

2016-2017

ANNUAL REPORT | ᐱᓂᐃᓪ ᐱᓂᐃᓪ ᐱᓂᐃᓪ ᐱᓂᐃᓪ

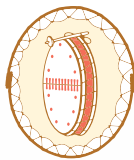


TABLE OF CONTENTS



Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)

Message from the Grand Chief/Chairman	2
Message from the Deputy Grand Chief/ Vice-Chairman	13
Message from the Executive Director	17
Message from the Deputy Executive Director	22
Communications	25
Cree-Canada Relations	26
Cree-Québec Relations and Taxation	32
Natural Resources	50
Operations and Maintenance and Capital Grants	52
International Affairs	53
 Remembering Norm	 56



Cree Nation Government

Finance and Treasury	59
Human Resources	62
Cree Human Resources Development	67
Commerce and Industry	86
Environment and Remedial Works	88
Capital Works and Services	98
Child and Family Services	110
Justice and Correctional Services	117
Eeyou Eenou Police Force	136
Social and Cultural Development	141
Eeyou Communications Network	165
 Cree First Nations – Chiefs and Offices	 166
 Board/Council Members – Executive/ Executive Committee Members	 167

Cover Photo:
Neoskweskau, Mistissini, Eeyou Istchee
by Deborah Loon

Photo on this page:
Brendan Forward



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Inquiry into Quebec-Indigenous relations in Val-d'Or
Photo: Lyle Stewart



Message from the GRAND CHIEF/CHAIRMAN

DR. MATTHEW COON COME

It is once again my distinct pleasure to report to the members of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee on our achievements and activities over the course of the 2016-17 fiscal year.

This past fiscal year has been a very busy one with enormous effort placed on both the promotion and protection of our rights, while at the same time also undertaking initiatives to ensure that the quality of the lives of our people and of our communities are continually improving.

This past year has been another reminder to us all of the importance of preserving and defending our Cree rights. The year was a further reminder to us that we can never take our rights for granted, nor can we ever assume that once they have been recognized that we can rest comfortably. Our rights have been the basis of everything we have achieved as an Indigenous nation over the last forty-plus years, yet we must always remain vigilant and alert to make sure those rights are never eroded, diminished, or ignored.

CREE-CANADA GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT

For me, personally, the conclusion of negotiations on a *Cree Governance Agreement* and Constitution represents the most important accomplishment for the Cree Nation over this past year. This Agreement represents yet another step forward in strengthening Cree governance.

At the time that Quebec announced its intention to develop the James Bay Hydroelectric Project, we Cree people were seen to be in the way. We were regarded as a potential obstacle to that development, and it was believed that we had no rights to be where we had always been.

But at that time, our leaders refused to accept that definition of our reality. Our leaders then understood the importance of our maintaining our connection with the land and they had a vision of how we could share the wealth of the land with others and co-exist.

What our Cree Nation has accomplished since the signing of the *JBNQA* is nothing short of a revolution. We have accomplished what, in other parts of the world, has required armed struggle. We have engaged in a 40-year process of decolonization. We have gotten out of the *Indian Act*, and the current *Governance Agreement* represents another step in that process. With this *Governance Agreement* the power to control things at the local level will be in our own hands.

We now determine what happens on Cree Territory. We run our own institutions to provide health services and education through our Cree Health Board and Cree School Board. We govern our communities ourselves without the interference from a paternalistic government. We have nation-to-nation relationships with both the province and the federal government. We have a clear

voice in the development taking place on our traditional territory, and we have vastly improved the living conditions in our communities.

These are all things that national Indigenous leaders have talked about for decades as what should be present for reserves across the country. These are the things that were recommended in the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. And these are the things that are described as aspirations and hopes in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. And we here in Eeyou Istchee have already achieved all of them. Over the last 40 years we have stayed focused on our rights and we have struggled to translate the recognition of our rights into benefits for our communities and our people.

Our *Governance Agreement* is a further step in the very special history of the Cree Nation. It is a further step in achieving the noble vision of recreating our original sovereignty in a contemporary context. It is a further step in the progress of Indigenous Peoples world-wide.

As we continue to defend and advance our collective rights as a Nation, we never lose sight of our need to address the concerns and conditions of our people as individuals and as communities.

PROVINCIAL INQUIRY INTO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN IN THE VAL D'OR AREA

I have continued to be troubled that at a time in our history when we have made such major gains in the development of harmonious relationships with non-Cree communities within the region, that we still need to point out, and fight against, continuing systemic racism. And it has continued to be a huge disappointment to me that the most vulnerable among our people are subjected to abuse at the hands of the representatives of law and justice in Quebec.

I wish to once again acknowledge the family of Cindy Ruperthouse and the women who courageously came forward with their allegations of abuse at the hands of certain Val d'Or SQ officers.

We were very disappointed with the report undertaken by the Montreal police which exonerated all the SQ officers in the Val d'Or area and found no grounds for charging any of the officers against whom allegations were made. This left our women feeling even more vulnerable and distrusting of the system which is supposed to be protecting them. We made a commitment that we would not rest until an independent provincial inquiry was established to get at the truth and to make that truth public.

As a result of our persistent efforts, together with the efforts of the AFNQL, Premier Couillard announced the establishment of a provincial judicial inquiry which will in-

What our Cree Nation has accomplished since the signing of the JBNQA is nothing short of a revolution.

investigate the treatment of Indigenous peoples by public institutions including the police, correctional services, youth protection and health systems. The inquiry will look at systemic relations between the region's police and Indigenous population and will complement the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

The independent provincial judicial inquiry will be led by Superior Court Justice Jacques Viens, who spent 25 years working in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region. The inquiry is scheduled to take two years to complete, concluding on November 30, 2018. We look forward to working with the inquiry and we look forward to the conclusions of this very important inquiry.

We also applaud the efforts that Mayor Corbeil of Val d'Or has taken to lead his community in a new and positive direction in order to establish more positive relations with the Indigenous peoples of the area.

ONTARIO LAND CLAIM

The launch of our legal claim for recognition of Cree rights in Ontario represents both an effort to have Cree rights acknowledged, but it also represents our determination to have the rights of our Cree individuals to carry out traditional activities on traditional Cree territory recognized.

The proceedings in the Ontario Court of Justice are a continuation of the claims originally pursued in the *Coon Come No. 3* case, which was launched in 1989.

This legal action seeks recognition of Aboriginal rights and Aboriginal title over lands in Ontario on a shared basis with other Aboriginal peoples, and it also alleges breaches by both the federal and provincial governments of their duties to protect the rights and interests of the Cree Nation in these lands.

The Cree people who have traditionally occupied these lands include those individuals affiliated with Washaw Sibi, MoCreebec and Waskaganish. Since Washaw Sibi is not a fully recognized band under the *Cree-Naskapi Act*, Chief Pauline Trapper-Hester has been named as a plaintiff in these proceedings on behalf of all the members of Washaw Sibi. Similarly, since MoCreebec is not a historic collectivity and cannot claim Aboriginal rights or title, the interests of the MoCreebec people are represented in these proceedings as members of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee.

Although the Cree Nation recognizes that other Aboriginal peoples also have rights and interests in these lands, and although the claim does not intend to affect the rights of other Aboriginal peoples, there has regretfully been a negative reaction on the part of a number of Ontario communities and groups to our claim. The proceedings simply are attempting to have Cree Nation rights recognized.

We understand these concerns which stem from an interpretation of Treaty 9. In order to advance our claim, we may very well need to make arguments regarding the history of Treaty 9, in particular the extinguishment clause. But the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee has never been party to Treaty 9 and we will need to raise these issues clearly. We understand that these issues are important for Treaty 9 beneficiaries. I will continue to reach out to these communities to explain the intent of our legal action and to express our willingness to engage in dialogues with the objective of identifying approaches which will be beneficial for all Indigenous peoples in this area and beyond.

WASHAW SIBI

The Cree Nation Government continues to support the work of the Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi to establish a new village and become the tenth Cree First Nation. Under the leadership of Chief Pauline Trapper-Hester and its dedicated Council, Washaw Sibi is in the final stages of identifying a suitable site for constructing the new village.

Regrettably, in reaction to the launch of the Cree Nation's Ontario Claim, the Algonquin communities in the region expressed opposition to a new Cree community established on lands that they have claimed as being part of their traditional territory. In order to avoid potential conflicts within the region, a previous site that had been selected by Washaw Sibi was, therefore, abandoned.

We are confident that this final round of site selection will result in a process that will substantially increase the progress of Washaw Sibi in achieving its long-held dream and vision of establishing a new village without fear of losing their Cree language and culture.

MOCREEBEC

Similarly, the Cree Nation Government will continue to support the efforts of MoCreebec to become the eleventh Cree First Nation. We are committed to working with the people of MoCreebec to achieve proper recognition of their community as well as their rights under the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*.

The MoCreebec community is comprised of individuals who are members of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee and who are beneficiaries of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*. Some are descendants of Eeyou Istchee Crees whose family hunting territories were located within the present boundaries of Ontario. Others are descendants of Eeyou Istchee Crees who relocated to Ontario more recently, for reasons of health care, education or employment.

However, changes in land rights in the area over time have resulted in changes to the legal statuses and benefits

of the Eeyou Istchee Crees who reside in Ontario. Over the years, some individual Eeyou Istchee Crees elected to join the Moose Cree Band to receive Treaty 9 benefits, while many others chose to maintain their affiliation with their respective Northern Quebec Cree Bands. When the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* (JBNQA) was signed in 1975, many MoCreebec Crees were included as JBNQA beneficiaries. However, over time the MoCreebec Crees were excluded from benefits under the Agreement as a result of Quebec's restrictive interpretation of the JBNQA's residency requirement. This requirement excludes JBNQA beneficiaries from receiving treaty benefits if they have not resided within the Eeyou Istchee territory in Quebec within the previous ten years.

We will be working closely with the MoCreebec leadership to address all these issues for the benefit of our Cree people living in MoCreebec.

HOUSING

The Cree Nation Government has continued to work on a very important initiative to address the severe housing situation in all of our communities. We are now finalizing a financial model for housing that will begin to address the serious housing situation in our communities in a way that is responsible and responsive to the needs of our people.

We have conducted community consultations in the communities to hear concerns and to solicit feedback on the model which is being contemplated so that we can begin to establish a system which addresses the financing, the construction and the legal elements of housing, while being sensitive to the economic and cultural factors of the Cree Nation. We know that we cannot wait for governments to solve this problem, and in keeping with our responsibilities as a self-governing nation, we are creating a Cree-made solution to the housing crisis. We will do this in a way that maximizes the employment and other economic benefits and spin-offs for our communities. Once we have this important initiative ready to launch we will inform the Cree Nation.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL ISSUE: THE DAY SCHOLARS

In addition to the difficulties experienced by survivors of the Indian Residential School System, an often overlooked, but also very difficult experience, was that suffered by those Indigenous children known as “Day Scholars”. These were children who attended the Catholic and Anglican-run schools but who were boarded by private families near the location of these schools. There remain many untold stories about the suffering experienced by children who attended these schools and who suffered equally at the hands of the people who were involved in the running of these schools.

Within Eeyou Istchee such a school operated in Chisasibi and children from all the coastal communities were sent to Chisasibi and experienced the “Day Scholar” phenomenon.

It has been my honour to be involved in bringing this issue into the open on a national scale. I am pleased to report that the Minister of Indigenous Affairs, Dr. Carolyn

Bennett, has appointed a “Minister's Special Representative” to address this issue, and will work with individuals who experienced the “Day Scholar” reality, as well as their descendants who have experienced the generational impacts of this reality.

As the work of this “Special Representative” progresses, we will keep you informed, along with any information related to bringing your experience to the attention of this Representative. It will be important for us to continue to address all aspects of the Indian Residential School System and other related approaches which attempted to destroy Indigenous languages and cultures.

OUR EMPHASIS ON CREE YOUTH: CAPACITY-BUILDING

We have for many years stated that the development of our youth will be the key for the Cree Nation to realize the enormous potential which lies before us. We have before us the possibility of becoming the major economic and political force in northern Quebec. This potential will only be realized if our youth have the skills, the knowledge, and the commitment to achieve this dream. For the last several years, one of our top priorities has been to ensure that we are doing everything we can to promote and establish effective capacity building strategies. We have remained committed to this objective and we have continued to meet with the communities and have developed approaches to ensure that our objectives can be achieved.

In a very real sense, the future of the Cree Nation lies with our youth, and the Cree Nation will continue to grow and thrive depending on how well-prepared our current youth will be to assume responsibility for managing the affairs of our Cree Nation—from the local level to the national level to the regional level; and how prepared they will be to take on the employment opportunities which will become available in the region in the years ahead.

We remain committed to working closely with our youth to encourage them to take on the responsibilities associated with building a healthy and prosperous Cree Nation.

Typically, our Annual Reports are available to our members during our Annual General Assemblies, which are held in August of every year. By the time this Annual Report is distributed we will have held elections for Grand Chief and Deputy Chief of the Cree Nation Government. When the people of the Cree Nation choose a new leader to take us into the next chapter of our Nation's history, I promise to support and assist that person in continuing our path of blazing a trail for Indigenous nation-building.

Meegwetch. ●

DR MATTHEW COON COME

C'est encore une fois un véritable plaisir pour moi de rendre compte aux membres de la Nation crie d'Eeyou Istchee de nos accomplissements et de nos activités aux cours de l'exercice financier 2016-2017.

Cette dernière année financière a été très chargée; de grands efforts ont été réalisés pour la promotion et la protection de nos droits, ainsi que des initiatives prises pour assurer l'amélioration continue de la qualité de vie de notre peuple et de nos communautés.

Cette dernière année a été un nouveau rappel pour nous quant à l'importance de préserver et de défendre nos droits criés. Cette année nous a également rappelé que nous ne devons jamais tenir nos droits pour acquis, pas plus que nous pouvons aspirer à nous reposer confortablement une fois nos droits reconnus. Nos droits sont le fondement de tout ce que nous avons accompli en tant que nation autochtone depuis les dernières quarante et quelques années, mais nous devons toujours rester vigilants et alertes pour nous assurer que ces droits ne seront plus jamais érodés, diminués ou ignorés.

ENTENTE SUR LA GOUVERNANCE CRI-CANADA

En ce qui me concerne, personnellement, la conclusion des négociations pour une entente et une constitution crie canadienne représente l'accomplissement le plus important de la Nation crie cette année. Cette entente représente un nouveau pas en avant dans le renforcement de la gouvernance crie.

À l'époque où le Québec a annoncé son intention de développer le projet hydroélectrique de la Baie James, nous, le peuple cri, étions vus comme si nous bloquions le passage. Nous étions perçus comme un obstacle potentiel au développement, et les gens croyaient que nous n'avions aucun droit d'être là où nous avons toujours été.

Mais, à l'époque, nos chefs ont refusé d'accepter cette définition de notre réalité. Ceux-ci ont alors compris l'importance d'entretenir notre lien avec le territoire et ils voyaient une façon de partager la richesse du territoire avec les autres et d'y coexister.

Ce que notre Nation crie a accompli depuis la signature de la CBJNQ n'est rien de moins qu'une révolution. Nous avons accompli ce qui, dans d'autres parties du monde, a exigé une lutte armée. Nous nous sommes engagés dans un processus de décolonisation de 40 ans. Nous nous sommes sortis de la *Loi sur les Indiens*, et l'Entente sur la gouvernance actuel représente une autre étape dans ce processus. Grâce à cette Entente sur la gouvernance, le pouvoir de diriger les choses au niveau local sera entre nos propres mains.

Nous déterminons maintenant ce qui se passe sur le territoire cri. Nous gérons nos propres institutions afin de

fournir des services de santé et d'éducation par le biais de nos Conseils de santé et de nos commissions scolaires crie. Nous gouvernons nos communautés nous-mêmes sans l'interférence d'un gouvernement paternaliste. Nous avons des relations de nation à nation avec les gouvernements provinciaux et fédéraux. Nous avons une voix claire en ce qui concerne le développement qui a lieu sur notre territoire traditionnel et nous avons beaucoup amélioré les conditions de vie dans nos communautés.

Tous ces points sont des choses dont les chefs autochtones, sur le plan national, discutent depuis des décennies, de ce qui devrait être présent pour les réserves à travers le pays. Il s'agit de choses qui ont été recommandées dans le rapport de la Commission royale sur les peuples autochtones. Aussi, ce sont les choses qu'on décrit comme des aspirations et des espoirs dans la *Déclaration des Nations Unies sur les droits des peuples autochtones*. Et ici, à Eeyou Istchee, nous les avons toutes accomplies. Depuis les quarante dernières années, nous sommes restés concentrés sur nos droits et nous avons lutté pour transformer la reconnaissance de nos droits en avantages pour nos communautés et notre peuple.

L'Entente sur la gouvernance est une nouvelle étape dans l'histoire très particulière de la Nation crie. C'est une nouvelle étape vers l'accomplissement de la noble vision de recréer notre souveraineté originale dans un contexte contemporain. C'est une nouvelle étape dans le progrès des peuples autochtones à travers le monde.

Pendant que nous poursuivons la défense et l'avancement de nos droits collectifs en tant que Nation, nous ne perdons jamais de vue notre besoin d'aborder les préoccupations et les conditions de notre peuple en tant qu'individus et communautés.

ENQUÊTE PROVINCIALE CHARGÉE D'EXAMINER LES ALLÉGATIONS D'ABUS DE FEMMES AUTOCHTONES DANS LA RÉGION DE VAL D'OR

Je continue d'être troublé du fait qu'à une époque de notre histoire où nous avons réalisé de tels gains majeurs relativement au développement des relations harmonieuses avec les communautés non crie de la région, nous avons encore besoin de souligner le racisme systémique et de lutter contre lui. Et, cela demeure une grande déception pour moi de voir que les plus vulnérables parmi notre peuple sont victimes d'abus par les représentants de la loi et de la justice au Québec.

Je souhaite une fois de plus reconnaître la famille de Sindy Ruperthouse et les femmes qui ont déclaré si courageusement les abus qu'elles ont subis par certains agents de la SQ de Val-d'Or.

Nous avons été très déçus par le rapport déposé par la police montréalaise qui a exonéré tous les agents de la

SQ dans la région de Val-d'Or et qui n'a trouvé aucun motif pour déposer des accusations contre les agents mis en cause. Cela a eu comme résultat que nos femmes se sentent encore plus vulnérables et méfiantes par rapport au système qui est censé les protéger. Nous nous sommes engagés à ne prendre aucun répit jusqu'à ce qu'une enquête provinciale indépendante soit établie pour découvrir la vérité et rendre cette vérité publique.

En raison de nos efforts persistants, combinés avec ceux de l'APNQL, le premier ministre Couillard a annoncé l'instauration d'une enquête judiciaire provinciale qui porterait sur le traitement des personnes autochtones par les institutions publiques, y compris la police, les services correctionnels, la protection des jeunes et les systèmes de santé. L'enquête examinera les relations systémiques entre la police et la population autochtone de la région et viendra compléter l'Enquête nationale sur les femmes et les filles autochtones disparues et assassinées.

L'enquête indépendante judiciaire provinciale sera dirigée par le juge de la Cour supérieure, Jacques Viens, qui a travaillé pendant 25 ans dans la région d'Abitibi-Témiscamingue. L'enquête s'étendra sur deux ans et se terminera le 30 novembre 2018. Nous avons hâte de collaborer à cette enquête très importante et de la conclure.

Nous saluons les efforts que le maire Corbeil de Val-d'Or a déployés pour orienter sa communauté vers une nouvelle direction positive afin d'établir des relations plus harmonieuses avec les peuples autochtones de la région.

REVENDEICATION TERRITORIALE DE L'ONTARIO

Le lancement de notre revendication juridique pour la reconnaissance des droits cris en Ontario représente à la fois un effort pour obtenir la reconnaissance des droits cris, mais aussi notre détermination d'obtenir la reconnaissance du droit de nos individus cris à effectuer des activités traditionnelles sur le territoire traditionnel cri.

Les procédures à la Cour de justice ontarienne constituent la suite des revendications déposées à l'origine dans l'affaire *Coon Come No 3*, lancée en 1989.

Cette poursuite judiciaire vise la reconnaissance des droits autochtones et des titres de propriété autochtones sur des territoires en Ontario, partagés avec d'autres peuples autochtones. Elle allègue également des violations de la part du gouvernement fédéral et du gouvernement provincial quant à leurs obligations de protéger les droits et intérêts de la Nation crie sur ces territoires.

Le peuple cri qui occupe traditionnellement ces territoires comprend les individus affiliés à Washaw Sibi, MoCreebec et Waskaganish. Comme Washaw Sibi n'est pas une bande entièrement reconnue sous la loi *Cree-Naskapi*, Chef Pauline Trapper-Hester a été désigné plaignante dans ces procédures judiciaires au nom de tous les membres de Washaw Sibi. De même, puisque MoCreebec n'est également pas une collectivité historique et ne peut revendiquer des droits ancestraux ainsi qu'un titre autochtone, les intérêts du peuple MoCreebec sont représentés dans ces procédures juridiques comme s'il était membre de la Nation crie d'Eeyou Istchee.

Quoique la Nation crie reconnaisse que d'autres peuples autochtones ont aussi des droits et des intérêts

par rapport à ces territoires, et que la revendication n'a pas l'intention d'affecter les droits des autres peuples autochtones, il y a malheureusement eu une réaction négative de la part de quelques communautés et groupes ontariens au sujet de notre revendication. Les procédures juridiques ont simplement comme objectif d'avoir reconnaissance des droits de la Nation crie.

Nous comprenons ces préoccupations, qui découlent d'une interprétation du Traité 9. Afin de faire avancer notre revendication, nous serons peut-être contraints de présenter un argument par rapport à l'histoire du Traité 9, en particulier la disposition d'extinction. Mais, la Nation crie d'Eeyou Istchee n'a jamais fait partie du Traité 9, et nous aurons besoin de poser ces questions clairement. Nous comprenons que ces questions sont importantes pour les bénéficiaires du Traité 9. Je continuerai à tendre la main à ces communautés afin d'expliquer l'intention derrière nos poursuites juridiques et afin d'exprimer notre volonté d'entamer des dialogues qui ont comme objectif d'identifier des approches avantageuses pour tous les peuples autochtones de cette région et au-delà.

WASHAW SIBI

Le gouvernement de la Nation crie continue à soutenir le travail de la Nation crie de Washaw Sibi afin d'établir un nouveau village et de devenir la dixième Première Nation crie. Sous la gouvernance de Chef Pauline Trapper-Hester et son Conseil dédié, Washaw Sibi en est aux dernières étapes de l'identification d'un lieu approprié pour la construction du nouveau village.

Malheureusement, en réaction au dépôt de la revendication ontarienne de la Nation crie, les communautés algonquines de la région ont exprimé une opposition à l'établissement d'une nouvelle communauté crie sur des terres qu'ils revendiquent comme faisant partie de leur territoire traditionnel. Afin d'éviter des conflits potentiels dans la région, un autre lieu, qui avait été choisi par Washaw Sibi antérieurement, a donc été abandonné.

Nous avons confiance que cette dernière ronde de sélection du site aura comme résultat un processus qui augmentera considérablement le progrès de Washaw Sibi dans l'accomplissement de son rêve et de sa vision de longue date visant à établir un nouveau village, sans peur de perdre sa langue et sa culture crie.

MOCREEBEC

De la même façon, le Gouvernement de la Nation Crie continuera d'apporter son soutien aux efforts de MoCreebec pour devenir la onzième Première Nation crie. Nous sommes engagés à collaborer avec le peuple de MoCreebec pour la reconnaissance adéquate de leur communauté ainsi que de leurs droits sous la *Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois*.

La communauté MoCreebec est composée d'individus qui sont membres de la Nation crie d'Eeyou Istchee et qui sont bénéficiaires de la *Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord québécois*. Certains sont descendants des cris d'Eeyou Istchee qui avaient des territoires de chasse familiaux situés à l'intérieur des frontières actuelles de



MoCreebec

Photo: Michael Jolly

l'Ontario. Les autres sont des descendants des cris d'Eeyou Istchee qui ont déménagé en Ontario plus récemment, pour des raisons de santé, d'éducation ou d'emploi.

Par contre, les changements à travers le temps des droits territoriaux dans la région ont entraînés des changements de statuts légaux et d'avantages pour les cris d'Eeyou Istchee qui vivent en Ontario. À travers les années, certains cris d'Eeyou Istchee ont choisi de se joindre à la bande de Moose Cree pour obtenir des avantages du Traité 9, tandis que bien d'autres ont choisi de maintenir leur affiliation avec leurs propres bandes cries du nord du Québec. Quand la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois (CBJNQ) a été signée en 1975, plusieurs cris MoCreebec y étaient inscrits en tant que bénéficiaires du CBJNQ. Mais, à travers le temps, les cris MoCreebec ont été exclus des avantages sous l'entente, en raison de l'interprétation restrictive du CBJNQ par le Québec. Cette exigence empêche les bénéficiaires du CBJNQ de recevoir des avantages de traité s'ils n'ont pas habité dans le territoire Eeyou Istchee au Québec depuis les dix dernières années.

Nous travaillerons étroitement avec la direction de MoCreebec pour aborder toutes ces questions au bénéfice de notre peuple cri habitant à MoCreebec.

LOGEMENT

Le Gouvernement de la Nation Crie a poursuivi le travail concernant une initiative très importante pour aborder la situation grave du logement dans nos communautés. Nous finalisons actuellement un modèle de fi-

nancement pour le logement qui commencera à aborder la situation problématique du logement, de manière responsable et qui répondra aux besoins de notre peuple.

Nous avons entrepris des consultations dans des communautés afin d'entendre les préoccupations et solliciter des rétroactions sur le modèle que nous envisageons actuellement afin de commencer à établir un système qui aborde le financement, la construction et les éléments juridiques du logement, et qui est sensible aux facteurs économiques et culturels de la Nation crie. Nous savons que nous ne pouvons pas attendre que le gouvernement résolve ce problème, et en assumant nos responsabilités en tant que nation autogouvernée, nous sommes en train de créer une solution crie à la crise de logement. Nous le ferons de manière à optimiser l'emploi ainsi que les autres avantages économiques et les retombées pour nos communautés. Une fois que nous serons prêts à lancer cette initiative importante, nous en informerons la Nation crie.

QUESTION D'ÉCOLE RÉSIDENTIELLE : LES ÉLÈVES DES ÉCOLES DE JOUR

En plus des difficultés vécues par les survivants du système d'écoles indiennes résidentielles, une expérience souvent négligée, mais aussi très pénible est celle endurée par les enfants autochtones désignés comme « élèves des écoles de jour ». Il s'agit d'enfants ayant fréquenté les écoles catholiques et anglicanes, mais qui étaient hébergés par des familles habitant près des écoles. Il reste beaucoup de récits inédits au sujet de la souffrance vécue par les enfants qui fréquentaient à ces écoles et qui ont également souffert aux mains des gens qui étaient impliquées dans la gestion de ces écoles.

À l'intérieur d'Eeyou Istchee, il y avait une telle école à Chisasibi; les enfants de toutes les communautés de la côte y étaient envoyés et y ont vécu le phénomène d'« élèves des écoles de jour ».

Ce fut un honneur pour moi de contribuer à révéler au grand jour cette question à l'échelle nationale. J'ai le plaisir d'annoncer que la ministre des Affaires autochtones, Dr Carolyn Bennett, a nommé un « représentant spécial du ministre » pour aborder la question et collaborer avec des individus qui ont vécu la réalité des « élèves des écoles de jour », ainsi que leurs descendants qui ont subi les répercussions générationnelles de cette réalité.

Au fur et à mesure que le travail avancera, nous vous tiendrons au courant, de même que nous vous transmettrons toute information pertinente pour transmettre votre vécu à l'attention de ce représentant. Il sera important pour nous de continuer d'aborder tous les aspects du système des pensionnats indiens et d'autres approches connexes qui ont tenté de détruire les langues et cultures autochtones.

NOTRE EMPHASE SUR LA JEUNESSE CRIE : RENFORCEMENT DES CAPACITÉS

Nous affirmons depuis plusieurs années que le développement de nos jeunes sera la clef de la réalisation du potentiel énorme de la Nation crie. Nous avons devant nous la possibilité de devenir la force économique et politique majeure du Nord du Québec. Ce potentiel ne sera réalisé que si nos jeunes ont les capacités, les connaissances et l'engagement pour accomplir ce rêve. Depuis plusieurs années, nous faisons tout pour promouvoir et établir des stratégies de renforcement de capacités

et cela constitue l'une de nos priorités. Nous sommes restés engagés envers cet objectif et nous continuons de rencontrer les communautés et de développer des approches afin d'assurer que nos objectifs soient réalisés.

De façon très réelle, le futur de la Nation crie repose dans les mains de nos jeunes, et la Nation crie continuera à grandir et à s'épanouir tant que nos jeunes seront prêts à assumer la responsabilité de gérer les affaires de notre Nation crie, et ce, du niveau local et régional au niveau national; et tant qu'ils seront prêts à saisir les occasions d'emploi qui s'offriront dans la région durant les prochaines années.

Nous demeurons engagés dans une collaboration étroite avec nos jeunes pour les encourager à assumer les responsabilités associées au développement d'une Nation crie saine et prospère.

Habituellement, nos rapports annuels sont disponibles pour nos membres pendant nos assemblées générales annuelles, qui ont lieu en août chaque année. Au moment où notre rapport annuel sera distribué, nous aurons eu des élections pour élire le grand chef et le Chef adjoint du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie. Lorsque les gens de la Nation crie choisissent un nouveau chef pour les diriger dans le prochain chapitre de l'histoire de notre Nation, je promets de soutenir et d'aider cette personne à défricher la voie vers la construction de la Nation autochtone.

Meegwetch. ●

Le futur de la Nation crie repose dans les mains de nos jeunes, et la Nation crie continuera à grandir et à s'épanouir tant que nos jeunes seront prêts à assumer la responsabilité de gérer les affaires de notre Nation crie.

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EPC, the Cree communities, regional planning partners (such as the Natural Resources Committee/Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government and the Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission).

Our plan is to map Cree land use so as to identify and map areas that are now crucial to protect and others that may be important for the future of the communities in other ways. Issues will arise, and with informa-

tion from the communities we will find ways of resolving them. Building capacity and training at the level of Cree communities will also create jobs for coming generations.

I wish the Cree Nation success in our shared endeavours and good health in the coming year. ●

Photo: T. Philiptchenko/CBHSSJB



Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come and the Chairperson of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services, Bella M. Petawabano, have endorsed a Framework for Action to Improve Access to ensure Nutritious Food in Eeyou Istchee.

RODNEY MARK

Cette dernière année nous avons progressé dans l'établissement du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie et dans la collaboration avec les communautés sur leurs plans et priorités. Ce que nous faisons consiste à mettre en œuvre la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois comme elle aurait dû être appliquée dans les années soixante-dix. C'est dommage que de nombreuses personnes ayant joué un rôle clé dans la négociation de la Convention ne soient pas ici aujourd'hui pour partager le déroulement de cette convention. C'est un plaisir, par contre, de voir de jeunes personnes se diriger vers des emplois et travailler à la réalisation de leurs espoirs en l'avenir.

Le grand chef Matthew Coon Come et la présidente du Conseil cri de la santé et des services sociaux, Bella M. Petawabano, ont appuyé un cadre d'action pour assurer et améliorer l'accès à une alimentation nutritive à Eeyou Istchee. Il y a une pointe d'ironie dans l'appel pour plus d'aliments nutritifs pour les familles Eeyou. Durant ma vie, il y a toujours eu assez de viande de gibier nutritive, meejim, pour tout le monde, et même si nous n'étions pas aussi aisés qu'aujourd'hui, nous mangions de la meilleure nourriture. Pour cette raison, nous demandons à toutes les entités de nous soutenir dans cette action pour que cela devienne votre action d'améliorer ce que vous et vos familles mangez.

Vous vous demandez aussi peut-être pourquoi cela est important. Eh bien, l'accès à une alimentation nutritive et abordable est essentiel pour la promotion de la santé et pour prévenir les maladies chroniques. Il est aussi vrai que, malgré les niveaux de vie plus élevés dans nos communautés, il y en a trop parmi nous qui n'ont pas assez à manger. Il y a des enfants qui se couchent le ventre creux. Aussi, de mauvais choix alimentaires mènent au diabète, aux maladies cardiaques, à l'obésité et aux différents types de cancer, parmi d'autres troubles de santé.

De plus, les enfants qui n'ont pas une alimentation adéquate ont des mauvaises dents et sont souvent incapables d'être attentifs en classe parce qu'ils n'ont pas assez d'énergie pour participer au cours; ou encore, ils perdent leur capacité de concentration parce que les boissons gazeuses leur donnent des bouffées d'énergie à court terme suivies d'une perte d'énergie à long terme. C'est ce cycle qui doit être brisé.

Je conseille vivement à toutes les entités d'Eeyou de se débarrasser de mauvaises habitudes comme la consommation de boissons gazeuses, de bonbons ainsi que d'aliments riches en glucides et en graisses. La statistique alarmante indique que 25 % de la population adulte est atteinte du diabète et la projection actuelle révèle que dans 15 ans, 40 % de la population aura le diabète. Il est très important de rendre prioritaires la promotion des aliments nutritifs et l'augmentation de l'activité physique chez vous. Vous avez tous été témoins de la douleur et de l'agonie que ceux qui sont atteints du diabète doivent subir. Nous pouvons éviter cela et je suis certain qu'il y en a plusieurs parmi vous qui souhaitent

en parvenir. Battons cette prévision de 40 % en éliminant le diabète de nos vies. Faisons une priorité de l'exercice et des glucides faibles en gras à Eeyou Istchee pour l'avenir.

Vous pouvez aussi trouver des informations supplémentaires sur les pages Web suivantes :

<http://www.creehealth.org/accessnutritiousfoods>

<http://www.creehealth.org/nutritionguidelines>

Cette dernière année j'ai travaillé sur des questions environnementales comme les efforts déployés par la communauté Chisasibi et la corporation Niskamoon avec Hydro-Québec et d'autres parties concernées pour replanter la zostère, en nourrissant l'espoir que la population d'oisins reviendra sur la côte à des niveaux auxquels nous sommes habitués. Comme vous le savez peut-être tous, la condition de la glace est en train de changer et cela peut rendre périlleux le voyage le long de la côte. De plus, les changements dans la distribution des glaces et des animaux ont lieu partout dans la région de la Baie, un fait dont je suis certain que les gens de Sanikiluaq peuvent témoigner.

Le Gouvernement de la Nation Crie/le Grand Conseil prend les mesures nécessaires avec Parcs Canada pour initier une « étude de faisabilité » pour une aire marine nationale de conservation (AMNC) potentielle dans la Baie-James. L'aire d'étude proposée à Parcs Canada s'étend de l'embouchure de La Grande rivière jusqu'à la frontière ontarienne – autrement dit, la région marine d'Eeyou au sud des limites de la région marine du Nunavik (RMN). Cette étude déterminera les limites de la AMNC et comprendra d'autres consultations auprès des communautés cries et inuites de la côte.

Aussi, en tant que président de la Commission de planification d'Eeyou, je travaille avec nos membres pour établir l'Entente de gouvernance entre la Nation crie et le Québec reliée à l'utilisation et à la gestion des terres ainsi qu'à la planification des ressources sur les terres de catégories 1 et 2.

Les communautés sont représentées sur la Commission de planification Eeyou (EPC) et sont soutenues par l'équipe du gouvernement de la Nation crie. Cette équipe collaborera avec l'EPC, les communautés cries, les partenaires régionaux de planification (comme le Comité de ressources naturelles/le gouvernement régional Eeyou Istchee Baie-James et la Commission d'aménagement de la région marine d'Eeyou).

Nous planifions de cartographier les terres cries de manière à identifier et cartographier les régions qu'il est maintenant indispensable de protéger et d'autres qui, dans d'autres aspects, peuvent être importantes pour l'avenir des communautés. Des problèmes surviendront, mais à l'aide des informations obtenues des communautés, nous trouverons des moyens de les résoudre. Le renforcement des capacités et la formation au niveau des communautés cries créeront aussi des emplois pour les futures générations.

Je voudrais souhaiter à la Nation crie du succès dans nos initiatives communes et une bonne santé dans l'année à venir. ●



Message from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BILL NAMAGOOSE

Another year has gone by. The development of the Cree Nation continues to evolve and is being enhanced by our dedicated employees at the Cree Nation Government.

We have mechanisms that run the services and programs many of our people now take for granted. Our youth cannot remember a time when the Cree Nation Government and other Cree entities like the Cree School Board and Cree Health Board were not there. They do not remember a time when Canada and Quebec managed our services.

The highlight of the year has been the successful negotiation and consultation on the *Cree Governance Agreement* with the Federal Government envisioned in the *New Relationship Agreement* that the Cree Nation adopted by referendum in 2008.

Despite opposition, misinformation and fear mongering from two external mediocre law firms and from the usual Cree Nation Government detractors the Cree Communities and the Cree Nation Government have ratified the *Cree Governance Agreement*.

I was also surprised that many local government officials were not as familiar with the *Cree Naskapi Act* as we had imagined they would be. This led to confusion and misunderstanding on what the intention was of using the *Cree Naskapi Act* as a transitional Cree Constitution.

We would not have been able to agree on a Cree Constitution prior to the ratification of the *Cree Governance Agreement*. Many view a constitution as the founding document of a Nation and will therefore go to great lengths to get their views and texts included. I do not share that view. The Cree Nation is already constituted and has existed for thousands of years. It does not need to recognize itself. We have a Cree culture and a Cree way of doing things which we already incorporate in our deliberations and governance practices. A governance constitution like the one that will be adopted is only a manual on how the Cree Nation Government will function. It is not a founding document, just another step in the implementation of Cree Nation Governance in contemporary times.

We must keep this principle in mind as we contemplate and develop the Cree Constitution.

During the consultations on the *Cree Governance Agreement* I was also surprised by the lack of knowledge and understanding about how our treaty rights and rights

in general can become imperiled by government policies and the negative consequences such policies would have on our people and communities.

We are strongest when we invoke our rights in responding to governments and weakest when we squabble amongst ourselves.

We also need to be careful of the many special interest groups in the Cree Nation. Some of them may demand seats on the Cree Nation Government. We must limit the power to govern only to those that are elected by the Cree people at local and national levels. Self-appointed people or those who claim to be elected but are not in fact elected in an open authorized election of governance should not get seats on the Cree Nation Government, even as observers, as this is a recipe that may weaken or even unravel our contemporary Government. The elected people must also be held accountable and must be transparent at all times in undertaking their responsibilities.

The *Cree Governance Agreement* goes further than any Indigenous Governance Agreement in existence in Canada today. The Cree Nation citizens will no longer have to report to the Federal Government Minister of Indigenous Affairs.

In the aftermath of the assault of several Indigenous women in Val-d'Or, the Cree Nation Government was successful in convincing the Quebec Government to set up the Public Inquiry on Relations Between Indigenous Peoples and Certain Public Services in Québec. It is time that such an inquiry takes place so that a guide can be prepared on how Governments and Indigenous people can enjoy a fruitful and respectful relationship.

We also have started a legal process in Ontario to settle the Cree title and rights that existed before Canada and Ontario came in to existence. Unfortunately, the Crees in Ontario have inexplicably decided to stand with Canada and Ontario to claim that Cree rights do not exist on that side of the line known as the Ontario border. It is difficult to understand why they would defend these colonial structures when they usually rally against them.

The *Paix des Braves* (PDB) and the *New Relationship Agreement* (NRA) continue to be implemented properly. The progress at the local level is very apparent. Most Cree communities have now built their second arena or community center. Many First Nations in Canada do not have the resources to build even one arena.

I would like to thank the Community Directors of Operation, Director Generals and Treasurers, and the Capital Project Managers for their input and guidance into the planning process at the Cree Nation Government. They act as facilitators for the many community capital projects that must be built in the Cree communities in accordance with the *Paix des Braves* and the *New Relationship Agreement*.

Two of the most serious issues we face is the housing backlog and lack of a thorough and thoughtful economic development strategy for the Cree Nation. Both of these issues left unresolved could cause an exodus from the Cree communities. We need to set up an economic development fund and redeploy our now redundant compensation funds from the 70s and 80s to help create opportunities and job creation in the future.

On February 22, 2017 we lost our dear friend and one of the biggest champions of the Cree Nation. Norm Hawkins has been a friend, supporter, and believer in the Cree Nation since the early days of the Grand Council of the Crees. He always provided top-notch professional financial advice to the Cree leadership until his passing. His sound financial advice is at the foundation of most of the financial agreements we now have in place and upon which we continue to build on.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the great work of the employees of the Cree Nation Government. Without their work and support the Cree Nation Government would cease to function.

I wish you all the best of luck in the coming year. ●

CREE HARRICANA LAND CLAIM (ONTARIO)

We have always maintained that Eeyou Istchee, the traditional territory of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee, extends beyond the boundaries of what is now known as Quebec, and includes portions of the lands and waters of what is now Nunavut, Ontario and Labrador. We have long resisted efforts by the Canadian and provincial governments to interfere with our rightful use of these lands, including through the imposition of provincial boundaries. In recent years, we have renewed our attention to Cree rights in the portion of Eeyou Istchee that falls to the west of the Quebec-Ontario boundary.

When the Governments of Canada and Ontario agreed to extend the territory of the province of Ontario north to the shore of James Bay in 1889, no one considered the rights of the Crees and other indigenous peoples, or the geography of the lands. The straight line of the new Quebec-Ontario boundary bisected the Harricana River watershed, artificially dividing Eeyou Istchee. The border cut through hunting territories and travel routes throughout this watershed, that had been used and occupied by the Crees since time immemorial.

Initially, the new provincial border was an imaginary line, existing only on paper maps. But over time, its existence was solidified in the administrative and colonial practices of the federal and provincial governments. In 1905 and 1906, when Canada, Ontario and a number of Aboriginal peoples entered into Treaty No. 9, the Crown deliberately ignored the rights of the Crees of Eeyou Istchee over these lands. Over the last century, the Quebec-Ontario boundary has been used and relied upon in countless ways to deny and interfere with the exercise of Cree rights in Ontario. The people and communities of Washaw Sibi, Waskaganish and MoCreebec, as well as their ancestors, have borne the brunt of these colonial efforts.

In March and May 2016, the Cree Nation commenced, on behalf of all its members, an action in the Superior Court of Justice of Ontario to obtain recognition of the Cree Nation's Aboriginal title and Aboriginal rights over its traditional territory in northern Ontario. The action was filed by the Cree plaintiffs against the Governments of Canada and Ontario. The territory over which the Cree Nation seeks recognition of Aboriginal title consists of the portion of the Harricana River watershed that falls in Ontario. The Cree Nation also seeks recognition of its Aboriginal rights over an adjacent area, consisting of the Abitibi River and North French River watersheds.

This action in the Superior Court of Justice of Ontario is essentially a continuation of claims regarding Ontario lands that were first commenced by the Cree Nation against Canada in the Federal Court in 1989, in an action known as *Coon Come #3*.

The Cree Nation acknowledges and respects that other Aboriginal peoples also have rights in these lands, including a number of signatories of Treaty No. 9. The Cree Nation's land claim in Ontario is based in the legal concept of shared or joint Aboriginal title, a doctrine recognized and confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada. Under the doctrine of shared Aboriginal title, where two or more different Aboriginal peoples occupied certain

lands together but to the exclusion of others prior to the Crown's assertion of sovereignty, a finding of joint title can be available. The Cree Nation's land claim in Ontario is thus grounded in an acknowledgement that other Aboriginal peoples have used and occupied these lands along with the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee, both historically and today.

On February 28, 2017, the Cree Nation amended its statement of claim, to confirm that the declarations of Aboriginal title and Aboriginal rights over lands in Ontario that are sought in the action are "without prejudice to any other existing rights other Aboriginal peoples may hold with respect to these lands". This amendment confirms the Cree Nation's position that it is seeking a determination regarding its Aboriginal and title rights vis-à-vis the federal and Ontario Crowns (from whom all non-Aboriginal interests in these lands derive), while acknowledging that other Aboriginal peoples hold rights to the lands in question. The amendment confirms the commitment and acceptance by the Cree Nation that all existing rights of other Aboriginal peoples will remain undisturbed by the declarations that the Cree Nation may ultimately obtain regarding its rights over lands in Ontario.

Several preliminary motions have arisen in the action over the 2016-2017 fiscal year, and these will likely be determined in coming months. Moose Cree First Nation has brought a motion to be added as a party defendant, and Nishnawbe Aski Nation has requested to be added as an intervener. Both Moose Cree First Nation and

Nishnawbe Aski Nation have indicated that they intend to vigorously oppose the Cree Nation's claim.

After the motions by Moose Cree First Nation and Nishnawbe Aski Nation have been determined by the Court, it is anticipated that Canada will bring a motion to strike the action (with leave to amend) on various grounds.

Legal, anthropological and historical research on behalf of the Cree Nation in support of the Ontario claim will continue in the coming year. The materials on which the claim is based include interviews with the present day users and occupants of the areas under discussion, ancestral family links to past owners of these hunting territories, anthropological materials going back in time to the 19th century and historical materials from the Hudson Bay Company records, the Jesuit Relations and other sources from as far back as the 17th century.

The arguments advanced by the Cree Nation in this case are at the forefront of the development of the law of Aboriginal title, and challenge the legacy of colonial dispossession that lies at the foundation of the laws and institutions of the Canadian federation. There is every indication that the Cree Nation's Harricana (Ontario) land claim will entail lengthy and complex litigation, but the Cree Nation and its leadership are committed to seeing this important matter through. As Grand Chief Coon Come has said, "the Cree Nation is not afraid of long fights. We will continue to fight for our rights in Ontario until they are recognized." ●

Action filed to obtain recognition of the Cree Nation's Aboriginal title and Aboriginal rights over its traditional territory in northern Ontario

CV-16-547938
~~01-16-547938~~

67

Court File No. _____

ONTARIO
SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE

BETWEEN:

GRAND CHIEF MATTHEW COON COME, Grand Chief and Chairman of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and the Cree Nation Government, suing on his own behalf and on behalf of all members of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee

- and -

THE GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (EYYOU ISTCHEE)

- and -

THE CREE NATION GOVERNMENT (formerly the CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY)

- and -


THE CREES OF THE FIRST NATION OF WASKAGANISH

- and -

THE CREE FIRST NATION OF WASWANIPI
known as the Waswanipi Band pursuant to the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act

- and -

THE CREE NATION OF NEMASKA





URANIUM DEVELOPMENT IN EYYOU ISTCHEE

In recent years, the Cree Nation has taken a stand against uranium development in Eeyou Istchee. As stewards of these lands, we have resolved to protect Eeyou Istchee against the serious long-term risks that this form of development would bring to our lands and way of life.

The Matoush project was the first advanced uranium exploration project in Quebec and in Eeyou Istchee. It was located north of Mistissini, on Mistissini traplines. After many years of study and consultation, both the Cree Nation of Mistissini and the Cree Nation as a whole had indicated their steadfast opposition to the project. In response, in November 2013, Quebec refused to authorize Strateco Resources' Matoush Advanced Uranium Exploration Project, due to its lack of social acceptability amongst the Crees.

The Cree Nation has opposed uranium development in Eeyou Istchee because of the long-term, irremediable effects that uranium mine tailings can have on the environment, and their potential impact on the Cree way of life for generations to come. In refusing to permit the Matoush project to proceed, Quebec demonstrated its respect for the nation-to-nation relationship between Quebec and the Cree Nation. Quebec's decision was consistent with a fundamental principle confirmed in the *Paix des Braves*: that development in Eeyou Istchee requires Cree consent.

After it was refused the permit that it required to proceed with the Matoush project, Strateco sued the Quebec government for \$200,000,000, in damages for the alleged losses it suffered as a result of the decision. Strateco argued that the decision to refuse the permit for the Matoush project was "illegal." Strateco's position was that "social acceptability" is not a criterion found in the law, and therefore that Quebec could not legally refuse a permit on that basis. According to Strateco, the Quebec government was not legally permitted to consider the social

impacts of the project on the Crees' traditional practices and way of life, and was not permitted to consider Cree opposition to the project. Strateco argued that the Cree Nation gave up its right to have any say in the development of Eeyou Istchee when the JBNQA was signed.

Strateco's argument was an attack on Cree rights and the JBNQA. The Grand Council of the Crees, the Cree Nation Government, and the Cree Nation of Mistissini intervened in this litigation to ensure that Cree rights and interests were represented and protected, and that the Cree Nation had a voice in litigation that sought to (re) interpret the JBNQA.

The trial of Strateco's suit took place in Quebec City before Justice Denis Jacques of the Quebec Superior Court, from January to February 2017. The Cree interveners participated actively in all aspects of the trial. Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come and Mistissini Chief Richard Shecapio each testified for several days. Their testimony took into account Cree history, Cree values and connection to the land, and the Cree way of life.

Contrary to the position advanced by Strateco, the Cree interveners argued at trial that the JBNQA requires the government to consult with the Crees and to consider the impacts that proposed development could have on their land, economies, societies and way of life. The government was also required to consider its nation-to-nation relationship with the Crees, as well as the Cree opposition to the project. As a result, the Government's was entitled to refuse to authorize the Matoush project because of the absence of social acceptability for the project on the part of the Crees. The decision was entirely consistent with the legal regime established by the JBNQA, and could not form the basis for damages.

At the conclusion of the trial, Justice Jacques reserved his decision. His judgment is expected sometime in 2017. ●

COMEX REPORT FROM THE CREE MEMBERS TO THE CREE NATION GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The year started with recently appointed chairperson Suzann Methot at the helm. She has a tremendous interest in environmental issues and Cree culture. She replaced Mr. Andre Boisclair, a former Minister of the Environment, with a broad interest in development and environmental issues.

The members of COMEX are: Daniel Berouard, Robert Joly, Jean-Paul Murdoch, Brian Craik and the Chairperson Suzann Methot.

The list of projects before the COMEX in 2016-2017 include the those found in the table below.

In regards to the James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) section 22, the members of COMEX review projects to ensure environmental protection, minimize damages from development, and that Cree rights are being respected. The COMEX reviews development information and, when appropriate, holds hearings on projects that demonstrate they require testimony of residents of the Territory and other interested parties including representatives of governmental institutions, commercial interests, or representatives of civil society.

Project Name	Proponent Names
Forestry Road L-209 and E-West – feasibility	Barrette Chapais
Forestry Roads H-West and I – feasibility	Matériaux Blanchette
Blackrock Mine – iron, titanium, vanadium – feasibility	Métaux BlackRock inc.
Troilus Mine – Closing the Mine Site	
Route 167 North – follow up	Department of Transport & Stornoway
Wemindji Gravel Pit – feasibility	Wemindji
Chisasibi Quarry CA-2 expansion	Community of Chisasibi
Bachelor Lake Mine – follow up	Metanor
Eastmain 1-A Project – follow up	Hydro Quebec
La Mine Langlois – feasibility	Nyrstar
Sanitary Landfill Site – feasibility	Community of Waswanipi
Whabouchi Lithium deposit – follow up	Nemaska Lithium Inc.
Renard diamond mine – follow up	Stornoway
Pelletized Wood Project – feasibility	Rentech



COMEX has a website: <http://comexqc.ca/en/accueil/> and the members discuss among themselves how information can be more efficiently disseminated to residents of Cree communities and other interested parties.

COMEX reviews proposed projects recommended by the provincial and regional administrators based on the COMEV directives. The COMEV is another committee created under the JBNQA. The COMEV is guided by two lists. One is of projects that are automatically submitted to the process for review and the other list is of projects not automatically subject to review. If a project is not listed in the JBNQA, the COMEV advises the Cree, Quebec, or Federal administrators of the Environment as to whether such a project should be reviewed or exempted from review. These lists are respectively called Schedule I and Schedule II of the JBNQA Section 22. ●

COMEX list of projects interactive map
<http://comexqc.ca/en/projets/>





Message from the DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MICHAEL PETAWABANO

On behalf of the Cree Nation Government I am pleased to present the 2016-2017 annual report of Government Support Services. Some of the responsibilities under my direct supervision include the services of Information and Technology, Records and Information Management, and Management of the Montreal and Nemaska Offices. As the Deputy Executive Director hired in February 2016, I would like to express my gratitude to the employees working under my supervision, who have performed above expectations and achieved great success this past year.

My role is to assist the Executive Director Mr. Bill Namagoose, and I've been assigned to work with the following departments by providing support and guidance;

- Cree Human Resources Development Department
- Department of Commerce and Industry
- Child and Family Services
- Social and Cultural Development Department
- Fire Protection Services

I believe that here at the Cree Nation Government, all departments should have a strategic direction and an annual plan to guide departments towards attaining

their objectives. Our strength at the Cree Nation Government is to focus on the services and support we provide to our stakeholders. We, as a Cree Nation, must build our partnerships to maximize our efficiency and effectiveness. This has to include developing tools that will help us evaluate our effectiveness and realign our services or programs where required. We have completed work on the Annual Plans this year and in the coming year 2017-2018, most of the departments have committed to working on their respective strategic plans.

During the past year, I have taken every opportunity to learn and understand the Cree Nation Government structure and to engage all departments and senior staff. The 2017-18 year will be one of continuing to work together to evolve and deliver better standards of services and set the goals for continued improvements to Government Services. ●

Our strength at the Cree Nation Government is to focus on the services and support we provide to our stakeholders. We, as a Cree Nation, must build our partnerships to maximize our efficiency and effectiveness. This has to include developing tools that will help us evaluate our effectiveness and realign our services or programs where required.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICE

The Cree Nation Government Services - Information Technology Service department has accomplished some important goals and made significant progress in 2016-17. A new structure of Cree Nation Government centralization Information Technology was implemented for the ease of administration and to cut IT costs. We also created an internal committee that met 3 times this past year to hear what the department's IT priorities were for this year, and also to plan the needs for upcoming years. A part of this process provided the opportunity for each department to advise IT about what their needs are.

Livestreaming

The Cree Nation Government continues to broadcast Board Council Meetings to keep Cree people connected to what is happening within the Cree Nation Government. Equipment has been upgraded to minimize technical issues that may occur during these meetings that are held every three months. Livestreaming of Cree Nation Government meetings is an integral part of the Cree Nation Government communication strategy. The broadcasts allow the people of Eeyou Istchee to listen via the internet and also by radio. In particular, we are proud to provide this special service to members of various Cree Nations of Eeyou Istchee living and working outside the territory, as it gives them the opportunity to be a part of the political forum. As long as they have internet connection, they can be informed.

Email Migration

The ITS department has successfully migrated and consolidated most of the Cree Nation Government departments email to the Cree Nation Government email

system at our Cree Nation Government Montreal data center. To date, CHRD is the only department that is planned for 2017-18. Email centralization is an important component of good data management. Cree Nation Government is bringing all departments under one service to better maintain security and to provide for any possible loss of information. Since the implementation of the new state of the art and highly secure Cree Nation Government Data Center two years ago at the Montreal office location providing Services Oriented Architecture (SOA), Cree Nation Government mission critical systems, including email and network infrastructure, are up and running with no down time, and are providing high availability and business continuity.

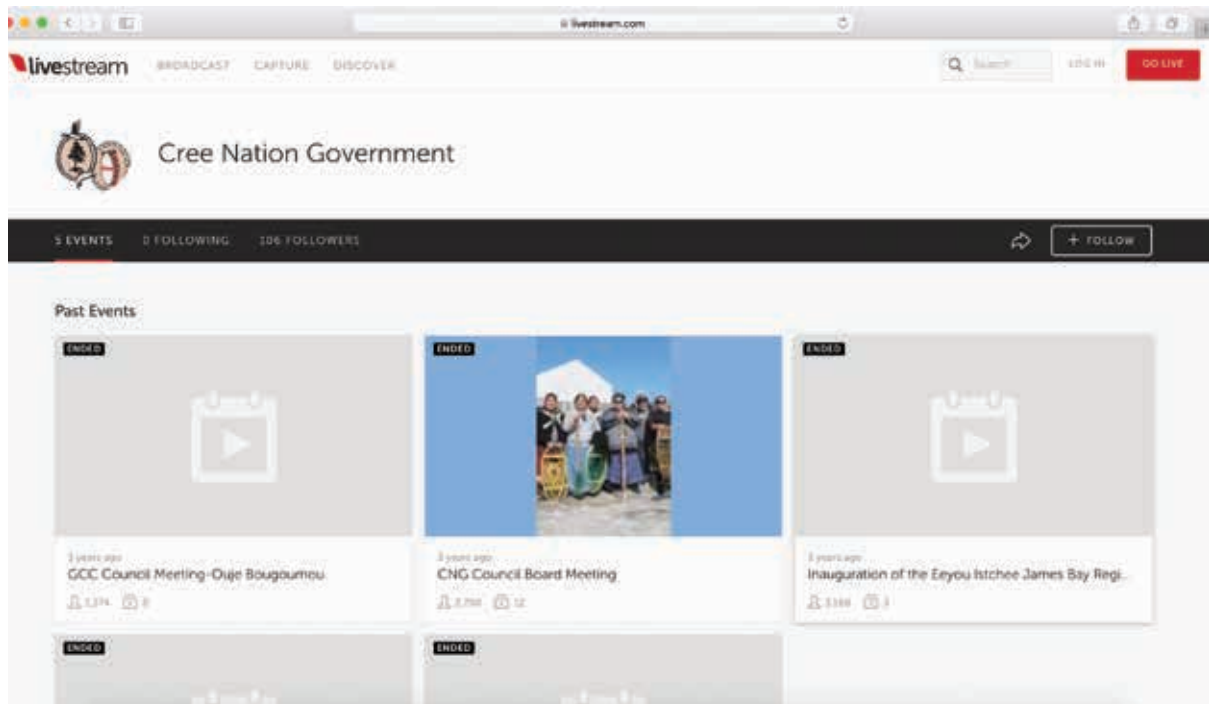
Electronic Automation Finance

The IT services has successfully completed major milestones of another critical IT project for the Cree Nation Government Finance Department, by automating their Purchase Ordering and Invoicing process workflow using digital technology. With this automation, there will be no more paper trail of Purchase Orders and Invoices; everything will be done electronically through system workflows. It will also allow the finance staff to make timely payments to thousands of Cree Nation Government suppliers, including service providers, and will save a substantial amount by making payments on time through early payment credits and saved interest charges. The project will be tested and phased in during 2017.

IP Telephony

The Cree Nation Government Government Support Services has undertaken another important IT project to upgrade and modernize the current legacy phone

Cree Nation Government on Livestream



systems to IP Telephony systems agency wide. IT has completed the upgrade of phones for EEPF at different offices. The rest of the Cree Nation Government offices will be upgraded to IP phones in 2017 in several phases. This change will cut on communication costs significantly and will provide a great ROI (Return On Investment). The modernization of the Cree Nation Government telephone system, in addition to cost savings, will position Cree Nation Government with a modern cost effective communications system for many years to come.

New IT Infrastructure for EEPF

The Information Technology Department has also successfully completed upgrading all ten EEPF offices with the new and highly secure IT infrastructure. The project scope includes the main data center at the Regional Head Quarters in Chisasibi, the Disaster Recovery site in Wemindji, and all eight detachments in the Cree communities. The new infrastructure follows CRPQ guidelines and standards, provides centralized system/data access, and high availability, meaning extremely high reliability. All sites are now connected and are using state of the art IT equipment. Connectivity and reliability are key components in assisting the EEPF in providing superior policing services to the communities of Eeyou Istchee.

