title of Youth Grand Chief (2021-2025) was awarded to Adrian N. Gunner and the title of Deputy Youth Grand Chief was awarded to Jordan Masty. Their inauguration was held on November 11, 2021, in Waswanipi, alongside the newly elected Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief.

Certificate in Indigenous Governance (UQAT)

August 2021 – Summer 2023

Virtual (Ongoing)

In partnership with the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue and with the financial support of Apitisiwin Skills Development

Starting in the Fall 2021, a cohort assembled by the Department of Social & Cultural Development and the Cree Nation Youth Council began the part-time Certificate in Indigenous Governance. The group is composed of young leaders and non-youth students involved in leaderships or working for the Cree Nation Government. The intent of the

certificate is to provide a broader perspective on matters of governance to strengthen the leadership skills of the participants and help them grow in their roles as active stakeholders of the Cree nation.

As of June 2022, the cohort has completed a total of 5/10 courses necessary to the completion of their certificate. The group is expected to graduate in the summer of 2023.

Cree Nation Youth Day

August 14, 2021

Local Event sponsored by CNYC

In celebration of the early beginnings of the CNYC, August 14th was chosen to be the official Cree Nation Youth Day based on the dates of the first Cree Youth Conference in Wemindji back in 1985.

Each year, the local youth councils are given an allowance from the CNYC special projects to organize activities for their local youth. This year's participating communities were Mistissini (BBQ and Car Rally), Wemindji (Baseball, Water Soccer Baseball and Bonfire) and Washaw Sibi.

32nd Annual General Assembly

November 16-18, 2021

Virtual Event

Theme: TAAPWAAUCHAAYIMINAN – Believe in Us!

Hosted virtually, this edition of the Annual General Assembly mainly focused on finding ways to connect the youth together amid COVID-19 restrictions, getting a better sense of the youth's concerns regarding the Grand Alliance and offering an open space for discussion. In an effort to be more interactive, a hybrid format was used which mixed local gathering spots to tune in the virtual happenings such as the gathering itself and the virtual entertainment night featuring artists Angel Baribeau and The Northstars.

2nd Inspire Hope Awards

March 25, 2022

Virtual Event

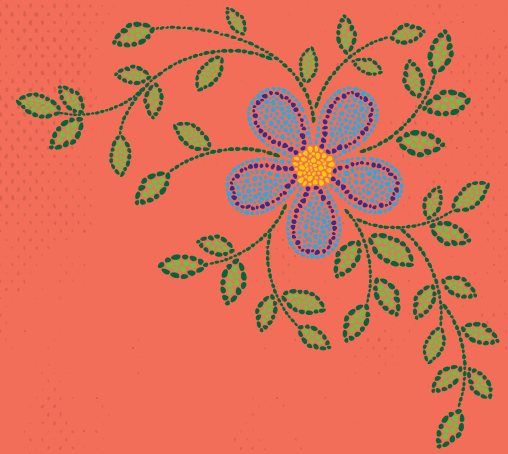
For this year's edition, the CNYC received a total of 135 nominations for its 28 award categories. Out of all these nominations, two youth (one coastal and one inland) were selected for the Inspiring Youth Award, totaling 30 awards altogether. The announcement of the recipients was done during a virtual Award Ceremony hosted in the JBCCS studios in Mistissini. The MCs, Steven Tapiatic (Coastal) & Freddie Dixon (Inland), alongside the Youth Grand Chief, conducted the majority of the event in Cree as a means to highlight the Cree Language Month and the important of it for the youth. The event included messages from current leadership and a performance by Ezekiel Neeposh. Locally, many of the youth councils hosted viewing parties sponsored by the CNYC to outreach to more youth in person while respecting COVID-19 measures in place.





FORESTRY

*Message from the Director
Gillman Ottereyes*



I AM PLEASED TO SHARE SOME OF THIS YEAR'S ACHIEVEMENTS AND REPORT ON THE PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE IN 2021-2022. AS WAS THE CASE LAST YEAR, COVID-19 PROVIDED NUMEROUS CHALLENGES TO OUR OPERATIONS. LIKE OTHER DEPARTMENTS, WE COPE BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES BETWEEN THE PANDEMIC WAVES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. WE ALSO TOOK FULL ADVANTAGE OF REMOTE WORKING PLATFORMS TO COMPLETE SEVERAL IMPORTANT PROJECTS.



Working in collaboration with the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP) and the Cree Québec Forestry Board Secretariat, our team was able to complete the drafting of several important guides that will assist the community Joint Working Groups in their ongoing forestry consultations with the tallymen and Cree land users. Another pandemic challenge that we were able to overcome in 2021-2022 was integrating a new “pre-consultation” process in preparation of the next cycle of 5-year operational forest management plans (PAFIOS).

A further highlight from last year was our monitoring team acquiring all the necessary equipment (e.g., offroad trucks, ATVs and snowmobiles) to effectively reach the remotest of areas within the commercial forest zone. The new equipment has also enabled them to provide a standardized monitoring service for our Cree land users in support of the local Cree forestry Joint Working Groups. Among other things, these monitoring efforts help to ensure that various forestry harmonization measures that are requested by the tallymen are completed to their satisfaction.

Another milestone from 2021-2022 was the appointment of William Saganash, one of our field monitors, to serve as a Joint Working Group member in Waswanipi. Mr. Saganash's

role as a Joint Working Group member allows for a closer liaison between the other Waswanipi Joint Working Group members and the Forestry Department.

The commitment of the Cree Nation Government to sustaining Cree traditional activities within Eeyou Istchee was reflected in 2021-2022 through the allocation of over \$2 million in project funding to tallymen, trappers, and other Cree land users who were affected by forestry operations. Under the Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement Program, nearly 400 remedial projects were undertaken last year. Working closely with our Québec negotiator, we were also able to complete a draft agreement with the province to renew this program for another five years. We are hopeful that both parties will ratify this draft agreement early in the coming year.

I am proud of the progress the Forestry Department has made this past year and excited at our potential to improve our capacity to manage our forests. Our professional staff, most of whom were hired last year, have settled into their positions and we have come together as a team. Working in collaboration with other Departments, Cree entities, and the Cree communities I am confident that we will be able to sustain our traditional ways of life while developing the economy within Eeyou Istchee.

*Gillman Ottereyes
Director of Forestry*



MANDATE

The Forestry Department's mandate is to implement the provisions of the Adapted Forestry Regime set out in the *Paix des Braves Agreement*. In its broadest terms, the regime is designed to:

- Provide adaptations to the forestry law to better take into account the Cree traditional way of life
- Provide greater integration of concerns relating to sustainable development
- Provide participation, in the forum of consultation, for the Crees in the various forestry planning and management processes

In addition to these goals, the 2015 *Baril-Moses Agreement* extended this regime to Mistissini and Ouje-Bougou-

mou traplines east of the height of land. The Cree-Québec Governance Agreement also provided for the establishment of a collaborative forest management regime over Category II lands. It was the potential of this collaborative regime for Category II lands and the weight of these other agreements which led to the creation of a stand-alone Forestry Department within the Cree Nation Government governance structure.

The Department also administers the Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement Program, which funds local projects to mitigate the impact on those land-users who are affected by forestry. This program is jointly funded through an agreement with Quebec.

FORESTRY DEPARTMENT STAFF

Our Department Director, Gillman Ottereyes, sits on the Cree Québec Forestry Board and oversees all files and activities related to the administration of the forestry regime in Eeyou Istchee.

Our Forestry Engineer, Stephan Ouellet, provides advice and technical support to the Cree Nation Government and the Cree communities on matters related to forestry. He analyzes the Annual Forest Management Plans, Special Management Plans, and any related modifications, to ensure that the rules of Chapter 3 regarding forest activities are applied within Eeyou Istchee and the Baril-Moses territories.

Our Forestry Planning Officer for Category II lands, Nicolas Lemieux, will take full responsibility for preparing forestry management plans for Category II traplines when work begins on the Collaborative Forestry Regime. The Regime is set to be implemented in two five-year phases. In the first phase, Nicolas will work closely with the MFFP forest planners and be familiarized in their planning systems. In the second 5-year phase, he will prepare forest management plans for Category II lands. In addition to this role, Nicolas provides technical assistance on a wealth of Department files regarding forestry planning, implementation, and monitoring.

