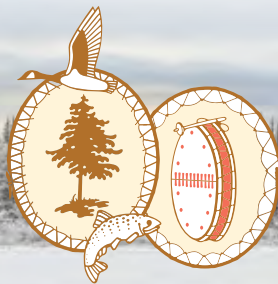
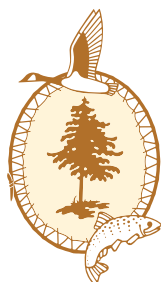
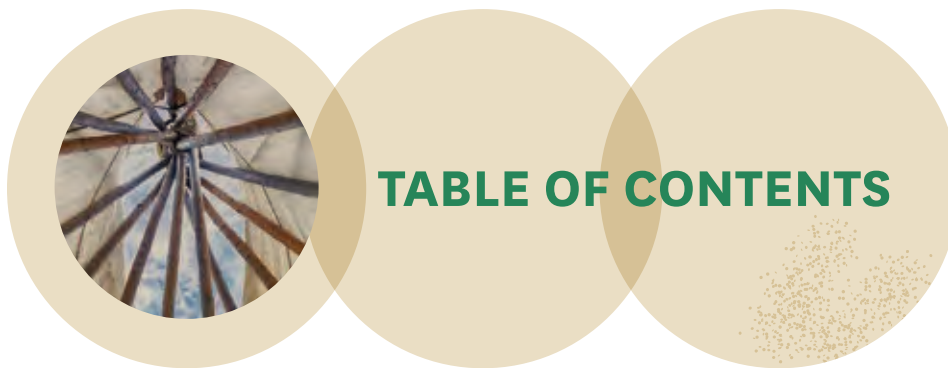


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Annual Report

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Annual Report



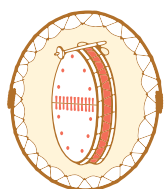


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Photo: Adrian Gunner



MESSAGE FROM THE GRAND CHIEF

Paul John Murdoch

Reflecting on what has been achieved since the Cree Nation Government elections of 2025 it is inevitable to feel an immense sense of gratitude to all the leaders of Eeyou Istchee.

The key to the strength of Eeyou Istchee has always been the ability of our leaders to be united and collectively fight for the rights of our people, communities and land. This is particularly challenging in 2026 when the threat is never direct, comes from within and the world is defined by division and polarization. Yes, we have social challenges, yes, we have housing shortages and we need to create employment opportunities so that our youth can come home, realize their potential and build families in a safe and nurturing environment. The optimism that our communities will flourish despite these challenges exists because of the collective will and commitment to work together across entities such as the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, the Cree School Board, and the government of every community.

In March of 2026, we held the CONNECT: Leadership Forum in Chisasibi where leaders from across Eeyou Istchee came together to identify links, connections and networks that we need to create to address our social challenges, our housing challenges while relying on the values embedded in our culture and language. Many calls to action have been identified with the leadership at all levels committing to work in a collaborative manner. The challenge will be that we take collective and coordinate action to ensure that all the measures that we identified for the empowerment of our communities, families and people do not remain just words. As leaders we must be thankful for the dedicated and professional staff that act as the administration of our local governments and the Cree Nation Government. Concrete steps have already been taken in decentralizing programs to address homelessness to ensure the most responsive local initiatives, steps at decentralizing elements of the Cree Nation Private Housing Strategy which make sense to manage at the local level and centralizing other elements to create leverage with the banking and insurance industry for example. We are doing our best to respect the distinction between policy and administration which requires trust and transparency on both sides.

We have introduced two very important legislative initiatives at the Cree Nation Government which is hoped will bring greater solidarity, accountability and transparency to the

leadership of the Grand Council of the Cree (Eeyou Istchee)/ Cree Nation Government. The first is in relation to legislative provisions for a “vote of non-confidence” whereby should the Council of the Cree Nation Government lose confidence or no longer trust the Grand Chief or Deputy Grand Chief there is a clear and simple process for the triggering of an election. The hope is obviously not that the provision will be triggered any time soon but rather is a demonstration of the importance of the leadership of the Cree Nation Government to maintain the confidence and trust of the Council and ultimately the people of Eeyou Istchee.

The second important piece of legislation, which might not on the surface appear significant, is the requirement that the hiring of any staff or the acquisition of any office outside of a Cree community must be approved by the Council. All Cree entities must invest more in our communities. Every job that is created by our government and entities are critical to the development of our local economies and at this time where someone is hired cannot be considered a purely administrative question. Therefore, ensuring that it will always be easier to hire someone or open an office in a community will build a natural prioritization of our communities. If we do not prioritize our own communities for employment, development of offices, calling of meetings or contracts through Cree Nation procurement strategies how credible are we in demanding that others do so?

Government relations are defined today by governments' desperation to overcome the effects of global economic uncertainty by unfortunately putting pressure on Indigenous communities and peoples across the country and province to accelerate natural resource development projects. The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement continues to be our shield against irrational and unsustainable development. It is imperative that all the people of Eeyou Istchee are properly informed of the tools and mechanisms that we have to protect our land and way of life by permitting only sustainable and compatible development projects in Eeyou Istchee. We need to do what makes sense in the long term instead of reacting to the temporary fears of today.



- Add "Community Health & Safety" to category priorities for consideration to Cree Nation annual relocation exercise

Discussions began this year on the renewal of the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship Agreement Between Canada and the Cree of Eeyou Istchee and I am grateful to Bill Namagoose for answering the call when the Council of the Cree Nation Government requested his assistance. These will not be easy discussions and there is much at stake but I am optimistic when I considered the presence of very professional Directors such as Anthony MacLeod, Executive Director, Tina Petawabano, Director of Government Relations, Rhonda Oblin-Cooper, Director of Capital Works and Services and the Director Generals and Treasurers of all our communities working on the matter and lending undeniable credibility to the Cree Nation's ability to govern itself.

One of the proudest moments this year was walking into the National Assembly with all the Chiefs of Eeyou Istchee to defend ourselves from a potentially denigrating and dismissive Quebec Constitution. One could feel the connection to past great Cree leaders who have traveled to the Quebec National Assembly to defend Cree rights and land. We defended our interests without emotional rhetoric but with calm and

the precise language for which our leaders have always been known. The days leading up to that hearing, all Chiefs contributed to the discussions and the construction of arguments. We have had hours of meetings going well past the scheduled ending to discuss the importance of protecting the rights of our people and our land. I would like to thank Chief Frank Atsynia, Chief Greta Whiskeychan-Cheechoo, Chief Gaston Cooper, Chief Daisy House, Chief Clarence Jolly, Chief Robbie Kawapit, Chief Irene Neeposh, Chief Michael Petawabano and Chief Raymond Shanoush for their dedication and inspiration as leaders in representing our people.

There will be challenges ahead, we will lose loved ones as we did this year but it is by standing together, picking each other up and accepting help from one another that we will continue on this path of building this beautiful Nation in Eeyou Istchee.

Paul John Murdoch
Grand Chief



MESSAGE DU GRAND CHEF

Paul John Murdoch



En réfléchissant aux réalisations accomplies depuis les élections de 2025 au sein du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie, il est impossible de ne pas ressentir une immense gratitude envers tous les dirigeants d'Eeyou Istchee.

La force d'Eeyou Istchee a toujours reposé sur la capacité de nos dirigeants à faire preuve d'unité et à lutter collectivement pour les droits de notre peuple, de nos communautés et de notre territoire. Ce défi est d'autant plus grand en 2026, alors que les menaces sont rarement directes — émanant souvent de l'intérieur — et que le monde est marqué par la division et la polarisation. Oui, nous faisons face à des enjeux sociaux, oui, nous connaissons une pénurie de logements; nous devons également créer des emplois pour permettre à nos jeunes de revenir dans nos communautés, de réaliser leur potentiel et de fonder une famille dans un environnement sûr et enrichissant. Si nous avons bon espoir de voir nos communautés prospérer malgré ces défis, c'est grâce à notre volonté collective et à notre engagement à collaborer entre les différentes instances, telles que le Conseil cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie-James, la Commission scolaire crie et les gouvernements de chaque communauté.

En mars 2026, nous avons tenu le forum « Connecter : le Forum du leadership » (Connect: Leadership Forum) à Chisasibi, où des dirigeants de tout Eeyou Istchee se sont réunis dans le but d'identifier les liens, les connexions et les réseaux à créer pour relever nos défis sociaux et en matière de logement, tout en nous appuyant sur les valeurs ancrées dans notre culture et notre langue. De nombreux appels à l'action ont été définis, les dirigeants de tous les niveaux s'engageant à travailler en collaboration. Le défi consistera à mener une action collective et coordonnée pour faire en sorte que toutes les mesures identifiées en faveur de l'autonomisation de nos communautés, de nos familles et de notre population ne restent pas lettre morte. En tant que dirigeants, nous devons exprimer notre reconnaissance envers le personnel dévoué et professionnel qui assure la gestion administrative de nos gouvernements locaux et du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie. Des mesures concrètes ont déjà été prises pour décentraliser les programmes de lutte contre l'itinérance afin de garantir des initiatives locales plus réactives, ainsi que des démarches en vue de décentraliser certains éléments de la Stratégie de logement privé de la Nation crie — dont la gestion locale est tout-à-fait pertinente — tout en en centralisant d'autres,

par exemple, afin de créer un effet de levier auprès du secteur bancaire et des assurances. Nous nous efforçons de respecter la distinction entre l'élaboration des politiques et l'administration, laquelle exige confiance et transparence de part et d'autre.

Au cours de l'année, nous avons présenté deux pièces législatives très importantes au Gouvernement de la Nation Crie, dans l'espoir qu'elles renforceront la solidarité, la responsabilisation et la transparence au sein de la direction du Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee) et du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie. La première concerne des dispositions législatives relatives à une « motion de non-confiance » : si le Conseil du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie venait à perdre confiance dans le Grand Chef ou le Grand Chef adjoint, il existerait alors un processus clair et simple pour déclencher une élection. L'objectif n'est évidemment pas de voir cette disposition appliquée dans un avenir prochain, mais plutôt de démontrer à quel point il est crucial pour les dirigeants du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie de conserver la confiance du Conseil et, en fin de compte, celle de la population d'Eeyou Istchee.

La deuxième pièce de législation importante — qui peut sembler à première vue non significative — impose que le recrutement de personnel ou l'ouverture de bureaux en dehors d'une communauté crie soient soumis à l'approbation du Conseil. Toutes les entités cries doivent davantage investir dans nos communautés. Chaque emploi créé par notre gouvernement et nos entités est crucial pour le développement de nos économies locales. Dans le contexte actuel, le lieu d'embauche ne saurait être considéré comme une simple question administrative. En conséquence, en veillant à ce qu'il soit toujours plus facile d'embaucher ou d'ouvrir un bureau au sein d'une communauté, nous favoriserons naturellement ces dernières. Si nous ne donnons pas la priorité à nos propres communautés en matière d'emploi, d'implantation de bureaux, de tenue de réunions ou d'attribution de contrats selon les stratégies d'approvisionnement de la Nation crie, quelle crédibilité aurons-nous pour exiger que d'autres agissent de la sorte?

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Les relations avec les gouvernements sont aujourd'hui marquées par la volonté désespérée de ces derniers de surmonter les effets de l'incertitude économique mondiale; malheureusement, ils exercent des pressions sur les communautés et les peuples autochtones de tout le pays et de la province en vue d'accélérer les projets de mise en valeur des ressources naturelles. La Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord québécois demeure notre bouclier contre tout développement irrationnel et non durable. Il est impératif que toute la population d'Eeyou Istchee soit dûment informée des outils et des mécanismes dont nous disposons pour protéger notre territoire et notre mode de vie, en ne permettant que des projets de développement durables et compatibles à notre réalité en Eeyou Istchee. Nous devons privilégier des choix judicieux à long terme plutôt que de réagir aux craintes passagères du moment.

Les discussions concernant le renouvellement de l'Entente sur une nouvelle relation entre le Gouvernement du Canada et les Cris d'Eeyou Istchee ont débuté cette année, et je suis reconnaissant envers Bill Namagoose d'avoir répondu à l'appel lorsque le Conseil du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie a sollicité son aide. Ces discussions ne seront pas faciles et les enjeux sont considérables; toutefois, je suis optimiste lorsque je considère la présence de directeurs très professionnels — tels qu'Anthony MacLeod, directeur général, Tina Petawabano, directrice des relations gouvernementales, et Rhonda Oblin-Cooper, directrice des travaux d'immobilisation et des services, ainsi que les directeurs généraux et les trésoriers de toutes nos communautés qui travaillent sur ce dossier — dont l'engagement confère une crédibilité indéniable à la capacité de la Nation crie à s'autogouverner.

L'un des moments dont je suis le plus fier cette année a été de pénétrer dans l'enceinte de l'Assemblée nationale avec tous les chefs d'Eeyou Istchee, afin de nous défendre contre un projet de Constitution du Québec potentiellement dénigrant et méprisant. On pouvait ressentir le lien avec les grands chefs cris du passé qui, eux aussi, s'étaient rendus à l'Assemblée nationale du Québec pour défendre les droits et les terres des Cris. Nous avons défendu nos intérêts sans rhétorique émotionnelle, mais avec le calme et la précision de langage qui ont toujours caractérisé nos dirigeants. Durant les jours précédant cette audience, tous les chefs ont pris part aux discussions et à l'élaboration de nos arguments. Nous avons tenu de longues réunions qui se sont prolongées bien au-delà de l'horaire prévu, pour débattre de l'importance de protéger les droits de notre peuple et de nos terres. Je tiens à remercier les chefs Frank Atsynia, Greta Whiskeychan-Cheechoo, Gaston Cooper, Daisy House, Clarence Jolly, Robbie Kawapit, Irene Neeposh, Michael Petawabano et Raymond Shanoush pour leur dévouement et l'inspiration qu'ils nous apportent en tant que représentants de notre peuple.

Des défis nous attendent; nous perdrons des êtres chers, comme ce fut le cas cette année, mais c'est en restant unis, en nous soutenant mutuellement et en acceptant l'aide des uns et des autres que nous poursuivrons la construction de cette magnifique nation en Eeyou Istchee.

Paul John Murdoch, Grand Chef



Photo: Adrian Gunner



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Եվրոպական միությանը մեր համայնքը և մեր ժողովուրդը միջոցառումներ են անցկացնում, որոնք նպաստում են մեր համայնքի զարգացմանը, մեր ժողովուրդի կրթության բարձրացմանը, մեր ժողովուրդի առողջության բարձրացմանը, մեր ժողովուրդի աշխատանքային տեղերի ստեղծմանը, մեր ժողովուրդի ապրուստի բարձրացմանը:

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY GRAND CHIEF

Linden Spencer



Wachiya. It is an honour to present my first Annual Report as Deputy Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government.

My name is Linden Spencer, and I come from the Cree Nation of Eastmain. I also have family ties to Chisasibi, and like many Cree people, my connection to Eeyou Istchee extends beyond a single community. I was raised with the values of hard work, respect, humility, and service to others. These values continue to guide me every day as I fulfill my responsibilities as Deputy Grand Chief.

Before serving in this role, I had the opportunity to work as an entrepreneur, Youth Chief, and community leader. These experiences allowed me to better understand the realities facing our people, our youth, our families, and our communities. They also taught me the importance of listening, building relationships, and working together to find solutions.

This past year has been one of the most important and rewarding experiences of my life. Being elected as Deputy Grand Chief is a responsibility that I do not take lightly. Every day, I am reminded that our role as leaders is to serve our people and to ensure that the voices of Cree beneficiaries continue to guide the decisions we make.

Serving alongside Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch has been a privilege. Throughout the year, we have worked closely together to represent the interests of the Cree Nation, strengthen relationships with our communities and partners, and advance priorities that are important to our people. We have spent countless hours in meetings, discussions, negotiations, and community engagements, always focused on moving Eeyou Istchee forward.

One thing I quickly learned in this role is that leadership is never the work of one person. Behind every meeting, every initiative, every decision, and every accomplishment is a team of dedicated individuals working tirelessly on behalf of our Cree Nation.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, Directors, Managers, Coordinators, Advisors, support staff, and all employees of the Cree Nation Government. Their dedication, professionalism, and commitment are what allow our

organization to function effectively every day. The work they do behind the scenes can go unnoticed, but it is essential to the success of our Cree Government. Their efforts help coordinate many files, projects, meetings, and services that support our communities and Cree beneficiaries.

The Grand Chief and I are fortunate to work alongside such a dedicated and talented team. Their support allows us to focus on representing our people and advancing the priorities that matter most in Eeyou Istchee. The accomplishments highlighted throughout this report belong not only to leadership, but to the many employees who work every day to serve Cree people.

I would also like to thank our Chiefs and Deputy Chiefs for their leadership and commitment to their communities. The strength of Eeyou Istchee comes from the collaboration between local and regional leadership. Although every community faces unique opportunities and challenges, we continue to work together with a common goal of improving the quality of life for our people and creating opportunities for future generations.

To our Elders, thank you for your guidance, wisdom, and teachings. Your knowledge continues to guide our decisions and reminds us of our responsibilities to our people, our lands, and future generations.

To our youth, thank you for your passion, determination, and willingness to step forward. You are the future leaders, and your voices, ideas, and ambitions will continue to shape the future of Eeyou Istchee.

I would also like to recognize and thank the leaders who came before us. The strong Nation we have today was built through decades of hard work, vision, and sacrifice. Former Grand Chiefs, Deputy Grand Chiefs, Chiefs, Councils, Negotiators, and community members dedicated themselves to protecting Cree rights, strengthening our governance, and building the institutions that continue to serve our people today. We are grateful for the foundation they created and remain committed to building upon their work.

HUNTING, FISHING AND TRAPPING COORDINATING COMMITTEE (HFTCC)

As a member of the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC), I had the opportunity to participate in discussions and decision-making related to wildlife management, conservation, and the protection of Cree harvesting rights under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Throughout the year, the Committee reviewed a number of important files, including provincial fishing regulations, wildlife management plans, outfitting matters, and conservation initiatives affecting Eeyou Istchee. These discussions brought together representatives from the Cree, Inuit, Naskapi, provincial, and federal governments to address issues impacting our lands and traditional way of life.

A significant focus of our work was caribou conservation. The continued decline of caribou populations remains a major concern for Indigenous communities across the North. During the year, I participated in discussions and workshops with Indigenous leaders, wildlife experts, and government representatives to examine both traditional knowledge and scientific information regarding caribou management.

In February 2026, the Cree Nation Government proposed a moratorium on caribou harvesting south of the 55th parallel as part of ongoing efforts to support population recovery and ensure that future generations can continue to benefit from this important cultural and traditional resource.

The Committee also supported the organization of a regional caribou workshop that brought together Indigenous nations from across Quebec and Labrador to discuss conservation challenges, share perspectives, and explore collaborative approaches to protecting caribou populations.

As we move forward, I remain committed to supporting responsible wildlife management, protecting Cree harvesting rights, and ensuring that future generations can continue to maintain the strong connection our people have with the land.

JUDICIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In December 2025, I was appointed to the Judicial Advisory Committee alongside Chief Michael Petawabano and Deputy Chief Daniel Mark Stewart. Since our appointment, we have met regularly to review justice-related priorities and explore ways to strengthen the support provided to Cree communities through the Department of Justice and Correctional Services.





One of our primary areas of focus has been Community Justice Committees. As communities continue to face challenges related to public safety, social issues, and the justice system, we believe local solutions and community involvement are essential. Throughout the year, we worked to better understand how Community Justice Committees can be strengthened and supported so they can play a greater role in addressing local priorities and helping communities find solutions that reflect their unique needs and realities.

The Committee also reviewed its mandate and engaged with Department staff to gain a better understanding of the programs and services currently available across Eeyou Istchee. These discussions provided valuable insight into both the successes and challenges facing our justice system and highlighted opportunities to improve support for Cree people navigating provincial and federal systems.

A key priority has been ensuring that Cree voices and perspectives continue to be heard in discussions surrounding justice, corrections, and community wellness. We recognize that many challenges cannot be addressed by one organization alone, and meaningful progress requires collaboration between communities, regional leadership, and government partners.

The Committee also supported initiatives aimed at youth engagement, community safety, and awareness around social issues. Through discussions following the Connect Conference and preparations for major regional events

such as the Eeyou Istchee Summer Games, we emphasized the importance of prevention, education, and creating positive opportunities for youth.

As we move forward, I remain committed to supporting a justice system that is responsive to the needs of Cree people, strengthens community-based approaches, and promotes safer and healthier communities throughout Eeyou Istchee.

CREE NATION HOUSING STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

Housing continues to be one of the most important issues facing our communities, and throughout the past year I had the opportunity to serve on the Cree Nation Housing Strategy Working Group alongside fellow leaders, housing professionals, and Cree Nation Government staff.

The Working Group was established to review and improve housing programs available to Cree beneficiaries while identifying practical solutions to increase housing opportunities across Eeyou Istchee. Our discussions focused on simplifying housing programs, reducing administrative barriers, expanding eligibility, and exploring innovative approaches that can help more Cree families access housing.

Over the course of the year, we reviewed existing private housing programs and examined ways to improve support available to applicants. We also explored opportunities to develop innovative housing options, including rent-to-own models, support for returning students and young families,

employer-assisted housing initiatives, and other approaches that could help address the growing housing needs within our communities.

A key objective of the Working Group has been to ensure that housing programs are more accessible, efficient, and responsive to the realities faced by Cree people. Discussions also focused on increasing public awareness of housing programs, strengthening financial literacy supports, reviewing subsidy levels, and identifying opportunities to encourage greater private housing development throughout Eeyou Istchee.

In addition to addressing immediate housing challenges, the Working Group examined longer-term priorities, including land management, zoning considerations, housing renovations, rental housing, infrastructure requirements, and the development of policies that support sustainable community growth.

The work completed this year represents an important step toward developing a comprehensive housing strategy that reflects the needs and aspirations of our people. While significant challenges remain, I am encouraged by the collaboration between leadership, housing departments, and community representatives who continue to work together to find practical solutions.

Housing is more than infrastructure, it is about creating stability for families, supporting future generations, and building stronger communities. I remain committed to advancing housing initiatives that will help improve access to safe, affordable, and sustainable housing for Cree people across Eeyou Istchee.

EEYOU MARINE REGION LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENT

As a member involved in matters relating to the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement, I had the opportunity to participate in discussions and initiatives aimed at protecting and advancing Cree interests within our marine territory.

A significant milestone in 2026 will be the announcement of the Wiinipaakw National Marine Conservation Area in Wemindji in the fall 2026. This historic achievement represents years of collaboration, planning, and commitment by Cree leadership, community members, and partner organizations working toward the protection and stewardship of our marine environment.

The establishment of the conservation area recognizes the importance of preserving the ecological integrity of the region while respecting and maintaining the traditional relationship that Cree people have with the land, waters, and wildlife. It reflects the values of responsible stewardship that have guided our people for generations and ensures that future generations will continue to benefit from and learn from these lands and waters.

The creation of the Wiinipaakw National Marine Conservation Area also presents opportunities for continued collaboration in environmental protection, scientific research, education, and sustainable economic development while ensuring that Cree rights, knowledge, and participation remain central to the management of the region.

This achievement demonstrates what can be accomplished when governments, communities, and Indigenous nations work together toward a common vision. I am proud to witness this important step forward and remain committed to supporting initiatives that protect our lands, waters, culture, and way of life for generations to come.

CLOSING REMARK

As we look ahead, our responsibility is to continue building a strong, united, and prosperous Cree Nation. We must continue creating opportunities for our people, strengthening our communities, protecting our rights, preserving our culture and language, and ensuring that future generations inherit a Nation that is even stronger than the one we know today.

While challenges will always exist, I remain optimistic about our future. I believe in the strength of our people, the resilience of our communities, and our ability to work together to achieve our shared goals. When we stand together as one Nation, there is no challenge we cannot overcome.

I am grateful for the trust that has been placed in me, and I remain committed to serving our people with dedication, respect, and humility.

Meegwetch,

Linden Spencer
Deputy Grand Chief



MESSAGE DU GRAND CHEF ADJOINT Linden Spencer



Wachiya. C'est un honneur pour moi de présenter mon premier rapport annuel en tant que Grand Chef adjoint du Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee)/Gouvernement de la Nation Crie.

Je m'appelle Linden Spencer et je viens de la Nation crie d'Eastmain. J'ai aussi des liens familiaux avec Chisasibi et, comme beaucoup de Cris, mon attachement à Eeyou Istchee dépasse le cadre d'une seule communauté. J'ai été élevé dans le respect des valeurs du travail, de l'humilité et du service aux autres. Ces valeurs continuent de me guider au quotidien dans l'exercice de mes fonctions de Grand Chef adjoint.

Avant d'occuper ce poste, j'ai eu l'occasion de travailler comme entrepreneur, comme Chef des jeunes et comme leader communautaire. Ces expériences m'ont permis de mieux comprendre les réalités auxquelles font face notre peuple, nos jeunes, nos familles et nos communautés. Elles m'ont également enseigné l'importance de l'écoute, de l'établissement de liens et du travail en collaboration pour trouver des solutions.

L'année écoulée a été l'une des expériences les plus importantes et enrichissantes de ma vie. Être élu Grand Chef adjoint est une responsabilité que je ne prends pas à la légère. Chaque jour, je me remémore que notre rôle de dirigeants est de servir notre peuple et de veiller à ce que la voix des bénéficiaires cris continue d'orienter les décisions que nous prenons.

Servir aux côtés du Grand Chef Paul John Murdoch a été un privilège. Tout au long de l'année, nous avons travaillé en étroite collaboration pour représenter les intérêts de la Nation crie, renforcer les liens avec nos communautés et nos partenaires, et faire progresser les priorités qui sont importantes pour notre peuple. Nous avons consacré d'innombrables heures à des réunions, des discussions, des négociations et des activités communautaires, toujours dans le but de faire aller de l'avant Eeyou Istchee.

Une chose que j'ai rapidement comprise dans ce rôle, c'est que le leadership n'est jamais l'œuvre d'une seule personne. Derrière chaque réunion, chaque initiative, chaque décision et chaque réalisation se cache une équipe de personnes dévouées qui travaillent sans relâche pour notre Nation crie.

Je tiens à exprimer ma sincère gratitude au directeur général, au directeur général adjoint, aux directeurs, aux

gestionnaires, aux coordonnateurs, aux conseillers, au personnel de soutien et à tous les employés du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie. Leur dévouement, leur professionnalisme et leur engagement permettent à notre organisation de fonctionner efficacement au quotidien. Le travail qu'ils accomplissent dans l'ombre passe souvent inaperçu, mais il est essentiel au succès de notre Gouvernement cri. Leurs efforts contribuent à la coordination de nombreux dossiers, projets, réunions et services qui soutiennent nos communautés et les bénéficiaires cris.

Le Grand Chef et moi avons la chance de travailler avec une équipe de personnes aussi dévouées et talentueuses. Leur soutien nous permet de nous concentrer sur la représentation de notre peuple et la promotion des priorités qui comptent le plus en Eeyou Istchee. Les réalisations mises en lumière dans ce rapport sont le fruit non seulement de la direction, mais aussi des nombreux employés qui œuvrent chaque jour au service du peuple cri.

Je tiens également à remercier nos chefs et chefs adjoints pour leur leadership et leur engagement envers leurs communautés. La force d'Eeyou Istchee provient de la collaboration entre les dirigeants locaux et régionaux. Bien que chaque communauté ait à faire face à des possibilités et des défis qui lui sont propres, nous continuons de travailler ensemble avec un objectif commun, celui d'améliorer la qualité de vie de notre peuple et créer des perspectives d'avenir pour les générations futures.

À nos aînés, merci pour vos conseils, votre sagesse et vos enseignements. Votre savoir continue d'orienter nos décisions et nous rappelle nos responsabilités envers notre peuple, nos terres et les générations futures.

À nos jeunes, merci pour votre passion, votre détermination et votre volonté d'aller de l'avant. Vous êtes les leaders de demain, et vos voix, vos idées et vos ambitions continueront de façonner l'avenir d'Eeyou Istchee.

Je tiens également à rendre hommage aux dirigeants qui nous ont précédés et à les remercier. La Nation forte que nous connaissons aujourd'hui a été bâtie grâce à des dé-

centaines de travail acharné, de vision et de sacrifices. D'anciens grands chefs, grands chefs adjoints, chefs, conseils, négociateurs et membres de la communauté se sont consacrés à la protection des droits des Cris, au renforcement de notre gouvernance et à la mise en place des institutions qui continuent de servir notre peuple aujourd'hui. Nous leur sommes reconnaissants des fondations qu'ils ont posées et nous demeurons déterminés à poursuivre leur œuvre.

COMITÉ DE COORDINATION DE LA CHASSE, DE LA PÊCHE ET DU PIÉGEAGE (CCCPP)

En tant que membre du Comité de coordination de la chasse, de la pêche et du piégeage (CCCPP), j'ai eu l'occasion de participer aux discussions et à la prise de décisions concernant la gestion de la faune, la conservation et la protection des droits de récolte des Cris en vertu de la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois.

Tout au long de l'année, le Comité a examiné plusieurs dossiers importants, notamment la réglementation provinciale de la pêche, les plans de gestion de la faune, les questions d'équipement et les initiatives de conservation touchant Eeyou Istchee. Ces discussions ont réuni des représentants des Cris, des Inuits, des Naskapis, ainsi que des gouvernements provincial et fédéral afin d'aborder les enjeux qui affectent nos terres et notre mode de vie traditionnel.

La conservation du caribou a constitué un axe majeur de notre travail. Le déclin continu des populations de caribous demeure une préoccupation majeure pour les communautés autochtones du Nord. Au cours de l'année, j'ai participé à des discussions et à des ateliers avec des leaders autochtones, des spécialistes de la faune et des représentants gouvernementaux afin d'examiner à la fois le savoir traditionnel et les données scientifiques relatives à la gestion du caribou.

En février 2026, le Gouvernement de la Nation Crie a proposé un moratoire sur la chasse au caribou au sud du 55e parallèle dans le cadre des efforts continus visant à soutenir le rétablissement de la population et à faire en sorte que les générations futures puissent continuer à bénéficier de cette importante ressource culturelle et traditionnelle.

Le comité a également appuyé l'organisation d'un atelier régional sur le caribou qui a réuni des nations autochtones du Québec et du Labrador afin de discuter des défis en matière de conservation, de partager des points de vue et d'explorer des approches de collaboration pour protéger les populations de caribous.

Alors que nous allons de l'avant, je reste déterminé à soutenir une gestion responsable de la faune, à protéger les droits de récolte des Cris et à veiller à ce que les générations futures puissent continuer à maintenir le lien fort qui unit notre peuple à la terre.

COMITÉ CONSULTATIF JUDICIAIRE

En décembre 2025, j'ai été nommé au Comité consultatif judiciaire aux côtés du chef Michael Petawabano et du chef adjoint Daniel Mark Stewart. Depuis notre nomination, nous nous réunissons régulièrement pour examiner les priorités en matière de justice et explorer des moyens de renforcer le soutien offert aux communautés crie par le service de la Justice et des Services correctionnels.

L'un de nos principaux axes de travail a porté sur les comités de justice communautaires. Face aux défis persistants que rencontrent les collectivités en matière de sécurité publique, de problèmes sociaux et de système judiciaire, nous sommes convaincus que les solutions locales et l'implication de la communauté sont essentielles. Tout au long de l'année, nous avons œuvré pour mieux comprendre



comment renforcer et soutenir ces comités de justice communautaire afin qu'ils puissent jouer un rôle plus important dans la prise en compte des priorités locales et aider les collectivités à trouver des solutions adaptées à leurs besoins et à leurs réalités spécifiques.

Le Comité a également revu son mandat et engagé des discussions avec le personnel du Service afin de mieux comprendre les programmes et les services actuellement offerts en Eeyou Istchee. Ces discussions ont permis de mieux cerner les réussites et les défis de notre système de justice et ont mis en lumière des possibilités d'améliorer le soutien offert aux Cris qui ont à effectuer des démarches dans les systèmes provinciaux et fédéraux.

L'une de nos priorités clés a été de faire en sorte que les voix et les perspectives des Cris continuent d'être prises en compte dans les discussions concernant la justice, les services correctionnels et le bien-être de la communauté. Nous reconnaissons que de nombreux défis ne peuvent être relevés par une organisation à elle seule et que des progrès significatifs nécessitent une collaboration entre les communautés, les dirigeants régionaux et les partenaires gouvernementaux.

Le Comité a également appuyé des initiatives visant l'engagement des jeunes, la sécurité de la communauté et la sensibilisation aux enjeux sociaux. Lors des discussions suivant le Forum Connect et des préparatifs d'événements régionaux majeurs comme les Jeux d'été cris, nous avons souligné l'importance de la prévention, de l'éducation et de la création de possibilités positives pour les jeunes.

Alors que nous continuons sur notre lancée, je reste déterminé à soutenir un système de justice qui répond aux besoins du peuple cri, renforce les approches communautaires et favorise des communautés plus sûres et plus saines dans tout Eeyou Istchee.

GROUPE DE TRAVAIL SUR LA STRATÉGIE DE LOGEMENT DE LA NATION CRIE

Le logement demeure l'un des enjeux les plus importants auxquels nos communautés font face, et au cours de la dernière année, j'ai eu l'occasion de siéger au sein du Groupe de travail sur la stratégie de logement de la Nation crie aux côtés d'autres dirigeants, de professionnels du logement et de membres du personnel du Gouvernement de la Nation Crie.

Le Groupe de travail a été mis sur pied pour examiner et améliorer les programmes de logement offerts aux bénéficiaires cris, tout en trouvant des solutions pratiques pour accroître les possibilités de logement dans l'ensemble du territoire d'Eeyou Istchee. Nos discussions ont mis l'accent sur la simplification des programmes de logement, la réduction des obstacles administratifs, l'élargissement des critères d'admissibilité et l'exploration d'approches nova-

trices pouvant aider un plus grand nombre de familles cries à avoir accès au logement.

Au cours de l'année, nous avons passé en revue les programmes de logement privés existants et examiné les moyens d'améliorer le soutien offert aux demandeurs. Nous avons également exploré les possibilités de développer des options de logement novatrices, notamment des modèles de location-accession, un soutien aux étudiants et aux jeunes familles revenant des études, des initiatives de logement subventionnées par l'employeur et d'autres approches susceptibles de contribuer à répondre aux besoins croissants en matière de logement au sein de nos communautés.

L'un des principaux objectifs du Groupe de travail a été de veiller à ce que les programmes de logement soient plus accessibles, plus efficaces et mieux adaptés aux réalités vécues par le peuple cri. Les discussions ont également porté sur la sensibilisation du public aux programmes de logement, le renforcement du soutien à l'éducation financière, la révision des niveaux de subvention et le repérage des possibilités d'encourager le développement accru de logements privés dans l'ensemble du territoire d'Eeyou Istchee.

En plus de s'attaquer à la résolution des problèmes de logement immédiats, le Groupe de travail s'est penché sur les priorités à plus long terme, notamment la gestion foncière, les considérations de zonage, la rénovation des logements, le logement locatif, les besoins en infrastructures et l'élaboration de politiques favorisant une croissance durable de la communauté.

Le travail accompli cette année constitue une étape importante vers l'élaboration d'une stratégie globale en matière de logement qui reflète les besoins et les aspirations de notre peuple. Malgré les défis importants qui subsistent, je suis encouragé par la collaboration entre les dirigeants, les services du logement et les représentants de la communauté qui continuent de travailler ensemble pour trouver des solutions concrètes.

Le logement, c'est plus qu'une infrastructure : il s'agit de créer de la stabilité pour les familles, soutenir les générations futures et bâtir des communautés plus fortes. Je demeure déterminé à faire progresser les initiatives en matière de logement qui contribueront à améliorer l'accès à des logements sûrs, abordables et durables pour le peuple cri de tout l'Eeyou Istchee.

ACCORD SUR LES REVENDICATIONS TERRITORIALES DE LA RÉGION MARINE D'EYYOU

En tant que membre impliqué dans les questions relatives à l'Accord sur les revendications territoriales de la région marine d'Eeyou, j'ai eu l'occasion de participer à des discussions et à des initiatives visant à protéger et à promouvoir les intérêts cris dans notre territoire marin.



Une étape importante qui sera franchie en 2026 sera l'annonce de la création de l'Aire marine nationale de conservation de Wiinipaakw à Wemindji à l'automne 2026. Cette réalisation historique représente des années de collaboration, de planification et d'engagement de la part des dirigeants cris, des membres de la communauté et des organisations partenaires œuvrant à la protection et à la gestion de notre environnement marin.

La création de cette aire de conservation reconnaît l'importance de préserver l'intégrité écologique de la région tout en respectant et en maintenant le lien traditionnel que le peuple cri entretient avec la terre, les eaux et la faune. Elle reflète les valeurs de gestion responsable qui guident notre peuple depuis des générations et font en sorte que les générations futures continueront de bénéficier de ces terres et de ces eaux et d'en tirer des enseignements.

La création de l'Aire marine nationale de conservation de Wiinipaakw offre également des possibilités de collaboration continue en matière de protection de l'environnement, de recherche scientifique, d'éducation et de développement économique durable, tout en veillant à ce que les droits, le savoir et la participation des Cries demeurent au cœur de la gestion de la région.

Cette réalisation démontre ce qu'il est possible d'accomplir lorsque les gouvernements, les collectivités et les nations autochtones travaillent de concert à la réalisation d'une vision commune. Je suis fier d'être témoin de cette avancée importante et je demeure déterminé à soutenir les initia-

tives qui protègent nos terres, nos eaux, notre culture et notre mode de vie pour les générations futures.

CONCLUSION

Alors que yeux se tournent vers l'avenir, il est de notre responsabilité de poursuivre l'édification d'une Nation crie forte, unie et prospère. Nous devons continuer à créer des possibilités pour notre peuple, à renforcer nos communautés, à protéger nos droits, à préserver notre culture et notre langue, et à veiller à ce que les générations futures héritent d'une nation encore plus forte que celle que nous connaissons aujourd'hui.

Malgré les défis qui existeront toujours, je reste optimiste quant à notre avenir. Je crois en la force de notre peuple, la résilience de nos communautés et notre capacité à œuvrer ensemble pour atteindre nos objectifs communs. Alors que nous sommes unis comme une seule Nation, il n'y a pas d'obstacle que nous ne puissions surmonter.

Je suis reconnaissant de la confiance qui m'a été accordée et je reste déterminé à servir notre peuple avec dévouement, respect et humilité.

Meegwetch,

*Linden Spencer
Grand Chef adjoint*



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Anthony MacLeod



As we close another year of service to the Cree Nation, I would like to thank our leadership for their continued trust, guidance, and commitment. Their leadership continues to shape our direction and support the progress we are working to achieve.

This year marked a significant period of transition for the Cree Nation Government. We experienced the profound loss of our former Executive Director, Davey Bobbish, whose leadership and deep commitment left a lasting impact. Davey believed strongly that our government must remain grounded in the communities it serves, and that belief continues to guide our work. On a personal level, I also feel this loss deeply. Davey was not only a respected colleague, but a close friend, and he is greatly missed.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank Lillian Loon, Executive Assistant, for over 35 years of dedicated service. Throughout her years at CNG, she has played an essential role in organizing and coordinating the many meetings that support our administrative and decision-making processes, ensuring that directors, staff, and community representatives could come together effectively to advance our shared priorities. As she begins her well-earned retirement, we extend our sincere gratitude for her many contributions and wish her the best.

At the same time, the Cree Nation entered a new chapter in leadership with the election and inauguration of Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch and Deputy Grand Chief Linden Spencer, alongside newly elected youth leadership. Together, this new leadership represents a renewed mandate to strengthen governance, foster unity across Eeyou Istchee, and continue advancing important priorities forward.

As I assumed the role of Executive Director in December 2025, I did so with a strong sense of responsibility to build on the foundation established by those who came before me, and to ensure continuity in the work already underway. This work was further supported through the Director General and Treasurers' Group, which met regularly throughout the year to coordinate priorities across entities. These meetings focused on capital planning, infrastructure priorities and discussions related to the renewal of the New Relationship Agreement, helping to align community priorities with ongoing planning and negotiations. In

parallel, Board/Council continued to play a key governance role, providing direction through its review of agreements, legislation, and strategic priorities, and issuing directives to guide implementation across the organization.

A key moment this year was the CONNECT Leadership Forum, which brought together leaders from across the Cree Nation Government, the Cree School Board, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, and the communities to look at shared challenges. What stood out from those discussions was the need to work better together — to improve coordination, align efforts, and take a more practical approach to addressing community needs. It also reinforced the importance of unity in how we move forward, not only in principle, but in how we work together across mandates and institutions. This work will continue into the next fiscal year, with a focus on moving these discussions into concrete, coordinated actions.

Initiatives advanced with the departments throughout the year — including work related to the private housing strategy, policy development, responsible financial management, and collaboration with departments such as Forestry and Justice — reflect a broader effort to support sustainable development, and advance shared priorities across the organization. This also includes work connected to the Cree Nation Economic Prioritization Agreement, which continues to help strengthen entrepreneurship and create lasting economic opportunities.

This year has not been without challenges. Pressures related to natural resources, climate change, and changing economic conditions continue to affect our communities and require thoughtful, coordinated responses. We must continue to adapt while ensuring our rights, our land, and our traditional way of life remain protected.

Looking ahead, our work remains focused on strengthening governance, advancing our treaty and agreement frameworks, and ensuring that the benefits secured under

these agreements translate into meaningful outcomes. This includes continued engagement with partners through forums such as the Cree–Canada Standing Liaison Committee and the Cree–Quebec Standing Liaison Committee, where important discussions this year included the renewal of the New Relationship Agreement, Cree–Quebec governance matters, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA), land-related matters, and broader policy issues.

As we close out the year, we also reflect on the 50th anniversary of the JBNQA, an important milestone that underscores the lasting significance of the agreements that continue to shape our work today. It is an honour to serve the Cree Nation as Executive Director, and I am proud to

contribute to the work ahead alongside our leadership, Deputy Executive Director Melissa Saganash, the directors, and the wider team whose dedication continues to move the Cree Nation forward.

Meegwetch.

Anthony MacLeod
Executive Director





MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Melissa Saganash



This year has been a challenging one for the Cree Nation Government that has brought much change as we entered the 50th anniversary of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.



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EMPLOYEES



As an organization, we suffered an immense loss with the passing of Davey Bobbish, our Executive Director, in October of 2025. As a people, we lost the model of a great family man, a generous friend, and a proud Chisasibi eeyouch. Davey's way of serving was always about asking himself what it was that the community needed. Remembering to ask ourselves this question is how we hope to continue honouring that legacy of committed public service Davey believed in so deeply. He continues to be sorely missed every day as a colleague and a friend.

2025 has brought change in leadership with the election of Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch and Deputy Grand Chief Linden Spencer in July of 2025. Building on unity and openness to create a solid voice for the Cree Nation has been the focus of this first year in office. The Cree Nation Government has been active in providing support through Directors and their teams by contributing to more community dialogue, finding ways to breaking down silos whether they are internal or external, and hoping this shift allows for more inclusive and transparent links with our partners – the communities and their members who we serve each day.

In December of 2025, Anthony MacLeod was officially welcomed as the new Executive Director of the Cree Nation Government. Anthony's experience as our Director of Commerce and Industry for 8 years, and prior to that, extensive accomplishments in management and entrepreneurship with a strong belief in what our people can and have done make him well suited for the job. I look forward



to supporting him in his endeavors and wish him the very best as he enters into this role.

A major part of why building that unity is so critical at this time for the Cree Nation is the health and well-being of our Nation. Despite the many victories of the Cree Nation over the decades where we have built our own health, education and public safety systems, we are not immune to social challenges that have for effect impacting the lives of our youth and their families.

The focus on unity and breaking down silos that our new leadership has been prioritizing has set the stage for the first CONNECT conference held in Chisasibi in March 2026. It is designed to align strategic actions around community priorities while improving collaboration and strengthening data and information sharing relevant to instilling better community health and well-being. Alongside leadership from all Cree First Nations, the Cree School Board, Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, and other key stakeholders like the Eeyou Eenu Police Force and Cree Nation Youth Council, we are committed to bringing action to identified priorities. This conference was the first of a series we expect to collaborate on. We have the tools to make things better, now we need to work together and connect them.