Records Information Management

Additionally, IT services and the RIM (Record Information Management) group are working together on the implementation of the new Records Information Management system. The project objective is to initiate an electronics records archives, to protect and preserve all records of administrative, fiscal, legal and historic value within the Cree Nation Government. A Record Classification and Retention Scheme will be designed and implemented using Laserfiche ECM systems. This will lead to the modernization of the Information system for Governance and the Records and Information Management (RIM) Program of the Cree Nation Government. It will eliminate the current Cree Nation Government paper records (stored in boxes at off-site vendor locations) at all Cree Nation Government departments. After the implantation of the new Records Information Management System and digitization, information will be readily available and accessible via a central database using a browser, internet, and any device. Cree Nation Government IT/RIM group is currently working with Ricoh Canada on this project, and completion is anticipated by the end of 2017.

This new digital information storage system will provide some outstanding benefits to the Cree Nation Government departments, including time saving features which will also save costs. Additionally, Cree Nation Government will realize substantial savings on document storage fees. The digitization also reduces the risk of document loss due to possible flooding or fire damage at storage facilities.

EEPF Radio Communications

Cree Nation Government set up a task force with the support and contribution of an expert engineer specialized in police radio communications, and has proceeded

with a thorough evaluation of its needs and the requirements of its future radio communication system. Decision-makers, however, recognized the need to replace the current system with a more modern system capable of linking all communities, while adequately meeting requirements for operations, safety and the management of calls from the public. The Government of Quebec, through the CSPQ, has established, and is managing, all telecommunications systems for government organizations. A meeting with the manager responsible for telecommunication systems at the Sûreté du Québec revealed that the P25 system was being deployed throughout the province with the exception of remote or isolated territories, but that there was interest in eventually sharing such a system with other government organizations where required. The task force will be in discussion with CSPQ for an eventual agreement for 2017-2018.

Membership and Statistics

The Cree Nation Government worked closely with the Quebec Registrar who is responsible for the Cree and Naskapi Beneficiaries List under the Ministry of Health and Social Services of Quebec (MSSS). We have prioritized the procedure to protect the confidentiality of our beneficiary list. All organizations listed below had to comply with policy and procedures set by law under the privacy act.

The current organizations who have access to the Cree and Naskapi beneficiary list are:

- Cree Nation Government
- Cree School Board
- Cree Board of Health and Social Services in James Bay
- All 9 Cree Communities (Eastmain, Chisasibi, Mistissini, Nemaska, Ouje Bougoumou, Waskaganish, Waswanipi, Wemindji, Whapmagoostui)
- Cree Hunters & Trappers Income Security Board.

Cree clerks from Cree Communities attended a course with Algonquin College, improving their skills on how to work with the available data that can be accessed. This data may have many purposes the Cree Nation can use for studies, evaluations, and forecasting. For this reason, In January 2017 the Cree Nation Government transferred the position of Membership Clerk to the Department of Commerce and Industry to maximize the potential of this job.

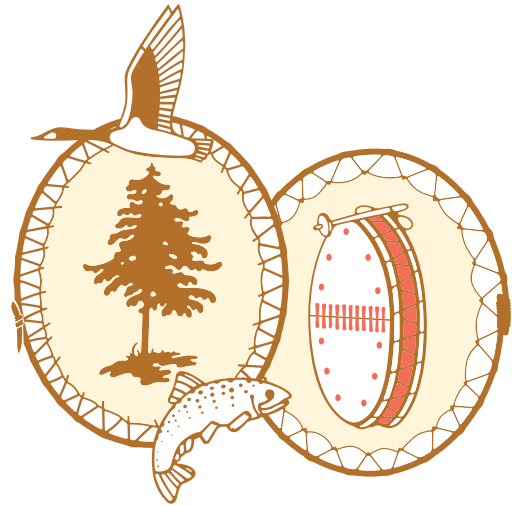
Fire Protection

The Cree Nation Government mandate is to support the Local Fire Departments in the Delivery of fire protection/prevention services on Category 1A lands. Through our office, direction and support has been given to the Regional Fire Protection Staff to work with Local Fire Chiefs to standardize their operational procedures/guidelines and to incorporate a management tool for operations. The software has been purchased for all Cree Communities and is presently being deployed. Fire Chiefs have accepted to work on the operation procedures this coming year, and should be in place before year-end. ●

COMMUNICATIONS

The newly formed Cree Nation Government Communications team was launched in the Spring of 2016. Headed by Director of Cree-Quebec Relations, Melissa Saganash, Communications Advisor, Joanne Ottereyes, and Events and Communications Officer, April Pachanos, the team has its sights set on a number of projects. From the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and Cree Nation Government brand guidelines and website, to assisting our colleagues with tailored communication plans, the team exists to provide assistance to the various internal departments as well as deliver information regarding the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and Cree Nation Government activities to the general public.

Additionally, in an effort to help promote the efficient dissemination of information, the Communications team invited their counterparts from regional entities to discuss strategies and plans, tools, and upcoming events. The objective of these meetings is to help create a better flow of information between entities, and most importantly, to the people across Eeyou Istchee. ●



The New Refined Logos



Eeyou Istchee communications meeting

CREE-CANADA RELATIONS

During the past year, the Federal Government began to implement some of the policy objectives that were contained in the ministerial mandate letters publicly released shortly after the election of the new Liberal government in October 2015.

In particular, on December 8, 2015, the Government of Canada announced the launch of an independent National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Between December 2015 and February 2016, the Government held meetings across Canada with survivors, family members, various organizations and provincial/territorial representatives to seek input on the design and scope of the National Inquiry. On August 3, 2016, the Government announced the Terms of Reference for the National Inquiry and the appointment of the five commissioners who will lead the Inquiry. The Commissioners officially began the National Inquiry on September 1, 2016. They are expected to submit an interim report in the fall of 2017 and a final report by the end of 2018. The National Inquiry began its first public hearings in Whitehorse, Yukon during the week of May 29, 2017, and has indicated its intention to request an extension of its mandate.

On February 22, 2017, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the establishment of a Working Group of Ministers to review various federal laws, policies and practices related to Indigenous Peoples to ensure, among other things, that the government is meeting its constitutional obligations with respect to Indigenous and treaty rights. The Minister of Justice of Canada will chair the Working Group, which will be comprised of six ministers who have significant responsibilities for the relevant statutes and policies to be reviewed.

CREE-CANADA GOVERNANCE NEGOTIATIONS

The *Agreement concerning a New Relationship between the Government of Canada and the Cree of Eeyou Istchee* ("Federal NRA") sets out a process for negotiation leading to a *Cree Nation Governance Agreement* and a Cree Constitution. These negotiations between the Government of Canada and the Crees of Eeyou Istchee have now been completed.

Consultations on the draft Governance Agreement and Cree Constitution took place with the Cree First Nations, Cree entities and Cree beneficiaries, including information meetings in each Cree community, over six months between the start of November 2016 and the end of April 2017. The Governance Agreement and Cree Constitution have been formally approved by resolution

of each of the Cree First Nations and of the Cree Nation Government / Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee). Canada and the Crees are expected to sign the Governance Agreement this summer. The Governance Agreement will take effect when the federal legislation approving it takes effect.

Purpose

The Governance Agreement and Cree Constitution will strengthen Cree self-government on Category IA lands in the context of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* (JBNQA). They will provide the Cree with greater autonomy and flexibility in governance on Category IA lands. They will also provide long-term predictability of funding for the Cree First Nations and Cree Nation Government.

Cree Nation Governance Agreement

In summary, the Governance Agreement will make more efficient existing governance powers and procedures on Category IA lands under the JBNQA and the *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act*. Arrangements regarding Cree local and regional governance on Category IA lands will be transferred from the *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act* into the Governance Agreement and Cree Constitution. Once the Governance Agreement takes effect, the *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act* will no longer apply to the Cree beneficiaries, Cree First Nations or Category IA lands.

The Governance Agreement will address three main subjects:

1. Jurisdiction of the Cree First Nations and Cree Nation Government to make laws (instead of by-laws) on Category IA lands – existing arrangements will be maintained, save that Cree laws will not have to be submitted to the Minister of Indigenous Affairs;
2. Land regime on Category IA lands, including access and the grant of rights in lands and buildings – existing arrangements will be maintained;
3. Financial arrangements with Canada, including long-term commitments for Operations and Maintenance and Capital Grant funding.

Under the Governance Agreement, the Cree First Nations will keep the same local government powers, functions and responsibilities that they have now on Category IA lands under the *Cree Naskapi (of Québec) Act*. Similarly, the Cree Nation Government will keep the same powers that it now has on Category IA lands under the *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act* concerning, for example, standards for essential sanitation and fire protection.

It is also important to understand what the Governance Agreement does **not** do:

- It does not affect Cree rights under the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*;
- It does not affect Cree governance on Category II lands under the *Cree – Québec Governance Agreement*;
- It does not transfer powers or functions from the Cree First Nations to the Cree Nation Government or vice versa;
- It does not affect the powers and responsibilities of the Cree institutions, such as the Cree School Board, Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay and Eeyou Police Force.

Cree Constitution

The Cree Constitution, for its part, starts with a short statement of key Cree values and principles. It then sets out arrangements regarding the exercise of the Cree right of self government in relation to the administration and internal management of the Cree First Nations and the Cree Nation Government on Category IA lands.

These internal governance arrangements are currently set out in the *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act* and will be transferred into the Cree Constitution. These arrangements concern subjects such as procedures for making laws and resolutions, elections, meetings and referenda, financial administration and amendment of the Constitution.

It is important to note that the Cree Constitution can change over time if desired by the Cree. This is because, unlike the *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act*, the Cree Constitution will not be set out in a federal law. Instead, it will be a purely internal instrument of Cree self-government. It will not be approved by Canada or Québec. This means that the Cree can change the Constitution if they wish to do so in the future in order to reflect changed conditions, without the participation of Canada.

Conclusion

The Governance Agreement, the Cree Constitution and the Cree laws adopted pursuant to them will all have the force of law and be binding on all persons. Together, they represent another step in implementing Cree self-government in compliance with the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* treaty. They will provide the Cree First Nations and the Cree Nation Government with important tools to assume greater autonomy and responsibility in the governance of Category IA lands.

FEDERAL NRA – ASSUMPTION OF FEDERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

During the past year, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government continued to proceed with the implementation of key elements of the Federal NRA, particularly the assumption of federal JBNQA responsibilities.

Over the 20-year term of the Federal NRA, the Cree Nation Government assumes, with funding provided by Canada under the Federal NRA, certain responsibilities of Canada under various provisions of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*. These assumed federal JBN-

QA responsibilities include certain aspects of Cree community and economic development, the administration of justice and the development of human resources.

However, only those federal JBNQA responsibilities specifically identified in the Federal NRA are assumed by the Cree Nation Government. In all other cases, federal responsibilities under the JBNQA remain with Canada. For example, Canada remains responsible for providing adequate funding for policing and access roads to the Cree communities.

Police Funding

Funding for policing in Cree communities by the Eeyou-Eenou Police Force is currently provided by Canada and Quebec through a tripartite agreement signed on September 25, 2014. This agreement is in place for another year, until 2017-2018. Negotiations with Canada and Quebec on a successor agreement should begin shortly.

Funding for Access Roads

Federal funding to upgrade the access road to the coastal Cree communities remains an outstanding matter with Canada. Cree and federal representatives, in collaboration with Quebec representatives, are pursuing discussions in an attempt to address this matter, in compliance with Section 28 of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement*.

Existing Agreements and Financial Arrangements

In March 2013, the *Operations and Maintenance Funding Transfer Payment Agreement* and the *Agreement regarding Annual Capital Grants to the Quebec Cree Communities*, both signed with the Government of Canada, were renewed for a five-year period, from April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2018. The proposed *Cree Nation Governance Agreement* addresses certain financial arrangements with Canada, including long-term commitments for Operations and Maintenance and Capital Grants funding. Upon the signing of the *Cree Nation Governance Agreement*, these Operations and Maintenance and Capital Grants funding agreements will be renewed on the same terms and conditions as in the current agreements. They will secure long-term base funding for the Cree communities, providing them with predictability and the ability to plan.

Cree Associations

The Federal NRA provides that the assumption by the Cree Nation Government of Canada's responsibilities regarding the Cree Trappers' Association (CTA), the Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association (COTA) and the Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association (CNACA) is based on Canada's continuing obligation to fund these Associations for the term of the Federal NRA. Since April 1, 2013 and until March 31, 2018, this federal funding is provided through an annual grant funding agreement for the Associations between Canada and the Cree Nation Government. Negotiations with Canada over a successor agreement to the current annual grant funding agreement should begin shortly.

The Governance Agreement and Cree Constitution will strengthen Cree self-government on Category IA lands in the context of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA).

Cree Human Resource Development

The Federal NRA also provides that the assumption by the Cree Nation Government of Canada's responsibilities regarding training courses, job recruitment and placement related to "territorial programs" and "enhanced delivery structure" is based on the maintenance or continuation by Canada of the additional funding for training programs, facilities and job recruitment and placement services in the Territory, on terms reasonably comparable to the funding provided to the Cree Nation Government in the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

In this regard, the Cree and federal representatives must pursue discussions to ensure the renewal of Canada's continued funding for training and Cree human resource development, which is currently provided through an *Agreement respecting the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Program and Related Services* signed in 2007 (2007 AHRDP Agreement). The 2007 AHRDP Agreement was initially for a period of two years and has been extended several times to allow for the negotiation of a successor agreement. Most recently, this Agreement was extended until March 31, 2018. Negotiations with Canada over a successor agreement to the 2007 AHRDP Agreement should begin shortly.

The indexation of federal funding under the 2007 AHRDP Agreement since 2009 remains an outstanding matter. On March 30, 2017, the Cree Nation Government submitted a funding request to Canada concerning the required funding adjustments to the 2007 AHRDP Agreement, as well as new service needs.

CREE NATION GOVERNMENT BY-LAWS – CATEGORY IA LANDS

Under the *Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act*, the Council of the Cree Nation Government may make by-laws on Category IA lands respecting:

- (a) the regulation of buildings used for housing or for regional governance;
- (b) essential sanitation services;

- (c) the establishment, maintenance and operation of fire departments; and
- (d) the protection of the environment, including natural resources, and the prevention of pollution.

The Cree Nation Government has already adopted two such by-laws. First, the *By-law concerning the Establishment, Maintenance and Operation of Community Fire Departments* was adopted in 2013 to assist the Cree communities in the establishment and operation of their community fire departments. It provided requirements for admission and qualification of fire department personnel, including fire chiefs, fire prevention officers and firefighters. It also set minimum standards related to the construction and maintenance of fire halls and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment.

Second, the Cree Nation Government adopted the *By-law concerning the Regulation of Certain Buildings for the Protection of Public Health and Safety*. This by-law was adopted in 2014 to ensure that all buildings constructed by or on behalf of the Cree Nation Government for regional governance meet the proper standards of construction, including those applicable elsewhere in the Province.

The Cree Nation Government continues to work on the implementation of these important by-laws in collaboration with the Cree First Nations. It is also in the process of developing other by-laws, including with respect to the quality of drinking water.

AMENDMENTS TO THE JAMES BAY AND NORTHERN QUEBEC AGREEMENT

Amending Formula

Representatives of the Cree, Canada and Quebec continue discussions regarding changes to the amending formula in the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*. Among other things, proposed changes would allow certain amendments to the JBNQA to be made with the consent of the parties that have an interest in the amendments, as opposed to all parties. For example, amendments to Section 4 of the JBNQA regarding the territorial descriptions for Cree Category I and II lands would no longer require the consent of all

parties to the JBNQA. Instead, Section 4 could be amended in the future with the consent only of Québec, Canada and the Cree Nation Government where modifications concern Category IA lands, and, in other cases, with the consent of Québec and the Cree Nation Government. An agreement on these changes is expected shortly.

Ten-Year Clause (Section 3)

Representatives of the Cree, Canada and Quebec continue discussions regarding changes to Section 3 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* that would ensure that Cree beneficiaries who are outside the Territory for more than ten years would continue to be entitled to exercise rights and receive benefits under the JBNQA if their absence is for reasons of health, education or work duties with an organization that promotes the interests of the Crees. An agreement on these changes is expected shortly.

Territorial Descriptions (Section 4)

Representatives of the Cree, Canada and Quebec continue discussions regarding the finalization of the land descriptions in Section 4 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*. An agreement on these changes is expected shortly. In parallel, the parties are discussing possible land reconfigurations, including for Waswanipi, Nemaska and Waskaganish, in light of the abandonment of the Nottaway-Broadback-Rupert (NBR) project.

EEYOU MARINE REGION AGREEMENT

The *Agreement between the Crees of Eeyou Istchee and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada concerning the Eeyou Marine Region* (“Cree Offshore Agreement”) was signed on July 7, 2010. It came into force on February 15, 2012.

The main components of the Cree Offshore Agreement include the following:

- (a) exclusive ownership by the Cree Nation Government, for the Crees, of most of the islands in Eastern James Bay and Southern Hudson Bay from Long Island going South;
- (b) joint ownership by the Cree Nation Government, for the Crees, and the Inuit of Nunavik of most of the islands from Long Island North to Umiujaq;
- (c) ownership includes the subsurface mineral rights in the islands owned by the Cree Nation Government, for the Crees, or jointly owned by the Cree Nation Government, for the Crees, and the Inuit of Nunavik;
- (d) 5% share for the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) of all royalty payments made to government flowing from natural resources extracted in the seabed;
- (e) \$50 million in compensation paid over nine (9) years to the Cree Nation Government, acting as the Recipient of Payments;
- (f) a Cree harvesting regime for the Eeyou Marine Region providing that Crees may harvest throughout the area;
- (g) Cree participation in various institutions of public government, including an Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board, a Eeyou Marine Region Impact Review Board and a Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission;

- (h) detailed provisions concerning Cree participation in development projects through Impacts and Benefits Agreements;
- (i) any Aboriginal rights, including rights to self-government, that the Crees may have, to the extent that those rights do not relate to or affect the use and ownership of lands or resources in Nunavut and in the area comprising Hudson Bay and James Bay, are not affected by the provisions of the Cree Offshore Agreement;
- (j) detailed provisions concerning protected areas, land use planning, government employments and contracts, archaeology, ethnographic resources, etc.

The Wildlife Board, Planning Commission, and Impact Review Board established under the Cree Offshore Agreement are now fully operational and continue to carry out their respective mandates. For the Planning Commission, this includes the formulation of a land use plan for the Eeyou Marine Region, in consultation with the Cree communities and other stakeholders.

Each of these entities was established as an independent institution of public government and each is mandated by the Cree Offshore Agreement to address issues concerning the present and future use, protection, and development of the Eeyou Marine Region.

Cree and federal representatives are pursuing discussions on the designation of the Bear Islands and Grey Goose Island as “Cree lands,” in exchange for a transfer to Canada of Cree lands of equivalent size on South Twin Island. An agreement in this regard is expected shortly.

SECTION 22 OF THE JBNQA AND BILLS C-38 AND C-45

As reported previously, Parliament adopted in 2012 Bills C-38 and C-45, which amended or replaced certain federal environmental laws, including the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act 1992*, the *Fisheries Act*, the *Species at Risk Act* and the *Navigable Waters Protection Act*.

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government strongly opposed these legislative amendments because they reduced environmental protection measures in Eeyou Istchee. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government considers that, by reducing the scope and strength of the environmental and social protection regime established for the Crees by Section 22 of the JBNQA treaty, Canada has breached its treaty and other obligations toward the Cree. Furthermore, whatever communications were carried out by the Government of Canada with the Crees in relation to Bills C-38 and C-45 have been inadequate as consultation with respect to the Cree.

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government referred these matters as a dispute to the Cree-Canada Standing Liaison Committee established under the Federal NRA. Since then, discussions have been held with federal representatives in an attempt to find concrete solutions to address these issues in a manner consistent with Cree rights and the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in *Québec (Attorney General) v. Moses* (2010).

Earlier this year, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the establishment of a Working Group of Ministers to review various federal laws, policies, and operational practices to help ensure, among other things, that the government is meeting its constitutional obligations with respect to Indigenous and treaty rights. This review process may provide an additional opportunity to address our concerns about Bills C-38 and C-45.

In parallel, discussions have been held between the Cree and Canada, detailed proposals have been made by the Cree and correspondence has been exchanged in the context of the dispute resolution process. In addition, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government has participated in the process initiated by Canada to review its environmental legislation. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government submitted detailed briefs during the winter and spring of 2016-2017 with respect to the modernization of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, the *Navigable Waters Protection Act*, the *Fisheries Act* and the *National Energy Board Act*.

MOCREEBEC

In 2015, the Government of Canada finally agreed to hold exploratory meetings concerning the Mocreebec situation with representatives of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee), Mocreebec and the Government of Ontario. These meetings were expected to provide an opportunity to clarify the request and position of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and Mocreebec, and to examine possible options for addressing the present situation of Mocreebec.

Cree and federal representatives exchanged various correspondence in 2015-2016, and they held an initial meeting in Moose Factory on October 26-27, 2015, where a representative from the Government of Ontario was also present. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government remains committed to working

with the Chief, Council and people of Mocreebec to find acceptable long-term solutions for their community.

CREE LAND CLAIM IN ONTARIO

The border between Quebec and Ontario in the James Bay area was established pursuant to successive land transfers, without Cree knowledge or consent. Eeyou Istchee was once part of a large area of land that Europeans called “Rupert’s Land”, which was purportedly transferred to the Hudson Bay Company by King Charles of England in 1670.

At the time of Confederation in 1867, the new territory of Canada did not include Rupert’s Land, but the *Constitution Act, 1867* contemplated the eventual admission of Rupert’s Land within Canada. The Hudson’s Bay Company territories, including Rupert’s Land, were sold to the British Crown in 1868, and Rupert’s Land was transferred in 1870 from the British Crown to the Government of Canada. Over time, the Government of Canada transferred large portions of Rupert’s Land to Ontario, in 1889 and 1912, and to Quebec, in 1898 and 1912, which led to the establishment of the border between Quebec and Ontario in the James Bay area.

The land transfers of Rupert’s Land to Ontario and Quebec were carried out subject to the resolution by Ontario and Quebec of the aboriginal claims in the respective territories transferred to each province. Treaty No. 9 (1905 and 1906) was entered into by the Government of Canada with the concurrence of the Government of Ontario in order to resolve the aboriginal claims in a portion of Rupert’s Land that was now located in Ontario. The aboriginal rights and claims to the portion of Rupert’s Land transferred to Quebec were not the subject of an agreement until the signature of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* in 1975 in the context of a settlement of legal proceedings concerning the La Grande Project (1975). In 1982 Cree rights under the JBNQA were pro-



tected by the Constitution of Canada and the JBNQA has since been referred to as a Treaty.

The Crees have been pursuing legal proceedings against the Government of Canada in the Federal Court since 1989 with respect to the entire territory of Eeyou Istchee, including parts in Québec, Ontario, Nunavut and Labrador. Over the years, certain parts of these legal proceedings, known as the “*Coon Come Proceedings #3*”, have been settled. Portions of these proceedings related to issues addressed in the Federal NRA (2008) and the Cree Offshore Agreement (2010) were eventually discontinued. The remaining parts of these Coon Come proceedings #3 concern Cree claims in Ontario and Labrador. These claims were not addressed with Canada and they remain outstanding.

In 2014, Canada filed a motion to strike these *Coon Come Proceedings #3* in the Federal Court, submitting that the Federal Court did not have jurisdiction to hear these Cree claims. In July 2015, the Federal Court rendered its decision and ordered that these claims be stayed in the Federal Court while the Cree Nation pursues these claims related to Ontario’s lands against both the Governments of Canada and Ontario in the Superior Court of Justice of Ontario.

In March and May 2016, the Cree Nation commenced, on behalf of all its members, an action in the Superior Court of Justice of Ontario to obtain recognition of the Cree Nation’s Aboriginal title and Aboriginal rights over its traditional territory in northern Ontario. The action, filed against the Governments of Canada and Ontario, seeks declarations of Aboriginal title (on a shared basis with other Aboriginal nations) and Aboriginal rights over approximately 48,000 square kilometres of lands located south of James Bay and immediately west of the Ontario Québec boundary.

The Cree Nation’s action in the Superior Court of Justice of Ontario is essentially the continuation of claims

that were first commenced by the Cree Nation against Canada in the Federal Court in 1989, in the *Coon Come Proceedings #3*.

Grand Chief Coon Come has recently stated: “The imposition of the Ontario-Quebec boundary cut through our homeland of Eeyou Istchee. Our people have used, occupied, governed and protected these lands in Ontario since time immemorial, but our rights in these lands have never been addressed in any treaty.”

The Statement of Claim of the Cree Nation has from the start acknowledged that the areas over which Aboriginal title and Aboriginal rights are claimed have been used and occupied by the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee on a shared basis with certain other Aboriginal peoples. In February, 2017, the Crees amended their Statement of Claim to confirm that the rights claimed by them in Ontario are without prejudice to any existing rights other Aboriginal Peoples may hold with respect to the lands asserted to be subject to the Aboriginal title or Aboriginal rights of the Plaintiffs.

However, the Moose Cree First Nation has by motion sought leave from the Court to be added as a defendant in these proceedings and is taking the position that the Moose Cree have exclusively occupied the traditional lands claimed by Plaintiffs to be subject to their rights. In addition, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) has by motion sought to intervene as an added party in these proceedings, in opposition to the claims of Plaintiffs. These motions will be heard by the case management judge in early June 2017.

On February 21, 2017, additional proceedings were filed for various Orders and a declaration respecting the failure of Ontario to consult and accommodate the Cree Applicants with respect to regulatory approval processes required for the West Detour Project, the planned expansion by Detour Gold Corporation of its Detour Lake Gold Mine. ●

Photo: Brendan Forward



CREE-QUEBEC RELATIONS

The Cree Nation continues to assume additional responsibilities and jurisdictions as its governance institutions mature. Communications with the Government of Quebec are of crucial importance in this process, based on the Nation-to-Nation relationship established by our treaty, the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, the *Paix des Braves* and the *Cree-Quebec Governance Agreement*. Certain challenges have been addressed over the past year in Cree – Quebec relations with respect to, among others, forestry, the environmental review of forestry access roads and the Val d'Or crisis affecting indigenous women and the police.

The Cree Nation continues to maintain relations with the Government of Quebec at the highest level. Abel Bosum, as Negotiator, Cree – Quebec Relations, and Melissa Saganash, Director of Cree – Quebec Relations, maintain regular communications with senior officials of the various Quebec Ministries involved in Cree files.

CREE-QUÉBEC STANDING LIAISON COMMITTEE

The Cree-Quebec Standing Liaison Committee established by the *Paix des Braves* serves as the clearing house for relations between the Cree and Quebec. It provides a forum to resolve differences as they arise, and helps to strengthen relations between the Cree and Quebec. The Cree representatives are Bill Namagoose and Abel Bosum with the support of Melissa Saganash. Quebec's representatives are Madame Marie-José Thomas, Associate Secretary General of the Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat, and Daniel Gagnier, former Chief of Staff to Premier Jean Charest. The Committee met twice in 2016, in March and December, focussing on certain priority issues, including the provincial judicial inquiry regarding Indigenous peoples and public services in Quebec, the *Cree-Canada Governance Agreement* and Cree priority for contracts and tenders. Discussions at the Standing Liaison Committee have been professional and positive.

CREE-QUÉBEC GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT

Implementation continues on the *Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory* that was signed with Quebec on July 24, 2012.

Cree Nation Government

The Cree Nation Government is continuing the implementation of its new governance functions on Category II lands. The Cree Nation Government is considering its organizational and human resource requirements in light of its

new functions on Category II lands. In consultation with the Cree First Nations and other Cree stakeholders, the Cree Nation Government must put in place the structures, personnel and processes needed to assume its new responsibilities and for Cree leaders to assume their new functions both on the Cree Nation Government and on the Regional Government.

The Cree Nation Government organized orientation sessions in 2016 for the Cree Chiefs and Cree Nation Government personnel on the new governance regime in Eeyou Istchee. A session was held on March 22, 2016 for the staff of the Cree Nation Government Department of Environment and Remedial Works. Another session was held for the Cree Chiefs on September 6, 2016. Both sessions addressed the legislative framework for governance in Eeyou Istchee and the jurisdictions, functions and powers of the Cree Nation Government on Category II lands and of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government on Category III lands.

Under the direction of Deputy Grand Chief Rodney Mark and Director Isaac Voyageur, the Land Use Planning Unit of the Cree Nation Government Department of Environment and Remedial Works is advancing the work to define the composition and mandate of the Eeyou Planning Commission. This Commission will be responsible to prepare, in consultation with the Cree First Nations and other stakeholders, a regional land and resource use plan for Category II lands. Another priority is the development of policies, principles, and objectives that will guide the development of the regional land and resource use plan for Category II lands. A two-day workshop on these matters was held in Ouje-Bougoumou for key stakeholders in the Eeyou Planning Commission on July 12-13, 2016.

Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government

The Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government on Category III lands was formally established on January 1, 2014. On January 1, 2016, the Grand Chief formally assumed the position of Chair of the Council of the Regional Government for a two-year mandate. Madame Manon Cyr, Mayor of Chibougamau, who served as Chair of the Regional Government for its first two years, now serves as Vice-Chair.

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



Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come at Cree Nation Government's community consultation in Chisasibi
Photo: Brian Stewart

Government /Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) Council/Board. Meetings are held alternately in the Cree and Jamésien communities. The Regional Government is moving toward becoming an effective partnership in governance between the Cree and the Jamésiens in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory. The Regional Government is progressively assuming more of the functions and responsibilities on Category III lands provided for under the *Cree-Quebec Governance Agreement*.

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 Quebec. During its first five years of operation, the Regional Government is not required to increase taxes, and any shortfall in tax revenues in relation to expenditures during this period must be funded by Quebec. For this reason, and during this first five-year period, Quebec is required to approve the draft budget of the Regional Government.

Some uncertainty arose over the past year with respect to the funding provided by Quebec under the Governance Agreement for land and resource planning on Category III lands. The Regional Government is making representations to the Government of Quebec in order to clarify this matter and to permit it to carry out its responsibilities regarding land and resource planning.

Governance Agreement Does Not Affect Cree Rights under the JBNQA

Some concern has been expressed that Quebec communications concerning matters related to Category III lands are increasingly being directed to the Regional Government. The effect is to by-pass the Cree Nation Government and JBNQA entities, even when Cree rights

and interests on Category III lands under the JBNQA and other agreements are affected.

One of the main purposes of the Governance Agreement is to promote the autonomy and development of the Cree Nation. The Governance Agreement therefore has as one of its primary objects the exercise by the Cree of greater autonomy and responsibilities regarding the governance of Category II lands, in particular with respect to governance powers of a local, municipal, and regional nature under Quebec laws concerning the planning and use of the territory and resources.

The Governance Agreement also modernizes municipal and regional governance regimes under Quebec laws on Category III lands in order to ensure the equitable representation and participation by the Cree and the Jamésiens on Category III lands.

In other words, the objects of the Governance Agreement are:

- (a) to increase Cree governance and autonomy on Category II lands through the Cree Nation Government; and
- (b) to provide, for the first time, Cree participation in governance on Category III lands as equal partners with the Jamésiens in the Regional Government.

That does *not mean* that the Governance Agreement limits Cree rights on Category III lands. On the contrary, the Governance Agreement *expressly preserves Cree rights* under the JBNQA and the *Paix des Braves*.

As a result, the Governance Agreement does not affect Cree rights with respect to the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Regime under Section 24 of the JBNQA. Nor does the Governance Agreement affect Cree rights with respect to the Environmental and Social Protection Regime under Section 22 of the JBNQA, including the roles

The first meeting of the Cree – Inuit Working Table took place in February 2017, where discussions focussed on priority in contracting and employment for the Cree and Inuit.

and jurisdictions of the various environmental bodies, such as the JBACE, COMEV, COMEX and COFEX.

Again, the Governance Agreement does not affect Cree rights under the *Paix des Braves*, including under the Adapted Forestry Regime and concerning the responsibility of the Cree-Quebec Forestry Board for Cree consultation regarding forest management activities.

As for land and resource planning on Category III lands, the Regional Government must consult the Cree Nation Government and the Cree First Nations with regard to the preparation of the Regional Plan for Integrated Land and Resource Development (PRDIRT) for Category III lands. Quebec must consult both the Regional Government and the Cree Nation Government with regard to preparing Quebec's public land use plan (PATP) for Category III lands.

The Grand Chief has directed that this matter be taken up with the appropriate authorities in order to ensure full respect for Cree rights throughout the territory of Eeyou Istchee under the JBNQA and other agreements.

Regionalization of Services

Commission de la construction du Québec (CCQ)

The Governance Agreement contemplates the regionalization of certain Quebec Government 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 Jamésiens, the Government of Quebec 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. Discussions have also focussed on improving access to training and facilitating the acquisition of regular competency certificates.

Progress has been limited as some resistance has been encountered from the CCQ and trade unions to the creation of a new CCQ region for the Eeyou Istchee James Bay territory. This matter is to be taken up at the Cree – Quebec Standing Liaison Committee.

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). At present, the SAAQ has no office or point of service in any of the Cree communities. Its only points of service are

located in Chibougamau, Lebel-sur-Quévillon, Matagami and Radisson. The Cree Nation of Chisasibi has sought the support of the Regional Government for the establishment of a SAAQ office in Chisasibi, and the Regional Government has responded positively.

Cree-Inuit Working Table

Further to discussions in 2016 between the Grand Chief and Jobie Tukkiapik, President of Makivik Corporation, a Cree – Inuit Working Table has been to discuss cooperation in matters of common interest. These matters include:

- Mutually satisfactory governance arrangements with respect to the *Cree – Quebec Governance Agreement*;
- Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Regime of Section 24 of the JBNQA;
- Priority in contracting and employment under Sections 28 and 29 of the JBNQA;
- Plan Nord.

The first meeting of the Cree – Inuit Working Table took place in February 2017, where discussions focussed on priority in contracting and employment for the Cree and Inuit. Both parties are developing proposals on this matter, and expect to coordinate further at the Working Table over 2016-2017.

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND PUBLIC SERVICES

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. Reports later emerged of similar incidents involving SQ officers in Sept-Îles, Maniwaki and Schefferville and on the SQ's poor response in addressing complaints. A number of Cree women from Eeyou Istchee came forward with similar accounts.

When the problem first came to light, the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee, together with the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL), called on Quebec to establish an independent judicial Commission of Inquiry with a very focused mandate. At first, Quebec resisted calls for an independent judicial Commission of Inquiry, on the grounds that it would take too much time, cost too much and duplicate the work of the na-

tional Commission of Inquiry on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls announced by the Government of Canada. The Grand Chief and other Indigenous leaders disagreed, and intense discussions took place with Quebec throughout 2016.

These efforts were successful. On December 21, 2016, Quebec adopted Order-in-Council 10952016, creating the *Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Quebec: 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.

Quebec has appointed retired Superior Court Justice Jacques Viens as the President of the Commission, while Crown prosecutor Christian Leblanc has been appointed as lead counsel for the Commission. The offices of the Commission are located in Val d’Or, and it has established its own website: <https://www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca/>. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government has been granted full participant status before the Commission. It will collaborate with concerned Cree parties in presenting the Cree perspective, concerns and recommendations for improving relations between the Cree of Eeyou Istchee and the public services within the mandate of the Commission.

The hearings of the Commission are scheduled to start on June 5, 2017 at the Commission’s offices in Val d’Or. It is likely that the Commission will also hold hearings at other locations, including certain Cree communities. The Commission is to complete its work and submit its report, with its findings, conclusions and recommendations, not later than November 30, 2018.

FORESTRY

Agreement to Resolve the Baril-Moses Forestry Dispute

On February 7, 2002, the Cree and Quebec 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 Quebec Agreement*.

The Baril-Moses Agreement was a recognition by the parties that, although these traplines are outside of the JBNQA territory, they are part of the traditional lands of the Crees of Eeyou Istchee, continue to be integral to the Cree traditional way-of-life, and the territory should be protected from overharvesting to protect this way-of-life.

However, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government was informed in 2011 that during 2010, forestry operations were conducted by Resolute Forest Products of Canada Inc. and Les Chantiers de Chibougamau Ltée, under permits issued by Quebec in breach of the provisions of the Baril-Moses Agreement.

The Cree were never consulted or even informed that Quebec intended to permit, or was in fact permitting excessive logging in breach of the Baril-Moses Agreement.

After unsuccessful efforts over several years to resolve the matter through negotiations, the Cree filed legal proceedings in March 2014 (amended in May 2015) against Quebec, Resolute and Chantiers Chibougamau seeking orders against them to ensure their immediate respect of the Baril-Moses Agreement as well as damages from Quebec.

In January 2015, the Grand Chief and Premier Couillard agreed on a mandate for former Quebec Premier Lucien Bouchard to act as mediator between the Cree and Quebec in order to promote the resolution of the Baril-Moses forestry dispute between the Cree and Quebec, and of certain related issues including the non-compliance issues with Resolute’s certificates.

On July 13, 2015, after months of intense negotiations led by Bill Namagoose and Abel Bosum, the Cree and Quebec 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, Quebec and the Cree will work together on possible improvements of these standards.

The Agreement provides for negotiations between the Cree and Quebec 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*.

The Agreement provides for certain funding by Quebec 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 kilometers. This measure will help to protect environmentally sensitive areas, including woodland caribou habitats. A joint Cree-Quebec task force will work to identify possible additional protected areas in the JBNQA Territory. The Agreement also commits Quebec to work with stakeholders, including the Cree, for the recovery of woodland caribou habitat and regard a precautionary approach for the interim protection of woodland caribou habitat.

The Agreement provides that the Innu of Mash-teuiatsh may participate in the processes regarding forestry standards and woodland caribou if they wish to do so. Discussions have taken place with the Innu of Mash-teuiatsh during the year 2016-2017 on certain of these issues, as outlined in section 1.17.1.

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government undertook not to oppose the environmental authorization of certain forestry access roads, subject to certain conditions, including the independence of the environmental assessment bodies, Cree individuals and Cree entities in the review process. Quebec undertook to provide funding to support Cree traditional activities and the implementation of the Collaborative Forestry Management Regime mentioned in the Cree Quebec Governance Agreement of July 2012. Finally, the Cree undertook to dis-

continue the legal proceedings taken against Quebec and certain forestry companies.

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 Quebec to work together on forestry measures to ensure this harmonization over the long term.

Forestry Harmonization Agreement

In June 2009, Quebec 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. Quebec 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 – Quebec 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 Quebec 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.

Negotiations took place between Quebec and the Cree on the proposed Forestry Harmonization Agreement in consultation with the Chiefs and the members of the Joint Working Groups of the Cree communities of Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou, Waswanipi, Waskaganish and Nemaska. A draft Consolidated Forestry Harmonization Agreement was prepared including the following elements:

- (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.

Consultations were held between October 2015 and April 2016 between the Cree Nation Government Forestry Team, led by Abel Bosum and Isaac Voyageur, and the Chiefs and Joint Working Group members of the Cree communities of Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou, Waswanipi, Waskaganish and Nemaska to review the proposed Consolidated Forestry Harmonization Agreement. Community assemblies were also held in this regard.

On April 22, 2016, Council/Board of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government adopted Resolution 2016-12 approving the *Consolidated Forestry Harmonization Agreement* and author-

izing its signature subject to the finalization of certain documents and to other potential improvements. Certain improvements of the *Consolidated Forestry Harmonization Agreement*, including some suggested by the Cree communities, were agreed to with Quebec in 2016-2017. It is expected that this Agreement will be approved by the Council of Ministers and signed in the near future.

Collaborative Forestry Management Regime

The *Cree-Quebec 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 Quebec and the Cree Nation Government in order to develop the integrated forestry management plans. This collaboration's objectives are 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 shall be carried out once the Cree Nation Government conducts consultations with the Cree tallymen and other Cree stakeholders concerned.

The collaborative management regime will proceed in two five-year phases. During the first five-year phase, Quebec shall assume 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 shall assume primary responsibility for forestry planning and management, with the technical and financial support of Quebec.

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* provides for funding by Quebec 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.

Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* provides that Quebec 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 of 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 under the Enhancement Agreement. 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.

Forestry Access Roads

After the signature of the *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement*, Quebec reactivated the environmental assess-

ment of forestry access roads “H-West” and “I” under Section 22 of the JBNQA. These proposed roads are located south of the Broadback River on Category III lands and would affect five traditional Cree family territories, or “traplines”, of the Cree community of Waswanipi.

The Cree Nation of Waswanipi expressed strong opposition to these roads on the grounds that they would lead to logging on the last three intact Waswanipi traplines and destroy critical habitat for woodland caribou.

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* provides that, subject to certain conditions, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government will not oppose the environmental authorization of these access roads outside the Broadback River Protected Area. However, the Agreement also provides that it does not affect the independence of the environmental committees, Cree individuals and other Cree entities with regard to the environmental assessment of these roads.

The COMEX panel carried out the environmental assessment of the roads in accordance with the process set out in Section 22 of the JBNQA. Key elements of this assessment were the social acceptability of the roads project and the protection of threatened woodland caribou in the Broadback River basin. Road construction in critical core habitats for woodland caribou disturbs and displaces animals into less favorable habitats and substantially increases mortality, particularly by predation. This compromises the viability of the woodland caribou populations.

In the *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement*, Quebec committed to the recovery of woodland caribou habitat in Quebec and to work diligently with the Cree on a caribou habitat recovery plan. Quebec also undertook to work with the Cree on a “precautionary approach” for the interim protection of woodland caribou habitat pending the implementation of the caribou recovery plan.

At the time of signature of the *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement*, Quebec indicated that the caribou habitat recovery plan would be released very shortly. Despite this undertaking and despite many subsequent requests

by the Cree, the plan was not made available during the course of the COMEX assessment.

On March 24, 2016, the COMEX issued its report and recommendations on the environmental assessment of forestry access roads “H-West” and “I”. The report notes the lack of social acceptability for these roads, based largely on concerns about the cumulative impacts of the roads and related commercial forestry activities on Waswanipi traplines and the conservation of woodland caribou habitat. The COMEX report also notes that, as of its date, the woodland caribou recovery plan had not yet been released.

In view of this absence and certain weaknesses of the environmental impact study, the COMEX recommended a precautionary approach, limiting the length of roads “H-West” and “I”. This approach would leave intact the “Mishigamish” territory which the Cree Nation of Waswanipi wishes to conserve as a protected area.

After the COMEX issued its report, the Government of Quebec authorized the construction of the two forestry access roads in accordance with the recommendations of COMEX.

Woodland Caribou

Quebec released a summary “Woodland Caribou Habitat Stewardship Action Plan” in April 2016. The plan is in outline form, and it comprises two phases: immediate protection measures for essential habitat components, and development of a long-term strategy for woodland caribou habitat. Phase 1 measures include:

- Establishment of new northern limit taking into account recommendations of scientific committee;
- Maintenance of 90% of intact forests;
- Creation of protected areas in Broadback Valley and in Montagnes Blanches (Otish Mountains);
- Preservation of caribou habitat north of the northern limit of commercial forest area;
- Adapted forestry planning;
- Intensification of monitoring to help protect the species;



Photo: Sylvain Paquin

- Information campaign for local and regional populations regarding precarious state of the species;
- Pilot project to decommission forest roads.

Phase 2 is to address a long-term strategy for woodland caribou habitat, to be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders, including Indigenous communities, regional entities, universities, and the forestry industry. The strategy will be based on four orientations:

1. Monitoring of socioeconomic impacts;
2. Other supply sources of wood;
3. Greater cooperation with other provinces;
4. Improved monitoring of caribou populations.

The Cree consider that these measures require significant development in consultation with the Cree communities and trappers if they are to have any real positive effect on the recovery of woodland caribou habitat.

A Partners Table has been established with representation from the Government of Quebec, Indigenous peoples, including the Cree, municipalities and industry to address implementation of the “Woodland Caribou Habitat Stewardship Action Plan”. Three meetings have been held over the past year. Progress to date has been modest, except with respect to the Broadback River Protected Area.

ENVIRONMENT AND PROTECTED AREAS

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* calls for a process to identify additional protected areas. It has been agreed at the Standing Liaison Committee to establish a special Cree – Quebec Table on the Environment and Protected Areas. This Table would 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 would carry out its functions under the Standing Liaison Committee, and would not 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) such other matters as Québec and the Cree Nation Government may agree upon from time to time.

ENERGY

On April 7, 2016, Quebec released its 2030 Energy Policy. This is a high-level policy document setting out broad government energy orientations. It identifies certain targets to be achieved by 2030, including the following:

- enhancing energy efficiency by 15%;
- reducing the amount of petroleum products consumed by 40%;
- eliminating the use of thermal coal;
- increasing overall renewable energy output by 25%;
- increasing bioenergy production by 50%.

The Energy Policy notes that Hydro-Quebec currently has a buffer or surplus equivalent to more than 4% of Quebec’s annual electricity needs. New energy supplies will only be authorized when the surplus is on the order of 2.5% of Quebec’s annual electricity needs, not expected until at least 2024. Hydro-Quebec is unlikely to require additional energy supply before then. In order to limit the impact of wind energy on Quebec electricity rates, the Energy Policy advocates that new Quebec wind farms export their all their electricity to North American markets. It also envisages wind energy as an alternate solution to fossil fuel energies in northern Quebec.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

2012 Health Agreement

A Health Agreement and Funding Framework was signed with Quebec on August 16, 2012 for the period 2013-2018, for operations, and 2013-2020, for capital. It will permit further improvements to health and social services and facilities for the Cree of Eeyou Istchee. The Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay is continuing to implement this new Health Agreement, including the development of services and the execution of new capital projects, among them a new hospital centre in Chisasibi, discussed more fully below.

Time did not permit other pressing issues to be addressed in the new Health Agreement. Instead, it was agreed by exchange of letters to address these issues after the Agreement’s signature. These issues include, among others, the challenges posed by resource development for the Cree Health Board, tax matters, training and the revision of the legislative framework of the Cree Health Board. Under the 2012 Health Agreement, these questions are to be discussed at the Steering Committee established under that agreement.

In March 2014, the Board of Directors approved the development and implementation of a new approach to governance for the Cree Health Board. This governance model is inspired by principles advanced by the Quebec Association of Health and Social Service Establishments (*Association Québécoise d’établissements de santé et de services sociaux* (AQESSS)), in a manner consistent with the JBNQA and the legislative framework of the Cree Health Board.

Since that time, the Cree Health Board has developed and adopted governance and orientation tools for the Board of Directors and its members, including the Executive Director, regarding their roles, responsibilities and functions. These tools include a series of “Board Gov-

The Cree Nation Government and the Cree Health Board have been committed for a long time to addressing the issues of family violence and violence against women in the Cree communities.

ernance Policies” that address, in broad terms, how the Board of Directors is to carry out its responsibilities, accomplish its tasks, and evaluate its performance. The Cree Health Board continues to develop its governance tools, including operational management policies. It is also promoting greater accountability and transparency through an internal audit department and clear financial controls.

The Cree Health Board meets regularly with the Ministry of Health and Social Services regarding implementation of the Health Agreement and Funding Framework.

Chisasibi Hospital Infrastructure

Further to the 2012 Health Agreement, the Cree Health Board is planning the construction of a major new regional health and social service complex in the Cree community of Chisasibi. This complex will include a new hospital centre, administrative centre and long-term care facility. It will provide essential health and social services for “Region 18”, the health and social services region under the jurisdiction of the Cree Health Board.

The funding of infrastructure for the new Chisasibi hospital complex has been raised at the CreeQuebec Standing Liaison Committee. The Cree Health Board is working with technical experts to review the plans, cost estimates and funding required as well as alternative solutions in order to optimize plans and maximize efficiencies.

Women’s Shelters in Waswanipi and Waskaganish

The Cree Nation Government and the Cree Health Board have been committed for a long time to addressing the issues of family violence and violence against women in the Cree communities. Over the years, given the lack of women’s shelters and related programs and services in Eeyou Istchee, a number of Cree women have had to seek shelter outside Cree communities.

The Cree Nation Government and the Cree Health Board are now working together with other key stakeholders to make available to Cree women in Eeyou Istchee the required prevention and intervention programs and services, as well as adequate facilities, including two women’s shelters, one in Waswanipi and the other in Waskaganish. The Cree Nation Government and the Cree Health Board have concluded a Framework Agreement

that defines the conditions of their partnership regarding the women’s shelters in Eeyou Istchee. The Framework Agreement provides, among other things, that:

- (a) the Cree Nation Government will construct two women’s shelters and assume the entire costs related to such construction, subject to the terms of the Framework Agreement, including various undertakings of the Cree Health Board, and subject to the required regulatory authorizations and permits;
- (b) the Cree Health Board will lease from the Cree Nation Government the women’s shelters for a nominal amount, will operate and maintain at its own costs such facilities for 20 years, and will secure the required regulatory authorizations and permits.

The construction of the women’s shelter in Waswanipi is now completed and will officially open shortly. Construction of the women’s shelter in Waskaganish is expected to be completed during the 2017-2018 financial year.

Youth Centre in Mistissini

Upon the recommendation of the Cree-Quebec Judicial Advisory Committee, the Cree Health Board and the Cree Nation Government Department of Justice and Correctional Services are working together to establish a Youth Facility in Mistissini. This facility is to be part of a larger plan, which is to include a group home, a camp for the bush program, and healing homes. The services to be provided by the Youth Facility are to be adapted to different youth, including boys, girls, and youth subject to various measures under the *Youth Protection Act* (Quebec) or the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (Canada), taking into account the different types and level of behavior issues. This facility will be designated as a “youth custody facility” for the purposes of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.

On December 12, 2016, the Cree Nation Government and the Cree Health Board concluded the *Framework Agreement for the Construction, Operation and Maintenance of a Youth Facility in Eeyou Istchee*, which provides for, among other things, the following:

- (a) the Cree Nation Government will construct the Youth Facility at its cost, subject to the terms of the Framework Agreement, including various undertakings of the CBHSSJB, and subject to the required regulatory authorizations and permits;

Upon the recommendation of the Cree-Quebec Judicial Advisory Committee, the Cree Health Board and the Cree Nation Government Department of Justice and Correctional Services are working together to establish a Youth Facility in Mistissini.

- (b) the Cree Health Board will lease from the Cree Nation Government the Youth Facility for a nominal amount, will operate and maintain the facility at its cost for 20 years, and will secure the required regulatory authorizations and permits.

On May 5, 2017, the MSSS approved the clinical plan and the draft lease agreement for the Youth Facility. Construction of the Youth Facility is expected to take place during the 2017-2018 financial year.

Non-Insured Health Benefits

The MSSS has advised the Cree Health Board that it wishes review the management of the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program. Discussions between the Cree Health Board and the MSSS have made good progress over the 2016-2017 year towards an agreement on the principles for the administration of the NIHB Program. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government is following this file closely as it affects Cree Nation treaty rights under Section 14 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*.

Legislative Review

The Cree Health Board is reviewing its governing legislation, the *Act respecting health and social services for Cree Native persons*, with a view to modernizing it and taking account of developments in health and social service legislation over the past 20 years. As this is a matter that affects Cree Nation rights under Section 14 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, the Cree Health Board is coordinating this work with the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government. This process has been initiated with the tabling of specific legislative amendments to promote the inclusion of Cree traditional healing methods and nutrition within the Cree Health Board. Technical amendments have also been proposed to modernize the complaints regime and to bring it more into line with the rest of the health and social services network, with required adaptations for the Cree context.

EDUCATION

Negotiations to renew the Funding Rules of the Cree School Board for the 2014-2015 to 2018-2019 school years were successfully concluded with Quebec

and Canada in October 2014. These negotiations resulted in a positive outcome for the Cree since base funding of the School Board has been protected and certain elements, including funding for special needs and for capital requirements, have been improved or increased. These negotiations related to the treaty rights of the entire Cree Nation under Section 16 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*. They were therefore conducted jointly by the Cree School Board and the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government.

CONTRACTING AND TENDERING

The tender and contracting rules imposed under Quebec 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 Cree Nation under the JBNQA and of the special northern context of Eeyou Istchee.

A draft Cree proposal on contract priority is being developed to address these issues. It will propose special measures to give effect to Cree contract priority as well as to take account of the special status and context of the Cree institutions, such as the Cree Health Board and the Cree School Board, under the JBNQA treaty. These institutions, as well as the Cree First Nations and other Cree stakeholders, will be consulted regarding this draft proposal prior to submission to Quebec.

CHILDCARE SERVICES

A multi-year *Child Services Agreement* was concluded between the Cree and Quebec on February 11, 2014. Among other things, it provides for a greater regional governance role for the Cree Nation Government and an increased delegation of powers from the Ministry of Families to the Cree Nation Government, including for the allocation of funding to Cree childcare centres according to Cree Nation Government standards.

The new *Childcare Services Agreement* also provides for increased funding to account for the Cree context, such as northern allowances. This was achieved in a context of budgetary cutbacks for other childcare centres in the province. The increases in overall funding levels for Cree childcare centres will be used to help implement northern allowances to attract and retain qualified and competent personnel. In addition, the *Childcare Services*

Agreement requires the Government of Quebec to support the construction of two new facilities: a 45-space facility in Wemindji, and an 80-space facility in Chisasibi. The expansion of an existing facility in Wemindji was completed in 2015.

EEYOU-EENOU POLICE FORCE

The Eeyou-Eenou Police Force (EPPF) was established by the Cree Regional Authority on April 1, 2011. On September 25, 2014, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, Canada and Quebec concluded the *EeyouEenou Police Funding Agreement* for the period from April 1, 2104 to March 31, 2018. The terms of this Agreement are essentially the same as for the previous Funding Agreement from 2008-2009 to 2012-2013, as extended for 2013-2014. The contributions of Canada and Quebec have been indexed, and will be indexed for future years on the basis of the Consumer Price Index.

Unionization

On December 1, 2015, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) filed an application with the federal Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) for union certification of certain members of the EPPF.

However, in October 2015, the Federal Court of Appeal held in the *NishnawbeAski Police Services Board* decided that the labour relations of the Nishnawbe-Aski police services, a First Nations police force, fall under provincial jurisdiction. On April 7, 2016, the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed the application for leave to appeal this decision. The decision of the Federal Court of Appeal affirming provincial jurisdiction over First Nations police forces remains unchanged.

In view of the *NishnawbeAski* decision, the CIRB asked the parties to submit their positions in the matter. In its decision of August 12, 2016, the CIRB accepted the position of the Cree Nation Government and dismissed the application for certification of CUPE.

The Association of Eeyou Eenou Police Officers then filed a notice in certification under Quebec labour relations legislation with the Labour Administrative Tribunal to represent all the police officers who were employed with the EPPF.

The Union was certified to represent the constables. A question remains to be decided as to whether the EPPF lieutenants are covered by the certification. The Labour Administrative Tribunal will decide this question following a hearing to take place on July 4, 2017. In the effects following this decision to be rendered, the parties will have to start negotiating a first Collective Agreement.

If the negotiations fail and the parties do not succeed in agreeing a Collective Agreement, a mediator will be called to help the parties to find a solution to their difficulty. If the mediation fails, one party may ask for the arbitration of the first Collective Agreement. The police officers are not, in any circumstances, allowed to strike.

Inspection

The *Police Act* provides that the Minister of Public Security shall order an inspection of police forces every

five years. Given that the EPPF has been in operation since 2011, the Cree Nation Government authorized in December 2016 a similar inspection of the EPPF pursuant to the *Cree Nation Government Policing ByLaw*. The inspection aims to provide, among other things, the Cree Nation Government with an assessment of the operations and the quality of services provided by the EPPF. The inspection's purpose is similar to an audit: to evaluate processes, risks, and measures of control put in place in order to contribute to their improvement.

FIREARMS REGISTRATION

In December 2015, Quebec introduced a new bill on firearms registration, Bill 64, the *Firearms Registration Act*. Bill 64 requires that non-restricted firearms in Quebec, essentially rifles and shotguns, be registered and it establishes related rules.

On April 5, 2016, the Grand Chief presented the brief of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government on Bill 64 to the Committee on Institutions of the National Assembly. The brief sets out the following positions:

- (a) the Cree oppose any legislation, including Bill 64, that could limit Cree Aboriginal and treaty rights, including any unreasonable restriction on Cree hunting, fishing and trapping rights under Section 24 of the JBNQA;
- (b) concerns for public security and safety in relation to firearms must be balanced with the constitutionally protected treaty rights of the Cree Nation, including hunting, fishing and trapping rights;
- (c) the Cree are open to the establishment of a provincial firearms registry, *provided that* it is adapted to fully respect Cree rights and the realities of the Cree hunting culture;
- (d) this adaptation may require specific modalities or exemptions for the Cree, and other mechanisms relating to the implementation of this registry in the Cree context;
- (e) all of these measures should be considered through a special Cree-Quebec technical table as well as by the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee ("HFTCC").

The brief was well received, and a useful discussion took place with members of the Committee on Institutions. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government will follow up with Quebec regarding the special technical table to consider special modalities for the Cree, and will also follow up with the HFTCC in this regard, particularly with the representatives of the "Native" parties (Cree, Inuit and Naskapi).

CREE CUSTOMARY ADOPTION AND YOUTH PROTECTION MATTERS

A Working Group on Aboriginal Customary Adoption reviewed various options in order to clearly reflect the legal effects of Aboriginal customary adoption in Quebec legislation. This Working Group included a representative of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government and the Cree Health

Board, along with representatives from other Indigenous organizations, representatives from the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services and Ministry of Justice, and a Director of Youth Protection.

The Working Group completed its final report in April 2012. This report was considered by the relevant Ministers of Justice in relation to legislative bills which proposed amendments to the Quebec adoption regime, including with respect to the legal effects of certain customary adoptions.

For the Crees of Eeyou Istchee, customary adoption has been practiced for generations and continues to be practiced today. It remains an integral part of Cree culture and identity. The Cree have sought changes to provincial legislation regarding customary adoption since the early 1980's and, for almost as long, Quebec has committed to doing so in the *Civil Code of Quebec*.

In June 2012, and again in June 2013, bills to amend the *Civil Code of Quebec* and other legislation with respect to adoption, including customary adoption, were introduced in the National Assembly. While these bills "died on the order paper" with the calling of elections, a similar bill was tabled in October 2016: Bill 113.

Cree participation in the Working Group helped to shape these legislative proposals, and the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government and Cree Health Board, working with other Indigenous organizations, were successful in securing the tabling of these proposals in the National Assembly. The Cree, in close coordination with other Indigenous organizations, collaborated with the Government of Quebec in the development of Bill 113.

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government and Cree Health Board also participated in the National Assembly committee hearings on Bill 113 in November 2016. The Cree Nation welcomed this initiative as an important step to fulfill Quebec's commitment to recognize Aboriginal customary adoption in Quebec legislation, while maintaining that this regime does not affect related Cree Aboriginal and treaty rights.

Generally, Bill 113 has been well received and the Cree continue to push for the adoption of this legislation as soon as possible. If adopted, Bill 113 will help to harmonize provincial adoption legislation with Cree Aboriginal and treaty rights in relation to adoption matters.

RECONFIGURATION AND FINAL LAND DESCRIPTIONS FOR CREE COMMUNITIES

Two tables have been established with the Government of Québec concerning Cree land issues:

- (a) One table deals with determining the final land descriptions for Cree Category I and II lands with a view of incorporating such final descriptions into the JBNQA and in 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.

The activities of these tables continued during fiscal

year 2016-2017. In parallel, the Crees, Quebec and Canada have started drafting a Complementary Agreement in order to incorporate the final land descriptions into the JBNQA for all other communities.

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

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 Band under the JBNQA and related legislation, with the same powers, rights and responsibilities as other Cree bands, 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 Quebec) Act*.

