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Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)
Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee)

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Cree Nation Government
Gouvernement de la Nation Crie



G. C. C. E. I.
est. 1974

C. N. G.
G. N. C.
est. 1978

PRESS RELEASE

GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (EEYOU ISTCHEE)/CREE NATION GOVERNMENT CONDEMNS UNAUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES OF NON-JBNQA BENEFICIARIES RELATED TO CARIBOU HARVESTING IN EEYOU ISTCHEE

NEMASKA, Eeyou Istchee (December 4, 2017) – For nearly a decade now, the Cree Nation has raised concerns with the noticed decline in the Leaf River caribou herd that has migrated through annually through Eeyou Istchee for centuries. A recent census has confirmed the Cree Nation's concern placing the herd's population at a meager 181,000 – a drastic drop from a total head count of 430,000 in 2011, only 6 years ago.

This serious decline in the caribou population no longer allows Cree hunters to meet their guaranteed level of harvest as provisioned for in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA). In order to preserve the herd and protect the sustenance needs of our hunters and their families, certain provisions will require enforcement.

Efforts to alert our concerns about the caribou decline to the Quebec government have finally led to some action in December of 2016 when the province announced a complete moratorium on the caribou sport hunt, as of February 1, 2018. The winter 2017 caribou sport hunt will therefore proceed for a last season, with permits issued reduced by 50% from last year's total allotment.

Despite these government restrictions, additional local resource management efforts will be required if we are to expect the species to restore healthy population numbers. We ask that all beneficiaries of the JBNQA act with the utmost respect and preservation for the caribou. Caribou harvesting should be conducted only for personal sustenance needs and no wasting or selling should occur.

In recent years, local hunters have observed an influx of aboriginal hunters non-beneficiary of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) and the Northeastern Quebec Agreement (NEQA) entering Cree territory accompanied by beneficiaries, thus acting as unauthorized guides enabling non-beneficiary aboriginals to harvest caribou in Cree territory.



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To this effect, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government have adopted a resolution requesting that all non-beneficiaries of the JBNQA and NEQA respect the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping regime of the territory and be subject to the Quebec laws and regulation of general application.

“Our hunters and their families rely on the resources of the land. Wildlife management plans are fundamental to the health and well-being of our people. Full collaboration in respecting management plans for the benefit of the species will be expected from our neighbors during this critical time.” – Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government will work in collaboration with local governments and organizations such as the Cree Trappers' Association, to develop measures that will ensure that Cree, Naskapi and Inuit beneficiaries of the JBNQA and NEQA act in conformity with the regime in the territory and cease any unauthorized activities or guiding for non-beneficiaries.

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

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