Our Forestry Joint Working Group (JWG) Coordinator, Dion Michel, facilitates the work of the Joint Working Groups in each of the 5 Cree communities affected by forestry, supporting Cree land users and community members in forestry planning consultations and providing technical assistance to solve forestry-related conflicts that arise during the planning and implementation stages.

Our Field Monitoring Coordinator, Jérémie Poupart Montpetit, leads our Field Monitoring Program, establishing procedures, gathering data, responding to the concerns of Cree land users, and monitoring activities on the ground to ensure that the implementation of forestry plans adheres to the agreements and respects the concerns of Cree tallymen and land users. Our Field Monitors, Roderick Happyjack and William Saganash, assist the Field Monitoring Coordinator, conduct field work, and facilitate the participation of Cree community members in consultation, monitoring, and conflict resolution processes.

Our GIS Analyst, Marie-Pier Jean, supports the Forestry Planning Officer and brings her expertise to all Department files through geomatics data analysis and mapping – work that is critical to meet our forest management and planning targets as we move toward Phase 2 of the Collaborative Forestry Regime. Marie-Pier is currently working with our Forestry Planning Officer in re-mapping the location and dimensions of key forest areas that are important to Cree land users which serve as a critical part of the Adapted Forest Regime.

Our Forestry Programs Officer, Jimmy Iserhoff, works to implement the Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement Program, which funds remedial projects in the Cree communities affected by forestry.

FUTURE DEPARTMENT FACILITIES

Considering Waswanipi is the Cree community most affected by forestry operations in Eeyou Istchee, the Cree Nation Government opted to locate the main Forestry Department office there. Over the past two years, the Director and his team have been working with Capital Works Department in the design and outfitting of this exciting new facility. The pandemic and related supply shortages have caused delays in construction start-up, but we are confident that groundbreaking excavation will begin in May 2022. The expected completion date for the new building is set for the spring of 2024.

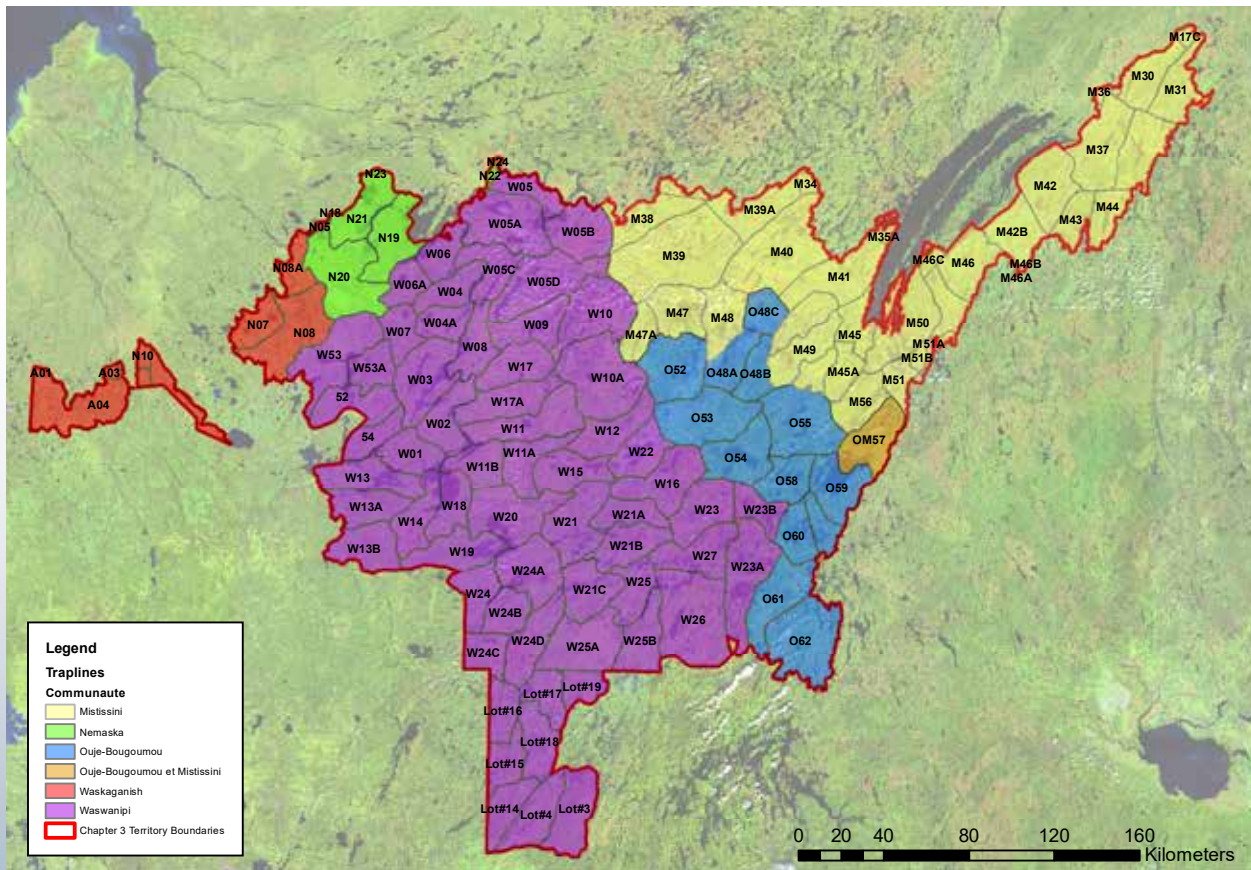
CREE QUÉBEC FORESTRY BOARD

The Cree Québec Forestry Board (CQFB) was established for the parties to monitor the implementation of the Adapted Forest Regime of the Paix des Braves Agreement. The Board holds a minimum of four regular meetings each year as part of its mandate. In the past year, specific focus was given to the status of moose habitat within traplines affected by forestry management operations through a partner project with the University of McGill. The CQFB also continued with its ongoing monitoring agenda which is designed to track progress on a variety of issues related to the Adapted Forest Regime. The Cree members appointed to the CQFB are Gillman Ottereyes, Isaac Voyageur, Geoff Quaille, Nadia Saganash, and Steven Blacksmith. Technical support from the Department is provided by Stephan Ouellet and Dion Michel.

FORESTRY PLANNING

Cree Communities Impacted by Forestry

Traplines within the Chapter 3 Territory



Traplines within the Chapter 3 territory Legend Traplines Communities Mistissini, Nemaska, Ouje-Bougoumou, Waskaganish, Waswanipi



Forestry Activity in 2021-2022

Table 1 shows forestry-related activities within the Chapter 3 territory in the 2021-2022 forestry season. A total of 116 traplines were affected, including 56 traplines (down from 83 last year) which experienced harvesting, 79 impacted by forestry roads (down from 90), and 78 subjected to silviculture activities (up from 42).

Baril-Moses Territory

In fulfillment of the Baril Moses settlement agreement, the Cree Nation Government, the Innu and the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP) have established an implementation working committee on forestry for the Baril-Moses territories. The original Baril-Moses Agreement (2002) and its settlement agreement (2015) require the MFFP to apply most of the forestry provisions of the Adapted Forestry Regime to this territory. Last year, the committee received a proposition for the delineation of management zones within the territory from the MFFP. This proposition is a blend of Cree traplines and Innu hunting territories in keeping with existing ecological districts and watersheds. The Cree and Innu met several times last year to discuss the MFFP's proposal. The Innu have indicated that they would like to modify the proposal and are currently working on their amendments. Once the proposal is finalized, the 1% Areas of Cree Interest and the 25% Areas of Cree Wildlife Interest will be jointly identified by the Crees and Innu for further implementation.

Revision of Sites of Interest and Relocation of Non-listed Biological Refuges

Chapter 3 of the *Paix des Braves Agreement* allows for 1% of the total area of a trapline included in a Forest Management unit to be identified as Areas of Interest, on which no forest development activities may be undertaken unless the tallyman agrees otherwise. Such sites might include seasonal camps, burial sites, fruit-picking areas, archeological sites, bear dens, portage trails, or other sites of interest to the Cree people. The Agreement also provides for the creation of Areas of Wildlife Interest for each trapline. These areas, which total 25% of the productive forest area on any given trapline, provide a further layer of precision for forest man-

agement activities in sensitive wildlife habitats identified by the tallymen.