The *Act to amend the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*, adopted in 2009, amends the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act* in order to, among other things, recognize Ouje-Bougoumou as a Cree Band. These amendments came into force on May 15, 2014, which is 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.

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and Mistissini concluded negotiations with Quebec and Canada and, in September 2013, signed with Quebec the "*Final Settlement Agreement Related to the Transfer of Certain Lands from Mistissini to Quebec*". 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 Quebec 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 provincial legislation remains to be amended in order to reflect the incorporation of Ouje-Bougoumou into the JBNQA.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER FIRST NATIONS IN QUEBEC

Innus of Mashteuiatsh

By way of background, the Innus of Mashteuiatsh (also called Première Nation des Piekuakmiulnuatsh), their Chief and Band councillors had filed proceedings against Canada and Quebec for recognition of their aboriginal rights over an area they claimed as their traditional territory, and for \$750 million in damages for various infringements to their aboriginal rights. These proceedings were discontinued.

Over the past year, a Cree–Mashteuiatsh Table has been established to address possible cooperation on joint management of certain specific sectors, resources and traditional activities, forestry management standards, with special attention to the protection of wildlife habitat, economic development and certain other matters.

Over the past year, a Cree–Mashteuiatsh Table has been established to address possible cooperation on joint management of certain specific sectors, resources and traditional activities, forestry management standards, with special attention to the protection of wildlife habitat, economic development and certain other matters. These discussions are being carried out in close consultation with the Cree Nations of Mistissini and Ouje-Bougoumou. Discussions have been positive and productive.

Atikamekw of Opitciwan

In February 2004 the First Nations of Opitciwan, Wemotaci and Manawan, as well as the Council of the Atikamekw Nation, and several Chiefs and council members filed a law suit against Canada and Quebec.

The area effectively claimed by the Atikamekw in the JBNQA territory includes a large segment of the southern traplines of Oujé-Bougoumou, as well as a large segment of the southern traplines of Waswanipi. It also includes certain Senneterre Cree traplines.

The Atikamekw are asking the Court, in particular, to declare that the JBNQA and its implementing legislation did not extinguish the Aboriginal claims of other Nations. Alternatively, if their rights were extinguished, the Atikamekw claim damages.

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government and the Grand Chief have intervened in this case to ensure that the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government be a full party to any negotiations and to reserve rights of the Cree inside and outside of JBNQA territory.

Court proceedings have been suspended by the Atikamekw and Quebec since 2007, with Cree consent, in order to attempt to negotiate a settlement of the case. The suspension was set to expire in May 2012 but other options, such as a discontinuance of the proceedings, have been the subject of discussions.

The Atikamekw have expressed the desire to discontinue these legal proceedings on the following conditions:

- (a) Quebec and Canada, as defendants, as well as the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, HQ, SEBJ and SDBJ, as intervenors, agree that the discontinuance will be without costs;
- (b) the parties agree to renounce to the prescription acquired and the benefit of time elapsed as of December 30, 2003.

Although the parties reviewed this possibility as well as the terms of a proposed agreement in this regard, there has been little movement in this respect over the past years.

Innu of Takuikan Uashat Mak Mani-Utenam and Bands

The Uashat Band is seeking numerous declarations and orders from the Superior Court of Quebec. The territory claimed by the Uashat Band is very extensive. It includes a large segment of the JBNQA territory, in particular, around the Caniapiscau reservoir and northward up to Kuujuaq. Many Mistissini traplines are included in this territory. In addition, the Uashat Band is claiming the entire Eastmain River basin as a travel route and they claim a gathering site in the James Bay coast near Eastmain. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) was made party to these proceedings (“Pinette” proceedings).

On June 14, 2005, the Uashat Band was granted a suspension in these proceedings for five years. However, despite the suspension, the Innu presented a motion to have these proceedings jointly managed with other related proceedings (the “McKenzie” and “Uashaunnuat/La Romaine” proceedings). This motion was accepted on December 4, 2008. The La Romaine proceedings touch the JBNQA Territory but it seems that this may not have been intended. Nevertheless, the Grand Council of the

Crees (Eeyou Istchee) is now seeking an official clarification in order to protect Cree rights.

The Pinette proceedings were divided into a “Part A” and a “Part B”. For the purposes of “Part A”, the area includes a significant portion of Quebec, but excludes the Uashat Innus’ alleged traditional territory in the province of Newfoundland and also excludes the territory covered by the JBNQA in Quebec. “Part B” of this proceeding is exclusively with respect to the alleged traditional territory of the Uashat Innu located within JBNQA territory. The proceedings with respect to the JBNQA Territory have been suspended. Some discussions have taken place with the Innu, but there has been little movement over the past years.

Betsiamites

In this case, the Betsiamites First Nation, their Chief and Council and representatives of two families claiming interests in the JBNQA territory are suing Canada and Quebec. In addition, HydroQuebec, SEBJ, SDBJ, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and Makivik Corporation are named as interested parties.

In these proceedings, the Betsiamites are claiming 35,000 km² in the territory contemplated by the JBNQA, mostly in the area in and around the Caniapiscau reservoir.

The Betsiamites state that they have been impeded in the exercise of their Aboriginal rights in the JBNQA territory and they therefore thus request, in addition to the recognition of these rights, an amount of \$75 million as compensation.

In the event that the Court finds that their rights have been extinguished by the legislation approving the JBNQA, they claim \$250 million in damages for such extinguishment.

There have been no substantive developments in the proceedings involving the Cree parties for some time. However, the case management judge has convened the parties to a case management hearing to be held in September 2017.

Innu of Matimekush-Lac John

The Matimekush Lac John Innu Nation Band instituted legal proceedings against Canada and Quebec in December 2013 in which they seek declarations to the effect that

- (a) the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Native Claims Settlement Act* has no effect as regards them;
- (b) this law did not extinguish the Innu claims, title and interests in the part of the Nitassinan (their claimed traditional territory) located within the territory covered by the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* and the *Northeastern Quebec Agreement*; and
- (c) the Innu have Aboriginal title and Aboriginal rights to the part of Nitassinan located within the territory covered by the Agreements.

Alternatively, if the Court decides that Innu rights are extinguished on JBNQA Territory, the Innu request declarations that

- (a) they are entitled to fair compensation in consideration for the expropriation of their rights and interests on the part of Nitassinan located within the

territories covered by the Agreements, as per sub-section 3(3) of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Native Claims Settlement Act*; and

- (b) Quebec and Canada failed to fulfil their fiduciary duty toward them.

In such case, the Innu also seek an order condemning Canada and Quebec to pay the Matimekush Lac John Innu Nation Band the sum of \$500,000,000 as fair and equitable compensation.

Alternatively, should the Court refuse to condemn Canada and Quebec to pay just compensation, the Innu request declarations that

- (a) Canada did not honourably implement the promises and commitments it made in the Order in Council of 1870;
- (b) Canada did not act honourably when it proceeded to the unilateral extinguishment of the Innu’s Aboriginal rights to the part of Nitassinan located within the territory covered by the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* and the *Northeastern Quebec Agreement*; and
- (c) Quebec did not honourably implement the provision providing for the negotiation of the claims of the Innus of Matimekush-Lac John, as stated in Sub-section 2.14 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*.

These proceedings are specially managed and all procedural delays have been suspended. These proceedings have not been active since 2014.

Algonquins

On June 3, 2014, the First Nations of Abitibiwininni, Kitcisakik, Lac-Simon, Long-Point and Wahgoshig, as well as several Chiefs and council members, all part of the “Great Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation” (“Algonquins”), instituted legal proceedings against Quebec and Canada. The Algonquins seek declarations to the effect that:

- (a) the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Native Claims Settlement Act* did not extinguish the Algonquins claims, rights, title and interests in the area of their territory covered by the JBNQA;
- (b) the Algonquins have aboriginal title and aboriginal rights in the area of their territory covered by the JBNQA.

Alternatively, if the Court decides that the rights of the Algonquins are extinguished on the JBNQA Territory, the Algonquins request declarations that:

- (a) the Algonquins are entitled to fair compensation in consideration for the expropriation of their rights on the area of their territory covered by the JBNQA, as per sub-section 3(3) of the *Federal Native Settlement Act*;
- (b) Quebec and Canada failed to fulfill their fiduciary duties toward them.

In such case, the Algonquins also seek an order condemning Quebec and Canada to pay the sum of \$500,000,000 as fair and equitable compensation, or any other amount deemed appropriate by the court.

Alternately, should the Court refuse to condemn Quebec and Canada to pay a just compensation, the Algonquins request declarations to the effect that:



- (a) Canada did not honourably implement the promises and commitments it made in the Order in Council of 1870;
- (b) Canada did not act honourably when it proceeded to the unilateral extinguishment of the Algonquin's aboriginal rights in the area of their territory covered by the JBNQA and by repealing paragraphs c), d) and e) of the *Quebec Boundaries Extension Act, 1912*;
- (c) Quebec did not honourably implement the provision providing for the negotiation of the claims of the Algonquins, as stated in Sub-Section 2.14 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*.

On August 14, 2014, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government filed a declaration of intervention in order to safeguard Cree rights and interests throughout the course of this litigation. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government are now intervenors in this case. The case is specially managed and the delays regarding the conduct of the proceedings were suspended in September 2014 by the case management judge.

PLAN NORD

Relaunch

After the election of the new Government of Quebec in April 2014, Premier Couillard announced on May 8, 2014 the relaunch of the Plan Nord. A ministerial committee for the Plan Nord was established, chaired by Pierre Arcand, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Plan Nord. Mr. Geoffrey Kelley, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, serves as vice-chair of this committee.

Cree Vision of Plan Nord

In response to Quebec's initial announcement of the Plan Nord in 2008, the Cree developed our own *Cree Vi-*

sion of Plan Nord. It outlines Cree conditions, expectations and priorities in relation to the Plan Nord. These include respect for Cree rights under the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, the *Paix des Braves* and the *Cree-Quebec Governance Agreement*; meaningful Cree participation and benefits; compliance with the JBNQA environmental and social protection regime; environmental and social acceptability; and implementation of Cree Plan Nord priorities, including social housing, transportation, energy, training for Cree workers, tourism and protected areas.

Special Cree – Quebec Process

The Grand Chief has emphasized to Premier Couillard and Ministers Arcand and Kelley the need to keep a special, high level Cree Quebec process to implement Cree development priorities for Eeyou Istchee in the context of the Plan Nord. This special Plan Nord process falls under the Cree – Quebec Standing Liaison Committee.

Société du Plan Nord

On December 5, 2014, the National Assembly adopted the *Act respecting the Société du Plan Nord*. The mission of the Société du Plan Nord is to contribute, in collaboration with the representatives of the regions and the Aboriginal nations concerned as well as the private sector, to the development of the area covered by the Plan Nord, in keeping with the principle of sustainable development and in accordance with the policy directions defined by the Government in relation to the Plan Nord. The Société may coordinate infrastructure projects and develop or operate infrastructures, alone or in partnership. In addition, it may assist and support local and Native communities in their development projects.

In March 2015, Minister Pierre Arcand announced the composition of the first board of directors of the Société du Plan Nord. The Cree Nation is represented on the board by Andy Baribeau, Director of the Cree Nation

Government Department of Commerce & Industry.

The Société has released its *Action Plan 2015-2020*. It outlines broad policy directions and objectives with regard to developing the North's economic potential, community development, environmental protection and protected areas.

Eeyou Communications Network

The Société du Plan Nord agreed to provide certain funding to the Eeyou Communications Network for its Phase 2 project to connect the Cree communities of Eastmain and Waskaganish to ECN's broadband network. In February 2017, ECN reached the final milestone in Phase 2 of by "lighting-up" the community of Waskaganish. In addition, ECN completed its full loop for better stability and robustness. The ECN transport network south of 550 is totally completed. ECN is developing a strategy for the connection of Whapmagoostui, the most northern and difficult community to connect.

CREE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The *Paix des Braves* provides for the creation of the Cree Development Corporation (CDC) to serve as one of the main vehicles for Cree economic development and investment. The CDC's mandate includes:

- (a) supporting the long-term development of each Cree community;
- (b) developing Cree expertise in economic development and the management of development funds;
- (c) promoting job creation for the Cree in Eeyou Istchee;
- (d) making the Crees active partners of Québec in the economic development of Eeyou Istchee;
- (e) promoting and encouraging the creation and development of businesses and resources in order to stimulate economic opportunities for the Cree.

The Cree Nation sees the CDC as a strategic player in order to seize the opportunities that arise in Eeyou Istchee under the Plan Nord and other development initiatives. Work is advancing on the CDC's strategic business plan.

The CDC will make investments in key sectors, such as mining, forestry, energy and infrastructure, that will

create wealth for the Cree as well as job and business opportunities for our people. The CDC, when appropriate, will partner with players in Quebec finance and business to take advantage of investment opportunities.

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government has designated as its representatives on the CDC's board of directors the Grand Chief as well as Dr. Ted Moses, Chief Davey Bobbish, Bill Namagoose, Abel Bosum and Jack Blacksmith. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government will pursue discussions with Quebec regarding the appointment of its five representatives on the CDC board of directors.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH MINING COMPANIES

Goldcorp/Les Mines Opinaca – 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.

Since the signature of the Collaboration Agreement, the Cree workforce now represents close to 20% of the overall workforce present at the site (220 Cree employees out of 1,137 workers). In addition, in 2016, construction and services contracts totaling close to \$61M have been awarded to various Cree Enterprises.



Stornoway Diamond Corporation – Renard Project

On March 27, 2012, Stornoway Diamonds (Canada) Inc. 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, business opportunities, 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.

The site is located approximately 290 km north of the Cree community of Mistissini, within the community's traditional territory. In order for the mine to operate, a road is currently being constructed. While Stornoway was initially to be a contributor to the construction and maintenance costs of the new road, in November 2012, the company entered into a Framework Agreement and an associated letter of intent with the Government of Quebec for the financing and completion of the extension of Highway 167 under Stornoway's direct management. The agreement is designed to ensure timely road access to the project and the commencement of mine construction during 2013, as previously contemplated.

The key features of this agreement are that Stornoway will assume the completion of segments "C" and "D" of the extension of Highway 167 as a single lane mining grade road and Quebec will provide Stornoway with financing to complete the work.

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 seven (7) occasions since the execution of the Mecheshoo Agreement.

In April 2014, Stornoway announced a C\$944 million financing package to fund the construction of the

Renard Project, which began in June 2014. Throughout the year, the Cree workforce averaged almost 20% of the overall workforce present at the site, depending on the contracts being carried out. In addition, in 2016, construction and services contracts totalling over \$70.8M have been awarded to various Cree Enterprises.

BlackRock Metals Inc. – The BlackRock Project

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

BlackRock filed its Notice of Project with the Quebec Department of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks 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 Oujé-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 Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation and BlackRock are currently negotiating the terms of various contracts which could be awarded to Oujé-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.

Renard Mine

Photo provided by Stornoway



Nemaska Lithium Inc. – The Whabouchi Project

In 2009, Nemaska Lithium Inc. acquired a property from Golden Goose Resources in Nemaska traditional territory, located approximately four kilometres north of Hydro-Quebec's Albabel 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.

Since then, the Cree Nation of Nemaska, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government and Nemaska Lithium Inc. have been negotiating 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.

Other Mining Projects

Over the last four years, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government and various Cree communities have signed a number of pre-development agreements with other mining companies, which should lead to discussions on the conclusion of IBAs. However, like other regions, Canada and Quebec have seen a slowdown in mining investment owing to the global decline in commodity prices. As such, these discussions have 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;
- (f) the Rose project (lithium and tantalum) of Critical Elements Corporations in the territory of the Cree Nation of Eastmain;
- (g) the Moblan project (lithium) of the joint venture between SOQUEM and GlobeStar Mining Corporation in the territory of the Cree Nation of Mistissini;
- (h) the Windfall Lake project (gold) of Eagle Hill Exploration Corporation in the territory of the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi;
- (i) the Croteau Est and Waconichi projects (gold) of Northern Superior Resources in the territory of the Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation;
- (j) the Horden Lake project (nickel and copper) of El Condor Minerals in the territories of the Cree Nation of Nemaska and the Cree Nation of Waskaganish;
- (k) the Corner Bay project (copper) and other mining properties of CBay Minerals in the territory of the Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation;

- (l) the Iron Hills project (iron ore) of the Barlow mine in the territory of the Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi;
- (m) the Monster Lake project (gold) of Iamgold/Tomago in the territory of the Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation and the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi;
- (n) the Coulon project (zinc, copper and silver) of Virginia Mines in the territory of the Cree Nation of Chisasibi;
- (o) the Philibert project (gold) of SOQUEM in the territory of the Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation;
- (p) the Anik project (gold) of GeoMega Resources in the territories of the Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation and the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi; and
- (q) the Troilus Extension project (gold and copper) of 2507868 Ontario Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sulliden Mining Capital Inc. and the Cree Nation of Mistissini.

TAXATION

Québec Fuel Tax

In April 2002, a claim was filed with the Quebec Revenue Agency on behalf of Cree individuals and Cree First Nations for the refund of Quebec fuel tax paid during the period 1991 to 2001.

This claim was one of the issues discussed at the "Cree-Quebec Tax Table" established early in 2003 pursuant to the *Paix des Braves*. In 2003, after the Cree filed their claim, the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL) filed a class action on behalf of all First Nations in Quebec, other than the Cree First Nations, seeking compensation for Quebec fuel tax paid. At the Cree-Quebec Tax Table, the Quebec Revenue Agency reserved its position regarding the Cree claim for refund of fuel tax in view of the AFNQL class action.

On June 30, 2011, the Quebec Revenue Agency announced that an agreement had been reached with the AFNQL to settle its fuel tax class action for First Nations other than the Cree. In view of this settlement, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) resumed discussions with the Quebec Revenue Agency regarding the settlement of the Cree's claim for the refund of Quebec fuel tax.

After lengthy discussions, a settlement of the Cree fuel group claim was concluded with Revenue Quebec for an amount of \$8.5 million plus reasonable legal fees. The settlement, effective October 3, 2016, covers all claims for the period ending on July 1, 2011.

The Settlement Agreement provides for the distribution of the settlement amount among the nine Cree communities, in proportion of each community's respective portion of the claim. This distribution has been made to the communities. The amount of the settlement is to be used by the Cree First Nations for community purposes, in addition to the amounts allocated in the normal course for such purposes, and are to be spent by June 30, 2018. In accordance with the Settlement Agreement, each community is required to provide a statement and activity report to Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and Cree Nation Government Council/Board with respect to the use of the amount distributed to it.

Through intensive discussions, the Cree, together with other Indigenous peoples, were able to agree with Quebec on the establishment of a judicial commission of inquiry to look into the relations between Indigenous peoples and certain public services with a view to improving the services and preventing or eliminating discrimination.

Additional Childcare Contribution

Further to the 2014 Québec Budget, amendments were made to the *Educational Childcare Act* in order to change the rules for determining the contribution required from a parent whose child receives subsidized childcare. Under these changes, a parent whose child is receiving subsidized childcare must pay a basic contribution to the childcare provider and an “additional contribution” to the Minister of Revenue, if required, depending on his or her total annual income.

A parent receiving subsidized childcare is required to pay this additional contribution if the family income exceeds \$50,000. The term “family income” is defined at the relevant sections of the *Educational Childcare Act* as the total of the individual’s income for the year, determined under Part I of the *Taxation Act*, and the income, for the year, of the individual’s eligible spouse for the year, determined under that Part I.

However, on the basis of the tax exemption in section 188 of the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*, the Cree have proposed that Quebec establish an administrative policy to exclude the tax-exempt income of an “Indian” earned on reserve (including Category IA land) from the determination of income for purposes of the application of the additional contribution for subsidized childcare services. This matter has also been raised with the Quebec Revenue Agency and it is anticipated that more formal discussions will occur on this matter in the coming months.

CONCLUSION

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

Since the signature of the *Paix des Braves* in 2002, the Cree-Quebec relationship has ensured significant benefits for the Cree Nation. The funding provided pursuant to the *Paix des Braves*, the important 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 Quebec 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.

During the course of 2016-2017, this relationship faced certain challenges, in particular, the response to the Val d’Or crisis. Through intensive discussions, the Cree, together with other Indigenous peoples, were able to agree with Quebec on the establishment of a judicial commission of inquiry to look into the relations between Indigenous peoples and certain public services with a view to improving the services and preventing or eliminating discrimination.

These experiences demonstrate that, with determination and good faith on the part of both the Cree and Quebec, any challenges can be resolved for the common benefit of the Cree and all Quebecers. ●

NATURAL RESOURCES

The management of Eeyou Istchee's natural resource continues to be at the forefront of much of the Cree Nation Government's work in 2016-2017. Progress was made on many files including but not limited to: forestry and related regional government administration, community involvement in mining and policy development, and the advancement of Cree proposed protected areas.

REGIONAL NATURAL RESOURCE COMMITTEE

The Regional Natural Resource Committee was established by the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government (EIJBRG) to provide technical advice on natural resource management issues that fall within the jurisdiction of the regional government for Category III lands. Consisting of 6 Jamesien and 6 Cree Nation Government representatives, the committee continued to provide guidance and assistance on behalf of the EIJBRG on files related to forestry, land use planning, and protected areas development.

With respect to forestry, the Committee continued overseeing the development of the Local Integrated Land and Resource Management Panels, known by their French acronym as T-GIRTs. These multi-stakeholder panels are responsible for providing input and comments on the Government's tactical and operational forestry plans. Despite some poorly attending meetings in non-Cree communities, the Cree representatives at these panels tabled a series of proposals to influence how future forestry planning will consider moose habitat management, road network management, and the protection of fish spawning sites. It is hoped by all involved that the Quebec Government will take positive action within in the design of its forestry management plans to realize the T-GIRT's recommendations.

The other issue that has occupied the efforts of the Cree representatives on the Regional Natural Resource Committee centered on the nature of how the Committee is to collaborate with the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (MERN) on its public land use plan known as the PATP. While the *Governance Agreement* with Quebec states that the EIJBRG has an obligation to work with the MERN on this plan, the Agreement does not define the nature of this collaboration. However, the Governance Agreement does contain a provision (132) that allows for the parties to negotiate the terms of this collaboration at a future date. With this provision in mind, the Regional Natural Resource Committee deferred its work with MERN on the PATP until this matter of provision 132 of the Gov-

ernance Agreement was addressed by the EIJBRG. The EIJBRG has since referred the question of suitable collaboration on the PATP to the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment (JBACE) for advice.

The Regional Natural Resource Committee is also mandated to oversee preparation of the Regional Plan for Integrated Land and Resource Development (PRDIRT). Similar to the PATP that the MERN is developing, the PRDIRT is a regional public land use plan for Category III. The work for this plan has yet to commence as the Government of Quebec has not provided the EIJBRG with suitable funding.

Finally, with respect to protected areas, the Regional Natural Resource Committee provided its endorsement to the EIJBRG for the Government's proposal to expand the Assinica Cree Heritage Park, and the establishment of biodiversity reserves for Waswanipi Lake and the Broadback River.

FORESTRY HARMONIZATION AGREEMENT

Last year it was reported that the Board/Council was finalizing its approval of this proposed Agreement with expectation that Quebec and the Crees would sign the final agreement in the summer of 2016. The Forestry Harmonization Agreement serves as an amendment to the Adapted Forestry Regime of the Paix des Braves Agreement and was necessary because of an incompatibility with the province's new Sustainable Forest Development Act passed in 2010. Unfortunately, the Forestry Harmonization Agreement has yet to be completed.

Soon after the Council/Board approved and notified the Government of Quebec of its intention to sign the agreement, the Quebec Government's lawyers went on strike. Without lawyers, the Ministry of Forests, Fauna and Parks (MFFP) informed the Crees that it was not possible for the proposed agreement to clear the required legal review process. In February of this year, the lawyers were legislated back to work and it is hoped that the parties will set a signing date as soon as possible.

It is important that the Harmonization Agreement is signed as soon as possible to ensure clarity over the forestry regime in Eeyou Istchee.

CREE QUEBEC FORESTRY BOARD

At the conclusion of the 2016 fiscal year, it was reported that the Cree Quebec Forestry Board was without a Chair due to the passing of its former Chairman Gilbert Paillé. In the fall of 2016, Quebec appointed Hervé Deschenes as the new Chairman. Mr. Deschenes

is a forester with a background in technological development within the forest industry.

Since taking up this position Mr. Deschenes has focused the Board's efforts on preparing for a full engagement in the upcoming development of the tactical and operational forest management plans for 2018-2023. This past year, the Board also continued its efforts in the development of a monitoring framework that will be adapted to the new provisions of the forestry regime when the Forestry Harmonization Agreement is signed.

CREE QUEBEC TABLES

As reported last year, the Cree Negotiator, Abel Bosum, took steps to establish two senior level tables with the Deputy Ministers for the environment and mining branches of the Quebec Government. The goal of these tables is to open up direct, high-level, channels of communication in order to address various files that cannot be resolved through simple technical intervention.

The Cree Quebec Table on Protected Areas and the Environment met for the first time in February. The parties came together to discuss the development of a communication protocol to better address future environmental emergencies. The current practice is for the Government of Quebec to communicate through the Regional Government to notify the public of any ongoing environmental emergencies such as floods, toxic spills, mining accidents, etc. However, in the past when such emergencies occurred, representatives from the Cree Nation Government did not receive timely notification on the details of these emergencies to properly inform the Cree public on the status of the situation. The parties agreed that the existing protocol leaves potential gaps in the communication of this important information to the Crees and they committed to working together on an appropriate communication mechanisms to address these gaps.

Another issue that the table's members discussed was the status of the Broadback Protected Area. Following the signing of the Baril-Moses Agreement, Quebec committed to creating the Broadback Biodiversity Reserve and to establish a special task force with the Cree Nation Government and Waswanipi on future expansion of this reserve. While the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment and Climate Change (MDDELCC) sent the Cree Nation Government a copy for comment of the proposed conservation plan for this area in May of 2016, there has been no follow-up in creating the special task force. Accordingly, the Cree Nation Government has recommended a follow-up meeting to allow the parties to discuss the proposed conservation plan for the Broadback Biodiversity Reserve and begin the special task force's work on potential future expansion to the Reserve.

The Cree Quebec Mining Table also held two meetings last year. These meetings focused on developing a working plan with the MERN to begin the assessment and clean-up of the many abandoned mining exploration sites scattered throughout Eeyou Istchee. Similar discussions were held concerning the cleanup of well known abandoned mining sites on Waswanipi and Oujé-Bougoumou lands.

Finally, with respect to the Governance Agreement with Quebec, the Cree Nation Government and the MFFP established the Local Integrated Land and Resource Management Table for Cat II lands. This table has the same function as the T-GIRT table mentioned previously for Cat III lands, except this table is administered jointly by the Cree Nation Government and the MFFP rather than the EIJBRG. This Category II table is also the focal point for the development of a collaborative forestry management regime for Category II lands. The Table held its first meeting in March of this year. ●



Photo: Brendan Forward

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL GRANTS

The *Operations and Maintenance Funding Agreement* and the *A-Base Capital Agreement* form the two key base funding agreements which provide the core operations and maintenance funding required by the Cree Communities and the Cree Nation Government. Since 1984, the *Operation and Maintenance Funding Agreement* (O&M Agreement) has provided \$1.536B while the *A-Base Capital Agreement* has provided some \$373M since 1987. The funding to support both agreements is provided solely by the Government of Canada.

These two important funding sources came about as a result of the implementation of Chapter 9 of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* (JBNQA). Chapter 9, which addresses *Local Government on Category 1A Lands*, provides for special legislation concerning local government for the James Bay Crees on Category 1A lands. The special legislation that implemented this Chapter was the *Cree Naskapi (of Quebec) Act* which came into force in 1984 and which was conditional on a funding agreement that is the O&M Agreement.

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) upholds the position that this funding is a treaty obligation and rejected the attempt by Canada in 2012 to insert language in the agreement to subject it to Canada's fiscal policies with respect to self-government. Treaties are not subject to policy and are constitutionally protected.

The past two renewal agreements, including an earlier effort to seek a longer-term agreement, were termin-

ated as a result of Canada's insistence to apply Canada's self government fiscal policies to this funding agreement.

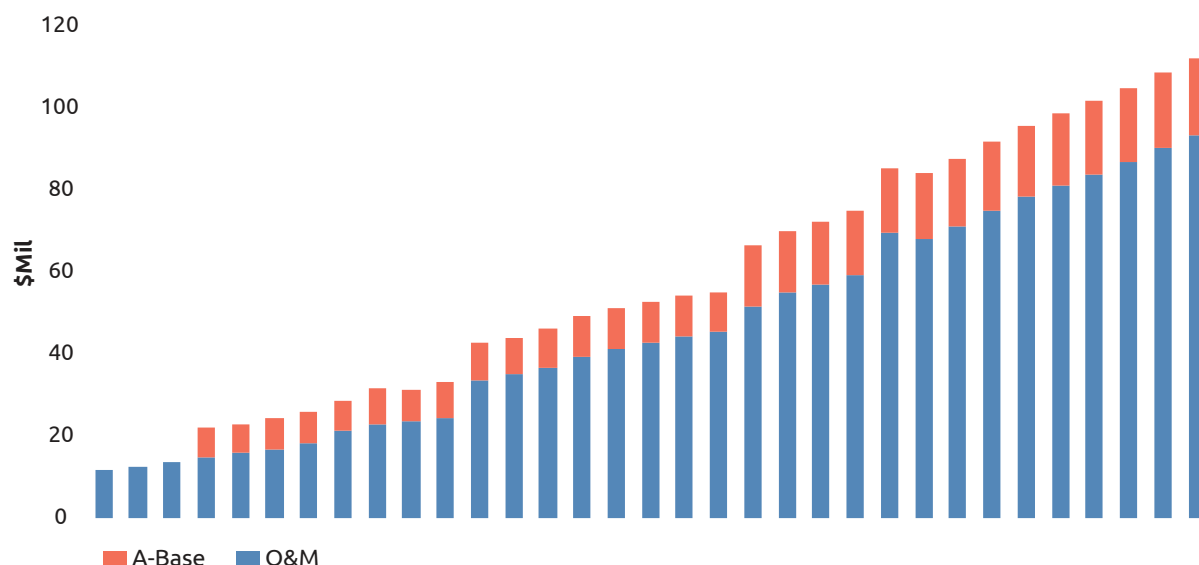
Currently the O & M Agreement will terminate on March 31, 2018. Negotiations for a subsequent agreement were required to begin October 1, 2016. These negotiations were set aside as a result of an agreement at the Governance negotiating table to renew the O&M and Capital A-Base Agreements for a further period of twelve years followed by a second term of twelve years on the same terms and conditions as the existing arrangements. This will require ratification of the agreement by all parties and the adoption of the required legislation to implement the governance agreement.

Funding for 2016-2017 under the O&M grant and the Capital grant amounted to \$93,364,678 and \$18,959,067 respectively for a total of \$112,323,745. Funding for 2017-2018 for these two grants will total \$116,962,267.

The funding for O&M is driven by increases in population and price so it is very important for each community to attach a very high priority to maintaining accurate and up to date beneficiary records. In past years we have lost millions due to late recording of births because an adjustment is only triggered in the year the birth is recorded. There is no retroactive adjustment back to the year of birth.

The following graph provides an overview of the funding provided under each grant since its inception, and shows the important escalation which has occurred in large part because of an increase in population. ●

Evolution of O&M and Capital Grant Funding



INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND NGO ACTIVITIES

The persistent efforts of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) to advance Cree rights at the global level, initiated in the early 1980s, continue to reap concrete benefits.

During the past year, the government of Canada continued to emphasize the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. However, while commitments continued to be made, the government was often lacking in concrete follow-up actions.

A new positive development was the adoption of the *American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. This new Declaration applies to Indigenous peoples in the Americas, which include North, South and Central America and the Caribbean.

These and other developments are described below. The examples serve to significantly increase the relevance and positive influence of international human rights law in the Indigenous context.

At the international level, support for Indigenous peoples' human rights and participation in global forums continues to grow. However, within Canada and other countries, there is significant work to be done to strengthen implementation of Indigenous rights and related state obligations that are affirmed in international law.

Achievements and challenges during the past year include the following.

UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

During the past year, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) focused on promoting the *UN Declaration* and strengthening its application internationally and in Canada. In the coming year, the United Nations will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration by the General Assembly, which took place on September 13, 2007.

Cross-Canada support continued to grow for MP Romeo Saganash's private members bill C-262, which includes a legislative framework for implementing the *UN Declaration*. Such an approach will help to ensure that progress made will not be easily reversed by any future government. As the Minister of Justice, Jody Wilson-Raybould, indicated to the House of Commons on April 12, 2016: "We need to develop a national reconciliation framework in partnership with indigenous communities ... That reconciliation framework needs to survive the life of one government."

In April 2016, the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples met in Ottawa with the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Carolyn Bennett.

This Coalition includes the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and other Indigenous and human rights organizations in Canada. Lawyer Paul Joffe, representing the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee), provided the Minister with a brief summary of each provision in Bill C-262. However, to date, the federal government has yet to take a formal position on Bill C-262.

WORKING GROUP OF MINISTERS TO REVIEW LAWS AND POLICIES

In February 2017, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the creation of a Working Group of Ministers on the Review of Laws and Policies Related to Indigenous Peoples. The Working Group will not only examine relevant federal laws, policies, and operational practices to help ensure the Crown is meeting its constitutional obligations with respect to Aboriginal and treaty rights, it will also adhere to international human rights standards, including the *UN Declaration*. Furthermore, it will also support the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action.

This Working Group has the potential to accomplish highly important work. In March 2017, the Minister of Justice declared that the Working Group mandate is to "decolonize our federal laws and policies and to ensure that a recognition-of-rights approach" is reflected in all aspects of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples. The government has committed to collaborate with Indigenous representatives, but such cooperation has yet to take place.

FREE, PRIOR AND INFORMED CONSENT (FPIC)

FPIC or "consent" continues to be a key issue that is discussed in Canada and internationally. On behalf of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee), lawyer Paul Joffe has been on a number of panels to examine FPIC. Such discussions have taken place at the AFN National Energy Forum in Ottawa in March 2017, an NGO workshop in Vancouver in November 2016 and at an AFN Workshop on the *UN Declaration* in December 2016 in Gatineau, Québec. He also gave a lecture in March 2017 to Dalhousie University law students on the *Declaration*, FPIC and governance issues.

Consent is an essential element of Indigenous peoples' right of self-determination in international law. FPIC can serve as an effective safeguard if it is used to protect Indigenous peoples' human rights or their lands, territories and resources.

In April 2016, the *Northern Public Affairs* magazine

produced an issue on FPIC. Paul Joffe was one of the reviewers assisting the NPA editorial board.

AMERICAN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The *American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was adopted by consensus by the Organization of American States (OAS) General Assembly on 15 June 2016. This is a significant development, with potentially far-reaching positive implications for Indigenous peoples in the Americas.

Indigenous peoples in the Americas now have two declarations that explicitly affirm and elaborate upon their human rights related to state obligations. The *American Declaration* includes some provisions that fall below the *UN Declaration* and others that go beyond. In addition, both include provisions that the other lacks.

In any specific situation, the minimum standard is the one that is higher in these two instruments. Canada must respect the interactions between the *American Declaration* and the *UN Declaration*.

UN PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

In May 2016, the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs declared in New York at the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues: “I’m here to announce, on behalf of Canada, that we are now a full supporter of the Declaration *without qualification*.” The Minister added: “By adopting and implementing the Declaration ... *we are breathing life into Section 35 and recognizing it now as a full box of rights* for Indigenous peoples in Canada. ... [O]ur constitutional obligations serve to fulfil all of the principles of the declaration, including *free, prior and informed consent*.”

Canada’s statements at the Permanent Forum were enthusiastically applauded by those attending the session. However, since that time, Canada’s inclusion of Indigenous peoples in implementing the *UN Declaration* has not been evident.

The theme of the 2016 Permanent Forum session was “Indigenous peoples: conflict, peace and resolution”. A key message of this session was the need to combat pervasive violations against Indigenous human rights defenders, including criminalization, persecution, violence, imprisonment and killing. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) participated actively in this annual meeting and joined with its partners in submitting a joint statement on implementation of the *UN Declaration*. Also, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come had a substantive meeting with Minister Bennett.

UN EXPERT MECHANISM ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (EMRIP)

In September 2016, the UN Human Rights Council amended EMRIP’s mandate, so that it shall provide the Human Rights Council with expertise and advice on the rights of Indigenous peoples as set out in the *UN Declaration*. Among its significantly expanded powers, EM-

RIP may seek and receive information from all relevant sources as necessary to fulfil its mandate.

EMRIP is also now authorized to prepare an annual study on the status on the rights of Indigenous peoples worldwide in the achievement of the ends of the *Declaration*, focusing on one or more interrelated articles of the *Declaration*. EMRIP can also, upon request, assist Member States and/or Indigenous peoples in identifying the need for and providing technical advice regarding the development of domestic legislation and policies relating to the rights of Indigenous peoples.

In April 2016, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) actively participated in the consultation in Geneva that led to EMRIP’s mandate being expanded as illustrated above. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) attended the July session and submitted a joint statement on implementation.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In 2016, the Trudeau government issued its Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS) for 2016-2019. The federal government acknowledged in effect that its FSDS does not safeguard Indigenous peoples’ rights.

The government indicated that it was undertaking a review of existing processes that involved using the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Such processes included the Expert Panel for the Review of Environmental Assessment Processes and the Expert Panel for National Energy Board Modernization.

In past years, Canada has joined other states in supporting international instruments that focus on sustainable development. These have been adopted by consensus by the UN General Assembly and indicate that sustainable development includes the *protection of human rights*. Canada adopted a *Federal Sustainable Development Act* in 2008, which binds the federal Crown. Although federal legislation uses the international definition of sustainable development in this Act and in the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*, both current and former federal governments have failed to protect Indigenous peoples’ human rights when approving proposed resource development projects.

In December 2016, the General Assembly emphasized: “*poverty is an affront to human dignity*” and repeated the call for the end of poverty and hunger by implementing the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) is actively working on sustainable development, both internationally and at home.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERT GROUP MEETING (EGM) ON THE UN DECLARATION

In January 2017, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) participated actively at an EGM held at UN headquarters in New York to consider the state of implementation of the *UN Declaration* and what steps could be taken to improve such efforts particularly within States. The Meeting also examined the complementary roles and impact of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous

Issues; the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

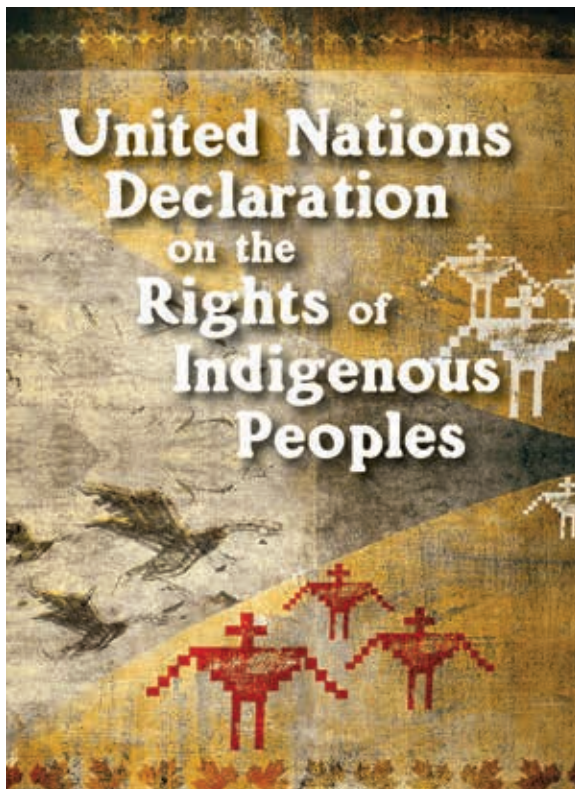
HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

As described above, the *UN Declaration* is increasingly becoming a central focus in law and policy reform by the Trudeau government. As a result, interest in this human rights instrument is growing significantly. Indigenous peoples, federal, provincial and municipal governments, educational institutions, corporate entities, and others in Canada are seeking to learn more about the *Declaration*. Such initiatives are often carried out in the context of reconciliation, as called for by the Truth

and Reconciliation Commission. As an essential part of human rights education, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) has participated with its partners on various panels to highlight and explain diverse aspects of the *declaration*.

To date, the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples has distributed more than 200,000 booklets on the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, mostly in Canada. This past year, the coalition printed an additional 100,000 booklets and the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) was a major contributor. The booklets are now available in e-reader format as well. ●

To date, the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples has distributed more than 200,000 booklets on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, mostly in Canada.



Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/61/L.67 and Add.1)]

61/295. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The General Assembly,

Taking note of the recommendation of the Human Rights Council contained in its resolution 1/2 of 29 June 2006,¹ by which the Council adopted the text of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

Recalling its resolution 61/178 of 20 December 2006, by which it decided to defer consideration of and action on the Declaration to allow time for further consultations thereon, and also decided to conclude its consideration before the end of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly,

Adopts the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as contained in the annex to the present resolution.

107th plenary meeting
13 September 2007

Annex

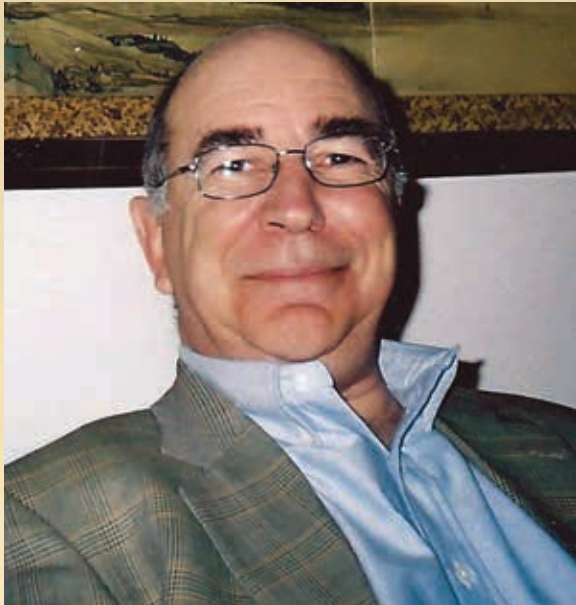
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and good faith in the fulfilment of the obligations assumed by States in accordance with the Charter,

Affirming that indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples, while recognizing the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such,

¹See Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 53 (A/61/53), part one, chap. II, sect. A.



REMEMBERING NORM

On February 22, 2017 we lost our dear friend and one of the biggest champions of the Cree Nation.

Norm Hawkins has been a friend, supporter and believer in the Cree Nation since the early days of the Grand Council of the Crees. Norm committed the past forty plus years to acting as a financial advisor to the Cree Nation, including many local and regional entities.

He always provided top notch professional financial advice to the Cree leadership until his passing. His sound financial advice is at the foundation of most of the financial agreements we now have in place and upon which we continue to build.

Norm played a major role in negotiating unique economic and social benefits for the Crees in the context of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement negotiations. He then became the very first-full time financial advisor to the Crees.

He worked closely with the Crees to establish and implement a unique financial system, which stands to this date as a testimony of his ingenuity.

Norm was instrumental in negotiating the Operation and Maintenance Funding Agreement

with Canada, which has become the backbone of all financing arrangements with Canada and Quebec. Norm brought his vision of national standards, as opposed to those developed by Indian Affairs, to ensure that each successive funding agreement appealed to the standards which could be identified throughout the country and specifically in non-native environments.

This agreement has stood the test of time, delivering more than \$1.5 billion dollars to date to the Cree Nation and our communities since 1984. Norm played a key role as well over the past five years to help entrench this funding agreement for the next twenty-four years through his participation in the Cree Canada Governance negotiations.

The principles which Norm established for the Operations and Maintenance Funding negotiations were adopted for most other significant funding agreements, which the Cree Nation currently benefits from in addition to the standards which we have now come to enjoy in our communities.

Norm believed strongly in the potential of the Crees and was convinced that Cree skills would enable the Cree Nation to be a master of its own destiny. He dedicated himself to assist in the achievement of this objective. He was proud

Norm Hawkins has been a friend, supporter and believer in the Cree Nation since the early days of the Grand Council of the Crees.

to work closely with the directors of finance of the Cree communities. He was intimately involved with representatives of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree nation Government and of the Cree communities in the elaboration of community profiles, community budgets and the implementation of support services for the Cree First Nations.

Norm's work is reflected not only in the admirable physical aspects of the Cree communities, but in the importance the Cree Nation gives to efficient management of its lands and resources.

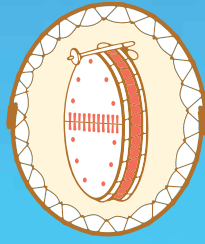
Norm has mentored many Cree leaders both regionally and locally as well as many of the professionals who provide continuing support to the Cree Nation. Norm played a key role in the ini-

tial development of CREECO and was an early Board member. Norm equally supported the efforts made to date to establish the Cree Development Corporation, which was meant to build upon the successes achieved to date in economic development by CREECO and other entities.

Norm will always be remembered as a soldier who was never afraid to enter battle with the Federal Government, and whose strategic advice played a key role in resolving conflicts. Norm committed his professional life to the development of the Cree Nation, its institutions, and our membership.

Norm was, more than anything else, a friend to our people and a key member of our Nation building team whom we will always remember.





CREE NATION GOVERNMENT

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FINANCE AND TREASURY

Message from the Treasurer
MATTHEW SWALLOW

The past year provided an opportunity for the Cree Nation Government to review many important issues relating to Accountability and Transparency, which were the focus of discussions with the Federal Government of Canada pursuant to the Governance Agreement. As I have expressed in prior years, the Cree Nation Government has continued to develop new rules respecting accountability and transparency and has been leading these developments internally for many years now.

Over the past year the communities have worked closely with the Cree Nation Government to develop and implement new By-laws concerning Financial Administration, which operationalize all the Financial and Administrative provisions of the Cree Naskapi (of Quebec) Act and build upon other principles concerning transparency with the release of elected officials' remuneration with the Annual Financial Report to the local membership. Similar provisions were adopted by the Cree Nation Government previously regarding the regionally elected positions as well.

Collectively, the Cree Nation Government and all local communities continued to work together to develop standardized reporting systems which have improved the financial reporting of all entities. We are pleased to advise that for the first time ever, all communities and the Cree Nation Government submitted the required audited financial statements to all authorities in accordance with the deadlines provided for in the Cree Naskapi (of Quebec) Act. I commend the local Treasurers and Management teams for their efforts to meet this important reporting deadline.

The Cree Nation Government continues to evolve to meet the increasing reporting responsibilities and to improve measures relating to transparency and accountability. At the same time, we continue to work with all local communities to develop standardized financial reporting regimes and to ensure compliance with obligations imposed by the many financial agreements that the Cree Nation Government and all communities are responsible to administer. The reality of today's environment places enormous responsibility on the financial administrators at both the local and regional levels.

The Governance Agreement will include the previously agreed to *Cree Naskapi (of Quebec) Act* reporting obligations, as well as those applicable to the Cree Nation

Government in accordance with the Provincial *Act respecting the Cree Nation Government*. In addition, certain new measures relating to transparency and accountability to our members will become part of the reporting regime once the Agreement is approved by all parties and the required legislation is implemented.

An important responsibility of the Office of the Treasurer is to ensure compliance by Quebec with the financial terms of the Paix des Braves. As explained in the Annual Report of the Eenou Eeyou Limited Partnership (EELP) with respect to the funding received from Quebec, and as we have indicated in previous Annual Reports, there continues to be a dispute with Hydro Quebec regarding the confidentiality of the data required to determine the actual value of economic production in the Territory. It is the firm position of the EELP that this information must be provided annually to the recipient of funding in accordance with the Agreement. Hydro Quebec and the Government of Quebec have nevertheless withheld this information for many years now, despite providing all the required information during the initial years of implementation of the Agreement.

Accordingly, the Cree Party has exercised its right to audit the Annual Payment to ensure compliance with the Agreement. The audit conducted for this year has revealed many discrepancies which are currently the object of discussions with Quebec and/or have been resolved because of the recognition of the need to make payment adjustments by Quebec since the period of the audit.

The Cree party intends to seek resolution of these matters through the Standing Liaison Committee and/or through the re-establishment of the Chapter Seven Implementation Committee. Furthermore, we are seeking a new agreement concerning the confidentiality of the data to ensure proper implementation of the Agreement in future years.

The resources now under the administration of the Cree Nation Government and other Cree entities entrusted with the implementation of the JBNQA are very significant. For the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the Council/Board allocated \$333,814,060 for various programs, services, and responsibilities either under its administration or under the administration of other entities established pursuant to the JBNQA and related agreements. These funds are exclusive of the budgets for the Cree School Board and

the Cree Board of Health and Social Services, as well as many other Cree entities.

Over the coming year we will continue to work with all communities to address the continually evolving financial and administrative issues we all face and will ensure that we assist one another in employing best practices being developed both locally and regionally. We continue to be impressed with the exchange of best practices amongst all communities and together we help build our nations' capacity.

As a final note, I wish to express my continuing appreciation to all staff of the Department of Finance and Treasury who have devoted 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.

An Overview of certain Funding flowing through the Cree Nation Government including funds allocated by the Cree Nation Trust and Eenu- Eeyou Limited Partnership

The Cree Nation Government and the EELP 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.

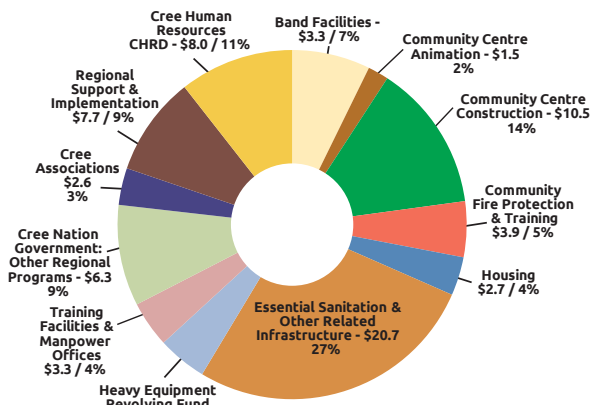
The following summarizes certain of these arrangements for 2016-2017:

Government of Canada	
Cree Act Operation and Maintenance Funding	\$ 93,364,678
Federal Capital A-Base Funding	\$ 18,959,067
Agreement Respecting Cree Human Resources Development	\$ 6,990,913
Canada / Quebec Joint Funding	
Policing Services Agreement	\$ 17,378,630
Government Of Quebec	
Agreement Concerning a New Relationship – Annual Payment	\$ 94,160,855
Agreement Concerning the Administration of Justice	\$ 18,007,855
Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee Territory	\$ 8,452,023
Cree Nation Trust	
Implementation of Assumed Obligations and Responsibilities	\$ 76,500,000

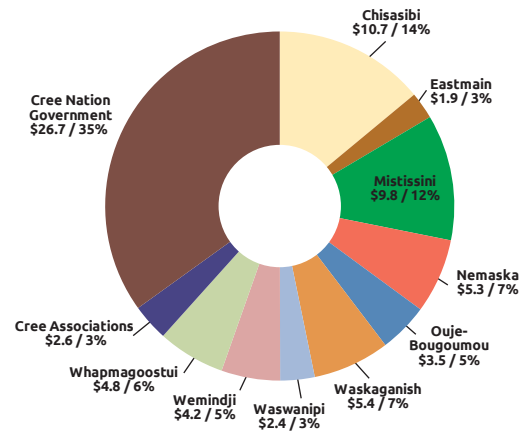
In addition to the funding described above, both Canada and Quebec provide funding in relation to Cree Education to the Cree School Board, and Quebec provides funding for Health and Social Services to the Cree Board of Health and Social Services. Many other program funding arrangements exist between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

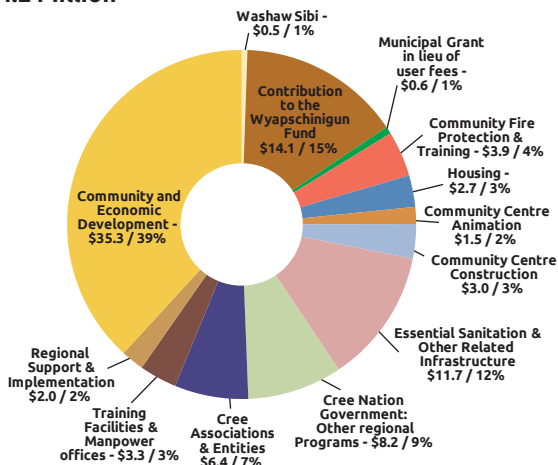
New Relationship Agreement CANADA Funding Allocation 2016-2017 by Program \$76.5 Million



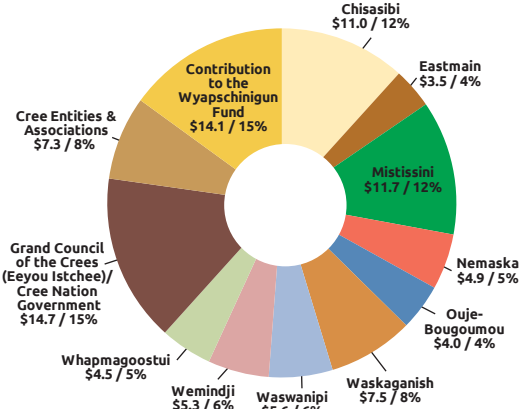
New Relationship Agreement CANADA Funding Allocation 2016-17 \$76.5 Million



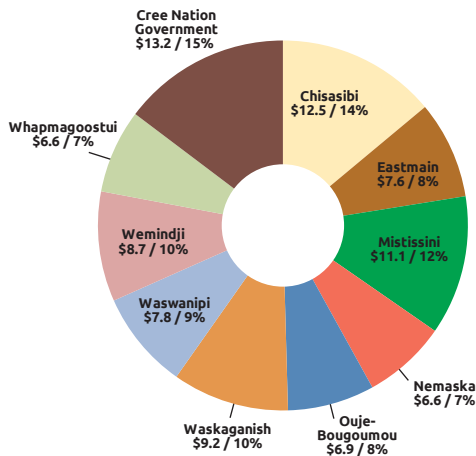
New Relationship Agreement QUEBEC Funding Allocation 2016-17 by Program \$94.2 Million



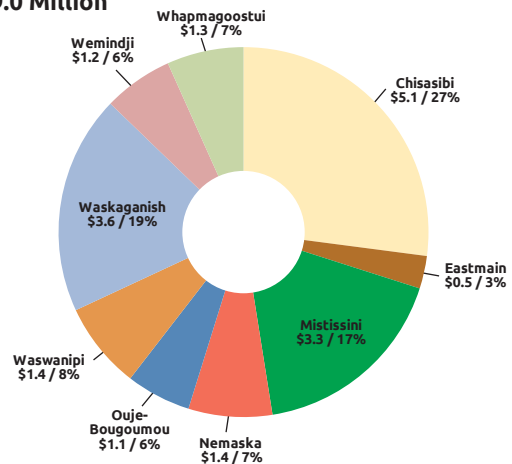
New Relationship Agreement QUEBEC Funding Allocation 2016-17 \$94.2 Million



O&M Funding Allocation 2016-17 \$93.4 Million



Capital Funding Allocation 2016-17 \$19.0 Million





HUMAN RESOURCES

Message from the Director
NANCY BOBBISH

It is with pleasure that I present our annual human resources report. The report is a reflection upon some of our key activities for the 2016–2017 fiscal year and provides an opportunity for us to share our achievements, recognize where we need to further advance our efforts, and provide insight into where we are going as a department.

The Human Resources department has been on a journey of significant change over the past two years, and this journey continues today. As we navigate through these transformations, our structure and the various roles within our department have evolved to better reflect ongoing priorities and needs.

Our Human Resources team made huge strides in expanding our work and improving our service delivery. Our job is to continue to focus intently on what we can control: streamlining existing tools, policies and processes, in addition to providing our employees with equitable, comprehensive and supportive human resources services.

Our year can be summarized in a few words: with plentiful opportunities for growth and improvement, we can proudly say that we made significant progress. With this, I must thank the Human Resources' employees for their continued commitment, enthusiasm, and perseverance.

I invite you to read through our report.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The Human Resources department delivers human resource services by focusing on efficiency, clear standards, and consistent application of human resource policies across the Cree Nation government.

OUR PRINCIPLES

Strategically focused

We advance the Cree Nation Government's mission by thinking and acting in the best interests of the organization and the workforce; in particular, when developing policies and programs and delivering services.

Professional

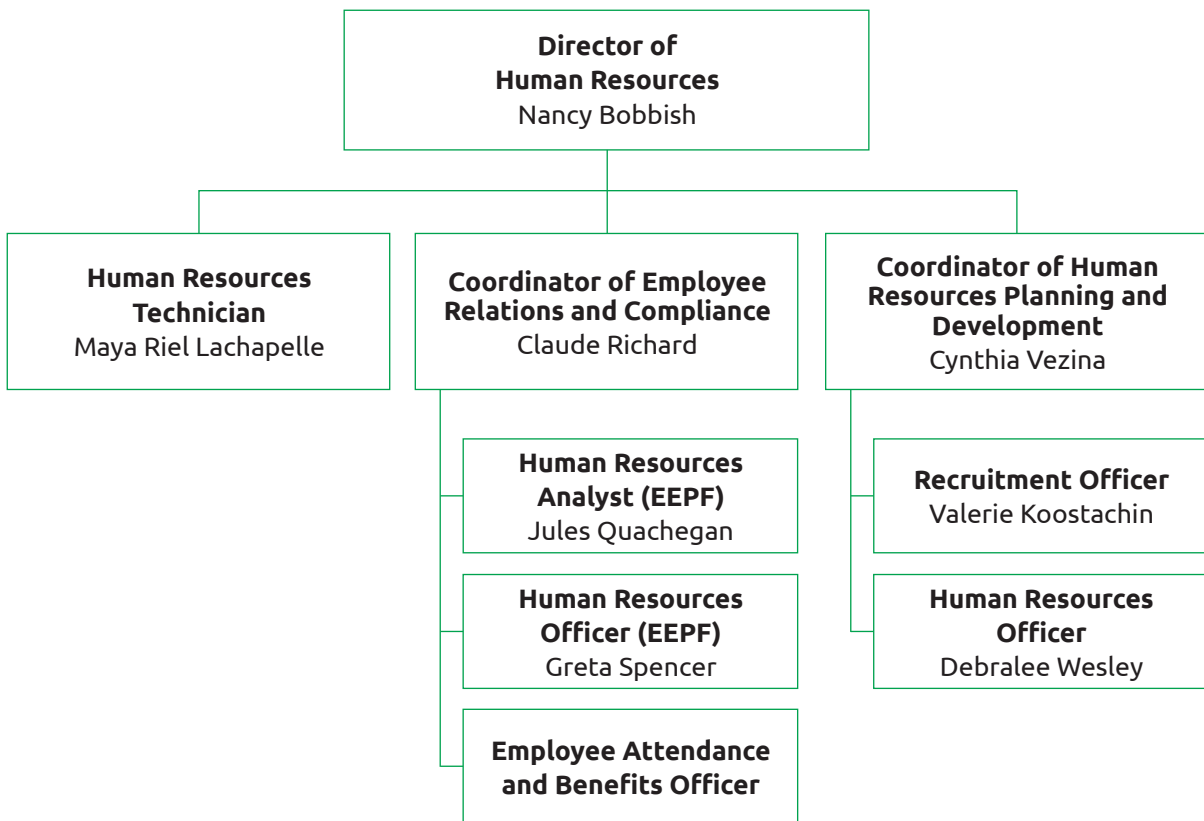
We act with honesty and integrity. We anticipate and are proactive, collegial and collaborative in our work. We are fair and equitable.