With the arrival of Anthony MacLeod now official, we have resumed regular meetings of the Cree-Québec Standing Liaison Committee. This committee established by the Paix des Braves Agreement in 2001 has been key to addressing issues or other matters of importance with the Québec government. Tina Petawabano, our Director of Government Relations, is also a member of this committee along with Anthony MacLeod and myself. We are supported by staff

from our various departments who may lend some technical expertise and guidance for files that may become more complex.

In addition to qualified staff throughout our departments, we have also been supported by Nathan Afilalo, our Senior Policy and Legislative Advisor, who has been contributing his own expertise to both leadership and staff alike. Nathan has been developing helpful tools for staff as well as a federal and provincial policy and legislative dashboard specifically for the purpose of informing Board/Council of upcoming changes or the tracking of bills and regulations of interest to the Cree Nation. This has been helpful in identifying and categorizing issues by relevance and priority and keeping leadership informed of what is to come. We would like to acknowledge the expertise and commitment these many staff members have contributed – it is greatly appreciated.

Despite the challenges and change that the year has brought us, our teams throughout the departments have shown professionalism and dedication. It has been a pleasure to serve alongside them, and I look forward to us continuing to grow together where we shape and build your government to your expectations. We know that change requires a lot of work and patience, but our outlook is a positive one as we can see that the dedicated staff of the Cree Nation Government is up to the task. With this in mind, this year's theme could not be more appropriate as we are indeed united in purpose and guided by hope for what is to come.

Melissa Saganash
Deputy Executive Director



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

Fiscal Year 2025–2026: Driving Organizational Excellence

During the fiscal year 2025–2026, the IT Department solidified its position as a strategic enabler and strategic partner to the Cree Nation Government. By executing targeted initiatives in infrastructure modernization, cybersecurity, and service delivery, the department has significantly enhanced its capacity to provide reliable, secure, and scalable technology services, while improving overall staff efficiency and service effectiveness. This year marks a pivotal transition toward a proactive, risk-aligned, and data-driven operational model that supports the evolving needs of our communities and departments. As technological evolution continues to accelerate, the recruitment of local talent remains a top priority, ensuring the sustained growth, resilience, and capacity of the IT team.

Strategic Infrastructure Enhancements

The department continued the modernization of core infrastructure, directly contributing to organizational resilience. Key achievements include:

- Modernized core IT infrastructure to bolster reliability, performance, and long-term scalability.
- Stabilized network environments across multiple sites to support expanding operational requirements.
- Advanced the standardization of server environments and systems, improving overall manageability and sustainability.

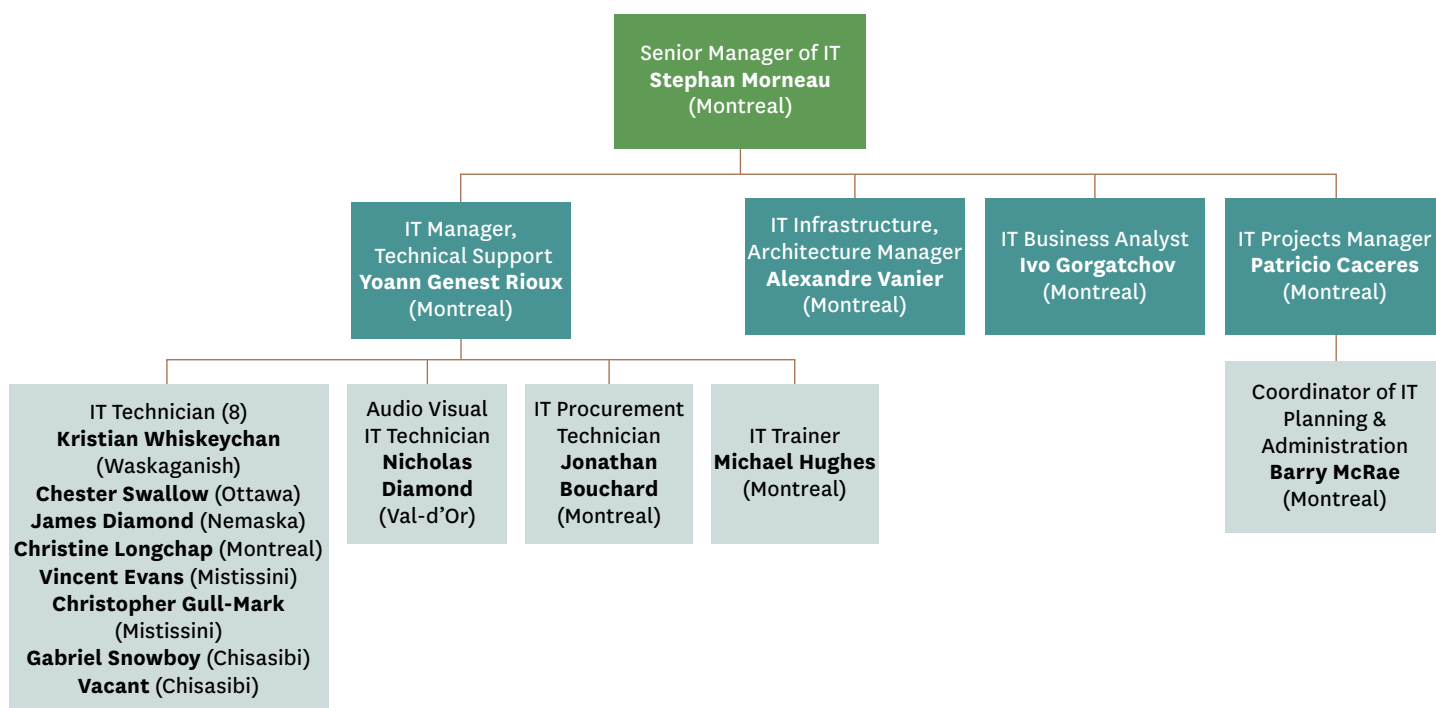


System Upgrades, Integrations, and Evolution

To improve control, security, and accessibility, the IT Department prioritized:

- Implementation of centralized device and system management solutions.
- Upgrading critical systems to supported, secure operating platforms.

Figure 1. The organizational structure for the Information Technology Department



- Enhancing the integration of collaboration tools to drive cross-departmental efficiency.
- Advancing system standardization and data governance protocols.

Cybersecurity and Operational Resilience

Recognizing the necessity of a mature security posture, the department shifted toward a proactive, risk-aligned security model:

- Strengthened cybersecurity through optimized configurations, policies, and continuous monitoring.
- Developed centralized oversight to enhance visibility and response time to security events.
- Expanded physical security involvement across various CNG office locations
- Increased organizational training efforts to foster a culture of secure practices.

Service Delivery Metrics (2025–2026)

The IT Department managed a complex operational environment supporting:

- **650** user profiles and over **550** infrastructure assets.
- **62** offices across **13** communities and satellite offices.
- **60+** internet connections and coordination with **40+** external service providers.
- **200+** mobile devices.

Support Activity:

- **7,782** support tickets processed via Halo and MSP platforms.
- **2,644** system alerts proactively addressed.

While the transition to modern management platforms has increased visibility, the recorded 7,782 tickets (compared to 5,723 in the prior year) underscore the sustained growth in demand and the expanding reliance on IT services across the Cree Nation Government.

The 2025–2026 fiscal year reflects the department’s commitment to evolving into a more structured, accountable, and data-driven entity. By acting as a strategic enabler and strategic partner, the IT Department has successfully improved organizational performance while maintaining high standards of reliability. Looking forward, the department remains dedicated to leveraging auditable metrics, robust governance, and innovative technology to support the strategic priorities of the Cree Nation Government.

RECORDS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (RIM)

Throughout 2025–2026, the RIM team continued to strengthen its role in advancing information governance while laying the foundations for the future Cree Nation

Archives Center. As the RIM function has matured, it has developed increased capacity to guide and support information management practices across the organization. The team is now being called upon more frequently by departments, reflecting growing visibility and a rising demand for RIM expertise in supporting both daily operations and strategic initiatives. This progression also signals a broader shift toward an integrated approach, where records management and archival preservation are increasingly aligned within a unified lifecycle model.

Rim Project Deployment and Sustainability

The RIM Project continued to build on established document management practices, with ongoing work to apply and refine processes across departments. This includes continued collaboration with both new departments and previously engaged teams to enhance existing environments and ensure long-term sustainability.

Work progressed through the deployment and improvement of SharePoint-based environments. Ongoing collaborations included Commerce and Industry, Environment (ESIA, CCU, EcoFund), and the Ottawa Embassy, as well as the preparation of additional sites supporting mining activities and interdepartmental initiatives.

To date, over 70% of departments have been reached, with more than nine SharePoint sites deployed. These efforts contribute to reducing information silos, improving accessibility, and supporting more efficient and secure document management practices across the organization.

Strengthening Information Governance

This year placed a strong emphasis on advancing the governance frameworks that support records and information management. The RIM team continued to refine and develop clearer, more cohesive policies, tools, and structures to support consistent decision-making and long-term sustainability.

Key achievements include:

- Development of an organization-wide functional classification scheme, integrated with the broader information architecture
- Ongoing work on a retention schedule, access and confidentiality policies, and structured document lifecycle management
- Introduction of strategic document categories designed to identify high-risk information assets and guide enhanced protection strategies
- Development of governance instruments, including by-laws for a future Documentary Heritage Governance Committee
- Implementation of improved intake, acquisition, and disposition processes, supported by standardized tools and tracking mechanisms

These initiatives are supported by ongoing ecosystem mapping and the integration of First Nations information

governance principles, including OCAP® (Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession). They are also reinforced by strengthened collaboration with IT, which serves as a key strategic lever for the Cree Nation Government's digital transformation and will continue to be further developed in the coming year.

Together, this work establishes a stronger and more coherent governance framework to support both operational needs and long-term archival stewardship.

Digital Governance and Microsoft Purview

This year also marked the beginning of the RIM team's transition toward enhanced digital governance tools. As part of this evolution, Microsoft Purview has been identified as a key platform to support the implementation of retention and sensitivity labels across the organization.

The team has begun training on Purview and is working toward a phased implementation. This platform will play a critical role in automating the application of retention schedules, supporting confidentiality and sensitivity classification of records, and enhancing compliance, traceability, and accountability throughout the records lifecycle.

This work reflects strengthened collaboration between RIM and IT, ensuring that governance frameworks are effectively supported by robust technological infrastructure.

Digital Research Library (BETA)

A major milestone this year is the launch of the internal Digital Research Library, currently in beta testing. Hosted on SharePoint, the platform now includes over 1,000 research materials—including bibliographic records, studies, reports, and maps—and continues to expand.

Structured using Dublin Core metadata standards, the library significantly improves the accessibility and discoverability of research materials across the organization. It also strengthens institutional knowledge and supports research and decision-making activities, transforming the Documentation Centre's holdings into a dynamic and accessible digital resource.

Historical Archives and Archival Foundations

In parallel, the RIM team has made important progress toward establishing the foundations of the Cree Nation Archives Centre.

A key achievement this year is the development of the first draft of the JBNQA archival fond, focused on the negotiation and signing of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. This work represents a critical step in preserving foundational documentation of Cree governance and history.

Additional progress includes:

- Development of archival processing and inventory protocols
- Ongoing review and organization of legacy records

- Preparation for the implementation of the AtoM archival platform
- Development of preliminary audiovisual preservation guidelines

These initiatives reflect a growing integration between records management and archival functions, supporting a comprehensive lifecycle approach to information.

Physical Records and Documentation Centre

Efforts also continued to address the management and preservation of physical records stored across multiple locations. With an estimated 5,000 boxes of records, this remains a significant priority.

Through improved processes and the implementation of a formal disposition protocol, more than 350 boxes have been securely processed and destroyed over the past 1.5 years. At the same time, site assessments have highlighted urgent preservation needs, reinforcing the importance of building adequate archival capacity.

The progress achieved in 2025–2026 reflects a significant evolution in the RIM function. By strengthening governance frameworks, expanding digital tools, and advancing archival development, the RIM team continues to build a comprehensive and sustainable approach to information management.

Looking ahead, priorities will focus on strengthening governance, advancing the Cree Nation Archives Centre, and continuing to improve systems that support secure and accessible information, including Microsoft Purview, SharePoint environments, and key archival collections such as the JBNQA fond.

Through the continued integration of records management and archival practices, the RIM team remains committed to supporting operational efficiency, regulatory compliance, and the long-term protection of Cree knowledge, history, and institutional memory.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Team continued to strengthen public engagement and information sharing across Eeyou Istchee throughout the year. The team remained responsible for coordinating and disseminating news, public updates, and organizational information related to the priorities and activities of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, while also expanding collaboration with regional entities and enhancing digital communications tools.

The team maintained and updated the Cree Nation Government's digital platforms, including the official website and social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X, and YouTube. These platforms served as key tools for public outreach, event promotion, emergency notices, livestream broadcasts, and community engagement.

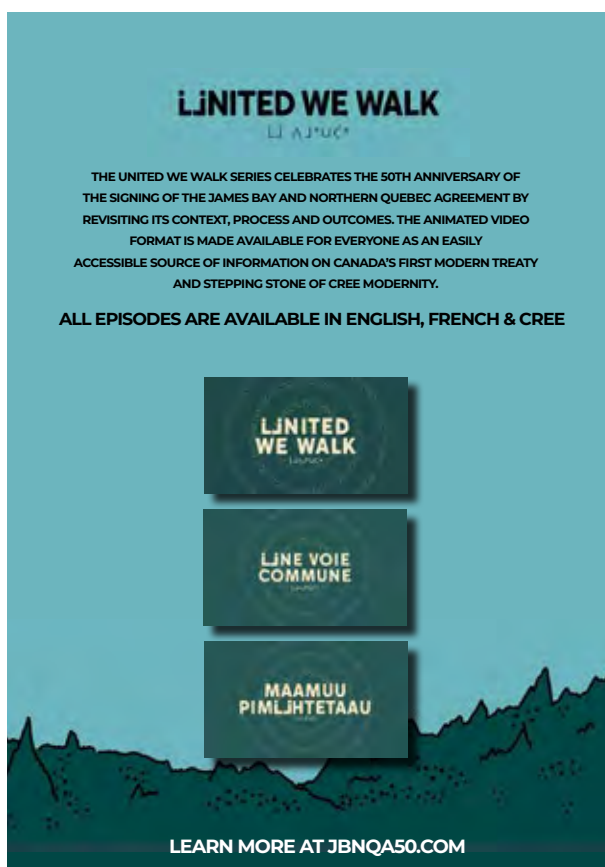
Communications staff also supported departments across the organization through copy-editing, PowerPoint preparation, graphic design, campaign development, media coordination, and promotional materials.

This year, the Communications team continued producing summaries and highlights of Annual General Assembly and Board/Council meetings as well as a quarterly newsletter to improve transparency and accessibility of information for community members. The team also coordinated media relations, issued press releases, and supported the organization of major gatherings and public events throughout the year, such as the Cree Nation Business Summit and CONNECT Leadership Forum.

Internally, the team also experienced staffing changes with the hiring of a new Multimedia Communications Specialist, Adrian N. Gunner, in August 2025, while recruitment efforts are underway to fill the vacant Graphic Artist Technician position. Under the Manager of Communications, Joanne Ottereyes, and the Senior Digital Communications Advisor, Brendan Forward, leadership capacity was strengthened to include greater responsibility for project coordination, digital strategy, and interdepartmental collaboration.

Regional collaboration remained a major focus. Building on the successful second edition of the Regional Communications Meeting last year, a third gathering was held in March/April 2026 with communications representatives from the Cree Nation Government, Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, and Cree School Board. Discussions focused on communications priorities, challenges, collaboration opportunities, and progress made following the Second Regional Communications Meeting in 2025. Participants also participated in workshops on “Building your influence” and “Leading conversations” while sharing best practices in internal and external communications, identified collaboration goals, and worked toward developing a communications plan and determining the next steps for the group.

The Communications Team also continued its work on the 50th anniversary commemoration of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA). Planning and content development advanced significantly over the year, including the completion of the UNITED WE WALK video series in partnership with Edelman and Studio Nord-Est. The nine-part animated series explored the historical context, negotiations, and lasting impacts of the JBNQA and is now available in Cree, English, and French on our [YouTube](#) channel. The initiative aims to increase awareness of the agreement among youth and broader audiences while preserving and promoting Cree history for future generations. Additional public education and commemorative promotional materials were also developed in support of the anniversary campaign which culminated on November 11, 2025 with the 50th JBNQA anniversary event which brought



The United We Walk video series received the Applied Arts Canada – 2025 Illustration Award.

together leadership and special guests to commemorate the signing of the agreement in Chisasibi.

The Cree Nation Government’s digital presence continued to expand over the past year, with sustained growth across the website and all social media channels. The [cngov.ca](#) website remains the primary hub for public information, careers, agreements, and governance resources, while the organization’s social platforms drive ongoing community engagement and outreach.



Website Performance

Top Pages	Active Users	Views
Homepage — GCC(EI)/CNG	19,000	74,000
Careers	2,500	14,000
The Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee	3,500	11,000
Agreements	2,400	8,400
Contact	3,100	6,700

Source: Google Analytics, Apr 1, 2025 – Mar 31, 2026.

Website Performance — cngov.ca

Between April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026, cngov.ca attracted 65,000 active users and generated approximately 330,000 events, with 64,000 new users. The majority of traffic arrived through organic search (Google and Bing) and direct visits, with referral traffic from Facebook and a growing share from AI-assistant referrals. The most-visited destinations were the homepage, the Careers portal, and the Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee section.

Social Media Growth

All four primary social channels posted year-over-year follower growth, led by Instagram (+28%) and LinkedIn (+20%). Combined, the channels reached 19,135 followers across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Of particular note, Facebook and Meta platforms provided content that was viewed over 9.3M times during the fiscal year, with United We Walk being a significant highlight for socials (viewed 6.3M times across all platforms).

Digital Elections Platform — Powered by Sequent

For the 2025 general elections, the Cree Nation Government partnered with Sequent to deliver a secure, verifiable online voting platform across all ten Cree communities. Building on previous call-in systems, the new solution combined multi-factor authentication, end-to-end encryption, and a tamper-evident vote ledger, designed in alignment with Elections Québec internet-voting principles. The election ran in two secure rounds — electing the Grand Chief in July 2025 with a first-round majority, followed by a run-off for Deputy Grand Chief — supported by culturally aligned voter education and low-bandwidth optimization for remote access.

Digital Elections Platform

10	2	3,116	723	23% of vote
Communities	Voting rounds	Total Vote	Votes cast	Ratio

Source: Sequent election case study, 2025.



Social Media Growth

Platform	Handle	Followers	Growth
Facebook	@gccra	12,421	+10%
Instagram	@gccra	1,630	+28%
LinkedIn	@gccra	4,432	+20%
YouTube	@gccra	652	42%▲

Facebook 12,421

Instagram 1,630

LinkedIn 4,432

YouTube 652

These results build a foundation to demonstrate how online voting can be used in future elections giving new accessibility and security to voting in the future. Our goal beyond accessibility is to encourage greater participation in our electoral process, and this will be a core focus of future elections in Eeyou Istchee.

Website Rebuild

The Communications team is currently rebuilding cngov.ca on Directus, a modern headless content management system that will give the organization greater flexibility, improved performance, and a more accessible, structured approach to managing content across departments. The new website is anticipated to launch in October 2026.

Over the past year, the Communications team contributed to a wide range of creative and branding initiatives. This included social media campaigns, newsletter layouts, event materials, organizational branding assets, public awareness graphics, and visual support for community outreach projects. As communications needs continue to evolve, the department remains committed to strengthening regional collaboration, improving accessibility of information, and ensuring that Cree voices, priorities, and stories are effectively shared across Eeyou Istchee and beyond.



EYYOU ISTCHEE LAND KEEPERS PROGRAMS/ WILDLIFE PROTECTION ASSISTANTS (EILK/WPA)

The Eeyou Istchee Land Keepers Program (EILK), under the leadership of Program Coordinator Benoit Longchap, continues to play an important role in the stewardship and collaborative management of Eeyou Istchee. In 2025-2026, the program maintained a team of four full-time Land Keepers/ Wildlife Protection Assistants stationed in Mistissini and Chisasibi. The Cree Nation Government remains committed to supporting this initiative, recognizing its contribution to the protection of the land, wildlife, and Cree traditional practices.

The Land Keepers combine responsibilities under Québec wildlife legislation with cultural stewardship roles that promote Cree values and traditional land use. Working closely with tallymen, community members, and Québec Wildlife Protection Officers, they help monitor activities on the land, support wildlife management efforts, and raise awareness about the respectful use of natural resources.

Throughout the year, the Land Keepers continued to conduct regular patrols across Eeyou Istchee using patrol vehicles, snowmobiles, boats, and other specialized equipment. Their presence on the territory helps ensure compliance with regulations, supports the sustainable use of wildlife resources, and provides assistance to local leadership and land users when needed.

The team also continued to monitor hunting and harvesting activities in key areas of the territory. Land Keepers maintained an active presence in Zone 17 and other areas where increased monitoring was required. They also supported local leadership and tallymen by documenting activities on the land and providing timely information regarding harvesting and resource-use activities.

During fishing season, the team conducted patrols in spawning areas and popular fishing locations to promote safe and responsible harvesting practices, ensure compliance with applicable regulations, and encourage respect for the region's lakes and rivers. Land Keepers also continued to work alongside wildlife officers and community representatives when responding to wildlife-related incidents, including situations involving animals near communities.

The program continued to support tallymen and local authorities by assisting in situations requiring mediation or intervention on the land. Their role as a trusted presence in the territory contributes to positive relationships among land users and helps address concerns before they escalate.

Team members also participated in training provided by Québec Wildlife Protection Officers and received ongoing instruction in new technologies and monitoring tools relevant to their work. These opportunities help ensure that the Land Keepers remain well-equipped to carry out their responsibilities safely and effectively.

Community outreach also remained a key component of the program. Land Keepers engaged with local schools and youth through presentations and career awareness activities, sharing information about wildlife protection, land stewardship, and employment opportunities in the field. By promoting the importance of protecting Eeyou Istchee and encouraging future generations to become involved in environmental stewardship, the program continues to strengthen connections between communities and the land.

The Cree Nation Government acknowledges the dedication and commitment of the Land Keepers and Wildlife Protection Assistants, whose ongoing efforts contribute to the protection of wildlife, the preservation of Cree values, and the sustainable management of Eeyou Istchee for future generations.



Photo: Katherine Dehm



FEDERAL ELECTION

Mark Carney was elected Liberal Party leader on March 9, 2025. He was sworn in as the 24th Prime Minister of Canada on March 14, 2025. Following the general federal election of April 28, 2025, Mr. Carney formed a minority Liberal government. In April of this year, he secured a majority government with full control of the House of Commons, and his government can pass legislation without needing opposition support. The next national election is not required until 2029.

Prime Minister Carney's new government has acted swiftly to advance an ambitious agenda amid mounting global pressures, including from previously announced U.S. tariffs. As part of his agenda, Prime Minister Carney sought to better integrate Canada's internal economy and increase trade independence through various measures, including Bill C-5 (the *One Canadian Economy Act*, which includes the *Building Canada Act*). This new legislation received Royal Assent on June 26, 2025, and will advance projects of national importance by streamlining federal regulatory

requirements and approval times. Mr. Carney took early action to ease the cost of living and introduce certain tax cuts and reinforce national security and increase military spending. He also introduced measures to achieve greater fiscal discipline by reducing the deficit. During his election campaign, Mr. Carney reiterated his commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

SPECIAL BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

The Cree-Canada relationship is of critical importance for the Cree Nation. The Cree Nation stands in a special nation-to-nation and treaty relationship with the Government of Canada by virtue of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA). This relationship was very tense in the first decades after the signing of the JBNQA as many of Canada's treaty undertakings were left unfulfilled. This resulted in protracted legal proceedings initiated by the Crees against Canada. This relationship took a turn for the better with the signing of the Cree-Canada New Relationship Agreement in 2008. This Agreement resolved most of the outstanding litigation opposing the Cree Nation



to Canada and set up a process to implement an enhanced Cree Nation Government. This relationship was further developed and consolidated with the signing of the Cree Nation Governance Agreement in 2017.

The JBNQA is the first modern Indigenous treaty and land claims agreement in Canada, and it continues to serve as the living and evolving foundation of Cree treaty rights and modern Cree self-government. The JBNQA celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, with several events and initiatives to highlight this important milestone.

Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch, together with the Board/Council of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, is responsible for providing political direction for relations between the Cree Nation and Canada. He is supported by Anthony MacLeod, Executive Director, Melissa Saganash, Deputy Executive Director, and Tina Petawabano, Director of Federal and Indigenous Relations.

STANDING LIAISON COMMITTEE

The Cree-Canada Standing Liaison Committee established under the New Relationship Agreement continues to serve as a forum to strengthen relations between the Crees and Canada and to address issues and resolve differences as they arise. Over the years, the Standing Liaison Committee has presented an opportunity to develop and maintain a strong working and administrative relationship between the GCC(EI)/Cree Nation Government, as represented by the Executive Director, and a senior federal official of the Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), at the Assistant Deputy Minister level, as intended under the New Relationship Agreement.

Executive Director Anthony MacLeod is the Lead Cree Representative on the Standing Liaison Committee. His counterpart and Lead Federal Representative on this Committee is currently Heather McLean, Assistant Deputy Minister for the Modern Treaties, Consultation and Intergovernmental Relations Sector of CIRNAC.

OPERATIONAL TABLE

The Cree-Canada Operational Table presents an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between the Cree Nation and Canada at an operational level. This Operational Table can play an important role in the current context of the renewal of the New Relationship Agreement and other key agreements with Canada. During the past year, the Operational Table has addressed several operational and technical matters between the Cree Nation and Canada and has helped to coordinate arrangements for other Tables and technical discussions on MoCreebec, the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement and the modernization of the Land Registry System. The Cree Nation Government is currently represented at the Operational Table by our Director of Federal and Indigenous Relations Tina Petawabano.

NEW RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENT (2008)

The New Relationship Agreement marked a turning point in Cree-Canada relations. One of the main purposes of this Agreement was to resolve differences between Canada and the Cree Nation as to the implementation by Canada of the JBNQA and claims, grievances and other matters, including the resolution of litigation. This enabled the Cree Nation and Canada to embark upon a new and positive relationship. The New Relationship Agreement also sought

Photo: Brendan Forward

to improve the implementation of the JBNQA, to provide for the assumption by the Cree Nation of greater responsibility for Cree economic and community development, to provide for the achievement of greater autonomy, and to better respond to the traditions and needs of the Crees by ensuring that decisions respecting the Cree Nation as a whole are made at a regional level.

Over the years, the implementation of the JBNQA has not always been easy, particularly during the 1980's and 1990's when many disputes arose over treaty implementation and resource development in Eeyou Istchee. Disputes gave rise to legal proceedings against Quebec and Canada. Legal proceedings against Quebec were mostly resolved in 2002 with the Paix des Braves. Those against Canada were mostly resolved in 2008 with the New Relationship Agreement.

Under the New Relationship Agreement, the Cree Nation Government assumes, during the 20-year term of that Agreement and with funds provided by Canada, certain federal responsibilities contemplated in the JBNQA. These "Assumed Federal JBNQA Responsibilities" include certain aspects of Cree community and economic development (Section 28 JBNQA), and certain federal aspects of the administration of justice for the Crees (Section 18 JBNQA). Over the years, the Cree Nation Government and the Cree communities have had to plan and manage large scale capital projects and related operations, and they have developed the capacity and the means to determine and implement their own priorities and strategies.

We report regularly to Canada on how we implement the New Relationship Agreement, and particularly the Assumed Federal JBNQA Responsibilities, and we continue to build and maintain a strong bilateral relationship with senior federal officials through the Standing Liaison Committee and other bilateral mechanisms with Canada. This year, in the context of the Cree-Canada negotiations of a successor agreement to the New Relationship Agreement, we presented another comprehensive report to federal officials providing details of how the Cree Nation has prioritized the allocation of funds, particularly to fulfil the Assumed Federal JBNQA Responsibilities. We have also presented another virtual "tour of the communities" with pictures of the main facilities built with funds under the New Relationship Agreement. In the context of the negotiations with Canada of a successor agreement to the New Relationship Agreement, a delegation of federal officials travelled to Eeyou Istchee to visit Nemaska and Wemindji as part of understanding the Cree context and circumstances to support the renewal of the New Relationship Agreement and other key Agreements.

The New Relationship Agreement came into force on February 21, 2008, and will expire at midnight on February 21, 2028. There are less than two (2) years before the end of this Agreement and other major Agreements with Canada, including the Operations and Maintenance Agreement and

In the context of the negotiations with Canada of a successor agreement to the New Relationship Agreement, a delegation of federal officials travelled to Eeyou Istchee to visit Nemaska and Wemindji as part of understanding the Cree context and circumstances to support the renewal of the New Relationship Agreement and other key Agreements.



Photo: Katherine Dehm

the Capital Grants Agreement. Discussions with Canada on the renewal of these Agreements have started at the beginning of 2026. The renewal discussions concerning the New Relationship Agreement and other major Agreements with Canada will thus run from early 2026 until new agreement(s) can be agreed upon, hopefully before the expiry of the existing Agreements in 2028. These negotiations and discussions are advancing at a reasonable pace so far. The renewal of these Agreements is crucial for the protection of Cree rights and to ensure the continued wellbeing of our people, our nation and our communities for the future.

These renewal negotiations are taking place in a context of national and global uncertainty, where Canada continues to navigate a rapidly changing world that is becoming increasingly fragmented, complex and volatile. The fiscal situation of Canada is also challenging. Moreover, the Carney government is now promoting large infrastructure, natural resources and industrial projects to grow the Canadian economy and render it less dependent on the US market. In this context, some of the most critical objectives to pursue in negotiations with Canada are the protection of Cree rights and the continuity, stability and predictability of federal transfers to the Cree Nation.

The negotiations of a successor agreement to the New Relationship Agreement present an opportunity to review certain undertakings and matters that have yet to be fully implemented or resolved between Canada and the Cree Nation. For example, under Chapter 5 of the New Relationship Agreement, the parties had made certain commitments, including for subsequent negotiations of amendments to the JBNQA and to certain federal laws, and of transfer of federal authority to the Cree Nation Government under certain environmental and wildlife protection legislation. The Crees have proposed that these matters be carried forward for resolution into the successor agreement to the New Relationship Agreement, along with other outstanding matters between Canada and the Cree Nation or unfulfilled undertaking by Canada under the JBNQA.

To support these renewal discussions with Canada, internal preparations are critically important and a considerable amount of internal preparatory work on the Cree side has been carried out. As reported previously, some of this preparatory work has been ongoing for several years already. Under the direction of the Executive Director of the Cree Nation Government, these preparations have involved the Cree communities, as well as relevant departments of the Cree Nation Government responsible for implementing key components of the New Relationship Agreement, including Capital Works and Services, Justice and Correctional Services and Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD).

CREE NATION GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT

The New Relationship Agreement provided for a process for negotiating an agreement and related legislation concerning a Cree Nation Government with powers and authorities

beyond the scope of the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*. On July 18, 2017, pursuant to this process set out in the New Relationship Agreement, the Government of Canada, the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) and the Cree Nation Government entered into the Cree Nation Governance Agreement, which was approved, given effect and declared valid and given the force of law by the *Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee Governance Agreement Act*.

The Cree Nation Governance Agreement provides, among other things, for the modernization of the governance regime on Category IA lands contemplated, at the local level, in Section 9 of the JBNQA and previously provided for in legislative form in the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*. The *Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee Governance Agreement Act*, together with the Cree Nation Governance Agreement and the companion Cree Constitution, have replaced the *Cree Naskapi (of Quebec) Act* with respect to the Crees, Cree First Nations, Cree Nation Government and Category IA lands. Existing arrangements regarding Cree local and regional governance powers on Category IA lands, as well as the land regime, including access and the grant of rights in lands and buildings, have been largely maintained and transferred from the *Cree Naskapi (of Quebec) Act* into the Cree Nation Governance Agreement and the Cree Constitution.

The New Relationship Agreement and the Cree Nation Governance Agreement have settled until 2028 most of the outstanding implementation, governance and fiscal issues between the Cree Nation and Canada. The Cree Nation Governance Agreement also sets out special arrangements concerning fiscal relations between the Crees and Canada that provide guidance for the negotiation of a successor agreement to the New Relationship Agreement beyond 2028 and the renewal of key funding agreements with Canada, particularly the Operations and Maintenance Agreement and its companion Capital Grants Agreement.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT AND CAPITAL GRANTS AGREEMENT

In Section 9 of the JBNQA, Canada committed to recommend to Parliament special legislation concerning Cree local government on Category IA lands. This special legislation eventually took the form of the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*. From the outset of the discussions relating to the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*, the Crees have required an assurance of adequate funding for the implementation of their responsibilities under that Act. Over the years, the Crees have continued to take the position that the implementation of Cree government responsibilities under the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*, and subsequently under the Cree Nation Governance Agreement and *Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee Governance Agreement Act*, must be supported by adequate, stable and predictable operations and maintenance funding from Canada.

For its part, Canada has continuously provided operations and maintenance funding to support the implementation

of Cree government responsibilities under the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*, and subsequently under the *Cree Nation Governance Agreement* and *Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee Governance Agreement Act*, through a specific grant referred to as the Operations and Maintenance Agreement. This Agreement, which has been continuously renewed from time to time for various multi-year periods, is based on special grant funding arrangements put in place in 1984 in recognition of the special relationship between the Crees and Canada flowing from Section 9 of the JBNQA. It is the result of an out-of-court settlement of 1988, and it has been subject to a 2004 judicial mediation between Canada and the Crees.

Concurrently with the signing of the Cree Nation Governance Agreement, the Crees and Canada have renewed the Operations and Maintenance Agreement, along with the companion Capital Grants Agreement, for the period from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2028. The Crees and Canada are currently negotiating the renewal of these Agreements for the period beyond April 1, 2028.

LAND REGISTRY SYSTEM

The current Land Registry System for Category IA lands was first created in 1984 under the *Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act*. In 2017, the provisions related to the Land Registry System were incorporated into the Cree Nation Governance Agreement without any substantive change. Consequently, these provisions, and the Land Registry System itself, have remained essentially unchanged since 1984, and are well overdue for modernization.

Cree and federal representatives have established a technical Table to explore options to modernize the current Land Registry System and to make it more efficient, accessible, reliable and easier to use, particularly to facilitate the development of a private housing market in the Cree communities. Cree and federal representatives continue to hold discussions and to explore short- and longer-term solutions.

CREE NATION HOUSING STRATEGY

During the past year, the Cree Nation Government has continued to work collaboratively with the Cree communities to implement the various components of the Cree Nation Housing Strategy, particularly the social and private housing programs. The Cree Nation Housing Strategy offers very significant potential for unlocking wealth for Cree individuals and for stimulating the economies of the Cree communities while, at the same time, creating employment and solving a number of persistent social issues related to overcrowded housing.

Social Housing Program

Since 2021, the Cree Nation Government has successfully negotiated funding from the Government of Canada, which represents a very significant federal investment in the Cree

The Cree Nation Housing Strategy offers very significant potential for unlocking wealth for Cree individuals and for stimulating the economies of the Cree communities while, at the same time, creating employment and solving a number of persistent social issues related to overcrowded housing.

Nation Housing Strategy. Combined with other sources of funding and efforts, this investment offers the potential to address current needs for social housing in the Cree communities.

A significant portion of this funding is intended to enable the Cree communities to build at least 750 new social housing units for low-income Cree individuals and families without having to incur new debt. The Cree communities are required to build these new social housing units in accordance with the Community Social Housing Program, which the Cree Nation Government developed in collaboration with the Cree communities and approved in March 2022.

In March 2023, the Cree Nation Government approved a multi-year plan to support the operation and maintenance and capacity needs for the new 750 social housing units to be built over the next five years. It also approved a multi-year housing renovation plan to support the renovation of existing social housing units in the Cree communities.

The Cree communities remain on track to build their respective shares of the new social housing units by 2028, without incurring any substantial debt.

Private Housing Program

In May 2020, the Cree Nation Government established the Private Housing Program. Under this Program, the Cree Nation Government can provide subsidies to eligible Cree individuals who wish to build a new home in accordance with the terms and conditions of that Program. To be eligible to receive a subsidy, the applicant must, among other things, meet the relevant credit criteria, as determined by a financial institution, and provide, among other things, a commitment letter from a financial institution to provide a “mortgage loan” for the balance of funding required to build the house.

So far, certain financial institutions have agreed to provide long-term mortgage loans for Cree applicants to purchase a new home in the Cree communities, but only once the house is fully built and appraised but not financing for the construction of the house. The Cree Nation Government continues to pursue discussions with financial institutions to find long-term solutions and to ensure that they provide Crees with comparable financial products and benefits as elsewhere in Quebec.

In the meantime, the Cree Nation Government has put in place interim measures to ensure the viability of the Private Housing Program and to help those who have already started the process of building their own homes. As part of these interim measures, the Cree Nation Government has approved a “construction loan” program to support Cree individuals who wish to build their own private home in a Cree community and who need a “bridge loan” until they can secure a mortgage loan for the long-term financing of their new home. This program is intended to complement

the Private Housing Program and to encourage more Cree individuals to build their home in the Cree communities.

Last year, the Cree Nation Government undertook a comprehensive assessment of the Private Housing Program to expand housing solutions, in consultation and collaboration with the Cree communities, and taking into account requests from Cree Chiefs and Cree Nation members and input from Cree communities’ senior management.

MOCREEBEC AND WASHAW SIBI

Cree and federal representatives continue to pursue exploratory discussions on MoCreebec, in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with Canada in 2022. Cree representatives have explained to federal officials that the MoCreebec issue is very unique. It is an outstanding issue which requires a pragmatic approach and creative and practical solutions that will most likely be outside existing federal policies. In parallel, the Cree Nation Government is committed to building and maintaining a positive relationship with the Moose Cree First Nation, and to exploring options for MoCreebec that may present opportunities and benefits for all parties and neighbouring communities. Washaw Sibi requires a different approach given its unique context.

AMENDMENT OF SECTION 22 JBNQA – ENVIRONMENT

Cree and federal representatives have continued discussions to amend Section 22 of the JBNQA, as a way of implementing the 2010 *Moses* decision of the Supreme Court of Canada. This decision calls for special Cree participation in the “external” federal assessments of projects in the JBNQA Territory carried out pursuant to the federal *Impact Assessment Act*, as well as the requirement for the “internal” treaty process to be carried out before the federal *Impact Assessment Act* process. These discussions are based on a memorandum of understanding concluded with Canada in February 2022, and several agreements concluded with Canada for specific mining projects, enabling the creation of joint assessment committees with equal membership from the Cree Nation and Canada.

The Crees and Canada have worked together on proposed amendments to Section 22 of the JBNQA. So far, the proposed amendments only deal with Cree participation in the external process. Prior to the federal election in April 2025, the parties concluded a “Consensus between Negotiators Agreement”, to indicate their agreement in principle on a preliminary text of a complementary agreement to amend Section 22 of the JBNQA, which remains however subject to possible changes following further reviews and consultations, including with Quebec.

The Cree Nation Government has indicated to Canada that additional discussions are required with respect to the proposed amendments to Section 22 of the JBNQA in order to



Photo: Brendan Forward

deal with the requirement for the internal JBNQA process to be carried out before the federal external *Impact Assessment Act* process and to deal with the problems stemming from Canada's timelines under the *Impact Assessment Act*.

Cree and federal representatives have also discussed the impacts in Eeyou Istchee of Bill C-5 (the *One Canadian Economy Act*, which includes the *Building Canada Act*). This new legislation is intended to advance projects of national importance by streamlining federal regulatory and environmental requirements and approval times. Cree representatives have made it clear that Bill C-5 cannot have the effect of circumventing the JBNQA processes for projects in the JBNQA Territory.

EEYOU MARINE REGION LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENT

General Context

On July 7, 2010, the Government of Canada and the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) entered into the Agreement concerning the Eeyou Marine Region ("EMR Agreement"), which was approved, given effect and declared valid on February 15, 2012 by the *Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement Act*.

Renewal of EMR Implementation Plan

To ensure the proper implementation of the EMR Agreement, Canada and the Crees have prepared a detailed Implementation Plan, which was signed in 2010 at the same time as the EMR Agreement. The Implementation Plan contains, among other things, the levels of implementation funding required from Canada during the first ten-year planning period to support the operations of the three Boards established under the EMR Agreement, the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board, the Eeyou Marine Region Planning Commission and the Eeyou Marine Region Impact Review Board. Cree and federal representatives have been pursuing bilateral discussions to renew the Implementation Plan for a subsequent ten-year planning period (2026-2036). Discussions are well advanced and the parties are expected to reach agreement on a renewed Implementation Plan and increased funding levels for the EMR Boards in the very near future.

Wiinipaakw National Marine Conservation Area

For many years, the Cree Nation Government has been working in collaboration with the Parks Canada Agency to explore the feasibility of establishing a National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) in the Eeyou Marine Region. In July 2024, Canada and the Crees signed a memorandum of understanding and committed to work towards the establishment of the Wiinipaakw as an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) by Cree mechanisms and as an NMCA pursuant to Chapter 6 of the EMR Agreement and relevant federal legislation. The Wiinipaakw IPA-NMCA will initially follow the boundaries of the Eeyou Marine Region south of the mouth of the Chisasibi – Great River but will exclude all Cree Lands which will remain under Cree ownership. The

Wiinipaakw IPA-NMCA was announced as a key initiative in Canada's new \$3.8 billion Nature Strategy unveiled by Prime Minister Mark Carney on March 31, 2026. It was highlighted as a priority area in Canada's plan to protect 30% of land and water by 2030. The Wiinipaakw IPA-NMCA will contribute to efforts by the Crees to preserve our culture, reclaim our traditional place names, provide opportunities for land- and sea-based healing, pass on language and culture to future generations, and acknowledge that the Crees are the primary stewards of our traditional territories.

The Wiinipaakw IPA-NMCA will be formally established by federal legislation. In the meantime, Canada and the Crees are expected to sign a proposed protected area impact and benefit agreement, based on an agreement-in-principle concluded in the summer of 2025, and consistent with the requirements of the EMR Agreement.

COMMISSIONER OF MODERN TREATY IMPLEMENTATION

As part of implementing its new Modern Treaty Implementation Policy, Canada has developed legislation to create an independent Commissioner of Modern Treaty Implementation. The independent Commissioner will report directly to Parliament and will act as an oversight mechanism to hold the federal government accountable for federal implementation of modern treaties. The Commissioner will have full independence to undertake reviews and performance audits of any activity carried out by the Government of Canada that relates to the implementation of modern treaties and their related self-government agreements. The proposed Commissioner will not affect existing bilateral mechanisms for Cree-Canada relations, such as the Standing Liaison Committee, and it will complement, rather than replace or duplicate, the mandate of the Cree-Naskapi Commission and other existing mechanisms or processes.

On October 10, 2024, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations introduced in Parliament Bill C-77, *An Act respecting the Commissioner for Modern Treaty Implementation*. The Bill died when Parliament was dissolved to initiate the federal election in March 2025. However, it was reintroduced in Parliament on September 25 as Bill C-10 with essentially the same content as the previous Bill C-77.

LAND DESCRIPTION AND RECONFIGURATION

Cree, federal and Quebec representatives have established various tables to address land issues, including:

- a table to determine the final land descriptions of Cree Categories I and II lands with a view to incorporating such final descriptions into the JBNQA and related legislation;
- three (3) separate tables pursuant to section 4.18 of the *Paix des Braves* for the reconfiguration of the Category I lands of Waskaganish, Waswanipi and Nemaska following the abandonment of the Nottaway, Broadback, Rupert (N.B.R.) Complex; the table for Waskaganish also deals with enclaves in that community;

- a table for the Eastmain Former Mission Lands and possibility other land issues;
- issues related to the Chisasibi 500 foot corridor have been referred to the Cree-Québec Standing Liaison Committee.