Since the Agreement was signed in 2002, there have been many changes in the territory affecting these 1% and 25% Areas. For example, new protected areas have been created, such as the aquatic reserve around Waswanipi Lake. Natural changes caused by forest fires have also had an impact on the amount of land or productive areas that

Baril-Moses Territory

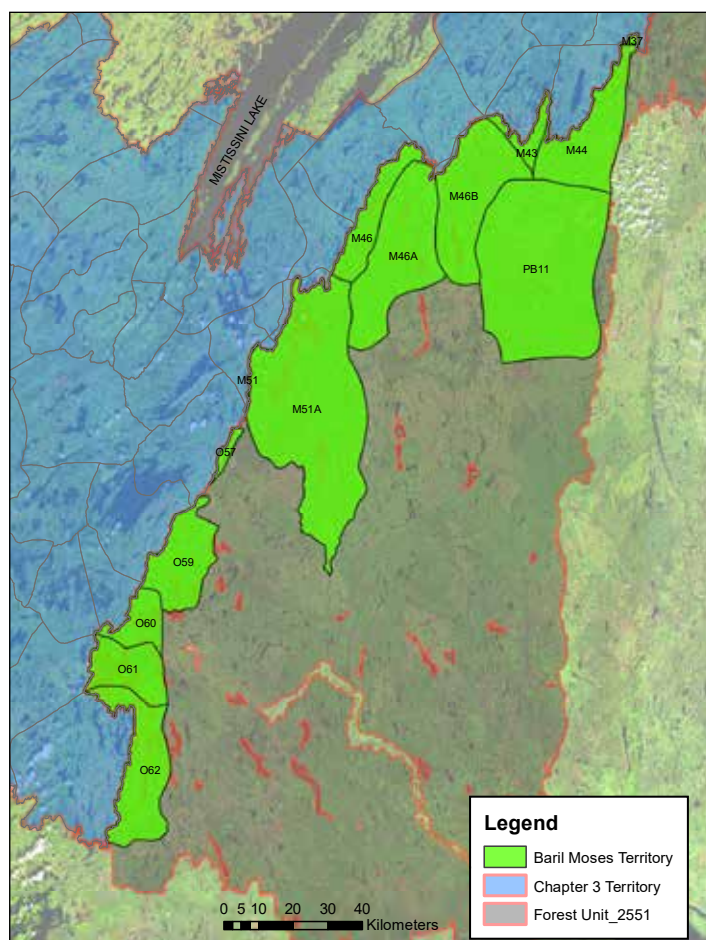


Table 1. Traplines affected by Forestry Activity 2021-2022

Community (Traplines)	Harvesting		Roads		Silvicultural	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Waswanipi (62)	39	23	50	12	54	8
Mistissini (32)	11	21	19	13	15	17
Ouje-Bougoumou (12)	6	6	10	2	9	3
Nemaska (7)	0	7	0	7	0	7
Waskaganish (3)	0	3	0	3	0	3
Total (126)	56	60	79	37	78	38

can be statistically included in the size of areas of interest. The Forestry Department has compiled all these statistical changes and is now working with the tallymen to revise their 1% and 25% areas to ensure that they benefit from the full protection of lands afforded by the Agreement. Our GIS Analyst and Forestry Planning Officer are also using this exercise to relocate unregistered biological refuges on several traplines.

This is a complicated and highly technical exercise that requires the participation of all affected land users. Our Forestry Planner, GIS Analyst and Field Monitoring Officers work closely on a weekly basis with the Joint Working Group members of the communities for this exercise. We adjusted our list of traplines for this exercise to exclude those that came under full protection by the Grand Alliance initiative in December of 2020. As a result, we now have a total of 110 traplines to review. Progress is incremental and our department anticipates this work to continue through to December 2022.

Forestry Planning and Data Management

Forest management planning and its related consultations with the Cree generate an enormous amount of documentation and maps. In the past, the Cree Nation Government depended upon the MFFP's data system, which provides the Cree Joint Working Groups access through a File Transfer Protocol Site (FTP). The MFFP's FTP site is essentially a massive hierarchy of digital folders and files which are not user-friendly for the Joint Working Group members.

To resolve this, our Forestry Planner and GIS Analyst have developed an in-house site on a Cree Nation Government server and have begun transferring forestry data (e.g., maps and GIS files, forestry plans, reports, and minutes) to this location. Continuing in 2021-2022, our team collaborated with the Environment and Remedial Works Department's GIS unit in the design for a Cree Nation Government GIS data system. Our Field Monitoring Coordinator also collaborated with the GIS unit in the design of field monitoring data recording apps that will allow for their streamlined integration into departmental workflows.

Table 3. Budget distribution for Cree silvicultural enterprises 2021-2022

Enterprise	Budget (\$)	% of the budget
Staakun Enterprise	987,453	46.8
Dooden	191,142	9.1
Weshthau	249,955	11.9
Miiyunakutaw	249,955	11.9
Eenatuk Forestry	427,655	20.3
Total	2,106,239	100

Assisting in the implementation of 3.6o (Forestry Economic Development)

The Crees have the first right of say on 15% of the silvicultural work budget within the Chapter 3 territory. Our Forestry Engineer assists the Commerce and Industry Department in providing the opportunities for contracts and in distributing the work among the eligible Cree companies. The table below presents the budget allocated to each silvicultural enterprise in 2021-2022. The total amount provided represented a 9% increase from last year.

FORESTRY JOINT WORKING GROUPS (JWG)

The Department's Joint Working Group Coordinator works with the communities affected by forestry to find collaborative solutions that consider Cree traditional ways of life, the contemporary lives of forest users, and the needs of the forestry industry. Each of the 5 Cree communities affected by forestry has a Joint Working Group (JWG), created to harmonize forestry activities with the activities of Cree land users through regular consultations with the MFFP and forestry companies.

Table 2. Follow up of 1%, 25% and biological refugee relocations as of March 31, 2022

Community	Delivered to MFFP	Updated now	To do	Total
Ouje-Bougoumou	1 (9%)	1 (9%)	9 (82%)	11
Mistissini	11 (38%)	1 (3%)	17 (59%)	29
Nemaska	0	0	3 (100%)	3
Waskaganish	0	0	6 (100%)	6
Waswanipi	28 (46%)	4 (7%)	29 (48%)	61
Total (126)	40 (36%)	6 (5%)	64 (58%)	110

Consultation Guides

To improve these consultations, the Cree Québec Forestry Board recommended that the parties develop three working tools or procedural guides for the JwGs to bring a higher level of efficiency to the process. In 2021-2022, the JwG Coordinator and the Monitoring Coordinator collaborated closely, internally with the Cree JwGs and externally with the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP), on the production and review of these guides.

The first guide is a set of standardized *Internal Operating Rules (IOR)*, which set out procedural rules for all the JwGs to follow. Prior to these rules, each MFFP administrative office and JwG used its own rules, which resulted in confusion, particularly over the seasonal consultation schedules and the comprehension of the JwGs mandate. In March of 2022, the new *Internal Operating Rules* were finalized and adopted by the Cree Nation Forestry Department and the MFFP.

The second tool is a *Harmonization Management Guide* that sets out the parameters of measures that can be used by the tallymen, companies, and forest planners to better harmonize forestry operations with traditional pursuits. This guide also provides a template and workflow for each step in the harmonization process. The *Harmonization Management Guide* was developed over the past two years and finalized through several rounds of consultation with the JwGs in 2022. It is expected to be operationalized by the parties in May of 2022.

The third guide addresses conflicts during the consultation process. The *Conflict Resolution Guide* frames the procedures to be followed to ensure that every land-use conflict is appropriately addressed in sequential steps. This guide is based on the provisions set out in the Adapted Forest Regime and accentuates the important role that the JwG Coordinators play in conflict management and resolution. As with the *Harmonization Management Guide*, this guide was also reviewed extensively by the JwGs, with a final draft being submitted to the MFFP in March of 2022. We expect one final round of exchanges prior to finalization with the MFFP in late April or early May of 2022.