Respectful

We are considerate, thoughtful and engaged in manner and approach. We exercise the considered judgement of a trusted advisor.

The Human Resources department has been on a journey of significant change over the past two years, and this journey continues today. As we navigate through these transformations, our structure and the various roles within our department have evolved to better reflect ongoing priorities and needs.

OUR TEAM



POLICIES

Human Resources policies were revised and developed in a variety of areas, including the following:

- Code of Ethics
- Policy Recruitment, Selection and Hiring
- Policy Overtime

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Continuous learning and development are seen as vital to ensure employees have the skills, knowledge and abilities for their current roles, and are prepared for new challenges. Recognizing employee individual performance and development as well as their contribution to overall organizational success is key.

The Human Resources department is committed to strengthening the capability of managers and holding them accountable to enable employees to thrive and meet their full potential. To enable employees to maximize their potential and get the most out of their career, the performance management process covers key competencies, objectives defined at the beginning of the year, and a year-end review, with employees' self-assessment playing a critical role.

The annual performance evaluation's objective is to provide staff and their managers an opportunity to:

- Discuss job performance;

- Set goals for professional development;
- Establish objectives for contributing to the department's mission; and
- Discuss expectations and accomplishments competencies, objective setting at each new reference year.

In 2016-2017, through our performance evaluation process and investment in our employees, we continue to support professional development. We are proud to say that this led to five (5) internal promotions during the year.

Furthermore, we encourage work placement for students that are enrolled in Colleges or Universities looking for the opportunity to develop relevant skills, knowledge and experience while getting firsthand work experience in a real working environment. We had a total of (5) internships this year.

We also worked very closely with Eenu Eyou Police Force (EEPF) on the ongoing Policing Technology Program initiative at College Ellis. We are continuously recruiting Cree Beneficiary candidates that have an interest in Policing. We had 11 Cree students that were enrolled in our fourth cohort, 2 left for personal reasons and 9 students are expected to graduate with an Attestation d'études collégiales (AEC) in Police Technology, for an 82 percent retention rate. The students had their entry tests at École nationale de police du Québec (ENPQ) and we are very happy to say that the 9 students succeeded the physical entry tests, meaning a 100 percent success rate.

The Recruitment, Selection and Hiring Policy has been developed to ensure consistent and equitable standards for staffing, and to create a qualified pool of talent to support our government's current and future needs.

RECRUITMENT

Throughout the year, the Human Resources department supported the Cree Nation Government's recruitment function by continuing to:

- Develop recruitment strategies;
- Identify and share best practices;
- Consult and find options for "hard-to-fill" positions;
- Develop and distribute recruitment tools and resources; and
- Develop and monitor recruitment metrics.

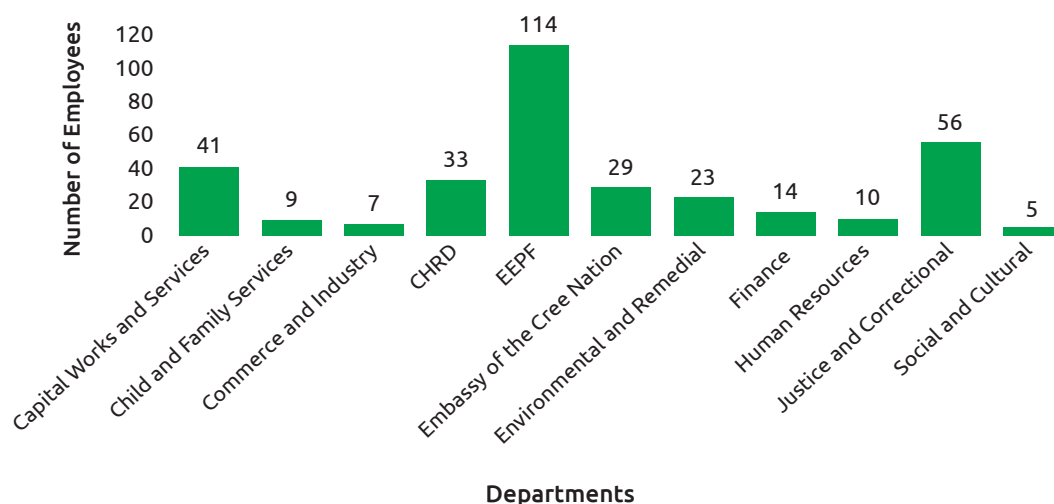
The success of the Cree Nation Government relies on its ability to attract the best staff, and its recruitment methods must be fair, efficient, and effective. Therefore, the Recruitment, Selection and Hiring Policy has been developed to ensure consistent and equitable standards for staffing, and to create a qualified pool of talent to support our government's current and future needs. It is designed to serve as a general guideline for making the right decisions while adhering to the recruitment process.

Effective recruitment, selection, and hiring practices optimize the efficiency of human resources, improve the integration of a person in a job, and contribute to the retention of the Cree Nation Government's personnel.

For the summary of the staffing activity for 2016-2017 for our 12 departments, we advertised 46 external competitions and 2 internal competitions. 30 were permanent positions and 18 contractual replacement positions such as: Maternity Leave, Education Leave and Leave of Absence, etc.

We have a total of 341 permanent positions (Figure 1. Permanent Positions per Department). Part of our main objective is to invest in your employees, to retain a professional workforce, and to create a work environment that fosters employee engagement and productivity. There were 17 employees that left the organization to pursue other opportunities. Every employee was asked to participate in an Exit Interview. Exit interviews are an effective tool, in terms of assessing and analyzing overall employee engagement. The onus is on Human Resources to do these interviews, and to then make effective use of the information that is gained during exit interviews. Ultimately, this information is extremely valuable in terms of playing a part in preventing future employees from leaving the organization, and improving our overall working environment.

Figure 1. Permanent Positions per Department
(Total of 341)



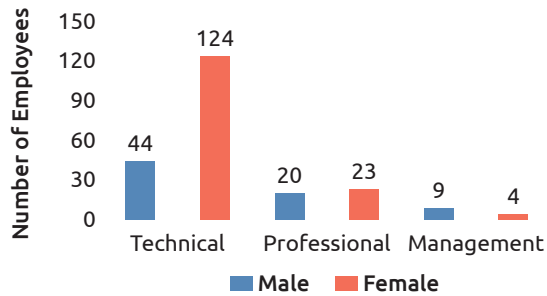
HOW DIVERSE IS THE CREE NATION GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE?

The tables below describe our workforce by gender (figure 2 - Gender Distribution), ethnicity (figure 3 - Ethnic Demographic) and location of work (Figure 4 - Distributions of employees).

Figure 2. Gender Distribution

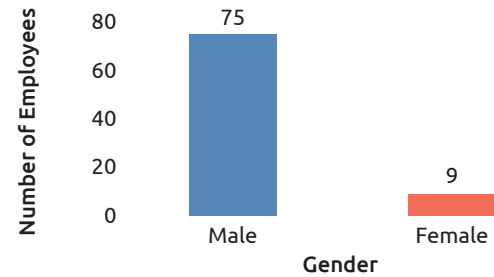
Gender Distribution

(Civilian)



Gender Distribution

(Non-Civilian Permanent and Contractual)

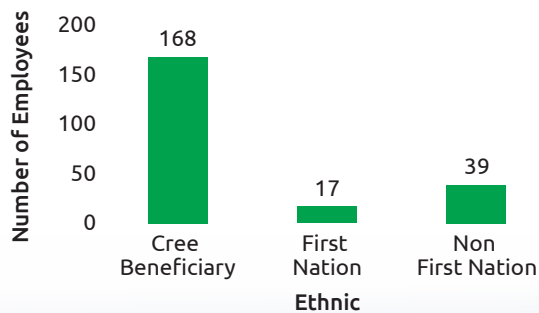


Currently women account for 57 percent of the civilian labor force and 11 percent of the non-civilian labor force.

Figure 3. Ethnic Demographic

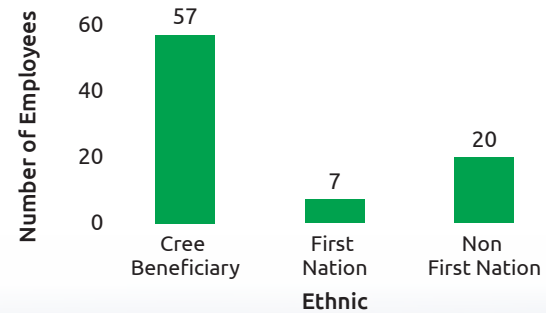
Ethnic Demographic

(Civilian)



Ethnic Demographic

(Non-Civilian)



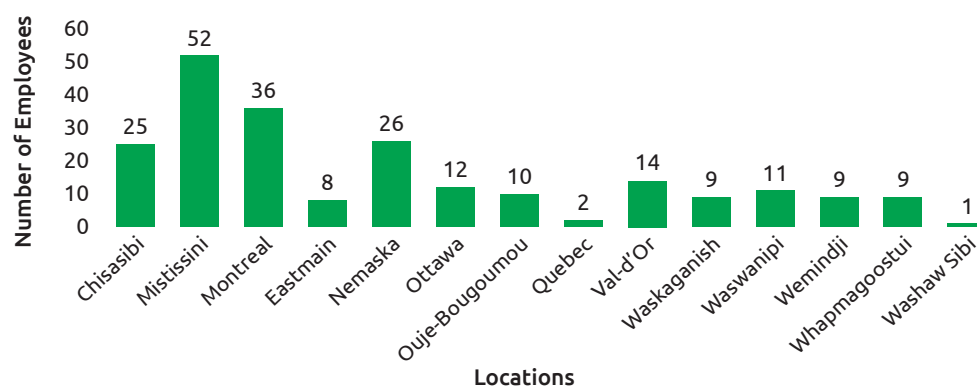
Currently Cree Beneficiary account for 75 percent of the civilian labor force and 68 percent of the non-civilian labor force.



Figure 4. Distribution of Employees

Distribution of Employees

(Civilian)



Distribution of Employees

(Non-Civilian)



Currently, 71 percent of our civilian employees and 98 percent of the non-civilian employees are working in our communities.

ONBOARDING

Work began in 2015 to revamp the Cree Nation Government's process for onboarding of new staff, including the development of tools and guidelines for managers.

The following initiatives were completed in 2016:

- Update processes, related forms and checklists.
- Human Resources also follows up with new employees to see how new staff are being integrated into their new role and the organization.

OUR NEXT STEPS

The path we are on is a multi-year one. We are pleased with our progress to date and look forward to continuing to gain momentum in the years to come with our planned initiatives and envisioned changes. ●



CREE HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Message from the Director
LOUISA SAGANASH

We are pleased to present the 2016-17 activities of Cree Human Resources Development Department (CHRD) of the Cree Nation Government.

CHRD department has managed the agreement respecting the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Program and Related Services (AHRDS) since it was first signed in 1996. This will be the 21st year of its operation. Its head office is in Mistissini and has local offices in the communities of Chisasibi, Wemindji, Eastmain, Waskaganish, Whapmagoostui, Nemaska, Ouje-Bougoumou, Waswanipi and Washaw Sibi, with 35 dedicated Staff servicing the communities and focusing on the labour market needs of employers and individuals in preparation of the many job opportunities throughout Eeyou Istchee. Working together to increase the way individuals access services is a key objective moving forward.

CHRD's front line workers had more training and completed the Career Development Practitioners Training Program in 2016-17. It is important for the CHRD to have its own qualified and professional team providing services in their respective communities.

During last quarter of 2016-17, Employment and Social Development of Canada (ESDC) informed us of increased funding for programs to support additional services, increase the First Nations and Inuit Child Care initiative (FNICCI) funding amount to support urgent repairs and renovations for existing on-reserve child care facilities and, lastly, to increase funding for youth apprenticeship program and services to decrease employment barriers.

The two communities selected for the Youth Apprenticeship Program were Waskaganish and Whapmagoostui. The main objective of the program was to encourage youth who had left school early to reconnect with traditional Cree habits, provide guidance on the path to starting their own business, and show them the benefits of returning to school.

The Department continues to work in collaboration with its partners towards fulfilling its mandate of creating employment opportunities throughout Eeyou Istchee and delivering programs and services that will assist individuals prepare for, find, and keep employment throughout the territory.

At this time we would like to thank all of our partners. We would also like to extend special thanks to the Cree

School Board's Adult Education program's collaboration with the CHRD in carrying out numerous training projects this past year. We are looking forward to their continued participation and partnership in the coming year.

Many thanks to the CHRD team for the excellent work accomplished this past year and their much valued commitment to its vision in helping build a qualified and professional workforce in Eeyou Istchee.

We invite you to review our challenges, accomplishments and future plans.

Meegwetch and God bless.

DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CREE NATION GOVERNMENT			
DIRECTOR CHRD			
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT			
GENERAL SECRETARY			
COORDINATOR OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES			
Chisasibi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cree Employment Officers (2) • Coastal Program Officer • Receptionist Eastmain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cree Employment Officer 	Mistissini <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cree Employment Officers (2) • Career Counsellor (inland) • Inland Program Officer • Youth Program Officer • Communications Officer • Financial Program Officer • Receptionist 	Nemaska <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cree Employment Officer Ouje-Bougoumou <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cree Employment Officer Washaw Sibi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cree Employment Officer Waskaganish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cree Employment Officer 	Waswanipi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cree Employment Officer Whapmagoostui <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cree Employment Officer Wemindji <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Counsellor (coastal) • Cree Employment Officer • Receptionist
COORDINATOR OF TERRITORIAL PROGRAMS			
Sectoral Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mining • Construction 	Sectoral Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forestry • Tourism 	Sectoral Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecom • Transport 	Financial Program Officer
COORDINATOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES			
Junior Accounting Clerk		General Accounting Clerk	

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Cree Human Resources Development Department (CHRD) of the Cree Nation Government manages the Agreement Respecting the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Program and Related Services. This agreement was originally signed as a five year agreement in 1996, renewed in 2001 for five years, then extended for a two year term in 2007, with yearly extensions from then on. The CHRD is going on to its 21st year of service to its clientele in Eeyou Istchee Territory.

CHRD's mandate is:

- To 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 Crees and non-Crees in the Cree communities and throughout the territory.

CHRD fulfills this role by acting as a liaison between employers and the Cree labour force, offering training, employment programs, and services targeting sustainable employment. To help facilitate this mandate, the territorial programs were developed to implement funding provided by the Cree Nation Government. The intended purpose was to provide support for Crees looking to receive training and access employment resources to work in the territory.

Mission: To equip and empower individuals with the skills and knowledge to achieve meaningful and sustainable employment and personal success.

Vision: Help build a qualified and professional workforce to fill any employment need in Eeyou Istchee. We are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of future generations.

Values: CHRD is committed to working together in providing excellent services to Eeyou Istchee based on integrity, fairness, trust, and respect. CHRD values its investment in the personal success of our people.



Cree Human Resources Development (CHRD) Staff

Personnel Plan

CHRD has 35 employees operating throughout the Cree communities that oversee and implement local and regional services offered to the people of Eeyou Istchee. The personnel and operational plan is managed by the Director of the CHRD and is administered by three Coordinators.

CHRD Coordinating Committee

The CHRD coordinating committee consists of the Director, her Administrative Assistant, and three Coordinators who meet on a monthly basis to review their work action plan and to monitor progress of CHRD's operational plan.

Internal Capacity Building Planning Sessions

During the year, the CHRD holds two staff planning sessions. These bi-annual sessions are held to ensure that the team can meet to synergize, update, inform, and build capacity. We also review our past year's challenges and accomplishments at these sessions and plan out the department's future objectives. The summer planning session was held in Ouje-Bougoumou on June 14-15, 2016, and the winter planning session on December 14-15, 2016 in Montreal.

The CHRD staff learned how to increase self-awareness at work, while establishing their own professional objectives through introspective activities. A good review of the database was also included in this training, group exercises were executed to put in practices the new features presented. These planning sessions also play an important role in the department's internal capacity building in response to continual changes within the region.

Staff Recognition Awards

At the yearly December Staff Planning session the CHRD recognizes the efforts of its staff members in three areas of service excellence: Teamwork, Community involvement and Innovation. In 2016-17 the following staff received the awards:

- 1) Teamwork- Norman Blacksmith
- 2) Community Involvement- Judy Capassisi
- 3) Innovation-Deborah Loon

We thank these staff members for their initiative and commitment to the CHRD.

Every year selected CHRD staff attended the CAN-NEXUS conference, which was held on January 23-25,

2017 in Ottawa, Ontario. CANNEXUS is a bilingual National Career Development Conference designed to promote the exchange of information and explore innovative approaches in the areas of career counselling and career development. The conference was first held in 2007 and continues to expand in scope and impact— with more than **900 participants** from across Canada and internationally.

Career Development Practitioner Training

CHRD is proud to announce that the Career Practitioners Development Training Program (CPDTP) is now a recognized and credited program offered by the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue. Indeed, because of the CHRD's commitment to provide training to its front line workers that will result in a recognized and credited diploma, the 12 credit program is now offered as a short undergraduate program called: Employability And Career Development In Aboriginal Context (0832A) to the whole region. This is the only short-program in career development offered in English in the province. This 4 course program is open to anyone meeting the admission criteria of the University.

The program is a great addition to the resources available to the region. It answers to "*professional and personal needs of participants by allowing them to develop knowledge related to counselling, career development, helping relationship in a job counselling context, ethics and employment rights in an aboriginal context.*" Furthermore, the program equips the participants with an introduction to key concepts in counselling and career development and the process necessary for effective work in career development and counselling. This program was developed based on the original CPDTP, created by the Canadian Career Development Foundation.

CHRD employees shall graduate in 2017 and obtain their 12 credits upon the completion of the last course, Employment Law (winter 2017). Employment Law is an introduction to the Quebec Labor Code and related jurisprudence. This course will benefit the Cree Employment Officers by providing them with general knowledge of the employment law and how it may impact their clients' career development.

The next course of the program will be offered in Fall '17, and will be called Career Development Theories in Aboriginal Context. For more details on the program, you can contact UQAT or visit the following website: www.uqat.ca/en/services/firstpeoples/?m=programmes



Career Development Practitioner training

SERVICE DELIVERY INITIATIVES

Update on Federal Negotiations

This last year the Liberal Government of Canada decided to prioritize funding for Indigenous Peoples in Canada with respect to improving employment and job skills of Indigenous Peoples.

In the Federal Budget, the Government stated their intention to: “Advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, through investments in infrastructure and First Nations and Inuit health, actions to strengthen Indigenous communities, funding to support education and training, and measures to promote language and culture revitalization.”

Among other things, they proposed to use types of infrastructure projects to provide employment to local indigenous communities and to ready the local populations through various training initiatives as sketched out below:

- i.) Helping Indigenous people acquire the skills and work experience that they need;
- ii.) Providing \$90 million over two years for 4600 Indigenous post-secondary students;
- iii.) Financing Indspire with \$5 million/year – conditional on receipt of matching funds from the private sector, to help Indigenous students obtain post-secondary postings or employment opportunities;
- iv.) Providing an additional \$50 million to the ASETS Program in 2017-2018;
- v.) Providing \$39.2 to reduce barriers to employment faced by Indigenous youth.

The Cree Nation Government still has some unresolved issues with the Government of Canada that stem from the continued dispute between the parties.

In addition, the Cree Nation Government Department of Cree Human Resource Development has applied to new sources of funding made available by Canada. The primary use of such funding will be to improve our knowledge of the outcomes of measures taken by the CHRD to provide training and employment opportunities for our people. We need to know what works and what does not, who is getting jobs and who isn't. And more importantly, what are the reasons for success or failure and how can we improve what we do?

The Federal-Cree Agreement respecting the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Program and Related Services between Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada and the Cree Regional Authority, was signed on April 25, 2007 (“AHRD Agreement”). This agreement was signed in the context of the Canada-Cree New Relationship Agreement signed the same year. It states:

“The assumption in relation to paragraphs 28.9.1 and 28.9.2 of the JBNQA contemplated by paragraph 4.3 e) of this Agreement is premised on the maintenance or continuation by Canada for each year of the Term of this Agreement of the additional funding for training programs and facilities and of job recruitment and placement services in the Territory, on terms reasonably comparable to that to be provided to the CRA in fiscal year 2008-2009 by the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development (HRSDC).”

The Crees interpret this clause to mean that the funding provided under the Agreement of April 25, 2007 is indexed or augmented to offset the loss in value of this

funding amount due to the rising costs of providing services. Moreover, the Cree Nation Government has on many occasions pointed out that the present method of allocating funds across Canada does not result in a fair distribution of funds to the Cree Nation Government or many other First Nations.

Since the arrival of the Liberal Government of Mr. Trudeau, we have renewed the AHRD agreement that was signed 10 years ago for another year. Most or all of the other communities in Canada signed agreements under the ASETS Program as the AHRD program has been replaced by ASETS.

This last year we had meetings with federal government officials and initiated consultations to find a flexible more appropriate program to be used for developed First Nations in Canada. In addition to this, the CHRD has needs that are crucial for any service provider.

Through consultations with staff, the CHRD has identified the following five key areas:

- a) Labour Market Survey - to identify opportunities for Cree employment;
- b) Adult Upgrading Allowance – to encourage and facilitate a return to school (upgrading) for those who require basic language and numeracy skills;
- c) Monitoring CHRD Clients – to improve rates of success in training programs and job retention rates;
- d) CHRD Funded Training Programs – to increase the diversity of training opportunities;
- e) CHRD Clients with Disabilities – to provide better access to CHRD programs.

We continue to await word on the proposals that we have sent to Canada for program extensions and treaty fulfillment.

Background

Between 2008 and 2016, the increase in CHRD clientele and the cost of delivering services was not matched by an adequate or proportional increase in federal funding. In addition, since 2009 funding indexation, or adjustment of federal funding under the AHRD Agreement to keep the spending power equal to the amount referred to in the Federal NRA, remains an outstanding matter between the Cree Nation Government and Canada. Consequently, CHRD has been forced to either cut services or rely increasingly on funding from the Cree Nation Government in order to maintain the same level of services.

In order to try and remedy this, the CHRD carried out an internal review process late last year, consulting with its employees, key partners, and stakeholders in order to evaluate the current level of services that it provides and to identify potential weaknesses or gaps in service delivery. Five key areas and needs were identified during this consultation: labor market survey, adult upgrading allowances, monitoring for CHRD clients and CHRD funded training programs and CHRD clients with special needs.

CHRD has included the results of this process in a comprehensive funding package that reflects the proportional increase in population and cost of living in Eeyou Istchee during the period in question, the most important service and program delivery needs that are not being met, and new positions that will be needed if CHRD is



Robert Kanatawat, former Chief of Chisasibi, speaking at the Regional Career Fair

to maintain its service delivery standards and remain an effective service delivery model.

The Funding Package was submitted to Service Canada/Employment and Social Development Canada in March, 2017 and key Cree negotiators are continuing to work with Service Canada/Employment and Social Development Canada to finalize it.

Strategic Planning and Annual Operational Plan

This is the final year of the department's strategic plan and much has been accomplished. There is still much to do but all is going well moving forward. The review and revision of the strategic plan started this past year and will have to be finalized sometime in 2017 in order to be ready for implementation in 2018.

Along with our strategic plan, we develop an operational plan every year and list our priorities under program activities and service delivery section. The annual operational plan includes data on ESDC funding, information about consultations with partners, description of supporting activities with their related clientele, targets, and results.

We look forward to continuing to advance in the key directions that will improve the CHRD's capacity to offer programs and services within Eeyou Istchee. We would like to congratulate our staff on their continued efforts to meet these directives.

CHRD Program Policies

This past fiscal year saw the CHRD complete a review of its policy on programs following an extended consultation and input from all CHRD staff as well as members of the ASDAC. This policy sets the eligibility rules for CHRD funding and is therefore the cornerstone in the implementation of our program.

This policy on programs came into effect in 2007 and the main objective of the review was to better reflect the needs of all stakeholders and enhance the efficiency of

our services within the framework of the agreement respecting the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Program and related services as well as the requirements of the agreement concerning a new relationship between the Government of Canada and the Crees of Eeyou Istchee. A manual of procedures will be developed for the use of our staff in order to better support them in the day-to-day management of the program.

The proposed amendments to the policy were presented to the council for discussions at their March meeting and we are expecting final approval before the summer.

PROGRAM DELIVERY – CHRD'S PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Through funding provided on an annual basis from Employment and Social Development Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, and the Cree Nation Government, the CHRD implements programs in four main areas.

Labour Market Development

Under the CHRD's service delivery model, the objective of the Labour Market Programs (LMP) is to improve participation of the Cree labour market by working in partnership with local and regional stakeholders and conducting the following activities in the Cree Communities of Eeyou Istchee.

In 2016-2017, CHRD funded or supported the following LMP related activities:

Regional Career Fair: On October 18-19, 2016 CHRD's 9th Regional Career Fair took place in Wemindji at the Chief Walter Memorial Sports Complex. It brought 20 exhibitors together, employers, academic institutions, and Cree organizations to promote employment and training in Eeyou Istchee. The theme was "Plan for your Success" and over 350 individuals registered for the event from Wemindji, Eastmain, Chisasibi, Oujebougoumou and Nemaska. We were very happy to have the inland communities

join the coastal communities' career fair this year. It gave students, youth, and job seekers opportunities to network with employers and helped them to understand career opportunities that are growing fast in Eeyou Istchee.

Thank you to the CHRD Career Fair organizing committee members: Denise Brown, James Napash, Demerise Mayappo, Benjamin Loon, Sandra Lacroix, Jennifer Longchap, Anna Trapper, Judy Wesley, Martha Matthew, April Linklater and Thomas Blackned.

Special thanks to the Keynote Speakers from across Canada, Keith McIntosh, C.E.O of Plato, New Brunswick; Tina Keeper, former actress of North of 60, Winnipeg, Manitoba; and Robert Kanatewat, former Chief of Chisasibi, Quebec.

We thank all the exhibitors and speakers for their important contributions and for helping make the CHRD's annual career fair such a successful event.

Roundtable on Capacity Building (RCB) Phase III: In 2016-17, the Roundtable on Capacity Building Planning Committee met several times to plan out the next phase and finalize community reports. Much has been accomplished since the initial phase of the RCB and we are moving towards implementing the important recommendations put forth in the findings. A comprehensive

implementation strategy was developed and a report has identified the need to facilitate partnerships between educators and potential employers for capacity building. On November 9th, 2016 the committee made a presentation to the Cree School Board's Regional General Assembly to address the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee's initiative on capacity building. Speakers at the assembly were; Abel Bosum – *Highlight of main milestones*; Philip Awashish – *Journey to Social Justice*; and Robert Kanatewat – *Moving forward*.

Cree Nation Abitibi-Temiscamingue Economic Alliance's Conference 2016: Several CHRD staff attended the Secretariat to the Cree Nation Abitibi-Temiscamingue Economic Alliance's conference "Looking Ahead Together" which prioritized important subjects of Northern Quebec and the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region. The objective of this gathering was to strengthen partnerships, business dialogue, and cultural awareness between Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Eeyou Istchee James Bay, and Nunavik. CHRD's Director was invited as a guest speaker and member of a panel for Education and Training. She also presented the "Cree Mining Workforce". The conference was very informative and the CHRD was very honored to be invited to take part.

Guest Speaker Louisa Saganash, Director of CHRD, at the Economic Alliance Conference



Skills Development

Giving participants the skills and knowledge that they need to become employable within a particular field is the primary purpose of the Skills Development Program. By working in close collaboration with the Cree School Board, other educational partners, and employers it is our hope to identify training that corresponds to growing areas of employment. This will ensure the training offered to our clients and supported by the CHRD is closely tailored to and aligned with employer needs.

In addition to vocational training, there is also a need to ensure that participants are ready for the training that they are about to undertake and have a good chance of success in their program. This allows them to utilize the skills that they have gained in a way that increases their on the job performance and their ability to progress towards a sustainable career. To this, a continuum of support is crucial –beginning when a client is recruited, through pre-training, during training, on to the job site, and in the workplace

The following are key areas of skill development activities during 2016-17:

- 1) **Essential Skills and Life Skills:** Benchmarking our clients as it relates to a given area of employment is a standard practice that the CHRD has undertaken over the past three years. By assessing core literacy, numeracy and document-use skills as they relate to specific jobs we can establish the needs of our clients before they enter training. This allows time to work with them to improve their overall ES skills and also to help them understand how these skills relate to the expectations of the job they plan to establish a career in.
- 2) **Vocational Training:** the CHRD provides funding on an annual basis for clients' travel, living allowances, lodging, and meals to ensure that they can participate in training programs that can lead to employment opportunities. Educational partners are also supported through funding that assists with equipment rental, professional fees, and other course related costs to ensure that training can be delivered both within Cree communities and at vocational training centers.
- 3) **Customized Training:** Working in close partnership with employers helps to identify specific areas of training content within vocational programs that may need to be modified in partnership with the Cree School Board and other educational partners. The main purpose of this is to ensure that training content corresponds as closely as possible to the job requirements. These programs often lead to a high level of employment due to employer training design input.
- 4) **Training and Certification:** Continued client support following the completion of their training is an important part of increasing their employability as well as their retention within their sector of employment. The CHRD assists by providing funding that allows workers to receive additional training to receive key competency cards, work place safety cards,

and underground mining modules that are needed to work on a job site. This removes barriers to employment while giving the client a greater ability to seek employment opportunities.

- 5) **Capacity Building:** As our communities develop within the territory, so too must the skills, competencies, and abilities of our people if we hope to achieve our goal of providing long term, sustainable employment. Capacity building involves close partnerships with multiple organizations, communities and individuals to identify barriers that prevent them from achieving their goals in a sustainable way. This allows for the development of shared goals that increase the ability of individuals, communities and organizations to achieve meaningful results.

2016-17 CHRD Funded or supported Skills Development Training Courses in fields such as:

Accounting Program, Administration, Aviation IFC and Multi Engine, Bus Driver, Career Development, Carpentry, Commercial and Residential Painting, Computing Support Program, Drinking Water Operator Certification Course, Electricity Training Program, ENCS Program, Firefighters, Heavy Equipment Operators, Home Care Assistant Program, ISO Certification Training, Mine & Drilling Training, Northern Building Maintenance, Professional Cooking, RBQ Training, Recreation Leadership, Secretarial Studies Program, Special Needs Educator, Starting a Business, Surveying & Topography, Truck Driver, Welding Training Program.

Employment Development

Integration into the Cree labour market is the primary mandate of the CHRD. While training is an active and important part of the support provided to clients, it is well understood that work experience is an essential part of clients building the life skills, essential skills, and on the job refinement of their vocational training. In many cases, newly trained workers within fields such as health, mining, construction, and education are required to have prior experience in order to be considered strong candidates for employment. Providing funding to build these opportunities for experience is a key initiative that the CHRD supports to increase the work experience of our clientele.

Creating new employment is the second mandate of the CHRD under its service agreement. This is done by working in partnership with our communities, development operations and independent entrepreneurs to develop new areas of employment that create essential services and opportunities within our communities.

The following are key areas of CHRD employment programs activities carried out during 2016-17:

- 1) **Job Placement:** By working in partnership with employers, the CHRD assists clients to find work placements within their field of training or within an area that clients can fill an employment need. This provides a mutually beneficial relationship where the employer gains the workforce needed to complete a project or provide a service while at the same time providing workers with the experience needed to ad-



Annual General Assembly of the Cree Nation Government

vance their careers. As discussed above, this is especially critical for sectors of employment that require specific work experience as hiring criteria.

- 2) **Job Creation:** Supporting new business developments that lead to the creation of long term sustainable careers is an area that the CHRD continues to support on both a local and regional level. This not only broadens the diversity of the job market in Eeyou Istchee but also responds to the growing population that we have in our communities that will be seeking employment.
- 3) **Apprenticeship:** Within certain regulated trades, hours are required to become eligible to take a trades examination. These examinations recognize the skills and knowledge acquired on a work site and are essential to the career advancement of our clients working in the trades. Working in partnership with employers, the CHRD funds apprenticeship programs that build structured experience and progression for newly trained welders, carpenters, mechanics, and other trades people working in Eeyou Istchee.
- 4) **Self Employment and New Enterprises:** To encourage clients to pursue economic opportunities, services and expertise that can lead to sustainable employment and business opportunities. In addition, the CHRD can provide funding to the position itself for a fixed period of time to support the sustainable establishment of that job within a business.

2016-17 CHRD funded or supported Employment Development Programs in fields such as:

Administration, Advance Wilderness First Aid Training, Apprenticeship Program in Construction, Audio Engi-

neer and Studio Technician, Business Implementation, Camp Management & Food Services and Housekeeping, Capacity Building on Financial Management, Certificate Program in Aboriginal Language Revitalization, Chainsaw Safety & Maintenance Training, Coaching on Product Development for Cree Entrepreneurs, Communications Officer, Community Action Program, Community Maintenance Management Systems, Community Radio, Computer Training, Construction Services, Customer Service Attendants, Data Collection and Presentation, Dental Assistant Training, Employment Law Course, Facility Manager Training, Flight Attendant, Hair Stylist and Assistant, Hotel and Hospitality Operation Training, Human Resources, Integration of surveyor graduates into workforce, Light duty Janitor, Marine Captain Training, Firefighters, Sports Manager, Water Maintenance Workers, Northern Station and Passenger Service Agent, Plumbing, Postal Services, Special Needs Educator, Translator.

Youth Programs

Youth programs offered through the CHRD are intended first and foremost to increase the skills, knowledge, and experience of young people to ensure their successful participation in the Cree Labour force. Another key objective of these programs is to provide students with work experience that will help them establish long term career goals, build independence, and develop skills that increase their employability.

In this respect, Youth Programs are multi-faceted, incorporating activities from labour market development, skills development and employment programs towards a targeted demographic.

Each year over 2026 youth participate in 42 youth programs. This is possible by working in partnership with



Youth at Career Fair

the schools to fund programs that promote science and technology, success within academics, and promote early career development. Communities also play a key role in providing work experience opportunities to our youth within band administrations, local businesses, and organizations that are based within the communities. This inclusive approach ensures that our youth are being given a clear sense of the opportunities that exist and the support they need to support their goals.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Strategic Partnership Fund (SPF)

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)'s Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF) is a partnership-driven complement to the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Strategy (ASETS). Its overall objective is to increase the number of aboriginal people integrated into the Canadian labor market.

Cree Employability Skills Development Partnership (CESDP)

Building on the success of our SPF initiative, the 'Eeyou Mining Skills Enhancement Project (EMSEP)', the CHRD responded to an ESDC call for proposals in July/2016 by submitting a multi-year training to employment project for funding called the 'Cree Employability Skills Development Partnership (CESDP)'. After hearing nothing for nine months, we were contacted in March, 2017, and informed there was interest in considering the project. We were asked to make some changes and adjustments and re-submit the proposal, which we did later that month.

The CESDP includes many of the same key elements which contributed to the EMSEP project success –for example, essential skills assessment and instruction, and workplace culture and work-readiness preparation for par-

ticipants in vocational and customized training programs –and will also begin to work with trainers onsite and in the different workplaces where Crees are employed.

In addition to mining, CESDP job coaches will work with industry partners from different sectors –construction, service, tourism, and forestry – in order to take full advantage of local and regional employment opportunities. As with the EMSEP project, the CHRD believes that this kind of partnership approach to workforce development, combining pre-employment assessment and instruction with on-the-job support and coaching, is a sustainable model which will lead not only to more confident, trained and employable Crees but, ultimately, to an increase in job retention rates.

To date, we have not yet received final approval for the CESDP project. Feedback from Employment and Social Development Canada has been favorable, our application is now at the national review level, and we expect a positive response shortly.

Emploi Quebec

The liaison officer is under the Plan Nord's strategy to strengthen the Cree labour force development as outlined in the 2015-20, Plan Nord's action plan. The liaison officer's mandate, under the direction of CHRD, is to ensure liaison between Emploi-Quebec and Cree Communities in regards to employment, program opportunities offered by Emploi-Quebec and to provide information on the Labour Market Information (LMI). The liaison officer also guides Cree community members and businesses toward the completion of projects by using Emploi-Quebec's resources in assisting local and regional economic initiatives and projects.

The main objective to provide LMI to Cree Communities at large, has been achieved. Numerous Labour Mar-

ket Workshops (10) were delivered in Cree communities during the year. In terms of attendance at workshops: 108 participants for inland communities attended activities in Mistissini, Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougamaou and Nemaska. Attendance in coastal communities was a little less, with 95 participants for a total of 203 persons.

It is also important to highlight the participation of many individuals in our regional employment fair held last fall (2016) in Wemindji where dozens of Crees were informed of the job market in the Nord-du-Québec region.

An additional component within this same objective was also successfully explored this year and new brochures from the Emploi-Quebec website were immediately sent to all Community Employment Officers who in turn disseminated them in each of their communities.

Another activity that deserves to be highlighted is the sending of about a hundred letters to Cree Private Entrepreneurships and businesses in order to inform them about the financing program called 'Large Scale Economic Project'. Indeed, more than one hundred Private Cree Businesses from Eeyou Istchee have been contacted by mail, informing them about Emploi-Quebec's funding. Anyone interested and meeting funding criteria is welcome to meet Emploi-Quebec's CPMT to process their file (Commission des partenaires du marché du travail).

In closing, we would like to highlight a new program of Emploi-Quebec: "A program which deserves to be known and, why not, a part of your enterprise this year?" The Workplace Apprentice Program is designed for voluntary-qualification trades: trades that are not subject to a specific government regulation. The program is based on the journey person system. Journey persons are experienced workers who pass their know-how and skills on to apprentices— co-workers who have yet to acquire or have only limited skills in the trade they hope to practice. The skills the apprentice needs to master are specified in an apprenticeship booklet provided at the start of the training. Details about the apprentice's progress are recorded in the same booklet. Training can last from 3 to 36 months depending on the needs of the apprentice.

We also thank Emploi-Quebec for partnering with the CHRD in contributing to work integration and some customized training projects in 2016-17, and more specifically funding the SPF's EMSEP –Eeyou mining skills enhancement project for another year after its completion.

Employment and Social Development Canada-Service Canada

Outreach Program

Service Canada has two service centers in Eeyou Istchee, Chisasibi, and Mistissini within the CHRD Offices. For the other communities, an outreach program was initiated by both partners. In 2016-2017 there were 2 visits to Waskaganish, and 2 visits to Nemaska.

Service Canada agents have been working with our local Cree Employment Officers to offer government of Canada services and to receive applications and benefits of the programs and services disseminated from service centers.

In 2017-18, Service Canada is planning to continue visits to both Waskaganish and Nemaska and possibly add another site - Wemindji or Eastmain.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada

We had a call for proposals from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) for the Skills Link Program and more specifically the mentored work experience component. The proposal was submitted and CHRD/Cree Nation Government received additional funding to initiate more funds for this program.

The communities received additional allocation of funds to hire more youth under this program to gain work experience in several entities throughout the community. Most communities took part in the initiative. Mentored work experience is beneficial to youth so they have some experience prior to entering the job market.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Grand Opening of the Mayaupiu Training Institute

A press release was sent out on May 24, 2016 to announce the Grand Opening of the Mayaupiu Training Institute in Wemindji on June 9, 2016. Guests were given a tour of the facility, followed by an inauguration ceremony. Deputy Grand Chief Rodney Mark conducted the ribbon cutting ceremony, along with representatives from the Cree Nation of Wemindji, Goldcorp, Cree School Board, and the Cree Nation Government.

The Mayaupiu Training Institute houses the offices of CHRD/Cree Nation Government along with Cree



*Grand Opening of the
Mayaupiu Training Institute*

School Board and Goldcorp, and is the first of its kind providing targeted adult training needs for members of the Wemindji Cree Nation and James Bay Cree Nation. Programming for the institute will be driven by industry, market trends, and the needs of the community including continuing education.

Thank you to the CHRD for coordinating the prestigious event and we wish to thank all who joined us for the opening ceremony.

Waskaganish Training and Development Center

The Cree Nation Government's Capital Works Department (CWSD) and CHRD worked in collaboration with partners, the Cree Nation of Waskaganish, and the Cree School Board on the construction of the Waskaganish Training and Development Center.

The concept plans were very similar to the Mayaupiu Training Institute built in Wemindji. An initial meeting with project partners was held in September 2015 during which the concept was presented and adjustments were made as agreed by the partners.

CWSD met with the contractor, architect, and engineer and the first meeting was held on August 29, 2016. The mobilization and beginning of the construction was scheduled to start on September 7, 2016. The founda-



Construction of the Waskaganish Training and Development Center

tion and building structure were completed before the Christmas holidays. After the holidays during the winter months the work resumed and closed the exterior of the building. To date the work is moving along with the interior mechanical and electrical work progressing well. The delivery is scheduled for the end of July 2017 and CHRD could potentially occupy the building by the beginning of September 2017.

CHRD SUCCESS STORIES

SUCCESS STORY – MARVIN OTTER

Marvin Otter is Cree from Washaw Sibi. He attended the Centre de Formation Harricana. He completed the program in Logging and Wood Processing. This was a 30-week program with 2 weeks of on the job training. Marvin was offered a full time job after completing his program. He is a dedicated and punctual employee. His teachers complimented him as a good student. We wish him the best in his further accomplishments.



CHRD SUCCESS STORIES



AUBERGE MAANITAAUKMIKW

In February of 2016 Mr. Louie-Rene Kanatewat opened his Auberge Maanitaaukmikw in Chisasibi. His new Auberge establishment is a 9 bedroom lodging facility and each room is named after a Cree community. CHRD funds a permanent position (Manager/Front desk worker) at the lodge and is currently in its 2nd year of doing so. Whenever an event happens in Chisasibi, the lodge is always booked and Mr. Kanatewat's first year of business was successful.



CREE WORKERS AT STORNOWAY

Stornoway mine is located 350 km north of Mistissini and is the first ever diamond mine in our region. During the construction of the camp, there were about 500 workers. It took almost 2 years to complete all the construction. While in their construction phase, Stornoway mining and recruitment started for the pit.

During the construction of this project, Cree School Board along with CHRD started training people in Heavy Equipment Operations, Ore Extraction, Trucking, Milling and Metal Processing, and Drilling and Blasting courses to prepare the participants for the companies recruitment process.

Once the participants completed their courses, CHRD worked closely with Stornoway to integrate them into work force of the company. It was a tough challenge but the CHRD is pleased with the turnout and hiring of Crees by Stornoway.

Number of Cree working for Stornoway:

- Year 1 of production, 16 Crees hired.
- Year 2 of production, 40 Crees hired.
- As of today, Stornoway has hired 56 Crees.

CHRD SUCCESS STORIES

EARLY NATIVE CHILDCARE SERVICES

Currently running in Mistissini is the Early Native Child-care Services course. This is one of a few courses that has been held within the territory and is important in maintaining quality childcare services. In this particular course there are 18 students from Mistissini and Chisasibi, all of whom receive a training allowance through CHRD. This course is an excellent example of the importance of both student and teacher dedication. Their teacher, Holly Nathan, is always quick to help and encourage her students, and her students are committed and have an impeccable attendance record. When asked, Holly stated that 16 out of 18 are well on their way to passing the course when it ends on June 2, 2017. CHRD has been invited to attend their graduation on June 3, 2017 and we look forward to seeing those devoted students receive the benefit of their hard work and dedication. We wish them luck in their future endeavors in childcare services!



SUCCESS STORY – TRISHINA KATAPATUK

Hello my name is Trishina Katapatuk, I'm from Waskaganish Qc., and I'd like to talk about my education. I was in secondary 4 when I dropped out of high school. I was a young mother and too busy looking after my child which is why I dropped out of school. A few years later I was struggling to find work in our community. I worked in a kitchen and in 2013 I took a cooking course that I completed to become a certified cook. But after 6 years of I working in a Kitchen, I decided to move on to something else. Once I heard there was a course in Waskaganish from CEGEP de St Felicien for a special needs program, I said to myself that I would try it. I went to see the daycare manager at Waas-eskun Child care center and told them I was interested so they gave my name to the program. A few days later I got a letter in the mail that I got accepted. I was kind of nervous at first. I can say it wasn't easy for me but I'm very thankful to my teacher Barbara Pepabano Snowboy for all the help she gave me. I completed my course and graduated in November 2016. I am proud of myself and all my family members were proud of me too. In 2017 there was a job posting from the Cree School Broad for a special need educator so I decided to give it a try, and applied for it. A couple of days later I received a letter that I would have an interview. Of course I was nervous again but a few days later I got a call and told that I got the job. I was so happy and I would like to thank CEGEP for accepting me in to the program and the CHRD for their sponsorship.



CHRD COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

WHAPMAGOOSTUI



Small Photos: <http://www.whapmagoostuifn.com/gallery/>



WHAPMAGOOSTUI

Wachiya from the CHRD Office in Whapmagoostui. It is with great pleasure that I submit this annual report from our Whapmagoostui CHRD Office highlighting the events and activities that emerged for the fiscal year of 2016 – 2017 with the joint ventures and financial assistance of the Regional CHRD Services & other financial contributors.

I would like, first of all, to thank the Whapmagoostui Band Corporation, Cree Human Resources Department, Cree Nation Government, Sabtuan continuing Adult Education, Cree School Board and other local entities that contributed into these programs and projects. Also, we are grateful to the many participants who were involved in various programs that were offered in the community and at the regional level.

For those that have succeeded and completed their studies through various on-the-job training programs, business ventures or start-ups, community assistance programs, Youth assistance/summer student programs, up grading, etc. Congratulations in taking part and making your goals and aspirations achievable through CHRD and our other partners in working together towards our major goals, training, and employment.

Our Community Achievements throughout the year includes:

- **Fire brigade Trainees** – 12 Participants
- **Various on-the-Job Training for WFN employees** – 10 participants
- **Community Action Plan** – 10 participants
- **Youth Programs/Summer Employment/Youth Work Experience** – 14 Participants

Youth Special Project/Youth Apprenticeship Program – 31 participants (A pilot project introduced in October 2016 that concluded March 2017 for at risk Youth. The program assisted Youth in finding good work habits and engaged them in motivational and learning activities. Their work and training experience included community involvement at local events. They were also exposed to a variety of activi-

ties each week to build skills: computer training, first aid training, economic development training, entrepreneurial training, as well as fund raising activities to help Elders and those in need. Overall the project had a positive impact on the Youth that participated and completed the program.)

- **Whale Mart for Sales & Services Trainees & Job Creation** – 5 participants
- **Construction Services/ Minheku Construction** – 16 participants
- **Community Radio Station Manager/Announcers/ Job Creation** – 3 participants
- **Leslie's Coffee Shop Trainees – Creation of New Employment/Job Creation** – 3 participants
- **WFN New Employment** – 6 participants
- Other contributions for training and projects:
 - WEEDCo.** – 1 participant
 - Cree Nation Government** – 12 participants
- New Programs:
 - Carpentry & On-The-Job Training** – 14 participants
 - Educators in Native Childcare and Services (2017-2018)** – 25 participants

CHRD's support and assistance:

- Introductory sessions for new students of CHRD Services
- Job search/employment opportunities: resume building & covering letters, Service Canada EI applications
- Workshops and informational meetings (Economic Development, Youth Council, WFN, Construction, Educators, Sabtuan)
- Career fairs
- Individual career counseling
- Continuous support for employment search, training, support and guidance, information and building a bonds on based trust and a working relationship with our clients

Many thanks to my other CHRD colleagues for being there when assistance is required, the frontline workers for these projects and programs, especially the Director and Coordinator at the Head Office! Thank you!

Nii Maria Kawapit, Community Employment Officer

Note: CHRD could not include all ten community profiles in the annual report so every year we will add one community profile.

CHRD PROGRAM SECTION SUMMARY REPORT, FISCAL YEAR 2016-17

Projects and Participant Training Interventions / All CHRD Programs

CHRD in collaboration with Cree Nation authorities, institutions and employers continues promoting partnerships and 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.

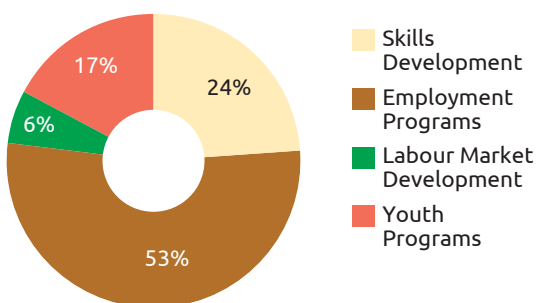
CHRD received hundreds of project submissions in 2016-17. A total of 246 projects received support from CHRD and carried out training activities throughout the communities and territory during the fiscal year. There were more than 3,400 participant interventions in these projects. ●

CHRD Projects and Participant Interventions by Program in Fiscal Year 2016-17

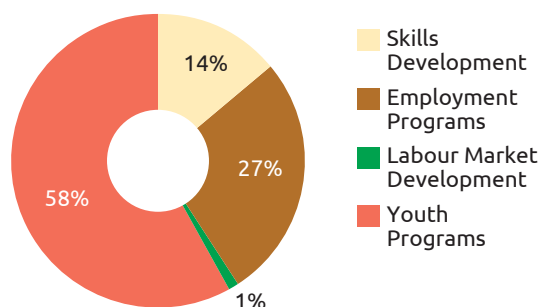
	Number of Projects	Participant Interventions
Skills Development	59	509
Employment Programs	127	919
Special Programs / Disability	3	12
Labour Market Development	14	21
Summer Student Program	18	313
Youth Work Experience	19	176
Cooperative Education	4	1137
Science and Technology	1	400
SPF Mining	1	1
Total	246	3488

Note: Projects with employment and training activities in the fiscal year based on contract dates.

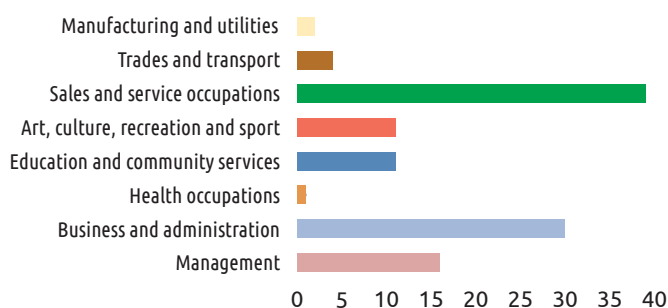
Projects by Program Types, 2016-17



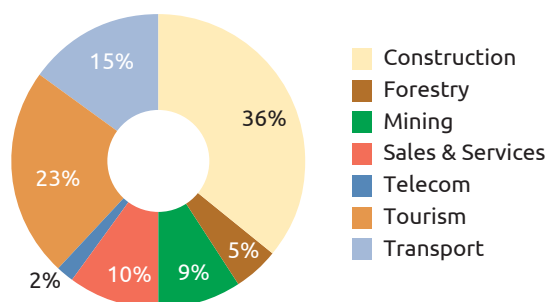
Participants by Program Types, 2016-15



Community-based Projects
by Training Field, 2016-17

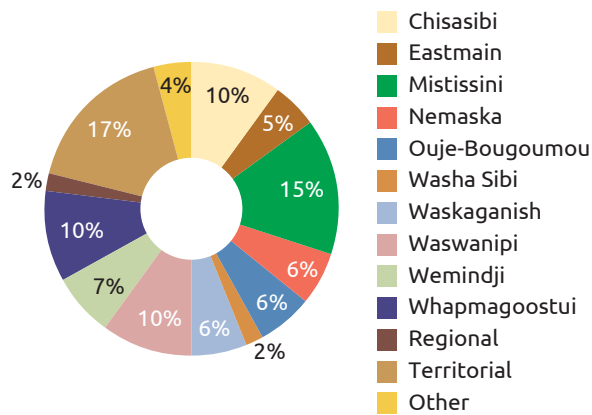


TERRITORIAL PROJECTS
Distribution by Industrial Sector, 2016-17



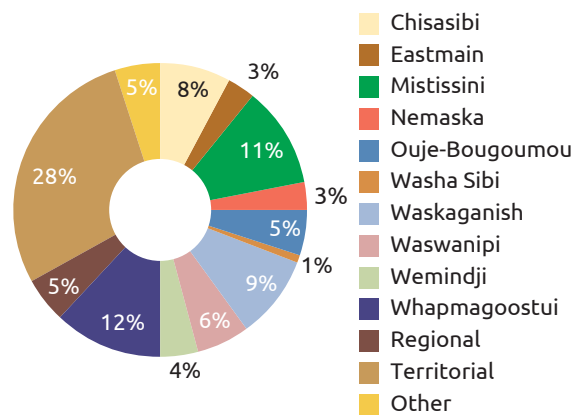
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Distribution of Projects by Community, 2016-17



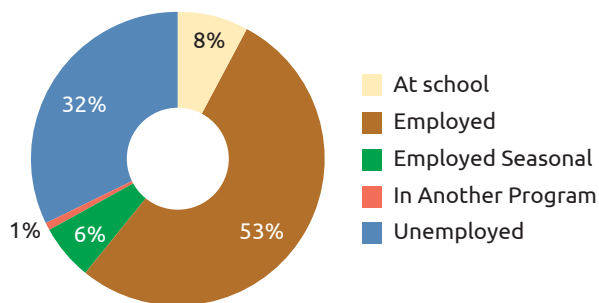
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Distribution of Participants by Community, 2016-17



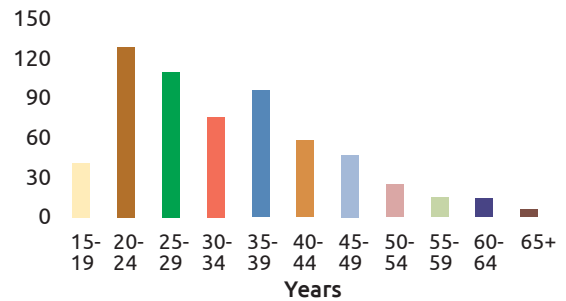
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Participants' Post-training Results, 2016-17



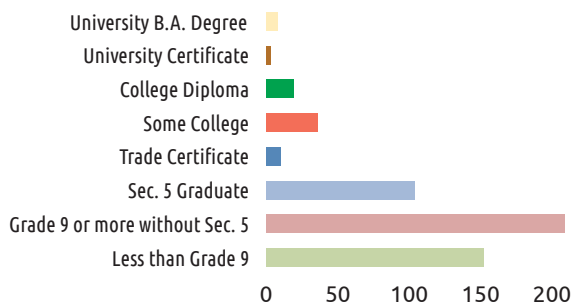
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Participants by Age, 2016-17



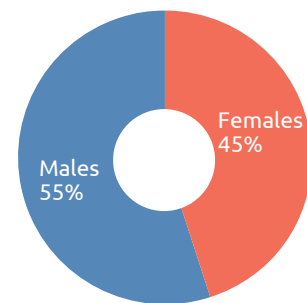
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Participants by Level of Education, 2016-17



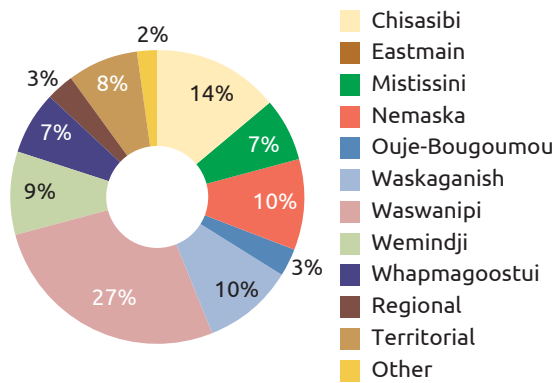
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Distribution by Gender, 2016-17



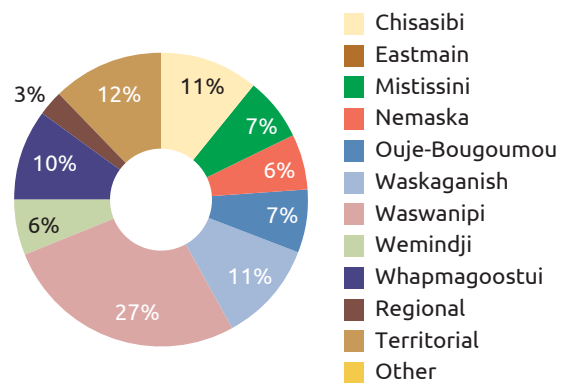
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Distribution of Projects
by Community, 2016-17



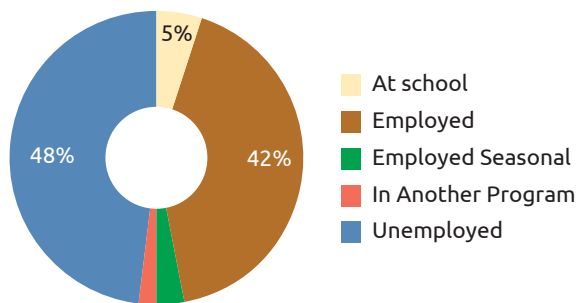
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Distribution of Participants
by Community, 2016-17



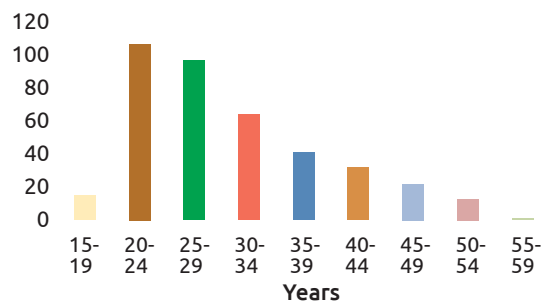
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Participants' Post-training Results, 2016-17



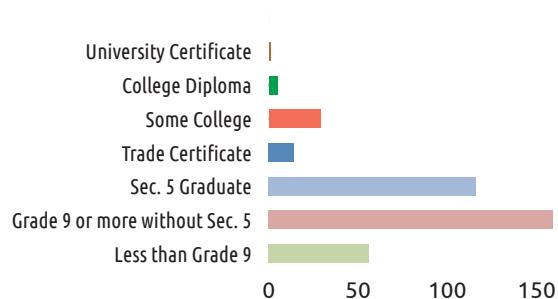
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Participants by Age, 2016-17



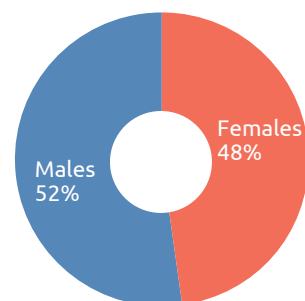
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Participants by Level of Education, 2016-17

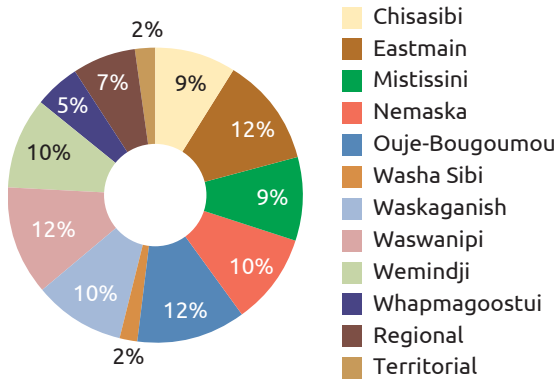


SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

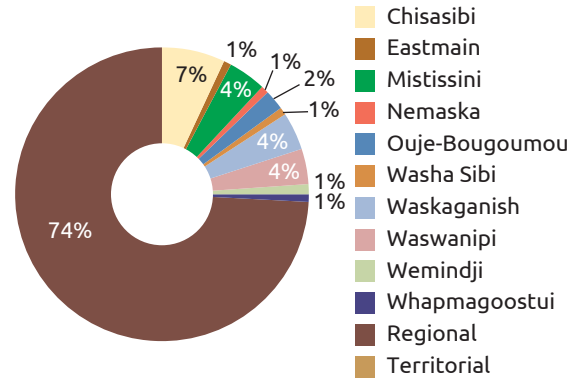
Distribution by Gender, 2016-17



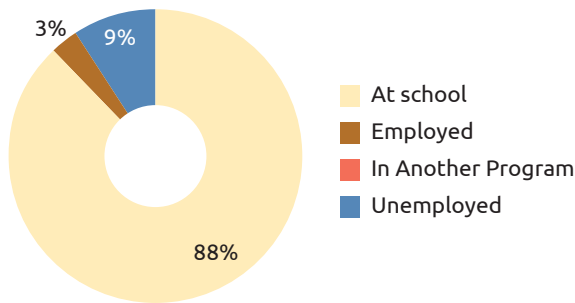
YOUTH PROGRAMS
Distribution of Projects
by Community, 2016-17



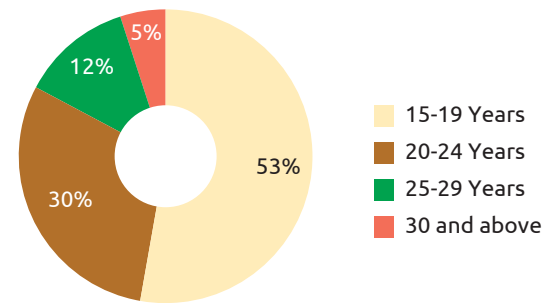
YOUTH PROGRAMS
Distribution of Participants
by Community, 2016-17



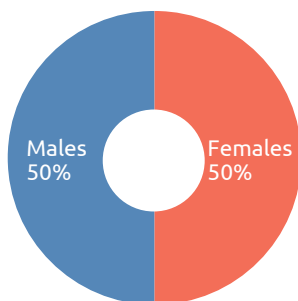
YOUTH PROGRAMS
Participants' Post-training Results, 2016-17



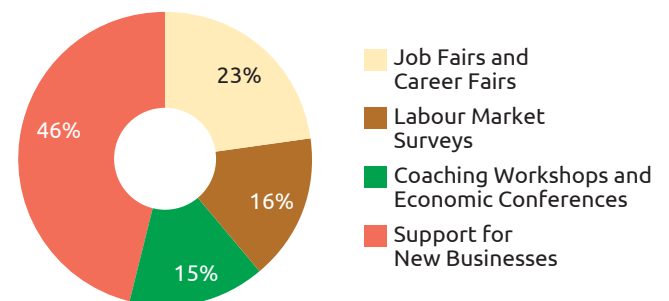
YOUTH PROGRAMS
Participants by Age, 2016-17



YOUTH PROGRAMS
Distribution by Gender, 2016-17



LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMS
Projects by Activity, 2016-17





COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Message from the Director
ANDY BARIBEAU

Key. The last year has been a busy one once again for the team at the Department of Commerce and Industry, or “DCI” as we call ourselves. Generally, the DCI’s reason for being is to support our communities and business people throughout Eeyou Istchee so that our economies become stronger, more diversified, and serve as a reflection of who we are and want to be as Eeyouch and Eenouch. We try to do this through building relationships of collaboration, trust, and a common understanding of where we are and where we want to be.