The intention is for final territorial descriptions of the Cree Category I lands to be given effect through changes to Section 4 of the JBNQA and related legislation. The most recent developments relate to Waswanipi, Waskaganish, Eastmain and Nemaska.

Waswanipi

In January 2026, Cree, federal and Quebec representatives signed the Waswanipi Reconfiguration Agreement, which had been in preparation for many years. The Parties are now working on its implementation, for certain parcels of land to be recategorized, in accordance with the plan of agreement for the Waswanipi Reconfiguration. The plan of agreement was signed by the Waswanipi Cree First Nation, the Waswanipi Landholding Corporation, the Cree Nation Government, Quebec and Canada in January and February of 2024.

The implementation of the Waswanipi Reconfiguration Agreement is carried out by an implementation committee formed by all parties to the agreement, and requires, among other things, environmental assessments, land surveys and management of land rights.

A transitional agreement was signed during the 2022-2023 financial year in order to secure the opening of a new waste management site and infrastructure adjacent to the community of Waswanipi. The site would eventually be located in Category IA lands, once the reconfiguration is completed. In addition, steps have been taken with Quebec and Canada to prioritize the reconfiguration of a small parcel of lands located in front of the community, identified as Block A12.

Waskaganish

Representatives of Waskaganish, the Cree Nation Government, Québec and Canada are working on a reconfiguration plan to recategorize the Category IA land of Waskaganish in a manner that better meets the needs of the community. Discussions are ongoing and progressing at a reasonable pace. The Waskaganish reconfiguration discussions have provided the opportunity for the parties to normalize various areas (enclaves) such as the so-called “Roman Catholic Mission Lands” and the “Maloney-Watt Lands”.

In June 2023, the situation of the “Roman Catholic Mission Lands” was normalized through the execution of a deed of transfer between Waskaganish and the Amos Diocese. This was followed by an Agreement between Cree Entities which occupy the land, and by discussions with Quebec and Canada with a view to designate various enclaves as Category IA lands.

In May 2024, a deed of transfer was signed with respect to the “Maloney-Watt Lands”. However, Quebec informed the Cree parties of possible uncertainties related to the validity of the title of such lands and suggested that non-contentious proceedings be undertaken to normalize such title. Waskaganish and the Cree Nation Government undertook such proceedings, in October 2025, the Superior Court of Quebec granted the application and declared the Crees of the Waskaganish First Nation to be the owners of the Maloney-Watt Lands by acquisitive prescription, confirming that their title of ownership resulting from the transfer deed signed on May 27, 2024 constitutes a valid title of ownership.

In February 2026, Cree, federal and Quebec representatives signed the Agreement on Certain Waskaganish Lands, with respect to the enclaves to become Category IA lands. The parties are now working on its implementation through a committee, including environmental assessments, land surveys and management of land rights.

The Waskaganish reconfiguration also provides the opportunity to address the issue of the so-called “Hudson’s Bay Lands”, now partially occupied by the North-West Company and their Northern Store. Discussions concern the designation of these lands as Category IA lands.

Eastmain

Eastmain is in the process of addressing so-called “Roman Catholic Mission Lands” and so-called “Hudson’s Bay Lands”. As a first step, the “Roman Catholic Mission Lands” were transferred by the Diocese of Amos to Eastmain through a Deed of Transfer signed in August 2024. In parallel, the Cree Nation Government, Eastmain, Quebec and Canada have completed the negotiations of an agreement to designate the former “Roman Catholic Mission Lands” as Category IA lands. Such agreement is ready for approval by all the Parties. However, the change in Québec’s leadership in the spring of 2026 has delayed the signature of the agreement. Eastmain has requested the establishment of a table to discuss the possible reconfiguration of its community lands.

Nemaska

Nemaska is in the process of evaluating potential reconfiguration scenarios for its Category I lands. A table has been established, with representatives of Canada and Québec.



CREE-QUÉBEC RELATIONS



CONTEXT

Just over fifty years ago, on November 11, 1975, the Cree, the Inuit, Québec and Canada signed the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* (JBNQA). It was, and remains, a landmark, as the first modern Indigenous treaty and land claim settlement agreement in Canada and Quebec. It expresses a generous vision of partnership in governance and development between the original people of Eeyou Istchee, the Eeyou/Eenou, and Quebec. With this treaty, the Cree accepted to share a place in Eeyou Istchee for Quebec, whose presence there was relatively recent.

At the time, the Cree made a strategic decision to work primarily with Quebec in areas of its constitutional jurisdiction, including lands and resources, local and regional government, health and education, justice and police, environmental protection, and hunting, fishing and trapping. In doing so, the Cree helped to consolidate Quebec's presence in Eeyou Istchee through a partnership in governance and development.

The JBNQA was not just a transaction. The Cree saw it as the beginning of a relationship with Quebec, a true partnership based on mutual respect and collaboration. Over the first 25 years following the signature of the JBNQA, this vision was more often frustrated than fulfilled, largely due to lack of implementation of the JBNQA treaty promises. Relations between the Cree and Québec deteriorated to an impasse by the end of the century.

Then, in 2002, the Cree and Québec recommitted to their partnership with the *Cree-Quebec New Relationship Agreement*, often called the *Paix des Braves*. This Agreement boldly restated the vision of partnership of the JBNQA. It committed the parties to work together to promote greater autonomy and responsibility for the Cree in their own development within Québec. The *Paix des Braves* marked a turning point in Cree-Quebec relations, for the better. It embodied the spirit of reconciliation, long before that term gained wider use.

The focus of the *Paix des Braves* is development. Several chapters are devoted to partnership between the Cree and Québec in the development of the forestry, energy and mining resources of Eeyou Istchee. The Cree assumed certain of Québec's JBNQA responsibilities for community and economic development. The Agreement settled many long-standing legal proceedings. And it created an innovative, high-level body, the Standing Liaison Committee, to strengthen political, economic and social relations between Québec and the Cree.

The *Paix des Braves* was followed ten years later by the *Cree-Québec Governance Agreement*. As its title suggests, its focus is the governance of the vast Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory. It ended the exclusion of the Cree from governance of their ancestral territory. And it created a new and innovative partnership between the Cree, the Jamesians and Quebec in regional governance.



BILL 1, QUÉBEC CONSTITUTION ACT, 2025

On October 9, 2025, the Minister of Justice of Quebec, Simon Jolin-Barrette, tabled in the National Assembly Bill 1, the *Québec Constitution Act, 2025*. The explanatory notes of Bill 1 summarize its purpose:

This bill enacts the *Constitution of Québec*, the *Act respecting the constitutional autonomy of Québec* and the *Act respecting the Conseil constitutionnel*. In addition, it amends the *Constitution Act, 1867* and various Acts of Québec.

The *Constitution of Québec*, which states its primacy over any inconsistent rule of law, defines the Québec nation and establishes its attributes and collective rights. The system for the protection of human rights and freedoms and the fundamental language rights form part of the Constitution. The Constitution determines the founding principles of the national State of Québec and its fundamental responsibilities relating to, among other things, the nation's attributes and collective rights as well as Québec's distinct social values, including equality of women and men. The Constitution identifies the holders of the legislative, executive and judicial powers as well as their functions and duties. Lastly, it reiterates the principles that are to guide the actions of the State in external affairs.

The *Act respecting the constitutional autonomy of Québec* mainly establishes the policy directions for parliamentary and government action as it relates to the constitutional autonomy of Québec. [...] It forbids certain bodies from using public funds to contest certain Acts which state that they protect the Québec nation as well as the constitutional autonomy and fundamental characteristics of Québec. [...] It also specifies that the Minister Responsible for Canadian Relations and Constitutional Affairs may issue directives to government departments and bodies relating

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Photo: Brendan Forward

to usage and practice in the conduct of Canadian relations. In addition, that Act allows the Government to make a directive regarding the preservation of the constitutional autonomy of Québec, applicable to government departments and bodies, in particular to counter the encroachments of the federal State on Québec's jurisdiction. Moreover, that Act sets out provisions regarding the territorial integrity of Québec [...].

Bill 1 gave rise to controversy on the part of Indigenous peoples, civil society, cultural communities, human rights organizations and professional bodies, including the Barreau du Québec representing the lawyers practising in Quebec. Among the concerns expressed by opponents were that the proposed Constitution and related laws would fundamentally weaken the rule of law and the protection of minority rights.

Given this reaction, the Government of Quebec established special consultations and public hearings on Bill 1 and invited interested parties to submit briefs. Dozens of interveners did so and appeared before the National Assembly Committee on Institutions, which held hearings between December 4, 2025 and February 18, 2026.

The Grand Council / Cree Nation Government submitted a brief outlining certain key concerns of the Cree Nation regarding Bill 1, including that:

- It is dismissive of the rights of Indigenous peoples, in particular, those of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee, relegating the recognition of these rights to the unenforceable preamble rather than including it in the operative provisions;
- It reverses the historical progress made by Quebec over the past 50 years towards reconciliation with the Indigenous peoples of Quebec, including the Cree Nation;
- It fails to protect the rights of minorities vis-à-vis the majority;
- It weakens the rule of law by removing certain laws of Quebec from review by the courts;
- It weakens access to the courts by prohibiting the use of public funds by certain bodies to contest certain laws of Quebec that state that they protect the Quebec nation;
- It imposes a model of integration into the "Quebec nation" of "cultural minorities", presumably including Indigenous peoples, calling to mind the discredited historical policy of forced assimilation;
- It purports to protect the territorial integrity of Quebec, based on the notion that "the territory of Quebec is the historical homeland of the nation", disregarding the



Photo: Brendan Forward

relatively recent presence of Quebec in Eeyou Istchee and its dependence on the terms of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* treaty.

On February 12, 2026, Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch, accompanied by the Chiefs of the Cree First Nations, appeared before the Committee on Institutions of the National Assembly. He emphasized some of the main concerns of the Cree Nation regarding Bill 1:

- It was developed by Quebec in isolation, without meaningful consultation of the Cree Nation and other Indigenous nations;
- Its assertion that Eeyou Istchee forms part of the historical homeland of the Quebec nation is at odds with historical reality;
- It represents a major step backward from the positive relationship built over the past 50 years between Quebec and the Cree;
- It disregards the great cost paid by the Cree to advance this relationship, including the environmental impacts of major energy, mining and forestry developments;
- Its purported precedence over all inconsistent laws is contrary to the provisions of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* treaty, and to the power of the Cree First Nations to enact laws;
- It disregards the division of powers between Quebec, Canada and the Cree under the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* treaty;
- Its integration model disregards the painful legacy of the past forced assimilation of Indigenous peoples, including the Cree of Eeyou Istchee;
- It would interfere with the treaty right of the Cree to work with the governments of Canada under the JBNQA treaty;
- It would restrict access to the courts, not just for Indigenous peoples, but for the entire population of Quebec;
- Rather than uniting Quebec society, it would cause division and polarization;
- It is incompatible with the letter and spirit of section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* recognizing and affirming the aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada, including the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee.

The Grand Chief ended his remarks by expressing the willingness of the Cree Nation to engage with Quebec in co-developing a draft Constitution. This exercise must be carried out in partnership with the stakeholders, including other Indigenous nations, women, immigrants and other minorities.

CREE-QUEBEC STANDING LIAISON COMMITTEE

The Cree-Quebec Standing Liaison Committee established by the *Paix des Braves* serves as the clearing house for relations between the Cree and Quebec. It provides a forum to resolve potential difficulties as they arise, and helps to strengthen relations between the Cree and Quebec. The Cree representatives are Anthony MacLeod, Executive Director, Melissa Saganash, Deputy Executive Director, and

Tina Petawabano, Director, Government Relations.

Patrick Lahaie serves as Associate Secretary General of the Secretariat for Relations with the First Nations and the Inuit (SRPNI). Me Marie-José Thomas, State Administrator, has a long track record in Cree-Quebec relations. She is responsible for Strategic Projects and reports directly to the Secretary General of the Council of Ministers.

Over and above specific issues, the overarching mission of the Standing Liaison Committee, expressed in the *Paix des Braves*, is to strengthen political, economic and social relations between Quebec and the Cree. This mission is informed by the common desire of the Cree and Quebec to continue the development of Eeyou Istchee while ensuring that the Cree continue to benefit from their cultural heritage, their language and their traditional way of life.

CREE – QUEBEC GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT (2012)

Implementation continues for the *Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory* signed with Quebec on July 24, 2012 (“**Governance Agreement**”).

Cree Nation Government

The Cree Nation Government is intensifying efforts to implement its governance functions on Category II lands and is adjusting its organizational and human resources in light of these responsibilities. In consultation with the Cree First Nations and other Cree stakeholders, the Cree Nation Government continues to put in place the structures, personnel and processes needed to assume its governance responsibilities and to enable Cree leaders to assume their functions under the *Governance Agreement* both on the Cree Nation Government and on the Regional Government.

The Land Use Planning Unit of the Cree Nation Government Department of Environment and Remedial Works is advancing the work on land and resource use planning for Category II lands. This work includes consultation with the Cree communities on draft policies, principles and objectives, which will be submitted to the Cree Nation Government for approval.

The *Governance Agreement* provides for a special collaborative process between Quebec and the Cree Nation Government for the development by Quebec of a Public Land Use Plan (PATP) proposed for Category II and III lands. The PATP sets out the Government’s orientations for the use and protection of public land.

The Cree Nation Government has submitted detailed comments and proposed amendments to Quebec regarding its proposed PATP for Category II and III lands. The comments of the Cree Nation Government have been received positively by Quebec.

Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government

The primary mission of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government under the *Governance Agreement* is to

serve as a partnership between the Cree and Jamesians in the governance and development of Category III lands. To meet this objective, the Regional Government has jurisdiction over municipal management, regional development and land and resource use planning on Category III lands.

Officials of the Cree Nation Government, under the direction of the Grand Chief, the Executive Director and the Director of Government Relations, are working with officials of the Regional Government to clarify its roles and responsibilities under the *Governance Agreement* for governance and regional development on Category III lands. This exercise takes into account the respective responsibilities of the Cree Nation Government on Category II lands and of the James Bay Regional Administration with respect to the Jamesians.

This clarification has taken on increased importance due to two factors. The first is the requirement in section 85 of the *Governance Agreement* for the review of the representation and voting rights on the Council of the Regional Government, discussed below. The second factor is the growing role of the Cree Nation in shaping future development in Eeyou Istchee.

Both factors emphasize the need to strengthen communications and collaboration between the Cree and Jamesian partners in the Regional Government with a view to raising awareness of the benefits of the partnership for both populations.

Funding

Funding for the Cree Nation Government in relation to the *Governance Agreement* is addressed in paragraph 11.3.17 of the JBNQA and in section 73 of the *Governance Agreement*. These provisions state that Quebec shall fund the Cree Nation Government in accordance with five-year funding agreements. The first five-year funding agreement, for the period from April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2018, is set out in Chapter VI of the *Governance Agreement*. In accordance with section 164 of the *Governance Agreement*, the funding provided to the Cree Nation Government in financial year 2017-2018 was renewed for the subsequent financial year 2018-2019.

The Cree Nation Government and Quebec had intended to enter into a five-year funding agreement, for the period from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2024, but were unable to do so within the time limits provided. They therefore decided, on an exceptional basis, to enter into three Funding Agreements, the first for financial year 2019-2020, concluded on March 27, 2020, the second for financial years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, concluded on March 30, 2021, and the third for financial year 2022-2023, concluded on March 30, 2022.

On March 25, 2024, the Cree Nation Government and Quebec concluded the *Funding Agreement for the Financial Years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 concerning the Agreement on Governance in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory*. The Agreement provided for annual payments of \$5 million from Quebec to the Cree Nation Government for the financial

years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025. The Cree Nation Government may allocate the funding as it deems appropriate to the different components attributed to the Cree Nation Government in Chapter VI of the *Governance Agreement*. The Funding Agreement for the next five-year period has been renewed until the 2029-2030 period.

Review

The *Governance Agreement* provides that its implementation will be reviewed after five years of its coming into force on July 24, 2012. Since work focussed on setting up the institutions and processes necessary to implement the *Governance Agreement*, the first five-year review has not yet been carried out.

In the Funding Agreements concluded on March 30, 2021 and March 30, 2023, the Cree and Quebec undertook to initiate discussions as soon as possible, in accordance with sections 203 and 204 of the *Governance Agreement* concerning the review of its implementation, in particular on the following subjects:

- (a) Representation and the distribution of votes on the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government in accordance with section 85 of the *Governance Agreement* and section 37 of the *Act establishing the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government* (chapter G-1.04);
- (b) Sections 44 and 45 relating to energy on Category II lands;
- (c) Planning processes on Category II and III lands, taking into account the evolution of programs and the current context and other related questions;
- (d) Other implementation issues.

This review is pending in view of certain preparatory orientation work to be carried out with Cree and Jamesian representatives.

CHARTER OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE (BILL 96)

In May 2021, the Government of Quebec tabled in the National Assembly Bill 96, *An Act respecting French, the official and common language of Québec* (now Law 14). The stated purpose of the Bill was to affirm that the only official language of Quebec is French. It also affirms that French is the common language of the Quebec nation. To that end, the Bill makes several amendments to the *Charter of the French language*.

As indicated in previous annual reports, former Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty, in consultation with the Chairs of the Cree School Board and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services, advised the responsible Quebec authorities of certain serious concerns of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee related to Law 14.

These concerns centre on the conditions of priority access of Cree students to English-language colleges in Quebec, the requirement for three additional college French-language courses, and the requirement to pass a French proficiency exam in order to obtain the Diploma of College Studies. Concerns also exist regarding the administration

of justice adapted to Cree culture, language and way of life pursuant to Section 18 of the JBNQA.

Quebec has adopted a regulatory exemption for certain Indigenous students from the French proficiency exam required to graduate from Cegep. However, this exemption from the French proficiency exam would not exempt Cree students from the other two requirements. These are the requirements for (a) a certificate of eligibility for English-language instruction as condition for priority access to English-language Cegeps, and (b) three additional French courses at Cegep. This exemption appears to be a positive first step towards resolving the remaining two issues for Cree students regarding English-language Cegeps.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

For an overview of the services and organization of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB), please consult its most recent annual report available online.

Legislative Review

The CBHSSJB is continuing the process to revise, in close consultation with the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) / Cree Nation Government, its governing legislation, the *Act respecting health and social services for Cree Native persons* (**Chapter S-5**).

An important objective is to ensure that the CBHSSJB's governing statute reflects its character as an institution of service delivery to the Cree Nation in health and social services as contemplated in Section 14 JBNQA. The review is also intended to modernize the Act, taking account of developments in the general health and social service legislation over the past 35 years.

As this legislative review affects Cree Nation treaty rights under Section 14 JBNQA, the CBHSSJB is coordinating its work with the office of the Grand Chief / Chairman of the Grand Council of the Cree's (Eeyou Istchee) / Cree Nation Government. Chairperson Jeannie Pelletier has assumed leadership for the CBHSSJB of this initiative, with the support of Executive Director (Interim) Christina Biron, negotiator Abel Bosum, Cree Nation Government representative Melissa Saganash, and a negotiation team.

Further to the commitment made by former Health Minister Christian Dubé in 2024, the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MSSS), the CBHSSJB and the Grand Council of the Cree's (Eeyou Istchee) / Cree Nation Government have been carrying on discussions with a view to revising Chapter S-5. Discussions with Quebec are expected to continue to advance significantly in 2026-2027.

Funding Framework

The Cree possess important treaty rights to funding from Quebec for health and social services under Section 14 of the JBNQA. The first *Cree-Quebec Health Agreement* and the related *Funding Framework* were concluded in March 2005 pursuant to the *Paix des Braves* as an out-of-

The CBHSSJB is continuing the process to revise, in close consultation with the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) / Cree Nation Government, its governing legislation, the Act respecting health and social services for Cree Native persons (Chapter S-5).

court settlement of outstanding Cree claims regarding health and social services in the *Matthew Coon Come* legal proceedings. Since then, the Agreement and the Funding Framework have been renewed several times, usually for five-year periods.

The last such five-year Health Agreement and Funding Framework covered the period 2019-2024. The CBHSSJB is now working with MSSS to renew this Agreement and Funding Framework for the next multi-year period. As important Cree treaty rights under Section 14 of the JBNQA are involved, the Cree Nation Government is participating in the negotiations.

In light of the current fiscal context, market conditions and internal capacity, the CBHSSJB has recently proposed a four-year term for the Agreement and Funding Framework to cover the years 2026-2027 to 2030-2031. Pending the conclusion of this Agreement, the Government of Quebec continues to provide operational funding to the CBHSSJB.

This 2019-2024 Agreement provided significant new recurrent development funding to further improve the services offered to the Cree communities of Eeyou Istchee, including specialist services such as gynecology and obstetrics, oncology and mental health. The development of these services in Eeyou Istchee is intended to reduce the need for Cree to travel to the south.

The 2019-2024 Funding Framework also provided capital funding for the construction of new health and social services facilities, including the new Regional Health Centre in Chisasibi as well as birthing centres, seniors' centres, respite resources for the elderly, and mental health resources in the Cree communities. It also provided funding for information technology assets.

This Agreement and Funding Framework provided the CBHSSJB with the tools to implement the priorities identified in consultations with the Cree communities and clients and set out in the Strategic Regional Plan.

In the spring of 2024, the CBHSSJB presented its new Strategic Regional Plan for 2023-2030 to the MSSS. The new Plan identifies key strategic orientations and objectives to guide the CBHSSJB in the coming years. It includes measures under four main themes:

1. **Cree Culture:** increase land-based healing activities, Cree cultural safety, Cree representation in management and nursing;
2. **Health and Wellbeing:** increase partnerships with Cree entities, screening tests, vaccination, health promotion and prevention and suicide prevention;
3. **Access and Quality:** minimize out-of-territory stays, ensure access to care and service to elders, increase access to home care services, ensure services to youth and children, increase access to mental health services, increase access to respite services, improve care for individuals with diabetes, improve satisfaction with services, increase access to specialized services and to primary care services;

4. **Nurture and Grow:** Increase employee retention, ensure financial sustainability, increase digital transformation, enhance employee development through training, enhance employee wellness, increase the number of indigenous people employed by the Board and complete capital projects.

The Strategic Regional Plan will inform discussions with the Government of Quebec on the next Health Agreement and Funding Framework.

EDUCATION

Legislative Review

The Cree School Board has undertaken a review of its governing legislation, the *Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons* insofar as this Act applies to the Cree and the Cree School Board. This Act has remained essentially unchanged in regard to the Cree since 1978, and a modernization of its provisions in regard to the Cree and the Cree School Board is overdue.

An important objective is to ensure that the Board's governing legislation better reflects the Cree School Board as a specifically Cree educational institution, responsible for balancing Cree culture, language and way of life with academic and technical instruction to equip Cree students to pursue post-secondary studies or training if they wish.

This legislative review affects Cree Nation treaty rights under Section 16 JBNQA. The Cree School Board is therefore coordinating its work with the office of the Grand Chief / Chairman of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) / Cree Nation Government. Chairperson Dr. Sarah Pashagumskum has assumed leadership for the Cree School Board of this initiative, with the support of Director General Caroline Mark and senior managers, negotiator Abel Bosum, Cree Nation Government representative Melissa Saganash, and a negotiation team.

A Special Joint Table has been established with Quebec to review the modernization of the Cree School Board's governing legislation. The Special Joint Table met less frequently last year than in previous years. This was due to, among other things, the resignation of the previous Grand Chief in the spring of 2025, the election of the new Grand Chief in the summer of 2026, and the need to review Cree Nation orientations in certain major files, including this legislative review. Other contributing factors were the resignation of François Legault, the Premier of Quebec, and his replacement by Christine Fréchette as Premier, as well as the designation of a new responsible Assistant Deputy Minister, Mme Nadine Peterson, at the Ministry of Education of Quebec (MEQ).

The Cree School Board has developed and tabled with Quebec a proposed Agreement on a new *Education Act for the Crees*. The Agreement is intended to be signed by Quebec, and the Crees as represented by the Cree Nation Government and the Cree School Board. The Agreement would commit Quebec to table in the National Assembly

a new *Education Act for the Crees*, substantially in the form appended to the Agreement, in order to replace the existing legislative framework of the Cree School Board. The Agreement would also commit the Crees and Quebec to negotiate a complementary agreement to amend Section 16 of the JBNQA to ensure its consistency with the new Education Act for the Crees.

The new *Education Act for the Crees* would essentially build on existing structures, processes, guarantees and relations with Quebec and Canada as currently set out in Section 16 JBNQA. The new Act would reflect the Board's treaty status and special circumstances. It would recognize greater responsibility and flexibility for the Board in managing its own internal affairs. Among other things, the new Act would bring together changes already agreed to with Quebec or already presented to Quebec officials in the past.

The Grand Chief and the Chairperson of the Cree School Board have met on several occasions over the past months to review and refine the content of the draft Agreement and proposed new Act. They have reached consensus on the matter, setting the stage to advance the file when circumstances permit.

Budgetary Rules

The Cree School Board has been engaged since the fall of 2023 in discussions with MEQ and Crown-Indigenous Relations Canada (CIRNAC) for the renewal of the Budgetary Rules for school years 2024-2025 to 2028-2029. These negotiations are conducted under paragraphs 16.O.22 and 16.O.23 of the JBNQA, which state that the funding to be provided to the Cree School Board shall be in accordance with a formula to be determined by Quebec, Canada and the Crees.

Since the negotiations on the Budgetary Rules of the Cree School Board concern the treaty rights of the entire Cree Nation under the JBNQA, they are conducted jointly by the Cree School Board and the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government.

Discussions on the Budgetary Rules have taken unusually long, in part, for some of the reasons mentioned in the section. Nevertheless, considerable progress has been made, and most issues have been resolved. It is expected that the remaining issues will be resolved relatively quickly.

An important innovation of the new Budgetary Rules is the inclusion of funding for the "Differential Financial Framework". This Framework was agreed with MEQ and the Quebec Treasury Board pursuant to paragraph 16.O.37 of the JBNQA and the *Agreement concerning the Management Negotiating Committee of the Cree School Board* (CPNCSC Protocol). It provides special administrative premiums to the unionized personnel of the Cree School Board.

ECONOMIC SECURITY PROGRAM FOR CREE HUNTERS AND TRAPPERS

It has been agreed with Quebec to establish a negotiating table with representatives of the Ministry of Labour, which is responsible for the administration of the Economic Security Program for Cree Hunters and Trappers provided for in Section 30 of the JBNQA. The negotiations would address two potential questions. The first relates to raising the cap on the total number of remunerated person-days, and hence the maximum amount payable, under the Economic Security Program under the JBNQA.



Photo: Katherine Dehm

Hydro-Québec
has expressed
interest in
partnering with
the Cree in order
to develop up
to 6,500 MW of
wind power in
Eeyou Istchee.
This would be
among the largest
wind power
developments in
North America.

The second important objective concerns the possibility of entrusting the administration, but not the funding, of the Economic Security Program to the Cree Nation Government. While the program is efficiently administered, an issue exists in that participants are penalized through “clawbacks” of amounts received from programs. Cree administration of the program could be explored as a way to better honour the pursuit of the traditional way of life as a critical element in protecting and maintaining Cree culture, rather than treating it as an alternative welfare program.

CHILDCARE SERVICES

A multi-year *Child Services Agreement* was signed by the Cree and Quebec in 2014, providing a greater governance role for the Cree Nation Government, more delegation of powers from the Ministry of Families and increased, stable funding to account for the Cree context. The increased funding helped to implement northern allowances to attract and retain qualified and competent childcare personnel in Eeyou Istchee.

A seven-year *Cree-Quebec Childcare Agreement* was signed in 2022 for the period of 2019-2026, with a projected value of almost \$140 million. This Agreement continues to build on the previous one, including a further delegation of powers from the Ministry of Families, more regional support for Cree childcare centres and enhanced funding mechanisms for salary increases of Cree childcare personnel.

This Agreement also addresses retroactive salary increases that were an outstanding issue for the previous period and represented an important question of fairness for the Cree Nation Government. The funding mechanisms in the Agreement help to attract and retain qualified and competent childcare personnel for Cree childcare centres, who are so important to the success of these centres.

This Agreement renews for another five-year period as of April 1, 2026, and the parties may agree to modify it at any time, including for changes in the legal framework.

The Ministry of Families and the Cree Nation Government plan to review recent changes to the *Educational Childcare Act* in view of updating the Agreement in 2026-2027. They may also consider other changes to the Agreement at the same time to ensure that the Cree Nation Government can continue to carry out its governance and support role in Eeyou Istchee.

CREE NATION HOUSING STRATEGY

A clear relation exists between housing and economic, social and community development. The Cree Nation Government is now working with the Cree First Nations on the Cree Nation Housing Strategy. This strategy will propose concrete, specific actions to increase the supply and quality of housing in the Cree communities.

In the Winter of 2025, Board/Council has mandated a special working group to develop recommendation for sim-

plification of the Cree Nation Housing programs specifically the reduction of administrative burdens on applicants, the expansion of eligibility, the expansion of types of programs that the private housing fund could be applied to such as but not limited to: Rent to Own, Employer provided, Returning Student, access by “Real Estate Developers”.

The mandate includes the revaluation of the subsidy levels and structure under the Private Housing Program and the development of a communication plan to promote greater understanding and awareness of the housing issue generally in Eeyou Istchee.

CONTRACTING AND TENDERING

The tender and contracting rules imposed under Quebec legislation conflict at times with the Cree priority in contracts and employment provided for in Section 28 of the JBNQA. They also do not take account of the special status and autonomy of the Cree Nation under the JBNQA and of the special northern context of Eeyou Istchee.

The Cree Nation Government and the Government of Quebec have established a special Working Group of Cree representatives and procurement officials of the Quebec Treasury Board to address this matter under the Cree-Quebec Standing Liaison Committee. Its mandate is to develop a proposal to adapt public contracting rules to the realities and needs of the Cree communities, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay and the Cree School Board, taking into account the Cree priority provisions of Section 28 of the JBNQA.

This Working Group has discussed possible means to implement Section 28 of the JBNQA by means of a special contracting regime, with special reference to priority for Cree enterprises and workers in procurement for entities such as the Cree School Board and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services.

Discussions with Treasury Board have been positive; it appears open to Cree prioritization under the draft *Cree Nation Prioritization Agreement* for companies that invest in a Cree community, local human resources and have a real connection to the communities of Eeyou Istchee, regardless of their legal status or structure: corporation, joint venture, partnership and so on.

ENERGY

Hydro-Québec Strategic Action Plan

The Cree Nation Government is following closely the orientations of the Government of Quebec and Hydro-Québec regarding energy development in Northern Quebec, including the effects of energy exports to New England and New York. The Grand Chief maintains direct communications with the CEO of Hydro-Québec, Claudine Bouchard, as well as with the Cree Chiefs and Councils regarding possible strategies on energy development in the context of Hydro-Québec’s ambitious *Action Plan 2035*.

La Grande Upgrades

On January 21, 2024, the Board/Council adopted Resolution 2024-026 to approve the *Ayimihiituunaanuwich* document between the GCC(EI)/CNG and Hydro-Québec to establish a Joint Process to assess the technical, environmental, social and cultural aspects of the potential capacity upgrades for the La Grande Hydroelectric Complex. The *Ayimihiituunaanuwich* was signed by former Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty and Michael Sabia, the CEO of Hydro-Québec, on February 21, 2024.

The *Ayimihiituunaanuwich* process has progressed with the following work:

- (a) The Main Table, which made progress in defining an efficient approach toward regulatory authorization of the proposed Upgrades.
- (b) The Technical Sub-Table has been established with representatives of HydroQuébec, the Cree First Nations of Chisasibi, Wemindji and Mistissini, as well as Niskamoon Corporation. It has met several times, and is working on defining the scope of the technical, environmental and social studies that will inform the regulatory authorization process in due course.
- (c) The Economic Sub-Table has also met and has exchanged certain information to allow the parties to define an economic valuation of the Upgrades. The Cree party is working to develop a position on economic valuation that will be critical for future discussions.

Wind Energy

Hydro-Québec has expressed interest in partnering with the Cree in order to develop up to 6,500 MW of wind power in Eeyou Istchee. This would be among the largest wind power developments in North America. Unlike past, smaller wind power projects, Hydro-Québec would itself act as project proponent and owner, in partnership with the Cree First Nations.

Discussions are still at an early stage on this potential wind power partnership with Hydro-Québec. The Cree First Nations have emphasized the need for thorough consultations with tallymen and land users in order to assess community support for wind power development.

The orientation to be taken regarding discussions with Hydro-Québec on a potential wind power partnership will turn on the results of these community consultations as well as the direction given by the Grand Chief after his election in July 2025.

FORESTRY

Adapted Forestry Regime

As of February 2018, the Cree and Québec signed Amendment No. 6 of the *Paix des Braves* to replace Chapter 3 dealing with the Cree Adapted Forestry Regime, Complementary Agreement No. 25 to amend Section 30A of the JBNQA dealing with the Forestry Regime and a new Confidentiality Agreement to protect Cree traditional knowl-

edge. Complementary Agreement No. 25 came into force in March 2019. Amendment No. 6 to the *Paix des Braves* was published in the *Quebec Official Gazette* on December 11, 2019.

The Cree Nation Government made representations to Quebec in order to ensure that the *Sustainable Forest Development Act* be amended in order to implement Amendment No. 6 of the *Paix des Braves*. Quebec introduced Bill 97 entitled *An Act mainly to modernize the forest regime* on April 23, 2025. It provided that the provisions of Chapter 3 of the *Paix des Braves* prevail over the provisions of the *Sustainable Forest Development Act*. It also provided for a process with respect to fines in cases of breaches, as well as a consultation process regarding a draft regulation related thereto.

On September 10, 2025, the Lieutenant Governor of Quebec prorogued the National Assembly at the request of Premier Legault and convened the National Assembly for reopening on September 30, 2025. As a result, Bill 97 died on the Order Paper. However, on December 4, 2025, Quebec introduced Bill 11, *An Act to amend various provisions for the main purpose of reducing regulatory and administrative burden*.

Bill 11 basically reintroduces the abovementioned provision of Bill 97 and provides that the provisions of Chapter 3 of the *Paix des Braves* prevail over the provisions of the *Sustainable Forest Development Act*, as well as a process with respect to fines in cases of breaches and consultation regarding a draft regulation related thereto. Although the second session of the National Assembly ended, Bill 11 was reintroduced on May 6, 2026 for the third session. It remains to be seen whether or not Bill 11 will be adopted.

Amendment No. 6 also deals with the preparation of Wildlife Habitat Directives guiding the forest development planning process in order to foster the protection of wildlife habitats, which has proved to be a challenge since the signature of the *Paix des Braves*.

Collaborative Forestry Management Regime

The *Cree-Quebec Governance Agreement* provides for the establishment of a collaborative management regime for the forestry resources on the Category II and III lands situated in the territory contemplated by Chapter 3 of the *Paix des Braves*. This regime consists of collaboration between Quebec and the Cree Nation Government in order to develop the integrated forestry management plans.

The *Baril-Moses Resolution Agreement* of 2015 provides for funding by Quebec for the implementation of the Collaborative Forestry Management Regime set out in the *Governance Agreement* over the five years 2016-2017 to 2020-2021. The Agreement also provides for the negotiation of successor agreements regarding funding for implementation of the Collaborative Forestry Management Regime for the five-year period 2021-2026 and then the ten-year period 2026-2036.

In June and July of 2024, the Cree Nation Government and Quebec signed the *Agreement concerning the Implementation of the Forestry Management Collaborative Regime for the Period from April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2028 (Collaborative Regime Agreement)*.

The *Collaborative Regime Agreement* provides, in particular, that it is:

- (a) intended to enable the Cree Nation Government to continue to develop additional capacity in forest planning and management;
- (b) a partnership between the Parties concerning their respective roles, responsibilities and capabilities in forest planning and management.

The *Collaborative Regime Agreement* defines Quebec's financial assistance, implementation mechanisms, roles and responsibilities of the Parties, reporting requirements similar to those of the *Cree-Quebec Governance Agreement* and a process for the negotiation of subsequent agreements.

In parallel with the *Collaborative Regime Agreement*, the Cree Nation Government and Quebec also signed the *Agreement respecting the Provision and Use of Certain Data for the Collaborative Regime on Category II Lands*. This *Data Sharing Agreement* contains various undertakings by the Cree Nation Government to keep certain data confidential. The data contemplated by this Agreement excludes Cree traditional knowledge, which is already protected through an Agreement signed in 2017. The Cree Nation Government Forestry Department will, among other things, carry out the forestry planning and management work.

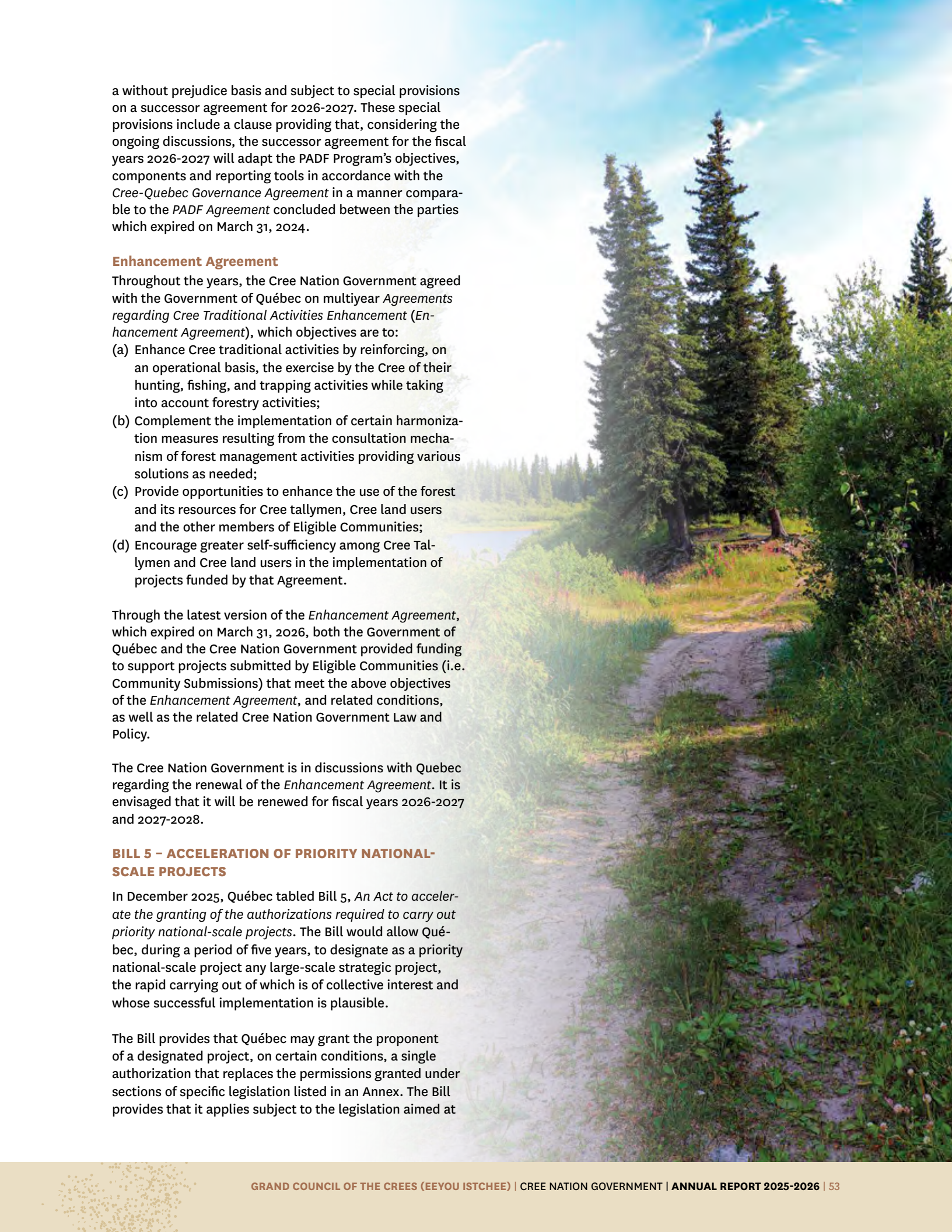
PADF Agreement

The Cree Nation Government and the Minister of Forests, Wildlife and Parks signed in early 2018 the *Delegation Agreement for Management of the Sustainable Forest Development Program of the ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs in the Nord-du-Québec Region (PADF Agreement)* for the period 2015-2018.

The purpose of the 2015-2018 *PADF Agreement* was to delegate to the Cree Nation Government the management of the Sustainable Forest Development Program (PADF Program), and to provide it with related funding. The Cree Nation Government has concluded similar agreements with Quebec for the periods 2018-2021 and 2021-2024.

Discussions were held regarding the conclusion of a PADF Delegation Agreement for the 2024-2025, 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 fiscal years. This Agreement would take into account the provisions of the *Cree-Quebec Governance Agreement* and have the effect of adapting the PADF Program's objectives, components and reporting tools, as provided by Quebec's normative framework. However, the Parties were unable to finalize this three-year Agreement within the time limits provided under the 2021-2024 *PADF Agreement*.

Consequently, it was decided, to conclude two (2) one-year interim *PADF Agreements*, for 2024-2025 and 2025-2026, on



a without prejudice basis and subject to special provisions on a successor agreement for 2026-2027. These special provisions include a clause providing that, considering the ongoing discussions, the successor agreement for the fiscal years 2026-2027 will adapt the PADF Program's objectives, components and reporting tools in accordance with the *Cree-Quebec Governance Agreement* in a manner comparable to the *PADF Agreement* concluded between the parties which expired on March 31, 2024.

Enhancement Agreement

Throughout the years, the Cree Nation Government agreed with the Government of Québec on multiyear *Agreements regarding Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement (Enhancement Agreement)*, which objectives are to:

- (a) Enhance Cree traditional activities by reinforcing, on an operational basis, the exercise by the Cree of their hunting, fishing, and trapping activities while taking into account forestry activities;
- (b) Complement the implementation of certain harmonization measures resulting from the consultation mechanism of forest management activities providing various solutions as needed;
- (c) Provide opportunities to enhance the use of the forest and its resources for Cree tallymen, Cree land users and the other members of Eligible Communities;
- (d) Encourage greater self-sufficiency among Cree Tallymen and Cree land users in the implementation of projects funded by that Agreement.

Through the latest version of the *Enhancement Agreement*, which expired on March 31, 2026, both the Government of Québec and the Cree Nation Government provided funding to support projects submitted by Eligible Communities (i.e. Community Submissions) that meet the above objectives of the *Enhancement Agreement*, and related conditions, as well as the related Cree Nation Government Law and Policy.

The Cree Nation Government is in discussions with Quebec regarding the renewal of the *Enhancement Agreement*. It is envisaged that it will be renewed for fiscal years 2026-2027 and 2027-2028.

BILL 5 - ACCELERATION OF PRIORITY NATIONAL-SCALE PROJECTS

In December 2025, Québec tabled Bill 5, *An Act to accelerate the granting of the authorizations required to carry out priority national-scale projects*. The Bill would allow Québec, during a period of five years, to designate as a priority national-scale project any large-scale strategic project, the rapid carrying out of which is of collective interest and whose successful implementation is plausible.

The Bill provides that Québec may grant the proponent of a designated project, on certain conditions, a single authorization that replaces the permissions granted under sections of specific legislation listed in an Annex. The Bill provides that it applies subject to the legislation aimed at

implementing the JBNQA. The Cree Nation Government is monitoring the status of this tabled bill closely.

EEYOU EENOU POLICE FORCE (EPPF)

Cree-Quebec discussions have taken place during previous fiscal years regarding:

- (a) the renewal of the *Modalities Agreement*, which relates to the EPPF's primary jurisdiction, the level of its police services and hiring requirements of its police officers; and
- (b) certain training components for future officers as well as other issues, such as the provision of Court security.

