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**Cree Nation Government**  
**Gouvernement de la Nation Crie**

A long-time tradition in Eeyou Istchee, the goose hunt was a way for our ancestors to live off the land when the melting snow and ice would make it challenging to travel the land to hunt other game or use the waterways for fishing. Feasts celebrated at this time were done in honour of the first goose of the season and as a way to give thanks for the harvest during the cold winter months.

An essential aspect of our culture, the goose hunt is still celebrated today by bringing families and community members together to spend time on the land and by providing an opportunity for all to share in the harvest. It is also a time for young hunters to learn from Elders, passing the teachings related to building an effective blind, to attracting geese through goose calls and decoys and to preparing the geese to cook over an open fire. These skills are rooted deep in our values imparting a sense of teamwork, respect and family to all that share in the experience.

The goose hunt also provides Elders, hunters and tallymen with opportunities to share their traditional knowledge of the language that is closely linked to the land. The intricacies of our language are better understood on the territory, where Cree words can take on many meanings. As well, much of our identity is rooted in our land, culture and language. Consider using this time of the year as an occasion to cultivate an inherent part of our identity, our language.

As you gather together for the goose hunt this year, we encourage you to pass on these traditional teachings and reflect upon the value of our traditions, culture and language and how they are a vital part of who we are. May you all enjoy this special time with your family and friends.

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**Dr. Abel Bosum**  
Grand Chief/Chairperson  
 Seal of the Cherokee Nation

**Mandy Gull**  
Deputy Grand Chief/Vice-Chairperson  
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