As we advanced into our second year of being, we can say we were able to accomplish many of our goals. On a personal note, I had to be away from work for a few months due to health reasons but I am extremely proud of the work the DCI team accomplished during this time. They were able to carry key files and serve our communities and partners, in part thanks to the help of a wonderful team of students.

The work DCI does is driven by pillars relating to economic activity sectors. The first sector is that of natural resources, mainly extractive activities such as mining, wind energy, or forestry. The second economic sector is that of the Cree-owned corporations and entities, whether these be our Band development corporations, our companies like Air Creebec, or our entities such as the Cree School Board. The third economic sector pillar is that which we call the “co-operative and sustainable economies”. This includes social economy actors, but also small and medium businesses, our hunters and trappers, the new economies, and efforts to have more women and youth involved in businesses, just to name a few. Of all the economic activity sector pillars, the pillar of cooperative and sustainable economies is the most important, as it defines who we are and who we want to be as communities and as a Nation. In this vision of social and economic development and growth, the two other pillars must be judged by how they can enhance, enrich, and strengthen this third economic pillar.

These economic sector pillars demand that our work constantly questions how the other pillars are impacted, and more importantly, how we can help the third pillar become stronger by making them reflective of our identity, rights, and needs. This cannot be achieved without a tight relationship with our communities, our business people, and our other partners who can contribute to greater and stronger Eeyou economies.

In the natural resources economic activity sector, we have been working on the implementation of various agreements, namely with the implementation of the Bachelor, Renard, Eleonore and Whabouchi mining projects. As our experience grows with mining, we are now beginning to see what areas are going well and which need to be improved. This knowledge will help us as we move along and create a greater balance between socio-economic realities and aspirations and the impacts of these activities. We are also looking at the economic implementation mechanisms related to chapter 3 of the Paix des Braves for the forestry sector. In the coming year, implementation will continue to be a priority, as well as the impact studies being carried out in relation to other possible projects throughout Eeyou Istchee. Ensuring social acceptability and compatibility with our rights and visions remains at the heart of how we address any of these projects.

For the Cree-owned corporations and entities, we still have a lot of work to do to ensure a longer-term vision of activities and how they can enhance and strengthen our Nation. In this economic sector pillar, the concepts of circular economies come into play. At the 2015 “Stronger Together Economic Development Conference”, there was a consensus that the economic “pyramid” of the Cree Nation needed to change. It was a general agreement that 70% of economic activities in Eeyou Istchee stemmed from Cree-owned corporations and entities (especially government services such as education, health, administration, etc.) while 30% of the activities were the result of small and medium businesses. This means that most of the moneys earned in Eeyou Istchee are spent outside of Eeyou Istchee, to the benefit of others and not Cree businesses and communities. This needs to change and we need to build our economic activities to consider the concepts of circular economies so that we maintain our monies in the communities – from the direct suppliers of our corporations and entities to the owners of small businesses where people can spend their moneys for needed goods and services. The Cree-owned corporations and entities are the ideal starting points for applying circular economies. In the coming year, we will work closely with the actors in this economic activity sector to see how we can develop our activities accordingly.

Finally, for our most important economic activity sector, that of the cooperative and sustainable activities,

Of all the economic activity sector pillars, the pillar of cooperative and sustainable economies is the most important, as it defines who we are and who we want to be as communities and as a Nation. In this vision of social and economic development and growth, the two other pillars must be judged by how they can enhance, enrich, and strengthen this third economic pillar.

we have been working with different partners to diversify these sectors. We have the Cree Social Economy Regional Table (“CSERT”), which is composed of representatives from enterprises and entities who work in the fields related to social economies. With the CSERT, we have also initiated a program called the “Cree Story” which is an attempt to develop a certification process of Cree products while developing a synergy among the many actors in activities related to Cree arts and crafts, land use and Cree knowledge. A consultation took place in the summer of 2016 and we plan on having a conference in late 2017.

Also, related to this third pillar is the support we provide to our small and medium business owners. We have been in a transition of the former programs so that we can work with our business people throughout the lives of their businesses. This involves revisiting one of our better-known programs, the Cree Entrepreneur Assistance Fund (“CEAF”). In its previous form, the CEAF provided grants to starting businesses. We have now adapted it to provide a wider diversity of services and possibilities, including the amounts granted. In the 2016-17, approximately \$750 000 in grants were approved for a dozen businesses throughout Eeyou Istchee, allowing for the creation or maintaining of several jobs. Normally, more funds would be approved under the CEAF, but due to the revamping of the program, the activities were limited, but it is now in full operation. We look forward to a more active CEAF in the new year.

In our efforts to continue our support to this third pillar, we also held short training sessions for business owners, and aspiring business owners, related to marketing and web-based marketing.

DCI has also been quite busy with what we can call “special projects”. One of the biggest projects has been the development of mechanisms to properly implement sections 28.10.3 and 28.10.4 of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. These sections deal with priorities for Crees for contract and employment opportunities. Many of the responsibilities related to these sections have been assumed by the Cree Nation through the last agreements signed with Québec and Canada. To achieve this,

we have been working on a trade and commerce agreement which would define measures to implement these sections. In the summer of 2016, we toured the communities to meet with community representatives and political leaders. Throughout the following months, we worked on developing the text for this agreement which has been circulated and should be approved in 2017.

Related to the trade and commerce agreement though independent is also the creation of “Cree Business Registry and Certification”, which would serve not only as a registry for Cree businesses, but would also certify true Cree businesses according to criteria such as Cree ownership, local employment, location of business and local-procurement policies. The registry should begin listing businesses in the summer of 2017 and will also serve to promote opportunities for other sectors besides those covered in the trade and commerce agreement.

DCI has also received funding to create a venture capital fund. The guidelines for this fund are currently being developed. Meanwhile, DCI also maintains the “Regional Development Fund” (“RDF”), which is a fund intended to contribute to the economic initiatives of communities and Cree entities, especially those active in social sectors. We contributed over \$3 000 000 to projects in Eeyou Istchee in 2016-17, such as the construction of the hotels in Eastmain and Chisasibi and to organizations such as the Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association and the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association for their projects.

We have also begun taking steps towards having DCI take on the role of being an information or resource centre for our communities and businesses, so that information and data regarding socio-demographic profiles, legal opinions, support programs, etc. are widely accessible for all communities and members of the Cree Nation.

So, in a nutshell, this is what DCI has been up to in the past year. For the coming year, we have many more projects and hope to be able to be more active with our communities to help them attain their visions and to make the Eeyou-Eenou Nation economies strong and vibrant.

Our Nation, Our Economies! ●



ENVIRONMENT AND REMEDIAL WORKS

Message from the Director
ISAAC VOYAGEUR

As Director of the Department of Environment and Remedial Works, I am pleased to offer this report on our accomplishments in 2016-2017.

Our work this past year has revolved around collaboration with Cree communities, Cree entities, other Cree Nation Government Departments, and other First Nations and governments.

One of this Department's proudest achievements of the past year is the successful launch of our Land Use Planning (LUP) Unit, with a staff of two in Waskaganish and three in Montreal. The LUP Unit was created to help meet the challenges of our commitments under the new Governance Agreements, and to build our capacity for collaborative land use planning in Eeyou Istchee. The Unit will support the new Eeyou Planning Commission, with representatives from all ten Cree communities, working together to develop a Cree vision the land use plan can follow.

Some of our most important work this year has been our collaboration with other First Nations. Migratory caribou play a key role in the traditional activities of the Cree, the Innu, the Naskapi, and the Inuit. Together our nations are working to find solutions to the caribou's drastic population decline across our territories. This year, the Ungava Peninsula Caribou Aboriginal Roundtable (UPCART) completed its *Migratory Caribou Management Strategy*, which is now ready to be adopted by each

nation. The Strategy is the result of years of negotiation and cooperation, and it will guide collaborative caribou management for years to come.

We learned in 2016 that the population of the Leaf River caribou herd has declined by more than 50% over the past five years. Yet Quebec insists on allowing another year of sport hunting of this herd. The situation is eerily familiar: the province waited years before banning the sport hunt on the George River herd, which once numbered in the hundreds of thousands and is now estimated at just 8,900 caribou. All efforts are required to stop the disappearance of these herds, and those efforts include hunting restrictions. It is essential that First Nations come together to manage this species. The loss of migratory caribou from our territories would have devastating impacts on our food security and cultures. I am proud that we have been part of UPCART for the past six years and that we now have a collaborative *Management Strategy* to present to the Cree Nation Government executive and Cree people.

I am proud of the many ways our Department is working with the Cree communities, Cree entities, and other First Nations and governments, to protect Cree lands and waters now and for generations to come.

Meegwetch.

One of this Department's proudest achievements of the past year is the successful launch of our Land Use Planning (LUP) Unit, with a staff of two in Waskaganish and three in Montreal. The LUP Unit was created to help meet the challenges of our commitments under the new Governance Agreements, and to build our capacity for collaborative land use planning in Eeyou Istchee.

INTRODUCTION

The Department of the Environment and Remedial Works 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, forestry, 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 is growing, with 22 staff in the Mistissini, Waskaganish, and Montreal offices. Our team includes biologists, analysts, engineers, management specialists, and project coordinators, supported on every file by our administrative staff, Sharon Pepabano Matoush and Robin Campbell. We work with other Cree Nation Government Departments, Cree entities, and Cree communities to ensure that environmental laws and practices in our territory uphold the JBNQA and the *Paix des Braves Agreement* and sustain our traditional ways of life.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (ESIA)

The Department participates in the federal and provincial environmental review bodies responsible for authorizing development projects in the territory (CO-FEX and COMEX). Section 22 of the JBNQA requires that most proposed projects affecting the territory undergo assessments to identify and mitigate potential problems before a project is authorized. The Department has two new Environmental Analysts, Lucas Del Vecchio and

Pernilla Talec, in addition to Kelly LeBlanc, who was on maternity leave this year. Their work is heavily supported by our Mining Engineer, Aurora Hernandez, and other Department staff within their areas of expertise.

The Department ensures that Cree communities are adequately consulted by review panels, proponents, and other parties at every stage of the ESIA process. In 2016, we completed a report on our Public Participation Project, designed to improve the ways we serve communities in the ESIA process and to complement the JBACE's comprehensive *Public Participation Report*. In February 2017, the JBACE Sub-Committee on Participation began work on a *Best Practices Guide* for proponents.

Our ESIA Unit is continually improving relations with other Cree Nation Government Departments and Cree entities. This year, for example, we launched initiatives to improve coordination with the Cree Health Board, the Department of Capital Works & Services and the Department of Commerce and Industry, to streamline collaboration on projects that overlap in jurisdiction.

Regional and Community Projects under ESIA in 2016-2017

There are several stages to the ESIA process. First, we assess preliminary information and recommend whether a project should be reviewed under the ESIA process. Next, we draft or comment on directives. We analyse and make recommendations on ESIA studies. And finally, we review monitoring and follow-up reports to ensure that conditions of a project's authorization are met. At all stages, we consult with impacted families and communities.

Select Projects Reviewed in 2016-2017 by the ESIA Unit

ESIA Stage	Project Name (Proponent)	Affected Community
Preliminary Information	Back-up well	Waswanipi
	Gee-man Shiipiish Creek Riverbank Rehabilitation	Waskaganish
Directives	Fenelon Mining Project (Wallbridge Mining Corp)	Waskaganish, Washaw Sibi
	Rose Lithium-Tantalum Mining (Critical Elements Corp)	Eastmain, Nemaska, Waskaganish
ESIAs under Review	Forestry Road L-209 (Barrette-Chapais)	Waswanipi
	Kakabat Granular Material Project	Wemindji
	Waswanipi Solid Waste Disposal Site	Waswanipi
	Wood Pellet Processor (Rentech)	Oujé-Bougoumou
Project Monitoring and Follow-up	Forestry Roads H-west & I (Materiaux Blanchet)	Waswanipi
	Bachelor Mining Project (Metanor Resources Inc.)	Waswanipi
	Whabouchi Mining Project (Nemaska Lithium Inc.)	Nemaska
	Eastmain-1-A/Rupert Diversion (Hydro-Québec)	Mistissini, Nemaska, Waskaganish, Eastmain, Wemindji, Chisasibi
	Langlois Mining Project (Nyrstar Corporation)	Waswanipi
	Renard Mining Project (Stornoway Diamond Corp)	Mistissini
	Road 167-N Extension (Transports Québec)	Mistissini
	Eleonore Mining Project (Goldcorp)	Wemindji
	Troilus Mining Project (First Quantum Minerals)	Mistissini
	BlackRock Mining Project (BlackRock Metals Inc.)	Ouje-Bougoumou
	Chisasibi High Ground Park and Quarry CA-2	Chisasibi

Project Highlights

Eleonore: We assessed proposed modifications to the Eleonore gold mine on Wemindji traditional territories, including a modification to the Sturgeon Monitoring Program, to ensure compliance with mitigation measures. We are overseeing a Communications Assessment around this project that could serve as a model for resource development projects across Eeyou Istchee. We collaborated with Wemindji in hosting community meetings to assess communication needs and, at a brainstorming session in April 2017, we began developing an action plan for effectively disseminating project information through multiple forums.

Renard: Stornoway's diamond mine on Mistissini traditional family traplines came into operation this year. The Cree Cultural Center was inaugurated in May 2016, the mine was officially opened in October, and the first diamond sales occurred in November. Several aspects of the Fish Habitat Compensation Plan were realized, including the enlargement of a lake trout spawning ground in the Lagopède Lake. The Wetland Habitat Compensation Plan is still under analysis, but Stornoway has answered COMEX's questions and proposed to invest in wetlands research.

Whabouchi: Nemaska Lithium submitted an update on its spodumene mine near the community of Nemaska. We are reviewing the monitoring, follow-up, and compensation programs. Our Mining Engineer, Aurora Hernandez, sits on all of the active environment committees established through impact benefit agreements in the territory, including the Chinuchi Agreement with Nemaska Lithium. The first meeting of the Whabouchi Environment Committee took place in January 2017.

Bachelor: We reviewed Metanor's request to extend the life of their gold mine at the site of the re-opened Bachelor Lake mill just south of Waswanipi. The extension was approved in February 2017, with 20 additional conditions of authorization. In April 2017, the proponent requested a further extension, proposing to process at this site the ore extracted from their Barry property, located further south on Waswanipi territory. We will analyse this request in the coming months.

MINING

The Department's Mining Engineer, Aurora Hernandez, provides technical support to the Cree-Quebec Table on Mines, which was reestablished in January 2016 to promote collaboration and communication on mining issues. The Table met twice this year to develop a work plan to begin the assessment and clean-up of the many abandoned mining exploration sites scattered throughout Eeyou Istchee.

The Cree Nation Government maintains a database of information on over 400 abandoned exploration sites in the territory. When first identified by tallymen in 2006-2007, about 190 of these sites were said to contain fuel drums or other hazardous material; the remainder were identified as having non-hazardous materials (e.g., drill cores or shacks). We also have a list of possible new aban-

doned mining exploration sites based on public exploration reports published annually by Quebec.

Mine Principale, between Doré Lake and Chibougamau Lake, is one of the larger and more complex abandoned mining sites in the province. It has been given high priority by Quebec for restoration. The department sits on the committee tasked with reviewing the technical aspects of Principale's restoration. Working in collaboration with Ouje-Bougoumou and Chibougamau for the past five years, we have gathered site information and assessed remedial measures, including a comparative study of options for managing the site's three major tailings parks. Consultations are planned in both communities to present the results of our studies.

On a separate issue, a Cree Mining Working Group was informally established and met several times this year to share information and support on mining issues affecting the communities. These include mining exploration projects that are exempt from formal Section 22 reviews. This is a new forum for the communities to provide comments on regional issues and for the department to better understand the issues facing communities on the ground, so we can better focus our work in their support.

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

The Department Director, Isaac Voyageur, is the Regional Environmental Administrator for Category I lands, assisted by our Environmental Liaison Coordinator, Cameron McLean, and our Science Advisor, Alan Penn. We provide funding, guidance, coordination, training, and technical support to Local Environmental Officers (LEOs) in each community. The department provides specialized advice to the communities on a range of environmental issues on all categories of land, and we collaborate with other Cree entities on a variety of files that overlap with environmental issues, such as our work with the Cree Health Board on issues of radon, drinking water, and lead shot.

Every year, we carry out Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessments, which are required by the CMHC and some lending institutions and insurance companies. We monitor and review the annual inventory and cleanup of former Hydro-Québec sites and camps. And we provide technical guidance to the communities on contaminated site management and remediation, including legacy sites, such as Cape Jones/Point Louis XIV, and local remediation at Block D, Chisasibi, and smaller sites in the Cree territory.

Drinking Water and Other Regulations: The Department monitors drinking water quality in the Cree communities, recording and relaying data between the laboratories and the responsible authorities. Sampling results are reviewed with community environment officials, water commissioners, and filtration plant operators, as needed. This year's results consistently support confidence in community water operators and systems.

The Department is collaborating with Capital Works and Services on the development of a distinctively Cree regional regulatory strategy for drinking water supplies. Much of the technical background work has been done. Discussions are underway about the options available to the Cree communities, including options for developing



LEA/LEOs on Site Visit at Sanexen Sol+ soil treatment facility in Montreal-East: Melvin Wesley (Waskaganish), Matthew Tanoush (Nemaska), Adario Masty (Ouje-Bougoumou), Sanexen Staff, Sanexan Staff, Barbara Hester (Waskaganish), Christopher Merriman (Eastmain), Johnny Cooper Jr. (Waswanipi), Matthew Chiskamish (Chisasibi), Cameron McLean (Cree Nation Government).

the local human resources required to manage water supply infrastructure. The *Cree and Naskapi Act* provides the necessary authority for a coordinated policy and regulatory initiatives within the context of Quebec standards. It will be a challenge to develop the necessary collaboration between regional and local levels of Cree government and central and regional levels of the Quebec government.

LAND REGIME ISSUES

The department's Science Advisor, Alan Penn, works on the implementation of the land regime provisions and boundary definitions under Sections 4 and 5 of the *JBNQA*, with assistance from our Environmental Liaison Coordinator, Cameron McLean. There are a number of outstanding boundary issues that still need to be settled.

The reconfiguration of Category 1A lands is progressing slowly. As these boundaries will be final and binding, all aspects are meticulously reviewed by all parties to ensure that each has properly followed their respective requirements for surveys and reviews. The goal is to replace Section 4 of the *JBNQA* with new territorial descriptions based on land surveys (including Ouje-Bougoumou and the modified boundaries of Mistissini). A number of boundary changes are under study in connection with the cancellation of the Nottaway-Broadback-Rupert project, and the results will be incorporated into the new Section 4. We are also seeking some corresponding changes to the land regime in Section 5.

One of the Department's priorities is the development of an appropriate authorization procedure for the occupation and use of lands for infrastructure-related purposes in Category II lands. We are seeking the cancellation of the 500-foot corridors along certain highways, notably Highway 113 in Waswanipi and the access road to Chisasibi, as well as the cancellation of the 200-foot corridors along the banks of major rivers flowing to the west of the James Bay highway. (The 200-foot corridors along the coast of James Bay and Southeast Hudson Bay will likely remain.) We are still seeking an agreement with Quebec on a process for reviewing the boundaries of Category II lands once these corridor-related issues have been settled. The development of Orders-in-Council is already underway for Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini.

Collaborative Forums

EMR Planning Commission: We are working closely with the Inuit in implementing the *Eeyou Marine Region Land Claim Agreement* (EMRLCA). Our Science Advisor, Alan Penn, and our Protected Areas Coordinator, Chantal Tetreault, sit on the EMR Planning Commission. We are working to define the role and responsibilities of the Cree Nation Government, as the owner of the islands, in relation to the Commission and to the Government of Nunavut. We are working with the five coastal communities on the implementation process for the land use plan. We participated in the first phase of consultations in Whapmagoostui and Chisasibi last year.

Cree-Inuit Working Groups: Working with the Cree Nation Government and the Makivik Corporation, we have prepared papers to support the development of collaborative working groups on areas of common interest to the Eeyou Istchee Cree and the Nunavik Inuit. These papers, now available for consultation, include reciprocal harvesting rights north and south of the 55th parallel; community lands and land use planning in Whapmagoostui-Kuujuaapik; and implementation of the EMRLCA-NILCA “Overlap Agreement.”

EIJBRG Natural Resources Committee: The Department participates in the Natural Resource Committee (NRC) established by the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government (EIJBRG) to provide technical advice on natural resource management issues that fall within the jurisdiction of the regional government for Category III lands. Consisting of six Jamesien and six Cree Nation Government representatives, the NRC provides guidance on files related to forestry, land use planning, and protected areas development. Through the NRC, we are formulating recommendations to Quebec regarding government structures and responsibilities, and we are participating in Quebec’s development of a public land use plan. Collaborative work on the NRC will continue through the coming years and is expected to play an important role in implementing the governance agreements.

FORESTRY

The Department Director, Isaac Voyageur, and our Wildlife Management Administrator, Nadia Saganash, sit on the Cree-Quebec Forestry Board (CQFB), which oversees the implementation of Chapter 3 of the *Paix des Braves Agreement*. Our Forestry Engineer, Stephan Ouellet, analyses Forest Management Plans (FMPs) and ensures that the rules of Chapter 3 are applied within Eeyou Istchee and the Baril-Moses territories. He works in collaboration with our Forestry Joint Working Group (JWG) Coordinator, Nicolas Lemieux, to provide technical assistance to the communities and to solve any forestry-related conflicts between the tallymen and Quebec.

Forestry Regime Files in 2016-2017

Harmonization Agreement: Negotiations to harmonize the 2013 *Act on Forest Occupancy* with the *Paix des Braves* concluded in 2016, but a labour strike by Quebec’s lawyers hindered the *Harmonization Agreement’s* signing. Signing is expected in 2017.

T-GIRTS: Local Integrated Land and Resource Management Panels (known by their French acronym, T-GIRTS) are multi-stakeholder panels that provide input on Quebec’s tactical and operational forestry plans. Last year, the Cree T-GIRT representatives tabled proposals to improve the consideration of moose habitat management, road network management, and protection of fishing spawning sites in forestry planning.

Category II lands: A collaborative forest management regime is being established to manage the Category II lands of Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini. The Cree will take charge of forest planning in those ter-

ritories by the year 2023. This year, we facilitated the establishment of a T-GIRT for Category II lands; its first meeting was in March 2017.

Baril-Moses territory: We are overseeing the implementation of the 2015 Administrative Agreement with Quebec concerning the Baril-Moses territory, with respect to forestry activities. The mosaic-cutting pattern and management by trapline have been re-established, and we are working on a consultation process for the territory. Discussions with the Innu community of Mashteuiatsh, on the forest modalities to be applied in that territory, are underway and are expected to benefit both Nations.

Overlapping Protection: We completed the relocation of the Cree sites of special interest identified in the *Paix des Braves Agreement* which overlapped with the biological refuges created through the FMP process of 2008-2013. Once the *Harmonization Agreement* is signed, we will give this file to Quebec for finalization of the relocated sites.

REMEDIAL PROGRAMS

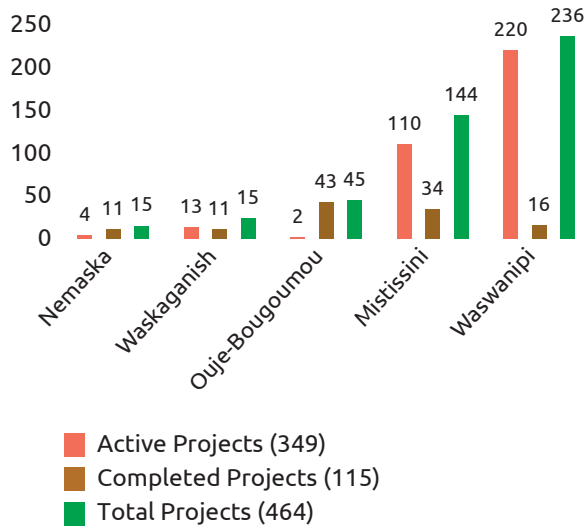
Our Regional Programs Officer-Forestry, Jimmy Iserhoff, works with our Forest Programs Project Monitor, Abel Neeposh, to implement remedial programs in the five Cree communities affected by forestry (Waswanipi, Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou, Waskaganish, and Nemaska). The Department participates in the Forestry Program Prioritization Committee (FPPC), which administers the dispersal of forestry-related program funding through remedial programs. The FPPC meets with Community Forestry Program Officers and department staff throughout the year to review and approve program funding.

The Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement Program: The goal of this program is to conciliate changes due to forestry with the practical concerns of trappers. This year, almost three million dollars was disbursed in remedial funding across the five communities. A total of 119 traplines benefitted from Enhancement projects including cabin construction, tent-frame construction, hunting route development, woodcutting, snow mobile trail development, and subsidies for hunting equipment.

Enhancement Project Funding in 2016-2017

Community	Total Available April 2016	Total Disbursements April 2017
Mistissini	\$833,752.81	\$832,998.18
Nemaska	\$88,254.61	\$82,700.00
Ouej-Bougoumou	\$258,761.07	\$258,761.07
Waskaganish	\$172,510.00	\$172,426.32
Waswanipi	\$1,526,531.88	\$1,515,673.20
	Total Enhancement Funding	Total Disbursements
	\$2,879,810.37	\$2,862,558.77

Enhancement Project in the FIMS database April 2013 - April 2017



The Forestry Information Management System (FIMS) is a geospatial database that manages the huge volume of Enhancement Program information, including meeting minutes, funding agreements, and project reports. The FIMS stores information on 464 Enhancement projects that have been undertaken since its inception in 2013. A large number of these projects remain "Active" but require only final reports to reach completion.

The Forest Resources Development Program: Formerly known as Volet II, this remedial program fosters regional development and job creation by promoting activities that maintain or improve the processing, development, and protection of the forest resource. The agreement authorizing the program ended in March 2015, but \$75,655.65 in funding was carried forward into the current year to fund a silviculture project in Mistissini (\$14,621.15) and a boardwalk extension in Nemaska (\$62,034.50). We are awaiting 14 outstanding Activity Reports to close the Volet II file.

Project Monitoring: The department conducts random spot checks for Enhancement and Volet II projects to ensure compliance with funding agreements. In July and Au-



*Monitoring Spot Check Site Visit August 2016:
Cabin Porch Construction
(2015/16 Enhancement Project M-49B)
William Mianscum, Land User; George Matoush, Tally Person
Photo: Abel Neeposh*

gust 2016, we visited nine accessible Enhancement projects and one Volet II project that had received funding the previous year. All projects had been satisfactorily completed.

GIS MAPPING AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The department's GIS Technicians, Jonathan Elkhoury and Maxine Mark-Stewart, support the full range of our mission and assist other Departments, Cree entities, and the communities with mapping and data storage needs.

Upgrading GIS services: We are in the process of modernizing our information management system into an accessible enterprise geodatabase. We have confirmed that we have the required IT infrastructure to host an ArcGIS server in Montreal, and we have begun to build the data-

ERWD Unit Assisted (Partners/Beneficiaries)	Select GIS Achievements of 2016-17
ESIA Cree Nation Government/Mistissini	Mapped the 167-N road extension; provided geo-referenced photos to assist the Cree Nation Government and Mistissini in auditing the project.
Mining Cree Nation Government/Communities	Produced a series of community maps of abandoned mining exploration sites.
Land Regime Cree Nation Government/Nemaska	Assisted with the reconfiguration of Nemaska's Category II lands; mapped the proposed boundary changes.
Forestry Cree Nation Government/Communities	Worked with JWG and MFFP planners to improve the sharing mechanism for Cree Land Use Maps.
Forestry Cree Nation Government/Waswanipi	Assisted the Forest Authority Department of Waswanipi in obtaining historical satellite images of the territory.
Forestry Cree Nation Government/Communities	Created a template for forestry consultation maps for each trapline affected by forestry within the Baril-Moses area.
Protected Areas Cree Nation Government/Chisasibi	Integrated and digitized information from land-users to create preliminary Protected Areas Proposals for Chisasibi.
Land Use Planning Cree Nation Government/Waswanipi	Began a Cabin Density Analysis in Waswanipi; analysed data and developed a map of non-native cabins per lake.
Land Use Planning Cree Nation Government/Communities	Developed a thematic map of Eeyou Istchee for the Eeyou Planning Commission, displaying layers of geographic information (mining, forestry, occupancy, energy, and wildlife).
Land Use Planning Cree Nation Government/Communities	Prepared a series of CLUM-based thematic maps combining big game data, fixed cultural sites, and travel routes.
Wildlife Cree Nation Government/Communities	Produced 18 basemaps for Cree Nation Government-EMR-CTA researchers to conduct interviews on polar bear populations; mapped 122 geo-referenced polar bear locations in the Eeyou Marine Region.
Wildlife Cree Nation Government/Communities	Produced 8 coastal basemaps to aid the Cree Nation Government-Niskamoon-Hydro-Quebec Research Project on eelgrass decline in Eeyou Istchee.



Mapping Protected Areas Proposals in Chisasibi: George Bearskin (left) identifying important areas in his trapline (FG17) with GIS technician Jonathan Elkhoury, July 2016.

Photo: Christie MacDonald, NCC

base model. A needs assessment and design study will be done before we create the geodatabase and migrate data into it. On a larger scale, to support the growing mandate of the Cree Nation Government under the new Governance Agreements, and to meet the growing needs of the Cree communities in using spatial data for land use planning, we hope to form a GIS Working Group to oversee the consolidation of spatial information in Eeyou Istchee in the coming years.

PROTECTED AREAS (PA)

The Department's Protected Areas Coordinator, Chantal Otter Tétreault, sits on the Eeyou Protected Areas Committee (EPAC), the Eeyou Marine Region (EMR) Planning Commission, and the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment (JBACE). Her work on Protected Areas is supported by the Department Director and all our staff within their areas of expertise.

Key PA Files in 2016-2017

Cree-Quebec Table on Protected Areas and the Environment: Terms of reference have been developed for this senior-level negotiations table, which met for the first time in February 2017. The parties committed to work together on a communications protocol for environmental emergencies. The parties also discussed the status of the Broadback PA (see below).

Broadback: Quebec committed in early 2016 to create the Broadback Biodiversity Reserve and to establish, with the Cree Nation Government and Waswanipi, a special

task force on future expansion of the Reserve. In May 2016, Quebec sent us three conservation plans: for Lake Evans and the Broadback River, Assinica, and Waswanipi Lake. We gathered and submitted comments from the three communities. In the coming months, we will return to Quebec with a more thorough community response to its proposals. Unfortunately, there has been no progress this year with regard to the creation of the Broadback special task force. We have recommended that the Cree-Quebec Table on Protected Areas and the Environment meet again to discuss Quebec's conservation plans and to begin the important work of the special task force in expanding the Broadback Reserve to meet the goals of the Cree Regional Conservation Strategy.

NCC Collaboration: The Cree Nation Government signed a two-year collaboration agreement with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) to create decision-making support tools that will assist in the process of identifying priority conservation areas. The NCC is creating a map of the human footprint and physical features of Eeyou Istchee.

Chisasibi PA Proposal: In partnership with the NCC, we are working with the community of Chisasibi to develop a protected area proposal that represents the community's vision. Following a meeting in Chisasibi in May 2016, we conducted three days of consultation and mapping with the tallymen (all but five tallymen have been interviewed). Our GIS Unit digitized the gathered information and integrated the results into preliminary PA proposals. We will return to Chisasibi to review the potential protected areas scenarios with community members in June 2017.

LAND USE PLANNING

The *Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory* created important new powers for the Cree Nation Government relating to land use and resource planning and management, as well as municipal management. Last year saw two important steps in establishing solid foundations for this expanded mandate.

Most importantly, the Eeyou Planning Commission (EPC) was established, with a mandate to build a collective Cree vision and the capacity to engage on land use planning-related activities throughout all of Eeyou Istchee. Composed of representatives from each of the ten Cree communities, the EPC will work collaboratively with regional planning partners to harmonize the various land use plans with the collective vision, interests and aspirations of the Crees. Last year, the EPC, in collaboration with the Cree Nation Government, launched initiatives to gather community feedback on the objectives of land use planning, to create a communications strategy, and to build important linkages with regional planning partners and key Cree organizations.

To provide technical support for the EPC, and to assist all Cree communities and Cree entities involved in land use planning, a new Land Use Planning (LUP) Unit was created in the Environment Department, with an office in Waskaganish. Christopher Beck, our former Forestry and Protected Areas Advisor, is now our Coordina-

tor of Land Use Planning. Jessica Labrecque, our former Environmental Analyst, is now our Land Use Researcher. Three new employees have been brought in to complete the LUP team: Thierry Mallette, our Land Use Planner, Gordon Blackned, our Land Use Planning Community Liaison Specialist, and Wayne Cheezo, our Land Use Planning Officer.

This team will work with the EPC, the Cree communities, and regional planning partners like the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government and the Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission, to enable the Crees to participate meaningfully in land use planning processes and to map, document, analyze, and apply Cree knowledge and cultural information to those processes.

As a first step in this ongoing collaboration, the LUP Unit is working with the EPC on a survey of the Cree communities to identify the issues and values that should frame land use planning in Eeyou Istchee, and to develop a Cree vision that land use planning can work toward. We have also begun holding open houses where community members can ask questions about land use planning and get information on how to participate in planning processes. Next steps include finalizing the survey results; building community capacity and training to better engage land users in land use planning and mapping activities; and developing a land use mapping program to support the collection, analysis and application of Cree land use information in decision-making processes.

*Eeyou Planning Commission (EPC) meeting
Gatineau, Quebec, April 2017*

Photo: Chris Beck



WILDLIFE

The Department Director, Isaac Voyageur, sits on the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC), supported by our Wildlife Biologist, Aurélie Bourbeau-Lemieux, our Science Advisor, Alan Penn, and our Wildlife Management Administrator, Nadia Saganash. Composed of representatives from the Inuit, Naskapi and Cree nations and the provincial and federal governments, the HFTCC manages the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Regime established under Section 24 of the JBNQA. HFTCC working groups have been created to cover key wildlife issues and files.

Migratory Caribou: There has been no caribou management plan in place in Quebec since 2010. The HFTCC has collaborated with Quebec on an updated provincial plan; however, little progress was made this year.

We have long known that the George River herd is in drastic decline. Once the largest migratory caribou herd in the world, today's population is estimated at a mere 8,900 caribou. The Leaf River herd, thought to be stable five years ago when it numbered 430,000 caribou, has since dropped by more than 50%. The 2016 summer population census and fall classification results give an estimated population of the Leaf River Herd of just 181,000 caribou. It is certain that the herd is in perilous decline.

To reduce the pressure on the caribou, efforts are required to minimize harvest. As the priority of subsistence harvest must apply, the sport hunt must be immediately closed. We recommended this to Quebec in 2016; however, Quebec has refused to close the sport hunt until 2018, instead reducing permit numbers for the coming year. This failure to close the sport hunt when our treaty rights and traditional ways of life are threatened by plunging caribou populations is a breach of the JBNQA and a threat to our future.

UPCART: The Department participates in the Ungava Peninsula Caribou Aboriginal Roundtable (UPCART), composed of the Inuit of Nunavik, the Inuit of Nunatsiavut, the NunatuKavut Community Council, the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, the Innu Nation of Labrador and all the Innu communities from the Quebec region. The UPCART was created in

2013, following the drastic decline of the George River Herd. Since then, the need for our collaboration has increased as the Leaf River herd has declined.

At the UPCART's September 2016 meeting, we significantly advanced a collaborative *Migratory Caribou Management Strategy* that has been in development for the past two years. Intended to set the foundation for the management of the George River and Leaf River herds, the strategy will be implemented through five action plans: 1) Indigenous Sharing Agreement, 2) Research and Monitoring Plan, 3) Habitat Management and Environmental Impact Plan, 4) Stewardship, Education, and Communication Plan, and 5) Social and Economic Plan.

Five of the seven nations have already approved the draft Strategy and are awaiting approval from the Cree nations and the Innu nations of Labrador. The Strategy should be adopted by all nations by the end of Fall 2017, after which it will be presented to the provincial government and the public.

Other Key Wildlife Files in 2016-2017

Woodland Caribou: Although Quebec released its *Action Plan for Woodland Caribou Habitat Management* in April 2016, little action has since been taken. The species recovery plan announced as upcoming last year has not yet been published, and the Cree-Quebec Woodland Caribou Taskforce has not met since 2014. Quebec has continued its monitoring program in Eeyou Istchee, with both aerial flights and telemetric collars, but the Crees were not involved in this work in 2017 due to a lack of advance planning on the part of the province. We are participating in Quebec's new "Partners Table" on woodland caribou management, which includes First Nations, municipalities, conservation groups, and forestry industry representatives. Quebec has announced that it will publish important documentation on woodland caribou management in Spring 2018.

Polar Bear: The HFTCC Polar Bear Working Group continued to develop a Management Plan for the three Polar Bear populations in Quebec. To adequately include Cree input into the Plan, we conducted a project on local knowledge acquisition in the five coastal Cree communities in February 2017, in partnership with the Cree Nation Government, the CTA and the EMR Wildlife Board.

Wolverine: As the Ontario wolverine population expands its range eastward, there is increasing likelihood of finding this endangered species in Eeyou Istchee. Following our Wolverine Awareness Project of 2015, this year we assisted Cree trappers in installing motion-activated cameras along with a baiting station, to help detect wolverine presence. To date, no wolverines have been seen in Eeyou Istchee.

Harvesting Monitoring: The CTA and the Cree Nation Government are working to improve harvesting monitoring capacity. In March 2017, we finalized a Cree harvesting booklet, in which each hunter can compile his harvesting of big game, small game, waterfowl and fish, as well as report important sightings related to wildlife diseases, species at risk, climate change, etc. A tour will be organized to promote the booklet's use in 2017-2018.

Eeyou Marine Region (EMR): The department sits on the EMR Wildlife Board, which contributes to the harmoniza-



Participants in the UPCART meeting in George River, 2016
Photo: Nadia Saganash

tion of wildlife management between inland and offshore regions. This year, the board began consultations in the coastal communities regarding research priorities, and we worked with the CTA to establish a partnership structure.

Coastal Habitat Research: In August 2016, the Cree Nation Government, Niskamoon, and Hydro-Québec signed an *Agreement Concerning Investigations into the Ecology of the Coastal Region of Eeyou Istchee*. The Department sits on the steering committee established to oversee research on eelgrass distribution, coastal oceanographic conditions, and the relationship of traditional land use with the coastal environment.

Rupert Bay IBA: In a collaboration of the Cree Nation Government, the CTA, Nature Canada, the community of Waskaganish, and the EMRWB, we conducted the fifth year of bird surveys in Rupert Bay and offshore islands in the Waskaganish area, gathering information required to designate Rupert Bay as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) under the IBA Program of BirdLife International. A workshop on bird identification was held in Waskaganish in Summer 2016, prior to conducting surveys on Charlton Island. Bird species at risk were sighted, and large mammal observations were made, including polar bear and caribou. To help us understand bird migration patterns in the area, we installed two Motus towers—one near the CTA office in Waskaganish and the other on Charlton island—that can detect birds passing within a 15 km radius.



WSI information officers, Jennilee Trapper and Anderson Jolly, in the WSI office in the Nemaska band office, June 2016
Photo: Aurélie Bourbeau-Lemieux

Weh-Sees Indohoun (WSI): The Weh-Sees Indohoun and Eastmain Special Wildlife Management Sector (WSI) was established to monitor and control access to fish and wildlife resources during the construction phase of the Eastmain-1A/Sarcelle/Rupert diversion project. After construction ended, concerns remained over the potential impacts of permanent access created by the project, and the WSI regulations were extended to monitor these. Since 2015, the WSI zone has been managed by the Cree Nation Government, with funding from Niskamoon and support from the Cree communities and the CTA. In 2016, a WSI office was provided by Nemaska from May to September, and two Information Officers were hired to monitor the fishing season in the zone. A total of 1,335 access rights were issued to 2,883 fishermen, who caught 22,932 fish, of which 10,108 fish were kept. Ten lakes reached their quota and were then closed to sport fishing. The WSI has been an effective wildlife management tool and we have advocated for its continuation but Quebec has decided to abolish the regulations, so 2017 will be the final year for the WSI zone. ●

Participants in the workshop on bird observation in Waskaganish, Summer 2016
Photo: Aurélie Bourbeau-Lemieux





CAPITAL WORKS AND SERVICES

Message from the Interim Director
MARTIN DESGAGNÉ, Engineer, MBA

This year has been a challenging one for the Department of Capital Works and Services (CWS). We saw the departure of our former Director, Mr. Henry Mianscum, who retired on June 3, 2016. Henry had been working for the Cree Nation since his 20's and adamantly believed in the development of the Crees and the Cree local and regional governments. Henry was a great leader who inspired us with commitment and dedication to his work. He told us in his last memo that he loved and cherished his work, which he demonstrated every day. We had the pleasure of working under his leadership.

It was under Henry's leadership that the Capital Works and Services mission statement advocated for creating goals and objectives that work towards achieving our ultimate goal: "Ensuring that the Eeyou/Eenou local and regional governments' infrastructure and related services enhance people's quality of life".

In order to continue the work Henry Mianscum started, I was asked to act as Interim Director for the Department of Capital Works and Services following his departure. It is with great honour and humility that I accepted to lead our team after 5 ½ years of service as Coordinator of Capital Works for CWS.

I have been working with the Cree Nation as an engineer since graduating from university 25 years ago in 1992. I first started working for a contractor in civil works where I managed infrastructure projects in Mistissini. I then moved to Nemaska to work at the Nemaska Head office from 1997 to 2003 where I was a civil engineer for the former Community Services Agency of the Cree Regional Authority. From 2003 to 2011, before returning to the Cree Nation Government, I worked for a large company on its files with the Cree Nation and the Algonquin First Nation.

In our department's report, we will present you all our activities related to:

Engineering Services

- Community Planning
 - o Community Capital Plans
 - o GIS Mapping of the Cree communities
- Fire Protection Support Services
 - o Fire Prevention Support Services
 - o Emergency Measures Support Services

- Procurement Activities for the Cree Nation Government
 - o Movable Asset Inventory of the Cree Nation Government
 - o Management of Leases for the Cree Nation Government

Capital Works

- Housing Support Services
- Capital Project Management
- Operations and Maintenance of the Cree Nation Government Facilities

As director of CWS for this year, I also focused on team building and communication within different sectors of our department. I held quarterly meetings with all the managers to synergize within the department. This was followed by a regular coordination meeting of the smaller divisions, such as the procurement and fire protection teams. The Montreal and Val-d'Or coordination meetings continued through the year.

Lastly, I would like to thank Cree Nation Government Management for their ongoing support and trust in our team. I would like also to thank all the Capital Works and Services staff for their dedication and hard work—from the janitor and the maintenance workers in the Cree communities, to our administrative and professional staff, you're all the reason we had a great year together!

HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

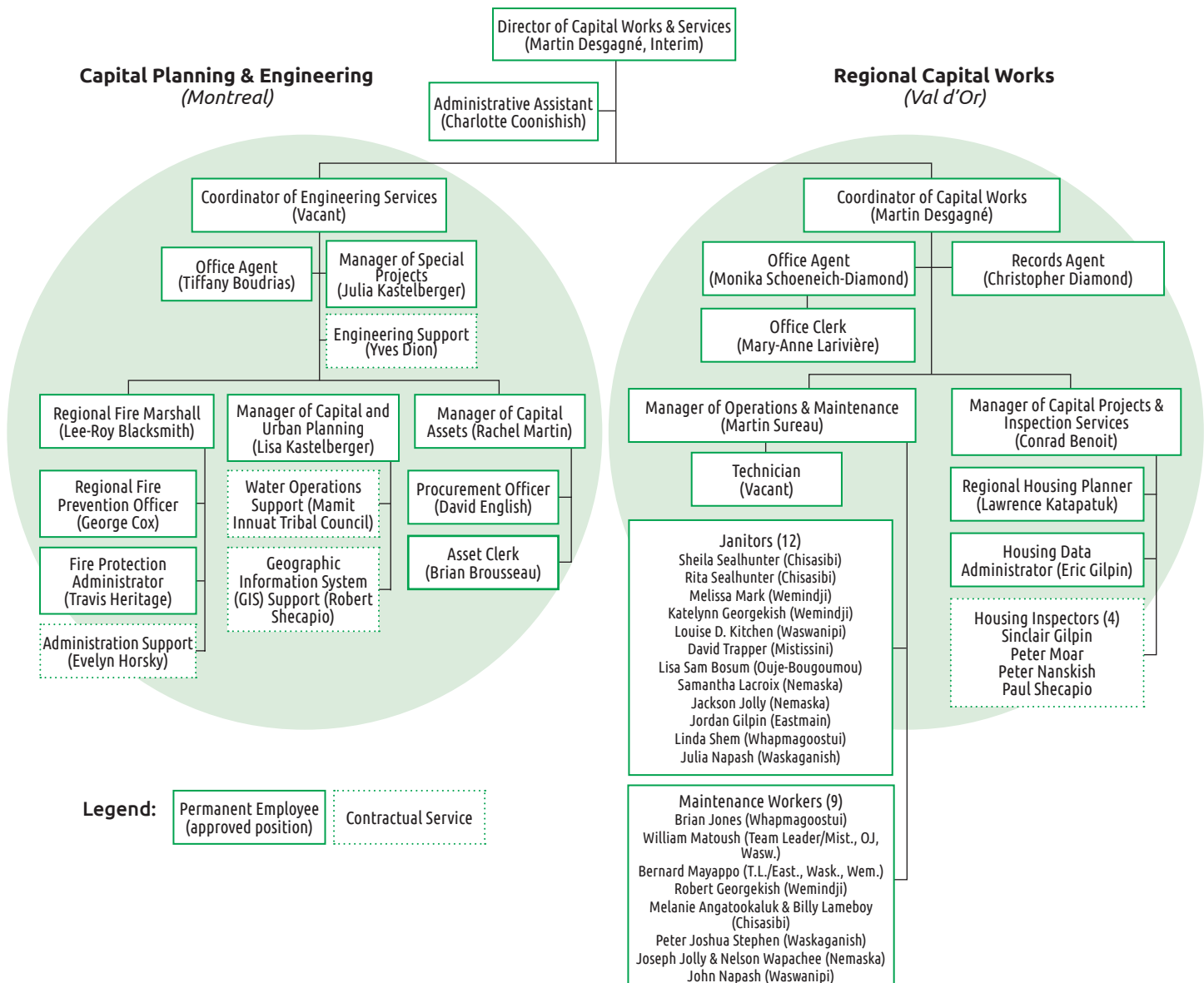
Organizational Structure of Personnel

The organizational structure of the department of personnel reflects the two main mandates: a) Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) Capital Planning and Engineering Services and b) Regional Capital Works Programs and Services. The department has been divided between two offices for efficiency purposes with partial decentralization from Val-d'Or as shown on Figure 1, "Organisation Diagram: Approved Personnel Structure for 2016-2017."



Capital Works and Services Employees

Figure 1. Organizational Diagram, Approved Personnel Structure 2016 - 2017



Legend: Permanent Employee (approved 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 administrative level through funding provided by the Canada-Cree New Relationship Agreement (NRA).

CWS manages the administration and annual update of the NRA Five-Year Capital Plan, incorporating local government projects from all nine communities. A capital planning timeline has been established with a series of deadlines for the submittal of project funding requests and supporting project justification. The department ensures that various technical standards are respected for every project prior to the recommendation of projects for funding. The final budget is approved by the council of the Cree Nation Government in December of each year for the upcoming fiscal year's projects. Approximately \$72,640,500 worth of projects in all nine communities was approved for 2016-2017, as illustrated in Figure 1 and Table 1.

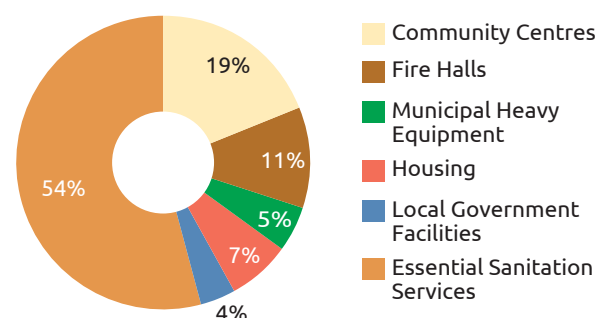
CWS is also responsible for the allocation, monitoring, and reporting of other sources of funding received through Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC). In 2015-2016, the Cree Nation Government was the recipient of the following three AANDC funding initiatives:

1. **Gathering Strength:** \$1,639,890 was allocated towards the following projects:
 - a) Whapmagoostui First Nation's Community Storm Drainage;
 - b) Whapmagoostui First Nation's Inspection and Correction of water service entrances in Old Sector;
 - c) Professional services of Yves Dion related to water projects,
2. **Water Strategy:** \$1,006,700 was allocated towards the following projects:
 - a) Cree Nation of Chisasibi's Addition of Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) to Reservoir.
3. **Water Operator Training:** \$455,200 was directed towards Water Operator training activities, equipment purchases, and Circuit Rider Professional Services.
 - a) Training: Two water operators' commission meetings were hosted by CWS in 2016-2017. The purpose of these meetings was to bring together all drinking and wastewater operators from the nine communities to discuss topics related to safe water operation. The first meeting took place on June 28 and 29, 2016 in Montreal, QC. A site visit to Xylem for a demonstration and training on Flygt Pumps (components, maintenance & troubleshooting) was included within this meeting.
 - b) The second meeting took place on March 22, 23 and 24, 2017 in Montreal, QC. During this meeting, trainings on generator maintenance and lockout procedures were provided. Participants were also provided with exhibitor passes to the AMERICANA tradeshow to learn about new technologies and meet vendors and suppliers.

Table 1. Approved 2016-2017 NRA Local Projects

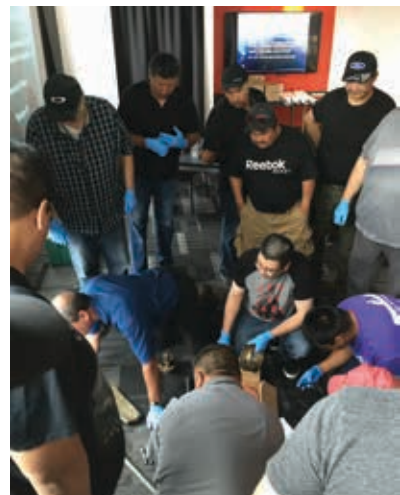
	Local Government Programs	2016-2017
1.0	Local Government Facilities	
1.1	Local Administration Building	\$575,350
1.2	Municipal Garages & Warehouses	\$2,677,430
	Sub-total	\$3,252,780
2.0	Essential Sanitation Services & Related Infrastructures	
2.1	Drinking Water Facilities	\$2,526,740
2.2	Waste Water Facilities	\$1,372,000
2.3	Residential Lot Development	\$16,149,063
2.4	Municipal & Institutional Lot Development	\$2,016,673
2.5	Water Reservoirs	\$713,300
2.6	Major Replacements & Corrections to Deficiencies	\$13,394,850
2.7	Solid Waste Management	\$977,371
2.8	Access Roads (1A land)	\$100,000
2.9	Studies	\$577,375
2.10	Cemeteries	\$988,461
2.11	Street Lighting	\$690,730
	Sub-total	\$39,506,564
3.0	Community Centre	\$13,453,941
4.0	Fire Halls	\$7,939,824
5.0	Municipal Heavy Equipment Revolving Fund	\$3,487,390
6.0	Housing	\$5,000,000
	Grand total	\$72,640,500

Figure 1. Summary of Approved 2016-2017 NRA Local Projects





Water Operator Training held June 28-29, 2016 in Montreal, Quebec

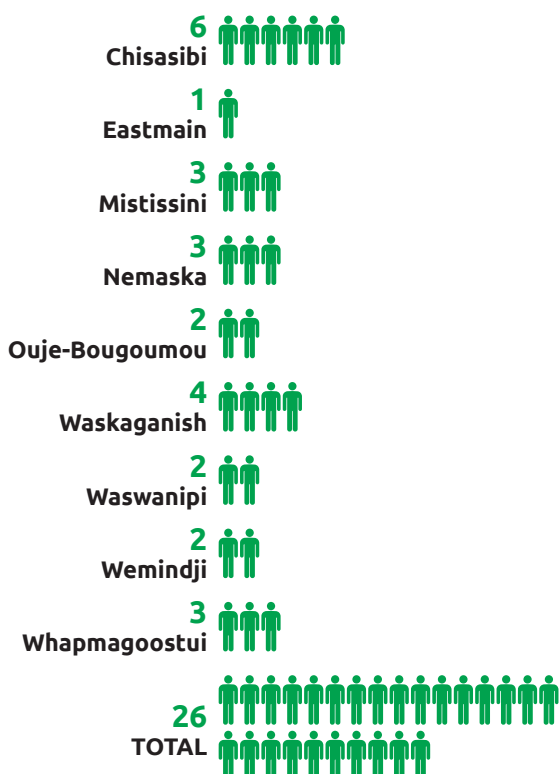


CWS has continued to recruit and organize trainings in order to have certified Drinking and Wastewater Operators present in the nine communities. At present, there are 37 certified operators divided amongst the communities, per Figure 2.

- c) Equipment Purchases: New equipment was purchased for community use including: journals for use as Log Books and reflectoscopes for fire hydrant inspection. The Enigma Multi-Point Correlation Leak Detection unit was also repaired.

- d) Professional Services: The Mamit Innuat Tribal Council (MITC) was engaged through this funding initiative to provide a Circuit Rider Training Program (CRTP) for water operators in all their communities along with a 24/7 hotline service for water operator use in case of emergencies or day-to-day inquiries.

Figure 2. Number of Certified Local Water Operators per Community



NRA Reporting Inventory

CWS is responsible for maintaining an ongoing record of all capital projects created through 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 the NRA funds were used. The collection of reporting documents is an ongoing task for CWS.

Geographic Information System (GIS)

GIS is a mapping tool which will help local governments in future planning of projects and community development. In 2014-2015, the service of Mr. Robert Shecapio was engaged to create a GIS map for the Whapmagoostui First Nation as a pilot project. Based on the success of the Whapmagoostui pilot project, CWS extended the project to include the mapping of Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou and Waswanipi in 2016-2017, with the ultimate goal of mapping all of the Cree communities. These maps incorporate all information collected through previously funded NRA projects (building plans, existing infrastructure, community master plans, etc.) with interchangeable and overlapping layers to create a comprehensive planning tool.

Engineering Support for Water-Related Projects

CWS provides additional engineering support for water-related infrastructure projects within the Cree communities. Throughout the year, professional engineering services were offered to communities

undertaking projects related to drinking and wastewater infrastructure. These services are ongoing and are being offered through the CWS department in order to ensure that all work being executed on these services follow the essential sanitation guidelines and abide by the local government, Cree Nation Government, and provincial and/or federal by-laws and standards.

Establishment of By-Laws, Standards & Guidelines

An obligation of the NRA is the establishment of minimal regional standards that meet or exceed federal and provincial standards. CWS has been mandated to develop, recommend and implement Cree Nation Government by-laws respecting the regulation of buildings for the protection of public health and safety, including the construction, maintenance, repair and demolition of buildings.

Project Management Services for Local Governments

On an as needed basis CWS provides project management services to local governments upon request.