In 2025, Quebec and the Cree Nation Government agreed to a new recruitment and training pathway in order to ensure that, in addition to the aspiring Cree police officers who obtain a "*patrouille gendarmerie*" (police patrol) diploma from the ENPQ, other aspiring Crees could become police officers through equivalency standards.

In recent years, the Sûreté du Québec has been asked to provide certain services to the Cree communities for the sole purpose of ensuring round-the-clock patrol services, in view of recruitment and retention difficulties. Discussions are also continuing with Québec and Canada regarding capital funding for the period after 2025.

CREE CUSTOMARY ADOPTION AND YOUTH PROTECTION

Following changes to Quebec law to clearly reflect the legal effects of Indigenous customary adoption and guardianship, in January 2019, the Board-Council of the GCC(EI)/Cree Nation Government designated the Cree Nation Government to act as the Cree competent authority to certify certain Cree customary adoptions and guardianships. This is to be done in collaboration with local committees set up by interested Cree First Nations.

In November 2019, the Quebec Registrar of Civil Status included the Cree Nation Government in its register of Indigenous competent authorities. This allows the Cree Nation Government to officialise an existing Cree customary adoption or guardianship, on request, if the relevant local committee has been set up and the adoption or guardianship meets the requirements of the Cree certification process. The Cree Nation Government will collaborate with the CBHSSJB as part of this certification process, including through the assistance of the CBHSSJB Director of Youth Protection.

The Cree Nation Government has finalized the administrative implementation documents, and several Cree communities have now established their local committees. Members of these communities with a local committee who have carried out a Cree customary guardianship or customary adoption may apply to the Cree Nation Government to have the customary guardianship or adoption certified, to make it easier to recognize legal effects, for the benefit of Cree children, families and communities. The Cree Nation

Government continues to make itself available to other communities with a view to allowing their members to have Cree customary adoptions and guardianships certified, if they choose.

LAND RECONFIGURATION AND FINAL DESCRIPTIONS FOR CREE COMMUNITIES

Several tables have been established with Quebec and Canada concerning Cree land issues:

- (a) One table deals with determining the final land descriptions for Cree Category I and II lands with a view to incorporating such final descriptions into the JBNQA and pertinent legislation;
- (b) Three tables were created pursuant to section 4.18 of the *Paix des Braves*, which concerns the reconfiguration of the Category I lands of Waskaganish, Waswanipi and Nemaska following the abandonment of the N.B.R. Complex;
- (c) The Cree-Quebec Standing Liaison Committee is dealing with the Chisasibi 500foot corridor;
- (d) One table is dealing with the Former Mission Lands in Eastmain, and, in the future, possibly other land issues.

Final Land Descriptions

The intention is to revise Section 4 of the JBNQA and other related provisions of the JBNQA in order to incorporate the final territorial descriptions of the Cree Category I lands. The recent focus has been on the land reconfiguration of Waswanipi and Waskaganish, and to some extent, Nemaska, pursuant to section 4.18 of the *Paix des Braves*, as well as Chisasibi and Eastmain. The plan is to finalize some of these land reconfigurations first in order to include them in the final territorial descriptions of Section 4 of the JBNQA.

Waswanipi Reconfiguration

In January 2026, Cree, Canada and Quebec representatives signed the *Waswanipi Reconfiguration Agreement*, which had been in process for many years. The Parties are now working on its implementation, for certain parcels of land to be recategorized, in accordance with the plan of agreement for the Waswanipi Reconfiguration. The plan of agreement was signed by the Waswanipi Cree First Nation, the Waswanipi Landholding Corporation, the Cree Nation Government, Quebec and Canada in January and February of 2024.

The implementation of the *Waswanipi Reconfiguration Agreement* is carried out by an implementation committee formed by all parties to the Agreement, and requires, among other things, environmental assessments, land surveys and management of land rights.

A transitional agreement was signed during fiscal year 2022-2023 in order to secure the opening of a new waste management site and infrastructure adjacent to the community of Waswanipi. The site would eventually be located on Category IA lands, once the reconfiguration is completed. In addition, steps have been taken with Quebec and Canada to prioritize the reconfiguration of a small parcel of lands located in front of the community, identified as Block A12.

Waskaganish Reconfiguration

The Crees of the Waskaganish First Nation, the Cree Nation Government, Quebec and Canada representatives are working on a reconfiguration plan, to recategorize the Category IA land of Waskaganish in a way that better suits the needs of the community. Discussions are ongoing and progressing.

The Waskaganish reconfiguration discussions have provided the opportunity for the parties to regularize various areas (enclaves), such as the so-called “Roman Catholic Mission Lands” and the “Maloney-Watt Lands”.

In June 2023, the situation of the “Roman Catholic Mission Lands” was finally regularized through the execution of a deed of transfer between Waskaganish and the Amos Diocese. This was followed by an Agreement between Cree Entities which occupy the land, and by discussions with Quebec and Canada in order to secure an agreement that the various enclaves will become Category IA lands.

In May 2024, a deed of transfer was also signed with respect to the “Maloney-Watt Lands”. However, Quebec informed the Cree Parties of possible uncertainties related to the validity of the title of such lands and suggested that non-contentious proceedings be undertaken to regularize such title. Waskaganish and the Cree Nation Government therefore undertook these proceedings on April 1, 2025. In October 2025, the Superior Court granted the application and declared the Crees of the Waskaganish First Nation to be the owners of the Maloney Watt Lands by acquisitive prescription, confirming that their title of ownership resulting from the transfer deed signed on May 27, 2024 constitutes a valid title of ownership.

In February 2026, Cree, federal and Quebec representatives signed the *Agreement on Certain Waskaganish Lands*, with respect to the enclaves to become Category IA lands. The Parties are now working on this Agreement’s implementation, carried out by an implementation committee formed by all parties to the Agreement. Implementation requires, among other things, environmental assessments, land surveys and management of land rights.

The Waskaganish reconfiguration also provides the opportunity to address the issue of the so-called “Hudson’s Bay Lands”, now partially occupied by the North West Company and their Northern Store. Discussions have begun with a view to permitting the lands to become Category IA lands.

Eastmain

The Cree Nation of Eastmain is also dealing with the so-called “Roman Catholic Mission Lands” and “Hudson’s Bay Lands”. As a first step, the “Roman Catholic Mission Lands” were transferred by the Diocese of Amos to Eastmain through a Deed of Transfer signed on August 26, 2024. In parallel, the Cree Nation Government, Eastmain, Quebec and Canada completed the drafting of an Agreement in order for the former “Roman Catholic Mission Lands” to become Category IA lands. This Agreement has now been approved by all the parties and is therefore ready for signature.

Eastmain has also requested that a table be established in order to discuss the possible reconfiguration of its lands.

Chisasibi

With respect to Chisasibi, discussions are taking place regarding the need to reconfigure Category I lands in relation to the road corridor that divides the community.

Nemaska

Nemaska is also in the process of evaluating potential reconfiguration scenarios for its Category I lands. A table has been established, with representatives of Canada and Quebec.

Washaw Sibi

The Government has been informed that a land reconfiguration issue may also arise for the proposed community of Washaw Sibi in the near future, subject to the development plans of the community.

CONCLUSION

The relationship with Quebec remains one of central importance to the Cree, both as members of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee and as citizens of Quebec and Canada.

Since the signature of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* in 1975 and of the *Paix des Braves* in 2002, the Cree-Quebec relationship has provided significant benefits for the Cree Nation. The funding provided pursuant to the *Paix des Braves*, the significant funding for Cree Health and Social Services, Education, Police, Justice, Childcare Services and the Adapted Forestry Regime all bear witness to an important and fruitful relationship.

The Cree-Quebec relationship will continue to play a critical role in the political, social and economic development of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee and of the entire region of Eeyou Istchee James Bay.





INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

Message from the Director
Tina Petawabano



The Cree Nation Government continues to engage directly with other Indigenous groups to share the experiences and history of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee.

We recognize the importance and mutual benefits of maintaining and strengthening relationships with our Indigenous neighbours, with whom we share many common concerns. Our approach is rooted in building and deepening relationships based on our shared Indigenous histories and values, and in concluding arrangements that reflect our cultures and traditional ways of relating to one another.

CREE INNU OF PEKUAKAMIULNUATSH NATION RELATIONS

The Maammu Wiicheutuwin Agreement, signed in 2018 between the Pekuakamiulnuatsh Nation and the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee, continues to serve as a foundation for identifying and addressing issues of mutual concern. These include land title, forestry management, economic development, wildlife management, environmental protection, and the promotion of our respective languages and cultures. Committees established under the agreement remain active, engaging in ongoing dialogues and collaboration throughout the year.

This treaty continues to promote inter-Indigenous relations, and at the same time, serves as a model for future discussions with other Indigenous groups.

CREE-NASKAPI-INUIT RELATIONS

The continued decline of migratory caribou populations remains a significant concern across the territory. With the support of Cree land users and tallymen, Cree leadership proposed a moratorium on the harvest of the Leaf River herd for the 2025–2026 season. The Cree representatives on the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC) tabled a resolution to this effect. The HFTCC has decision-making authority over the management of certain wildlife species, including moose, caribou, and black bear, with responsibilities that include establishing harvest limits and addressing management issues. This decision was not made lightly; rather, it reflects a commitment to conservation and is intended to provide the herd with the opportunity and time needed to recover.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the creation of the Cree-Inuit and Naskapi Forum was developed and signed in 2022. The MOU created a permanent forum that promotes cooperation and coordination between the parties and establish and advance nation-to-nation collaboration. There matters of common interest are raised, such as wildlife management, caribou, protected areas, regional economic





development, and environmental assessment, amongst others, are raised and can be jointly acted on. While the Forum did not meet in the 2025-2026, plans are well underway for many meetings in the 2026-2027 calendar.

Establishment of the Cree-Inuit-Naskapi Technical Table

The parties established a Cree-Inuit-Naskapi Technical Table and nominated representatives to participate in this initiative. The table is intended to serve as a platform for addressing shared concerns, developing joint positions, maintaining open lines of communication, and strengthening working relationships. The mandate of the technical table includes meeting on a regular basis to address issues raised at the annual forum and to prepare the agenda for future forums.

We look forward to working collaboratively with our Inuit and Naskapi partners on this important initiative.

CREE-INNU NATION RELATIONS

In recent years, the Cree Nation Government, the Cree Nation of Chisasibi, and the Cree Trappers' Association have engaged in ongoing dialogues with the Innu Nation of Quebec regarding their request to access caribou.

Through these collaborative efforts, the parties have sought balanced solutions that respect Cree rights and interests while prioritizing the health and sustainability of the herds. However, as mentioned above, the HFTCC passed a resolution prohibiting all caribou harvesting in Eeyou Istchee due to the continued decline in caribou populations.

The Cree Nation is aware of the impacts the moratorium causes beyond Eeyou Istchee, and remains committed to ongoing joint discussions to address shared concerns and build mutual understanding.

CREE – MOOSE CREE NATION RELATIONS

The Grand Chief, Deputy Grand Chief and Chief Peter Wesley of the Moose Cree Nation have engaged in meaningful discussions to share and reflect on the histories and relationship between our Nations. These discussions focused on the Memorandum of Understanding between the GCC(EI)/CNG and Canada, the establishment of MoCreebec, the Ontario litigation, opportunities to strengthen the relationship between the GCC(EI)/CNG and Moose Cree First Nation, and support for Moose Cree First Nation in initiating discussions with the Government of Canada.

The leadership and representatives from both Nations are committed to holding future meetings to continue these valuable exchanges.

CREE-ATTIKAMEKW RELATIONS

Late last fall, Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch and Grand Chief Constant Awashish of the Attikamekw Nation met to discuss some concerns raised by land users in the traditional territories of Ouje-Bougoumou and the Attikamekw of Opiticiwan and other potential partnerships. As a result, meetings with the respective chiefs of Ouje-Bougoumou and Opiticiwan and both Grand Chief Murdoch and Grand Chief Awashish, was held to address these concerns. The leadership committed to organizing a meeting of the land users and their families to find solutions to some of their ongoing concerns. This meeting resulted in good suggestions made by the land users and their families, these exchanges oblige the Cree-Atikamekw leaders to work together. Our turn to be confident, industries are afraid when First Nations unite. We will use our tools to help one another.

*Tina Petawabano
Director of Government Relations*

“Former Chisasibi Chief Robert Kanatewat and lawyer James O’Reilly reflected on the unity and resilience that enabled Cree communities to stand together in defence of their rights and way of life. In a moving tribute, Robert thanked James for his contribution to the Cree Nation, drawing a standing ovation from the audience.”



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE JBNQA AND ITS LEGACY FOR THE CREE NATION

**November 11, 2025 –
Chisasibi, Eeyou Istchee**

On November 11, 2025, more than 150 leaders, signatories, family members, and community members gathered in Chisasibi to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA). The event brought generations together to reflect on a historic journey that transformed uncertainty into self-determination and laid the foundation for the Cree Nation as it stands today.

Through documentary screenings, archival footage, personal reflections, and stories from Elders, participants revisited the events of 1975 and honoured the vision, resilience, and unity that made the Agreement possible. Signatories, negotiators, and leaders shared memories of the challenges faced and the collective determination that secured Cree rights and shaped the future of Eeyou Istchee.

The celebration also looked ahead. Youth Grand Chief Jade Mukash and Deputy Youth Grand Chief Darius Neacappo-Pelchat spoke with a sense of hope and determination, painting a picture of the future they envision for the next generations. Their words carried the energy of the young leaders that negotiated the JBNQA, imagining together what our Nation can become.

To end the event, Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch and Deputy Grand Chief Linden Spencer offered their reflections on the JBNQA—not as a document sealed in time, but as something alive—shaped by the hands of the negotiators who fought for it, and by the people of Eeyou Istchee who continue to breathe meaning into it today.

Fifty years later, the spirit of those who walked together in 1975 remains strong. Their legacy lives on in the people, communities, and future generations who continue the walk forward.



CREE NATION BUSINESS SUMMIT

August 19–21, 2025 – Mistissini, Eeyou Istchee

“Strong connections build strong economies — and the Cree Nation Business Summit was only the beginning.”

– 2025 Cree Nation Business Summit Report

The 2nd Cree Nation Business Summit brought together more than 200 attendees in Mistissini for three days of connection, learning, and economic vision-building. Held at the Neoskweskau Sports Complex under the theme Eeyou Entrepreneurship in Focus, the Summit united youth, entrepreneurs, and leaders to strengthen the Eeyou economy together.

The event featured three signature programs. The Eeyou Istchee Bear Den Case Study Competition, organized in partnership with Eeyoupreneur, guided 40 youth through the full entrepreneurial process — brainstorming, business planning, promotional video production, and a final pitch before a panel of judges. Teams developed seven unique business ideas, with Clearwater Plaza (Team 3) taking first place, Eeyou and Me Tourism (Team 6) second, and Big River Eeyou Centre (Team 2) third.

The Business and Leader Exchange Days drew 60 entrepreneurs and 25 Cree organizations and leaders for roundtables, panels, workshops, and networking. Two roundtable discussions — on the

creation of a Cree Nation Business Association and the development of a Local Administration Toolkit — surfaced key priorities including capacity building, access to capital, fair contracting, and centralized business information.

The Summit concluded with the inaugural Eeyou Istchee Regional Business Awards Gala, honouring five foundational businesses ahead of the JBNQA's 50th Anniversary: A.D.E.L.S. Restaurant (1971), Blackned Construction (1975), Waswanipi Grocery Store (1978/79), Meechum Reg'd (1982), and Natives Exploration Services (1984).

Presented by the CNG Department of Commerce and Industry, the Summit reinvested over \$330,000 into the Cree economy and laid a strong foundation for future partnerships. Planning is already underway for the 3rd Cree Nation Business Summit, to be held in Waskaganish in 2027.

Learn more: <https://cngov.site/>





“The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and strong — the legacy of our long-standing businesses will carry forward in new and exciting ways.”

— Anthony MacLeod,
Director, Department
of Commerce and
Industry (paraphrased)

CONNECT: LEADERSHIP FORUM

March 17, 18 and 19, 2026 –
Chisasibi, Eeyou Istchee

The inaugural Connect: Leadership Forum brought together Cree leadership, regional institutions, and community representatives for three days of candid dialogue on the urgent, interconnected realities affecting health, safety, and psychosocial well-being across Eeyou Istchee. Convened jointly by the Cree Nation Government, the Cree School Board, and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, the Forum created a safe space to share challenges, bring forward ideas, and coordinate action beyond institutional silos.

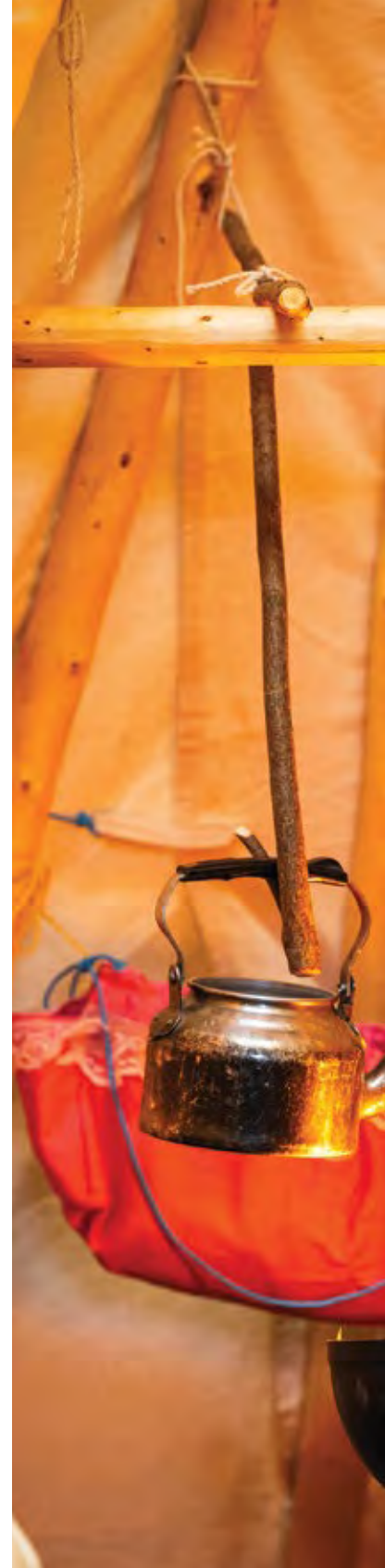
Roundtable presentations from Eastmain, Wemindji, Ouje-Bougoumou, Waskaganish, Chisasibi, Mistissini, Waswanipi, Whapmagoostui, Nemaska, and MoCreebec revealed strong overlap in the pressures communities face — housing shortages and homelessness, food insecurity, mental health and addictions, youth protection, chronic disease, violence, justice-system gaps, and the weakening of language, identity, and family supports. Across every discussion, the message was consistent: communities are asking less for new standalone programs and more for existing organizations to work together in a coordinated way.

Leadership and institutional presentations on youth protection, childcare and early childhood, education and student well-being, and health, justice, and safety reinforced a shared principle that collaboration is no longer optional. Throughout, participants emphasized moving from crisis response to prevention, from fragmented services to integrated action, and from isolated mandates to shared responsibility — all grounded in Cree language, family, land-based practice, and collective accountability.

A central outcome was the consolidation of 83 draft Calls to Action into 36 refined Calls to Action across nine themes, spanning governance and system integration, housing and basic needs, health and prevention, food security, family support, youth and education, justice and community safety, culture and identity, and economic inclusion. The Forum's strongest conclusion was that follow-up is now essential: participants called for a permanent coordination mechanism, shared protocols, common priorities, and stronger accountability. As a key next step, the Forum pointed to the establishment of a Tri-Partite Leadership Table (CNG, CSB, and CBHSSJB) to guide implementation and ensure the Calls to Action become visible change in the lives of Eeyouch/Eenouch.

Understood not as an endpoint but as a foundation, the Connect: Leadership Forum is the first in a series of events designed to turn dialogue into measurable, collective action.

Learn more: <https://cngov.events/>



“What we build here, in trust and in dialogue, will carry forward into the coordinated, collective action our communities deserve.”

— Connect Forum Invitation Letter

“We cannot take for granted that we know each other's institutions. We need to spend time getting to know each other's institutions.”

— Grand Chief Paul John Murdoch



Tribute to DAVEY BOBBISH

December 23, 1973 – October 5, 2025



It is with heavy hearts that we learned the news of the passing of our dear friend and Executive Director, Davey Bobbish, back in October 2025. Executive Director since January 2023, he saw the position first and foremost as an opportunity to help improve communities. His contributions have left a lasting legacy that will continue to guide and inspire all across Eeyou Istchee for years to come.

A leader and a diplomat

First elected to council in Chisasibi at the age of 24, Davey was a dedicated advocate for the Cree Nation, devoting his life to serving our communities at every level of government. With his calm demeanor and generous spirit, he inspired all of us to come together and stand strong, even in the most challenging situations. He had a special gift for encouraging those around him, making everyone feel confident and capable. His deep commitment to the Cree language and culture was reflected in his policies, which helped preserve, promote, and celebrate our identity and heritage for future generations.

A true diplomat, Davey knew how to represent our people with pride. He built strong connections with the Government of Canada, the Government of Québec, local municipalities, Crown Corporations, financial institutions, and fellow Chiefs. His warm and welcoming presence made a lasting impact, and he will be missed by everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him.

A Loving Family Man

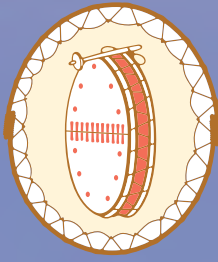
At just 51 years old, Davey leaves behind a loving family who meant the world to him. He was a proud father to Zachary, Elysia, Lawrence, Phoebe, and Katie-Lyn, and a cherished Baba to his eleven grandchildren. He shared a lifelong love with his wife, Bella, his high school sweetheart and devoted partner in everything they did.

Honouring his Legacy

Davey was known for his contagious laughter and always insisted on saying grace, bringing joy to our gatherings in Eeyou Istchee. He loved having a guitar close by, ready to belt out epic rock ballads at social events, and his kindness touched so many lives. He led by example, sharing his knowledge, offering encouragement, and fostering strong relationships with colleagues, friends, and community members alike.

As we fondly remember Davey Bobbish, we honour not only the remarkable person he was, but also the lasting impact he made on those around him. One of the greatest ways we can celebrate his life is by continuing the important work he cared so deeply about and by carrying forward the values he demonstrated every day—integrity, hard work, and respect for others. His legacy will continue to be felt through the people he mentored, the lives he touched, and the positive difference he made throughout his career and Eeyou Istchee.







FINANCE AND TREASURY

Message from the Treasurer Matthew Swallow



The Cree Nation Government continues to play a central role in implementing the key governance agreements with Canada and Québec. These agreements have established a stable financing framework for community operations, capital development and regional initiatives, while education and health and social services remain the responsibility of the Cree School Board and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay.



The year 2025-2026 marks a critical moment for the long-term fiscal stability of the Cree Nation. The Cree Nation Government and Canada have begun comprehensive renewal negotiations for all Cree-Canada financial arrangements. These negotiations include the renewal of the New Relationship Agreement, the development of its successor agreement, and the related Operations and Maintenance Agreement and Capital Agreement that support Cree governance, community infrastructure and the implementation of assumed obligations and responsibilities under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. These negotiations are being advanced within the broader framework of the Cree Nation Governance Agreement and the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee Governance Agreement Act.

The importance of these negotiations cannot be overstated. The agreements being renewed will influence the capacity of Cree communities to plan, build, maintain and expand essential infrastructure over the coming decade and beyond. They will also determine whether the fiscal relationship with Canada is sufficiently predictable, flexible and responsive to the realities faced by our communities, including the costs of northern construction, the renewal of aging assets, housing needs, transportation challenges, climate pressures and the growth of local and regional responsibilities.

The Cree Nation is also pursuing the renewal of important arrangements with Quebec where responsibilities and funding intersect. Many federal funding arrangements have direct implications for areas of Quebec jurisdiction, including justice, policing, forestry, regional governance

and economic development. The objective is to ensure that all core financial agreements are renewed on a long-term basis, aligned with Cree priorities, and supported by the new long-term Capital Plan being developed with the participation of the Cree First Nations and regional entities.

The broader economic environment makes this work even more urgent. Canada, Québec and the world economy have faced a period of slower growth, persistent cost pressures, trade uncertainty, volatile financial markets and geopolitical instability. U.S. tariff policy and global trade tensions have added uncertainty to the Canadian outlook, while Québec's economy has moderated and public finances have come under pressure. These conditions affect the cost of construction, financing, labour, procurement and long-term planning. They also reinforce the need for funding agreements that are resilient enough to support Cree self-government through different economic cycles.

Financial market conditions also affected the year under review. Equity markets generally delivered strong returns in 2025, including notable strength in Canadian equities and broad gains in global markets. However, these returns took place against a background of uncertainty related to trade policy, inflation, interest rates, technology valuations and geopolitical risk. The investment results of Cree entities were positive, but the experience of recent years confirms that investment earnings cannot substitute for fair, predictable and adequate treaty implementation funding. Market gains strengthen the financial position of Cree institutions, but they must be managed prudently and with a clear understanding that future returns may be more volatile.

Demographic trends must also be central to the negotiations and to our capital planning. The demographic study reviewed population growth over the past 20 years and showed average annual growth of approximately 2.39 percent in the first five-year period, slowing to 1.84 percent over the 20-year period, and further slowing to 1.39

percent in the most recent five-year period. Over the next 20 years, future population growth is projected to decline to approximately 1.03 percent annually. Even with slower growth, the cumulative impact on service delivery, housing, community facilities, infrastructure maintenance and community expansion remains significant. Planning must therefore account not only for population increases, but also for household formation, youth needs, elder services, land availability, asset replacement and the higher cost of delivering services in remote northern communities.

In 2025-2026, the Cree Nation Government continued the implementation of the Cree Nation Housing Strategy, which seeks to ensure access to affordable housing for all Crees and to promote private homeownership. This initiative is projected to cost more than \$1.3 billion and requires collaboration with Canada, Québec, Cree communities and other partners. Since 2021, the Cree Nation Government has secured \$514 million from the Government of Canada and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to support the construction of 750 new social housing units. The Strategy also contemplates economic participation by individuals, including through private financing and through contributions to the sustainability of social and government-supported housing.

The Cree Nation Government remains actively engaged with federal departments to streamline funding mechanisms under the Cree-Canada Governance Agreement. We continue to advocate for a whole-of-government approach to treaty implementation, one that recognizes that Cree governance, infrastructure, housing, policing, justice, language, culture, economic development and environmental stewardship are interrelated. The renewal of the NRA and related agreements must therefore provide practical tools

for implementation, including clear escalators, long-term capital planning, appropriate indexation, flexibility to address urgent needs and mechanisms for regular review.

For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the Council/Board of the Cree Nation Government has allocated \$509,707,434 to support programs, services and responsibilities administered by the Cree Nation Government and entities established under the JBNQA. These amounts do not include the budgets of the Cree School Board, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay or several other Cree entities.

The accompanying graphs in this report illustrate how these funds have been allocated across key priority areas for the current fiscal year. They also show the distribution of certain funding arrangements among the Cree communities, regional programs and Cree entities. These allocations should be read in the context of the negotiations now underway, as they demonstrate both the scale of current responsibilities and the need for renewed agreements that can support long-term sustainability.

In closing, I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to our accounting staff and to all those who support the financial administration of the Cree Nation Government. Their dedication and professionalism are essential to the effective functioning of our government. From their offices in Nemaska and across Eeyou Istchee, they help ensure the efficient flow of funding to communities, programs and entities that directly support the well-being of our people.

Meegwetch,

Matthew Swallow
Treasurer

Photo: Brendan Forward

An Overview of certain of the Funding flowing through the Cree Nation Government including funds allocated by the Cree Nation Trust and Eenou- Eeyou Limited Partnership

The Cree Nation Government and the Eenou-Eeyou Limited Partnership act as recipients of funding pursuant to many agreements with Canada and Québec. Pursuant to the New Relationship Agreement with Canada, payments, excluding Community Specific Agreements, are made to the Cree Nation Trust. The Cree Nation Trust provides annual disbursements

to the Cree Nation Government, which is entrusted with the implementation of the assumed obligations and responsibilities. The Cree Nation Government has also negotiated many funding agreements for the Cree Nation where the funding flows to the Cree Nation Government and is then reallocated to local communities or used in conformity with agreement guidelines.

The following summarizes certain arrangements for 2025-2026. The total of these amounts is \$509,707,434:

Government of Canada	
Cree Act Operation and Maintenance Funding	\$135,515,804
Supplemental Funding to support Operation and Maintenance Needs	\$8,517,342
Federal Base Funding for Capital	\$23,926,258
Supplemental Funding to support Capital	\$2,571,133
Supplemental Capital Funding for Housing Related Investments	\$52,512,195
Agreement respecting the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Program and Related Services	\$6,801,082
Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program Funding Agreement	\$1,600,770
Canada / Quebec Joint Funding	
Policing Services Agreement	\$26,999,213
Government Of Quebec	
Agreement Concerning a New Relationship - Annual Payment	\$108,932,917
Agreement Concerning the Administration of Justice	\$26,409,911
Cree Nation Trust	
Implementation of Assumed Obligations and Responsibilities	\$115,920,809

In addition to the funding described on the previous page, both Canada and Québec provide funding in relation to Cree Education to the Cree School Board and Québec provides funding for Health and Social Services to the Cree Board of Health and Social Services. Many other program funding arrangements exist between Canada, Québec and the Crees

to implement other special and regular program funding arrangements.

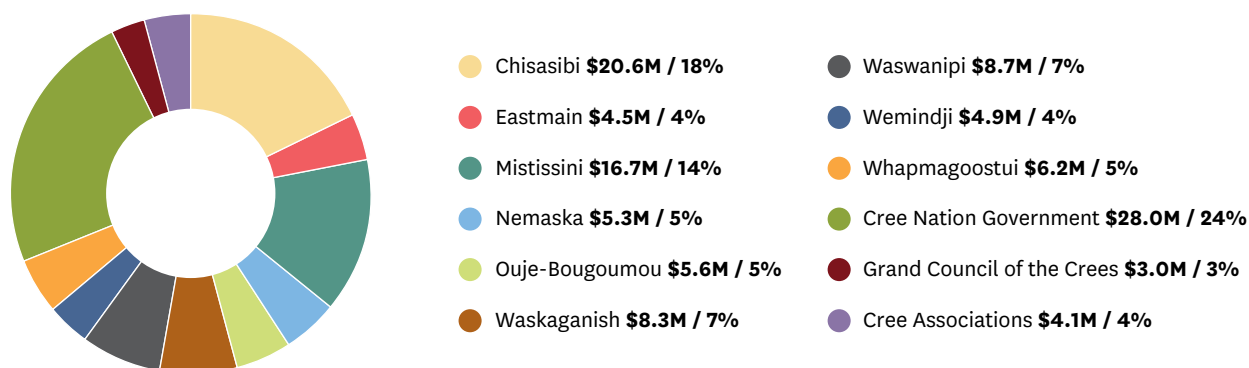
The following series of graphs provides a general overview of the allocation of certain funding arrangements and provides information as to the distribution amongst the various communities and other Cree Entities:

NEW RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENT CANADA

Figure 1. New Relationship Agreement CANADA | Funding Allocation 2025-26 by PROGRAM | \$115,920,809

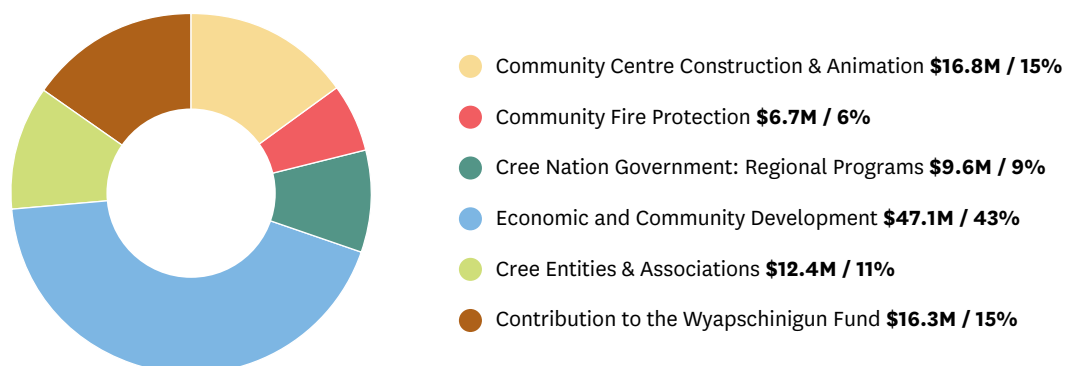


Figure 2. New Relationship Agreement CANADA | Funding Allocation 2025-26 | \$115,920,809



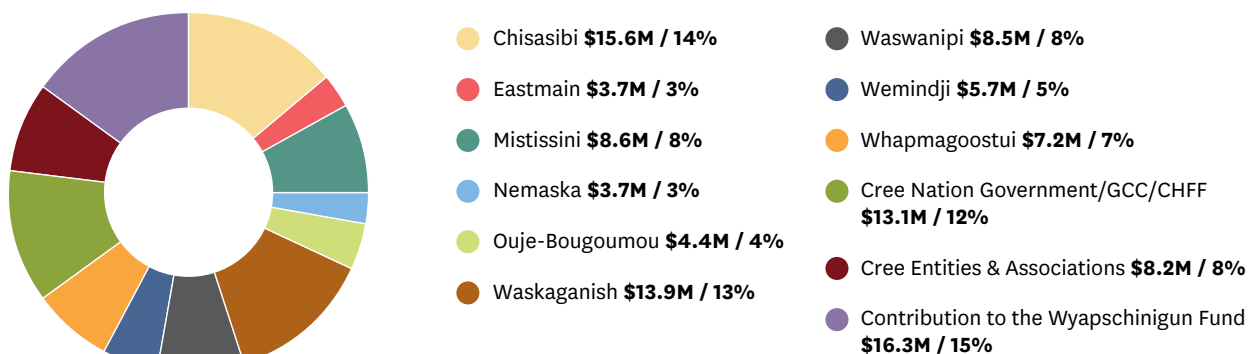
NEW RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENT QUEBEC

Figure 3. New Relationship Agreement QUEBEC | Funding Allocation 2025-26 by Program | \$108,932,917



NEW RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENT QUEBEC - continued

Figure 4. New Relationship Agreement QUEBEC | Funding Allocation 2025-26 | \$108,932,917



O&M AND CAPITAL FUNDING ALLOCATION

Figure 5. O&M Funding Allocation 2025-26 | \$135,515,804

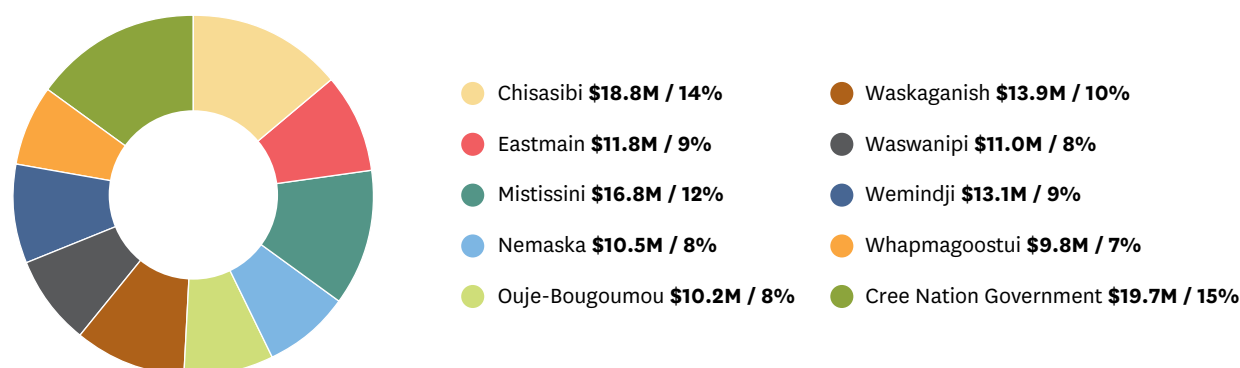
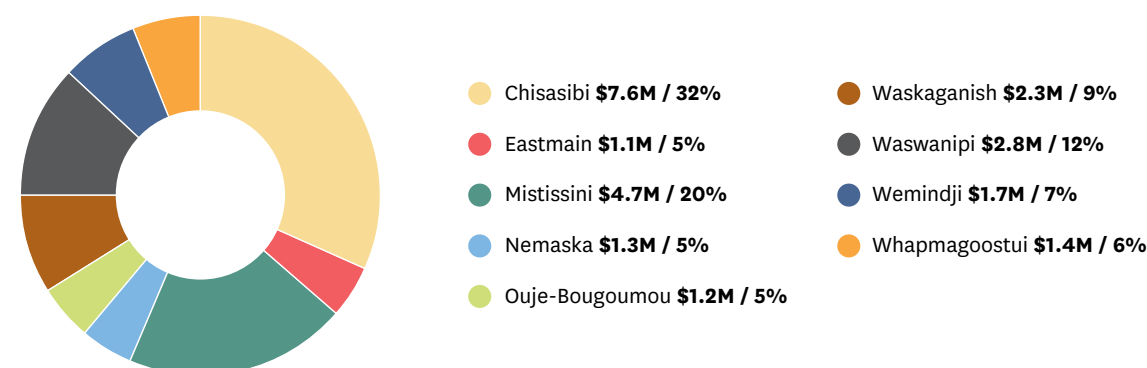


Figure 6. Capital Funding Allocation 2025-26 | \$23,926,257





HUMAN RESOURCES

Message from the Director
Nancy Bobbish



Welcome to the 2025–2026 HR Annual Report. This year, our focus has been on strengthening outreach, enhancing training and development, improving employee benefits, and ensuring we maintain a high-performing workforce. This report provides an overview of our workforce along with the key initiatives we have undertaken throughout the year.



I would like to sincerely thank my team for their exceptional dedication. Their care, respect, and strong work ethic truly make a difference. We are also very appreciative of the ongoing support we receive from our Treasurer, Matthew Swallow. His encouragement and guidance have helped us move forward with confidence and purpose.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to strengthening our workforce, expanding opportunities for growth and development, and deepening our relationships with the communities we serve. We will continue to build on this year's progress, guided by our shared values and a vision of a healthy, inclusive, and thriving workplace for all.

Respectfully,

Nancy Bobbish
Director of Human Resources

As we look ahead, we remain committed to strengthening our workforce, expanding opportunities for growth and development, and deepening our relationships with the communities we serve.

OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, a number of outreach and recruitment activities were undertaken in support of all Cree Nation Government (CNG) departments. These activities helped promote career opportunities, strengthen visibility, and connect with potential candidates across different communities and institutions.

The team participated in key organizational and community events, including the CNG All-Department Career Fair in Chisasibi, the CNG Annual General Assembly in Ouje-Bougoumou, and the Cree Nation Youth Council Annual General Assembly in Wemindji.

Recruitment outreach also included participation in education and career-related events, such as the Porte Ouverte at the École nationale de police du Québec, the John Abbott College Career Fair, the CEGEP de Chibougamau Career Fair, and the Cree School Board Higher Learning Event.

In addition, open house activities were held at police detachments to provide interested candidates with more information about policing careers and employment opportunities within the organization.

The summer student initiative provided meaningful benefits to the organization while contributing to the professional development of Cree beneficiaries. By engaging 12 students across 9 departments, the program supported workforce capacity during peak periods, allowing teams to advance projects and maintain service levels more effectively.

In addition, the initiative helped build a local talent pipeline by introducing participants to a variety of career paths within the organization. This early exposure fosters interest in future employment opportunities, supports succession planning, and strengthens long-term recruitment efforts.

The Police Training Program continued to support the development of future police officers. Since March 2025, 8 students successfully graduated, including 2 female and 6 male graduates. In addition, 17 Special Constables from the program were employed during the years, helping strengthen EEPF's operational capacity and future policing workforce.

Recruitment

During the reporting period, the Human Resources team conducted a total of 221 interviews in support of recruitment efforts across the organization. These efforts resulted in the successful staffing of 38 permanent positions, strengthening long-term organizational capacity and continuity. In addition, 8 long-term contract roles were filled to address specific operational needs and project-based requirements.

This level of recruitment activity reflects a sustained commitment to attracting qualified candidates, maintaining workforce stability, and ensuring that key roles are effectively resourced to support organizational objectives.

Our organization's strength lies in our people. As of March 31, 2026, we employ 460 individuals across 14 departments, each contributing to the well-being and advancement of our Nation.

Department		Employees	
Eeyou Eenou Police Force	120		26.1%
Justice and Correctional Services	80		17.4%
Capital Works and Services	60		13.0%
Government Support Services	39		8.5%
Apatisiwin Skills Development	32		7.0%
Environment and Remedial Works	27		5.9%
Social and Cultural Development	20		4.3%
Miyuuhpichinaausuwin Apatisiwin	17		3.7%
Finance and Treasury	15		3.3%
Human Resources	15		3.3%
Commerce and Industry	14		3.0%
Forestry	12		2.6%
Grand Council of The Crees	7		1.5%
Executive	2		0.4%
Total	460		100%

AT A GLANCE (BY THE NUMBERS)

7

GRAND
COUNCIL

2

EXECUTIVE
OFFICE

39

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT
SERVICES

15

FINANCE AND
TREASURY

15

HUMAN
RESOURCES

32

APATISIWIN SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT

17

MIYUUHPICHINAAUSUWIN
APATISIWIN

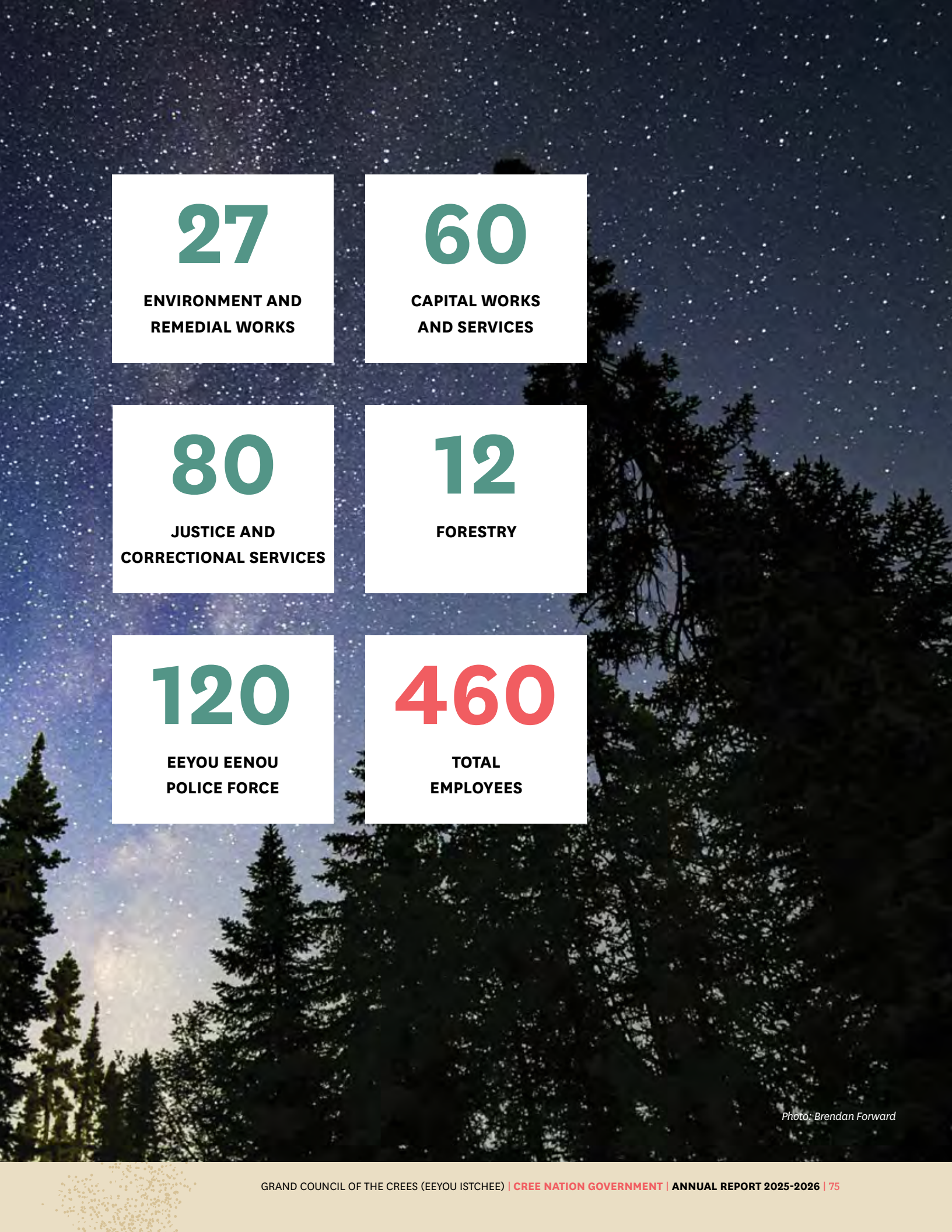
20

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT

14

COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY

Photo: Brandon Forward



27

**ENVIRONMENT AND
REMEDIAL WORKS**

60

**CAPITAL WORKS
AND SERVICES**

80

**JUSTICE AND
CORRECTIONAL SERVICES**

12

FORESTRY

120

**EEYOU EENOU
POLICE FORCE**

460

**TOTAL
EMPLOYEES**

Photo: Brendan Forward

Our workforce has stronger female representation overall, particularly in support, technical, and professional classifications. Representation shifts in the senior professional/manager, director, and executive categories, where male employees represent a higher proportion.