Interpretive Posters

To improve the general comprehension of the tallymen and land users for some of the basic provisions of the Adapted Forestry Regime, the Forestry Department's Field Monitoring Coordinator and GIS Analyst worked with an external graphic artist to create 3 educational posters. These posters graphically explain the functions of the Cree Areas of Interest (1%), the Cree Areas of Wildlife Interest (25%) and the Biological Refuges. These posters were provided to the JwGs of each community as consultation and educational tools to remind the tallymen of their rights with respect to the forestry consultations.

Forestry Planning Consultations

On April 1st of each year, in collaboration with the Cree Nation Government, Quebec authorizes forestry companies to harvest wood in the territory. Cree representatives from

each of the affected traplines are consulted in the forestry planning process and in monitoring of the implementation of forestry management plans—a process that can require mediation and conciliation in the event of disagreements as plans are implemented. This consultation process is a collaborative effort led by Forestry Department staff, including our JwG Coordinator, and Field Monitoring team.

PRAN and PAFIO Consultations

In 2021-2022, a new process was set in place to combine yearly modifications to the 5-year Integrated Operational Forest Plans (PAFIOs) along with the usual Annual Programming of Forestry Activities (PRAN) consultations in early fall. This new process allows for greater integration of Cree concerns, by providing more time to discuss and resolve concerns raised during the consultations. This in turn provides a higher level of flexibility to forest planners to consider alternative forestry scenarios to resolve conflicts when they arise.

While consultations were delayed by the pandemic in 2021-2022, remote tools developed during the previous year were put to great use to limit the impacts of the successive waves of travelling and contact restrictions. The resilience and capacity of adjustment demonstrated by the local offices were also critical to this success. Further training and collaboration between the local Joint Working Group offices and our Monitoring Service Program also allowed for faster treatment of information requests relating to obtaining precise field data to support the consultation efforts.

PAFIO Mediations and Conciliations

In cases where the official consultations on the Operational Integrated Forest Management Plans (PAFIO) 2018-23 have not led to an agreement, the JwG Coordinators assist with mediations to help resolve the disagreements. Following into our successes from the 2020-21 sessions, the complaint assessment and conflict resolution processes benefitted from a refined approach towards documenting conflictual issues (as per the processes identified in the early drafts of the conflict resolution process guide identified previously) and optimizing fieldwork activities from the Field Monitoring Program (see Monitoring section).

Pre-Consultations (PAFIO 2023-28)

2021-2022 also marked the introduction of another forest planning consultation process known as the “PAFIO Pre-consultations”. These new consultations, largely brought on at the request of Waswanipi JwG members, provide Cree land users with the opportunity to set out in detail their concerns and future needs regarding sensitive portions of their traplines, particularly as it relates to forestry road network planning, mixedwood stands and wildlife habitat. These pre-planning consultations, along with the Cree Land Use Maps (CLUM), provide the MFFP forest planners baseline information to better account for Cree objectives within the 5-year PAFIO plans.

Considering the importance of these pre-consultations, a great deal of attention was invested in preparing the local

JWGs, including joint meetings with the MFFP forest planners to create improved consultation tools and maps. The JWG Coordinator and the Field Monitoring Coordinator also engaged in a summer community tour to provide in-person training and support to the JWGs. Following this preparation, the pre-consultations effort was divided into two sessions from July to September and from February into April of 2022.

THE FIELD MONITORING PROGRAM

Following the successful establishment of our Monitoring service during year 2020-2021, the Forestry Department's Monitoring program has expanded the range of its activities outwards and provided continuous support to assist the JWGs in fulfilling their mandates. Our monitoring efforts also supported the work of the Environment and Remedial Works Department via a proactive collaboration for data-sharing and field monitoring program implementation for land use planning and wildlife files.

Over the course of 2021-2022, over 50 field visits were completed within traplines distributed across the Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou, and Mistissini communities. Expanding our reach by more than 33% this year, 39 traplines benefitted from field monitoring of over 180 elements, including harmonization measures, camps and cultural areas, complaints and damages to infrastructure, and monitoring of wildlife. In the past year, the monitoring team upgraded its range of field equipment by acquiring more specialized gear, its own fleet of pick-up trucks, ATVs and snowmobiles, a trailer, and various tools to ensure total independence and increase the safety of our operations in the field. While some acquisitions are still pending on our list (boat, drone, new garage area and office space) to further expand our capacity, fruitful collaborations with local partners should allow for fulfillment of our short-term needs and facilitate field activities.

Beyond serving the interests and needs of local Joint Working Groups, our collaboration approach has proved beneficial to the early stages of multiple programs such as the CLUM revisions in Ouje-Bougoumou, the biological refuge relocation exercise and the implementation of various protections emerging from the general forestry regulations (RADF) such as camp, water source and portage trail protection.

Towards 2022-2023, we are expecting to contribute to various new and exciting projects such as the identification of sensitive wildlife habitat components for the implementation of the Wildlife Habitat interim directives, the location of important cultural landmarks, and support for the archaeological and historical burial site location exercise.

Wildlife Habitat Directives

Upon the completion of the Mixedwood Stands Strategy last year, work for the completion of the Wildlife Habitat Directives took centre stage. Closely related to the Mixedwood Stands Management Strategy, but with more far-reaching objectives, Chapter 3 calls for the collaborative development of practical directives guiding the forestry planning process to foster the protection and development of wildlife habitats. A joint Cree-Québec committee has been working to elaborate these wildlife habitat directives.

In 2021-2022, Forestry Department staff facilitated discussions on the directives, aiming to provide better insight on wildlife protection from a Cree land user's standpoint. To better capture traditional Cree knowledge, the Forestry Department invited Henry-George Gull and Eliane Grant from the Waswanipi Forest Authority to sit as members of the Cree-Québec committee.

Despite our proactive team for this committee, progress on the directives has been slow, due to the pandemic and staffing issues at the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP). Late in the fall, Director General for the MFFP (Region 10), contacted our Director to formally notify the Cree Nation Government that the MFFP would need a one-year extension—to December 2023—on the deadline for completing the Wildlife Habitat Directives.

This extension is problematic because it means that these important habitat measures would not be available in time for the next 5-year forest management planning cycle (PAFIO). To resolve this situation, the parties agreed to approve a set of interim directives to serve as a placeholder for these important plans. Since January, the Cree committee members have been developing a set of directives aimed at improving the habitat conditions for moose and reducing the number of redundant roads in the territory. The Cree members plan to deliver these interim directives in June

Table 4. Monitoring of traplines 2021-2022

Community	Total Traplines	Traplines on Cat II Lands	Harmonization	Camp Areas	Cultural Areas	Complaints	Wildlife Areas
Waswanipi	27/62	12/22	23	69	9	11	0
Mistissini	9/32	7/22	15	36	0	0	0
Ouje-Bougoumou	3/12	0/7	3	8	1	1	0
Nemaska	0/7	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
Waskaganish	0/3	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	39/126	19/51	41	113	10	17	0



next year to correspond with the beginning of the PAFIO 2023-28 drafting.

Woodland Caribou in Chapter 3 territory

There is little habitat left in the Chapter 3 territory for the woodland caribou, a threatened species. A joint Cree-Québec subcommittee has been working on this file since March 2018, and in 2020-2021, despite the obstacles of the pandemic, the work progressed, albeit slowly. Québec representatives presented the province's scenarios of ecosystemic harvesting, and Cree representatives made suggestions for improvement.

Mid-way through last year, the Government of Québec announced that it would hold another round of province-wide public hearings into the future management of the species. As a result, there was little progress at our joint table. This is a very complex file that involves the delicate balance between efforts to protect woodland caribou and its habitat and the corresponding economic impact on forestry operations. It will be difficult to reach consensus with the various users of the territory.

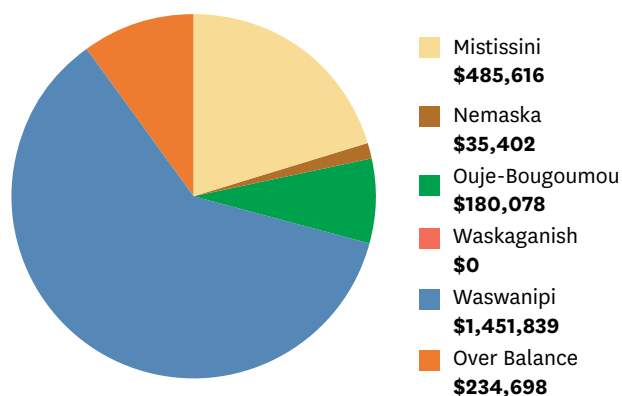
CREE TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement Program mitigates the impacts of forestry and addresses the practical concerns of Cree trappers and land users by funding local projects that enhance and reinforce Cree traditional activities. Jointly funded by the Cree Nation Government and Québec, the Enhancement Program provides immediate concrete support for tallymen, trappers, and Cree land users whose traditional activities have been affected by industrial forestry.

