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## **PRESS RELEASE**

## Cree Nation Government Announces Keep It Local, a New Mobile App and Campaign, as Part of the Year of Economic Development

Nemaska Eeyou Istchee (November 27, 2024) The Cree Nation Government's Department of Commerce and Industry (CNG/DCI), in partnership with the communities of Eeyou Istchee, is proud to announce the launch of Keep It Local, a new mobile app that rewards community members for shopping in Eeyou Istchee. Promoted with the tagline "When you buy local, we all win," the app is a fun and innovative way to encourage support for businesses in Eeyou Istchee ahead of the holiday season and beyond.

Starting December 1, community members can use the Keep It Local app to enter a monthly \$500 prize draw, earning new contest entries for every eligible purchase at a retailer in Eeyou Istchee. With just a few taps, people can upload their receipts and turn them into draw entries, adding some fun and excitement to everyday local shopping.

Community members can enter up to five receipts per purchase date, and two winners will be picked each month. Each winner will receive \$500 in the form of one or two gift cards to a local business of their choice, providing an even bigger boost to businesses in Eeyou Istchee.

"The research is clear: For every dollar spent at a local business, 66 cents stays in the community—creating jobs, growing businesses, and building a strong future for our children and grandchildren," said Anthony MacLeod, Director of the Cree Nation Government Department of Commerce and Industry. "The simple act of buying local encourages people to invest in our communities. With the holiday shopping season coming up, it's a great time to think about how our everyday shopping choices can help grow the Eeyou Eenou economy.

The Keep It Local app is a key part of a larger movement to uplift local Cree businesses with modern tools and technology. The Cree Business Registry will also be launched in the coming months to help connect government and entities with local entrepreneurs and services. Other CNG/DCI initiatives for the Year of Economic Development include improvements to the Cree Entrepreneurship Assistance Fund, revisions to the Cree Mining Policy, and a first-of-its-kind Cree Nation Business Summit. The department looks forward to continuing to build on these successes for

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years to come and has already committed to holding another Cree Nation Business Summit next summer.

Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty says the app will inspire pride in community members, turning everyday purchases into a collective effort to support the Eeyou Eenou economy. "Eeyou Istchee economic resilience is for our Nation's benefit. Encouraging our members to buy local contributes to that strengthening. This new app is innovative and showcases how you can participate."

The Keep It Local app is available for download on all Apple and Android devices now, with the first monthly contest starting December 1. To download the app and see full contest details, visit www.creekeepitlocal.ca.

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