For EEPF operational positions, male representation remains higher overall, especially among officers and senior officers. This breakdown helps identify where representation is balanced and where future recruitment, development, and retention efforts may support greater diversity.

In 2025–2026, Cree employees represented 76% of the workforce, while employees from other backgrounds represented 24%.

DAYFORCE SUPPORT AND REPORTING

Throughout 2025–2026, the Dayforce team continued to provide important support to the Human Resources and Finance departments, as well as to employees across the organization. This included assisting with system questions, data updates, reporting needs, troubleshooting, and process improvements.

This ongoing support contributed to improved service delivery, stronger collaboration, and more efficient access to HR and payroll-related information.

Training Forms

As part of the broader Training and Development mandate, custom forms were created in Dayforce to support the tracking of learning and development activities in line with internal policy requirements.

Improved Reporting

We worked in collaboration with Finance to develop a custom report to support arrears reconciliation. Existing reports were also enhanced to improve data extraction, analysis, and reporting for various branches within Human Resources and Finance.

Preparing for the Dayforce Hub Launch

We prepared a major homepage update—the new Dayforce Hub—scheduled for release in summer 2026. The update will give employees easier access to employment-related information and resources.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Throughout 2025–2026, we maintained a strong commitment to training and development. Our aim remains to support workforce growth and capacity. Significant progress was made on the organization's first comprehensive Training and Development Policy, scheduled for launch in 2026–2027. The policy will provide a clear and consistent framework to guide training and development initiatives across the CNG. To support its implementation, employee and supervisor guidebooks were developed, along with new Dayforce train-

ing forms to support training requests, approvals, and data collection.

The CNG Cree Language Learning Project continued through Sessions 3 and 4, offering virtual Cree language lessons to CNG employees. A webinar in October on EastCree.org further supported language learning and cultural engagement. In addition, a Teams Cree Resource Group was created to encourage ongoing learning and collaboration among employees. Funding support for these initiatives was provided by Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD).

Planning for a monthly Training and Development Webinar Series for employees also took place during this fiscal year, with the series launching in the following year. Hosted by HR, the series features both internal and external presenters covering a variety of workplace-related topics and provides employees with accessible micro-learning opportunities. Funding support for this initiative was also provided by ASD.

Exploration of Learning Management System (LMS) options also began to support future learning and development needs across the organization. During the year, the HR team expanded with the addition of a new HR Technician, supporting training and development, recruitment, and short-term contracts.

Overall, these initiatives reflect continued progress toward building a more structured, and accessible approach to learning and development within the CNG.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, HR provided employee relations support to promote organizational stability, compliance, and employee well-being. Work focused on helping managers navigate performance management, disciplinary matters, workplace concerns, employee leaves, and other issues, while ensuring employees were supported through fair, respectful, and well-informed processes. This support strengthened leadership capacity, informed decision-making, and promoted a consistent, respectful, and compliant approach to employee relations across the organization.

A strong emphasis was placed on risk mitigation and consistency. Managers continued to rely on established tools, including the Disciplinary Guide developed in the previous fiscal year, to support sound decision-making and defensible actions aligned with policy and legislation. HR also supported timely, structured conversations to address issues early, reduce escalation, and promote accountability across teams.

In addition to case-based support, HR contributed to broader organizational effectiveness through targeted communications, leave administration guidance, monitoring of leave trends, and analysis of workforce support programs such as the Employee and Family Assistance Program.

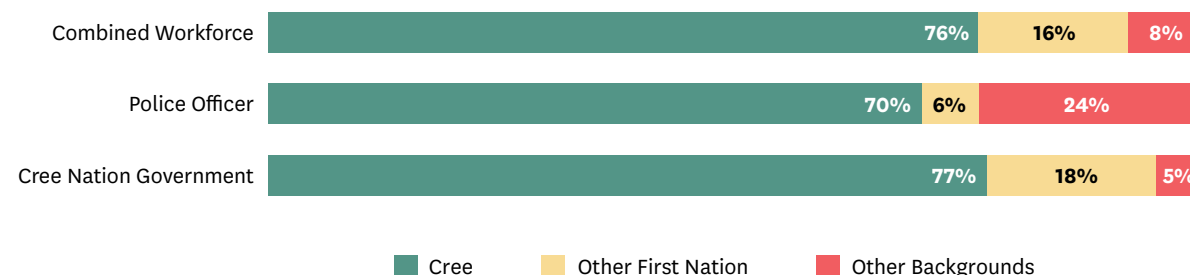
Gender Distribution (Civilian Employees)

Classification	Gender		Employees
Support & Technical	Male	62	33%
	Female	124	67%
Professional	Male	48	36%
	Female	87	64%
Senior Professional & Managers	Male	27	71%
	Female	11	29%
Director	Male	6	60%
	Female	4	40%
Executive	Male	4	80%
	Female	1	20%
Total	Male	147	39%
	Female	227	61%

Gender Distribution (Non-Civilian Employees)

EEPF Positions	Gender		Employees
Senior Officer	Male	13	93%
	Female	1	7%
Investigator	Male	4	50%
	Female	4	50%
Officer	Male	54	87%
	Female	8	13%
Court Liaison	Male	2	100%
Total	Male	73	85%
	Female	13	15%

Workforce Representation by Background



Policy and Workplace Support

HR advanced foundational work to support the development of a new harassment policy, with implementation anticipated in 2026-2027. This included reviewing current practices, identifying gaps and emerging needs, and helping ensure the future framework aligns with legislative requirements and organizational values. Early research and consultation began to shape a policy that will set clear workplace expectations, provide accessible reporting pathways, and strengthen support for a respectful and psychologically safe workplace.

Risk Mitigation and Compliance

HR supported organizational risk mitigation by ensuring employee relations matters were addressed proactively, consistently, and in alignment with policy, legislation, and best practices. Through early intervention, informed guidance, and close collaboration with leadership, potential risks were identified and managed before escalation. This included supporting disciplinary actions and terminations to ensure decisions were fair, well documented, and defensible; helping leaders identify and address potential legal, operational, and reputational risks; and maintaining current knowledge of employment legislation and evolving best practices to support informed guidance.

Employee Relations Awareness and Communication

HR promoted workplace awareness and consistency through targeted communications shared with staff throughout the fiscal year. These included posters and practical reminders on key workplace expectations, such as the effective use of Microsoft Teams out-of-office settings, navigating hybrid work arrangements, and keeping workforce information up to date. HR also played an important role in communicating with staff during office closures and situations where workplace risks prevented employees from working on site, providing clear, timely updates that outlined expectations, highlighted available supports, and reinforced the organization's focus on safety and wellbeing.

Employee and Family Assistance Program

The Employee and Family Assistance Program, delivered by TELUS Health, continued to provide confidential support services to employees and eligible dependents. Most users accessed counselling services, with support needs primarily related to personal and family matters.

TO CONCLUDE

Throughout the year, significant efforts were made to support the organization across all human resources functions. Key improvements were implemented, policies were reviewed and enhanced, and training initiatives were delivered. Ongoing support was also provided to the policing program. These collective efforts have contributed to the development of stronger managers, more effective employees, and a more resilient organization.

The Employee and Family Assistance Program, delivered by TELUS Health, continued to provide confidential support services to employees and eligible dependents. Most users accessed counselling services, with support needs primarily related to personal and family matters.



Photo: Katherine Dehm



APATISIWIN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Message from the Director
Abel J. Trapper



I am pleased to present the 2025-2026 Annual Report of the Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD) Department.



Above all, I extend my sincere thanks to our team for their dedication and support throughout the year. Guided by the department's 2023 to 2026 Strategic Plan, our divisions are now digitally streamlined and working more collaboratively than ever.

A significant milestone this year was ASD's growing recognition as a trusted referral partner for Quebec's construction industry. Stakeholders such as the Commission de la construction du Québec and other sector associations are increasingly turning to ASD to help connect Cree clients with timely information, services, and pathways into construction related employment and training opportunities.

This year, our Program Development Officers completed comprehensive training on efficient project monitoring and on developing program promotion plans tailored to each community in Eeyou Istchee. These efforts help increase awareness of ASD programs and strengthen collaboration, while deepening local knowledge of labour market needs.

With Employment Counsellors in every community of Eeyou Istchee, the Services team continued to strengthen its presence and deliver a wide range of employment supports. By drawing on strong community knowledge, they maintained relationships and built partnerships with local members and organizations.

With modern digital tools in place, the Finance and Administration Division strengthened oversight of the departmental budget, including human resources, employment services, and program operations. The team also ensured payments were processed accurately and on time.

The Cree Bursary Program continued to expand, supporting more recipients and reflecting the growing number of Cree students pursuing post secondary education. ASD remains proud to support students in achieving their academic goals.

As we reflect on this year's accomplishments, we are reminded that our clients remain at the centre of our work. Their goals help shape our direction and guide our decisions as we move forward.

Thank you,

Abel J. Trapper
Director of Apatisiwin Skills Development

OUR VISION

To help build qualified and professional workforce to fill any employment need in Eeyou Istchee.

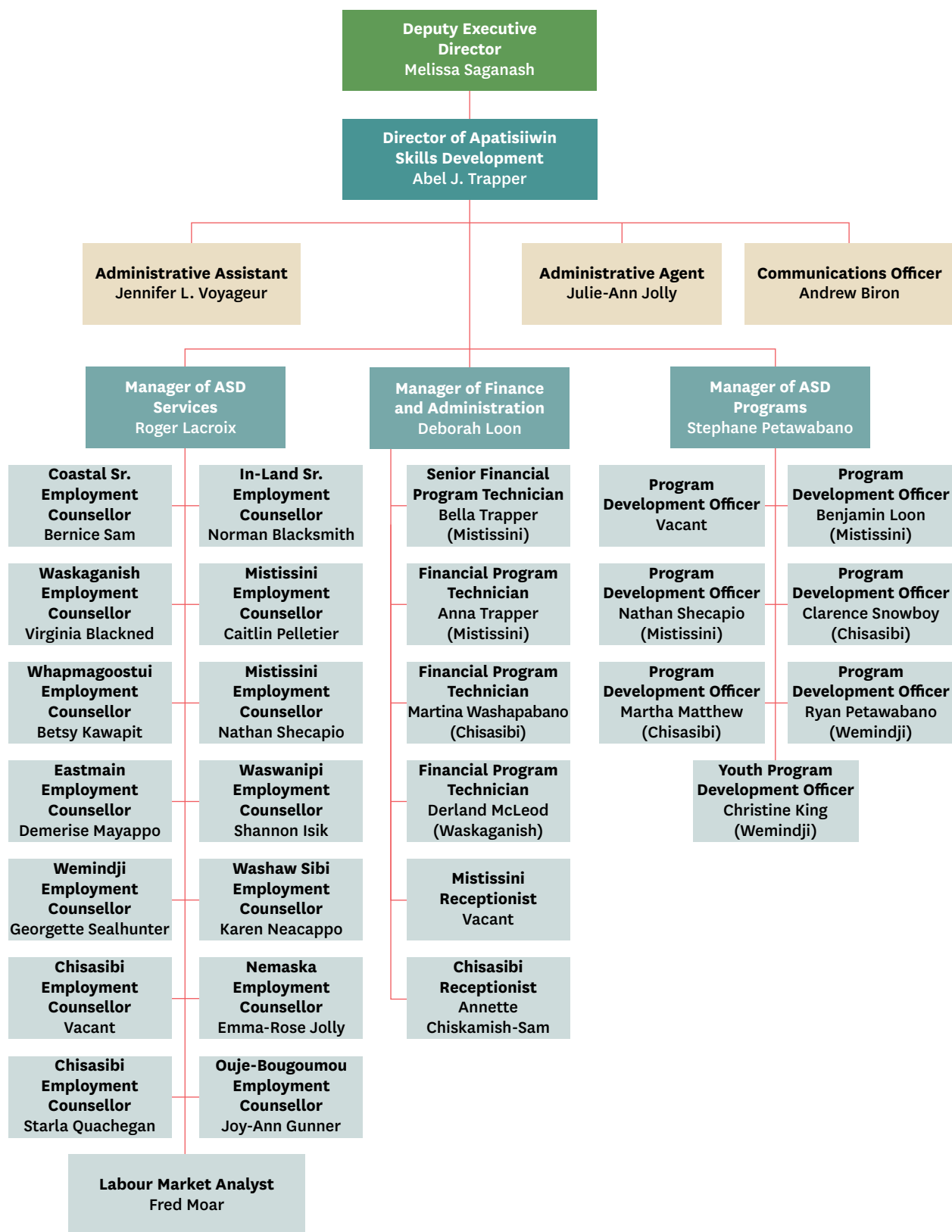
OUR MISSION

To equip and empower individuals with the skills and knowledge to achieve meaningful and sustainable employment and personal success.

OUR VALUES

To work together to provide excellent services to Eeyou Istchee based on integrity, fairness, trust, and respect.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Apatisiwin Skills Development builds capacity in Eeyou Istchee by advancing human resources development. Our mandate is to deliver wraparound services and innovative programs that support people along their career pathways through education, skills upgrading, and self employment through business creation, while also helping employers create opportunities and connect with qualified candidates to meet their workforce needs.

ASD TEAM

ASD has 10 offices in Eeyou Istchee and a service point at the Cree Nation Government Embassy in Ottawa. A team of 33 staff provide employment services and programs in communities and across the region. They work closely with clients to support their goals and build a strong workforce.

ASD SERVICES DIVISION

Led by a Manager of Services and supported by Senior Employment Counsellors, a team of 12 Employment Counsellors serves the 10 communities of Eeyou Istchee.

Additional resources are assigned to the two most populated communities, Chisasibi and Mistissini. The Division supports clients and communities with practical, job focused counselling.

Services include needs assessments, resume preparation, job search and job applications, job interview preparation, and other employment support measures as needed.

The Division also helps clients access program benefits and complete required documentation, including Cree Bursary applications, referral forms for training allowances, and participant follow up.

Employment Counsellors also provide information and assistance related to Employment Insurance and the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan.

The Services Division acts as a liaison with Service Canada, Services Quebec, the Canada Revenue Agency, Revenu Quebec, and the Commission de la construction du Quebec.

Through these partnerships, the Division provides general support to Cree clients when needed.

Aligned with ASD's 2023 to 2026 Strategic Plan, the Programs Division completed several key initiatives, including an archival system, and the transition to paperless processes. The Division will continue to sustain and strengthen these practices across its operations.

ASD PROGRAMS DIVISION

The Manager of Programs leads a team of seven Program Development Officers who deliver a diverse portfolio of programs with professionalism and efficiency.

Grounded in current labour market research, the division delivers programs in three core areas that build capacity and support the long-term economic empowerment of Eeyou Istchee communities.

Youth Programs

Youth Programs support youth employment and youth led initiatives by providing funding for hands on work experiences and community projects for youth. This support helps youth build skills, explore career pathways, and strengthen their transition into the labour market. In addition to summer placements, the programs offered part time employment during the academic year and funding to launch youth initiatives such as camps and clubs through Youth Initiative, Summer Work Experience, Science and Technology, Career Promotion and Awareness, Co Operative Education Placement, and Mentored Work Placement programs.

Capacity Building Programs

Capacity Building Programs strengthened the Eeyou Istchee workforce by encouraging post-secondary studies, supporting graduates as they entered the job market, and enabling career upgrading. With a focus on JBNQA Cree Beneficiaries, the division delivered the Cree Bursary, Cree Graduate, and Career Advancement programs.

Workforce Strategy Programs

Workforce Strategy Programs supported employers to recruit and train workers for specific positions while creating opportunities for unemployed individuals to maintain and strengthen their skills. The division also supported individuals pursuing self-employment by providing financial assistance throughout their entrepreneurial journey through Competencies and Skills, Job Creation, Persons with Disabilities, Self-Employment, and Research and Development.

Aligned with ASD's 2023 to 2026 Strategic Plan, the Programs Division completed several key initiatives, including monitoring and promotion, an archival system, and the transition to paperless processes. The Division will continue to sustain and strengthen these practices across its operations.

ASD FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Under the guidance of its Manager of Finance and Administration, the finance and administration processes are now being implemented department wide to strengthen consistency, efficiency, and service delivery across all offices.

Finance Team

The Finance Team monitors and administers departmental financial activities, supported by Financial Program Technicians.

Financial Program Technicians process claims by reviewing recipient reports and supporting documents to confirm compliance with the requirements of each contribution agreement. They also maintain accurate financial records

by compiling, updating, and validating information in the department's database.

Administration Team

The Administration Team supports day to day operations across departmental offices by maintaining electronic records in Laserfiche, managing document sharing and collaboration through SharePoint, and processing electronic travel claims.

Technological Implementations

To improve efficiency and collaboration across the department, DocuSign is being implemented for electronic signing of contribution agreements, and SharePoint is being implemented as a document sharing network accessible to all ASD offices.

COMMUNICATIONS

During the fiscal year, Communications strengthened Apatisiwin Skills Development's online presence by promoting programs and services consistently across social media and shifting from general awareness posts to more value-focused content aligned with Human Resources Development.

Communications also continued leveraging local radio to promote community visits and provided promotional support for provincial and federal government visits. This helped deliver in-person information and services to Cree Nation members.

On Facebook, content reached 950,600 total annual views, with 3-second views up 562% and total watch time up 495% year over year. Engagement increased to 36,133 interactions (+86.5%), and the page grew to 5,465 followers (+8%), with 384 net new follows.

Website performance also remained strong, with 27,000 active users and 842 jobs posted on apatisiwin.ca. The most visited pages were Job Listings (58,000 views), ASD Home (17,000 views), and Cree Bursary (6,200 views).

Website modernization is underway to refresh the design and improve the clarity of program and service information. Next year, a communications plan will be developed to guide channel use and strengthen continuous improvement through ongoing evaluation and optimization.

PLANNING SESSIONS

This past year, ASD held two planning sessions to strengthen coordination and keep staff informed of updates and new initiatives. Together, these sessions support a shared departmental direction, reinforce team connections, and improve operational efficiency. The December session brings the full department together, while the June session is held within each division to confirm priorities and plan next steps.

Social Media Post



APATISIWIN ᐃᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

YOU DO NOT NEED TO FEEL READY
YOU NEED TO START!

CONFERENCES

Our dedication to professional development and knowledge-sharing is reflected in our staff's active participation in conferences and industry events throughout the year. These gatherings provide essential opportunities for our team members to enhance their expertise and promote our organization's mission and initiatives. By interacting with peers and industry leaders, our staff effectively conveys our organization's values and accomplishments, encouraging a deeper understanding of our work, increasing our visibility within different industries interested in the development of the Eeyou Istchee labour market.

Chisasibi Career Fair

April 15, 2025 in Chisasibi, QC

The *Chisasibi Career Fair 2025* aimed to connect community members with employment and education opportunities by bringing together job seekers, Cree Nation Government staff, and other partners. It provided a space to explore career paths, attend workshops, build networks, and learn how to contribute to the community's workforce and future development.

Sustainable Development: Relationships, Indigenous Lands, and Energy Conference

June 11 & 12, 2025 in Amos, QC

The *Sustainable Development: Relationships, Indigenous Lands, and Energy Conference* was organized to bring together Indigenous leaders, government representatives, businesses, and other stakeholders to collaborate on advancing sustainable development. Its purpose was to foster dialogue, strengthen partnerships, and develop practical solutions by focusing on three key areas: building respectful and lasting relationships, supporting the stewardship and development of Indigenous territories, and promoting innovative, sustainable energy practices.

ASD Programs Planning Session

July 30 & 31, 2025 in Gatineau, QC

Programs division gathers to review and make adjustments for objectives, information sharing, and program funding.

EDO Information Session on CNG Programs

August 5, 2026 in Mistissini, QC

The EDO Information Session on CNG Programs aimed to inform community members about training and development opportunities offered through Cree Nation Government programs. Its purpose was to provide clear information on available initiatives, help participants understand how to access these programs, and encourage skill development and employment within the community.

Cree Nation Government Delegation to the Saguenay-St. Lawrence Marine Park

October 1-3, 2025 in Tadoussac, QC

The visit aimed to strengthen collaboration and share knowledge on marine conservation and protected area

management. It also supported dialogue with partners and provided insight into best practices for protecting marine ecosystems, helping inform Cree-led initiatives to safeguard biodiversity and culturally important waters.

Nemaska Lithium Business and Training Fair

October 22, 2025 in Nemaska, QC

Aimed to connect community members with business, employment, and training opportunities linked to the Whabouchi project. It brought together partners to share information on entrepreneurship, workforce development, and career paths, while supporting collaboration and local participation in the region's growing energy and mining sector.

ASD Programs presentation at the MEIRA Board Meeting

October 23, 2025 in Gatineau, QC

Aimed to inform board members about the range of training, employment, and capacity-building programs offered by Apatisiwin Skills Development. Its purpose was to share updates, strengthen partnerships, and support informed decision making on workforce development initiatives benefiting Cree communities.

CNYC Board of Directors Meeting

November 3-6, 2025 in Mistissini, QC

Youth representatives from across Eeyou Istchee discussed priorities, share updates, and guide the direction of the Cree Nation Youth Council. Its purpose was to support decision making, strengthen leadership among Cree youth, and advance programs and initiatives that promote their development and well being.

Business Exchange Day

November 26, 2025 in Val-d'Or, QC

The Business Exchange Day is a focused event designed to strengthen strategic partnerships and encourage business growth.

Through a series of personalized 15-minute meetings—often described as “business speed networking”—participants will connect with selected partners aligned with their goals. The event also features an exhibition area, keynote and guest speakers, a formal luncheon, and networking opportunities. Business Exchange Day reflects the Secretariat Cree Nation AT's commitment to supporting meaningful business engagement and regional economic development.

Administration and Management Career Fair by Centre d'études collégiales à Chibougamau

February 10, 2026 in Chibougamau, QC

To connect students and community members with employers and career opportunities in the business and administration field. Its purpose was to showcase potential career paths, encourage networking, and support the transition from education to the workforce in the region.

Higher Learning, Building Capacity 2026 Conference

February 20-22, 2026 in Ottawa, ON

Aimed to bring together Cree post secondary students, educators, and partners to support learning and career development. Its purpose was to promote networking, explore career pathways, strengthen skills and leadership, and foster cultural connection through engagement with Elders, knowledge keepers, and community organizations.

10th Anniversary Celebration of Eeyou Itun (Cree Land Stewardship)

March 10 & 11, 2026 in Waskaganish, QC

To recognize a decade of the Eeyou Itun program and its role in preserving Cree culture and land stewardship practices. Its purpose was to celebrate achievements, highlight the importance of traditional knowledge and land-based learning, and strengthen community commitment to protecting the territory and passing on Cree values to future generations.

ASD/DCI Community Tour

Apatisiwin Skills Development, in collaboration with the Department of Commerce and Industry, launched a new initiative aimed at promoting the programs and services offered by their respective departments. This initiative also seeks to provide community members with the opportunity to ask questions and receive information regarding all programs and services. Four meetings were held successively in Nemaska and Eastmain, from May 26 to 29, in Ouje-Bougoumou from June 16 & 17, and in Waswanipi, on June 19, 2025.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ASD STAFF

Training with Victoria LaBillois: Step Into your Power - Be your own Boss

November 25, 2025 in Val-d'Or, QC

Its purpose was to help individuals strengthen their voice, develop practical skills such as financial awareness and networking, and encourage them to pursue business and leadership opportunities while staying grounded in their culture and identity.

McGill School of Continuing Studies (SCS) - Certificate in Indigenous Business Management

Several ASD's employees are currently enrolled in the McGill School of Continuing Studies (SCS) Certificate in Indigenous Business Management, with completion anticipated in 2026. This program offers interactive learning tailored to the realities of daily life, with courses available online and within the community at convenient times. Participants acquire essential business skills and knowledge highly sought after by employers, government, and business owners. The curriculum is designed to empower our employees to develop the skills to start, promote, and manage socially relevant businesses or organizations, lead and manage people effectively, communicate with confidence, design and lead projects, and negotiate and manage conflict.

PARTNERSHIPS

Cree School Board

The Apatisiwin Skills Development department and the Cree School Board are nurturing their sustainable partnership to enhance collaboration at all levels and better meet the needs of students and clients.

The partnership aims to provide an aligned approach to students, clients, bands, employers by offering simple, effective services, avoiding duplications and contradictions.

In the past, our department and the Cree School Board's Sabtuan Adult Education Services signed an agreement to strengthen collaboration and support students in accessing employment opportunities. The agreement outlines clear processes for information sharing, confidentiality, consultation, and community relations, ensuring a seamless process for all involved.

Similarly, a partnership agreement with the Cree School Board's Post-Secondary Student Services is in development to maximize resources and assistance made available to post-secondary students transitioning to the Eeyou Istchee labour market.

These joint efforts to build partnerships stem from an attitude of open communication that fosters transparency, mutual understanding, and facilitates dialogue among all stakeholders. This commitment to communication is the key to continuous improvement and the success of our joint initiatives.

Services Québec, Service Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency

In recent years, we have chosen to expand the range of services we offer by developing collaborations with various provincial and federal government departments, including Service Canada, the Canada Revenue Agency, and Revenu Québec.

We remain committed to expanding the reach of these partnerships by ensuring that we have visited and offered services to all our communities by the end of summer 2026.

Commission de la Construction de Québec (CCQ)

Over the last decades, the Cree Nation Government raised issues and identified barriers in relation to the integration of Cree workers and entrepreneurs in the regime applicable to the Commission de la Construction de Québec (CCQ). The following key requests made by the Cree communities of Eeyou Istchee were essentially the following:

- Increase the access to competency certificate for Cree construction workers
- Recognize the work experiences and training outside the CCQ regime
- Prioritize hiring of the Cree workforce
- Diversify vocational training program available in the territory

- Provide access to English and adapted services for workers, for qualification exams and for CCQ skills upgrading courses
- Increase mobility of the workforce outside communities.

In the last ten years, increased collaboration between the CNG and the CCQ has led to important milestones for a better inclusion of Cree workers and entrepreneurs in the CCQ regime.

In 2019, the CCQ launched the Collaborative Approach for the Inclusion of First Nations and Inuit in the Construction Industry, whose objectives were to provide an adequate response to the demands expressed by the First Nations and Inuit in a general manner, and to enable the CCQ to coordinate structured efforts via the development of a Construction Industry Action Plan for the Inclusion of the First Nations and Inuit.

The Director of the Apatisiwin Skills Development Department, Mr. Abel Trapper, is an active member of the Advisory Committee for a Collaborative Approach for the inclusion of First Nations and Inuit in the construction industry.

Last year, the Commission de la construction du Québec (CCQ), alongside the First Nations and Inuit and the partners in the industry, launched the Construction Industry Action Plan for the Inclusion of First Nations and Inuit.

In early 2025, the CCQ started the implementation of the action plan, answering the request of the Cree Nation by harmonizing boundaries of the CCQ Baie-James region with those of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay region, and agreeing to adapt administrative services accordingly. Furthermore, the Ministère du Travail du Québec granted ASD the authority to act as a referral agency on its behalf.

CREE-CANADA RELATIONS

The Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee maintains a distinct nation-to-nation and treaty relationship with Canada, grounded in the 1975 James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA), recognized as the first modern Indigenous land claim agreement and treaty in Canada. This relationship was further strengthened through the 2008 New Relationship Agreement and the 2017 Cree Nation Governance Agreement, which together advanced Cree self-determination, clarified respective responsibilities, and reinforced regional authority over community and economic development.

Within this framework, the Cree Nation Government assumed expanded responsibility for training, employment services, and community development, supported by long-term financial commitments from Canada.

For Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD), this support includes core funding under a Funding Transfer Payment Agreement for the period 2018 to 2028, as well as additional funding through the Indigenous Skills and Employment

Training Program Funding Agreement for the period 2019 to 2029. Together, these agreements enable eligible clients to develop transferable skills, access employment services, and pursue sustainable, long-term career opportunities.

As these agreements approach renewal, several matters remain under discussion, including the indexation of federal funding under the New Relationship Agreement, the future of childcare support within new ASD funding arrangements, and longer-term funding solutions for Cree beneficiaries residing in MoCreebec.

Formal discussions with Canada on the renewal of the New Relationship Agreement and related funding arrangements are now underway, with the shared objective of ensuring the Cree Nation's continued capacity to deliver programs and services that reflect Cree priorities, responsibilities, and long-term development goals.

ASD COMMITTEES

Two committees review project assessment and recommendations made by ASD Program Development Officers. Their specific mandates are the following.

Technical Group

The Technical Group consists of ASD Managers and meets at least once a month to review projects with a value of \$25,000 or less.

Apatisiwin Skills Development Advisory Committee (ASDAC)

ASDAC consists of voting members which are representative from each of the 9 communities of Eeyou Istchee, the Cree Nation Government, the Cree Nation Youth Council and the Cree School Board

Non-voting members include the Director of ASD, a Washaw Sibi appointee and a Canada representative.

The ASDAC meets typically quarterly or at any other time deemed necessary thereafter to review projects of \$25,000 and over.

The ASDAC promotes full-time employment for the development of clients' employability skills, preferably leading to full-time employment, and monitors the progress of Cree Beneficiaries in the workforce. The Committee also provides support in resolving employment development issues by helping to bring them to the attention of the Government of Canada.

SUCCESS STORIES

MINOPRO CREE: DEVELOPING OUR PEOPLE, BUILDING OUR FUTURE

In Eeyou Istchee, Minopro Cree demonstrates what can be achieved when local talent is supported through targeted training and meaningful employment opportunities. As the Cree division, it has developed a practical, community-based approach that enables participants to build skills, strengthen confidence, and pursue rewarding careers in the industrial and mining sectors. Its Discovery Program, designed for members of Indigenous communities, offers hands-on learning in authentic workplace settings under the guidance of experienced trainers. Through this program, participants can explore trades, gain recognized skills, and prepare for stable employment close to home.

Founded in 2016, Minopro Cree was established with a vision to improve lives in Eeyou Istchee by creating access to mining-related employment opportunities. Through determination, the organization was built, partnerships were formed, and the support required to bring that vision to life was secured.

Minopro Cree is a mining training provider that equips participants with the theoretical knowledge and practical experience needed to adapt confidently to on-site work. The Discovery Program currently focuses on the mill sector of mining operations, preparing trainees for the realities of the workplace through applied learning.

Because a strong organizational foundation had already been established, Minopro Cree was able to welcome its first graduating class in 2018. The groundwork created through early planning, strategic partnerships, and community support provided the stability and direction needed to transform its vision into tangible results for participants in Eeyou Istchee.

In 2022, Minopro Cree launched its first Discovery Program cohort, further expanding its capacity to recruit, train, and integrate Cree workers into industrial settings across Eeyou Istchee. These milestones reflect not only the organization's commitment to building a skilled Cree workforce, but also its ability to turn opportunity into action and help create a future in which Cree workers can thrive in industries that contribute to the region's economic development.

The organization places a strong emphasis on small class sizes to ensure that each student receives the attention and support needed to succeed. Its agreement with



Dhilmar Eleonore also enables trainees to learn directly on-site, providing valuable experience in an authentic work environment.

This partnership helped students Nolan Bull and Jeremy Bearskin secure employment while completing the six-month program in March 2026, demonstrating the direct impact of training that is closely aligned with industry needs.

Building on this success, Minopro Cree has the intention to expand its training offerings. What began as a single program focused on mill operations, will offer underground training, creating new opportunities for participants to enter additional areas of the mining sector.

The new underground cohort's Goal is to bring in Cree Trainer from the Eeyou Istchee region, with multiple years of experience. A Cree professional that will bring both technical expertise and a strong connection to the community to the training program.

Minopro Cree has received support through Apatisiwiin Skills Development's Job Creation and Competencies and Skills funding programs. Minopro has also acknowledged the ongoing support of ASD whose team has remained accessible whenever guidance was needed.

This story demonstrates how organizations can achieve meaningful results when they work together to put people first, build strong connections, and create pathways to success. It illustrates how a collaborative ecosystem can generate lasting benefits for individuals, communities, and industry alike.

Photo: Brendan Forward

ASD ANNUAL REPORT STATISTICS



APATISHIWIN ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAMS FINANCIAL INFORMATION

During the fiscal year 2025-26, 590 projects were approved for a total of \$45,051,038 under employment and training programs and 268 projects received payments for a total amount of \$12,088,345.

In the data presented below, the “Other” category includes territorial projects and program contracts with Cree organizations of Eeyou Istchee outside of the territory.

290

PROJECTS APPROVED

\$45,051,038

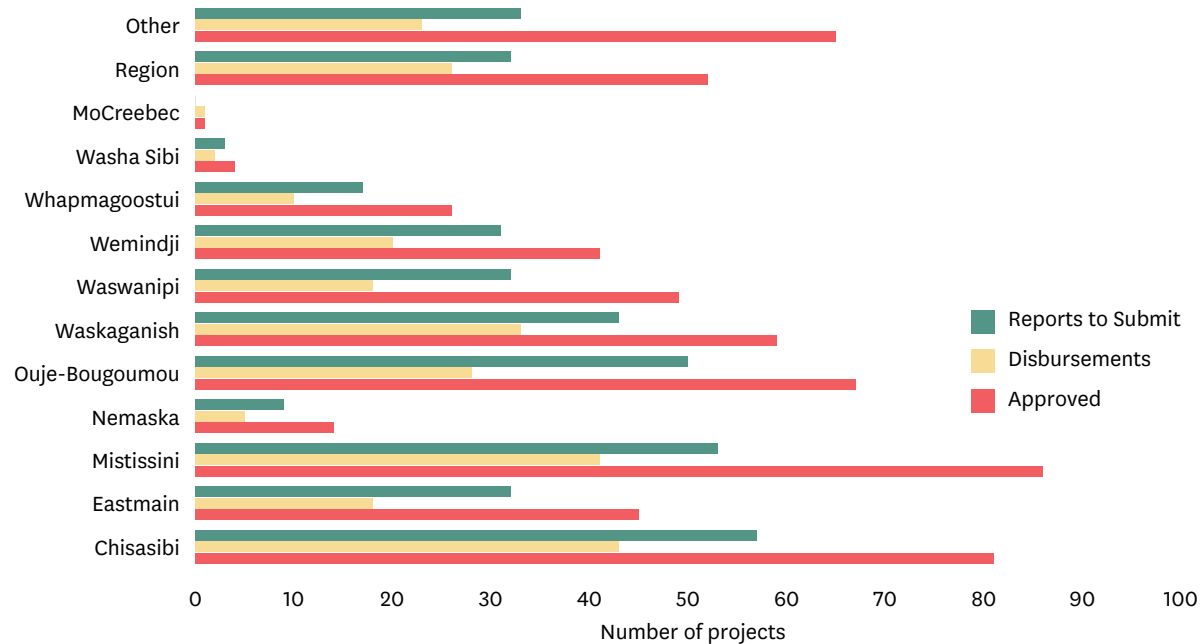
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROVED

Number of Projects with Financial Commitments and Payments

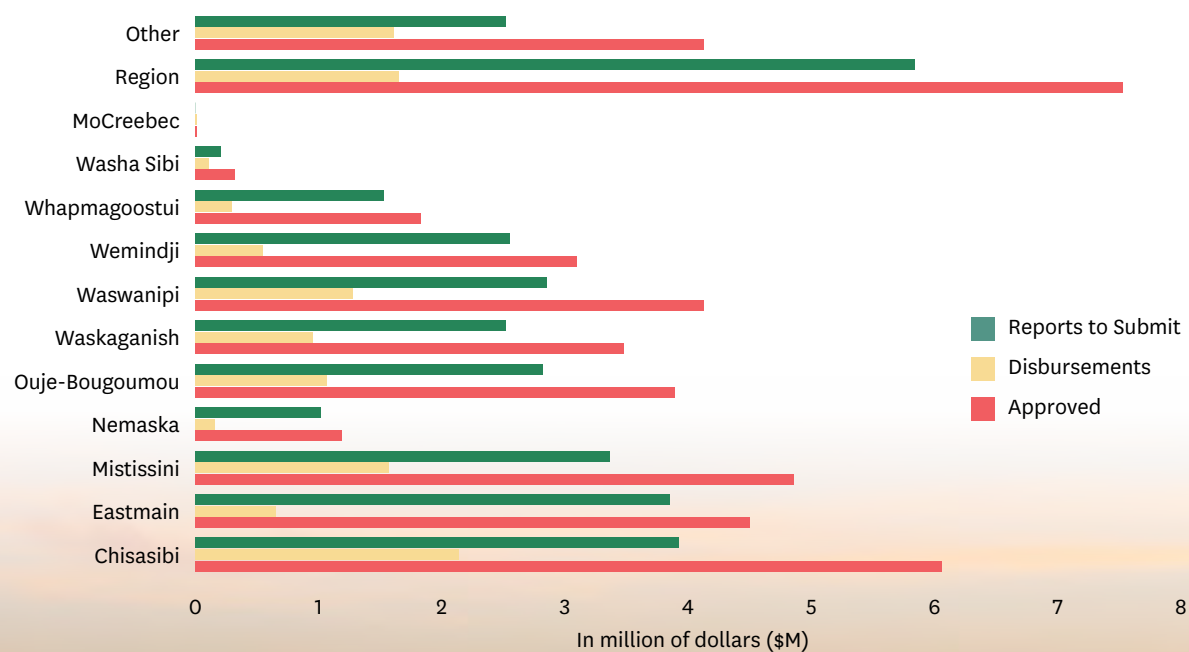
	Approved		Disbursements		Reports to Submit	
	No. of Projects	Amounts	No. of Projects	Amounts	No. of Projects	Amounts
Chisasibi	81	\$6,059,380	43	\$2,142,198	57	\$3,917,182
Eastmain	45	\$4,503,067	18	\$655,118	32	\$3,847,949
Mistissini	86	\$4,861,913	41	\$1,573,338	53	\$3,363,077
Nemaska	14	\$1,186,140	5	\$163,659	9	\$1,022,481
Ouje-Bougoumou	67	\$3,894,369	28	\$1,071,436	50	\$2,822,933
Waskaganish	59	\$3,475,121	33	\$952,979	43	\$2,522,142
Waswanipi	49	\$4,132,547	18	\$1,284,824	32	\$2,847,723
Wemindji	41	\$3,103,804	20	\$555,004	31	\$2,548,800
Whapmagoostui	26	\$1,830,977	10	\$299,563	17	\$1,531,414
Washaw Sibi	4	\$324,533	2	\$110,900	3	\$213,633
MoCreebec	1	\$13,213	1	\$13,213	0	\$0
Region	52	\$7,534,194	26	\$1,652,079	32	\$5,840,194
Other	65	\$4,131,780	23	\$1,614,034	33	\$2,517,746
Total	590	\$45,051,038	268	\$12,088,345	392	\$32,995,274

Photo: Brendan Forward

Number of Projects with Financial Commitments



Amounts Per Community



PARTICIPANTS IN ASD PROGRAMS

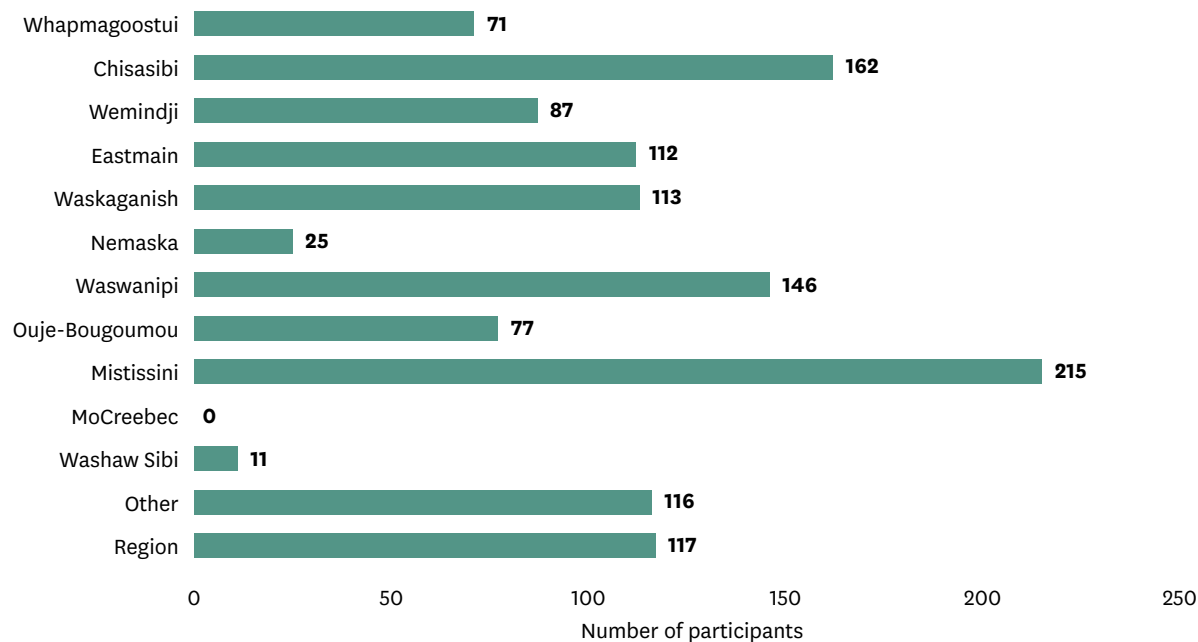
Apatisiwin Skills Development carried out employment and training activities throughout the communities and territory. During the fiscal year 2025-26, there were more than 3,500 participant interventions under the programs based on contract dates.