Enhancement Funding 2021-2022

As the renewal for this program is still under negotiation with Québec, the Cree Nation Government did not receive Québec's share of the program funding for 2021-2022. This meant that the program was administrated at half the funding for last year; however, there was some funding carried over from the previous year. In total, almost \$2.2 million was disbursed on 396 projects for 111 traplines across the territory. Table 5 and Figure 1 shows a breakdown of disbursements by community.

Figure 1. Enhancement Disbursements 2020-2021



Enhancement Projects

The main goal of the Enhancement Agreement is to mitigate changes brought by forestry activities and address the practical needs of trappers. Projects eligible for funding include replacing or relocating facilities (camps, docks, etc.), constructing boat landings, upgrading sites of interest (gathering places, etc.), snow removal and road maintenance in cases where such activities facilitate access to a camp, projects that facilitate travel by trappers, and other measures that reinforce the exercise of hunting, fishing, and trapping activities.

Also eligible for funding are stream enhancement work, beaver and muskrat relocation, spawning ground enhancement and related preparation projects, as well as trail network development, portage and snowmobile trail enhancement, silviculture work, and other wildlife habitat enhancement projects, such as moose yards—all projects that enhance the productivity of traplines and assist Cree land users in coping with the impacts of forestry.

Table 6 shows the total projects funded and traplines benefitted by the Enhancement Program in 2021-2022.

Table 5. Enhancement Funds Available and Disbursed 2021-2022

Community	Funds Available	Disbursements
Mistissini	\$548,121	\$485,616
Nemaska	\$46,620	\$35,402
Ouje-Bougoumou	\$139,860	\$180,078
Waskaganish	\$136,278	\$0
Waswanipi	\$1,047,359	\$1,451,839
Total Funds	\$1,918,237	\$2,152,935

Table 6. Enhancement Projects 2021-2022

Community	Traplines Enhanced	Total Projects
Waswanipi	59	267
Mistissini	36	94
Ouje-Bougoumou	13	32
Nemaska	3	3
Waskaganish	0	0
Totals	111	396

Renewal of the Agreement

The *Agreement Regarding Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement* was signed in 2005 and renewed in 2013. The negotiations to renew the Agreement for a further term were delayed for most of last year. Fortunately, in the last quarter, the parties came to an agreement over a draft, and it is expected that the new agreement will be ratified early in the next fiscal year.

Forest Information Management System (FIMS) Upgrades

A key part of administrating the Program is through collaboration with the local community program officers. These officers use our FIMS platform to track project applications, budgets, and approvals. To improve the delivery of this service, we contracted Aammuu Solutions to work with Strata360 in the development of upgrades to the system to make it more accessible for our community collaborators.



Community Outreach

Last year, the Department Director and the Forestry Program Officer provided information sessions in Ouje-Bougoumou and at a Niskamoon Gathering of Land Users in Mistissini. The purpose of these sessions was to update the land users on the Program's delivery and receive their feedback and concerns. The overriding preoccupation was related to the rising cost in pursuing traditional activities. Many of the participants indicated that equipment costs have increased while program funding levels have not kept pace. Other concerns were related to Québec's share of the funding and the continued future of the Program.

Site Visits

With the retirement of our Enhancement Program Monitor last year, the program of Annual Monitoring Spot Checks was carried out by the Department's Forest Field Monitors Program Officers and the Enhancement Program Officer. In the summer of 2021, our team conducted field site visits to several distant traplines including M-46A, M-35, M-41 and W-05C. It should be noted that our annual program was limited last year due to the travel restriction posed by the pandemic.





EEYOU EENOU POLICE FORCE

*Message from the Interim Police Director
Sherman Masty*



AS ACTING POLICE DIRECTOR OF THE EYYOU EENOU POLICE FORCE, I HAVE THE PLEASURE TO PRESENT THE EEPF ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTING THE MAIN ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE ORGANIZATION DURING THE YEAR THAT JUST ENDED.



I feel it is important to demonstrate a high level of transparency, share relevant safety information with the public and measure performance toward building a safer community for all. The following provides a summary of various achievements reached by the Eeyou Eenuu Police Force during the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

STAFFING

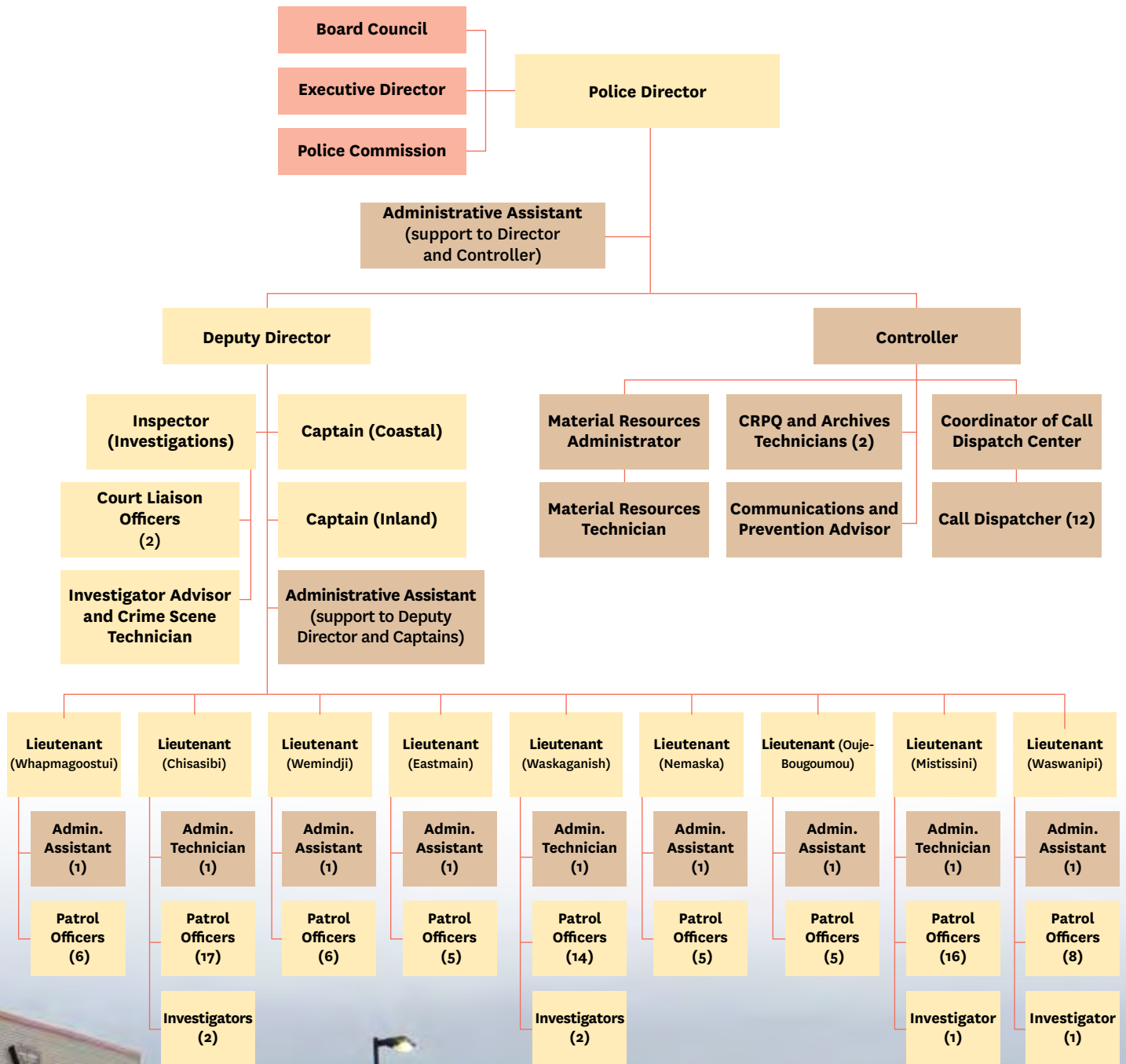
Officer staffing was particularly difficult to maintain in 2021. Manpower shortages were seen in all police services across the country, partially due to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic. Officers preferred to pursue careers closer to their friends and family so that meant a smaller pool of full-fledged contractual officers in Eeyou Istchee. Attendance restrictions at colleges and training centres limited the number of students for 2021-2022 as well. EEPF recruits continue to work hard and will be graduating in April 2022.