FIRE PROTECTION ACTIVITIES

Fire Protection Certification - FF1

Since March 2013, CWS has been implementing the Fire Protection by-law, which is nearly completed. We are pleased to have had thirty-seven new graduates who finished their FF1 certification in 2016 from the communities of Waskaganish, Wemindji, Nemaska,

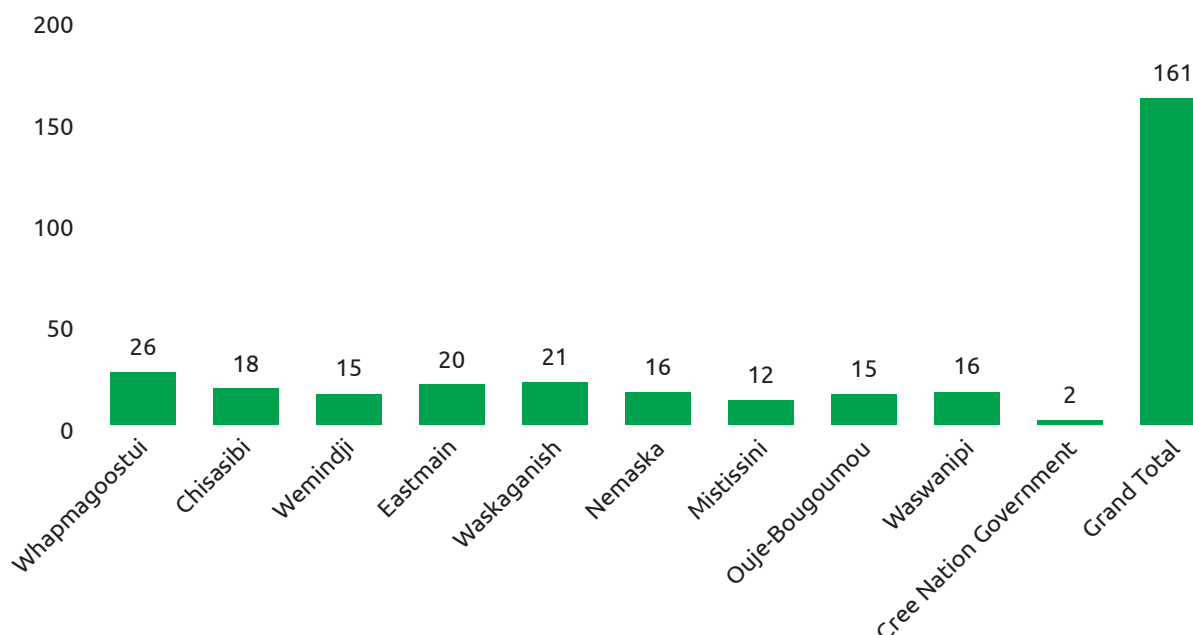
Eastmain, and Whapmagoostui. This brings the total of certified firefighters at the end of this fiscal year to 161.

We also have eight fire prevention officers, who were certified under the International Fire Prevention program, presently taking part in the Fire Prevention program under the sponsorship of JIBC. They are now all full-time employees with local fire departments. Moreover, this guarantees the Cree of Eeyou Istchee a work force of professional Fire Protection Service personnel and ensures the continued protection of our communities.

All the certificates were presented at the graduation ceremony that was held at the Bonaventure Hotel in Montreal on March 15, 2017 with friends and family in attendance. Mr. Lee Roy Blacksmith, Regional Fire Marshall, welcomed everyone as well as Mr. George Cox, Regional Fire Prevention Officer, who acted as Master of Ceremonies. We were also pleased to have Mr. Henry Mianscum, present at the ceremony, who was instrumental in launching the training. Mr. Romeo Saganash spoke glowingly of this program saying that it was one of the more successful ones in our communities. We are extremely proud of these young men and women and their achievements.

Moreover, the fiscal year brought completions of two fire halls: Waskaganish on July 21, 2016 and Whapmagoostui on October 27, 2016. Both fire halls held a grand opening ceremony that the Regional Fire Marshall attended. Mr. Blacksmith gave motivational speeches of encouragement and commended great success to both communities.

Figure 3. Number of Cree Nation Certified Firefighters per Community





Fire Prevention in the Cree Nation

Currently, we have eight certified fire prevention personnel in the Cree Nation. The fire prevention program lasted a lengthy 18 months. Although the program had been challenging and intensive, it will now allow the local fire prevention officers to perform the prevention methods, functions, physical demands, and administrative work that a fire prevention officer must apply within his or her community. The work of a fire prevention officer will be an ongoing process that everyone in the community can benefit from. When people of a community are informed and provided with fire safety information through public education, there is lesser risk for fire occurrences and injuries.

As the population and communities continue to grow, the risk of fires will also increase. Therefore, the need to implement and establish fire prevention programs and services for a community has to be in place. The challenge, however, is where and how to begin. The fire prevention officers will have to work together to come up with a strategy on how to move forward. Fire prevention has been one of the services that the fire departments have not been aware of in detail and assessment. Although we do have certified firefighters and fire officers, these personnel were not trained in the technical skills of preventing fires. It is only through a proactive approach in fire inspections, public education programs, and building blueprint reviews that problems are identified during design phase instead during construction that we can improve fire protection services. It is crucial that fire prevention officers are involved at the onset of the construction of buildings and reviewing plans so that fire-safety problems are lessened.

Emergency Measures Plan

The Capital Works and Services continue to collaborate with various stakeholders in the development

of emergency preparedness and response plans on behalf of the nine Cree communities. The Emergency Measures Plan (EMP) is vital because the fact that the Cree communities are relatively small and have fewer resources than what is generally available in large southern municipalities. As a result, our communities' emergency services have less experience in dealing with unexpected incidents and may put our communities at greater risk to the hazards of an emergency situation.

All Public Safety Officer (PSOs) have successfully completed introductory Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and Incident Command System (ICS) training. Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has the legal responsibility to assist First Nations in developing risk mitigations programs for their communities. INAC provides training courses on Emergency Management throughout the year and have been well attended by Cree stakeholders.

The Capital Works and Services Departments continues to assist the local Cree First Nation communities with the Emergency Measures Plan (EMP). In fact, the Emergency Measures Plan (EMP) developed for all First Nations territories in general is misleading. As written, the EMP is just a Preparedness Plan and not a response plan. Thus, the plan is unusable. The Capital Works and Services Departments has taken the initiative alongside community stakeholders in developing 'Operational Plans' based on specific disaster scenarios that the communities may experience. The next step is for the Capital Works and Services Department to test the communities Emergency Measures Plan (EMP) and Operational Plans through a simulated community-based disaster scenarios exercise. This exercise will involve all first responders and regional and local Cree entities operating in the community. The goal will be to have better local level coordination and define each entity's roles and responsibilities during times of community emergency.

PROCUREMENT & ASSET MANAGEMENT

The Department of Capital Works and Services was given the mandate to manage procurement activities and track assets for the Cree Nation Government. The procurement team is responsible for the acquisition and delivery of goods and services as well as tendering of construction projects. In 2016-17, over \$30M in purchase orders were issued by CWS for goods, services, and construction contracts.

Figure 4. Breakdown of Purchases Made

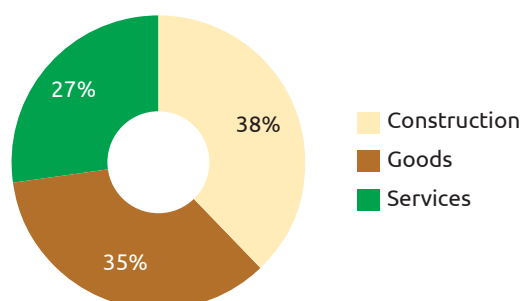


Figure 5. Percentage of Purchases Made Per Cost Bracket

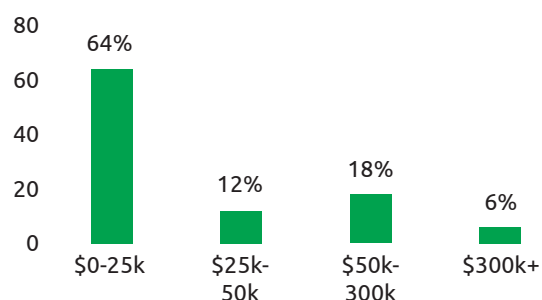


Table 2. CWS issued 34 Call for tenders in 2016-17

Whpmagoostui First Nation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architectural services for the analysis of the Whpmagoostui First Nation warehousing needs Increase of water supply capacity coordination, engineering, support in hydrogeology and recommendations regarding exploratory drilling and pumping Underground water research works in Whpmagoostui Leasing of heavy machinery vehicles for Whpmagoostui First Nation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whpmagoostui warehouse expansion Replacement of water service entrances Leasing of zamboni Whpmagoostui First Nation Fire hydrants Whpmagoostui water supply design & construction Community storm drainage plan Whpmagoostui Community storm drainage - Area 2 to Gawk Street
EPPF	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovation of Police Station in Eastmain Eeyou Eenou Police Force vehicles Architectural services for new Eenou Eenou Police Force detachment building Waskaganish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering Services for Eeyou Eenou police force detachment building Waskaganish Cree Eeyou Eenou Regional police headquarters expansion phase II Sale of Eeyou Eenou Police Force vehicles
CWS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cree Nation Government Duplexes renovation Fox & Marten trail Construction of the Waskaganish Training and Development Center Construction of residential duplex for the Cree Nation Government in Mistissini Asset condition monitoring of the Cree communities of Chisasibi, Waskaganish, Waswanipi Architectural services Transitional Homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of 5 Residences for the Cree Nation Government in Waskaganish Fabrication of 3 groups of 6 prefabricated modular row houses Paving Justice facilities Waskaganish Paving Justice facilities Eastmain Community Road Paving Cree Nation Government Waskaganish office furniture
Justice	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's Shelter Waswanipi appliances Paving Justice facilities Eastmain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's Shelter Waswanipi furniture Paving Justice facilities Waskaganish

Table 2 *continued*

Fire Department	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire department breathing apparatus and fire extinguisher re fill system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expression of interest - Specialist for writing tender specifications for fire trucks
CHRD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of the Waskaganish Training and Development Center 	

Figure 6. Number of Leases per community

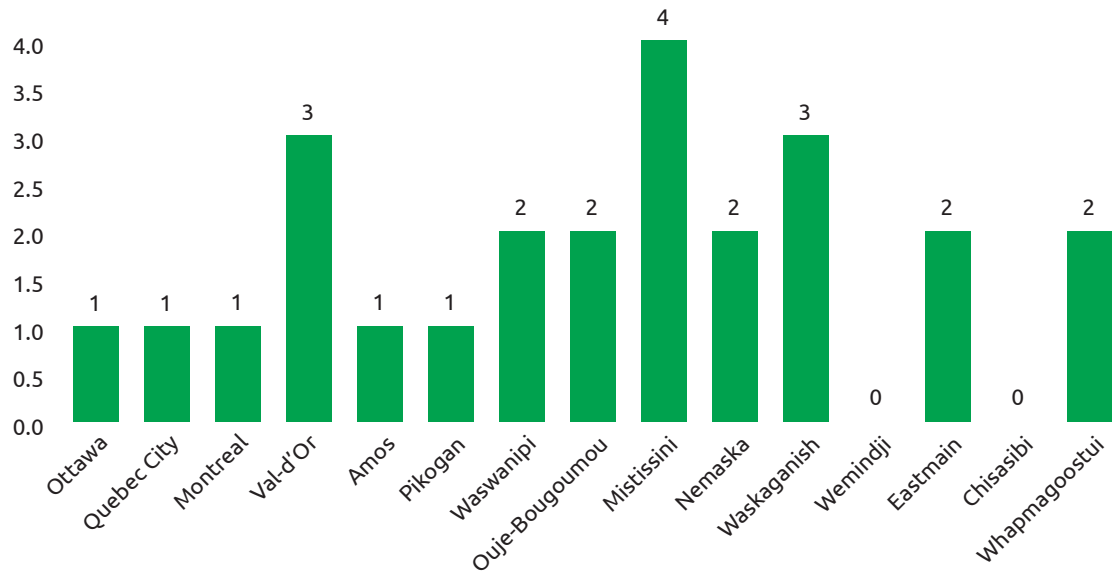
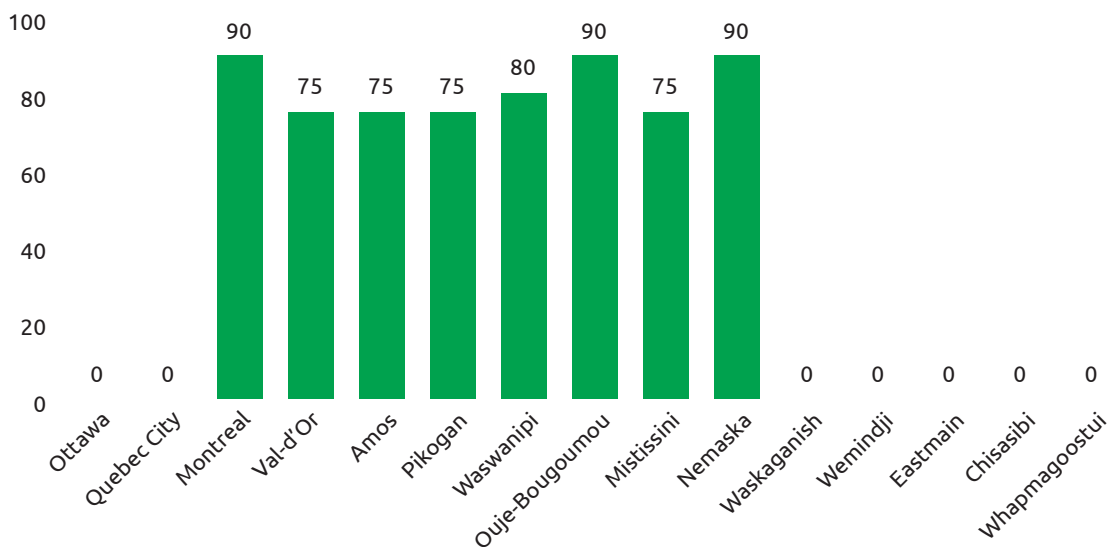


Figure 7. Percent complete



The Department of Capital Works and Services was given the mandate to create an inventory of assets for the Cree Nation Government. So far, assets in the following communities have been tagged and entered into the new asset tracking database: Nemaska, Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou, Waswanipi, Val-d'Or, Amos, Pikogan, and Montreal.

REGIONAL CAPITAL WORKS

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 and Maintenance (O&M) Activities

As of March 31, 2017, CWS had to oversee the O&M of 22 public buildings (approx. 200, 000 square feet) and 78 housing units located in the Cree communities as per the table entitled *Asset under the responsibility of CWS for Operations and Maintenance*. In order to carry out the O&M works, there is a team of 13 janitors, 10 maintenance workers (two of them are acting as team leader) and one manager dedicated to that work.

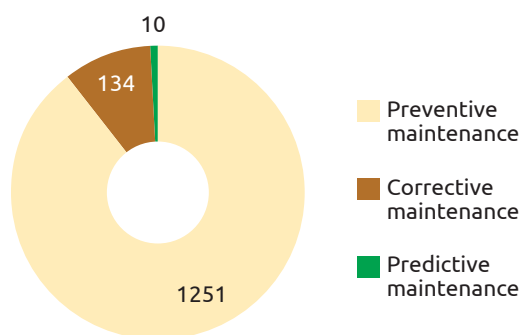
The types of O&M activities that are carried out by the maintenance workers can be classified in three major maintenance categories:

1. preventive;
2. corrective;
3. predictive.

We have started using a computerized maintenance management system (C.M.M.S.) in April 2016 and we have over 700 preventive maintenance templates for our building's equipment. Over the fiscal year we have produced close to 1400 combined work orders in the three categories.

The O&M staff of CWS in the Cree communities also answered emergency maintenance calls for the 16 daycare centres of the Cree communities, following an agreement with the Child and Family Services department of the Cree Nation Government.

Figure 8. CWS – Distribution of work orders



Capital Projects Activities

CWS also has a team in charge of construction activities, which had 20 active projects under its responsibility in 2016/2017 for a total value of \$33,899,368 as per the table entitled *Construction Activities of Regional Capital Works*. These projects were executed for the Cree Nation Government departments of the Eeyou Eenou Police Force, Justice and Correctional Services, the Cree Human Resources Development and the Cree Nation Government Administration.

Professional Services Activities

Furthermore, the Capital Works Division mandates professional firms of architects and engineers prepare plans and specifications for various construction projects, as well as to assist in the supervision of construction works and to develop a preventive maintenance program. In-house work is being done to electronically archive all the construction and O&M documents for further integration in to an information management system.

The staff of CWS in charge of Capital Projects and O&M also provide some technical advice to the Cree local administrations in matters related to call for tenders, project management, building construction and operations and maintenance, and housing construction and operations.

Housing Activities

The CWS provides support and services in the Cree communities that relate to housing. The Regional Housing Planner and the Housing Data Administrator are dedicated to the Cree housing file.

Inspection Services for CMHC and for the Insurance File with the Board of Compensation

The housing team is supported by four housing inspectors from the Cree communities who perform inspections on the social housing on behalf of CMHC. They perform inspections for new housing being built and the residential rehabilitation assistance program (RRAP), and also verify the physical condition review (PCR) of the current housing stock. The housing team also performs inspections and cost estimates following fire or flood incidents for the self-insurance program under the Board of Compensation.

The staff also participated in community housing conferences where presentations were made and booths were set-up to provide information about private homeownership, brochures were also handed out on housing in Eeyou Istchee. The staff participated in provincial housing conferences as well.

Eeyou Miichuwaap

The housing team coordinates a regional forum of exchange among the Cree communities called Eeyou Miichuwaap. In total, four meetings were held throughout 2016/2017. The Eeyou Miichuwaap meeting typically lasts two days: the first day being used to discuss the Cree housing file in the communities, while the second day is used to exchange information with CMHC staff.

Cree Regional Housing Action Plan

The housing team of CWS is also involved in the monitoring and the follow up of the Cree Regional Housing Action Plan that was developed with the participation of the local and regional officials of the Cree local and regional governments. The four main objectives of the Cree Regional Housing Action Plan are as follows:

- Apply Rent-Geared-to-Income;
- Develop a Social Housing Program for the Low Income Sector;
- Launch a Public Information Campaign on housing issues and the benefits of homeownership; and
- Use the housing demand to strengthen the Cree economy.

As part of the Cree Regional Housing Action Plan, the following actions were done in 2015/2016:

Regional Radio Show

A regional radio show on housing was hosted by the Regional Housing Planner in 2016/2017 once per month through James Bay Cree Communication Society.

CBC North Eeyou Miichuwaap Housing Column

The Regional Housing Planner participated in these 10-minute radio columns that were aired during the first two quarters of the year.

Distribution of Hygrometer and leaflet explaining how to control humidity

Last year the Cree Nation Government purchased hygrometers for every rental-housing unit in the Cree

communities. A hygrometer is a device that measures humidity in a house. They were distributed in Waskaganish and Wemindji this year to all rental unit tenants as a tool to control humidity or moisture to prevent mold and unhealthy homes. Two interns sponsored by CMHC did the work in Waskaganish and Wemindji.

Housing Strategy Work Group

The staff of the department participated in a work group to develop a housing strategy that was presented to the Council Board in the spring of 2016. A task force team lead by Mr. Henry Mianscum assisted by the Regional Housing Planner toured all of Eeyou Istchee to present the housing strategy to the Chief and Council of each of the Cree communities. A report of this tour will be compiled in 2017/2018.

Regional Housing Renovation Needs Survey

- The inspection of 3200 rental housing units of the Cree communities, including CMHC units and band rental units, was completed;
- This survey identified the global renovation needs to fix all the rental housing units in the Cree communities;
- The final report was completed in December 2016.
- There is an urgent housing renovation need of more than \$90,000,000 shown in the table below.
- Copies of the report and the housing unit inspections were distributed to the Cree communities' housing department and management staff.

Table 3. Housing Renovation Needs for the Cree Communities

	Number of units subject to the Cree Housing Renovation Needs Survey	Number of units inspected	Number of units not visited*	Extrapolating that all dwellings were inspected	Total estimated value of urgent housing renovation needs	Average cost per dwelling	Total estimated value of renovations due to Hazard & Mold (included in total Cost)	Urgent Housing Renovation Funding in 2015/2016 – Allocated	Urgent Housing Renovation Funding in 2016/2017 – Allocated	Urgent Housing Renovation Funding in 2017/2018 – Proposed
Whapmagoostui	195	195	0	195	\$8,030,575	\$41,182	\$2,447,000	\$560,515	\$376,639	\$376,639
Chisasibi	753	743	10	753	\$18,295,411	\$24,297	\$1,714,876	\$358,001	\$749,528	\$749,528
Wemindji	296	296	0	296	\$7,016,415	\$23,704	\$1,053,800	\$198,278	\$595,824	\$595,824
Eastmain	172	171	1	172	\$3,360,659	\$19,539	\$302,911	\$221,630	\$486,656	\$486,656
Waskaganish	431	405	26	431	\$15,005,105	\$34,815	\$3,048,724	\$297,416	\$541,368	\$541,368
Nemaska	170	162	8	170	\$4,246,233	\$24,978	\$647,784	\$369,017	\$391,305	\$391,305
Mistissini	560	561	-1	560	\$17,047,015	\$30,441	\$1,876,848	\$102,994	\$883,438	\$883,438
Waswanipi	395	367	28	395	\$10,760,134	\$27,241	\$1,043,736	\$263,269	\$262,669	\$262,669
Ouje-Bougoumou	194	194	0	194	\$6,605,469	\$34,049	\$591,850	\$128,880	\$712,574	\$712,574
Total	3166	3094	72	3166	\$90,367,015	\$28,543	\$12,727,529	\$2,500,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000

* Units not visited were either not accessible because tenants refused the visits, were absent after numerous attempts, or the units were brand new.

It was under Henry's leadership that the Capital Works and Services mission statement advocated for creating goals and objectives that work towards achieving our ultimate goal: "Ensuring that the Eeyou/Eenou local and regional governments' infrastructure and related services enhance people's quality of life".

Circuit Rider Training in Housing Maintenance and Computerized Maintenance Management System

- Two trainers were hired by the Cree Nation Government to provide training to the local housing department staff in housing maintenance and in the computerization of the housing maintenance using a CMMS; and
- This training is aimed at coaching and helping the local housing departments in organizing the maintenance of their rental housing stock. ●

Table 4. Asset under the responsibility of CWS for Operations and Maintenance (O&M)

	Number of facilities
Buildings	
CHRD Office	1
CHRD Training Centre	1
Cree Nation Government Head Office	1
EEPF Detachment	9
EEPF Headquarter	1
Justice Facility	9
Sub-Total	22
Housing Units	
Cree Nation Government Housing Units	35
EEPF Housing Units	43
Sub-Total	78
TOTAL	100

Approved 2016-2017 Department Budget

	2016-2017
Department Direction	\$ 491,250
Regional Capital Works	\$ 384,925
Technical Committees and Related Support	\$ 40,000
Capital Planning and Engineering Services	\$1,039,315
Housing Support Services	\$ 301,000
Regional Fire Prevention Support	\$ 141,075
Fire Protection Training & Other Initiatives	\$ 600,000
Forest Fire Protection	\$ 100,000
Grand Total	\$ 3,097,565

Table 5. Construction Activities of Regional Capital Works

Project	Value of Contract	Advancement				Delivery Date	Contractor
		Q1 2016/17	Q2 2016/17	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17		
Justice Facilities in Whapmagoostui, Wemindji, Eastmain and Nemaska – Installation of Generators	\$556,900	100%	0%	0%	0%	January 2016	VCC
Justice Facilities in Ouje-Bougoumou and Waswanipi – Installation of Generators	\$270,360	100%	0%	0%	0%	January 2016	CCDC
Cree Nation Government Head Office in Nemaska – Installation of Generator	\$232,000	100%	0%	0%	0%	February 2016	VCC
Renovation of EEPF Detachment Building in Ouje-Bougoumou	\$177,177	100%	0%	0%	0%	June 2016	Waswanipi Eenouch
Cree Nation Government Steel Structure Houses in Wemindji (3) – Interior Finishing and Landscaping	\$540,000	100%	0%	0%	0%	July 2016	Naococane Construction
Reconstruction of the Cree Nation Government House at 26 Bedabin in Nemaska	\$404,585	90%	100%	0%	0%	June 2016	VCC
New EEPF Detachment Building in Mistissini	\$4,426,060	70%	90%	100%	0%	October 2016	Construction Benoit Doyon Inc.
CHRD office in Chisasibi – Finalization of the Parking	\$164,880	0%	100%	100%	100%	September 2015	Wemindji Paving
New EEPF Detachment Building in Mistissini	\$4,426,060	0%	15%	50%	70%	May 2016	Construction Benoit Doyon Inc.
Women's Shelter in Waswanipi	\$4,482,300	50%	70%	85%	100%	February 2016	VCC
Justice Facility Filing in Mistissini	\$879,850	20%	70%	95%	100%	October 2016	CCDC
Justice Facility Filing in Chisasibi	\$691,286	20%	70%	95%	100%	October 2016	CBCC
Cree Nation Government Office Building Waskaganish	\$3,953,000	10%	50%	85%	95%	April 2017	CCDC
Justice Facility Paving Eastmain	\$150,000	0%	95%	100%	0%	October 2017	Wemindji Paving
Women's Shelter in Waskaganish	\$5,470,000	0%	10%	10%	10%	December 2017	CCDC
EEPF Duplex Mistissini	\$597,850	0%	0%	100%	100%	December 2015	Steelhawks Homes
Renovation of EEPF Detachment Building in Eastmain	\$200,000	0%	50%	95%	100%	October 2016	CCDC
Completion of the Police Headquarter Expansion	\$295,000	0%	90%	100%	0%	July 2016	CBCC
Cree Nation Government 5 housing Units in Waskaganish	\$1,397,000	0%	25%	80%	100%	February 2017	VCC
Cree Nation Government Housing Duplex Renovation in Nemaska	\$296,000	0%	10%	100%	0%	December 2016	Vieux Poste Construction
CHRD Training Center Waskaganish	\$8,775,000	0%	0%	40%	60%	September 2017	Construction Benoit Doyon Inc.
Cree Nation Government 6 Martin Trail fire damage	\$105,000	0%	0%	40%	100%	October 2017	Vieux Poste Construction
	\$33,899,368						



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 wonderful privilege to once again present the activities and achievements of 2016-2017.

First and foremost, we would like to give recognition and acknowledgement to all childcare staff members who have truly committed themselves to improving childcare services, and who form the backbone of our network. Without this group of dedicated persons, 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 all of 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, we focused a lot of our energies on working in collaboration with our partners who also support children in varied areas of either health, well-being, and education. We also participated in the development of a childcare management training program for all our directors and coordinators, which we hope to officially carry out in the next fiscal year.

We would also like to honour and pay tribute to our longest standing childcare colleague, Ms. Lucie Bergeron, otherwise known as our Cree Mother Goose. Lucie played a huge role in the establishment of the first Cree childcare centre in Eeyou Istchee at the end of the 1980s, and in the creation of our network of child and family services. Over the past twenty years, Lucie saw to the expansion of childcare services in Eeyou Istchee, and even witnessed young children attending daycare, going on to grade school and secondary school – and also to college – and then come back to childcare centres as parents or employees! Lucie's knowledge and dedication has not gone unnoticed, and we are truly grateful for the legacy she leaves with us. You will find out more about this tremendous lady in the special feature that can be found in the next few pages.

WIDE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES AT 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 agreements, specifically the Health Canada agreement for the Head Start and Maternal and Child Health Programs, as well as the Service Canada/Cree Human Re-

sources Development agreement for the implementation of the First Nations Childcare Initiative (FNCI).

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 living with special needs, and services for families.

We continued to strengthen our ties 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.

We also signed a new agreement with Avenir d'enfants which will allow us to deliver more childhood development programs in Eeyou Istchee to help provide local community-based projects and initiatives for the benefit of children 0 to 5 years of age.

In closing, we would like to say that all of these achievements would not have been possible without the support of our Cree leaders, who endorse the work that we do to promote the development and well-being of Cree 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.



The retirement of LUCIE BERGERON

Our friend Lucie Bergeron, also known as our Cree Mother Goose, has decided to retire at the end of the 2016-2017 fiscal year, after a long and fruitful career working with us in Eeyou Istchee. We want to express our gratitude to her by paying tribute to her vision, her dedication and her boundless energy.

In the 1970s, Lucie completed a nursing degree, and then a bachelor's degree in social work in 1976. After working in childcare operations in the Québec City area while raising her three beautiful children, Lucie moved with her family to Chisasibi in 1989. Once there, she sat with a few like-minded individuals and together, they started a daycare centre and a home daycare agency: this was a first for any Aboriginal community in Québec. She also coordinated the delivery of a CEGEP training program for the childcare educators.

In 1993, after she settled back in Québec City, Lucie realized that persons wishing to start a childcare centre in a First Nations community had little information to rely on, and so she wrote two books on the implementation and operation of childcare centres and home daycare agencies. These books were distributed throughout all Aboriginal communities of Canada, with the support of the HRDC Childcare Initiative program. More than 20 years later, communities still regard these two books as a guide and reference as they embark upon the adventure of implementing new childcare services.

Then in 1995, Lucie shaped her long-term vision, which consisted in supporting the development of Cree communities by helping them to set up integrated child and family services. The underlying ideas behind this vision, which are still valid today, were to better prepare children to enter and succeed in school, and to provide parents with the assurance that their children are in a safe, nurturing environment. Lucie started working with the Cree Regional Authority/Cree Nation Government to create the entire network of childcare centres in the nine Cree communities. Although this description may fit in a sentence, it truly is the work of a lifetime for Lucie, a work of passion and patience, of determination and collaboration.

Lucie spent the past 22 years tirelessly planning and building childcare facilities, and she invested much of her time and resourcefulness into creating a strong network of managers and educators who provide quality educational activities to children, and quality services for parents. To this end, Lucie developed and coordinated the delivery of three college-level training programs, through a partnership with the CEGEP de St-Félicien and under the auspices of the CHRD: the Educators in Native Childcare Services program, the Management of Aboriginal Child and Family Services program as well as the Special Needs Education program. To date, the Educators' program alone has been offered almost 50 times in the Cree communities, with more than 500 graduates.

Milestones in Lucie's career are numerous; here are a few highlights:

- The creation of a Department for Child and Family Services, to ensure the transfer of powers from the Québec Ministry of Family to the Cree Nation Government – in recognition of the Crees' ability to govern themselves.
- The negotiation of various agreements with federal and provincial departments, always with a view to further empower Crees.
- The implementation of the Head Start program throughout Eeyou Istchee, as well as of the Maternal and Child Health program.
- The creation of the very first social pediatrics centre associated with Dr. Julien's Foundation in a First Nations community, in Whapmagoostui.
- The creation, almost 10 years ago, of the Little Fireflies' House in Québec City, a non-profit centre that provides developmental services for many Cree children who live with multiple and very challenging disabilities.

Lucie takes pride in the fact that high-quality childcare services now exist in all nine Cree communities, providing educational programs to young children in their own language and culture. She often speaks of the courage and determination of the hundreds of Cree women and men who successfully completed professional training through a college-level program, and are now fostering the overall development of children. Her greatest joy and proudest achievement is to see Cree women grow strong and confident, and to witness how they develop their educational, management and leadership skills. These women have become role models in their communities and have taken on all aspects of the operation of the Cree child and family services at the local and regional levels.

Over the years, Lucie has made hundreds of friends in the communities, and she is regarded in high esteem by community leaders as well as by parents and families. Rumor has it that over the past twenty years, she is the person who has spent the most time on Air Creebec flights, travelling back and forth between communities – a "world record" that is not likely to be shattered any time soon.

Thank you Lucie, from the bottom of our hearts – you will forever be our Cree Mother Goose.



Mission of the CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

*We are the team that empowers
Child and Family Services Centres in
Eeyou Istchee to enhance the quality
of their services, to develop their
autonomy and to work efficiently.*

*We are part of a strong network
that fosters our Cree values, culture
and language in the services that we
provide for children and families.*

*We are working together for the
future of our children!*

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PERSONNEL

Our Department is based in Mistissini, with four full-time employees working out of our main office. One employee is based in Waskaganish, two are based in Waswanipi, one in Whapmagoostui, and finally, one is based in Chisasibi. In 2016-2017, we also continued to count on the support of a team of professionals who coach our team in the areas of management and finance. We are proud that members of our team are spread out in many communities, and increase our presence and visibility throughout our Territory.

Department team members continue to ensure that childcare services are being provided by Cree personnel in the Cree language, and that they use culturally-appropriate tools. Our work also includes ensuring that the childcare centres and Head Start programs reflect the communities' cultural values, beliefs and traditions. One of the main roles of our regional team is to travel to all of the communities in order to provide technical and professional support to staff and board members of the nine child and family services centres.

At the end of 2016-2017, more than 350 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 manage-

ment (human resources, finance, materials, administration, services). For centres with more than one facility, the Directors are assisted by coordinators, as well as by administrative assistants. Each centre employs a number of 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 counsellors as well as coordinators for their Head Start programs.

IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR ACTION PLAN

For fiscal year 2016-2017, the activities of the Child and Family Services Department have included the following.

Programs and Agreements

This year again, our Department channeled 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 22 million dollars into local services, renovations 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, 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.
- The *Cree Childcare Program* is funded through an agreement between the Cree Human Resources Development Department (CHRD) and Service Canada. This program allows local childcare centres to improve the ratio of children to educators, thus enhancing the quality of services.
- The *Cree Head Start Program* is funded by 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 who have 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 funded by Health Canada. This program allows us to establish a partnership with the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay in order to facilitate the delivery of health promotion services to children

and families, through the Â Mashkûpimâtsî Awash program.

- Our latest agreement, *Avenir d'enfants*, is funded jointly by the Chagnon Foundation and the Government of Québec. This program will allow us to contribute to the overall development of children five and under living in poverty, and to help ensure that every one of them has a chance to get a good start in life. Many projects will be implemented in Eeyou Istchee in the near future to further these goals.

Support to Childcare Centres in the Nine Cree Communities

- In 2016-2017, we continued to support the nine existing child and family services centres' management teams as well as local boards of directors, and facilitated training sessions for a number of them as well. 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 co-ordination 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 all programs and services.
- With the support of the Capital Works & Services department, we monitored regular maintenance needs and services for our sixteen (16) childcare facilities to ensure that they function to their best capacity.

Accessibility and Affordability of Child and Family Services

- At the end of fiscal year 2016-2017, there were 1,208 subsidized childcare spaces available in the nine (9) 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.
- 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.

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 training and development for staff members and persons who wish to pursue a career in early childhood development.

Here is an overview of the measures taken in 2016-2017:

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 from the programs that we sponsor also find employment in the Cree school and health board organizations.

This year, two graduation ceremonies took place in Eeyou Istchee. Fourteen (14) students from the Cree Nation of Oujé-Bougoumou, graduated from the CEGEP de St-Félicien's *Educators in Native Childcare Services* (ENCS) training program. Additionally, thirteen (13) students from the Cree Nation of Waskaganish completed their certification in Special Needs, also from the CEGEP de St-Félicien. Congratulations to all of our graduates who, thanks to their commitment and dedication to the well-being and education of young children, have acquired their diplomas and are



Top: Ouje-Bougoumou ENCS Graduation, June 2016
Bottom: Waskaganish Special Needs Graduation, April 2016

Department team members continue to ensure that childcare services are being provided by Cree personnel in the Cree language, and that they use culturally-appropriate tools.

now recognized as qualified educators.

The ENCS training program is still very much in demand throughout Eeyou Istchee, as local needs for trained educators in the communities are high. Two new programs started this year, in the communities of Mistissini in February 2016 and the community of Whapmagoostui in January 2017. Additionally, a new Special Needs program started in the community of Oujé-Bougoumou in January 2017. All three training programs have sizeable groups of students.

Much appreciation goes to CHRD and CEGEP de St-Félicien, both of which are very generous in supporting the delivery of these important programs in Eeyou Istchee. We also need to thank the CEGEP instructors, who are making an important contribution by inspiring not only their students, but all childcare workers to become true professionals.

Directors of Cree Child and Family Services Centres

Directors of childcare centres participated in two one-week training workshops this year – one in May 2016 in Val-d'Or, where they participated in the identification of components for a new CEGEP de St-Félicien management training program. We also held our annual Christmas retreat in Montreal in December 2016 to review needed changes to centres' human resources policies and to provide input into the management training program being developed by the CEGEP. A third meeting and training session took place in Québec City in March 2017 to review and discuss challenges faced in the daily operations of centres, and to provide information on upcoming programs to offer further childhood development initiatives. These sessions are meant to enhance directors' abilities so that they may better meet the challenges of their day-to-day responsibilities. The meetings also allow directors to network and to discuss issues that they face, and to jointly work on potential changes to their human resources policies and administrative procedures.

Financial Administration and Bookkeeping

Our very efficient regional finance team continued to travel throughout Eeyou Istchee to provide on-site

training and support to all administrative employees in charge of the financial administration of childcare centres. Team members also continued to prepare the financial statements for the year-end audits.

Inspection of Facilities and Programs

In addition to taking part in a training session on the new process and standards for inspection (facilitated by the Québec Ministry of Family), our Regional Inspections 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. These inspections were carried out in 2016-2017 within the centres located in all of the communities.

Educational Program

Our Regional Pedagogical Advisor continued to visit and provide necessary training sessions on the educational program to educators within our childcare centres. She also started to create an improved parent-child communication book for our childcare centres.

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 Baby Colleges program, which is gradually being rolled out to all communities. This program promotes the healthy development of young children, with an approach centering on family involvement. Through 9-week cycles of sessions, parents focus on topics such as parent-child bonding, best parenting practices, as well as cognitive and early literacy skills.

Special Needs Program

Our Regional Special Needs Advisor also made regular visits to the childcare centres and supported the educators who foster the development of children who have special needs. This year, our Special Needs Advisor partnered with our regional Head Start Advisor to develop a training session that focused on speech and language as well as autism. Finally, 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.

First Aid and Injury Prevention Courses

In order to ensure that all staff members remain certified in First Aid and CPR, courses with a focus on children were provided to childcare and Head Start educators as well as to parents in each of the communities.

Maintenance of our Facilities

This year, we worked in close collaboration with the Department of Capital Works and Services to assist us with the maintenance and repair of our sixteen childcare facilities. In addition, we continued to utilize the services of Roch Mandeville and his team, to coordinate maintenance and renovation projects for our childcare centres.

Maternal and Child Health Program

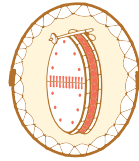
In partnership with the Cree Health Board, the Maternal and Child Health Program allows us to participate in the delivery of health promotion services to children and families, through the Â Mashkûpimâtsît Awash program. This year, in addition to a number of professional services, we have provided safety kits which included child-proof equipment, baby monitors, baby gates, bathing thermometers, etc. for all nine communities. These products were geared towards new young mothers with low income.

Liaison

- We planned and coordinated three regional meetings and workshops, as well as held regular meetings via teleconference when necessary with members of the Cree Child and Family 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, and this year, we have continued assisting in the distribution of the ten (10) children's books that were published to motivate Cree families to develop a habit of reading, starting from an early age. The books are available to all families, free of charge. If you have not received yours yet, do contact your local childcare centre or local Awash service within your CMC.
- We acted as liaison with other First Nations and organisations on childcare matters and issues, and ensured concerted and informed actions.
- We continued to network and build strong partnerships between the Cree Nation Government, local Cree Nation Administration offices, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services, CMCs, the Cree School Board, schools, as well as the Provincial and Federal Governments to provide inclusive, comprehensive and flexible childcare programs for Cree children, including children living with special needs.

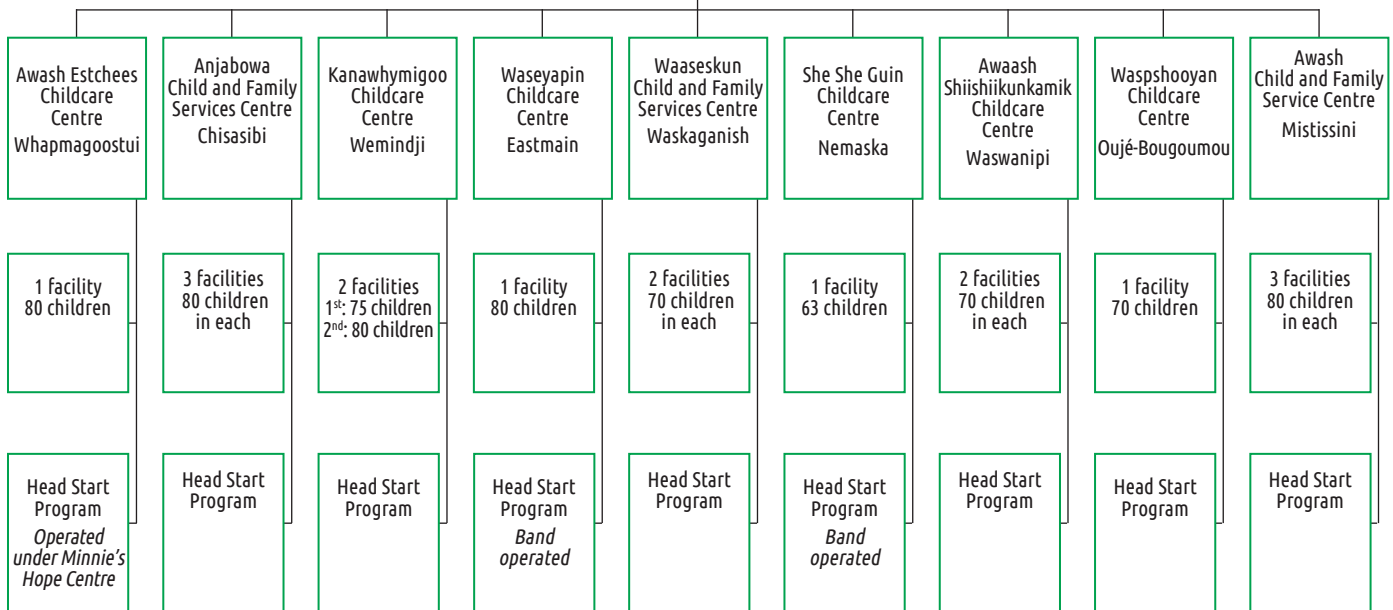
Our challenges for 2017-2018

1. Continue to provide professional and technical support to all local child and family service centres in all areas of operations, as well as in the maintenance of their facilities with the goal of empowering and building a strong network of childcare management leaders and professionals.
2. Based on new developments and changes brought by the Ministry of Family to the inspection process, hire an additional regional inspection officer to assist with the inspection of childcare facilities and programs.
3. Continue to support and monitor the progress of the Head Start programs.
4. Construct and build a new, fourth facility for the Anjabowa Child and Family Services Centre in Chisasibi, so that more families may benefit from childcare services.
5. With the support of CHRD, continue to deliver the CEGEP training programs *Educators in Native Childcare Services* and *Special Needs Education - Aboriginal and Inuit Children* in the communities that require these.
6. Collaborate in applying the collective agreements within the unionized childcare centres.
7. Continue to cooperate with the Cree Board of Health and Social Services in the harmonization of services aimed at families and young children of Eeyou Istchee.
8. Continue to provide training as needed for all childcare staff as well as provide a college level certificate training for all childcare management (coordinators and directors).
9. Manage the implementation of the agreement with Avenir d'enfants to support local Cree communities, so that they may provide early childhood programs; hire three persons who will support this initiative.



Cree Nation Government Child and Family Services Department

**Cree Child and Family Services
Centres Association**
composed of 9 Child and Family Services Directors





JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Message from the Director
DONALD NICHOLLS

We sense that there is a recognition of damage done and a commitment by the government to act. Canadians are learning more about the history of Aboriginal Peoples. By sharing the truth, we will continue to educate all people in Canada and to implement change.

Wachiya. It is a pleasure to once again present a report to the Cree Nation on the activities of the Department of Justice and Correctional Services. In 2016-2017, to answer the needs of the Cree of Eeyou Istchee, the Department of Justice and Correctional Services continued to develop our staff, programs, services and facilities. We recognize the commitment of our employees and appreciate the relationships and partnerships we have developed over the years in the community and at the regional, provincial and federal levels. We realize that our ability to deliver new services starts with a well-trained staff and with strong connections to other resources in the community.

In 2016-2017, the Department welcomed employees based in communities from across the Cree Nation. Ultimately all actions we take are with the aim of fulfilling our mission to offer better community-based services, more accessibility to justice and corrections systems, and to reinforce Cree values, ways and philosophies in our programs, services and systems.

We continue to invest in our existing facilities. This year, we have added to our conference rooms a series of photographs that represent local values, activities and significant landmarks. We have also integrated more Cree signage in local dialects throughout each facility and have added symbols to our entrances. We have also continued the use of our state-of-the-art video conferencing and media systems, notably during a two-week Superior Court Jury Trial.

In collaboration with the Cree Health Board, we completed the construction of one of the two planned regional women's shelters. We also signed a framework agreement with the Cree Health Board regarding the construction and operation of a Youth Facility, with closed custody units, which will allow us to keep our youth in the community and offer them better adapted programs.

The past year also marked important events for Aboriginal Peoples. After Aboriginal women spoke out against violence, the Government of Canada launched an independent National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in 2016. On August 3, 2016, the Government announced the Terms of Reference for the National Inquiry and the appointment of the five commissioners who will lead the Inquiry. The Commissioners officially began the National Inquiry on September 1, 2016. They are expected to submit an interim report in the fall of 2017 and a final report by the end of 2018.

On December 21, 2016, the Government of Québec established its own Commission of Inquiry on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Quebec. Our Department is contributing by preparing a report containing recommendations as to actions that could be taken immediately and also with respect to long-term fundamental changes.

We sense that there is a recognition of damage done and a commitment by the government to act. Canadians are learning more about the history of Aboriginal Peoples. By sharing the truth, we will continue to educate all people in Canada and to implement change.

We experienced some losses this year of people we worked with, as well as family members of staff. Our deepest condolences to them. Our Department is like a family, and we feel and share in the grief and loss of loved ones.

In 2016-2017, the composition of the Cree-Quebec Judicial Advisory Committee changed. This Committee was established pursuant to Section 18 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (1975) and the Cree-Quebec Justice Agreement (2007). This Committee is composed of representatives appointed by the Government of Quebec and the Cree Nation Government. It provides recommendations to the Quebec and Cree Nation Governments on budget allocation, research and initiatives in the area of justice and corrections. We welcome a new Chairperson, Deputy Chief of Chisasibi Daisy House, who began her two-year mandate of October 27, 2016. We welcome Irene Neeposh as a new Cree member of the Committee. The other members appointed by the Cree Nation Government are Deputy Grand Chief Rodney Mark, Kenneth Gilpin and Denis Blanchette. We also welcome back Hughes Tremblay of the Ministry of Public Security, who replaced Fabrice Gagnon. The other members appointed by the Government of Quebec are Jacques Pregent and Nathalie Ouimet (Ministry of Justice), Claude Turgeon (Ministry of Public Security), and Frédéric Desrosiers (Secrétariat aux Affaires autochtones). As always, we offer our thanks to all of the members, past and newly appointed, for their dedication and meaningful contributions.

We are grateful for the continued support of the Cree leadership and the Cree Nation Government. By collaborating with and supporting leaders, youth, Elders, and other departments, we can together achieve healthier, safer and stronger communities. We truly believe that strong institutions and relationships will better serve the next generations of Eeyou Istchee.

In this report, we present a brief overview of our programs and services, of the changes that occurred over the year, and some relevant statistics. The Department continues to build new relationships, while valuing the ones that allow us, year after year, to deliver local services and programs of great value to the communities. We remain committed to both enhancing public safety and building stronger communities and families.

Meegwetch.



INCREASING EXPERTISE IN THE DEPARTMENT AND CREE COMMUNITIES

It is a priority of the Department to invest in the continued development and growth of its personnel. In 2016-2017 we continued to commit time and resources to build efficiency and expertise in the areas of justice and corrections.

Training Curriculum

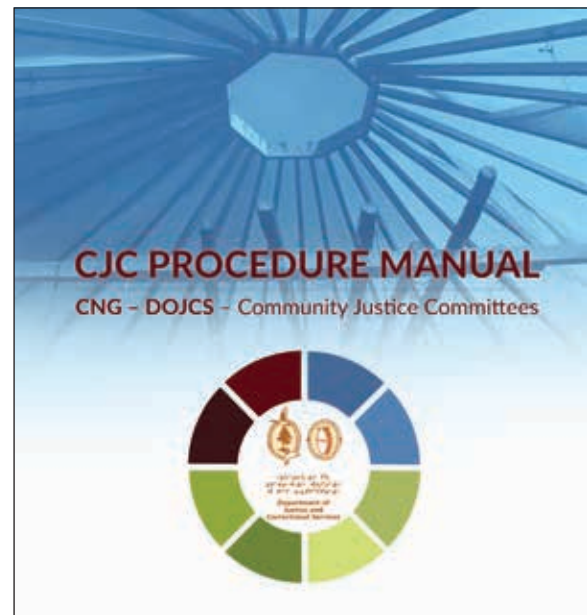
We regularly give training to our staff in mediation and conciliation skills, facilitation, community dialogue and other forms of client intervention. Our aim is to have services available locally to resolve interpersonal conflicts, employee disputes and group-based issues, but it is also to apply knowledge of underlying human identity needs when working with our clientele at the front-line level. Last year, the Department offered a number of different training sessions adapted to the role each staff member plays. For example, our staff received training in Aboriginal Suicide Prevention, Trauma Intervention, Motivational Interviewing, Records Management, Learning Disorders and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). All of these are chosen because they allow us to build the skills needed by our staff to successfully help our clientele while taking into consideration their individual circumstances.

The Community Justice Committees are independent bodies composed of volunteers present in the Cree communities. They are pivotal in the delivery in the community of a justice system that integrates and respects Cree values and ways. Through their interventions, the Justice Committees make justice services readily accessible and relevant to Cree society. Their skill set therefore needs to be continuously evolving to improve their overall effectiveness and ability to support a system that integrates Cree values, language and understandings.

Last year, the Community Justice Committees have had a number of training sessions and a conference, sponsored through an agreement with the Department of Justice of Canada. In 2016-2017, Justice Committee members attended the Dialogue for Life - Suicide Prevention Conference in November and a special training session on Court Procedures in Val-d'Or in February.

Also, in January 2017, forty-two (42) Community Justice Committee members coming from all nine communities took part in the Justice Symposium organized by the Department. This three-day long session helped to create a common understanding of the role of the CJC's, sharing knowledge, clarifying some concepts and offering coaching in the administration of justice throughout Eeyou Istchee. Robert Auclair, the Director of Youth Protection in Eeyou Istchee, was invited to explain Youth Protection procedures. To support the CJC's, the Department introduced the new Community Justice Committee Procedure Manual, which includes standardized templates and request forms.

New members of the Justice Committee from Oujé-Bougoumou, Eastmain and Wemindji also benefited from a 5-day training session facilitated by the Department of Law and Legal Studies of Carleton University. Held in Val-d'Or, the session was designed to prepare them for



In January 2017, forty-two (42) Community Justice Committee members coming from all nine communities took part in the Justice Symposium organized by the Department.

their new roles and for conducting Alternative Measures such as sentencing and healing circles.

CICR and Conflict Resolution Coaching

For the past six years, we have trained and certified the majority of our staff members with the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution (CICR) training program. We are convinced that not all conflicts need to go through the legal system. We are proud to say that 2016-2017 saw the sixth class of CICR graduates. It was one of our largest classes and it included partner Cree organizations and Elders.

The Department has also started a second advanced group as part of the project introduced last year to establish conflict resolution services in the communities. Participants, including staff and Community Justice Committees, received advanced training and practical experience in order to build conflict resolution competency and self-confidence. The effectiveness of this program is evidenced by the requests of front line workers and organizations for our services in the areas of mediation and conflict resolution. Over the years, the program has progressed well, and more partners from the Cree Health Board, Elders, Cree local governments, etc. are being trained.

As the Cree Nation Government owns the Cree version of the CICR Program, the content, which brings a truly holistic approach to assisting clients, is well adapted to Cree realities and values. We are also proud to have Cree co-trainers in the program, and that we can offer sessions in Cree. We are committed to developing our staff and intend to offer this transformative training for years to come in Eeyou Istchee.

It is clear for the Department that through these services, we can bring a truly holistic approach to assisting clients.



Charlie Appelstein's well sought after workshop

"No Such Thing as a Bad Kid!"

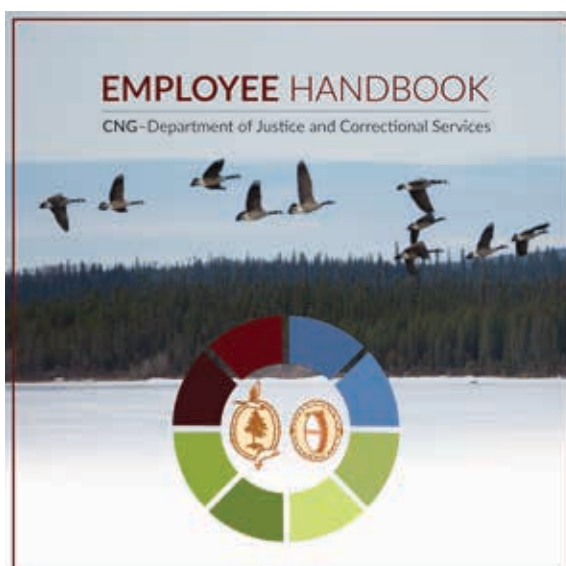
Prevention Program Officers and Primary Youth Workers also participated in two of Charlie Appelstein's "No Such Thing as a Bad Kid!" workshops in the past year. The Department invited other frontline workers from Cree Health Board, Cree School Board and Cree local governments to be a part of these workshops. Mr. Appelstein is a well-known expert who focuses on intervention based on strength-building rather than flaw-fixing. His training begins with the belief that every individual has or can develop strengths and utilize past successes to mitigate problem behavior and enhance functioning. These teachings are particularly relevant for our staff, as we strive to better understand and respond to troubled children and youth and to act early to prevent youth from offending or re-offending. It is all about finding someone to believe in a youth who normally does not have people in their lives that have faith in them.

Record Suspension training

Again, this year, the Corrections staff participated in a training session on the Record Suspension Program. This program allows our employees to work with those who are eligible for getting their criminal record suspended in order to seek employment opportunities in the communities and territory. In each community, we now have more resources, and also a Community Reintegration Officer who can guide individuals through the process. The program is for people who have taken responsibility for their actions, and are ready to move on in their lives.

Employee Handbook

Year after year, the Department aspires to offer to its employees a well-structured and enjoyable work environment. This year, the Department developed an Employee Handbook. It serves as an orientation guide for employees, ensuring that they have at their disposal information about their own job and about the vision and structure of the Department. Assembling all this information into one document allows them to perform better in their jobs and to collaborate even more effectively with each other in their efforts to offer excellent services to the Cree of Eeyou Istchee.



MAKING JUSTICE READILY AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE

Since its creation in 2008, the Department aspires to make justice relevant in the daily life of the community. To do so, we invest time and energy explaining what we do, educating community members regarding the justice system, and building infrastructures that reflect Cree values and ways of life. We strive to offer the most appropriate services for our Eeyou Istchee clientele.

Glossary of legal terms in Eeyou Eenou language: the presence of the Cree language

The Cree Nation Government and the Department pursue a vision of a justice system with Cree lawyers serving Cree clients in Cree courts in the future. Today, we work towards implementing the provisions of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, and providing that the current system incorporates Cree values, ways and usages, along with providing these in the Cree language.

Five years ago, the Department decided to develop a glossary of legal terms to 1) increase the understanding of people who come into contact with the courts, corrections and rehabilitation programs; and, 2) improve the ability of our services and those of governments to deliver clear and correct Cree translations in all processes of the justice and corrections systems.

A working group of language specialists in the three Cree dialects, a Cree coordinator and a former Crown attorney working on the French and English legal translations, has met frequently to develop this tool. This year and to date, the Glossary of Legal Terms in Eeyou Eenou Language comprises 677 words, in 3 Cree dialects, French and English, as well as their definition. In its final version, the document will be available in print and in electronic form. It will remain a tool in constant development, since laws, processes and definitions may change over time. This glossary of legal terms will be available shortly to anyone working within justice and corrections and rehabilitation programs, such as translators, partners and others. It will constitute a part of fair justice proceedings, corrections processes and youth protection cases, and make a difference in courts for Cree participants.

Unfortunately, Charlotte Brian MacLeod, the specialist in the Southern Cree dialect who was part of the working group, passed away this year. Her dedication to Cree

language preservation made her an invaluable part of the development of this project. She will be greatly missed.

Legal Information Training/Workshops

This year the Department, in accordance with its mandate to inform the Cree public and raise awareness in areas of law and justice, started touring the Cree communities to deliver Legal Information workshops in a variety of topics. The Department began with training staff, including receptionists, justice coordinators, and justice committee members. It provided a 4-day training program to clarify the difference between legal information and legal advice, and to prepare them to answer questions regarding the legal system and the mediation process to the general public.

The Department conducted surveys to find out areas of law that the communities would like more information on. Then, we started to develop presentations of legal information to the Cree communities. Some of the topics covered were an overview of the criminal justice system, family law, civil law, Elder abuse law, and youth. These were coordinated and promoted locally with staff. In principle, legal information is something that the Department can deliver to the general public, whereas, legal advice should only be delivered by members of the Bar of Quebec. As the legal professions is a regulated profession, advice on laws and legal situations are strictly reserved for members of the profession, e.g. lawyers, crown attorneys. Legal information is for citizens to know what the laws are and where to find information on processes and legal institutions to better make decisions. As it remains a priority to make justice always more accessible and understood, these sessions will continue to be offered to staff and to members of the Cree communities.

Website

A redesigned and updated website was launched this year. It now showcases even more images of Eeyou Istchee in order to truly reflect our culture and our land. These are the strengths upon which our society and communities were built.

It was translated into Cree in 2016-2017, and it now offers at your fingertips, in three languages, a wealth of information about the legal and corrections systems, about the services available to the Eeyou Istchee Crees, and the Cree Nation Government Department of Justice and Correctional Services mandate, funds, locations and resources.

Department of Justice
and Correctional Services
Homepage Web Site





Raising awareness about the Community Justice Committees

For the Community Justice Committee to be in a position to offer a wide range of interventions that are in accordance with the community's values, beliefs and traditions, its role must be well understood by the community and by all professionals involved in the justice system.

Last year, awareness tools were developed and distributed by the various communities to share their purpose and mission as well as the services they offer to handle lesser offences locally by community members, and for facilitating social peace, harmony and healing for individuals, families and the community. We are only limited by our constrictions as to the impacts we can make in the lives of those around us. So, we seek individuals who represent good values locally and have a passion to make a difference in their communities.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES: ROOTED IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Each year, the Department works on Justice facilities to meet the ever-growing needs and uses. During the routine maintenance of the buildings, we discovered the need to replace some of the deteriorating front facades and the roofs. This work was designed and Department of Capital Works went to tender to have these needed repairs done in the upcoming summer. Further, in order to provide more private and efficient spaces for lawyers to meet clients during court dates, the Department brought a series of Framery booths for the front lobbies of each Justice Facility. The booths were installed during the summer.

Women's shelters

In 2013, the Department worked with some experts on the Report on Conjugal Violence in Eeyou Istchee to gather data and insight on conjugal violence and its impact on women in Eeyou Istchee. The report contained a recommendation for the construction of one coastal and one inland shelter with 18-beds each for women and their children experiencing conjugal and related violence, as an alternative to continuing to send them to shelters in the south where their needs were not always being met. It was felt that we as a Nation could provide better services for our people.

Since then, building Women's Shelters and offering related services has been a priority for the Cree Nation Government. With the approved 20-year lease agreement between the Cree Nation Government and the Cree Health Board regarding the operation of the Women's Shelters in Eeyou Istchee, 2016-2017 was a busy construction year.



The Modernity and tradition in the logo

The construction of the Waswanipi Women's Shelter was completed in early 2017. The furniture arrived in February and inspection of the building took place in the spring. A logo was chosen for the new facility with a traditional story given around care and respect that will hallmark the services there. The Cree Nation Govern-



Booth for the lawyers and their clients



The Women's Shelter in Waswanipi is completed



Piling to ensure the durability of the Women's Shelter in Waskaganish

ment and Cree Health Board plan for a grand opening of the Women's Shelter in Waswanipi in 2017.