Participant statistics are presented following the three ASD program streams:

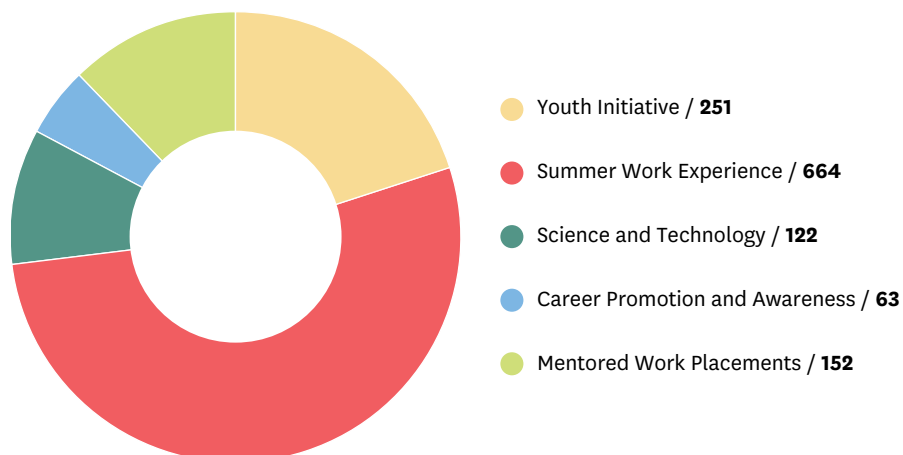
- Youth Programs
- Capacity Building
- Workforce Strategy

Youth Programs

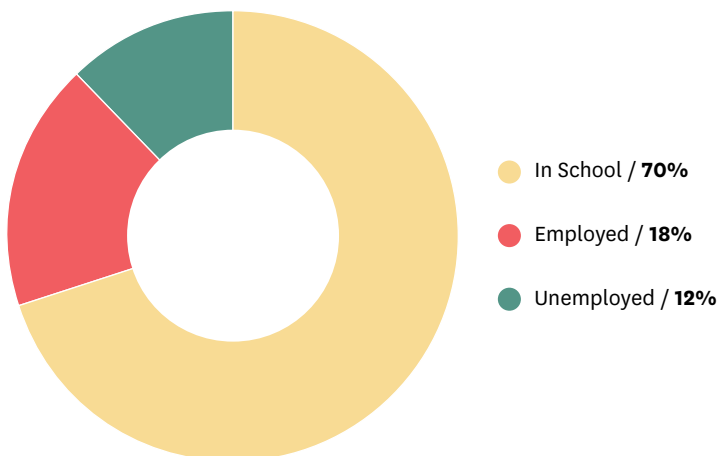
Youth Programs / Participants by Community



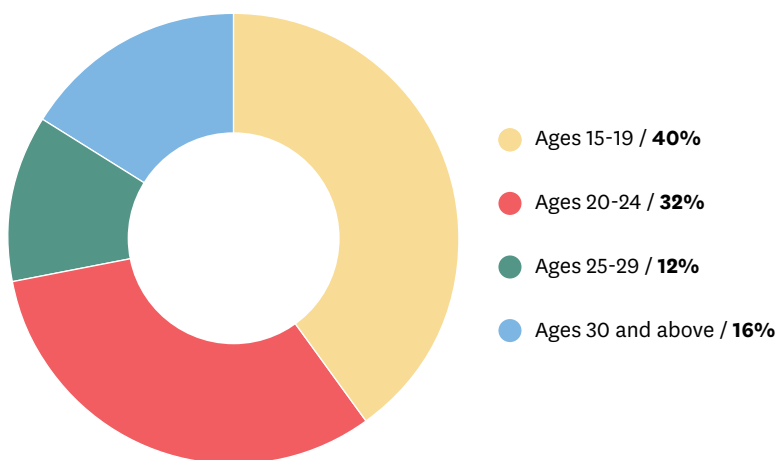
Youth Programs / 1,257 Participant Interventions



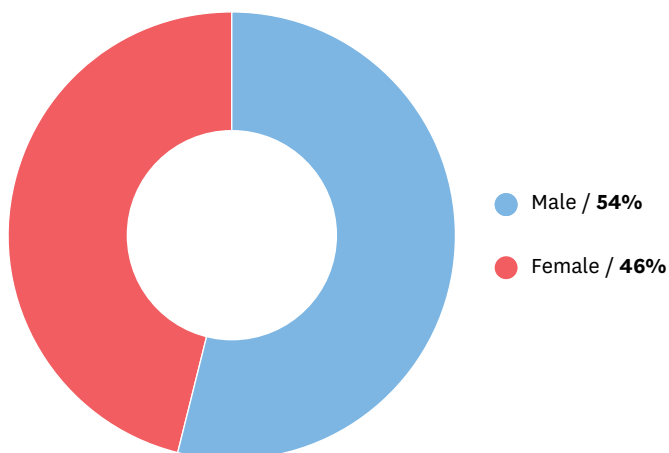
Youth Programs / Participants' Post Training Results



Youth Programs / % of Participants by Age-group



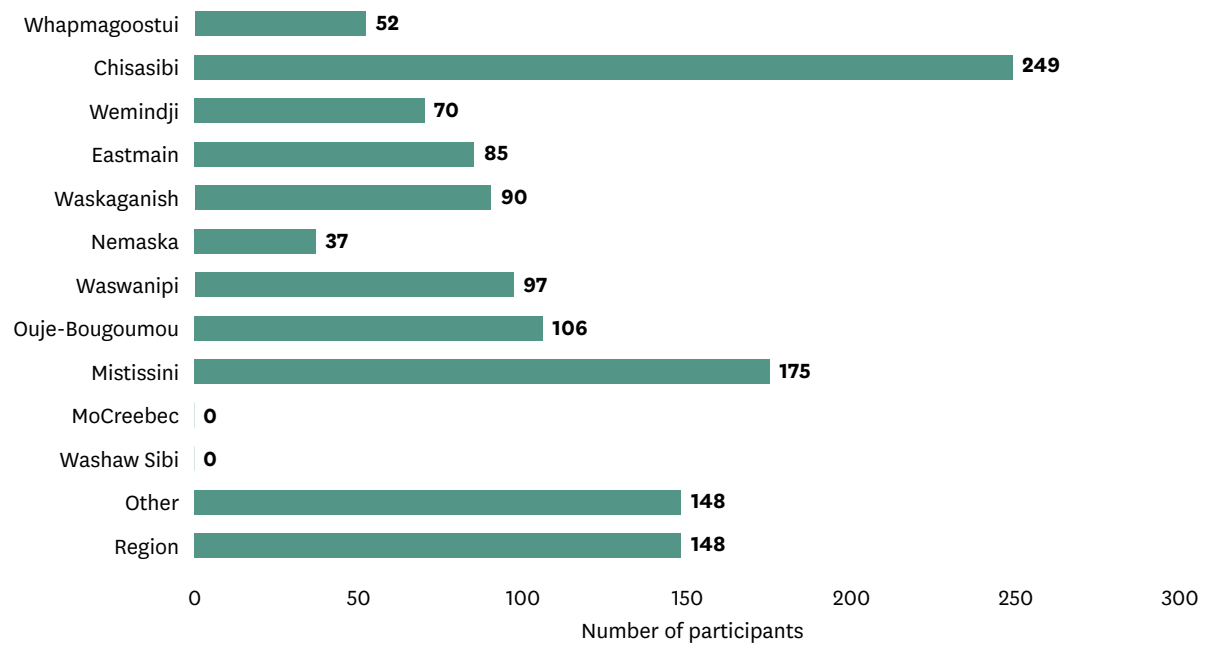
Youth Programs / Participants by Gender



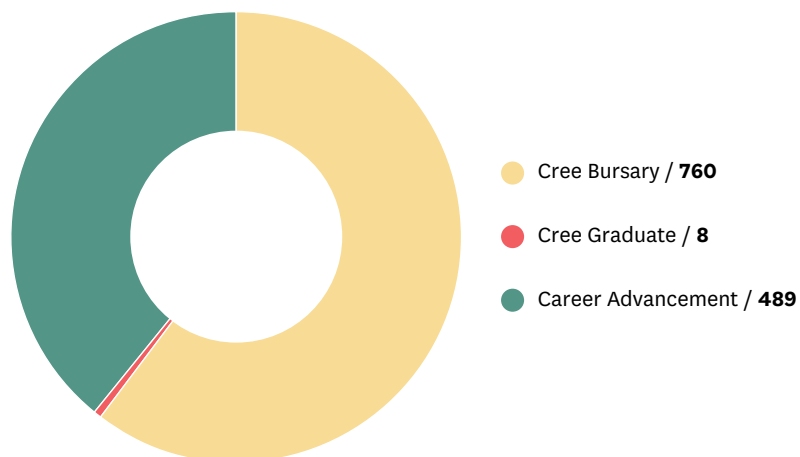
Apatisiwin
Skills
Development
carried out
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throughout the
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Capacity Building Programs

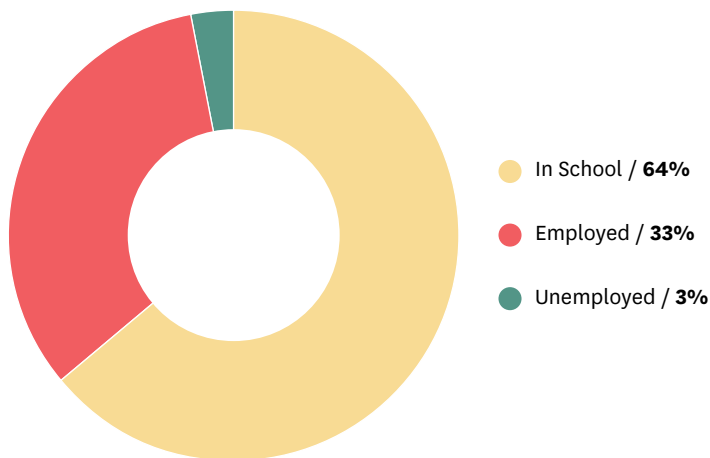
Capacity Building Programs / Participants by Community



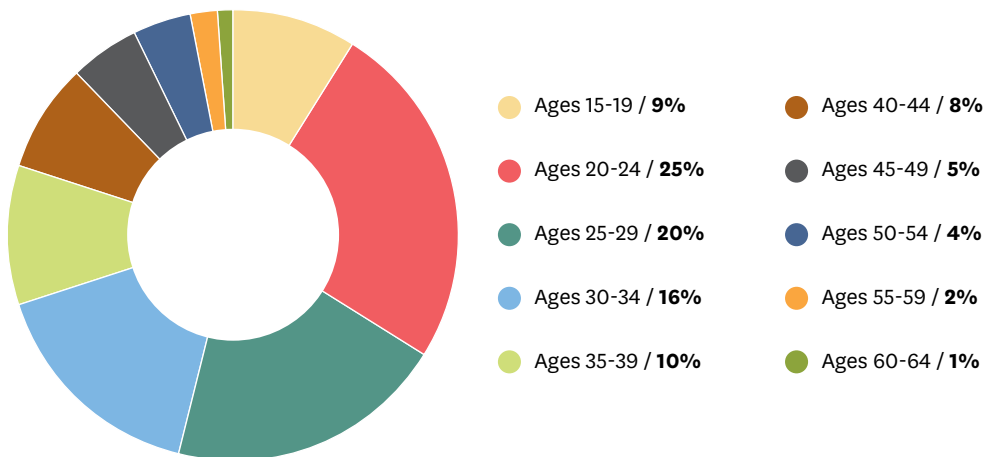
Capacity Building Programs / 1,257 Participant Interventions



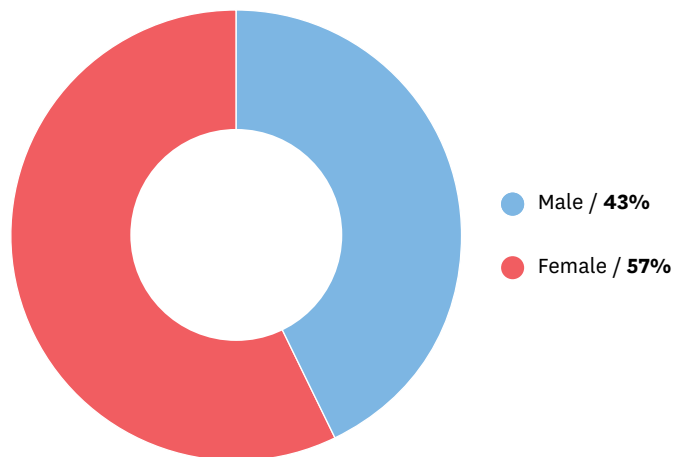
Capacity Building Programs / Participants' Post Training Results



Capacity Building Programs / % of Participants by Age-group

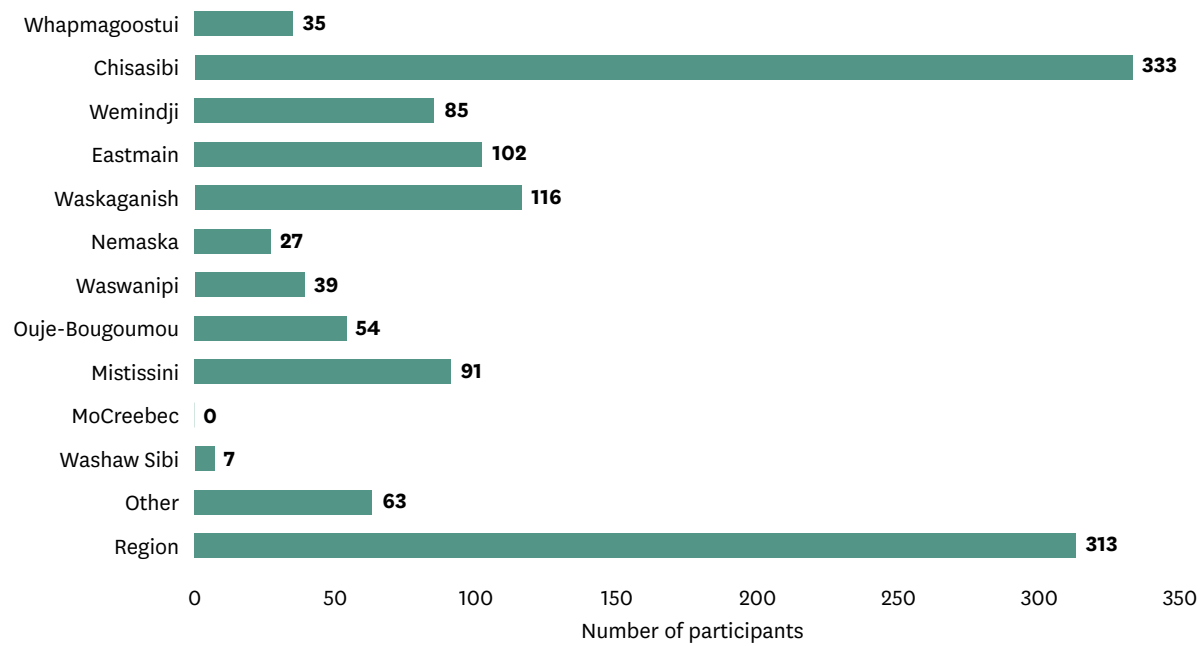


Capacity Building Programs / Participants by Gender

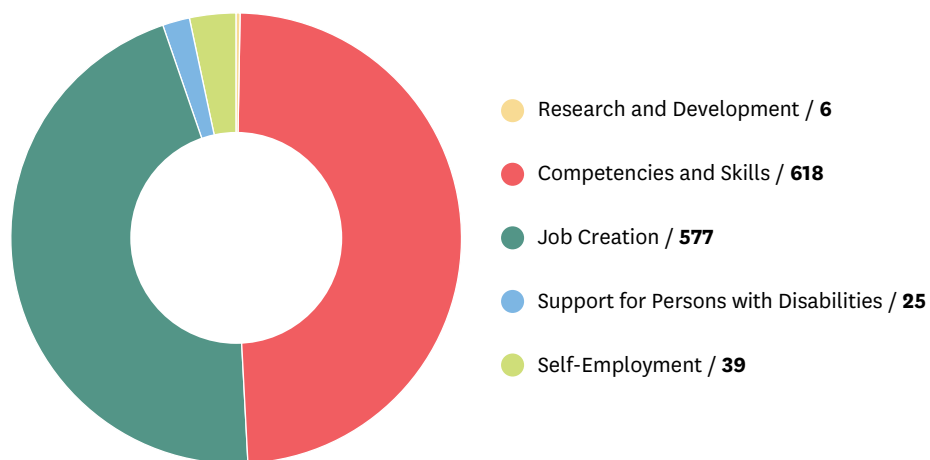


Workforce Strategy Programs

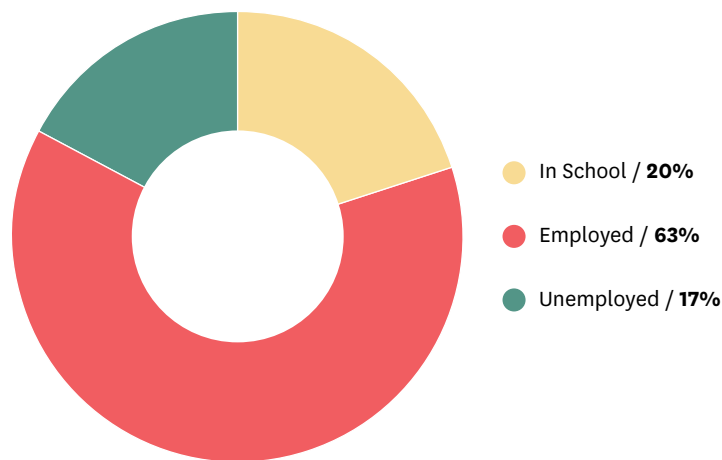
Workforce Strategy Programs / Participants by Community



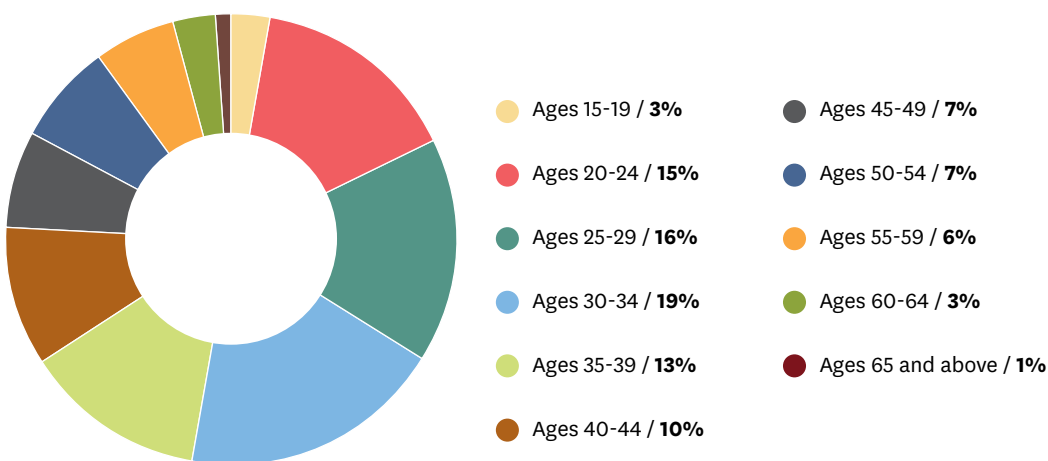
Workforce Strategy Programs / 1,257 Participant Interventions



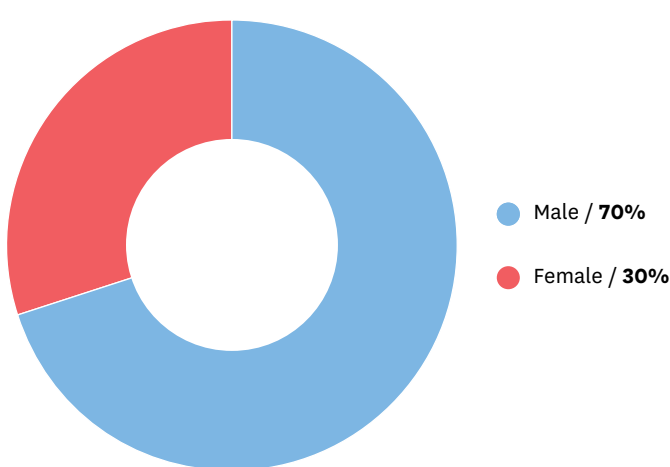
Workforce Strategy Programs / Participants' Post Training Results



Workforce Strategy Programs / % of Participants by Age-group

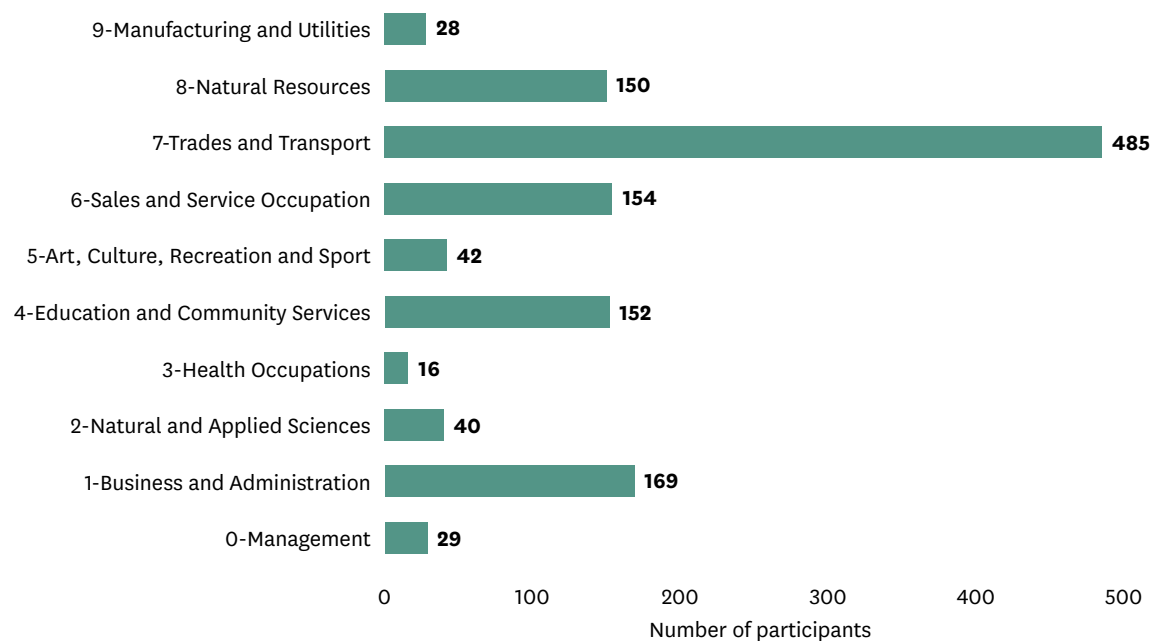


Workforce Strategy Programs / Participants by Gender

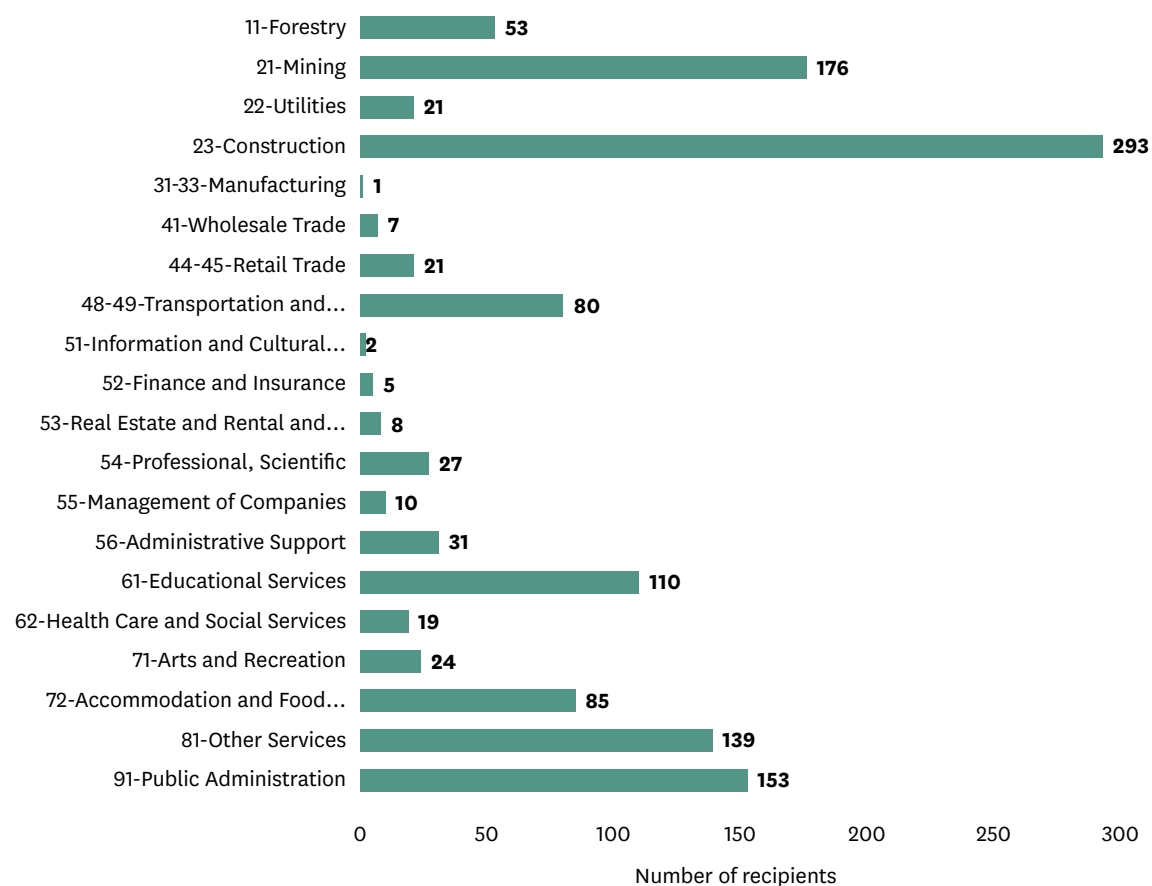


Workforce Strategy Programs

Workforce Strategy Programs / Participants by Training Field (NOC)

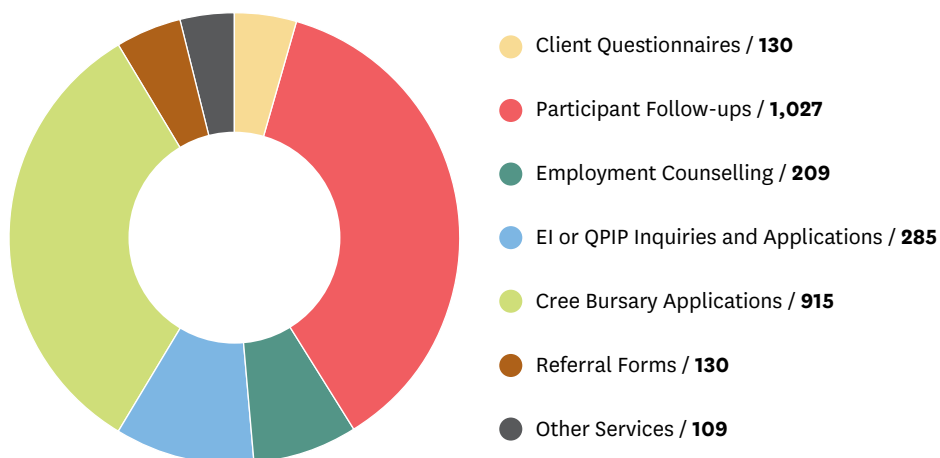


Workforce Strategy Programs / Recipients by Industry (NAICS)

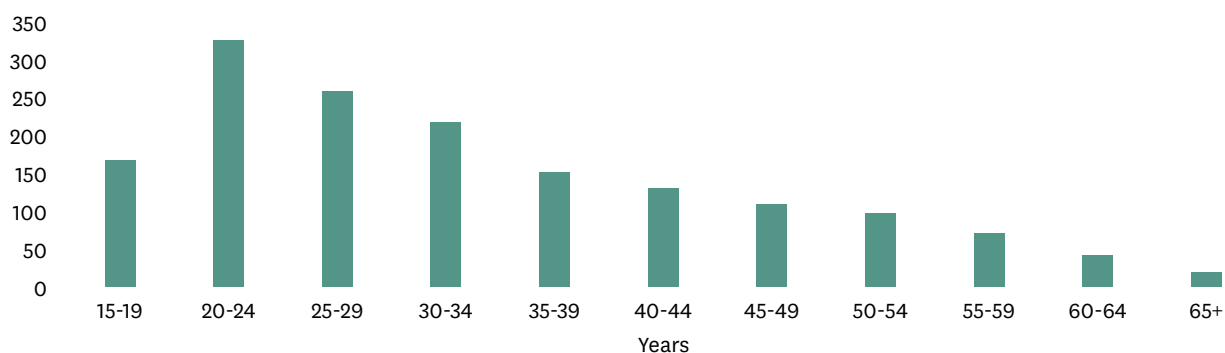


Client Services

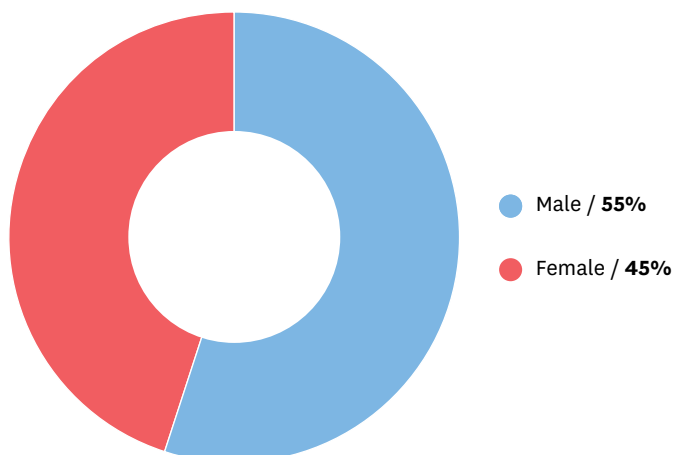
Client Services from ASD Counsellors



Client Services from ASD Counsellors / Clients by Age-Group



Client Services from ASD Counsellors / Clients by Gender





COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Message from the Interim Director Lucas Del Vecchio



I am pleased to present the Department of Commerce and Industry (DCI) annual report for 2025-2026.



I would like to firstly congratulate Anthony MacLeod on being named the Executive Director and wish him all the best in his position. I would like to thank and acknowledge the contributions of all staff members, past and present, whose efforts have helped ensure the continued success of the department throughout the year and particularly during the transition period.

During the year DCI continued to build on the foundations of previous years while navigating a period of transition. Throughout the year, the department remained focused on strengthening its capacity, improving service delivery to the communities, and advancing key strategic priorities that support economic development across Eeyou/Eenou Istchee. An important highlight for the year was the second Cree Nation Business Summit held in Mistissini in August 2025. I would like to extend my thanks to the entire department, the community of Mistissini and our numerous partners and service providers who helped in making the event such a success.

As in past years, our work has been focused on supporting the growth of Cree entrepreneurship and expansion of the private sector. With continued demand for programs such as the Cree Entrepreneurship Assistance Fund and the Regional Development Fund, DCI continued to play an active role in supporting the new and expanding businesses.

At the same time, this year marked important progress in advancing strategic economic initiatives. The department continued working on the implementation of the Cree Nation Economic Prioritization Agreement and the evolution of the

Business Registry and Opportunities platform. Both initiatives represent important steps in strengthening how we support and prioritize Cree businesses across the territory.

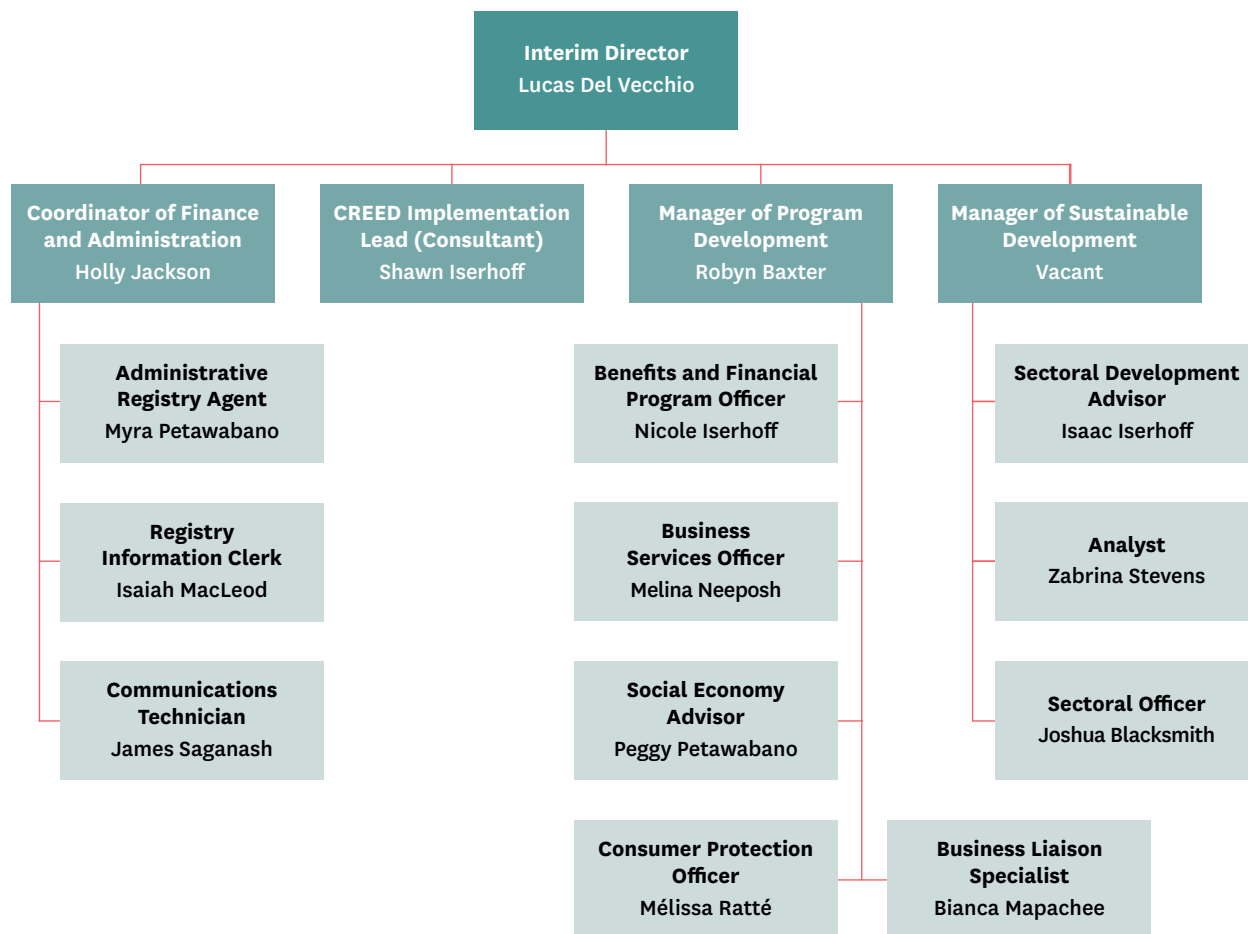
DCI also continued its involvement in sectoral development files, including ongoing coordination, participation and negotiations on files related to mining and forestry. Through this work, the department supports communities in navigating complex processes, opportunities and challenges related to resource development and broader economic trends.

In addition, the department placed increased emphasis on communications, outreach, and engagement, recognizing the importance of connecting with community members and improving awareness of available programs and services. Initiatives such as the continued development of financial literacy services and public engagement efforts contribute to strengthening participation in the regional economy.

Overall, 2025-2026 was a year of continued program delivery and the advancement of key strategic initiatives. As we look ahead, DCI remains committed to supporting Cree communities, entrepreneurs, and organizations, and to contributing to a strong and diversified Cree economy.

Lucas Del Vecchio
Interim Director, Department of Commerce and Industry

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY STRUCTURE



Christmas Planning Session 2025, Auberge Capissisit Lodge – Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Our Mandate

The Department of Commerce and Industry is mandated to diversify and stimulate economic growth in Eeyou Istchee by supporting Cree entrepreneurs, community-based enterprises, and regional economic initiatives.

Mission

The mission of the Department of Commerce and Industry is to support and advance economic development in Eeyou Istchee through strategic program delivery, sectoral development, and economic governance tools that enable Cree individuals, communities, and enterprises to participate meaningfully in the regional economy.

Vision

The Department of Commerce and Industry envisions a strong, diversified, and self determined Cree economy in which Eeyouch and Eenouch benefit from long term prosperity rooted in Cree values, stewardship of the land, and community well being.

Our Pillars

The DCI is driven by 3 economic pillars:

1. Local Enterprises
2. Natural Resource Development
3. Cooperative and Sustainable Economies

Department Movement

- Casey MacLeod, Analyst, resigned in June 2025 to pursue new opportunities and launch his own consulting company.
- Samantha Awashish completed her term as Interim Social Economy Advisor on June 27, 2025, and Peggy Petawabano returned to her position on June 30, 2025.
- James Saganash joined the department on July 21, 2025, as Communications Technician.
- Nicole Iserhoff joined the department on August 25, 2025, as Benefits and Financial Program Officer.
- Zabrina Stevens joined the department on October 14, 2025, as Analyst.
- Anthony MacLeod left his role as Director on December 8, 2025, to assume the role of Executive Director of the Cree Nation Government.
- Lucas Del Vecchio assumed the role of Interim Director on December 15, 2025.
- Katie-Joy Sealhunter-Matoush left her role as Business Services Officer in January 2026 to assume the position of Economic Development Officer for the Cree Nation of Wemindji.
- Bianca Mapachee joined the department on January 26, 2026, as Business Liaison Specialist.
- Melina Neeposh joined the department on March 30, 2026, as Business Services Officer.

We thank all former team members for their valuable contributions to the department and wish them continued success in their future endeavors.

BUILDING BRIDGES WITH THE COMMUNITIES

As more people now receive information through social media and digital platforms, communications have become an essential tool for reaching the population quickly and effectively. A recent youth public quiz and engagement initiative indicated that approximately 43% of participants were not familiar with the Department of Commerce and Industry role or the services available to them, highlighting the need for stronger visibility and public awareness.



With the Communications Technician position now established, the department's vision is to strengthen communication and engagement with the Cree Nation by making information more accessible and easier to understand. Through social media, graphic design, outreach, photography, video production, and promotional content. Communications aim to create a stronger bridge between DCI and the communities through increased digital presence, public outreach, and consistent sharing of programs, services, and opportunities available to the population.

DCI has also launched a Linktree platform that brings together programs, funding opportunities, campaigns, and resources in one easy-to-access hub for the public.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND SECTORAL OVERVIEW

Mining

Sectoral development activities in mining during the year emphasized capacity building, internal coordination, and the use of Cree specific policy and planning tools. DCI worked to strengthen its role as a point of coordination between communities, proponents, and regulatory processes.

This included support for policy development, community tools, training initiatives, and increased involvement in sector related working groups. These efforts supported informed participation and preparedness across Cree communities.

Last July, the Sectoral Team participated in an IBA consultation with the community of Waswanipi. During the session, the team presented several topics related to exploration and mining activities within the territory, with a primary focus on providing updates regarding the Windfall Project, located on the community's traditional trap-lines. The purpose of this consultation blitz was to inform community members about the project and outline the next steps in the process leading up to the potential signing of an IBA with the proponent. These sessions also help strengthen relationships with the community, raise awareness about mining activities, and, most importantly,



provide education on the JBNQA and the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) process that must be completed before any mining project is approved by the authorities.

The Sectoral Officer also met with the ESIA team from the Environment Department to review the process and coordinate an update for the affected Cree community. Discussions also included the ongoing restoration of an old outfitting and hydrobase camp. The community has appointed its administrative staff, and the Sectoral Officer has reached out to the tallyman in collaboration with local representatives.

Site Visit – Project Windfall

In early September, the Sectoral team had the opportunity to visit Project Windfall, located within Waswanipi territory. The team traveled to Lebel-sur-Quévillon before continuing on to the site. During the visit, the team met with the community and Gold Fields representatives on site. In the afternoon, the team toured the exploration camps and later accessed the underground ramp, where they witnessed firsthand, Cree workers operating their own drill rigs approximately 700 meters below ground.



GESTIM and SIGEOM Information Training Session

The GESTIM and SIGEOM information training session provided the community representatives and sectoral team with a practical overview of key tools used to support mineral resource planning and analysis in Québec. Participants were introduced to GESTIM, the public register of real immovable mining rights, and SIGEOM, Québec's spatial information system for mining and geology. The session also included presentations on mineral potential within the Eeyou Istchee traditional territory, helping strengthen the team's understanding of available data, strategic planning tools, and the broader mining context affecting the region.

Authorization of Impact-Causing Exploration Work

Under the Authorization of Impact-Causing Exploration Work initiative, the sectoral team developed a standardized response letter for all exploration permit requests submitted within Eeyou Istchee. This tool is intended to provide a consistent and formalized means of communication with industry stakeholders while clearly reinforcing Cree priorities. In particular, the letter recognizes the importance of traditional activities and emphasizes the protection of water, land, and wildlife. By establishing a more permanent approach to these communications, the team has strengthened how these concerns are conveyed throughout the exploration authorization process.

Outfitting

In September, the team participated in the 50th anniversary tri-meeting of the James Bay Advisory Boards, the Kativik Environmental Advisory Committee, and the Hunting, Fishing, Trapping Coordinating Committee held in Whapmagoostui. The gathering provided an important opportunity for regional collaboration and dialogue on environmental governance and land-use priorities.

As part of the Hunting, fishing, trapping coordinating committee, the Sectoral Officer also participated in a study tour to the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park in early October. The





visit provided valuable insight and strengthened partnerships that may support the future development of the Wiinipaakw National Marine Conservation Area in Eeyou Istchee. Representatives from coastal communities, including COTA, CTA, and CNG, attended alongside members of the Essipit First Nation, exchanges were made and discussion about the marine protected areas and presentations took place within their respective community.

Forestry

The department Director participated in the Cree-Québec Forestry Economic Council alongside the Directors of the Forestry Department and Apatisiwin Skills Development. The Council's mandate is to support the implementation of the economic provisions of the Paix des Braves agreement and to make recommendations aimed at maximizing positive economic impacts for the Cree Nation. In this role, the Council oversees matters related to the allocation of the 15% set-aside silvicultural work budgets and helps ensure that forestry-related opportunities are aligned with Cree interests, economic priorities, and long-term capacity-building objectives.

Data Collection and Analysis

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the Department of Commerce and Industry (DCI) continued developing its economic analysis and data management capacity to support long-term regional planning and evidence-based decision-making across Eeyou Istchee.

A key focus of this work was the advancement of the Regional Economic Analysis Project, with efforts centered on planning and pre-development activities, including refining the framework, identifying regional data gaps, and establishing foundational datasets to support future analysis and strategic planning.

Progress was also made in strengthening internal governance and research capacity through collaboration with leadership and working groups, ensuring alignment between economic analysis priorities and broader departmental objectives. Research and engagement activities

further expanded DCI's understanding of regional economic trends, including workforce dynamics, procurement patterns, housing needs, and economic leakage.

In October 2025, Zabrina Stevens joined the department as Analyst, supporting data coordination, internal data requests, and the ongoing planning and development of the Regional Economic Analysis Project.

Capacity-building remained a priority throughout the year, with participation in training and workshops related to data management, economic analysis, and Indigenous statistics.

These activities strengthened DCI's capacity to support evidence-based planning, policy development, and program decision-making across its mandates.

PROGRAMS

Cree Entrepreneurship Assistance Fund (CEAF)



The Cree Entrepreneurship Assistance Fund (CEAF) provides grants for new Cree business start-ups and funding for existing Cree businesses to expand, modernize, and upgrade their equipment and operations. The program supports the development of Cree-owned local enterprises and contributes to strengthening economic activity across Eeyou Istchee.

Throughout the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the CEAF program continued to respond to demand from entrepreneurs across multiple sectors, including transport, construction, and small service-based businesses. These investments support the creation of local services, build business capacity, and contribute to the circulation of funds within Cree communities.

This year, the department made significant progress in advancing existing projects toward completion, ensuring proper documentation, and closing files that had reached their final stage. In total, ten (10) projects from previous years were successfully closed out during the fiscal year, reducing the number of outstanding files and improving overall program management.

During the same period, four (4) new projects were approved under CEAF, supporting continued investment in Cree entrepreneurship and local economic development.

Overall, CEAF continues to play an important role in supporting Cree entrepreneurs while ensuring that program delivery remains efficient, accountable, and aligned with current priorities.

Regional Development Fund (RDF)

The Regional Development Fund (RDF) continued to support economic diversification and strategic regional development across Eeyou Istchee during the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Through targeted investments, the program contributed to advancing infrastructure, communications, and economic initiatives that support long-term growth and capacity-building.