The Director position was posted in December and will be announced July 2022 after two rounds of interviews.

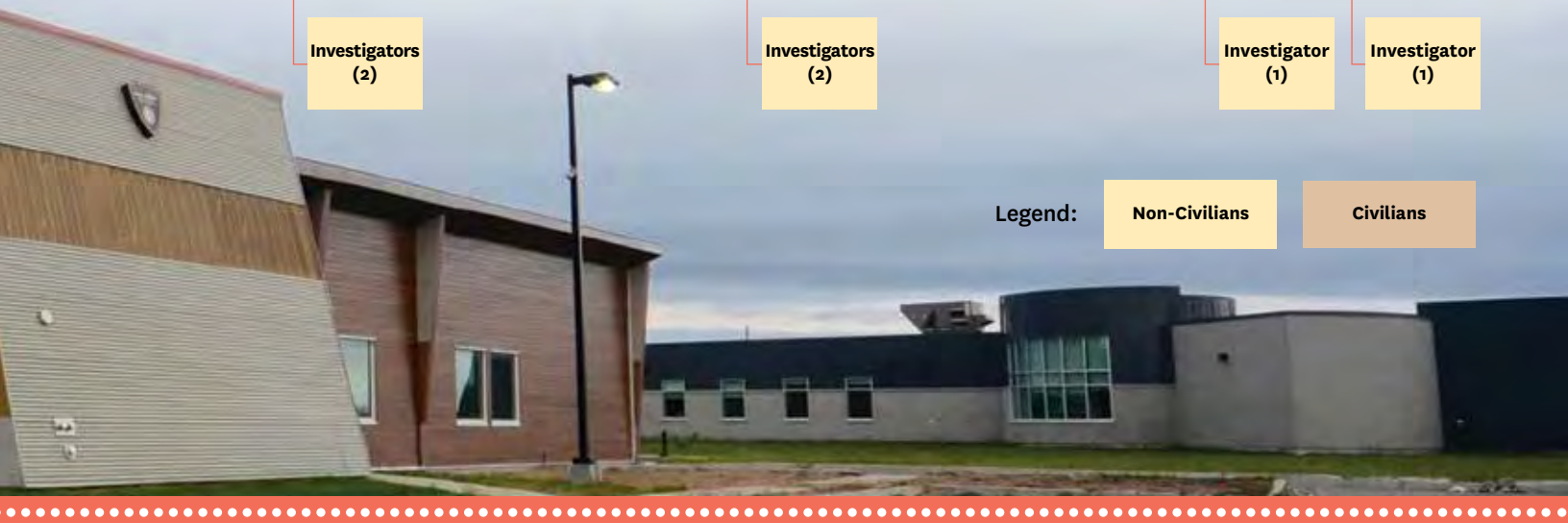
Shayla-Grace Napash went from being a Dispatcher to CRPQ and Archives Technician, and Pauline Bearskin also left the Dispatch Centre to become a Material Resources Technician. Alice Rondeau joined us in May as our Communications and Prevention Advisor. Gabriel Snowboy joined the Information Technology department.



Figure 1. Eeyou Eenou Police Force Organizational Chart



Legend: Non-Civilians Civilians



Procedures to fill the positions of Deputy Director and Inspector are ongoing and expected to be posted in the summer of 2022; it will be up to the Selection Committee to make recommendations to the Cree Nation Government: Executive Director of the Cree Nation Government, Chairman of the Police Commission, and Cree Nation Government Director of Human Resources.

RECRUITMENT

As noted above, finding contractual Officers was difficult this year; in the spring of 2021 EEPF was working on a plan to deal with the operational staff shortage. A letter was sent to Cree communities' Chiefs to ensure our policing services would continue albeit in alternative ways. One of the ways we reassured them was to talk about our Cree officer recruitment program. After years of negotiations, the Cree Nation Government Human Resources Director was able to secure an agreement and a new Cree Officer program emerged.

In an effort to recruit full-fledged officers, the Human Resources department created an Employee Referral Program (ERP) at the end of March 2022. The purpose of the ERP is to provide an incentive to a current EEPF employee who refers new applicants who are subsequently selected and successfully employed in a Patrol Officer position.

Employees who refer a new Patrol Officer would be entitled to the following monetary compensation:

1. First referral incentive, upon the hiring of a referral (need to work a minimum of 30 days) = \$500
2. Second referral incentive, after 6 months of continuous and active service = \$1,000
3. Third referral incentive, after 1 year of a continuous and active service = \$1,500

For full details of how the ERP works, the EEPF Employee Referral Program Policy outlines purpose and scope, the policy itself, incentive payment guidelines, program eligibility, and conditions and restrictions.

PREVENTION

Informing the public on various crime prevention topics was a challenge again this year. Limits on attendees as gatherings and buildings were closed to the public made for less direct involvement between EEPF and community members. That being said, some of the subjects that were tackled by our Lieutenants and Officers included Bullying, Conjugal Violence, Crime Stoppers, Eeyou Eenuu Call Dispatch Centre, Fraud, Road Safety and the Highway Safety Code, Suicide Prevention, and Vandalism.

Social media played a large role in disseminating information. Our Facebook page saw an increase of followers; from April 2021 until the end of March 2022, we had 589 additional users like our page, and saw a 50% increase in post reach. Every post has an average of 4,000 views. A new Instagram account was created in order to reach more youth for Police training recruitment purposes. At the end of March 2021, we had 130 Instagram followers. We also created a TikTok account since the platform is still gaining in popularity. The one recruitment video we created in February 2022 had a total of 5,013 views on TikTok and an additional 3,789 on our Facebook page. Based on that success, additional videos will be created for promoting the new pathway for EEPF recruits.

TOP 3 Facebook posts of the year based on how many users were reached:

- October 12, 2021 – Press Release: event in Chisasibi, Qc. 24,576 reached, 279 shares.
- June 4, 2021 – Press Release: event in Waswanipi, Qc. 12,752 reached, 89 shares
- February 17, 2022 – Statement: Child Safety in Eeyou Istchee. 12,450 reached, 148 shares

Facebook posts of events we attend allow for greater visibility. We put out reminders on special topics such as ice safety and school bus safety. If you see Officers busy at work, we would love to share photographs on our Facebook page; send us a message and we will make sure you get the credit.

Table 1. New Cree Officer Training Program; first cohort began March 7, 2021

Steps	Training Program	Duration
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cegep de l'Abitibi-Temiscamingue, Rouyn-Noranda, Québec • Police Technology Program (Attestation of Collegial Studies) 	3 months
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecole Nationale de Police, Nicolet, Québec • Special Constable Training Program 	13 weeks
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eeyou Eenuu Police Force, 9 Cree communities • Work as Special Constable in Eeyou Istchee 	approximately 1 year (with step 4)
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cegep de l'Abitibi-Temiscamingue, Rouyn-Noranda, Québec • while on-the-job training, continuation of modules from Police Tech Program 	approximately 1 year (with step 3)
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecole Nationale de Police, Nicolet, Québec • First Nations Basic Program 	3 weeks

TOP 3 FACEBOOK POSTS OF THE YEAR



October 12, 2021
Press Release:
event in Chisasibi



24.6K
 Reached



279
 Shares



June 4, 2021
Press Release:
event in Waswanipi



12.8K
 Reached



89
 Shares



February 17, 2022
Statement:
Child Safety in
Eeyou Istchee



12.5K
 Reached



148
 Shares

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

The Eeyou Enoou Police Force mission is to maintain peace, order, and public security. We are committed to working with the communities we serve.

Public information is vital in order for EEPF to enforce local by-laws. Call the EEPF emergency number in your community to report those who are not complying with isolation rules set by your local Cree Nation Public Safety Department.

