



Whapmagoostui
Chisasibi
Wemindji
Eastmain
Waskaganish
Nemaska
Waswanipi
Ouje-Bougoumou
Mistissini
Washaw Sibi
Mocreebec

PRESS RELEASE

Cree Nation Government expresses its disappointment in Quebec's lack of meaningful collaboration regarding the moose population situation in Zone 17

Nemaska, Eeyou Istchee (June 30, 2022) - The Cree Nation Government wishes to provide the following statement in response to the situation of the decline in moose population in Zone 17 and the discussions on the potential allocation of a portion of the Cree harvest of moose to Jamesian resident of the territory.

The Cree Nation Government would like to express its disappointment in the process and the lack of collaboration and communication that has been demonstrated by the Ministry of Wildlife, Forest and Parks and MNA for Ungava Denis Lamothe with respect to potential solutions to maintain a sports hunt for residents of the territory.

While the Cree Nation Government was in a process to find solutions to maintain a limited sport hunt for residents of the territory while respecting the decisions of each respective communities, the Cree were unfortunately informed, via a public notice on social media by MNA for Ungava Denis Lamothe, that such solutions would not be considered by the Ministry of Wildlife, Forest and Parks.

The recent announcement of the MNA has been issued without any Cree involvement and disregarded efforts currently in progress by the Cree. The announcement also referred to decisions by our Cree communities regarding the allocation to the sports hunt. Any announcement of a Cree harvest allocation to the sports hunt should have been provided by the Cree Nation Government. Furthermore, this announcement fails to respect due process while such decision by Québec should have been brought to the Cree Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC).

It is important to clarify that intensive efforts have been invested by the Cree Nation Government, concerned communities and tallymen, to propose solutions and approaches that would meet the expectations of all impacted by the decline of the moose population in Zone 17, including the Jamesian residents of the territory.

Given the current population, the HFTCC has established a limit of harvest of 104 moose and allocated this entre harvest to the Cree as foreseen in the JBNQA which states under subparagraph 24.6.3 d) that if game populations do not permit levels of harvesting equal to the guaranteed level established pursuant to paragraph 24.6.2, the Native people shall be allocated the entire harvest and may allocate a portion of this kill to non-Natives through recognized outfitting facilities. Pursuant to this, and given the sensitivity of the issue, the Cree have undertaken extensive consultations throughout the last 5 months with the impacted communities and tallymen to assess the feasibility of sharing a portion this allocation to the Jamesian residents of the territory.



The communities have expressed many concerns on the decline of the moose population including increased pressure from development, forestry and mining activities, increased uncontrolled access, lack of monitoring of wildlife population, as well as the lack of surveillance in the territory. Most importantly, the impacted communities and tallymen have outlined the importance of prioritizing the conservation of the moose population and its habitat first and foremost as well as the preservation of their traditional activities and subsistence needs as outlined in the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA).

Our tallymen have been patient and have continued to show openness despite the numerous impacts that they are subject to. The allocation of moose would have required great sacrifice by our tallymen and people to further reduce our harvest to accommodate the needs of the residents of the territory. Despite this, some of our tallymen and communities were still open to share their portion of the moose harvest in a spirit of sharing, compassion, and harmony between users of the territory.

The decision the Cree Nation of Waswanipi has taken to maintain the closure of the moose sport hunt for 2022, is in respect of concerns brought forth through their tallymen and the desire to focus on the development of a moose conservation plan. In parallel, the community and concerned tallymen of Ouje-Bougoumou has been open to allocate a portion of their harvest to the Jamesian residents of the territory for a special project that would maintain a limited sport hunt for the 2022 season.

The Cree Nation has expressed numerous times their openness by proposing solutions that have unfortunately not been adopted by the Ministry of Wildlife, Forest and Parks. In the meantime, the Cree Nation Government, the concerned communities, and tallymen will continue its work towards developing a moose conservation plan and harvesting guidelines through a Moose Management Committee. This plan will outline measures addressing impacts on the moose population and its habitat.

The Government of Québec must acknowledge its responsibility towards balancing development and conservation of habitat in addition to facilitating and promoting a harmonious co-existence between populations of the territory. The Cree Nation Government remains open to these discussions in the spirit of collaboration essential to positive and beneficial relations for all.

- 30 -

For further information:
 Flora Weistche, Political Attachée
 Telephone: [\(514\) 604-3276](tel:5146043276)