Throughout the year, several projects progressed through approval, implementation, and completion stages. Major initiatives included the Eeyou Communications Network (Meskino Project), the Waswanipi Hotel project, and the Ouje-Bougoumou Commercial Center, which continued to advance through funding and agreement processes. Additional projects approved during the year include the Eénatuk Cutting Team and the Mistissini Fish Tail Bay Project.

Several projects were also completed or moved into final payment stages during the fiscal year, including the JBCCS Cree TV Studio project, the COTA Alternative Lodging project, and the Chisasibi Telecommunications Radio Tower project, reflecting continued progress in delivering tangible economic outcomes through RDF funding.

The program also included several ongoing multi-year co-contribution projects, including the Elders Matching Contribution (MAMH Québec), Cree Social Economy Co-Contribution (Économie et Innovation Québec), CNG Communications Technology Co-Contribution (RRF – MAMH Québec), and the DCI–SDBJ Liaison Officer Co-Contribution (SPN and SDBJ).

Looking ahead, the future of the RDF remains under discussion, as its funding framework tied to the Cree–Quebec Governance Agreement has expired and is currently under negotiation.

Cree Social Economy Regional Table (CSERT)

The Department of Commerce and Industry oversees the Social Economy funding agreement between the Cree Nation Government and the Government of Quebec. The funding supports enterprises with social aims, promoting traditional Cree activities and culture. The Réseau des pôles d’économie sociale serves as the primary resource hub for the social economy, with the Chantier de l’économie sociale providing additional support and resources. Eeyou Istchee is represented by the “Cree pole,” which covers the nine Cree communities through the Cree Social Economy Regional Table.

Throughout the year, activities focused on collaboration, outreach, and capacity building. The Social Economy Advisor attended key meetings, completed AI training, and participated in conferences in Ottawa and Montreal. Outreach included the Cree Nation Business Summit in Mistissini and joint presentations with FN–QLEDC in Waskaganish, while representatives from all nine communities were invited to the Montreal conference to support regional collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Considerable progress was made toward re-establishing the Cree Social Economy Regional Table. A Call for

CEAF Funding Distribution by Community

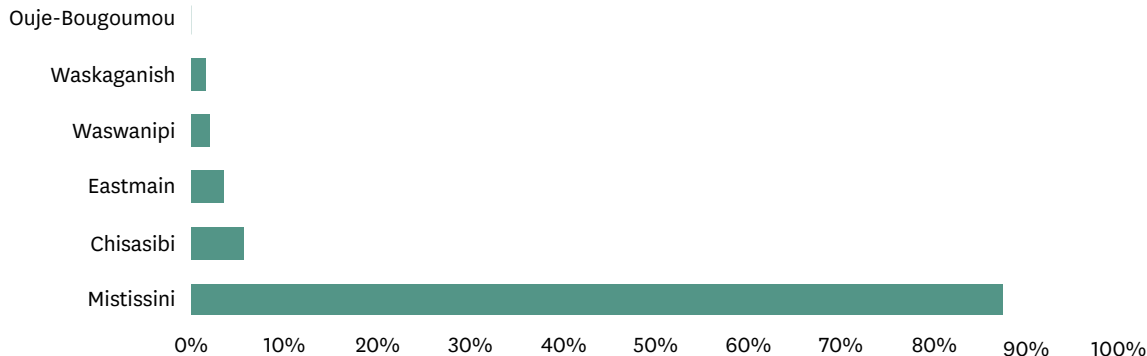


Table 1. Projects Approved Under the CSERT

Project	Community	Amount	Approval Date	Closed
EISRA – Expansion	Regional	\$25,000	January 30, 2026	March 23, 2026
CNACA – Strategic Action Plan	Regional	\$25,000	October 8, 2025	
CWEIA – First Nations Executive Education (FNEE) Entrepreneurship Program	Regional	\$25,000	November 11, 2025	
CNACA – Eastmain Arts Symposium	Regional	\$25,000	December 6, 2024	September 23, 2025
CWEIA – Technology Upgrade	Regional	\$22,929	March 17, 2025	August 16, 2025
CWEIA – Technology Upgrade	Regional	\$22,929	March 17, 2025	March 17, 2025

Proposals was launched, and Advantage Engineering Ltd. was selected to support this work, with initial engagement underway.

A total of three projects were approved during the fiscal year, while two projects carried over from the previous fiscal year were closed (see table 1).

Overall, these efforts contributed to strengthening partnerships, supporting strategic initiatives, and advancing the continued development of the social economy across Eeyou Istchee.

Regional and Rural Development Fund (RRDF)

The Regional and Rural Development Fund (RRDF) remained in a transition phase during the 2025–2026 fiscal year. Following the conclusion of the previous program in March 2025, efforts focused on the development and formal adoption of a new framework to guide future regional investments across Eeyou Istchee.

Throughout the year, key activities included defining regional priorities, confirming committee membership, and preparing supporting documentation for review at both Management and Executive levels.

These efforts led to the formal adoption of the new Regional and Rural Development Fund (RRDF) framework in March 2026, establishing a renewed structure to guide program delivery and regional investment in the coming years.

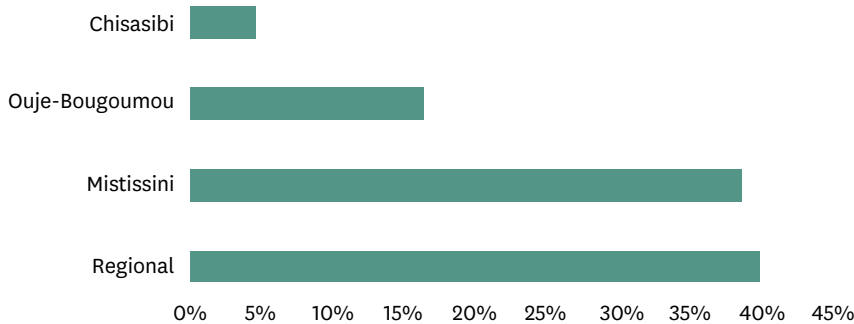
Looking ahead, the updated framework positions the Regional and Rural Development Fund (RRDF) to better support regional priorities through a more flexible and structured approach to funding and project development across Eeyou Istchee.

Cree Real Estate Entrepreneurship Development Program



The Cree Real Estate Entrepreneurship Development (CREED) Program continued to support the development of Cree-owned real estate and construction-related businesses across Eeyou Istchee. Throughout the year, the program supported new and current entrepreneurs, assessed project eligibility, and worked closely with proponents

RDF Funding Distribution by Community



to align projects with available funding opportunities. In cases where proposed activities were better suited to other funding programs, such as the Cree Entrepreneurship Assistance Fund (CEAF), applicants were guided toward the most appropriate program to support their business.

In 2025-2026, Mehekin Construction of Chisasibi remained the sole active CREED-funded project, having received \$75,000 in support. The project successfully reached completion, with all reporting requirements and supporting documentation reviewed and verified by the department. The project was formally closed on September 29, 2025, marking another successful investment in Cree entrepreneurship and local economic development.

The program also experienced growing interest from Cree entrepreneurs across Eeyou Istchee. Increased inquiries were received from Waskaganish, Chisasibi, and Eastmain regarding eligibility requirements, funding opportunities, and potential real estate development initiatives. Throughout the year, discussions were held with proponents representing projects such as the Eastmain Bed & Breakfast, Waskaganish Real Estate, and Broadback Construction to explore their concepts, financing requirements, and alignment with CREED program objectives. These engagements demonstrate a growing awareness of the program and the continued demand for support in the real estate and construction sectors.

SERVICES

JBNQA Beneficiary List

Throughout the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) Beneficiary Registry provided ongoing support to internal departments, Cree communities, and external organizations. Services included beneficiary confirmations, electoral lists, statistical data requests, and general inquiries related to JBNQA status.

Demand remained consistent, with activity influenced by elections and administrative needs that required updated electoral lists and timely responses. The registry continues to play a key role in maintaining accurate data and supporting governance and service delivery across Eeyou Istchee.

Cree Nation Economic Prioritization Agreement

The Cree Nation Economic Prioritization Agreement (CNEPA) continued to gain strong momentum over the past year, marked by the successful adoption of the agreement by three additional communities: Waswanipi, Mistissini, and Whapmagoostui. This expansion represents a significant step toward broader regional alignment and reinforces the shared commitment to strengthening Cree economic participation and prioritizing local businesses. With more communities formally recognizing the agreement, the CNEPA continues to solidify its role as a key framework for advancing economic development across the Cree Nation.

Extensive outreach and engagement efforts were carried out by management to support awareness and implementation of the CNEPA. Presentations were delivered to Chief and Council at band council meetings, as well as to community members and entrepreneurs during Annual General Assemblies and other key events. The Cree Nation Business Summit also served as an important platform to engage directly with business owners and stakeholders, providing detailed information on the benefits of the agreement and encouraging participation in the Cree Business Registry and Opportunities Platform.

Governance of the CNEPA was further strengthened through the appointment of new members to the Prioritization Review Panel representing the signatory communities. These appointments ensure that the review and certification process remains fair, transparent, and reflective of community perspectives. The Panel continues to play a critical role in assessing applications and applying the connecting factors test to determine eligibility for Cree Community-Based Enterprise (CBE) certification.

Communities that Have Ratified the CNEPA



Communities that didn't Ratify the CNEPA...Yet



Business Registry

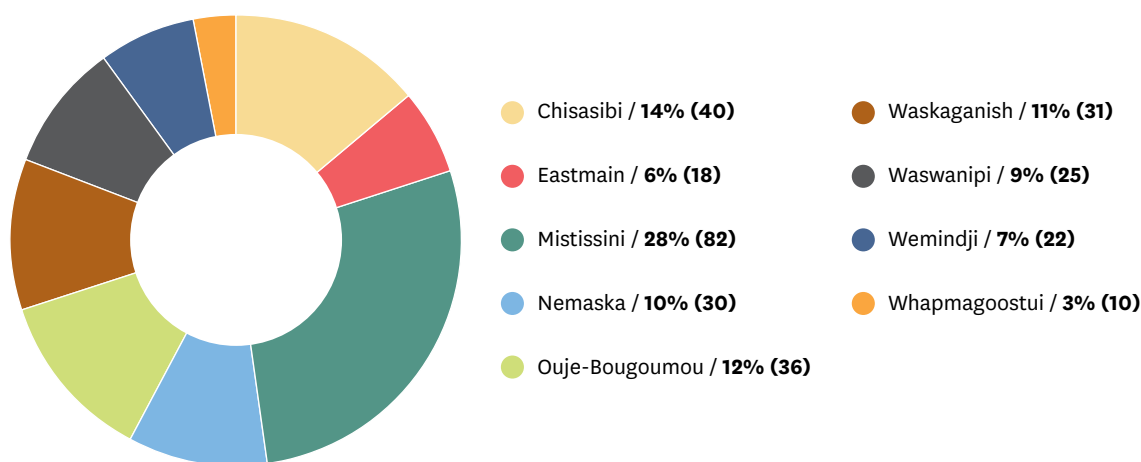
Since the launch of the Cree Nation Business Registry on July 14, 2025, the platform has grown to include 306 registered businesses, reflecting strong engagement and continued expansion across Cree communities. Throughout the fiscal year, approximately 20 businesses applied for Cree Community-Based Enterprise (CBE) certification, beginning with 11 applications in the first quarter and continuing with additional submissions across all quarters. To date, 10 businesses have been successfully CBE certified, while several others remain under review or in progress. These results demonstrate sustained interest in both the Registry and certification process as key components of CNEPA implementation.

A significant portion of this year's work involved direct engagement with entrepreneurs through community events and targeted outreach. Support was provided at key gatherings including the Waswanipi General Assemblies (April and January), the Cree Nation Business Summit (August 19–21), and the Economic Development Dialogue in Mistissini (January

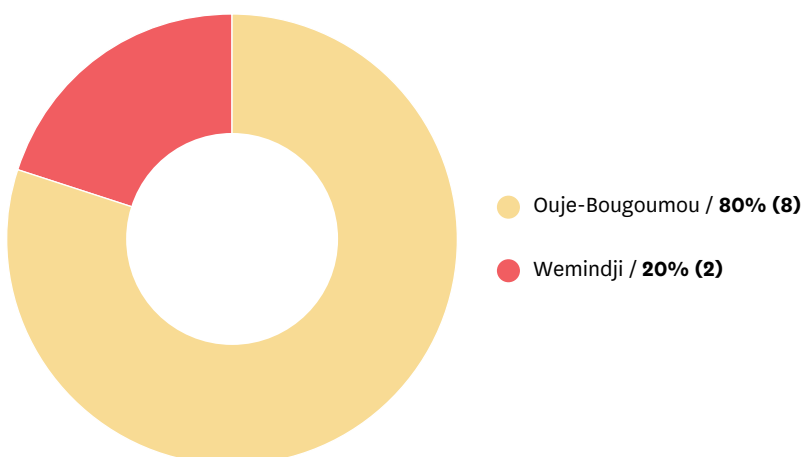
28). These events created valuable opportunities to assist entrepreneurs with business registration, guide them through the CBE certification process, and verify or update business information. Additional one-on-one support was provided both virtually and in person, helping entrepreneurs complete applications, register multiple businesses, and obtain required documentation such as NEQs. Engagement increased notably following the adoption of the CNEPA by Waswanipi and Mistissini, leading to a rise in registrations and certification inquiries.

Beyond outreach and certification support, key operational responsibilities included maintaining and updating the registry database, ensuring data accuracy, compiling sector-specific business lists for management, supporting internal initiatives such as the Keep it Local Campaign, assisting with opportunity postings on the platform, and coordinating with internal partners to help entrepreneurs meet registration and certification requirements.

Registered Businesses 2025-2026



CBE Certified Businesses 2025-2026



Consumer Protection

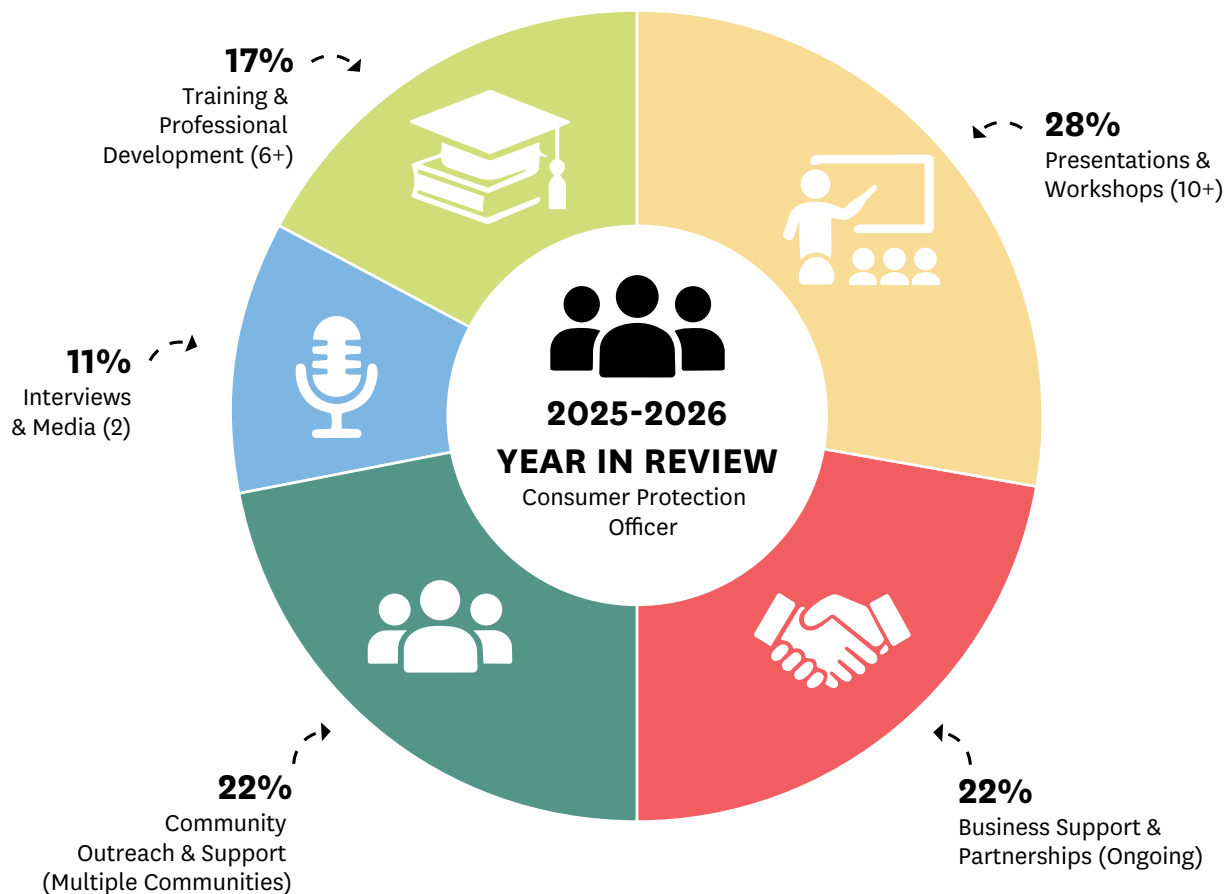
Throughout 2025–2026, the Consumer Protection Officer (CPO) continued expanding consumer protection services across Eeyou Istchee through community outreach, workshops, and individual support services. Community visits and tours provided opportunities to support individuals on topics such as contracts, financing, leases, fraud prevention, and consumer rights. At the beginning of 2026, the CPO completed automobile financing and sales training through the Centre de Formation Automobile du Québec to strengthen knowledge related to vehicle purchases, leasing, warranties, and dealership practices. The CPO also continued supporting Cree entrepreneurs and businesses through NEQ registration guidance, contract reviews, and financing support. Public awareness remained a strong focus through social media campaigns, departmental outreach videos, and CBC North radio interviews discussing consumer realities and tax exemptions. Youth engagement also continued through workshops presented to Secondary 5 students, career fairs, and Cree School Board events. Overall, 2025–2026 marked another year of growth for consumer protection services through increased outreach, partnerships, business support, and direct assistance provided across Eeyou Istchee.

Benefits and Financial Program Officer

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the Benefits and Financial Program Officer (BFPO) role experienced a period of transition before resuming service delivery in the second half of the year. The position remained vacant at the beginning of the fiscal year while recruitment efforts were underway.

In late August 2025, a new BFPO joined the team, marking an important step in strengthening the department's financial literacy services across Eeyou Istchee. Her initial focus was on familiarizing herself with DCI programs and reviewing existing workshop materials to ensure alignment with the department's financial empowerment objectives. This work included updating content, refining target audiences, and developing materials that are accessible, relevant, and culturally grounded for Cree beneficiaries.

Following this foundational work, the BFPO resumed community outreach and workshop delivery in partnership with the Consumer Protection Officer. Financial literacy sessions were delivered to youth and community members, including participation in the Higher Learning, Building Capacity Conference in Ottawa and the *College Ready, Life Ready* conference in Chisasibi. These sessions focused on key topics such



as budgeting, saving, and preparing for independent living and post-secondary education.

Additional outreach included a radio segment in March, where the BFPO contributed to discussions on saving and budgeting alongside a Housing Planner, further expanding public awareness of financial literacy topics.

Throughout the year, the BFPO played a growing role in reinforcing financial knowledge within communities, supporting youth and individuals in building essential financial skills. This work continues to contribute to stronger financial capacity and informed decision-making across Eeyou Istchee.

Business Services

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, Business Services were strengthened through the introduction of the Business Liaison Specialist role in the second half of the year.

The focus of this role was on building relationships with external partners, supporting collaboration initiatives, and preparing for increased service delivery to Cree entrepreneurs and community stakeholders. Activities included onboarding, coordination with regional partners, and clarifying roles and responsibilities to support program alignment.

As the role continues to develop, the Business Liaison Specialist will focus on strengthening direct support to Cree entrepreneurs through outreach, partnership development, and improved access to funding programs and services. This work aims to enhance client coordination, build stronger relationships with community stakeholders, and support business growth across Eeyou Istchee.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Keep It Local Campaign



Building on the success of its initial launch, the Keep it Local Campaign continued into its second year as a key initiative to promote local spending and support Cree-owned businesses across Eeyou Istchee. The campaign maintained strong visibility throughout the year, encouraging community members to shop locally and reinforcing the importance of economic self-sufficiency.



Throughout the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the campaign remained active with ongoing community participation and engagement. Monthly prize draws continued to incentivize local purchasing, while streamlined internal processes improved the tracking and management of submissions.

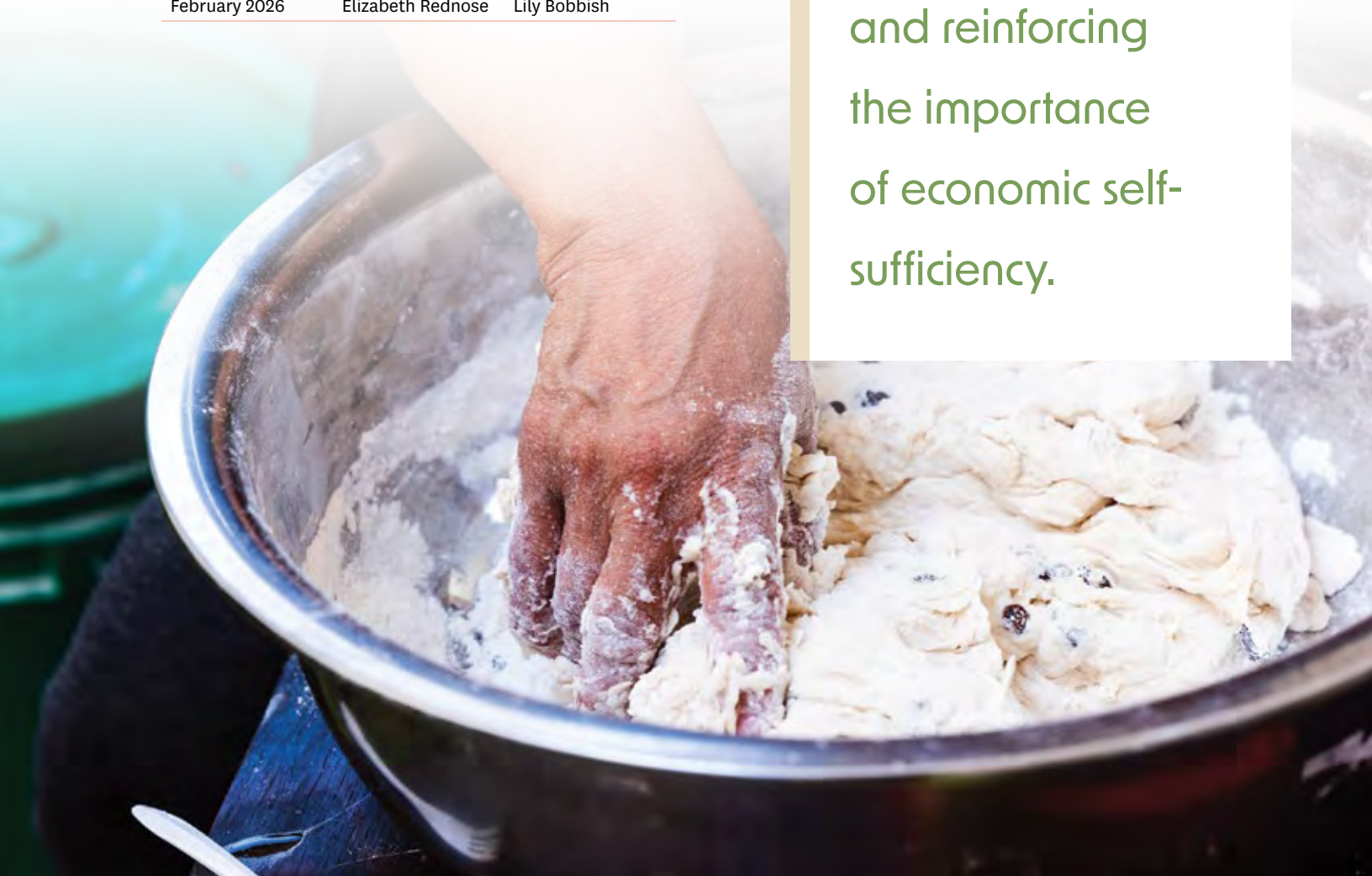
The campaign also continued to serve as a platform to strengthen connections between consumers and registered businesses, supporting the broader objectives of the Business Registry and the Cree Nation Economic Prioritization Agreement.

As the initiative moves forward, the Keep it Local Campaign remains an important tool for fostering community pride, increasing awareness of local businesses, and supporting long-term economic growth across the region.

Winners of the Keep It Local Campaign Draws

Draw Period	Retail Winner	Other Winner
October 2025	Trisha Gunner	Amy Linton
November 2025	Mary Diamond	Krishna Rodriguez
December 2025	Sarah Rupert	Kenny Mianscum
January 2026	Sherry Crowe	Krishna Rodriguez
February 2026	Elizabeth Rednose	Lily Bobbish

The Keep it Local Campaign maintained strong visibility throughout the year, encouraging community members to shop locally and reinforcing the importance of economic self-sufficiency.





ENVIRONMENT AND REMEDIAL WORKS

Message from the Interim Director
Anthony Macleod



The 2025–2026 fiscal year has been one of significant change across the Cree Nation Government, and particularly within the Department of Environment and Remedial Works. In a year defined by many transitions and evolving priorities, it has been my honour to support this department and witness firsthand the professionalism, resilience, and dedication of its team.



Over the months that I have had the privilege of overseeing this department, my confidence in the competence, integrity, and commitment of its staff has only grown stronger. Through every challenge and period of change, the department's managers have provided steady leadership, while staff across all units have remained focused on delivering meaningful results for Eeyou Istchee. Their efforts have not gone unnoticed. The commitment and professionalism demonstrated by this team have been recognized and appreciated throughout the organization and beyond.

The accomplishments highlighted throughout this report speak to the strength of that collective effort.

This year, the Protected Areas Unit continued advancing the Cree Nation's ambitious goal of protecting 30% of Eeyou Istchee by 2030, successfully completing Phase 2 of its four-phase workplan. Significant progress was also made toward the establishment of the Wiinipaakw Indigenous Protected Area and National Marine Conservation Area in the offshore waters of the Eeyou Marine Region. Thanks to the outstanding work of the Coordinator of Marine Conservation and the Manager of Protected Areas, negotiations have advanced toward the signing of a ten-year Impact Benefit Agreement that will support this landmark initiative.

The Wildlife Unit continued to support critical research and conservation efforts throughout the territory, including important data collection on moose populations in forest

fire burn areas. The unit also played an important role in supporting the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee's recommendation for a migratory caribou harvesting moratorium—a difficult but necessary measure in response to an undeniable population decline reflected in both scientific research and Cree traditional knowledge.

The launch of the Eeyou EcoFund in the fall of 2025 marked the beginning of an exciting new chapter for Cree-led environmental action. To date, ten biodiversity conservation projects have been approved for funding, representing approximately \$1.35 million in support for community and regional initiatives. With the anticipated addition of the Water Protection Fund and Climate Adaptation Fund, the program is on track to provide more than \$14.4 million in environmental funding opportunities for Cree communities and organizations.

The Land Use Planning Unit continued fostering productive relationships with key planning partners and spearheaded the development of tools to support data-driven decision-making. Concurrently, the team continued strengthening Cree representation and interests by providing support to Cree leadership at the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government.

The department's growing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Unit also made significant strides in advancing the Cree Nation's Geospatial Strategy. Through ongoing efforts to centralize, organize, and strengthen access to Cree-owned data, the team continued laying the foundation for improved data accessibility, enhanced decision-making, and greater Cree authority over information that supports planning and stewardship across Eeyou Istchee.

Meanwhile, the Climate Change Unit hosted another successful Adaptation and Environmental Emergency Preparedness Workshop in November 2025, made sub-

stantial progress toward establishing Cree-owned weather stations across the territory, and launched an innovative marine buoy pilot project to monitor ice thickness on Lake Mistissini.

These accomplishments represent only a small portion of the tremendous work advanced by the Department of Environment and Remedial Works over the past year. The pages that follow provide a fuller picture of the initiatives, partnerships, and achievements that continue to support the health of our lands, waters, wildlife, and communities.

It is with great pride that I present this report and recognize the remarkable efforts of the managers, professionals, technicians, coordinators, and support staff who made these achievements possible.

At the time of publication, the department will have recently welcomed its new Director, Jonathan Sutherland. I wish him every success as he settles into his new role and look forward to the stability and leadership he will bring to the department. I am confident that, under his guidance, this team will continue to inspire us in the years ahead.

Anthony Macleod
Interim Director of Environment and Remedial Works



At the time of publication, the department will have recently welcomed its new Director, Jonathan Sutherland. I wish him every success as he settles into his new role and look forward to the stability and leadership he will bring to the department.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (ESIAs)

The Department's ESIA Unit participates in the assessment and review of all projects submitted under the ESIA procedure established by Section 22 of the JBNQA. The unit consists of Manager Graeme Morin and three Environmental Analysts: Kaitlin Lloyd, Eva-Maria Hanchar, and Anna Krupa.

The Unit serves on the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment (JBACE) and participates in Environmental Committees established through Impact and Benefit Agreements signed with proponents and Cree First Nations. The team also works with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada through Cree-Canada Joint Assessment Committees (JACs) for mining projects subject to the federal Impact Assessment Act (2019).

The unit's work relies on (and facilitates) collaboration with departmental colleagues, regional organizations, federal and provincial governments, and Cree communities.

Projects under Section 22 ESIA assessment and review in 2025-2026

The team assessed 17 projects at the early stages of the ESIA procedure (Preliminary Information and Directives) for COMEV this year. Eight projects were exempted from ESIAs, two received Directives for the submission of an Impact Statement, two were withdrawn by proponents, and five remain under analysis. Additional information is available on the [COMEV](#) website.

The team also reviewed 19 projects at the later stages of the ESIA procedure (Impact Statement review and Follow-up) for COMEX this year. Two project impact statements were reviewed. Detailed information is available on the [COMEX](#) website.

Impact Statement under review

Canada and the Cree Nation Government continue to work together on project assessments requiring federal review under the Impact Assessment Act (2019). These agreements establish Cree-Canada Joint Assessment Committees (JACs) to support a collaborative assessment process.

Table 1. Select projects assessed by the ESIA Unit before COMEV in 2025-2026 (4 of 17)

Project	Proponent	Status	Cree Community Traditional Territories
Coastal Goose Enhancement – Creation of an artificial waterfowl hunting area	Niskamoon Corp.	Attestation of Exemption sent	Chisasibi
Ecocenter proposal	CNG – Capital Works Department	Attestation of Exemption sent	Whapmagoostui
Shaakichiwaanaan lithium mine	Patriot Battery Metals	Directive sent	Chisasibi
Adina Lithium Mine	Miyunaakun Lithium Inc.	Directive sent	Mistissini

Table 2. Select projects reviewed / followed up on by the ESIA Unit before COMEX in 2025-2026 (7 of 19)

Project	Proponent	Status	Cree Community Traditional Territories
Rose Lithium-Tantalum mine	Critical Elements Corp.	Conditions follow-up and Modification approved	Eastmain, Nemaska
Whabouchi Lithium mine	Nemaska Lithium Inc. (Rio Tinto Inc.)	Modification approved	Nemaska
Renard diamond mine	Stornoway Inc.	Follow-up and cessation of activities	Mistissini
James Bay Lithium mine	Galaxy Lithium (Rio Tinto Inc.)	Conditions conformity	Eastmain, Waskaganish
Windfall Gold mine	Windfall Mining Group (Goldfields Ltd.)	Impact Statement under review	Waswanipi
Wemindji new landfill	Cree Nation of Wemindji	Reviewing request for modification	Wemindji
Nemaska landfill	Cree Nation of Nemaska	Impact Statement under review	Nemaska

The unit is currently involved in six assessments and associated follow-up activities:

1. Whabouchi Lithium Mine Project
2. James Bay Lithium Mine Project
3. Rose Lithium-Tantalum Mine Project
4. Troilus Gold Mine Project
5. Mont-Sorcier Iron Mine Project
6. Shaakichiwaanaan Lithium Mine Project

ESIA Project Highlights

Eleonore Gold mine (near Wemindji)

Operations remain ongoing, and the Environment Committee continues to meet regularly. Consultation on the eventual closure of the mine has begun; however, under new ownership (previously Newmont Corp., now Dhillmar Inc.), exploration activities have continued and identified potential new ore bodies. The proponent has received approval for expansions to its tailings facility and continues Cree land-use monitoring interviews with affected families.

Rose Lithium-Tantalum mine (near Eastmain and Nemaska)

Critical Elements Corp. received federal and provincial authorizations in 2021 and 2022, respectively. The proponent is currently awaiting approval from Fisheries and Oceans Canada for its proposed fish habitat offsetting project. Throughout 2025, the ESIA Unit supported information-sharing and quorum requirements for the project's environmental monitoring committee.

James Bay Lithium mine (near Eastmain and km 381)

The project received federal and provincial authorizations in 2023. Rio Tinto Inc. is expected to decide in June 2026 whether the project will proceed to construction or remain under care and maintenance.

Whabouchi Lithium mine (near Nemaska)

Due to declining lithium prices, the project has been placed under care and maintenance. Rio Tinto Inc. is expected to decide in June 2026 whether construction will proceed or remain suspended.

Windfall Gold Mine (near Waswanipi)

The Windfall Mining Group submitted a revised Environmental Impact Statement in December 2023. Throughout 2024 and 2025, the ESIA Unit supported Cree representatives on COMEX, reviewed supporting documentation, and participated in discussions regarding project impacts with Waswanipi's Mining and Environment teams and the Cree Nation Government's Department of Commerce and Industry.

Troilus Gold Mine (near Mistissini)

The proponent submitted its Impact Study to both the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada and COMEX for review. During the past year, the ESIA Unit focused on analyzing the study. No consultations occurred during this reporting period.

Other ESIA Unit Highlights

Each year, the ESIA Unit collaborates with Cree communities, governments, project proponents, and scientific experts on research and policy initiatives that support environmental assessment processes and help mitigate impacts on the ground. Examples include collaboration on contaminated-site remediation, support for regional weather monitoring projects, and completion of a collaborative environmental DNA (eDNA) research project. The team also hosted an intern during the year.

In March 2025, the team visited the former Selbaie Mine with the Opinagow Environment Committee, which monitors activities at the Éléonore Mine. Analysts also attended the Canadian Institute of Mining conference in Rouyn-Noranda, including a site visit to the Mine Matagami remediation project, in June 2025. Earlier that month, the unit supported the JBACE workshop on residual materials in Mistissini. In October 2025, team members travelled to Chisasibi to support consultations on the Shaakichiwaanaan Lithium Mine Project in collaboration with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada.

MINING

In the absence of Mining Restoration Engineer Aurora Maria Hernandez this year, mining-related work (outside of the ESIA process) was limited to the following two projects:

Opinagow Environment Committee Awareness Video

Interviews were conducted between August and December 2025 in Wemindji and at the Éléonore Mine site on the topic of the Opinagow Environment Committee. Production of a short documentary is anticipated in summer 2026, with the goal of sharing the experiences of families affected by the mine and highlighting existing Cree-guided mitigation measures.

Abandoned Mining Exploration Sites (AMES) Cleanup

Cleanup activities at Abandoned Mining Exploration Sites (AMES) continued in 2025, with significant progress made in Mistissini and Whapmagoostui through ongoing collaboration with land users and community partners.

In Whapmagoostui, Cleanup Coordinator Adario Masty continued work alongside land users and community members at the largest known abandoned exploration site in the territory, which contains more than 400 abandoned barrels. During the 2025 field season, all remaining site contents, including barrels and other waste materials, were removed, while wood debris was safely burned on site where appropriate. The crushed barrels are scheduled to be transported south by boat in 2026 for final disposal.

In Mistissini, the program marked its first use of a formal call-for-tenders process for cleanup work at former uranium exploration sites. The cleanup was followed by mitigation plans developed jointly with land users to safely isolate



identified radioactive materials. Activities were completed with a focus on safety, environmental protection, and Cree participation.

Additional cleanup activities were carried out at sites within the Nibiischii Park territory near Mistissini in collaboration with the park management team and the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (MELCCFP).

Looking ahead to 2026, planned activities include completing the Whapmagoostui cleanup project, including the transportation and disposal of recovered materials, as well as continuing site characterization work across the territory. Current targets include the assessment of more than 60 sites located on traplines in Chisasibi, Wemindji, Eastmain, Nemaska, and Mistissini.

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

The Community Environmental Services Unit is managed by Cameron McLean (Manager of Environment) and supported by Kristy Franks (Environmental Advisor) and Alan Penn (Senior Science Advisor). The unit supports Local Environmental Administrators and Officers (LEA/Os) in nine Cree communities. Its work includes assisting with the remediation of contaminated sites, coordinating Phase I Environmental Site Assessments, delivering training and capacity-building initiatives, and supporting waste management efforts in collaboration with the Capital Works and Services Department.

Supporting Community Local Environmental Administrators / Officers (LEA/Os)

Through the ongoing coordination of regional environmental initiatives, the Community Environmental Services Unit



Representatives from Chisasibi, Mistissini, Wemindji, Nemaska, and the CNG at the 2025 Waste Management Symposium.

provides training on topics such as environmental monitoring and decontamination, while also supporting grant writing, policy development, and the expansion of local environmental capacity.

Notable events in 2025 included a training session held in Montreal in October focusing on environmental protection legislation, waste management, and impact assessment. The unit also began developing a poster for the 2026 International Association for Impact Assessment Conference in Québec City, which will be presented to an international audience.

Several community members and Cree Nation Government representatives also participated in the First Nations of Québec and Labrador Sustainable Development Institute (FNQLSDI) Waste Management Symposium held in December in Lac Lemay.

Mid Canada Line Cleanup

The Mid Canada Line (MCL) consists of abandoned military communication sites and fueling stations located along the 55th parallel, including 42 sites in Québec. A pilot project is currently underway to clean up seven of these sites, including four under Cree responsibility.

Throughout 2025, the Community Environmental Services Unit finalized work plans required to carry out cleanup activities scheduled for fall 2026.

Hydro-Québec/SEBJ-James Bay Region Site Cleanup

Work to clean up former Hydro-Québec/SEBJ sites continued throughout 2025. Activities focused on environmental assessment, characterization, and remediation at 15 sites located in the territories of Chisasibi, Eastmain, Mistissini, Nemaska, Waskaganish, Wemindji, and Whapmagoostui.

Tallymen and Trapline Representatives have been, and will continue to be, involved in verifying completed and ongoing

work alongside Cree Nation Government representatives and a third-party verifier.

Building Community Environmental Capacity

In partnership with the BEAHR Program/Eco Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, and Apatisiwin Skills Development, the Community Environmental Services Unit continued delivering Core Environmental Skills and Environmental Monitoring courses in fall 2025.

This year's cohort was hosted in Whapmagoostui. In the words of one student:

“The things I learned in class were greatly appreciated. Through stories we all learned a lot, especially about Western worldviews and our traditional world view...I am very proud to be here as I was struggling myself. I’m glad I never gave up.”



Graduates from the Environmental Monitoring course in Whapmagoostui, October 2025.

ECO-INVESTMENTS

Mission

Advance Cree-led environmental financing, partnerships, and policy innovation to strengthen stewardship of lands, waters, biodiversity, and climate resilience across Eeyou Istchee.

Brief Summary of Key Activities and Achievements

In 2025–2026, the Eco-Investments Unit moved from design to implementation by launching the Eeyou EcoFund as a major funding and governance platform for Cree-led environmental action. The unit also advanced strategic work related to climate, biodiversity, water, conservation finance, carbon rights, and environmental emergency response.



Table 3

Stream	Total Funding Envelope	Allocated in First Round	Remaining Envelope
Biodiversity	\$6,062,500	\$1,353,499	\$4,709,001
Water	\$5,875,000	\$0	\$5,875,000
Climate	\$2,500,000	\$0	\$2,500,000
Total	\$14,437,500	\$1,353,499	\$13,084,001

Table 4. First Biodiversity Allocation Round – Projects Supported

ID	Proponent/Recipient	Community	Project Title	Focus	Amount
01	CERRI	Chisasibi	Coastal Living Labs	Coastal stewardship and knowledge transmission	\$200,00
02	CNN	Nemaska	Awareness Campaign	Sustainable harvesting and knowledge transfer	\$200,00
03	CNG – Dept. Environment & Wildlife (Wildlife Unit)	Mistissini	Caribou Husbandry Program	Caribou conservation feasibility study	\$25,300
04	OBCN – Dept. Natural Resources	Ouje-Bougoumou	Land Keepers Pilot	Land guardians and monitoring	\$199,650
05	CNG – Dept. Social and Cultural Development	Ouje-Bougoumou	Atlas	Cree place names and associated knowledge	\$90,640
06	CFNW – Dept. Natural Resources	Waswanipi	Trail Clearing & Camp	Traditional route and camp access	\$40,700
07	CNW – Dept. Environment	Wemindji	Coastal Access & Conversation Plan	Coastal conservation and access planning	\$199,509
08	Whapmagoostui Tours and Adventure Company	Whapmagoostui	Site Cleanup	Environmental assessment and restoration planning	\$200,00
09	Regional Cree Trapper's Association	Regional	Caribou Documentary	Cree knowledge and caribou stewardship	\$77,700
10	CNG – Dept. Environment & Wildlife (GIS Unit)	Regional	Eeyou GeoHub	Geospatial platform for planning and data	\$120,000
Total first cohort					\$1,353,499



Lac Rouge / Kaa Waashteyaamiskaach - Spring 2025 Washout
(Photo credit - Jason Dixon)

Overall, the unit strengthened the Cree Nation Government's capacity to translate funding agreements and policy opportunities into practical Cree-led action, community capacity, and long-term governance tools for Eeyou Istchee.

Funding & Community Support

- Negotiated and structured three contribution agreements with the *Gouvernement du Québec* across Biodiversity, Water, and Climate, creating a consolidated funding pool of more than \$14.4 million for community and regional projects (see table 3).
- Established and launched the Eeyou EcoFund as the Cree Nation Government's flagship platform for Cree-led environmental action, supported by common governance tools, evaluation processes, applicant support, Secretariat coordination, and a dedicated public webpage at www.cngov.ca/ecofund.
- Supported the first Biodiversity funding allocation round: 10 Cree-led projects totalling approximately \$1.35 million, focused on stewardship, conservation, land access, knowledge transmission, restoration, and environmental data systems (see table 4).

PROTECTED AREAS

The Department's Protected Areas (PA) Unit is made up of Chantal Otter Tetreault, Protected Areas Manager, however with the ending of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) Indigenous led area-based conservation funding program, we were saddened to see the departure of Robin Campbell, Conservation Program Officer, Sarah Biron, Financial Program Officer and Cultural Conservation Officer,

Allen Matoush. Christopher Beck, Coordinator of Marine Conservation has remained in his current position thanks to an extended funding agreement with Parks Canada for the Establishment of the Wiinipaakw Indigenous Protected Area/ National Marine Conservation Area. We continue to support the Cree communities and Cree entities, by working with federal and provincial governments, and other partners to develop and implement protected areas and other conservation area initiatives in the territory. The Eeyouconservation.com website, focused on protected areas, has been completely overhauled and features new and improved content, look and feel, and functionality.