BE AWARE and remain vigilant; obey your local by-laws.
FOLLOW restrictions that have been established with your safety in mind.
EVERYONE must act together to keep our communities as safe and healthy as possible.

Facebook banner posted Spring 2022

EYOU EENOU CALL DISPATCH CENTRE

The Eeyou Eenou Call Dispatch Centre was launched on Sunday, May 30, 2021. It started with Chisasibi, Oujé-Bougoumou was added July 19, and Wemindji on August 16, Waskaganish on January 31, 2022. Waswanipi and Nemaska call dispatch service began on Monday, February 21. The goal is for all detachments to be on the system by the end of 2022.

This is how it works

Team of twelve (12) Dispatchers

- 12-hour shifts, same as Patrol Officers' work schedule
- 3 dispatchers per shift
- there is overlap to ensure the Call Centre is always covered
- every shift, 3 languages (Cree, English, French) are represented so all community members can feel comfortable using Call Dispatch
- If a call involves children, Dispatch calls Cree Health Board Youth Protection Services
- If fire department is needed, Dispatch will call the community fire hall

Figure 2. Percentage of Urgent/non-urgent calls received, Eeyou Eenou Call Dispatch Centre, May 2021-March 2022

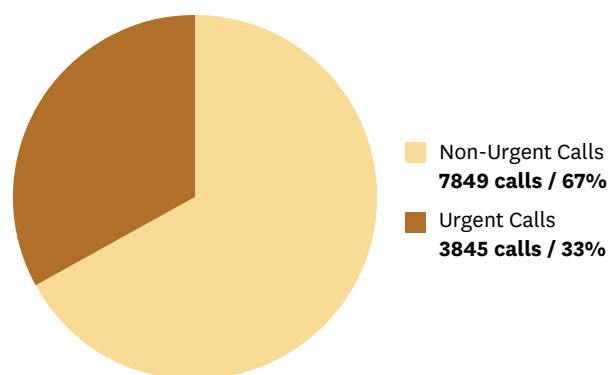


Table 2. Priority Codes for Emergency Calls, Eeyou Eenou Call Dispatch Centre

Code	Description	Action
1	URGENT: life in danger	Lights and sirens
2	URGENT	Lights
3	As soon as possible	
4	Next availability	
5	Follow up	

Statistics

All Communities: May 31, 2021 to March 31, 2022 – 11,694 calls; 3,845 calling cards created.

Chisasibi: 31, 2021 to March 31, 2022 – 2,671 calling cards created.

Ouje-Bougoumou: July 19, 2021 to March 31, 2022 – 424 calling cards created.

Wemindji: August 16, 2021 to March 31, 2022 – 291 calling cards created.

Waskaganish: January 31, 2022 to March 31, 2022 – 263 calling cards created.

Nemaska: February 21, 2022 to March 31, 2022 – 63 calling cards created.

Waswanipi: February 21, 2022 to March 31, 2022 – 133 calling cards created.

Popular reasons for calls

1. Non-Emergency (Information about court, speaking with an officer, general inquiries)
2. Priority 2 calls (1358 calling cards)
3. Priority 1 calls (1264 calling cards)
4. Priority 3 calls (1198 calling cards)
5. Priority 4 calls (25 calling cards)

In terms of language, it is difficult to determine the percentage of calls without listening to all 11,694 recordings, but the Coordinator gives a rough estimate of 93% Cree, 6% English, 1% French.

Training

- 4 Dispatchers were sent to Montreal for a 2-week CRPQ training in April 2021. This allows them to be able to query the central Quebec police database where they can retrieve information such as criminal background, licence plate, driver's licence, etc.
- 2 Dispatchers were sent to Montreal for a 2-week training for CRPQ in October 2021.
- Ongoing workshops provided by Workplan Learning Solutions included Living Well with Shift Work, and Dealing with Difficult Behaviours.
- Upcoming: First Aid/Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Standard and children/infants; ASSIST – suicide prevention.

Interesting Facts

- Call Dispatch Center launched in May 31, 2021, starting with Chisasibi. Since then we have linked 5 more communities to the Call Centre leaving only 3 communities left to be linked by the end of 2022 (Whapmagoostui, Eastmain, Mistissini).
- In December 2021, the police radio systems from all 9 communities were linked to the Call Dispatch Centre - including Satellite Communications (SATCOM); the Dispatchers are able to monitor and communicate with all officers in Eeyou Istchee.
- As of March 2022, the Call Dispatch Centre has 4 dispatchers with access to CRPQ, and 5 more will receive the training required to access the system in June 2022.

EYOU EENOU CALL DISPATCH CENTRE STATISTICS

All Communities: May 31, 2021 to March 31, 2022



11.7K

CALLS



3,845

CALLING CARDS

CALLING CARDS

CHISASIBI	2,671
OUJE-BOUGOUMOU	424
WEMINDJI	291
WASKAGANISH	263
NEMASKA	63
WASWANAPI	133

Popular reasons for calls

1

NON-EMERGENCY

2

PRIORITY 2
1358 calling cards

3

PRIORITY 1
1264 calling cards

4

PRIORITY 3
1198 calling cards

5

PRIORITY 4
25 calling cards



Eyou Eenou Call Dispatch Centre consoles



Ribbon Cutting of Eyou Eenou Call Dispatch Centre, by Coordinator Marie-Pier Roy, held by Donathan Saganash (Deputy Director) and Sarah Saganash (Controller), May 28, 2021.

EQUIPMENT

A Call for Tenders went out for new communications technology. Detachments needed a modern system not only to ensure the safety of the general public but to establish secure working conditions for Officers in the line of duty. Bell Canada won the competition and will be supplying new equipment for improved communications. Towers are being constructed at some detachments in order to service the upgrades.

OPERATIONS

Our Lieutenants met with their local stakeholders to talk about collaborations and issues that EEPF needed to tackle. For example, in Waswanipi, Lt. Shannon Nakogee reported the positive relationship between the Chief, Deputy Chief, and EEPF. Communication is open and debriefings are held when major events occur. Each detachment has a monthly calendar where they plan for road operations, events, and awareness campaigns. Our objective is to have increased community involvement now that pandemic restrictions are loosening.

CONCLUSION

April 1, 2021 was the 10th anniversary of the Eeyou Eenu Police Force. Since distancing protocols were still in place due to the coronavirus pandemic, a committee was created to plan and prepare for 9 separate events. These will be held in mid-2022. We will share photographs and news from those events in next year's Annual Report.

In closing, Eeyou Eenu Police Force Senior Management would like to express its sincere gratitude to all staff for their dedication and diligence. To the communities we serve: thank you for your support.

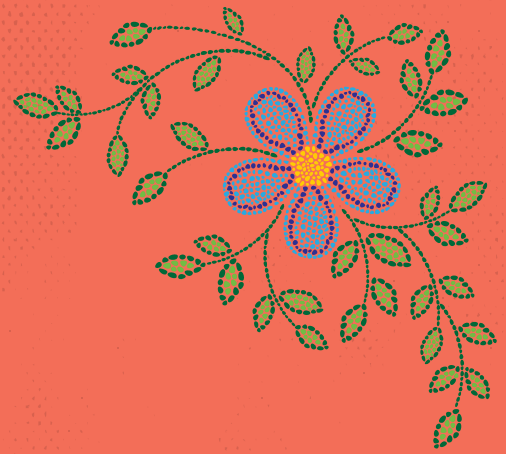
Senior Officers Meeting, Regional Police Headquarters, July 2021





EYYOU COMMUNICATION NETWORK

*Message from the President and Chair
Alfred Loon*



WE ARE PLEASED TO SUBMIT OUR ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CREE READERSHIP REGARDING OUR ACTIVITIES THAT WERE UNDERTAKEN BY THE EYYOU COMMUNICATION NETWORK TEAM FOR THE YEAR 2021-2022.



Eeyou Communication Network (ECN) is a not-for-profit telecommunications corporation that provides broadband services for the Cree communities of Eeyou Istchee and municipalities of the James Bay region. ECN delivers advanced, reliable and cost-effective network access for the benefit of communities, populations, businesses, organizations and governments.