The Department will collaborate with the Cree Health Board and the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association to offer at the shelters the programs which best meet the needs of our Cree women and children. An important and positive synergy has developed with the host communities as they are committed to welcoming the women and children.

The construction of the Women's Shelter in Waskaganish was delayed based on the recommendation of the Cree Nation Government Department of Capital Works following a slow start on the stability of the lot with the addition of piles. As this took longer than expected, the site was closed for winter months and construction resumed in the spring of 2017. The facility will benefit from the lessons learned in the construction of the first regional women's shelter in Waswanipi, and the required modifications will be incorporated. The Waskaganish Women's Shelter should be completed in early winter of 2018. As with all facilities, the quality and safety of the building were paramount over timelines.

CAVAC: a third location in action to support Victims and Witnesses of Crime

The mission of Cree CAVAC (Crime Victims Assistance Centers) Officers is to address the needs and concerns of victims and witnesses of crime in Eeyou Istchee. Until the Quebec Government launched the CAVAC program in 1988, victims and witnesses of crime were not receiving sufficient support within the justice system.

Over the past year, a number of new files have been opened to provide support, information and liaison with

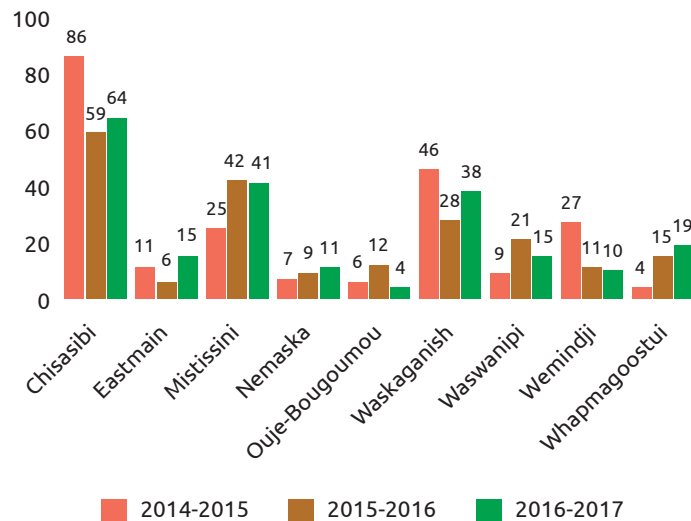
other services for Cree victims and witnesses of criminal acts. As planned, there are now three CAVAC offices located in three Cree communities to provide additional support services in Eeyou Istchee. The new CAVAC officer travels to Eastmain, Waskaganish, and Nemaska with the courts and when requested by clients. In 2016-2017, the Cree CAVAC provided services to more than 217 individual victims of violence or their relatives.



The CAVAC's new presentation folder

In order to strengthen and anchor these services in Eeyou Istchee and to create alignment with the Department, the presentation folder of the CAVAC was created to provide the public with relevant information on the services and office locations in the Cree language and in English. Further, information on the Department's website was also updated and can be found in Cree, English and French.

CAVAC - Support to Cree victims and witnesses of crime (by Community)



Building a Youth Facility

In 2016-2017, great progress has been made on the project to build a Youth Facility, including closed custody units, within the Cree Nation, in Mistissini. A framework agreement was signed by the Cree Nation Government and the Cree Health Board, and the clinical plan, together with the draft of the lease agreement and proposed design were presented to the Ministry of Health and Social Services of Québec (MSSSQ). The Ministry in turn offered comments and provided input on the documents to further strengthen the project. These suggestions were integrated in the plans of the Youth Facility, and the Cree Nation Government Department of Capital Works put out a call for tender for its construction. The Cree Nation Government expects to break ground in the summer of 2017, and complete the construction of the Youth Facility in 2019.

The goal of the Department and Cree Health Board is to develop the capacity to keep Cree young offenders and youth at risk closer to home. By building the Youth Facility in Eeyou Istchee, it becomes easier to develop and use culturally appropriate programs, such as land based programs to help with the prevention or the rehabilitation of the offenders while allowing for the families and communities to remain involved in the healing process. Further, the facility can be staffed by Cree and programming can be offered in the Cree language. In the year to come, work will continue with partners to make this project a reality.



Architect's representation of the youth detention facility

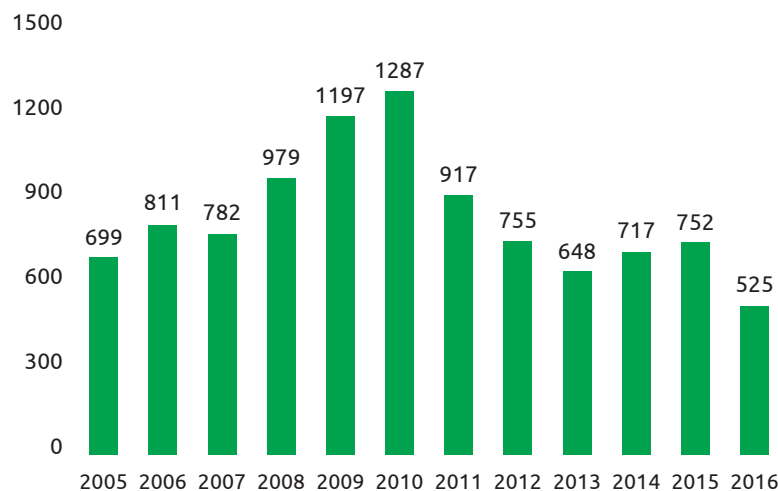
COURTS AND COMMUNITY JUSTICE

Court Statistics

The Justice Facilities built and operated by the Cree Nation Government receive itinerant court services within the Abitibi judicial district of Quebec. In Cree communities, the Court of Quebec sits as the itinerant court and can hear cases involving the Criminal and Penal Division, Civil Division, Youth Division and Small Claims. The Superior Court of Quebec can also sit and hear cases in the Cree communities. A special session of the Court of Quebec, presided by a justice of the peace, can be held in the Cree communities to hear cases involving community By-Laws.

The court calendar for the 2016-2017 year in Eeyou Istchee was busy, with there being from the Courts of Quebec 525 criminal cases, 217 cases involving federal statutory offences, 263 cases involving provincial statutory offences, 68 young offender cases, and 303 cases involving Cree community laws being heard. This does not include a Superior Court criminal jury trial and any civil law cases heard in the 9 communities. The Department was also requested to host a hearing of the federal court that may take place in the new judicial year. While the numbers seem high, the criminal court cases are actually decreasing, along with the infractions of local Cree government by-laws. We have provided statistics for your review and information.

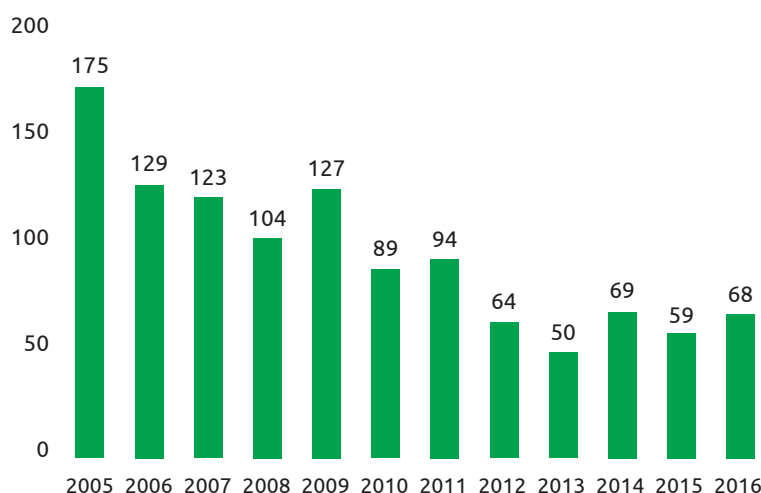
Evolution of the Number of Criminal Offence Cases



Criminal Offences include offences under the Criminal Code and the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, such as:

- Assault (including domestic violence)
- Driving while impaired
- Breach of conditions (probation, release)
- Threat
- Possession of a controlled substance (drugs)

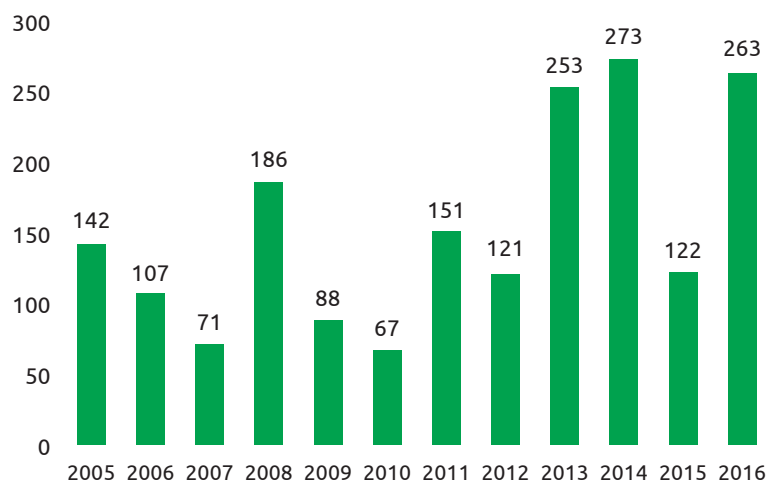
Evolution of the Number of Young Offenders Cases



Young Offenders offences include legal proceedings instituted under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA). The YCJA governs Canada's youth justice system.

- Applies to youth between 12-18 years old who are alleged to have committed criminal offences under the Criminal Code

Evolution of the Number of Statutory Offence Cases (Provincial)

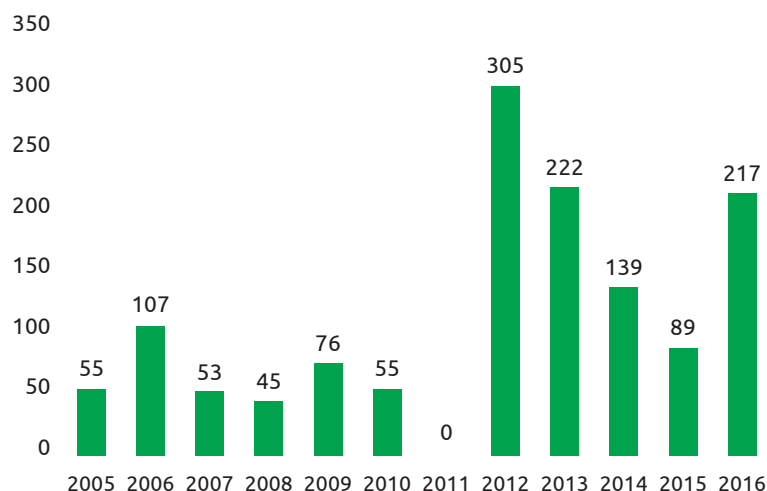


Statutory Offences (Québec) include files opened for offences under Québec statutory laws and regulations, such as:

- *Highway Safety Code*
- *Laws and regulations regarding fishing (provincial aspects, e.g. fishing license, period, catch) Also includes offences under Regional Municipal by-laws*
- *By-law No. 148 concerning Safety, Peace and Order (e.g., use of firearms across or towards a road)*
- *Bylaw No. 149 concerning Nuisances (e.g., eviscerating and leaving animal carcasses on the road or on a snowmobile trail)*

Offences mostly committed by non-Cree

Evolution of the Number of Statutory Offence Cases (Federal)

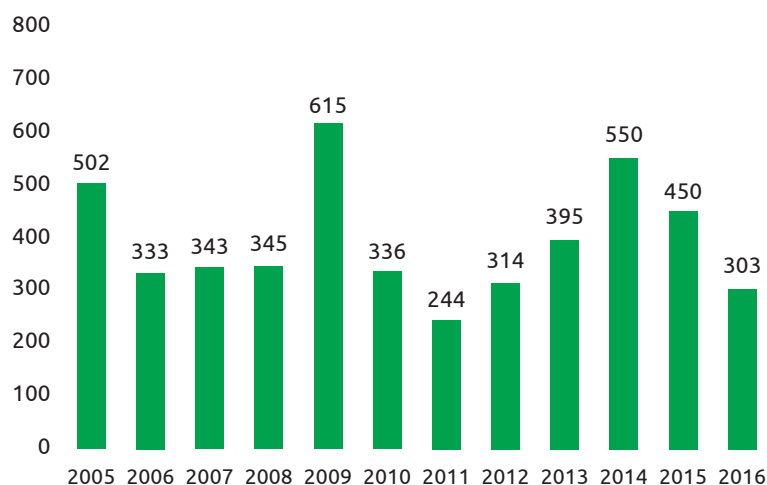


Statutory Offences (Federal) include the files opened for offences under federal statutory laws, other than Criminal Code, such as:

- *Fisheries Act (federal aspects, e.g. method of fishing)*

Offences mostly committed by non-Cree

Evolution of the Number of Community By-Law Offence Cases



Community By-Law Offences include files opened for offences such as:

- *Nuisance*
- *Highway Safety Code*
- *Alcohol By-Laws*
- *Curfew*

Videoconferencing

Videoconferencing technology was an important investment for the Department, both in terms of budget and time. Although all sites have been connected for a few years already, we are happy to report that eight out of the nine communities are now connected to the secure network named Réseau intégré de télécommunications multimedia, known as the RITM. Its fiber optic connection allows for faster and more secure communication. This growth is in conjunction with the expansion of the Eeyou Communications Network, as it provides sufficient bandwidths to allow for high quality connections.

Allowing for a trial or testimony to take place locally reduces stress for youth and their families, as well as minimizing overall costs of the procedure. In Youth Protection alone, there were more than 62 videoconferences, involving 112 children, in the 9 justice facilities in the past year.

The Department had the occasion to test the RITM during a two-week Superior Court Jury Trial which took place in Mistissini. Videoconferencing allowed the families and community from Waskaganish and Chisasibi to attend from a distance. It was the first trial using technology to link multiple sites at once, and the Superior Court was able to take full advantage of the other technology in the courtroom throughout the trial. Furthermore, on a different occasion, the Crown Counsel of Williams Lake, BC, who also used the system, gave her verdict: "...the video link worked very well (...). Also, you have a very beautiful courthouse!"

Keeping in mind that we wish to maximize the use of our resources and are always cost conscious, we have also been using videoconferencing to bring together staff without travel, for meetings and workshops. We can connect, share and learn from multiple locations throughout Eeyou Istchee and still be home with family for dinner. We encourage partners in the community to take advantage of this technology too, so Cree organizations are often booking meetings, interviews and other events with our systems. The courts have asked us to also look at providing more legal services from members of the Bar of Quebec through the video conferencing system. To this end, we are engaging in a research project with a university in Quebec on how to best improve the services through video conferencing we provide to the courts and for the many other uses we envision for these systems. The Department produced simple and easy to follow operation guides for these systems to help staff and partners use videoconferencing more easily.

Rules governing itinerant courts

In 2016-2017, the Department conducted a review with the Cree communities and other stakeholders of the proposed changes to the rules governing the operation of itinerant courts in the Cree Nation. These were initiated by the Court of Quebec, but these must be in compliance with the provisions of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement that specifically provides for Cree input on the operations of courts and special measures to integrate Cree values, ways and usages. Some proposed changes to the rules include the use of technology, operating hours, and translation into Cree of proceedings and decisions.

In fact, in relation to translation, the Department participated in a news special program on the use of Aboriginal languages in courts in Quebec. At present, there are Cree translators working in the three court circuits serving the Cree Nation. However, other First Nations are finding it difficult to get qualified translators to provide necessary services to their populations and ensure the processes are clearly understood. While at present the Cree Nation has sufficient translators, this is something we would want to ensure in the future as well to continue this service within the communities. This explains why the Department has been working on a glossary of legal terms for words used in courts, youth protection, and related services. This will ensure the existence of a guide for present and future translation services.

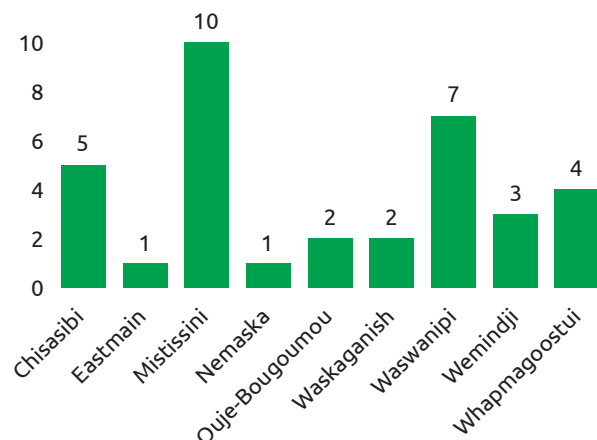
Gladue reports

Gladue reporting follows Criminal Code amendments, as well as a subsequent Supreme Court of Canada decision in 1999 requiring judges to look at the social, cultural and historical background of an Aboriginal offender before handing down a sentence. With recognition of the over-representation of Aboriginal peoples in the federal and provincial correctional systems, the intention is to provide the judges with more information in order to be better equipped to determine an appropriate sentence for an offender and look at alternatives to incarceration when appropriate.

The production of a Gladue report requires extensive work. It requires input from many different sources to determine what is best for the offender while respecting the best interest of the public, amongst other things. The Department is recognized for the quality of the Gladue reports it prepares.

Throughout the year, the Department produced 35 Gladue reports for individuals accused of offences facing possible time in detention. As there was a sufficient number of Department personnel qualified to produce these reports, no Gladue training was offered for the Department's staff in 2016-2017. These reports provide more knowledge for those working with offenders throughout the system. Department staff also help prepare Correctional Release Plans for Cree exiting detention facilities to best prepare them for reintegration back into the communities.

Gladue Report Produced (2016-2017)





Court Files Rooms

This year, Justice Facilities were expanded in Mistissini and Chisasibi to enable for the safe storage of court records on Cree territory. As required by the Ministry of Justice directives, the filing cabinets are waterproof, fireproof, lockable and placed in a restricted area so that only designated and duly authorized people can consult clientele files. This improvement constitutes one more step towards fuller implementation of certain provisions of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and subsequent agreements related to the administration of justice. It further builds capacity and resources that can be located in the Cree communities as a foundation to a Cree justice system.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Within the Communities

The Department continues to hire locally. Many of our staff members are part of their community and have strong ties. It may mean some extra training costs but in their interventions and work, they know of and take into account the challenges faced. This profound understanding of the context and nuances allows the Department to offer the best adapted services. Our local staff members have an idea of the trends and issues concerning various types of offences and activities locally, which can guide us in offering some additional support.

Furthermore, the Community Justice Committee exists to improve judicial outcomes and safety for all people in the community. It assists in the administration of justice at the community level, and in restoration, when affected members reconcile or right the wrong.

In 2016-2017, Community Justice Committees met with more than 129 individuals through various types of referrals, including from the Court or the Crown, to decide on the most appropriate course of action in restorative justice. Offences are the less serious offences, and through agreements and a funding arrangement, a local Community Justice Committee takes over a case so that it can be handled within the community. This reduces the over-representation of Aboriginal Peoples in detention, reduces the types of cases that would have to go to courts, and gives the local community a voice in how justice is done locally. Members of the Community Justice Committees are trained to handle cases for adults and youth. They can require an individual to complete number of actions to dispense with their case. These types of sanctions could include retributive, restorative, and conciliatory actions.

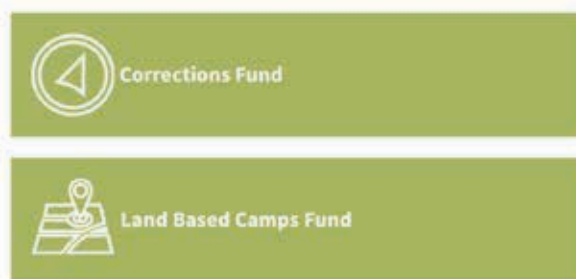
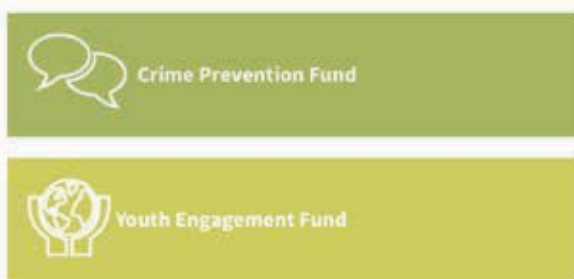
The Community Justice Committees help youth and adult offenders take responsibility for their actions and repair harm, and are active in the prevention of crime and victimization. As well, a Community Justice Committee member manages files so that cases can be diverted by the Crown Attorney to the committee rather than going through the court system.

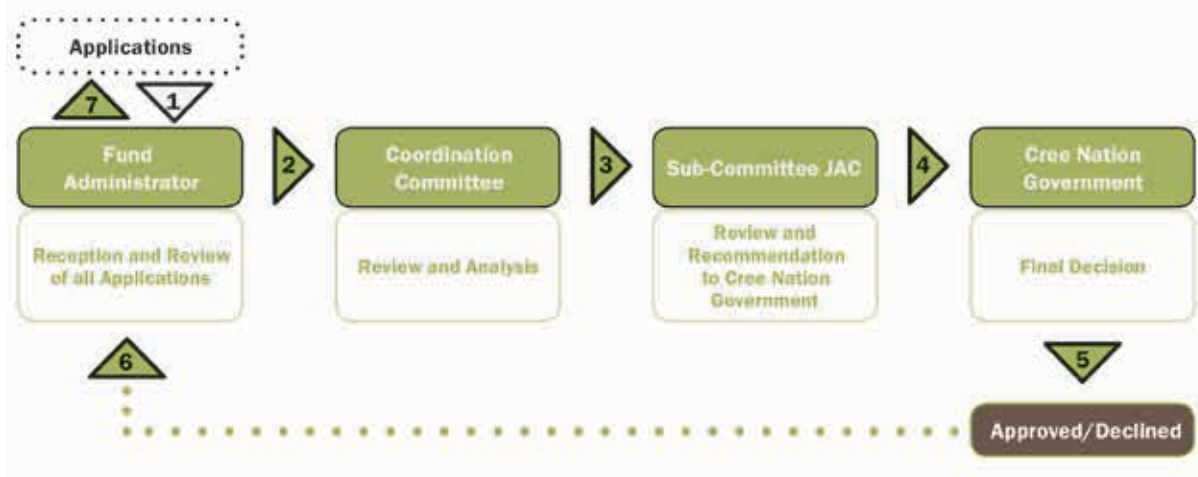
Cree Justice Funds

Through the Cree-Quebec Justice Agreement (2007), Québec provides funding to the Cree Nation Government to facilitate and improve the administration of justice for the Cree and for initiatives related to the justice system, pursuant to Section 18 of the JBNQA. The Department in 2014-2015 consequently set up four funds to help community members implement initiatives aimed at creating safer and more engaged communities across Eeyou Istchee.

Each fund has a specific objective:

- The Crime Prevention Fund aims to prevent and combat crime and support the creation of safer communities.
- The Youth Engagement Fund aims to empower the Cree youth while promoting general welfare.
- The Corrections Fund is established to support rehabilitation and reintegration of Cree offenders.
- The Land Based Camps Fund seeks to build land-based camps to support justice-related activities and rehabilitation of Cree offenders.





Application process for the Funds

To assist with the review of applications for the four new justice funds, the Cree-Quebec Judicial Advisory Committee (JAC) has created a sub-committee for each of the Funds. The sub-committees review the project proposals and make recommendations about which proposals should be approved and for which amounts. These recommendations are then presented to the Cree Nation Government for final approval.

In 2016-2017, 51 applicants submitted projects, and 33 projects were accepted including 11 projects under the Crime Prevention Fund, 6 projects under the Correction Fund and 16 projects under the Youth Engagement Fund. The Department sees in these applications the willingness of the Cree applicants and organizations to get involved in prevention, engagement, intervention, rehabilitation and reintegration. As incidents have an impact on many parts of a community, it is important that partnerships form a collaborative approach in prevention or reintegration. As we are partners in our education and health care systems, so are we partners in the safety and welfare of our communities.

All selected initiatives also have an additional requirement to be consistent with the policy of reflecting Cree values and in tune with Cree ways of life and culture. The Corrections Fund, for example, has run successful programs on training and reintegrating offenders into a local economy. However, the extra elements of having Elders speak with the offenders, and of some workshops on traditional activities related to fishing or hunting added an element that helped engage the youth in their culture and identity. It was also about teaching alternative healthy activities young adults can engage in when not at work. It is about reconnecting, valuing and listening. And in the process of the training and reintegration, some of the projects were specifically designed to give back to the community where harm might have occurred.

As for the Crime Prevention Fund, it has allowed for summer camps and even some well-organized winter excursions with high risk youth. The excursions take youth

onto the land for a number of weeks, with counselors, Elders and mentors, to teach traditional activities and counsel them on the direction their lives may be going in. The land is a great teacher as it teaches responsibility. It shows you that if you do not collect wood for a fire, it will be a cold night. There are consequences for your actions or in-actions. It teaches you to take care of yourself and others. That there is value in what you contribute to those around you. It can be a place without distractions, where you are valued for what you do then and not your past, and there is also a different pace of life. Another project last year was in collaboration with Youth Healing Services where families went onto the land for six weeks with a youth in the open custody facility. It allowed families from the communities to reconnect, and to build positive experiences and relationships. It was on the land with Elders, counselors and guides.

This year, submissions by local youth councils and the Cree Nation Youth Council for the Youth Engagement Fund were numerous, and 16 projects were accepted. These projects in some cases featured the pairing of youth with Elders in activities to create occasions for both groups to meet and for the Elders to transmit Cree values, culture and way of life. The projects included canoe brigades, camps, workshops and special artistic projects. The key again was to address an issue to reduce high risk activities, raise awareness on issues, and to integrate Cree culture and values into it. The difference being that the project design and applications come from the Cree youth themselves. It is about empowering youth to address issues impacting them within the communities.

The Department remains dedicated to the importance of these Funds. They serve a need, helping community members, as well as regional entities, to initiate projects and build partnerships aimed at the prevention of crime, rehabilitation, awareness, and reintegration with a connection to Cree land, values, and traditions. We encourage more people to apply, and you can learn more about the Funds at www.creejusticefunds.ca.



Programs and Services in detention facilities

In 2016-2017, corrections liaison officers, corrections release support workers, community reintegration officers, and accredited Elders and counselors visited Cree individuals in provincial and federal detention facilities or halfway houses on a regular basis. Counsellors and a Cree psychologist also make regular visits to Cree individuals in detention to offer support and guidance, and to do an assessment of needs. In 2016-2017, our psychologist made 35 visits to detainees in federal penitentiaries administered by Corrections Services Canada, 22 visits in provincial detention centers administered by the Ministère de la Sécurité publique, and did a number of follow-up sessions with individuals in their communities.

The traditional food program, which consists in bringing traditional food in the detention facilities as a part of rehabilitation and engagement, is still active. This program follows a traditional teaching that the land can heal. It reminds our clients that they still belong to a Nation, a community and family. Since we cannot bring them to the land, we bring the land to them. This program helps detainees connect back with their values, teachings and traditions and reminds them of what is important, and what could be done with better choices.

In order to ensure a thorough healing process and future reinsertion in the Eeyou Istchee community, workshops on addiction and violence continue to be offered to Cree inmates. Last year again, portions of In Search of Your Warrior (for men) and the Spirit of Your Warrior (for women) were offered. The Cree corrections staff also work on correctional release plans for individuals who are leaving detention, and accompany them on any hearings during their stay. We further provide translation when needed at these hearings. The staff will help families when they would like to know how to visit the institutions, check on the welfare of a loved one, or when there is important news that needs to be conveyed. We do a number of intakes to collect information, and use this to assess the needs when it comes to programming either in the facilities or when leaving detention facilities. We will often prepare plans when integrating individuals to transitional programs before returning to their communities.

PREVENTION FOR A BETTER FUTURE

A key mandate of the Department of Justice and Correctional Services is to ensure safe and healthy communities through the prevention of crime and victimization. The Department therefore spends time putting in place programs to work with children and youth who are tomorrow's citizens.

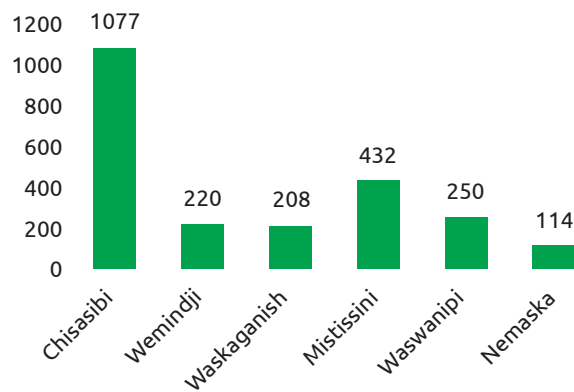
SNAP® (Stop Now and Plan)

STOP NOW AND PLAN (SNAP®), the evidence-based, cognitive-behavioral program developed by the Child Development Institute in Toronto, helps children regulate angry feelings by getting them to stop, think about the consequences of their behavior, and plan positive alternatives before they act impulsively. The program teaches life skills that everyone could use in coping when confronted with difficult or frustrating situations.

The Pitimaa Maamituneyiht SNAP® Program began as a three-year pilot project and was the first SNAP® in the world to be offered in remote locations. Pitimaa Maamituneyiht or think before you act has proven to significantly lessen the amount of suspensions and expulsions by training children to deal with conflict in a healthy manner, rather than acting on impulse. When children cannot cope with their anger and anxiety effectively, their ability to learn new skills and absorb knowledge is inhibited. Thus, SNAP® can also help children to learn more effectively in the classroom.



SNAP - Number of Students who benefited from the program



This program continues to draw interest. The number of followers on its Facebook page has increased from 700 in 2015-2016 to 744 in 2016-2017. Last year, 2301 Cree children and youth in 138 classrooms participated in these programs. In some of the communities, SNAP Programs did not run in the last year, so efforts were made to put in place workshops and other activities to engage the local children and youth.

While each community has a primary worker and an assistant in the program, it requires certification by the Child Development Institute for the delivery of a program in a school. Beyond the school based programs, the Prevention Officers worked one-on-one with individual cases when referred as well throughout the year. Further, the counselors for the summer literacy camps are given workshops by staff on SNAP techniques and lessons to further re-inforce these with the youth who have been in the Program. Teachers are also given workshops and awareness sessions.

An Alternative to School Suspensions

The Cree Alternative Suspension Program – based on one that was developed by the YMCAs of Quebec – was successfully offered in Chisasibi, Mistissini and Waskaganish to address the high number of suspensions in Cree schools in Eeyou Istchee. Adapted to Cree values and way of life, it aims to work with children while on suspension, instead of simply sending them home. Dur-



ing the suspension period, the youth completes school-work in the morning to keep up with the class, and focuses in the afternoon on the development of life skills and awareness of key issues. The parents and school are kept informed to ensure a smooth transition back in school.

In 2016-2017, nearly 100 youth, mostly from the secondary schools, benefited from the program. Two of the Cree sites had the highest number of intakes, this means they had the opportunity to work closely with youth to get them re-engaged back into education. A site must be able to sustain a full-time employee; therefore, each year we review the suspension statistics with the Cree School Board and YMCA to determine if other communities would have enough activity to justify another site. In the absence of these, we have looked at providing Alternative to School Suspension training to the SNAP assistant in the program. It may allow us to offer a portion of the Program.

Mindfulness Martial Arts Program

In 2016-2017, the Department inaugurated a pilot project of the Mindfulness Martial Arts Program (MMA) to help children with learning challenges, ADHD, or behavioural issues such as self-control, with whom other approaches may not be successful. In this project, eight youth were taught mindfulness meditation and breathing exercises to encourage discipline and behaviour modification in order to improve their self-awareness and ability to face challenges. The program helps bring focus of goals to youth, and health-wise Toronto Sick Kids Hospital started a pilot project this year to reduce diabetes in youth.

The project engages youth with attention or learning disabilities with mediation and martial arts component. However, it has a key cognitive therapy component to help with behaviour. The program was a learning lesson this year. It was difficult to find staff to pilot both the martial arts and the cognitive part of the program. The program in Ontario took years to develop and is now a credited part of their curriculum. So, the pilot project last year in a Cree school would need to be evaluated by the Cree School Board and the Department, but attendance was an issue at times.

Camps and We Day

Last year, the Department collaborated with external partners to provide Cree children with the opportunity to attend children's camps. The camps work with children to develop values, character and life and social skills, as well as to address issues such as bullying, resilience, resistance to peer pressure, and positive role modeling.

Take Action Camp

In July 2016, the Department sponsored a number of youth from the Cree communities to participate in three Take Action Camps, run by Me to We and Free the Children, in Peterborough, Ontario. The campers are encouraged to explore local and global issues. It is not your typical camp, although it does have activities like campfires, spontaneous dance parties, outdoor games, and crafts, but it is about engaging youth to make a difference on important issues in their communities and the world in general. It encourages them to take action now to make

impacts on others' lives. So, for instance, one day of camp is helping at a food bank. It is about also discussing issues such as poverty, cultural difference, education, environment, and teaches leadership skills on how to bring awareness to your peers and your community.

We Day

The National WE Day, which took place on November 9, 2016 at the Canadian Tire Center in Ottawa, was attended by 36 Cree youth from all of our communities, along with 13 accompanying adults. Over 16,000 students and educators gathered in this event, which celebrates youth making a difference in their local and global communities. The day was officially opened with a welcoming ceremony by an "Algonquin Grandmother". She moved the audience by highlighting the importance of healing the divide between indigenous Peoples and Canadians. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also attended the event.

As a prelude to WE Day Ottawa, one of our Cree teens received the Governor General's award for volunteerism during a ceremony on November 8th. Kevin Rabbitskin, a 14-year-old from Mistissini, won the award with nine other impressive young people involved in the ME to WE organization and who are active in their communities. According to Annie Ethier, director of Free the Children Montreal and Ottawa, it is the first time the award has been awarded to an Indigenous youth in the region. Kevin Rabbitskin displayed exemplary leadership skills in bringing people together around Cree culture both at camp and in Mistissini. "We are proud that

the Governor General of Canada has recognized a Cree youth with this prestigious award for people who make a difference in their communities and their nation," said the Department Director Donald Nicholls. "We hope that more youth will become involved in activities that improve the lives of people around them, and in the world community as well."

In February, 12 Cree youth from the regional Healing services facility attended the Montreal WE Day, which took place at the St. Denis Theatre in Montréal which gathered 2,000 youths. It is an opportunity for these youths to be inspired as well by many other youth across the province in wanting to make a positive difference.

Challenge Days

The Department sponsored a number of Challenge Days in the schools throughout the Cree communities last year. We had offered this in the past, with incredible results, so we were able to organize a multi-community tour of the program. In this holistic experiential program, youth and adult participants are guided through a series of powerful, high-energy experimental learning processes. The overall goals of the program are to increase personal power and self-esteem, to shift dangerous peer pressure to positive peer support, and to eliminate the acceptability of teasing, violence and all forms of oppression.

The Challenge Day Program is designed to unite the members of the school or community and to empower them to carry the themes of the program back to the school population. It aims also to address the issues of violence, teasing, social oppression, racism, harassment, conflict management, suicide, peer pressure, alcohol and drugs. The Department receives positive feedback from teachers and students each time we run the program, and it helps identify youth that may be at risk of harming themselves or others.

Hear Listen and Understand Conference

The Department organized a conference from March 28 to 30 for frontline workers who work with youth throughout the Cree Nation to learn, network and re-boot. There are always requests for people to attend conferences in their field of work to hear specific speakers. So, we thought we could instead bring incredible keynote speakers to Eeyou Istchee so more people could benefit from their experience, expertise and innovative approaches for dealing with at-risk youth.

Social workers, community justice employees, youth protection workers, and educators all gathered at the Hear, Listen, Understand Conference. They listened to Charlie Applestein, Leah Parsons, Michael Neuts, Rick Shaw, Dr. Victoria Creighton, Dr. Michael Ungar, Shaun Loney, Nicole Charron and Grand Chief Dr. Matthew Coon Come, who all offered thought-provoking and inspirational presentations. The speakers gave participants practical information, professional collaboration and a unique understanding of the complexities of youth intervention and social work in difficult environments. Nicole Charron from the Canadian Institute of Conflict Resolution ended the conference by lessons and exercises in Self Care for frontline workers. It was

*Kevin Rabbitskin receiving the Governor General's award
(Credit: Patrick Doyle, Canadian Press)*





Donald Nicholls, the DOJCS Director, with Hear, Listen and Understand speakers: Leah Parsons, Michael Neuts, Dr. Victoria Creighton, Rick Shaw, Dr. Michael Ungar, Ashley Iserhoff (Conference Chair)

about being healthy enough yourself to give an effective source of support for others.

“The conference provided an opportunity for front-line workers to enhance their skills and to hear from experts in their field,” says Department Director Donald Nicholls. He added: “People from the school board, health board, local public health organizations and the Justice department were working together in one room and were able to connect with each another.”

The Department then took things a step further, broadcasting the conference through an online livestream and hosting the video broadcast on the Grand Council website so that even more participants could benefit from the event. The Department produced as well an HD recording of the conference so people who missed it could simply go to the Grand Council’s website to listen to the presentations.

Crime Prevention Weeks in Eeyou Istchee

The Department supports crime prevention weeks in the communities to strengthen relationships between the organizations, raise awareness of issues, celebrate those who contribute to the wellbeing of a community, and to bring together community members.

In August, Mistissini held its Crime Prevention Week. A variety of guest speakers spoke about bullying, promoting a positive lifestyle, and respect. It was an opportunity to raise awareness of crime prevention by promoting positive messages. The movie night showed Highway of Tears, which was about murdered and missing Aboriginal women. A special part of the Crime Prevention Week was the awards night, where Community Recognition Awards were given out to recognize the contributions of community members.

In Nemaska, the Social & Prevention Week took place in November with workshops on Dealing with Bullying/Cyber-Bullying, Drugs and Alcohol, Violence and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. There were SNAP sessions, and Robert Auclair, Director of Youth Protection, made a presentation on the Youth Protection Act. Participants also came together in a Healing Circle and for meals, to share experiences and support each other.

In Waskaganish, the Restorative Justice and Healing Week took place in November as well. Some of the key speakers were Mike Neuts, an advocate for youth, speaking out against bullying, Miriam Wallbridge, a labour lawyer who gives legal information workshops, Mervin and Carol Ann Cheechoo, who speak on parenting and are the parents of Jonathan, who played with the NHL, and Cree Elders. It was an active week, which began with a Community Healing Walk, and continued with many sessions held directly at school to speak with youth.

In Whapmagoostui, the CrimePrevention Week included a visit by Mike Neuts to the Badabin Eeyou School to talk about bullying awareness. Another key speaker was Earl Lambert, a Cree motivational speaker and inspirational storyteller, met with students and teachers at all levels, from primary school to high school, and with parents and guardians in the evening. At the end of the week, students, teachers and community members, escorted by the local Eeyou Eenou Police Force, walked to demonstrate against bullying and violence against persons. This walk ended at the sports complex with some closing remarks and a catered meal.



Community Healing Walk in Waskaganish



Testing Technology

The Department was chosen to help the Cree Nation Government Finance Department test the new electronic travel claim request. This system makes the administration of claims much easier for our employees, and more efficient for the Finance Department. The Department of Justice and Correctional Services was happy to participate and to offer feedback when needed.

Commission of Inquiry on Indigenous Peoples and Public Services

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. Shortly thereafter, a number of Cree women from Eeyou Istchee came forward with similar accounts. At that time, the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee, together with the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL), called on Quebec to establish an independent judicial Commission of Inquiry. On December 21, 2016, the Government of Québec adopted an order in council to establish the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Quebec. The Commission will investigate, carry out analyses and make recommendations concerning 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. These public services include police services, correctional services, justice services, health and social services as well as youth protection services. The Government of Quebec has appointed retired Superior Court Justice Jacques Viens as the President of the Commission, given his familiarity with the Itinerant Court system and Northern Quebec. The hearings of the Commission are scheduled to start on June 5, 2017 at the Commission's offices in Val-d'Or. The Commission is to complete its work and submit its report, with its findings, conclusions and recommendations, not later than November 30, 2018.

The Department was asked to gather reports on incidents and activities of concern in the delivery of justice and correctional services to our clientele, to take note of experiences that we would find unsatisfactory in the treatment of our Cree clientele, and to offer recommendations and ideas.

Once this exercise is completed, the Department will submit to the Director of Cree-Quebec Relations a report

containing recommendations as to immediate actions that could be taken, and those that would go deeper into helping create environments that are safer and support change in relation to services offered by the province for vulnerable populations.

We hope that the results of this Commission of Inquiry will lead to deeper changes, and perhaps to modifications in policies and laws which would allow us to provide better services to Cree clientele in contact with Quebec policing, justice and corrections services. Further, this initiative could also have some important insights for the National Inquiry into the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls.

Quebec Social Justice

This year, the Department of Justice and Correctional Services continued to participate in the Quebec Social Justice Forum. This Forum is comprised of representatives from the Quebec Ministries of Justice, Public Security, the working group involves the Ministry of Justice, Public Security, and Health and Social Services, the Barreau du Québec, the AFNQL, the Court of Quebec and the Superior Court of Quebec, the Cree Nation Government and the Quebec Native Women's Association. It has the mandate of formulating recommendations to improve the delivery of justice services to Indigenous Peoples of Quebec. The Forum prepared a list of objectives that it reviews periodically with members, and experts, when appropriate. It allows the Department to exchange ideas, look at solutions, create working relationships and build collaborative efforts.

Further, the Department is working collaboratively with the Cree Health Board, the Cree School Board, the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association, the Cree Cultural Institute, other Cree entities, and the Director of Cree-Quebec Relations to look at Quebec's proposed Action Plan for the Social Development of Indigenous Peoples. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs brought together a number of representatives from the Cree Nation and other Quebec Indigenous groups at the beginning of this year. It was to look at the issues, and work together to discuss and define an action plan for dealing with issues of importance to Quebec's Indigenous Peoples. Some of the issues relate to social justice, and also the services, realities and responsiveness related to Quebec's justice and corrections systems. A collaborative and inclusive report for the Cree Nation needs in the area of social development is being prepared and will be ready later in the year.

LOOKING AHEAD

This year, the Department visited the Pine River Institute, a residential treatment centre and outdoor leadership experience for youth 13 to 19 of age struggling with addictive behaviors and often other mental health issues. The model uses the land to initiate the healing and education part of helping youth. Dr. Creighton, who ran youth rehabilitation programs in Montana, says to take youth onto the land jump starts their therapy by four months. It has so many lessons with respect to resiliency, self-care, and respect. The residence program is based upon the growth in maturity of the youth to deal with their issues. So, it could be a year and a half in the program versus the typical short term programs.

We also believe that rehabilitation comes from the land, and that we could develop a Cree program similar that works with youths until they are in a state to make healthier decisions. The Department presented this program findings to the Cree Health Board Commission, and the Elders, in December. We are encouraged that there is an awareness of this issue in the Cree Nation, and that there is a willingness to work collaboratively to look at solutions using the land and residency programming.

The Department is also considering for the near future a Cree Youth Build Program. In partnership with the Cree Human Resources Development Department (CHRD), the Cree School Board, the Commission de la construction du Québec (CCQ) and the construction industry, this program would allow youth and young adults to obtain a high school diploma while getting recognized hours and experience on construction sites with tradespersons. Youth Build would also help us combat unemployment, improve education and build much needed houses in the communities. This is a long-established program, but we would be one of the first to offer it in an Indigenous community in Canada. Many of the youths are typically at-risk in the system or of dropping out of school. Participants complete high school, and it also has been proven to reduce recidivism. But it also makes sense, with a shortage of housing, to look at building a generation of people with the skills to build houses.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Cree Nation Government Department of Justice and Correctional Services continues to build on

existing services, programs and processes that tie directly to the needs of the Cree Nation, as well as incorporate Cree values and ways of life. We are also committed to creating new services, partnerships, initiatives and processes to further meet those needs. We look for proven, evidenced based and innovative ways, and measure them to how well we can adapt them to be as effective and appropriate as possible. We work collaboratively with other Departments, organizations, governments and institutions to raise awareness, understanding and the quality of services for our People.

We have invested in improving the court system, and at the same time developing local justice initiatives to provide more opportunity for this system to be recognized and acknowledged as well. We also continue to invest in our staff, as well as members of local communities and partner organizations to build greater capacity to identify and work on issues together. While not all issues will be similar, our approach with values, understandings and established relationships can be.

The Department will continue to develop programs and services to build stronger, healthier and safer communities in the Cree Nation. We thank all of the leadership, partners, volunteers, Elders, community members, and government personnel who work with us in this common objective. The work we do together will translate to impacts both immediate and lasting within our Nation. We do comprehensive strategic planning internally and with other stakeholders, and look forward to what we will accomplish in the year to come. ●

A Tribute to CHARLOTTE BRIEN MACLEOD

On behalf of the Cree Nation Government Department of Justice and Correctional Services, we wish to pay tribute to Charlotte Brien MacLeod.

Charlotte Brien MacLeod worked as a special consultant on the Southern dialect for the Glossary of Legal Terms in Eeyou Eenou Language with the Department of Justice and Correctional Services. She was passionate about preserving and promoting the Cree language in her work and personal life. This dedication made her an invaluable part of the development of the Glossary.

So far, the Working Group on the Legal Terms has produced translations of 677 words and definitions related to justice in the three Cree



dialects. The Department lost Charlotte early this year at one of those meetings. She was an incredible worker, teacher, mother, friend and colleague. She will be sadly missed, and we are grateful for her contribution to making the justice process more accessible in the Cree language.



EEYOU EENOU POLICE FORCE

Message from the
Interim Police Director
LYLE COX



As Interim Police Director, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the recent retirement of my predecessor Mr. Reggie Bobbish, one of our most distinguished police pioneers who has also implemented the EEPF. Have a long pleasant retirement Reggie!

I am proud to present the EEPF's 2016 Annual Report. The purpose of this report is to ensure that the Cree citizens of Eeyou Istchee are well informed on the responsibilities, activities, challenges and accomplishments that the EEPF faced this past year.

At the EEPF we believe in accountability at all levels. Through the sharing of the information in this report it is my hope that the women and men, both civilian and sworn, of the EEPF will be able to continue building your trust in the work that they do every day to keep your communities safe. I am very proud to have been chosen as Interim Director of the EEPF and I intend to do my utmost to see that the EEPF continues its progression.

The men and women of the EEPF also make me very proud through their commitment to public safety in this Region. As always, I continue to urge you and all of my employees to be "*Proud to serve*" as we work together for public safety.

2016 marks our 6th year of existence, during which the EEPF made significant improvement, as you will notice on the pages that follow, especially on staffing and modernization of some of our equipment.

STAFFING

In 2016, the Cree Nation Government Council Board took a major decision by authorizing 25 additional full fledge officers for the EEPF, bringing the total number up to 106 by April 1, 2017. This decision was to be implemented in two steps. First, all ten (10) Special Constables positions funded until then by the Cree Nation Government were replaced by 10 full-fledge officers positions. As a consequence, the number of full fledge authorized officers went from 81 to 106. However, dispositions were taken to set aside open positions for recruits currently completing their basic training.

Following this decision, the EEPF and the Cree Nation Government Human Resources Department lost no time in launching the recruitment process, which resulted with the hiring of 22 additional full-fledge officers under contract for a specific period of time.

Figure 1 below details the actual number of officers in each category. It is important to understand that some of the filled positions might be vacant due to different circumstances. For instance, the officer might be on long-term leave of a different nature or under suspension. On average there are some 15 to 20 officers under this status. These officers are not considered active.

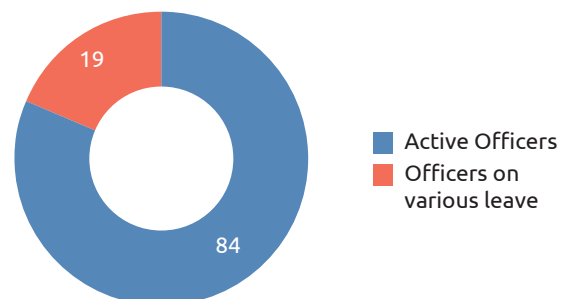
All in all, the number of EEPF active members throughout 2016 revolved around eighty-four (84) officers although the authorized staffing allocated for a total of ninety-nine (99) police officers.

Some of these recruits had little knowledge of Eeyou Istchee's reality and of its population. To meet this challenge, the EEPF held an induction session in Chisasibi in early December 2016. The outcome of this training was so positive that the EEPF decided to include it for its future recruits.

These much needed recruits will have a direct impact on the quality of policing services provided by the EEPF. In some communities, officers already in place had been stressed for months having to cope with staff shortages and, as a result, call response eventually took all the officers' energy, leaving little if any to proactive measures.

However, the problem is far from over. In spite of extensive financial investments and recruitment efforts, the EEPF has barely been able to come up with more than 8 or 9 trainees per year completing the AEC College Program and graduating from Nicolet. Yet, the recruitment efforts

Figure 1. Actual number of officers in each category



still attract some 18 to 20 applicants on each Cohort, but the graduation rate remains poor. This issue is among the priorities the EEPF has to address in the coming years. As we mentioned in our last Annual Report, there is a cost to professionalizing the EEPF. As we have moved away from the Special Constable status and given ourselves higher standards of professionalism, we must deal with the fact that recruits will require greater training, but on the other hand their improved skills and knowledge will benefit all of us in the long term.

In the meantime, recruitment efforts have to continue. Demographic projections clearly show that the Eeyou Istchee population will continue to increase at the rate above the national average for years to come, and our funding is based on population count.

In terms of training, the 164th Promotion graduation ceremony was held at the Police Academy (ENPQ) in Nicolet on May 27, 2016.

The 4th Cohort also began the AEC Program in May 2016 at College Ellis in Drummondville. This part of the basic training should be completed during the spring of

2017 before entering the final phase at the Police Academy (ENPQ) in Nicolet where graduation is set for October 2017.

Standing by its commitment to improve policing services and abide by professional standards, the EEPF looks into all allegations of possible wrongdoing on the part of its members. In each case, an investigation is made, and if in fact officers are at fault, actions are taken without delay through the disciplinary process. If found guilty, officers sanctions range from reprimand to dismissal. The EEPF currently has eight (8) of its officers under suspension related to allegations of criminal wrongdoing. From our vantage point, this is not a pretty picture, but it nonetheless illustrates the EEPF's commitment to enforce professional standards. It should be underlined that the disciplinary is under review and that new measures may come into force in 2017.

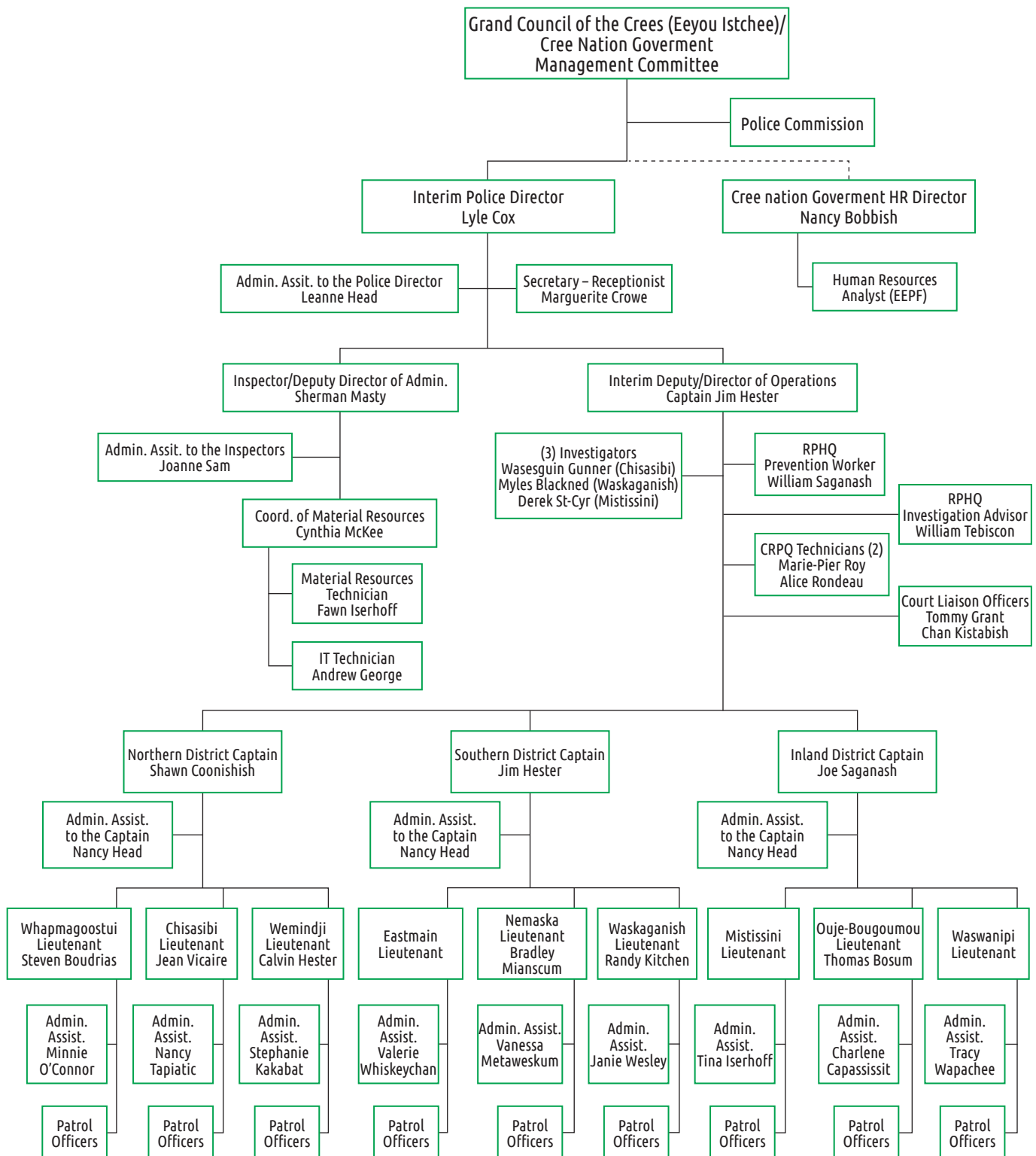
On a different topic, 2016 introduced a new reality in the labour relations field as some of its staff filed in a petition to demand unionisation. Competent authorities are currently addressing the request.

The men and women of the EEPF make me very proud through their commitment to public safety in this Region. As always, I continue to urge you and all of my employees to be “Proud to serve” as we work together for public safety.



Figure 2 presents the current EEPF Organizational Chart. The reader will note that several Senior Officer positions are vacant. However, district Captains ensure constant supervision.

Figure 2. EEPF Organizational Chart



LAW ENFORCEMENT

Figure 3 and 4 below show the variation in the number of most frequent offences reported to the EEPF.

Overall, the reported criminality rate continues its downward trend on most types of offences, and throughout 2016 EEPF members have increased their focus on drug use and trafficking.

Our approach remains a balanced one of both prevention and repression techniques, and we continue to work closely with members of the communities.

FIGURE 3. Selected Criminal Code Offences

Reported or known to the EEPF

From January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2016

Type of Offence	2015	2016
Assaults	709	613
Sexual offences	15	39
Homicide	0	2
Robbery	4	2
Break-in and enter	145	160
Theft - Motor Vehicle	37	49
Theft - Over \$5,000	13	9
Theft - 5,000\$ and under	22	18
Frauds	4	21
Offensive Weapons	19	25
Other Criminal Code Offences	785	720
Mischief (Property Damage) Over \$5,000	163	182
Mischief (Property Damage) \$5,000 and under	119	164
Heroin	0	0
Cocaine	12	15
Cannabis	17	12
Other drugs	6	12
Municipal By-laws	377	432

Source: Reported or known Criminal Code Offences based on Crime Statistics generated by the Department of the Eeyou Eeenu Police Force

FIGURE 4. Traffic Related Offences

Offence	Actual Number
Impaired operation of motor vehicle or over 80 mg	123
Dangerous operation of motor vehicle	7
Failure or refusal to provide breath sample	16
Provincial status	35
Municipal By-Laws	88

PROGRAM REVIEW

Late in 2016, the Cree Nation Government Council Board requested that a program review of the EEPF be undertaken. The mandate was given to two police management specialists and their report is expected in the spring of 2017.

COMMUNITY-BASED POLICING

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the EEPF remains committed to implementing more community-based policing strategies, especially with the increased staffing and the training these officers have received before our organization. In this regard, the EEPF is eager to tap into the expertise from some of the experienced members that have recently joined the organization. That is the case in our two major detachments, Chisasibi and Mistissini. I take this opportunity to welcome both detachment commanders in our organization. I am sure we will all benefit from their extended policing experience.

IT & MATERIAL RESOURCES

In 2016, the EEPF's Record Management System was gradually updated and became fully operational in February 2017. This system is called BEEON from ICO Technologies and it virtually covers the whole span of activities normally expected from a modern police force. Additional modules, such as Call-dispatch, can also be added. This tool will melt into the EEPF database and facilitate police files management at all levels.

In parallel, the EEPF IT Architecture Plan was finally completed. This system was desperately needed to interconnect local detachments with the RPHQ and the rest of the policing-community. As of May 2017, all detachments will be connected to the EEPF secured network.

The next major component remaining to be installed is a new Digital Fingerprinting System, which has already been acquired but could not be installed prior to having the proper IT Architecture in place. Now that the latter is in place, nothing is preventing us from activating this system in 2017. Once it is fully operational, this system will allow EEPF officers to perform queries and obtain real time information from national police databases.

As for the radio-communication system, we finally see light at the end of the tunnel. This project has been ongoing since 2013, and previous solutions were deemed too expensive. The Cree Nation Government Manage-

ment Committee created a workgroup with the mandate of examining all options available. During this process, the Workgroup has identified a potential partner having extensive expertise in radio communication networks for first-responders that would be interested in joining up with the Cree Nation Government to install and manage a system meeting the EEPF's needs. It is expected that present talks will result into an agreement sometime in 2017.

In the meantime, officers continue to operate with the old systems bequeathed by previous Cree local forces. However, in order to improve security concerns for the officers, especially when they are making transfers of prisoners or intervening outside the local area radio coverage, the EEPF purchased satellite radios in all EEPF patrol trucks with a base station at RPHQ.

As for police facilities, most detachments have been revamped to meet standards. This was the case for the Chisasibi detachment where major renovations were completed and are still underway. Elsewhere, in the new Mistissini detachment, construction began as planned but delivery was delayed until February 2017.

Next in line is the Waskaganish detachment, where new construction has been approved for 2017. Architects are already at work, and this building will be designed in a manner that will provide a suitable and efficient workspace for years to come.

The RPHQ extension built last year has been furnished with the storage equipment needed, as well as with dock equipment to unload the merchandise. As any other professional police organization, the EEPF maintains an inventory of police-related equipment and uniforms to meet the needs of its staff. The new facility also received the equipment needed for the new lab and the mobile unit for the Crime Scene Technician.

CONCLUSION

Although much remains to be done, substantial progress was made during 2016 to bring the force up to national standards. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all my colleagues from the different Cree Nation Government Departments. Without your support, the EEPF would not be where it is today.

To the Cree citizenry, on behalf of all EEPF staff, thank you for your support, and rest assure that this organization remains dedicated in improving the quality of policing services. ●

Architectural Plans for Waskaganish Police Station





SOCIAL & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Message from the Director
WILLIE ISERHOFF

Deeply embedded in our Cree culture are ancient values, principles and philosophies which have served to guide our people for thousands of years. The Cree Nation Government plays a vital role in the protection, promotion and expression of our Cree culture and language for the benefit of our people and for the benefit of cultural diversity on a more global scale.

