



PRESS RELEASE

Whapmagoostui
ወ-ප-ማ-ጋ-ስ-ቱ

Chisasibi
ች-ሬ-ቢ

Wemindji
ወ-ም-ን-ዲ

Eastmain
አ-ት-መ-ን

Waskaganish
ወ-ስ-ካ-ን-ሽ

Nemaska
ነ-መ-ሳ-ክ

Waswanipi
ወ-ሱ-አ-ፋ-ፋ

Ouje-Bougoumou
ኦ-ጀ-ቦ-ጋ-ሙ-ሙ

Mistissini
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Washaw Sibi
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MoCreebec
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UPPER LIMIT OF KILL FOR CARIBOU IN THE RESOLVED CREE AREA

Nemaska, Eeyou Istchee (February 18, 2026) – The Hunting Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC) passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a moratorium on caribou harvest in Eeyou Istchee below the 55th parallel. The resolution addresses requests by land users to prohibit the harvesting of caribou to prioritize the health of the herd and allow for population recovery. Local leadership as well as the Cree Nation Government have petitioned the HFTCC for a moratorium, trusting the wisdom of those who have been present on the land for thousands of years.

This extraordinary measure was taken due to the continued decline of the caribou of the Leaf River Herd, a worrying trend confirmed through both traditional knowledge and scientific data. Land users have noted poor health, and decreased migration ranges, amongst other issues. Prior to 2005, the herd numbered more than 600,000 caribou. Estimates now put the population at under 136,000 caribou. Further, in December 2025 the HFTCC received an alarming report of a 12% decline in the population of the Leaf River Herd between fall 2024 and 2025 alone. If current harvesting levels continue, the size of the herd is projected to be 63,000 caribou by 2030.

The rapid decline of the Leaf River Herd reflects a trend seen with other caribou populations across Eeyou Istchee, such as the George River herd and Woodland caribou. The Cree Nation is dedicated to taking action within its means. Implementing effective strategies is essential to halt decline and safeguard both the species and its cultural importance for future generations of the Cree people.

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For More Information

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