ECN has 24 employees, including seven Crees, located throughout Eeyou Istchee (Waskaganish, Wemindji, and Ouje-Bougoumou), James Bay (Chibougamau and Chapais), Val-d'Or and Montreal.

FIBER-TO-THE-HOME ("FTTH")

In 2021, ECN continued developing its FTTH network to new neighborhoods throughout the region. Furthermore, ECN has begun implementing the required infrastructure to support multiple vendors of its FTTH service to provide more choices to the region's Internet subscribers in the close future, through an "open-access" network.

NORTHERN BACKBONE UPGRADE PROJECT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH KINWAPT CABLE INC.

To help improve service to the community of Chisasibi through its ISP Kinwapt Cable Inc., ECN submitted an application to federal and provincial programs for a \$1.1M joint project between ECN and Kinwapt. The project was accepted, and ECN improved the capacity of its backbone network from kilometre 381 to Chisasibi, while Kinwapt modernized its distribution network, improving greatly the service to the community. ECN

also used this opportunity to invest \$250,000 into upgrading the backbone network to Wemindji and Eastmain at the same time which were still running on older SONET technology.

OVERALL NETWORK BACKBONE UPGRADE

With the traffic increasing significantly over the ECN backbone with the increase of FTTH subscribers, ECN has been planning to overhaul its whole backbone for the last 2 years. After months of design optimization for performance and costs, ECN settled on a design in 2021 to be implemented in 2022.

To improve the cost efficiency of this overhaul, ECN entered partnerships with Telus and the RISQ (Réseau d'Informations Scientifiques du Québec) to help them improve their connectivity to Abitibi, while improving ECN's connectivity to Montreal and funding a significant portion of the cost of this network overhaul.

This backbone overhaul is also necessary to transport the traffic that will soon be coming from Nunavik, through Chisasibi, towards Montreal.

Through this major backbone overhaul, ECN will be transitioning from multiples of 10 gigabit Ethernet technology to multiples of 100 gigabit Ethernet technology, which will be able to sustain the growth of traffic on our network for the mid to long term.

Furthermore, within this project, ECN is also establishing a 2nd point of presence ("POP") in Montreal at Cologix's MTL-4 facility in Anjou. Having this 2nd point of presence removes a "single point of failure" in the eventuality of issues at the first ECN POP in downtown Montreal.

This overhaul beginning in 2022 consists of an investment of more than \$5M over the next five years, including more than \$2M in 2022 alone.

BILLY DIAMOND HIGHWAY

Renovation works continued on the Billy Diamond highway in 2021, with again over 115 dig-up sites. Through a refining of the work processes in the field, ECN was able to signifi-

cantly improve the cost efficiency of managing these works, while decreasing the amount of fiber cable breaks from 4 in 2020 to 2 in 2021.

MISTISSINI-OUJE-BOUGOUMOU NETWORK REDUNDANCY

In 2020, ECN secured \$4M in funding to implement a redundant network link between Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini. The design phase was completed in 2021 and the project will be built in 2022, including a new telecommunications tower along the 167 road towards Mistissini, which will also be used to improve cellular coverage in the area.



This link will provide a lifeline to keep critical telecommunications services up and running when fiber optic cable breaks occur, and will benefit the communities of Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou and Chibougamau by creating a network “ring” with these three communities.

Other redundancy projects are being considered for the future, such as a submarine network interconnecting the coastal communities, and fiber optic redundancy for the communities of Nemaska, Chapais and Radisson.

RÉSEAU GOUVERNEMENTAL DE TÉLÉCOMMUNICATIONS - REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

ECN has been providing the government of Québec with telecommunications services throughout the region in partnership with Telus since 2013 within the program called “RITM” of the Québec government. Among others, the facilities of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay and Cree Justice are using these critical services. This program is coming to an end in 2022 and the government of Québec launched an RFP in mid 2021 to renew these services under the name Réseau Gouvernemental de Télécommunications (“RGT”).

ECN responded to the RFP in partnership with Telus and after months of work on the final proposal, ECN and Telus were awarded the contract once again. Through this process, ECN secured an important revenue source for 7 to 10 years while maintaining the critical service being provided.

Furthermore, Telus won the bid for the rest of the province of Québec meaning that they will keep a significant team on this file, which bodes well for the operational efficiency of Telus throughout the contract.

Telus and the government of Québec have complimented multiple times the quality of ECN’s service as well as the professionalism of ECN’s team and we are thrilled to keep these relationships going for the foreseeable future.

EYEU MOBILITY

Eeyou Mobility is a new project from ECN in partnership with the James Bay Eeyou Corporation and SSI Canada Inc. to deploy mobile cellular service throughout Eeyou Istchee James Bay. The intent is to cover all communities as well as most roads of the region and provide the best cellular connectivity service of the region at an affordable price over a 4G-LTE network. Although logistics and supply chain issues due to COVID-19 significantly affected the construction of this infrastructure, Eeyou Mobility has launched commercially in the communities of Ouje-Bougoumou, Nemaska, Mistissini, Waswanipi, Chapais, Chibougamau and Whapmagoostui and will have launched in all Eeyou Istchee James Bay communities by summer 2022. Eeyou Mobility has also secured \$58M in funding to build 53 cellular sites along the highways to cover most or all of the following roads:

- Billy Diamond highway
- Access road to Chisasibi
- Access road to Wemindji
- Access road to Eastmain
- Route du Nord from Billy Diamond highway to Nemaska
- Access road to Waskaganish

\$58M

**SECURED IN FUNDING TO
BUILD 53 CELLULAR SITES
ALONG THE HIGHWAYS**

- Road 109 from Matagami to 49th parallel
- Road 113 from Lebel-sur-Quévillon to Chibougamau
- Road 167 from Chibougamau to Mistissini

This project is to be completed by the first quarter of 2025 and will go a long way at improving the safety of the population travelling the roads of our region.

SOCIÉTÉ DE TÉLÉCOMMUNICATIONS ATIKAMEKW CRIE (“STAC”)

ECN has entered a limited partnership with the Atikamekw communities of Opitciwan, Wemotaci and Manawan in deploying and operating a fiber optic network between the Hydro-Québec power stations of Chamouchouane close to Lac St-Jean, and Judith-Jasmin in Terrebonne and onwards to the Cologix MTL-4 datacenter in Anjou, Montreal. Most of the fibers used are fibers purchased from Hydro-Québec on their optical ground wire (“OPGW”) over the new Chamouchouane Bout-de-L’île high voltage power line, although there is also 40 kilometres of new fiber cable being built between Terrebonne and Anjou.

This project increases ECN’s autonomy by operating its own fiber optic network all the way to Montreal, without

needing to depend on third-party suppliers in Abitibi or Lac St-Jean to get transport to Montreal, although ECN will maintain its third-party connectivity from Amos to Montreal for robustness purposes.

This is an 11M\$ project, it is in its last phase of construction and should be completed before the end of 2022.

GRANDE ALLIANCE TELECOMMUNICATIONS TABLE

ECN has participated at the Grande Alliance telecommunications table, presenting its vision for future development projects to improve telecommunications in Eeyou Istchee, as well as to be a partner in solving telecommunications issues other entities of the region might have. Most projects ECN presented are related to improving the reliability of the network, by building redundancy along planned infrastructure projects such as roads and railroads, as well as through the deployment of a submarine network along the coast.

WHAPMAGOOSTUI CONNECTIVITY

ECN has made all necessary preparations and improvements to integrate the community of Whapmagoostui on its high-speed telecommunications network including successful end-to-end testing of the connectivity between Chisasibi and Whapmagoostui. Network services through ECN will start being offered in the community in the coming weeks.

ECN has been hard at work in 2021 keeping its critical service connecting people throughout another year of the COVID-19 pandemic and it is with great pride that we continue improving the network to meet the ever-increasing needs in telecommunications of the organizations, businesses and people of our region.





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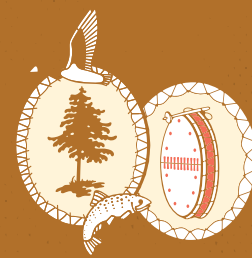


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Curtis Bosum
Christina Gilpin

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Chief Clarence Jolly Sr.
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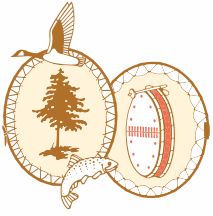
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