It continues to be my great privilege and honour to serve as a steward of the Social and Cultural Development Department of the Cree Nation Government in guiding the use of the resources available to us to continue the vital mission of the Cree Nation.

I am pleased to report to you on the activities of our Department during the 2016-17 fiscal year.

It has now been two years since a fundamental reorganization within the Cree Nation Government resulted in the establishment of the Department of Social and Cultural Development. The major divisions within our Department are the following:

- Culture and Language
- Cree Language Commission
- Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute
- Toponymy
- Cree Nation Youth Council/Youth Development
- Cree Nation Elders Council/Elderly Program
- Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association

Previously, the unit of Leisure, Sports and Recreation was associated with our Department; however, this function has now been re-established as a distinct entity called the Eeyou Istchee Sports and Recreation Association (EISRA), which functions through a service agreement with the Cree Nation Government.

As I reported to you last year, my Department, along with the units of Culture and Language, the Cree Language Commission, Toponymy and Archaeology, have moved to the Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute. The reports on their activities for the 2016-17 fiscal year can be found in other sections of this Annual Report.

The mandate of the Social and Cultural Development Department is to provide innovative and effective programming in the area of Cree culture and language. To ensure that we continue to do so in an effective manner, we have initiated a process to develop a comprehensive five-year strategic plan. Our objective is to enhance our Department so that we make the best use of the financial resources available to us to address the needs of our communities. We look forward to sharing the results of this initiative.

Last, but not least, I want to express my utmost appreciation to my staff for the tremendous team work they demonstrated during the course of the year. As a result of their commitment and dedication, much has been accomplished.

Mista-meeqwetch!

The Cree Nation Government plays a vital role in the protection, promotion and expression of our Cree culture and language for the benefit of our people and for the benefit of cultural diversity on a more global scale.



CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

MCCQ Funding Agreement

This year was the second in the three-year contribution agreement with the Quebec Ministère de la Culture et des Communications (MCCQ) for the period 2015–2016 through 2017–2018. By tapping into programs such as the Société du Plan Nord Action Plan 2015–2020, the Fond du patrimoine culturel québécois, as well as regular MCC programs, the new agreement doubles the funding from the previous one. The funding from the agreement for 2016–2017 totaled \$401,000, of which 76% was used in support of Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute programs, while the balance supported the cultural programs of the Cree Nation Government Social and Cultural Development Department.

Community Network

The mandate of the department is to work closely with the Cree First Nation councils, to help preserve, promote, celebrate and develop Eeyou/ Eenu culture and language. It is important to mention the cultural coordinators / cultural directors who are on the front lines in delivering cultural programs in their communities: Robbie Dick, Jr. (Whapmagoostui), Margaret Fireman (Chisasibi), Stacy Matches (Wemindji), Jamie Moses (Eastmain), Stacy Bear (Waskaganish), Deborah Wapa-

chee (Nemaska), Jane Voyageur (Mistissini), Daniel Bosum (Oujé-Bougoumou), Diane Cooper (Waswanipi) and Johnny Salt (Washaw-Sibi). Since 2013, collaboration between the Cree Nation Government and the communities has been facilitated by the presence of the Cultural Programs Liaison Officer.

Work of Cultural Programs Liaison Officer

The Cultural Program Liaison Officer carries out a wide range of activities in support of community cultural projects, including the preparation of proposals and reports concerning the Board of Compensation's Local Cultural Grants Program. Priscilla Bosum went on educational leave in September 2016 and, in January 2017, was replaced by Jamie Stevens from Waskaganish. The Liaison Officer maintains regular contacts with the cultural coordinators and schedules and plans meetings of the Cultural Coordinators' Working Group. Three meetings of this group were held in the course of the year, including one in Montreal in September, 2016, one in Gatineau in October 2016, and a final meeting in Oujé-Bougoumou in March 2017. Jamie Stevens also assisted ACCI in the organization of events and initiatives involving the cultural coordinators. As well, additional research was carried out for a possible new training program for community cultural workers. Jamie Stevens collaborated with ACCI on educational programming at the Institute and in other communities.

"I am grateful for my job and excited to work here at ACCI, this will be great opportunity to work side by side with the culture coordinators. I believe our culture needs to be promoted, and recognize our elders as key holders to the land".
- Jamie Stevens

Board of Compensation funding for local projects

An important supplementary source of funds for community cultural projects is the Cree Nation Government Board of Compensation Local Cultural Grants Program. This program was established in 1986 to ensure that the Cree communities would have access to funding for cultural activities. The funding provided for this program in 2016–2017 was \$100,649 in support of local cultural projects. The funds were used for a wide variety of cultural projects including festivals, gatherings, canoe trips, snowshoe walks, traditional hide preparation, fish smoking, sewing, tool making, etc. All of these activities contribute to the communities' objectives of preserving and passing on aspects of Cree traditional culture.

Special Grants for Community projects

A special grant totaling \$30,000 was made available to the Culture Coordinators from the MCCQ three-year agreement funds. The cultural coordinators were invited to submit proposals on behalf of their communities, and three communities were awarded funds. The Eastmain cultural department proposal was called "Legends & Storytelling 2017" and was awarded the amount of \$6,500. The Mistissini Cultural department proposal was entitled "Elder-Youth Story Art Project", and the amount given was \$10,000. Lastly, the Ouje-Bougoumou cultural de-

partment proposal was called "Wellness Journey 2017" and was given the amount \$13,500.

Language

The Cree Nation Government's Department of Social and Cultural Development would like to welcome its newest staff-member. Dorothy Stewart has been hired as the Cree Nation Government's Cree Language Coordinator. Dorothy will be responsible for developing the Cree Nation Government's language programming and policy, as well as overseeing the development and delivery of a Cree Language Survey for Eeyou Istchee. She will be based in Ouje-Bougoumou, working out of the Cree Nation Government's offices at Aanischaaukamikw.

The past year also witnessed the continuing development of the Cree Nation Government's place names program. The Cree Nation Government's PostGIS database now houses over 11,873 Cree-language place names that can be accurately mapped in either roman or syllabic orthography. Another 5,000 names are in the process of being fully entered into the database. Given that surveys are ongoing, the database will only continue to grow. This makes the program easily one of the biggest of its kind in North America.

Place name surveys were undertaken in Wemindji, where we are working with Sammy Blackned and Katherine Scott in support of their project to document trapline histories. The program's work in Wemindji was presented at the Centre for Indigenous Conservation and Development Alternative's conference in Wendake in September, 2016. The conference was attended by academics and Indigenous people from Canada, Africa, Australia, and Central and South America.

Dorothy Stewart, the Cree Nation Government's Cree Language Coordinator.

Photo courtesy of Dorothy Stewart





A place names interview at the Paakumushimuwaashtikw gathering in July, 2016.

Photo: Katherine Scott

Surveys were also undertaken in Nemaska, where we were fortunate to work with Matthew Tanoush and Lindy Moar. In Nemaska, surveys of all but one of the community's traplines are now complete. In Chisasibi, validation of coastal island names was begun with the assistance of Elsie Duff, Charlotte Tapiatic, and Jennifer Napash. Finally, work continued on mapping the place names on Washaw Sibi's traditional territory. We interviewed Fred Mowatt and his wife Margaret in 2016, and are currently working with the community to continue mapping their lands. Washaw Sibi is the only Cree community that has yet to have been the subject of Cree-language place name surveys, so we are anxious to proceed.

2016 also witnessed increasing co-operation with other Cree Nation Government departments and initiatives. Presentations on the place names program were made to the Eeyou Planning Commission and to the Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission. Given the importance of place names in relaying the historical, ecological, and cultural significance of places in Eeyou Istchee, the program is well positioned to support the Cree Nation Government's land planning initiatives in coming years. A presentation was also made to Council Board in January of 2017, and a mandate was secured that will allow the Cree Nation Government Toponymist to work with community governments to develop a process whereby Cree place names can be recommended for official recognition.

Finally, the program has published its first Cree-language map of Eeyou Istchee. The map contains over 700 Cree place names, and will be distributed to schools and other public venues in Eeyou Istchee. If you are interested in obtaining copies, please get in touch with John Bishop, Cree Nation Government Toponymist, at Aanischaukamikw in Oujé-Bougoumou. Copies will also be available from the Aanischaukamikw gift shop.

Archaeology

The Cree cultural heritage of Eeyou Istchee is rich and varied. It is preserved in the memory of elders and in Cree language and traditions and it is connected to places

on the land through stories, place names and archaeological sites. The staff of the Cree Nation Government's Archaeology Unit (David Denton and Dario Izaguirre) explores and researches heritage sites in collaboration with local communities, provides training for Cree youth, and works closely with elders to identify significant places. We provide technical and financial support to communities to preserve these sites and to educate Cree youth about this aspect of their heritage. The Archaeology Unit is based at Aanischaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute in Oujé-Bougoumou.

This year was an especially busy one with field projects in several communities.

First look at historical resources of Akaamaschii (Charlton Island)

With the support of the Waskaganish First Nation Chief and Council, the Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission, and local tallyman, Norman Jolly, the Cree Nation Government carried out a first archaeological survey on Akaamaschii (Charlton Island), the largest island in the Eeyou Marine Region, in August and early September 2016. This four-week survey and site evaluation was undertaken in the context of the multi-year, collaborative "Waskaganish Archaeology Project", which has resulted in a great deal of new information concerning ancient Eeyou occupation of the coastal zone. This joint project is managed locally by Waskaganish cultural coordinator Stacy Bear.

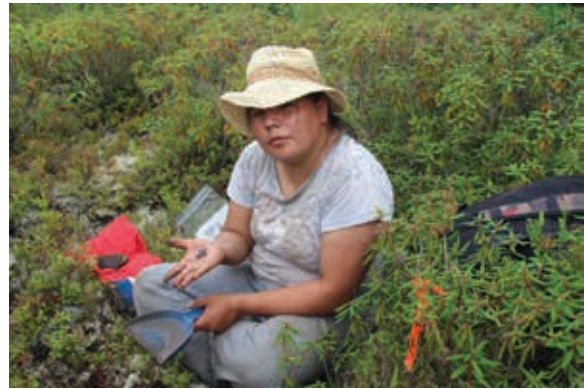
Our hopes for finding evidence of ancient Eeyou occupation of this island—located some 30 kilometres out into the sea—were unfortunately not to be realized. Neither was our hope of finding the remains of Captain Thomas James' camp at the northeast end of the island. Probably a more refined survey strategy is needed for both. On the other hand, our objective of documenting early European sites was richly rewarded. With the assistance of contract archaeologist Christian Roy, testing and evaluation was carried out at four buildings associated with the Hudson's Bay Company depot established on the island in the early 1680s. Due to erosion, the warehouse is

beginning to fall into the sea; additional salvage archaeology is urgently needed here. The survey also documented the North West Company's Fort St. Andrews (1803-1806) as well as an unexpected site where four to five wooden houses were erected in the mid-late 1800s and which likely housed Crees working on the first HBC beaver preserve (1839-1902) at Akaamaschii. Former buildings at the 20th century HBC depot were documented with the assistance of John Jolly. The excellent crew from Waskaganish included several members of the John and Sheila Jolly family as well as Josephine Diamond. The mapping of the site was facilitated by a drone survey, generously carried out by Guy Bennett, assisted by Rob Tymstra.

In coming years, we hope to continue the process of documenting heritage sites reflecting Cree, Inuit and European occupation of the offshore islands. More detailed interviewing work with knowledgeable Cree elders will be an important part of this process. Ultimately, these efforts will facilitate Cree management and consideration of these places for educational purposes or tourism.

Other sites near Waskaganish

Also as part of the 2016 Waskaganish Archaeology Project, a two-day evaluation of the Sanders Pond site was carried out by paleo-geographer Bernard Hétu. This important site is located 28 km inland from Waskaganish at an elevation of 68 m above sea level. When occupied, the site was on the seashore, on a long point between the mouths of the Rupert and the Broadback rivers, but over the millennia, the land has risen substantially in relation to the sea. The project resulted in a better understanding of the rocky deposits at the site which were created by wave action.



Josephine Diamond re-finds ancient coastal site at E Minipakaashich (Comfort Point) near Waskaganish

A short archaeological survey was carried out at E Minipakaashich (Comfort Point) at the outermost reaches of Rupert Bay. The principal objective was to find an archaeological site documented in 1983 by David Denton with Sanders Weistche and Lawrence Katapatuk. At that time, a forest fire had exposed numerous ancient fire places and stone artifacts and pottery were found here. The artifacts and site location suggested that the site was approximately 500 years old. Although the forest has completely grown up in the area, we eventually re-found the site by digging test pits in the deep moss. Future excavations here will help tell the history of the Wiinipekuu Iiyiyuuch (people of the sea).

Archaeology team heading into the woods on Akaamaschii (Charlton Island) to carry out survey





Charlie (Bobby) Capisisit excavates test pit at Upimiskaau Paawishtikuu near Oujé-Bougoumou

Survey at Upimiskaau Paawishtikuu (Oujé-Bougoumou)

The Archaeology Unit began a collaborative project with the Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation to assess the archaeological resources at Upimiskaau Paawishtikuu (Opémiska Rapids) in advance of an eventual mini-hydro project. The rapids are located near where the Chibougamau River enters Lake Opémiska on the Oujé-Bougoumou access road.

Our objective was to relocate and evaluate several sites recorded in the 1980s and to test high potential zones for other sites. The work was carried out by Francis Marcoux (Cree Nation Government consultant) and Dario Izaguirre, with the assistance of Charlie and Dylan Capisisit. Although the survey was scheduled to take place over several weeks in September and October 2016, the work was unfortunately cut short by a heavy snowfall. Nevertheless, the team succeeded in re-locating several of the previously known sites and finding two significant new sites. All sites produced tools and chipping debris from the manufacture of stone tools indicating their use well before contact with Europeans. Given the abundance and size of the chips, it is likely that the source of this stone is not far away. The initial results of the project suggest that Upimiskaau Paawishtikuu is archaeologically rich, probably reflecting its use as a portage and fishing place used for many hundreds or even thousands of years. We plan to finish this work in the summer of 2017.

Site evaluation at Amiskuuchimaaukamikw Point (Mistissini)

At the request of the Cree Nation of Mistissini (CNM), we carried out an archaeological evaluation of Amiskuuchimaaukamikw (Beaver Boss) Point. The community plans to develop this point as a cultural camp and wished to verify the archaeological potential in advance of work at the site. The project took place over two weeks in August and September 2016 and was carried out by Francis Marcoux for the Cree Nation Government, assisted by archaeological technicians John Bosum and Johnny Mattawashish, as well as several labourers provided by the CNM. The test pits, dug at regular intervals across the point, permitted the delineation of several zones containing artifacts—such as stone tools and chips from manufacture of tools—along the eastern shore of the point. The remainder

of the point can be developed without fear of disturbing any sites. Amiskuuchimaaukamikw Point is of historical significance as the place where the “beaver boss,” resided and where local operations for the Mistassini beaver preserve were carried out in the early 1950s. Following this, a government fishing camp was established here.

A visit to Waapushukamikw

A short project was carried out to accompany and monitor the activities an American archaeologist and a group of American flint-knappers and “primitive technology” enthusiasts at Waapushukamikw (also known as the Colline Blanche), a source of high quality stone in the Mistissini territories that has been used by Cree ancestors and other groups for over 5,000 years. The cave at the site is considered a sacred site by many local people. With the assent of the CNM and the local tallyman, Simon Mattawashish, Cree Nation Government archaeological consultant, Francis Marcoux, monitored the group during a site visit over several days in August, 2016. A limited sample of stone to use for experimental purposes was collected. The Cree Nation Government Archaeology Unit is following up with members of the group to obtain the results of its experimental work, including the effects of heat treating on improving the quality of the stone for making tools.

The proposed Kakabat granular materials project

At the request of the Cree Nation of Wemindji (CNW) and Taawich Management Services, the Archaeology Unit prepared a preliminary assessment of the archaeological potential of the proposed Kakabat area granular material project. Following an analysis of available information, it was concluded that there are zones within the project area that have archaeological potential and that these should be inventoried prior to the development and use of the borrow pit. It is expected that the inventory of these zones will be carried by the Cree Nation Government in collaboration with the CNW during the summer of 2017..

Publications and conferences

At the annual colloquium of the Association des Archéologues du Québec, held in Montmagny, Quebec, in April 2016, staff presented two papers: “La notion de « communauté » dans « l’archéologie communautaire » : l’exemple des Cris d’Eeyou Istchee” (“The notion of ‘community’ in ‘community archaeology’: the example of the Crees of Eeyou Istchee”) by David Denton and “Manifestations de l’Archaïque près de Waskaganish (“Manifestations of the Archaic in Eeyou Istchee James Bay”) by Dario Izaguirre and David Denton. David Denton attended the meetings of the Society for American Archaeology in Vancouver in March 2017 and presented a paper entitled “Waapushukamikw: Sacred Site and Lithic Quarry in Subarctic Quebec.” Staff invested time and energy in the preparation two articles that will be published in 2017-2018, including a retrospective on Cree community involvement in the Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Program in the context of hydroelectric development in the 2000s, and a presentation of the results of the community-based archaeology project at the Sanders Pond site near Waskaganish. ●



*Executive Director of Aanischaaukamikw,
Dr. Sarah Pash*

AANISCHAAUKAMIKW CREE CULTURAL INSTITUTE

It is my privilege to present this report from Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute, detailing some of our activities over the past year. This past year has been very productive as we have increased our capacity to engage audiences within Eeyou Istchee and beyond through the development of our travelling exhibit, “*Footprints: A Walk Through Generations*,” education programming for school groups, youth, and families and Elders’ programming. We have continued the realization of our mandate, ensuring that our treasured objects, documents, and audio/visual materials are preserved for future generations to learn from and we have also continued in the research and preservation of traditional knowledge. Our team is always grateful for the privilege of working to ensure that our children and grandchildren can continue to experience and benefit from the knowledge and teachings of our ancestors. We gladly continue to work under the mandate and vision of Aanischaaukamikw so future generations have access to and are able to experience our heritage, and maintain our rich culture.

Regional outreach and community engagement

This was a particularly strong year for Aanischaaukamikw in terms of regional outreach and community engagement activities. We were extremely proud of the expansion of our beaded hood program, culminating in the presentation of a beaded hood to the descendants of

the original hood bearer, Jane Gunner (ca. 1840, wife of Chief Joseph Gunner) in Mistissini. After four years of research and education programming focused on the traditional use, making of, and spiritual significance of women’s beaded hoods, we were able to locate the beaded hood, from around 1840 at the Musée de Lachine (Montreal), determine the original owner to be Jane Gunner, locate her descendants in Mistissini and Ouje-Bougoumou, and bring the beaded hood back to Eeyou Istchee to be introduced to Jane Gunner’s descendants in Mistissini. In reuniting the hood with the family and community we were very proud to partner with the community of Mistissini and are grateful to Ashley Iserhoff and Jane Voyageur of Mistissini’s Culture Department for their hard work to ensure that the reunification gathering was a success. We are also grateful to Air Creebec for ensuring that the hood travelled safely to Eeyou Istchee in compliance with our protocols for safe fragile object handling.

Throughout the year, we worked with community culture departments in support of their local initiatives. Our Executive Director, Dr. Sarah Pash, assisted the Chisasibi Heritage and Cultural Centre with its policy development and our collections staff partnered with the Chisasibi centre staff in research related to our travelling exhibit development. In addition, we offered professional development activities, providing training for culture department staff from Wemindji in collections storage and display for their exhibit. For the community of Waswanipi, we provided archives support contributing to their exhibit development and plans for their anniversary celebration.

We also completed a project for Waskaganish, providing conservation expertise and storage solutions for them as they dealt with a problem in their storage facilities. In June of 2016, the cultural objects from Waskaganish were repacked and returned to Waskaganish, and will become part of the community’s cultural programming and exhibits. Also this year, in October, we provided mold remediation services for the community of Ouje-Bougoumou’s band office, helping ensure that their valuable documents remained usable and intact.

Community consultations, beginning in April of 2016, were a major regional initiative for ACCI this year. We were able to obtain important input from all 10 communities of Eeyou Istchee that will inform our exhibit and collections planning for the next 5 years and give us long term direction for work in areas of our mandate that require special attention over the long term.



Woman’s Beaded Hood presentation to the descendants of Jane Gunner in Mistissini.



Wemindji staff in training workshop at ACCI



Minister of Culture and Communications, Luc Fortin, with Abel Bosum, President of ACCI and Willie Iserhoff, Vice President of ACCI at MCCQ consultations

We were also happy to take part in two regional events this year with attendance in August at the Nishiiyuu Cultural gathering and at the SAENCAT (Secretariat to the Cree Nation Abitibi-Temiscamingue Economic Alliance) business exchange event in May at the Hotel Eschers in Amos. At the Nishiiyuu event, we hosted one day of the event, focused on culture, with Willie Iserhoff, our vice-president, acting as our chairperson for the day. We also presented plans for our exhibit, examples of community cultural projects, and held a consultation session obtaining feedback from Elders that will inform our programming for the future.

Our participation in the SAENCAT event in May in Amos, allowed us to showcase ACCI and its capacity in a new venue. We set up our booth and some of our work while our Executive Director, Sarah Pash, gave a presentation as a keynote speaker about the importance of the work we do and our plans for the future.

Provincial outreach

ACCI has been pleased to be involved in activities elaborating provincial policies related to culture. We were happy to host the Ministry of Culture and Communications of Quebec here at the institute for their consultation session on a new cultural policy, and contributed to the Cree Nation Government's response to the consultation. In addition, ACCI was invited to contribute to the consultation session regarding social development of First Nations peoples by the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones; our Executive Director, Dr. Sarah Pash, attended this consultation session.

In addition, we worked to strengthen partnerships with other museums in the province and First Nations cultural institutes. We have developed our relationship with the Museum at Mashteuiatsh, taking part in a collaboration session with them in May, and will be formalizing our partnership with them through sharing training initiatives in Indigenous museology over the next few years. In addition, we hosted the Elders group from Mashteuiatsh at ACCI when they came to visit our territory in June.

Our partnership with the Musée de Lachine has become very important to us, as we worked together to en-

sure that the Gunner beaded hood was brought back to Eeyou Istchee. We continue to work together with them to discover provenance of objects and research traditional uses for objects from the 1800s. Partnerships such as these are important to our growth as a knowledge producing institution and serve to broaden our capacity to do research and to validate our results.

We have also begun a partnership with the Centres régional de services aux bibliothèques publiques, a provincial program, so that we can bring public library services to our communities. Our pilot ran successfully this year with the community of Ouje-Bougoumou and we look forward to the program's expansion to the other communities of Eeyou Istchee over next few years.

National outreach

We worked hard to increase our profile nationally throughout this year, beginning with a presentation at the Canadian Museums Association National Conference. We led a presentation on 'Inspired Solutions from Eeyou Istchee', inviting both the Chisasibi Heritage and Cultural Centre and the Wemindji culture department to present with us. Our presentation focused on "An Inspired Solution to Accessing Remote Collections in Eeyou Istchee" and highlighted our regional online database as an innovation in First Nations museum outreach to remote communities.



Jane Gunner Beaded Hood, ca. 1840



Some of our other conference presentations at National conferences included:

- May 2016 – Canadian Association for Conservation annual conference, Montreal – poster presentation “What should we be worried about and who cares? Updating Aanischaaukamikw’s Emergency Preparedness Plan”.
- June 2016 – Canadian Indigenous & Natives Studies Association annual conference, Regina – talking circle co presenter with Royal Saskatchewan Museum & Canada Museum of History: “Museums and Reconciliation”.

Collections growth: Museum, Library and Archives

The main work of our Collections team has focused on the development of our travelling exhibit, “Footprints: A Walk Through Generations.” This project began three years ago and it was extremely gratifying to see it come to life over the past year and achieve its completion. The exhibit, centered around the theme of walking and the importance of walking to our culture, our stories, our ceremonies, and our technologies, will travel throughout Eeyou Istchee and then across the country into 2020. The travelling exhibit has already received a great deal of media attention and interest from institutes and museums across the country anxiously looking forward to hosting “Footprints: A Walk Through Generations.”

Other projects undertaken by our collections department included the completion of our online database project, which will benefit all community culture centres and community members of Eeyou Istchee, and continued research into traditional objects and knowledge consolidation.

Our collection continues to grow through both donations and loans. Below is an outline of some of our important acquisitions through our museum, library and archives:

Acquisitions

Museum Collection

- 96 objects added to Core collection
- 10 objects added to Living collection

Library Collection

- 424 books added to ACCI Library general circulation collection
- 157 books added to ACCI Rare Books Collection

Archives Collection

- 9 additions to Cree Way funds
- 1 addition to ACCI funds
- 48 additions to Eeyou Istchee Ephemera funds
- Additions to Eeyou Istchee Photograph funds: 10 items from Eva Teresa Rhode; 72 items from Alain Jacob; 222 items from Josie Shecapio-Blacksmith;



1. Octopus Bag ca. 1958-73, donated by Shirley Levacy, acquired by Mary Mitchel

2. Girl's Walking Out outfit, 1980, on loan from Leslie Ann Petawabano, made by Lilybell Awashish

3. Barrette display, showing different styles of hair adornments from the communities of Eeyou Istchee

4. Snowshoes donated to ACCI collection by Cree Regional Authority

5. Bone and pin game made for ACCI by Ricky Jolly

6. Doll in traditional clothing, made by Diane Cooper, Waswanipi

155 items from Sophie & Abel Bosum; 64 items from Ralph Newson; 25 items from Chisasibi Skating Club; 2 items from Gordon Shecapio Blacksmith; 6 items from Stanley Bosum

- Mary Mitchell fonds: Photographs, notebooks and a film reel from a former teacher in Eeyou Istchee
- Romeo Saganash fonds: 2 campaign posters

Education and guest services initiatives

Our capacity to host visitors and groups grew over the past year as we completed work under a funding agreement with the Projet ACCORD, focused on accommodating tourists to our area. Our Interpretative Kits, teaching about Traditional Tools and Traditional Clothing, will allow us to expand on our programming capabilities to groups of all sizes. There is a rich historical outline in each kit, numerous items for people to handle, and activities for groups to further immerse themselves in Cree Culture in an interactive, engaging manner. These kits can be used as a model for other tourism-oriented operators to further develop their capabilities in the tourism field, and will assist in the development of tourism offerings throughout our region, especially by our outfitting operations throughout Eeyou Istchee.

We worked on a number of programs designed for contributing to the well-being of Elders in Eeyou Istchee in partnership with the Cree Nations Government's Department of Culture and Social Development. For one such project, Painting with Elders in Ouje-Bougoumou, Waswanipi and Mistissini, our staff went to each community to paint with elders at the local MSDC. We showed them traditional objects and had everyone speak about what they saw, and then used that as inspiration for their work of art. Our main goal was to have fun and provide an opportunity for the elders to laugh while creating art, and also to allow them to experience objects from the collection in an environment that was easily accessible to them.

Another project with Elders involved them in sharing stories, during which we brought in elders from different communities to share their traditional stories. We had visitors from other communities and students from various schools come to listen to the knowledge that their elders had to share. This was a powerful experience for all involved.

In hosting schools, we were happy to continue with a program developed for the Central Quebec School Board's MacClean Memorial School to deliver Secondary 5 Indigenous History curriculum, augmenting their school pro-

gram with visits to ACCI throughout the year. We also continued to host Cree School Board schools with numerous visits from schools in Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini. We even hosted a school group from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. This group makes their annual visit each year as part of their Environmental Conservation program. We continue to be an excellent place of learning for students as they experience and become immersed in Cree Culture through tours, cultural experiences and hands on learning.

Publications and Social Media Activities

As we move to ensure that we further engage and inform our communities and our regional partners, and raise the profile of ACCI nationally and internationally, we utilize many different types of media and communication sources. We are active on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Below is a list of some media initiatives including blog posts, articles in the mainstream media, articles in regional media sources, and refereed articles in academic journals:

- Summer 2016 - "Beadwork Barrettes on Display at Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute" Muse Magazine: vol 7-8 2016

ACCI education activity with students





ACCI team wearing orange shirts on September 30th to recognize and honour the experience of survivors of Indian Residential Schools in the spirit of reconciliation

- March 2017 – “John Blueboy goose decoy” What’s This featured object in Canadian Geographic
- Published 2016 - “Seeing Ourselves: The Path to Self-Curation, Cultural Sovereignty and Self-representation in Eeyou Istchee” Survivance and Reconciliation: 7 Forward / 7 Back: 2015 Canadian Indigenous and Native Studies Association Conference Proceedings [peer reviewed]
- January 2017 – “The Life of a Teacher in Eeyou Istchee: The Collection of Mary Mitchell” ACCI Blog post
- February 2017 – “Preparing for Siikun in Eeyou Istchee” ACCI Blog post
- Spring 2016 – “When it’s time to hide your hides” Air Creebec magazine article
- Summer 2016 – “Wild Blueberries: A Summer Family Tradition” Air Creebec magazine article
- Autumn 2016 – “Tiikwachin, It’s Autumn!” Air Creebec magazine article
- Winter 2016 – “Footprints: A Walk through Generations” Air Creebec magazine article
- Footprints: A Walk through Generations exhibit catalogue
- Footprints: A Walk through Generations promotional brochure
- December 2016 - Draft submitted for peer reviewed publication “Adapting the Brian Deer Classification Scheme for Aanischaaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute” Collections Management Special Edition published by Routledge.

This has truly been an exceptional year for ACCI. As always we continue to be highly productive, increase our capacity to fulfill our mandate and ensure that we continuously work towards the vision set for Aanischaaaukamikw to ensure the maintenance to our culture and language, to be a home for treasured objects and fragile documents, audio, and visual materials, and to ensure that our children generations from now, continue to have access to and enjoy our rich heritage. ●

CREE NATION YOUTH COUNCIL

Administration

CNYC Board Meetings: 5 meetings held

- April 5th – 7th, 2016
- May 31st – June 1st, 2016
- September 21-23, 2016
- January 11th 2017 (conference call)
- February 14 – 16, 2017 (Planning Session for fiscal year 2017/18)

CNYC Executive Committee Meeting(s):

7 Executive Committee meetings, 5 were in person and 2 Conference Call

Support Staff and Organizational Structure

In the fall of 2016, CNYC and Cree Nation Government discussed the relationship structure of the administration under the Department of Social and Culture Development.

CNYC was in need of Support Staff to have more impact in the Cree Nation, including in key areas such as: Organization Administration matters, delivery of programs and projects. Several key Support staff job descriptions were developed and were posted in March 2017.

Summer Student Support

A summer student was hired to assist CNYC in the delivery of activities between May to August 2016. Melanie Moore from Waswanipi, a University student from Carleton, got an experience of a life time working with CNYC, initiating and co-leading files and events.

Events and Programs

Eeyou/Eenou Regional General Assembly on Health and Social Services

CNYC was invited by the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay to attend and play an active role at the assembly held in Waskaganish on April 12-14, 2016.

Delegates from each community in Eeyou Istchee gathered to help shape the future of health and social services for our people and our communities. Representatives from the Cree Nation Government, Cree entities, and other government partners were also present.

On Tuesday, April 12, the Assembly witnessed the Ceremonial Blessing of the ground where the new Women's Shelter in Waskaganish will be built.

Day 1 featured keynote presentations. Day 2 was an Open Space, with an agenda created by participants. Day 3 featured, "Cree Way of Voting" (traditional democratic system) to identify priority items.

For more information, please go to the Cree Health Website: <http://www.creehealth.org/health-assembly>

Cree Nation Cares for Attawapiskat

On May 28, 2016, the Cree Nation Youth Council lead an initiative with Lead coordinator Gaston Cooper and numerous partners to travel to Attawapiskat, Ontario.

After a week of tragic suicide attempts from the Youth population. The Cree Nation from Quebec rose up

to meet with the members of Attawapiskat to show "its brotherly support and love" to the Cree from Ontario.

Approximately 35 individuals from the Cree Nation flew with Air Creebec to meet at the local complex organized along with the Attawapiskat Youth Council. This gave us a time for exchanges, meals and personal speeches from individuals from both sides of the boarders.

Interim Youth Grand Chief – "When you see someone dealing with a tragedy, especially one as big as "in a state of emergency". We all feel the trauma and must act accordingly to give support".

N'we Jinaan Music Festival

In partnership with David Hodges whom coordinated the event, N'we Jinaan Music Festival saw Youth from around the Cree Nation celebrating the talent in Eeyou Istchee and beyond on June 24 and 25th in the Cree Nation of Mistissini. The event featured Music Entertainers, workshops and special speeches from various of individuals and organizations.

Performing Artists:

The NorthStars
Kzo
Josée Bernier
Mariame
Joshua Salt
Sigoun Wapachee
JayLyfe



Matt Iserhoff
Alexandre Blacksmith
Tom Polson
Waseshkuun Singers
New Moon
Classic Roots
Simple Human Tribe
N'WE JINAN VOLUME 3 ARTISTS

Educators/Workshop Facilitators:

Catherine Orr of Calm Waters Photography
Chris Robertson (MikwChiyam)
Jamie Bradbury (MikwChiyam)
Natasia Mukash Visual Artist
The Niikaan Project
En Masse Pour Les Masses
MC: Nick Wapachee

CNYC Annual General Assembly 2016

The 27th annual CNYC general assembly took place on June 28 – 30, 2016 in Eastmain, Quebec. The theme; “Decide, Commit and Succeed”

Discussion periods were one of the most powerful moments during the AGA. At these periods our youth were enabled to discuss matters to them in selected topics:

- 1) Social Issues
- 2) Education
- 3) Health
- 4) Culture and Traditions

Each community was given time to deliberate about the biggest concern/issue concerning the topic and were asked to find a resolution to tackle this matter. Then they presented their thoughts to the assembly on each topic.

The words from the youth were greatly touching, moving and inspiring. They were given a moment, an opportunity to speak and to voice themselves, and they no doubt delivered! Each delegate had a moment to express themselves. For some it took a second to find the courage to let out the first word, but then brilliant and meaningful words came out. You knew they cared deeply for what they spoke.

It was one of the most satisfying moments because it was clear that, as an organization the CNYC achieved several objectives, one of which was to give our youth an opportunity. Secondly, another objective we achieved was developing leaders, because that is what we heard from the speech of these Young Cree leaders whom represented their communities at this assembly.

For the CNYC, It was our time to listen! Now we shall find ways, exploring the wishes of our youth, to meet the mandates given to us.

The energy at the assembly was great hope and enthusiasm, and the confidence that we will overcome these obstacles/issues we face together. As we finished, with a bit of blues we had to depart to each of our communities and say good bye to the new friends we had made.

We hope everyone left lifted and inspired. Although there is plenty of work that needs to be done and ACTION is the factor that is most required. I have no doubt the members within the CNYC, the Youth Chiefs and Youth Development Coordinators, and CREE YOUTH have the PASSION to play their part in making positive changes in the Cree Nation.

Special Presentations at our AGA from:

Cree Outfitters and Tourism Association
Cree Health Board Chairperson - Bella Petawabano
Cree Nation Government – Commerce and Industry
Special Guest Neuroscience Alex Thornton.

Cree Nation By-Law concerning Cree Nation Youth Council

After being adopted at the CNYC AGA, the Chairperson/Youth Grand Chief (interim) Alexander Moses presented the by-law concerning the Cree Nation Youth Council to the Cree Nation Government Executive on July 21st, to the Cree Nation Government Council Board on July 26th, then at the Cree Nation Government Annual General Assembly August 2 – 4, 2016. Which was the adopted recognition of CNYC in its role, purpose and objective in the Cree Nation.

We are thankful for the Cree Nation Government for all its support, and for enabling the CNYC to be leaders in the development of the Youth of our Nation.

Cree Nation Youth Day

A day celebrating the Cree Youth entitled the “Cree Nation Youth Day” will be held annually, to recognize and signify our youth are the future. CNYC and all Youth councils/departments in each community commit to celebrating the day simultaneously. The first edition of the Cree Nation Youth Day was held on August 14th, 2016.

Cree Youth Business Symposium

The Cree Youth Business Symposium 2016 was held in Chisasibi from August 16 – 18, 2016 at the Chisasibi Youth Center. The theme was “Uuhpikaapuutaau – Let's Rise”. The Chisasibi Youth Council lead and coordinated the event on behalf of CNYC.

CNYC took hold of the message at the Cree Nation Economic Conference held in Mistissini on November 2015, and acted immediately to play the significant role of advocating Entrepreneurship in our Youth.

The event featured Team Challenges, Networking, Workshops and Guest Cree entrepreneurs.

Nishiiyuu Cultural Gathering 2016

The James Bay Cree Cultural Education Center, with the Nishiiyuu Council of Elders in partnership with the Cree Nation Youth Council, co-hosted the 6th Annual Nishiiyuu Cultural gathering, which will be held in the Cree Nation of Nemaska on September 5, 6, 7 and 8, 2016 at the Nemaska Sports complex.

Program summary

Key Note Speakers

- Demonstration of Robbie's Dream Ceremony by Elder Robbie Matthew
- Marion Cox
- Chisasibi Elders “Traditional Medicine”
- “Threats of Global Warming to the Cree Way of Life Effects on Hunters and Trappers”
- James Kawapit – Whapmagoostui Elder “Drum – Stories and Songs”

Special Guests

Chief Thomas Jolly, Cree Nation of Nemaska

Workshops

- Beading (Paula Menarick-Beading Patterns, Beaded Hood)
- Beading Workshops – Beginners
- Moose and Caribou Hide
- Traditional Drum Making – James Kawapit
- Traditional Paddle making (carving) Harry Bearskin and John Crow
- Traditional Rattle making – Connie Bearskin and Beulah Crow
- Traditional medicine.

Special Workshops/Sessions: daily pipe ceremonies at sunrise (tee pee), sacred fire ceremony on the first day, various traditional ceremonies (initiation and introduction), reiki and reflexology sessions (by appointment only), cedar baths (by appointment only), personal one on one counseling sessions with traditional healer and therapists.

Also, Beaded Hood program: Research and Community Presentation to the families in Mistissini and community of Mistissini, Community Consultation on Exhibit Content and Long term plans and Travelling Exhibit Plans,

Consultation with Elders and Feedback on programs currently offered at ACCI or what elders feel should be presented to the children.

Discussion panels, Exhibits throughout the day; Traditional clothing, Hunting tools, Traditional Food and many more.

Kate Sharl Golf Benefit

Kate Sharl Foundation (KSF) is a non-profit organization with a mission to provide Indigenous special needs children with access high-quality, culturally appropriate resources to help them overcome their physical and developmental challenges.

On September 9, the KSF hosted its first annual golf benefit at the Château Cartier golf course in Gatineau to help raise funds for the fledgling foundation and give it some much-needed publicity. A partnership with CREECO and CNYC, the event raised over \$30,000 for the foundation.

CNYC contributed through sponsorship funding and Executive members volunteering in human resources at the event.

Cree School Board Education Conference

CNYC received an invite to attend and participate at the conference held in Mistissini, QC on November 8 and 9, 2016.

Under the theme, “Our Journey towards Student Success”, the Council of Commissioners and Cree School Board leadership, along with representatives from our youth, adult and post-secondary departments and services, met with parents and community stakeholders to connect, inform and engage in matters relating to education in Eeyou Istchee.

It was an important opportunity to share the key initiatives mapped out in the Cree School Board’s 2016-2021 Strategic Action Plan as well as the main highlights from the 2015-2016 Annual Report.

The event covered topics ranging from the history of Cree education, progress of the Working Groups on the



Cree Education Act and Cree Component, review of the Strategic Action Plan, educational progress reports, etc.

For more information of the event:

<https://www.cscree.qc.ca/en/our-organization/office-of-the-director-general/regional-general-assembly>

Cree Governance Agreement and Constitution Consultations

The CNYC chairperson was invited by the Cree Nation Government and Grand Chief Matthew Coon-Come to join the tour with the objective to learn of the Cree Nation's direction, understanding the agreements, and learning as a young leader in development. The consultations went across all 10 Cree communities, also meeting the Post-Secondary students in Ottawa and Montreal.

CreeBear Entrepreneur Workshops Tour

CNYC initiated Youth Entrepreneurship Workshops Tour in January 2017.

Thus far 6 communities accommodated:

Wemindji, Waskaganish, Nemaska, Waswanipi, Ouje-bougoumou and Chisasibi.

Youth need to play a role in Economic Development. We need JOB CREATION, and Entrepreneurship is the SOLUTION to this issue! In the workshops, Youth were

able to “advance your knowledge in marketing, getting to know your costumers, networking, building relationships, reports and such”.

Post- Secondary Motivational Night

CNYC hosted a motivation night in North Bay, Ontario to encourage, support and gather with the Cree Students in Post-Secondary.

We had more than 100 Cree community members whom live in the area attend the event. The event was catered, and featured special speeches from CNYC, Canadore College Aboriginal center and Cree Youth, as well as as Entertainment.

Miss Eeyou/Eenou Nation Pageant

CNYC, with partnership with Cree Women's Eeyou Istchee Association and Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association, hosted the 1st MEEN pageant since it was last held in the early 90's. Held on February 18th in Ouje-bougoumou, QC, Kayleigh Spencer was crowned Miss Eeyou/Eenou princess.

The Miss Eeyou/Eenou Nation will have an opportunity to participate at the Miss Indian World Pageant at the Gathering of Nations from April 27 to 29, 2017 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.





Discussion on the Cree Governance and Constitution: A CNYC Initiative in Collaboration with the Cree Nation Government

On Feb 20th, Youth Grand Chief Alexander Moses and John Paul Murdoch discussed Cree governance and Constitution. This is a CNYC initiative in collaboration with the Cree Nation Government, to target the youth and general population whom are active in technology platforms. This initiative was pursued to inform our younger generations of the agreements. The online stream was available for Questions, through social media, or by emailing to answer any of the Cree members inquires.

Link still available at: <http://www.creenationyouthcouncil.ca/discussion-cree-governance-constitution-cnyc-initiative-collaboration-cng/>

Youth and Elders Gathering 2017

The Cree Nation Youth and Elders conference will be held in Chisasibi from March 7-9, 2017. Activities include Elder's teachings, Youth teachings, Traditional Workshops, Ice fishing and many more.

Coordinated by Chisasibi Youth Council, Paula Napash, Juliette Ottereyes and Anita Napash.

Inspire Hope Youth Conference 2017

The 2017 the Inspire Hope Youth Conference was hosted by the Youth Council of Washaw Sibi from March 24-26, 2017. The Inspire Hope Youth Conference is a gathering of Cree Nation's Youth, to ignite inspiration to fulfill their wildest goals and Dreams. To offer hope, we all can make a difference for a better tomorrow!

This was our major event of the year, which featured various speakers, facilitators and special guests. We finished off the conference with a discussion panel with all in attendance. This year's event left us with very impactful moments and great energy.



Funding Agreement with Secrétariat à la Jeunesse

The largest file of the Cree Nation Youth Council in the fiscal year. Numerous meetings discussing the requirements and objectives of the next 5-year agreement with SAJ.

CNYC is in the process of signing a 4 year 1.6 million agreement to assist CNYC in pursuing its objectives in supporting and developing Youth of the Cree Nation.

A "Policy Review Committee" from the CNYC Board members is set to finalize details, and set a funding program for all to access targeting youth programming.

The projected date of signing the agreement is June 2017. More information will follow once all details are finalized.

Funding Contributions

Many funding contributions were handed to Regional events, programs and projects. CNYC was pleased to hear of the positive impact made to those partnerships. To name a few: Cree Regional Suicide Prevention Conference held in Waswanipi, Wemindji Career and Employment Program, Nemaska Music Fest, Ouje-Bougoumou Youth Week, Waswanipi Youth Empowerment Conference, Unity Conference held in Val d'Or, Wemindji Pow Wow, Chisasibi Youth Council's Gift from the Heart Foundation and many more. ●



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THE CREE WOMEN OF EYYOU ISTCHEE ASSOCIATION (CWEIA)

Membership

For the CWEIA's 9th Annual General Assembly (AGA), women from all corners of Eeyou Istchee met at Nemaska's Old Post from August 26th to 28th, 2016. We had engaging dialogue on issues and concerns surrounding the following theme:

"Walking together in the footsteps of our Kuukuumihniuch – Maamuu mitimaawaataau Kuukuumihniuch umaaskinaawaau"

Members as of March 31, 2017

120	Members
105	Eeyou/Eenou Women
14	Friend Members
1	Corporate member

Governance

Concerning the different levels of governance within CWEIA, we may see this year's developments and activities at a glance.

Certain **Local Women Associations (LWA)** held elections to appoint their representatives within CWEIA's Board of Directors. To this day, two (2) of the three (3) urban seats remain vacant, leaving the positions in Val d'Or and Chibougamou available to be filled in the future;

The **Board of Director (BOD)** representatives convened a total of six (6) times during the year. While three (3) of those meetings were carried out in person, the other three (3) were held via teleconference.

The **Executive Committee (EC)**, met on six (6) occasions, five (5) of which were done through conference call;

Finally, the **Gookumnouch Advisory Council (GAC)** convened on five (5) separate occasions.



**CWEIA's Team
as of March 31, 2017**

CWEIA Board Members		Name
EXECUTIVE	President	Linda L. Shecapio
	Vice-President	Rita Masty
	Secretary – Treasurer	<i>Appointment to be made at next Board meeting</i>
	Elder	Irene Bearskin House
	Youth	Melanie Neeposh
CREE COMMUNITIES	Whapmagoostui	Vice-President, R. Masty
	Chisasibi	Robin Pachanos
	Wemindji	Carmen Faries
	Eastmain	Sheila Mark-Stewart
	Waskaganish	Emily Blackned Hester
	Nemaska	LeeAnn Neeposh
	Mistissini	Lynda G. Jolly (Interim)
	Oujé-Bougoumou	Louise E. Neeposh
	Waswanipi	Louise B. Saganash
	Washaw-Sibi	Felicia Polson
URBAN	Senneterre	Elizabeth Mianscum
	Chibougamau	<i>Vacant</i>
	Val d'Or	<i>Vacant</i>



Wemindji Local Women



Nemaska Local Women

Goukumnouch Council	Postion
Irene House	CWEIA Executive Elder
Nancy Danyluk	NCOE representative
Maria Kawapit	Coastal representative
Marlene I. Kitchen	Inland representative

Staff	Name
Regional Coordinator	Manon Richmond
Special Project Coordinator (project base)	Marlene I. Kitchen
Bookeeper (contractual)	Rachel Martinhunter
Program Coordinator	<i>yet to be filled</i>



Eastmain Local Women

Accomplishments

Over the last year, CWEIA developed and finalized two (2) strategic plans and position papers.

CWEIA's Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Orientation 1:

Promote the Reappropriation of a Living Tradition and Culture for Cree Women

Orientation 2:

Nourish the Ground for Women's Empowerment

Orientation 3:

Act as a Leader and Nourish Leadership for Cree Women's Rights and Wellbeing

Orientation 4:

Build our organization in order to provide programs and services



CWEIA's Strategy to Inspire Women's Entrepreneurship 2017-2020

Strategy 1:

Promote and Support Individual Women Entrepreneurs

Strategy 2:

Nurture the Birth of Women Collective Businesses

Strategy 3:

Develop Social Economy Initiatives for Community Development



Position Papers to the Government of Québec Problems Related to Elder Abuse

The position of CWEIA regarding Elder abuse is one that promotes to strengthening of intergenerational bonds in hopes of a more respectful relationship with our elders and the decrease of any form of loneliness.

Secretariat Condition feminine (SCF)

In this paper, CWEIA denounced the unequal and limited access to employment (opportunities, salary, etc) and the discriminatory nature of certain policies. In conclusion, recommendations reflecting the Eeyou realities are proposed to further promote the inclusion of women while finding solutions to certain issues.



Project

CWEIA worked on three (3) special projects aiming to empower and identify opportunities for Cree women in the region of Eeyou Istchee.

Building Collective Business

This project takes the form of an action research project to anchor CWEIA's strategies into reality. Through this research, supportive resources and opportunities will be identified and a coop will be set-up to encourage the women with their traditional crafts so that *action and research can complement each other* and lead to the desired results in terms of the economic empowerment of Cree women.

Miss Eeyou Eenou Nation

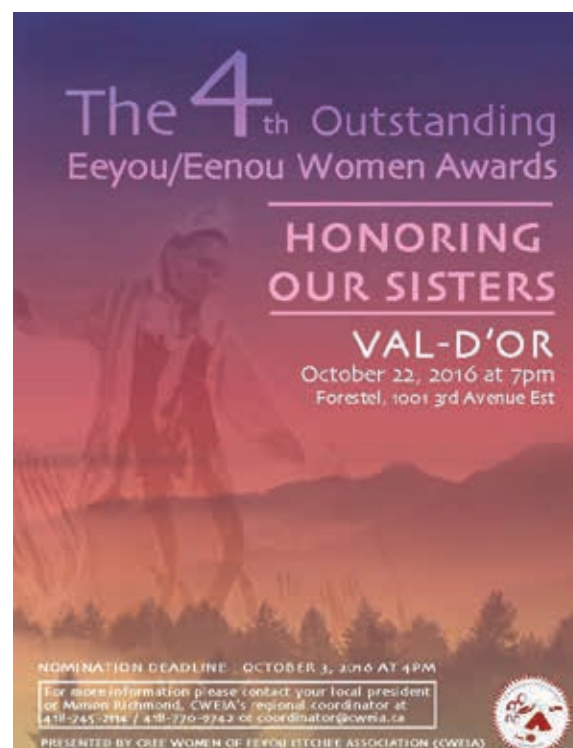
Through the success of a regional partnership, the 1st Miss Eeyou/Eenou Nation princess pageant was organized as a way of empowering young women and girls of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee. The intention was to create and solidify bonds between the participants as well as to showcase the variety of talent found within our young women. Although the aim was not to be competitive, this pageant allowed the selection of the first Miss Eeyou/Eenou Nation, Kayleigh Spenser, the privilege of attending Gathering of Nations in Albuquerque, one of the biggest Pow Wows in North America, to compete in the Miss Indian World Pageant.

4th Cree Outstanding Women Award

On October 22, 2016, CWEIA honoured some of its members during the 4th Cree Outstanding Women Awards held in Val d'Or. With categories varying from social involvement to cultural knowledge, these awards serve to recognize the efforts women of Eeyou Istchee demonstrate within their communities. By valuing these women, we hope to encourage and empower them and others. Congratulations to the Winners and nominees:

Betsy Longchap	Mistissini	Women in Arts and Culture
Cindy Coonishish	Nemaska	Women in Business
Edith Matoush	Nemaska	Keeper of the Language
Florrie Mark-Stewart	Eastmain	Mother of Cree Language

Janet Mark	Mistissini	Women in Education
Louisa Wynne	Whapmagoostui	Women in Politics
Priscilla V. Coon Come	Mistissini	Women in Health
Sally Paula Petawabano Mattawashish	Mistissini	Women Volunteer
Virginia Wabano	Waskaganish	Women in Public Service
Debbie House Cox	Chisasibi	
Evelyn Moore Bordeleau	Waswanipi	
Flossie Sheshamush Wynne	Whapmagoostui	
Gloria Kitty	Chisasibi	
Joe Marie Enish	Whapmagoostui	
Louise Bitternose Weapinicappo	Eastmain	
Stella Moar	Nemaska	
Wapachee		
Natasia Mukash	Whapmagoostui	
Stella M. Bearskin	Chisasibi	



Support to the Local Women Associations (LWA)

This year, a total of six (6) LWAs received a total of \$3500 to organize activities within their communities related to empowerment, cultural, and tradition.

Chisasibi: Women's day celebration

Ouje-Bougoumou: Moose hide tanning

Nemaska: Women empowerment event, yet to be organized

Whapmagoostui: Caribou hide project

Chibougamau: purchasing of sewing material

Seneterre: Women Tee-pee and empowering workshops

Thanks to the Board of Compensation as these local initiatives were made possible.

Re-appropriation of Living Culture

Considering that culture is ever changing and adaptive, this project focuses on the importance of transmitting Eeyou culture and assuring its continuity by motivating people to rediscover it on their own accord.

Following the Kuukuuminuwich Gathering, the teachings shared were brought together in the form of a booklet. Furthermore, pamphlets will also be developed using the reoccurring themes of both the teachings and the booklet.

An advisory committee was put in place to review the booklet content and also discuss and start the preparation of the 2nd Kumkumnouch Gathering. ●

Other Events and Representation		
Eeyou Istchee		
April 12-14	CHB Regional General Assembly on Health and Social Services – Waskaganish	Vice-President, Elder Representative
September 2-8	NCOE 6 th Traditional Gathering Nemaska	President and Regional Coordinator
October 4	Sister in Spirit	Whapmagoostui, Wemindji
October 19	CNACA 11AGA – Waswanipi	President
November 8-9	CSB Regional AGA	President
December 13	Grassroot empowerment and partnership	President, Gookumnouch Council Representative and Regional Coordinator
March 24-25	CNYC Inspire Hope	President
First Nation		
September 10-11	QNW Leadership Training – VD	Vice-President, Eastmain, Mistissini, Regional Coordinator and one member
September 20	FNQL SDI – Territory and natural resource	President
November 15-18	7th Biennial International Indigenous Research Conference 2016	President
November 21-25	Dialogue for life – MTI	Regional Coordinator, Maria Kawapit and two members
Others		
September 9	Secretariat Condition Feminine Consultation Day, Quebec Ministry	President
September 7-9	International Forum on Social Economy – Mtl	Marlene I. Kitchen (paid by Cree Nation Government)
January 30	Social Development Consultation by Secretariat affaire autochtone (SAA)	Quebec Government, President
March 22	International Entrepreneurship	President

THE REGIONAL ADAPTATION TO ENHANCE SENIORS' LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE CREE COMMUNITIES

The Funding Program offers financial aid for eligible organizations who wish to develop and set up activities, projects, and innovative services in order to improve living conditions of the Elderly in Eeyou Istchee. For the fiscal year 2016- 2017, a global amount of \$565,547.00 was granted towards Elderly projects.

The implementation of the Funding Program is based on the 2013-2017 *Specific Agreement on Regional Adaptation to enhance seniors' living Conditions in the Cree Communities* concluded between the Cree Nation Government and the Québec Government under the Ministry of Family and the Elderly.

Objectives of the funding:

- Promote the benefit and social inclusion of Elders;
- Encourage Elders to educate the youth and provide advice and information on Cree traditional knowledge, language, values, culture and traditions;
- Fight against Elder abuse;
- Support the more vulnerable of elderly;
- Promote access to cultural activities;
- Contribute to the improvement of living conditions for the elderly.

This year we had a list of 15 project applications and we were able to fund 12/15 projects.

We managed to fund 12 projects that promoted the objectives of the funding, and Elders were happy to receive some positive services geared to them. Some of the activities within the projects included: Sharing traditional



skills and knowledge, preserving traditions, improving living conditions, providing them with short term contracts to help them financially, promoting healthy lifestyles, educating youth on our history, sharing legends, storytelling, elders creating art, getting them active in various projects, and promoting unity among elders and youth through important gatherings.

This year is the final year for this specific funding, which lasted from 2013-2017. We are hoping that we can get a renewed agreement in the near future for more funding for more great projects for the Elders. ●

Wemindji Circle of Strength	\$18,000
Aayaanishchaa Generation to Generation 2016-2017	\$112,277
Elder's Care Program	\$50,000
2016 Cultural Gathering	\$90,000
Weechadowch Chainou Project 2016-2017	\$83,340
Chisasibi Cree Women's Association	\$24,150
Nanagethsaw Nishtu	\$16,440
Engaging our Elders through Teaching of our Culture & Language	\$50,000
Reappropriation of a Living Tradition and Culture	\$66,500
Elders Creating Art on Hide	\$21,000
Elder's Story Telling	\$7,440
Elder and Youth Gathering	\$26,400
Total of projects committed for 2016-2017	\$565,547

EYYOU COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

A significant advancement in communications is underway in Eeyou Istchee. Since its inception, this regional fiber-optic network provided bandwidth and Internet services to major Cree services and entities. It assisted in the development of telehealth, distance education, regional governance, and delivered services to safety, security and justice facilities. Now, the Eeyou Communications Network (ECN) is focussing its resources on reaching all of the homes and businesses in Eeyou Istchee with multiple services including reliable High-speed Internet, land-line telephones, and multi-channel television.

MAJOR CHANGES COMPLETED

Over the past year, ECN completed construction on phase 2 of its project, connecting all communities south of the La Grande River and completing the regional fiber optic ring throughout Eeyou Istchee. This 25M\$ project enabled service to the communities of Eastmain and Waskaganish who now benefit from high quality broadband telecommunication services for health, education and other community services as well as businesses. The regional fiber-optic ring, also, brings additional robustness to the services offered in the region as well as additional capacity for future needs, and provides the capability to initiate the upcoming fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) service.

The Eeyou Communications Network Phase 2 project presented unique challenges that required an innovative approach to technology, logistics, and regulation issues and thanks to the professionalism and hard work of the Eeyou Communications Network employees and partners, the project was a resounding success. For example, the Waskaganish-Matagami fiber link is now the longest terrestrial repeater-less fiber-optic link in Canada, equipped with highly specialized opto-electronic equipment.

The Eeyou Communications Network undertook many improvement projects in the past year. One of the most significant improvements was the development of a self-reliant power back-up. Now the Eeyou Communications Network community hubs, or points of presence, in Chisasibi, Wemindji, Eastmain, Waskaganish, Nemaska and Matagami, can withstand lengthier hydro power outages. This independence from power failures has improved to over 36 hours and it has already shown its benefit in real-life situations as planned and unplanned power outages are frequent in Eeyou Istchee.

The Eeyou Communications Network has also prepared for the future of the Internet and implemented IPV6 on its network. As the number of Internet-connected de-

vices increases exponentially and the pool of the current version addresses is exhausted, Internet service providers will soon be compelled to implement IPV6 on their networks. ECN is, once again, one step ahead of the technological curve.

In the past year, the ECN participated in the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) hearings on making high-speed quality Internet service available to rural and outlying areas. The proceedings resulted in regulations that will reduce the poor quality Internet service that telephone providers offer. The CRTC cited ECN in its report to the federal government as an example of a northern network that could perform as well as urban services.

MAJOR PLANS UNDERWAY

For residents and businesses in Eeyou Istchee, this past year saw the kick-start of the FTTH project after years of planning. Outside field surveys were completed to prepare the groundwork for full implementation of services in 2017-2018 to Eeyou-Istchee south of the La Grande as well as Radisson. For the residents of Eeyou Istchee and Radisson that means access to high quality Internet that meets the national Canadian standard of 50 megabits per second will be available. It also means that multi-channel selectable television services will be offered as well as toll-free inter-community telephone services, all at affordable rates. ECN also has developed its next stage of expansion that includes providing full services to Whapmagoostui.

The future for telecommunications in Eeyou Istchee is now brighter than ever thanks to Cree leadership, regional partnerships, and local expertise. ●



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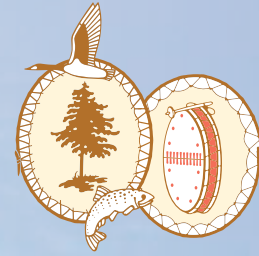


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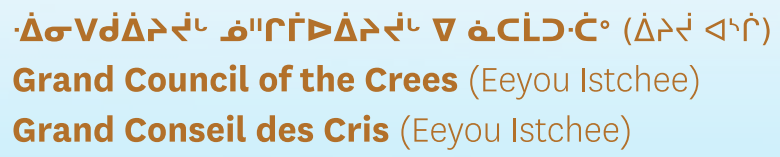
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