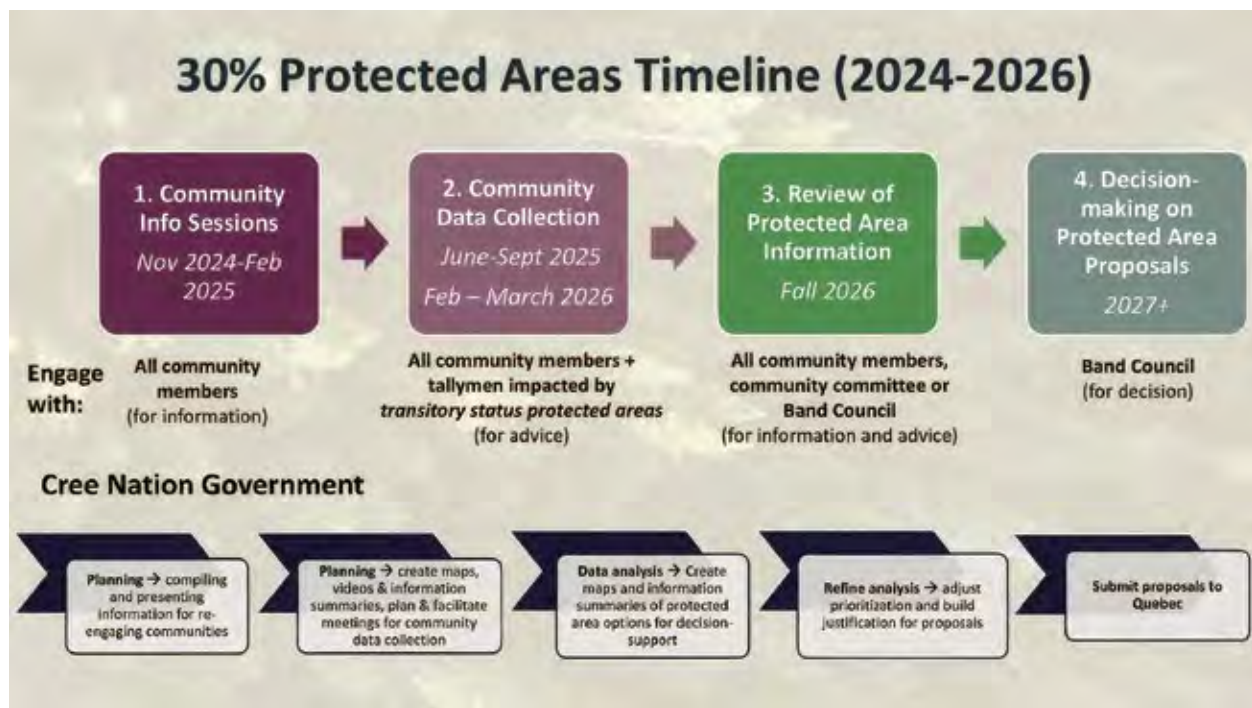
Following are some highlights from 2025-2026:

Terrestrial Protected Areas

ECCC's Indigenous-Led Area-Based Conservation funding program concluded during this fiscal year. Through this support, the Protected Areas Unit developed a four-phase community engagement process to support the development of new conservation proposals toward the 30-by-30 target, continue collaboration with Québec toward securing permanent status for the existing 23% protected areas network in Eeyou Istchee, and advance a management framework that ensures meaningful Cree First Nation participation and representation across the territory.

During the past fiscal year, Phase 2 (data collection) was completed with communities in support of the following objectives:

1. **Validate previous results of the 20% network** by sharing outcomes from earlier community consultations, assess-



ing satisfaction with both the protected areas network and the process that shaped it, and refining boundary proposals for existing protected areas based on conservation objectives.

2. **Explore governance, management, and development aspirations** based on conservation objectives and the sociocultural context.
3. **Develop protected area proposals toward the 30-by-20 target** and identify other territories of interest for future conservation initiatives.

Phase 3 will begin in the next fiscal year, with Phase 4 expected to conclude the process the following year.

Marine Protected Areas

Following the signing of the agreement to formally pursue the establishment of the Wiinipaakw Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) and National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) in the offshore waters of the Eeyou Marine Region, the Cree Nation Government and Parks Canada have been actively negotiating a 10-year Impact Benefit Agreement for the protected area.

Near the end of the fiscal year, Prime Minister Mark Carney launched [A Force of Nature: Canada's Strategy to Protect Nature](#) which included a commitment to advance the Wiinipaakw IPA-NMCA project.

The Cree Nation Government organized a Cree delegation to visit and exchange with the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park in the fall of 2025. Organized jointly by Parks Canada and the Cree Nation Government, the delegation included representatives from several CNG departments, Coastal

Cree First Nations, and Cree entities seeking a better understanding of marine protected area management.

Key activities included visits to Parks Canada's three main observation centres near Tadoussac; two whale-watching excursions, including one operated by the Essipit First Nation; meetings on park co-management and operations, including discussions with the Marine Park Coordinating Committee; and exchanges with the Essipit First Nation and Wolastoqiyik Wampanoag First Nation regarding their participation in the park through their Indigenous Guardians programs. The delegation also explored business and employment opportunities associated with marine protected areas.

The visit provided valuable insight into the opportunities and challenges associated with managing the future Wiinipaakw IPA-NMCA and helped inform ongoing planning efforts.

The Protected Areas Unit also intends to continue working with both Canada and Québec to advance the protection of James Bay coastal waters. In the coming fiscal year, this partnership will focus on progressing toward the establishment of a marine protected area for the Wiinipaakw coastal waters.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION

Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC)

The Wildlife Unit's main mandate is to support the Cree members of the HFTCC, an advisory body that reviews, manages, and regulates the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping regime established under Chapter 24 of the JBNQA. The HFTCC is comprised of representatives from the Cree, Inuit,

and Naskapi nations, as well as the provincial and federal governments. The Cree members include Deputy Grand Chief Linden Spencer and Cree Trappers' Association CEO Arden Visitor. The third Cree seat on the committee is currently vacant. Members of the Wildlife Unit serve as advisors to the Cree representatives.

The HFTCC maintains working groups on a variety of issues. In 2025–2026, the Wildlife Unit worked on fishing regulations, outfitting, and big game management. This included:

- Reviewing provincial changes to lake trout sport fishing regulations.
- Reviewing the provincial Moose Management Plan.
- Reviewing the provincial Small Game Management Plan.
- Supervising the outfitting regime and overseeing the right of first refusal.
- Developing a state-of-knowledge document on caribou predators in northern Québec to support future decision-making.
- Organizing a caribou workshop in March 2026 in Montreal that brought together Indigenous groups from across Québec and Labrador to discuss caribou-related issues.

The Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board (EMRWB)

The Wildlife Unit sits as an observer on the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board (EMRWB), a co-management body responsible for wildlife management in the Eeyou Marine Region. The EMRWB and Wildlife Unit collaborate on several projects and management files, including polar bear management.

Moose Management in Zone 17

The Moose Management Technical Committee (MMTC) was formed in response to concerns about the health of the moose population in 2021. It includes representatives from the Cree Nation Government, Cree Trappers' Association, Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou, and Waskaganish.

Since its inception, the MMTC has developed guidelines for moose harvesting in Zone 17. In 2024, a tag-permit system was implemented with approvals from the councils of Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou, and Waskaganish, as well as the regional and local CTAs. This initiative reflects a commitment to sustainable wildlife management and harvesting.

The MMTC held an internal workshop in November 2025 in Ouje-Bougoumou to discuss ways to strengthen moose management in Zone 17.

In February 2026, the Unit worked with the MELCCFP to conduct a moose aerial survey of Zone 17. The results will help inform future management decisions.

Moose Habitat Under the Adapted Forestry Regime

Since 2020, the Cree Nation Government, along with the CTA, Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou, Mistissini, Nemaska, and Waskaganish, has collaborated with McGill University and the MELCCFP to develop a tool for identifying moose

habitat within the Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) territory of Eeyou Istchee using Cree Knowledge and moose collar GPS data.

The project is now nearing completion, with final reports and products having been presented to partners. Deliverables include graphical fuzzy cognitive mapping (FCM) illustrating Cree social-ecological knowledge of moose and habitat, habitat selection analyses based on collar data, and a habitat quality index (HQI) model for moose within the AFR territory.

Moose and Wildfires

The Wildlife Unit is participating in the development of a new project led by Waswanipi, in collaboration with the MELCCFP, Université Laval, and the University of Calgary, examining the impacts of the 2023 wildfires on moose habitat. Caribou Management

In February 2026, the Cree Nation Government, supported by the Wildlife Unit, proposed that the HFTCC recommend a moratorium on caribou harvesting in Eeyou Istchee south of the 55th parallel. The proposed moratorium reflects both traditional knowledge and scientific information indicating continued declines in caribou populations and aims to support population recovery while protecting the cultural importance of caribou for future generations.

In March 2026, the team partnered with the CTA to organize a youth excursion north of Waswanipi, bringing together youth from Waswanipi and Ouje-Bougoumou with Elders and experienced guides. The initiative focused on traditional harvesting practices during periods of caribou decline. Participants learned how to maintain a camp, harvest alternative species, prepare country food, and strengthen their connection to the land and Cree stewardship values. A film crew documented both the excursion and the Pipun Eeyou Eetouwin Winter Arts Festival in Waswanipi. A documentary and educational materials are currently in production.

In collaboration with the CTA, a large-format map was produced to illustrate the ranges of caribou populations in Eeyou Istchee and communicate knowledge about their ecology, status, habitat needs, conservation status, population trends, and current threats. The map will serve as an educational and cultural resource for classrooms, land users, and community settings.

The Wildlife Unit hired Serge Couturier to conduct a feasibility study on a caribou captivity project in Eeyou Istchee, exploring approaches to support woodland caribou recovery. In December 2025, an Advisory Committee composed of knowledge holders from Mistissini was established to help guide the work and ensure it remains grounded in community perspectives.

In collaboration with the CTA, MELCCFP, and McGill University, caribou hair samples collected during polar bear

monitoring activities in the Eeyou Marine Region are being analyzed. The objective is to determine the population and ecotype origins of caribou frequenting coastal islands in the James Bay area and improve understanding of caribou distribution in Eeyou Istchee. This research responds directly to Cree observations and knowledge regarding caribou use of islands.

Lastly, this Unit continues to await Québec's Boreal Caribou Strategy for Eeyou Istchee.

Polar Bear Management

The Wildlife Unit participated in the Cree Polar Bear Knowledge Workshop held by the EMRWB and Mushkegowuk Council in January 2026. The workshop facilitated discussions on polar bear management across the bay and contributed to future management decisions.

The Cree Nation Government also joined the Polar Bear Administrative Committee (PBAC) and Polar Bear Technical Committee (PBTC), which support the cooperative management of polar bear populations in Canada. CNG attended PBAC meetings in May 2025 and PBTC meetings in February 2026.

Lake Sturgeon Threat Management Plan

Following completion of the Lake Sturgeon Threat Management Plan in March 2024, the Wildlife Unit continued

discussions with Fisheries and Oceans Canada regarding implementation. The plan represents a historic collaboration between the Cree Nation and Canada in developing a document required under the Species at Risk Act.

In 2025–2026, the Wildlife Team conducted an educational eDNA activity with high school students in Mistissini and participated in fish surveys conducted by Hydro-Québec.

The FISHES Project

The Fostering Indigenous Small-Scale Fisheries for Health, Economy, and Food Security (FISHES) project concluded last year. The initiative brought together researchers from Concordia University, Université Laval, and Cree communities to integrate Genomics, Fisheries Science, and Indigenous Knowledge in addressing food security and fisheries-related opportunities and challenges. During 2025–2026, the Unit continued reviewing publications arising from the project.

Nunavut Fisheries Regulations (NFR)

The Cree Nation Government was invited to participate in the drafting of the Nunavut Fisheries Regulations (NFRs). Despite their name, these regulations would also apply to the Eeyou Marine Region. The regulations are intended to replace and modernize existing Northwest Territories regulations and ensure compliance with treaty rights. A policy intention paper was completed in 2024, and consultations were completed during 2025–2026.



Photo: Katherine Dehm

Pre-Feasibility Study on Commercial Fisheries in the Eeyou Marine Region

A need to better understand the commercial fisheries potential of the Eeyou Marine Region was identified in winter 2025. As a result, the Wildlife Unit worked with the Cree Trappers' Association and the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board to engage Dylan Fraser's research lab to conduct a literature review and pre-feasibility study on fish and fisheries resources in the region.

Ptarmigan Project

The Wildlife Unit, in partnership with local Cree Trappers' Associations, participated in a MELCCFP regional ptarmigan project aimed at improving understanding of ptarmigan populations harvested in Eeyou Istchee. Wing collections were paused during winter 2025–2026.

The Cree Nation Government also assisted MELCCFP with the deployment of 12 wildlife telemetry transmitters across several monitoring locations, including the Route du Nord corridor, Billy Diamond Highway, Radisson sector, Highway 381, and the Transtaïga Road. Eleven transmitters were successfully deployed. One transmitter was allocated for educational purposes to support hands-on training and capacity building for students in Chibougamau. Initial capture operations were limited by extreme cold temperatures.

CLIMATE CHANGE

In 2025–2026, the Climate Change Unit continued its efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change in Eeyou Istchee while advancing regional and local adaptation and resilience. The team is composed of Manager of Climate Change Pernilla Talec and Coordinator of Climate Monitoring Killian Abellon. The team's work is guided by consultations with, and feedback from, community members. With the recent signing of the Green Economy Plan, the Climate Change Unit aims to support communities in accessing the \$2.5 million available for climate adaptation initiatives and coordinate efforts at the regional level.

Community Engagement and Capacity Building

The Climate Change Advisory Committee met four times this year. Three meetings were held virtually, while one consisted of in-person training. Following the Climate Change Adaptation and Environmental Emergency Preparedness Workshop held in Chisasibi in March 2025, a follow-up training session focused on inland communities was offered in Mistissini (November 2025).

The workshop brought together community members, youth, Elders, and partners from across Eeyou Istchee. Over three days, participants shared lessons learned, explored adaptation and preparedness strategies, and strengthened partnerships that support community resilience.

As another means of engaging community members, the Climate Change Unit developed a [series of short videos on the](#)

[topic of ice safety](#) aimed at encouraging land users to adopt safe travel practices. Topics include inland ice, coastal ice, ice walls, ice monitoring methods, and safety equipment.

Climate Monitoring

The Climate Monitoring Program continued to advance in 2025–2026, with several noteworthy developments. The Climate Change Unit is working toward a more unified approach to climate monitoring across Eeyou Istchee, regardless of monitoring type or participating organization.

Weather Stations

The Cree-owned weather station project advanced significantly this year, including the procurement of three weather stations and the completion of permitting and authorization processes with Québec entities and the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government. The stations are scheduled for installation in Nemaska, Chisasibi, and Whapmagostui during summer 2026.

In parallel, the Weather Data Management System, which will collect and make weather data available to stakeholders, reached the procurement stage and is expected to be operational by the end of 2026. The system will integrate multiple weather data sources across Eeyou Istchee and improve forecasting through data-sharing with ECCC.

Hydrometric Stations

The James Bay Coastal Hydrometric Program includes 13 hydrometric stations that measure water levels and temperatures in rivers flowing into the Eeyou Marine Region. Its management committee—composed of the Cree Nation Government, Niskamoon Corporation, Hydro-Québec, and the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)—met four times during the fiscal year to discuss program operations and future directions.

The committee also advanced work on a data policy and streamlined data-recording processes. Data remains publicly available at <https://eeyouriverdischarge.com/> pending its planned migration to the Cree Nation Government in the coming years.

Marine Buoys

The Cree Nation Government partnered with the Cree Nation of Mistissini to pilot an innovative buoy capable of autonomously measuring ice thickness on Lake Mistissini during winter 2026. Developed by Professor Bruno Tremblay of McGill University, the device was generally successful.

Mistissini data is publicly available at <https://web.meteo.mcgill.ca/tremblay/mistissini> pending its planned migration to the Cree Nation Government in the coming years. Based on lessons learned during the pilot phase, the buoy has been improved for a second winter of operation, including an upgraded battery system. The Cree Nation of Chisasibi will receive its first buoy next winter.

Food Access and Vulnerability Assessment

The Food Access and Vulnerability Assessment project was developed in response to growing concerns about food security and the additional pressures climate change places on food systems.

A key component of the project involved creating an interactive map containing a comprehensive inventory of food-related initiatives across Eeyou Istchee. The map includes initiatives related to local food production, traditional foods, and store-bought foods. Some initiatives focus on increasing access to the land and culture, while others support health, food security, training, education, or economic development. The objective is to increase the visibility of existing initiatives, encourage collaboration, and promote knowledge-sharing among communities.

The Climate Change Unit hosted a booth at the 2025 CTA Annual General Assembly to discuss the project and gather feedback to help guide future work.

In addition, a literature review of food-related initiatives was completed and is available. Next steps include finalizing a climate change projection booklet examining variables such as precipitation, temperature, growing-season length, and frost-free periods, as well as developing summary cards outlining potential impacts on key species.

Explore the preliminary map here: <https://spatialkat.github.io/eeyou-food-map/>



Natural Assets Accounting and Ecosystem Services Valuation

The Climate Change Unit continued to build its understanding of ecosystem service valuation—the process of assessing the economic value of benefits provided by ecosystems such as forests, wetlands, and rivers.

Mark Anielski, an economist specializing in this field, prepared a draft report for Eeyou Istchee using geospatial data compiled specifically for the region by the Woodwell Climate Research Center. The report examines the value of ecosystem services, including provisioning services such as food, fresh water, and medicines; regulating services such as carbon sequestration, flood control, and water purification; cultural services such as recreation, spiritual enrichment, and traditional land use; and supporting services such as soil formation, nutrient cycling, and biodiversity.

Policy, Research, and External Engagement

The Climate Change Unit advised the Québec government on upcoming policy initiatives, including its Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Biodiversity Conservation and Management. The unit also provided feedback on ECCC's *Canada in a Changing Climate Report 2026* and continued contrib-

uting to the federal National Assessment process through participation on its Advisory Committee.

The past fiscal year saw both new collaborations and renewed partnerships. The Climate Change Unit joined the Steering Committee of EeyouSat, a Canadian Space Agency-funded project focused on GIS data related to the Eeyou Marine Region, freshwater ice, and inland wetlands. The Cree Nation Government also became involved in Coast-Adapt, a Climate Risk Institute initiative aimed at supporting coastal communities through a customized climate adaptation platform.

Trainings and Events

The team attended several conferences, including the Tasiujarjuaq Sheewetaganapoi Consortium, ArcticNet, and *Nature Allée: la science du carbone en action*, and participated in a variety of professional development opportunities, including OCAP training, Ouranos training for Indigenous organizations, and CERIU courses. These activities helped the team stay informed of emerging developments, research, and opportunities in the rapidly evolving field of climate change adaptation.

Visual note of Climate Change Adaptation & Environmental Emergency Preparedness Workshop in Mistissini – Day 2



Credit: Marie-Joëlle Fournier

LAND USE PLANNING

The Land Use Planning Unit supports the Cree Nation Government and the Eeyou Planning Commission (EPC) in developing land use planning tools that align with Cree goals and priorities. In 2025-2026, the Unit included Manager Jessica Labrecque (until March 2026), Planners Rosanna Wisden and Jules Varin, Coordinator of the EPC Maxine Mark-Stewart, and Coordinator of Spatial Planning Charissa Abishiktha.

Key Activities and Progress

Eeyou Planning Commission

The EPC is composed of representatives from the nine Cree communities, with an observer from Washaw Sibi. Its mandate is to develop a planning vision for Eeyou Istchee, develop a land use plan for Category II lands, collaborate with other planning jurisdictions in Eeyou Istchee to ensure they reflect the collective vision and aspirations of the Crees, and upon request, advise the CNG on matters related to land use planning.

The EPC meetings serve as a dedicated space for deliberative engagement that facilitate the alignment of regional pri-

orities across Eeyou Istchee, with discussions covering the development and harmonization of planning tools across jurisdictions and sectors (draft planning goals and related objectives and actions, forestry, mining, protected areas, the offshore, etc.) and local projects (e.g. waste management, wildfire recovery, land reconfiguration, etc).

Municipal Affairs and Category III Lands

The Unit continues to support Cree leadership as representatives of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government (EIJBRG) by preparing briefings, providing information on the municipal regime in Category III Lands, attending public consultations, and responding to requests as they arise. This support will continue into 2026-2027 to help Cree representatives engage in planning-related matters on Category III Lands.

Planning Harmonization in the Eeyou Marine Region (EMR)

The EPC and the EMR Planning Commission continue to collaborate to harmonize the planning processes for both Category II Lands and the EMR.



Annual General Assembly, August 2025.

Municipal Affairs and Category III Lands

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Land Use Planning in Kativik

The Kativik Regional Government (KRG) continues to request Cree comments on projects in the context of its permitting scheme for the eventual enforcement of its By-Law. The Unit continues to build constructive dialogue with the KRG, as well as with other Nations whose territories are encompassed in the Kativik Master Plan and the draft By-Law.

In the 2026–2027 fiscal year, we look forward to continuing to work with the Eeyou Planning Commission, Cree governments, and planning partners on advancing the development of land use planning tools across the territory that reflect Cree interests, needs, and vision.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) SERVICES

The GIS Unit serves as the central team responsible for overseeing the Geographic Information Systems program within the Cree Nation Government, coordinating resources and services under an organization-wide mandate. The unit leads strategic planning efforts to ensure all CNG departments receive comprehensive and consistent GIS support. Through the Enterprise License Agreement with Esri Canada, the Unit also administers access to GIS tools and licenses for CNG and Cree First Nations staff, providing technical

assistance and customized training as needed. The team is composed of Manager Jonathan Elkhoury, GIS Database Administrator Bindi S. Dave, and GIS Analyst Maxine Mark Stewart (until July 2025).

Geospatial Strategy

The GIS Unit plays a key role in advancing the CNG's Geospatial Strategy, developed in 2021 to establish a shared vision for GIS and strengthen geospatial capabilities across the organization. The strategy is guided by a three-year roadmap (2023–2026), which identifies 13 key initiatives to support the continued development and enhancement of the GIS program.

Building on this strategy, the GIS Unit has begun implementing several of these initiatives. Early efforts focused on establishing a strong foundation through improved data governance, a new GIS workforce structure, upgraded enterprise-level infrastructure, and the development of departmental solutions. This year's work focused on standardizing GIS processes, expanding self-service options, and supporting departments in integrating GIS more effectively into their day-to-day operations.

Highlights from this Year's Initiatives:

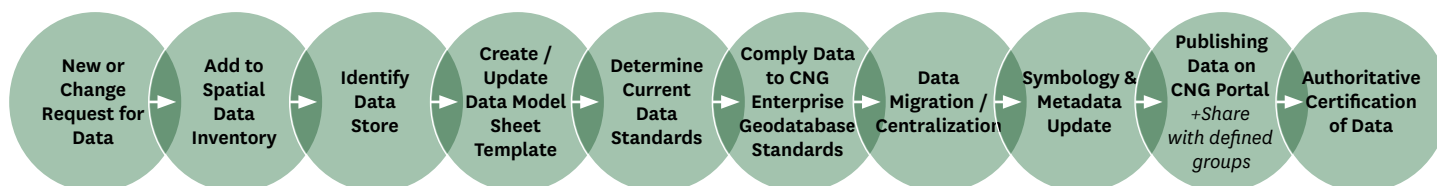
- **Consolidate and Centralize Core Cree Data:** Significant progress was made in refining department-specific workflows to centralize core Cree data and designate it as authoritative across CNG, supported by a phased implementation plan. Meetings with departmental subject-matter experts enabled completion of a Spatial Data Inventory, dataset modelling, and alignment with Enterprise Geodatabase standards, followed by data migration, metadata updates, symbology standardization, and publication.

The Cree Nation Government's Geospatial Strategy Three-Year Roadmap and 13 key initiatives (2023–2026)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Governance (GV)	GV1 - GIS Workforce Restructure		
	GV2 - Service Delivery and Demand Management		GIS Strategy Refresh
	GV3 - Governance Charter & Framework		
Capacity (CP)		CP1 - Consolidate and Centralized Core Cree Data	
		CP3 - Cree Nation Basemap	
	CP2 - GIS Workforce Training Plans	CP5 - ArcGIS Field Maps	
		CP4 - GIS Platform Technical Roadmap	CP6 - Increase Self Service Access
Communication (CM)	CM1 - Enable Local Communities		
		CM3 - Capital Planning & Collaboration Solutions	
			CM4 - GIS Services Catalogue
	CM2 - Strategic Leadership Engagement, Change Management and Communication		

Legend: Complete Inflight Future

Workflow Adopted for CNG Core Cree Data Centralization



Approximately 25 Core Cree Data layers have been centralized on the CNG Portal, with additional layers currently underway. Automated processes are also being developed to ensure these datasets remain current and accessible for decision-making across CNG and Cree communities.

Next steps include publishing datasets from external providers, consolidating similar Core Cree layers (e.g., burials and cabins), and maintaining an up-to-date publication environment.

- **Cree Nation Basemap:** Workshops were held to define the core requirements and design standards for a unified Cree Nation online basemap. A full proof of concept was completed, demonstrating how key datasets and cartographic elements can be integrated into a cohesive and authoritative product.

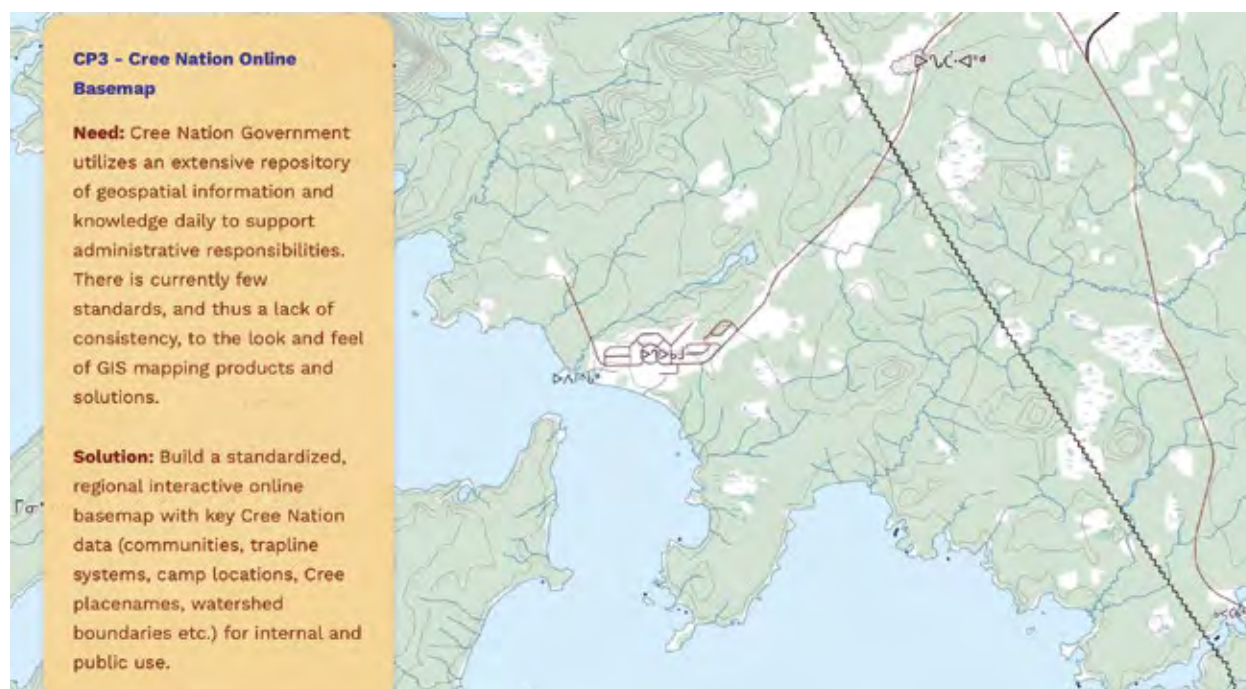
The next phase will focus on expanding the basemap to cover the entire territory and encouraging its adoption across CNG, Cree First Nations, and partner organizations.

- **GIS Community of Practice:** A GIS Community of Practice is being developed to enhance knowledge sharing, build geospatial capacity, and strengthen collaboration across communities and departments. A funding application was submitted to support the launch of this initiative and the creation of an annual Cree Nation GIS forum.

Next steps include securing funding, beginning event planning, and engaging communities to help shape the forum's focus and participation.

- **ArcGIS Hub/Enterprise Site:** Work is underway on a detailed mock-up to guide development of a future CNG ArcGIS Hub/Enterprise site. The mock-up is helping define the site's structure, navigation, and content strategy to ensure it effectively showcases authoritative datasets, maps, applications, and community-focused resources.

It also explores user experience considerations such as accessibility, layout, and workflows for different audiences, including staff, leadership, and community members. This design phase is laying the groundwork for a centralized



Proof of concept for the Cree Nation online basemap



Cree Nation Government's GIS Staff proudly presented its regional geospatial strategy at the Esri Canada User Conference in Toronto on November 4, 2025. From L to R: Bindi S. Dave, Jonathan Elkhoury, Drew Hannen, Robert Shecapio and Abishiktha Charissa

platform that will improve access to geospatial information, support transparency, and strengthen collaboration across departments and communities.

Next steps include refining the design, validating it with stakeholders, and preparing for phased implementation.

- **Geospatial Strategy Story Map:** Work on the Story Map was completed this year, providing an accessible and engaging way to communicate the vision, progress, and impact of the Geospatial Strategy.

View the Story Map here: <https://arcg.is/o4qjbX1>

Looking Ahead

As the GIS Unit continues to support departments and advance the Geospatial Strategy, the next phase of work will focus on expanding access to data and enabling more dynamic, real-time decision-making across the organization.

Key areas of focus include:

- **Strategy Refresh:** A comprehensive refresh of the Geospatial Strategy and Roadmap is underway to ensure alignment with evolving organizational needs, emerging technologies, and changing priorities. This process will refine timelines, validate progress, and identify new opportunities for innovation over the coming years.

- **Eeyou Geohub:** Building on earlier planning work, the GIS Unit will move toward launching a modernized Cree Nation Geohub: a centralized, user-friendly platform for sharing authoritative spatial data, applications, dashboards, and community resources.

The Geohub will support greater accessibility and transparency of geospatial information, strengthen collaboration between CNG departments and Cree First Nations, and streamline the delivery of public-facing maps and services.



CAPITAL WORKS AND SERVICES

Message from the Director Rhonda Oblin-Cooper



This has been a big year for the Capital Works and Services (CSW) team. Reflecting on my first fiscal year as Director, I feel privileged to work alongside such a dedicated group.



Over the past year, the team and organization have experienced significant change and growth while continuing to work closely with the communities as one agreement comes to a close. At the same time, we are preparing for a new chapter through negotiations to renew the New Relationship Agreement (NRA). This represents both an ending and a beginning, bringing exciting opportunities for the organization and for the CWS team to contribute to this important work. Throughout this process, the team worked closely with the communities to help gather their plans and provide ongoing support to the negotiating team. It is inspiring to see the communities developing their plans and next steps as we build our future as a nation.

The Capital Works and Services team has two main sectors: Technical Services and Capital Works.

Technical Services provides support and services in the following areas:

- Capital & Urban Planning Services
- Capital Asset & Procurement Services
- Fire Protection Services
- Public Safety Services
- Water Support Services
- Project Management Services

Capital Works offers support and services in the following areas:

- Housing
- Capital Projects & Inspections
- Operations & Maintenance

One key highlight of the past year was the extensive work carried out by the CWS Housing team in supporting leader-

ship through the Board/Council mandated Special Housing Working Group. This work contributed to the increase in the Private Housing subsidy, and we look forward to further improvements to the Community Private Housing Initiative 1.3A program under its two-year mandate.

Another highlight this year were the changes in our procurement processes, which included the integration of the Prioritization Agreement which is being led by Department of Commerce and Industry.

We worked closely with the Communities and the Justice Department to advance a community-based approach to the Almshouse projects. This same community-based approach has guided our work across all projects and services.

The CWS Department has also been working in close partnership with the Environment Department on the Marine Conservation Project and the Eco-Fund.

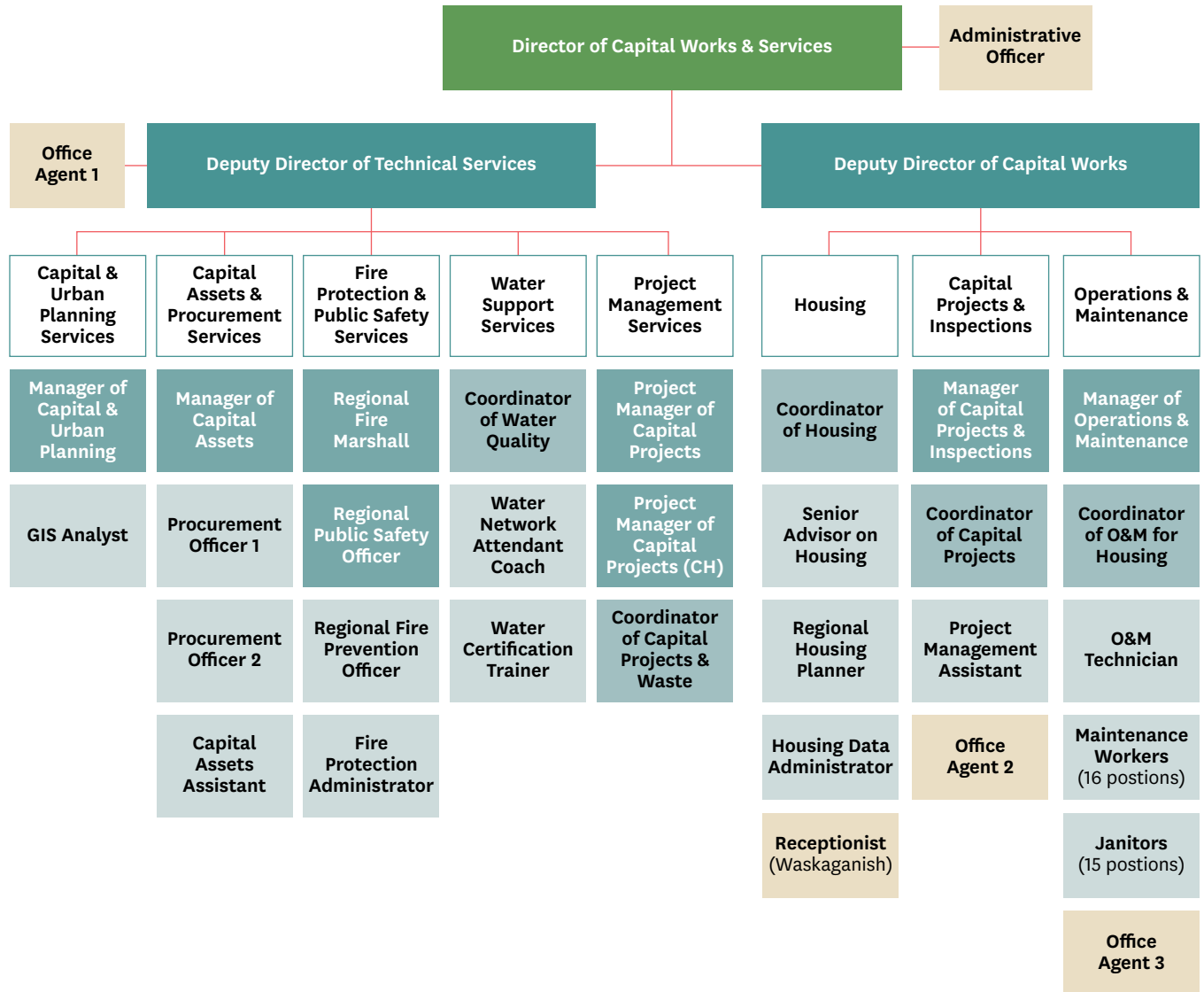
We will continue building strong connections across departments and working together with our sister departments to move shared priorities forward.

We will also continue to work in close collaboration with the local governments on the annual NRA planning, Fire Protection, Public Safety, Water and Wastewater, Waste Management, and Building Maintenance. I see all the work the communities are doing in these areas and I'm so thankful for all of the collaborations taking place.

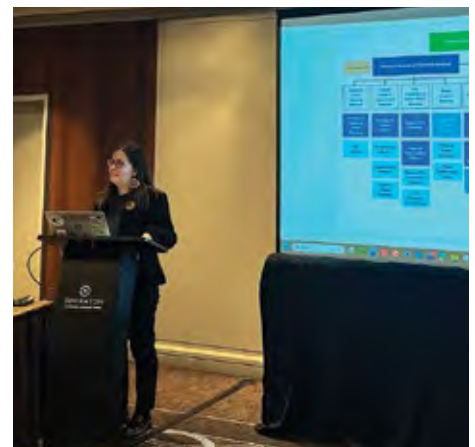
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Rhonda Oblin-Cooper
Director of Capital Works and Services

DEPARTMENT OF CAPITAL WORKS AND SERVICES



The Department of Capital Works and Services, including Director, Rhonda Oblin-Cooper.



CAPITAL ASSETS AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES

The capital assets and procurement team oversaw the procurement of goods and services and the management of the leases as per the processes explained below. In 2025-2026, the procurement team posted 25 calls for tenders, procured goods for a value of \$30,287,634 and processed 6 leases.



Figure 1. Percentage of purchases made per cost bracket

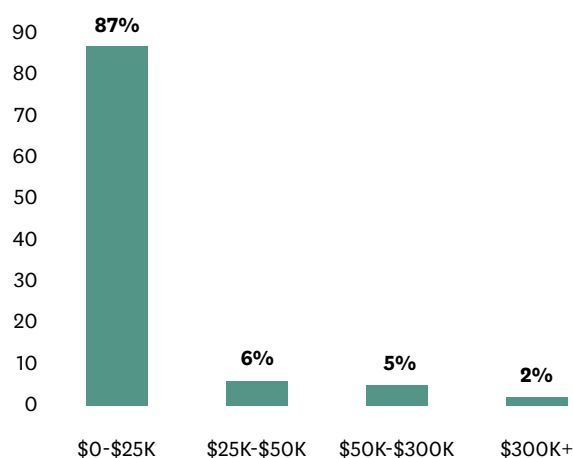
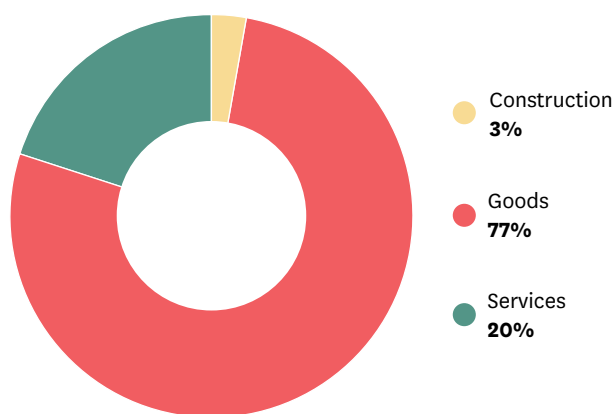
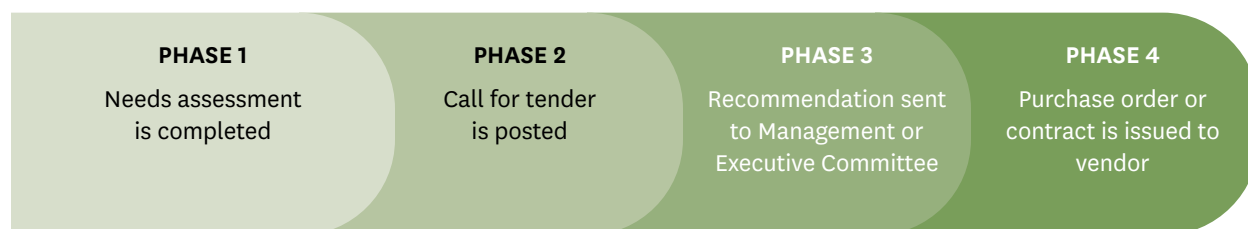


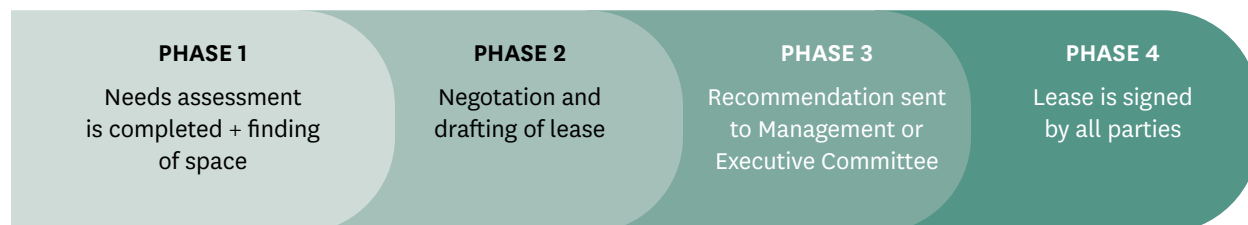
Figure 2. Division of purchases



Procurement projects valued at \$50,000 or more follow the process below:



Renewal or signing of new property lease is carried out as follows:



CAPITAL PROJECTS AND INSPECTIONS SERVICES

The Capital Projects team oversaw the construction activities for the Cree Nation Government's regional capital assets. In 2025-2026, numerous projects were executed as per table 1.

In addition, the Capital Projects team worked with each of the Cree Nation Government's departments by assigning architects and engineers to develop their projects with the goal of providing services for the Eeyou Istchee population respective to each department's mandate.

Table 1. Regional Construction Activities

No.	Project Description	Status (2026-03-31)	Contractor
1.0	Department of Justice & Correctional Services (JCS)		
1.1	Community Wellness Housing Mistissini (Tiny Homes & Main Building)	95%	KESI Construction
1.2	Community Wellness Housing Chisasibi (Tiny Homes)	95%	Chee Bee Cree Construction
1.3	Waswanipi Duplex	35%	Waswanipi Eenouch
1.4	Community Wellness Housing Waswanipi (Installation of Tiny Homes)	98%	VCC Entrepreneur Général
1.5	Chisasibi Almshouse	55%	Eeyou Eenou Construction
1.6	Community Wellness Mistissini Fencing	100%	Waskagan
2.0	Cree Nation Government Administration		
2.1	Nemaska Head Office Landscaping (Phase 2)	100%	VCC Entrepreneur Général
2.2	Staff Housing Renovations in Nemaska	90%	Project Management Approach
2.3	Nemaska Head Office Renovations	66%	Vieux Poste
2.4	Triplex in Chisasibi	98%	Construction Blackburn & Fils
3.0	Eeyou Eenou Police Force		
3.1	Ouje-Bougoumou Duplex	100%	Kagoose Larouche
3.2	Triplex in Chisasibi	98%	Construction Blackburn & Fils
3.3	Whapmagoostui Detachment parking lot paving	95%	CCDC
3.4	Radiocommunications Upgrade	98%	Bell Radio Division
3.5	Triplex and Duplex in Chisasibi	98%	Construction Blackburn & Fils
3.6	Triplex in Wemindji	100%	VCC Entrepreneur Général



Justice Almshouse in Chisasibi



Justice Duplex in Waswanipi



EEPF Triplex in Wemindji

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES

As of March 31, 2026, CWS oversaw the operations and maintenance (O&M) of 27 public buildings (approx. 233,700 square feet) and 184 housing units (approx. 196,600 square feet) located in the Cree communities as per the table below. To conduct the work, there is a team of 15 Janitors, 16 Maintenance Workers (three acting as team leaders), an Operations & Maintenance Technician, a Coordinator of Operations & Maintenance to oversee the CNG housing units and a Manager for Operations & Maintenance.

The types of operations and maintenance activities that are conducted by the Maintenance Workers can be classified

into three major maintenance categories: preventive, corrective, and predictive.

Since April 2016, the team has been using a Computerized Maintenance Management Software (CMMS) and has over 1200 preventive maintenance templates for the buildings' equipment. During 2025-2026, over 1179 work orders have been produced in all categories combined. CWS' O&M staff also answered emergency maintenance calls for the 13 daycare centres located in the Cree communities, following an agreement established with the Cree Nation Government's Department of Miyuuhpichinaausuwin Apatisiwin, formerly Child and Family Services.

Table 2. Assets under the responsibility of CWS for Operations and Maintenance (O&M)

Facility Type	Number of Facilities
Regional Buildings	
Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD) Office	1
Cree Nation Government Office in Waskaganish	1
Cree Nation Government Head Office Nemaska	1
EEPF Detachments	9
EEPF Headquarter in Chisasibi	1
Justice Facilities	8
Wellness centers	4
Forestry building	1
Warehouse	1
Subtotal	27
Housing Units	
Cree Nation Government Housing Units	61
EEPF Housing Units	83
Wellness Tiny houses	40
Subtotal	184
Total	192

Housing Renovations

In 2025-2026, the units listed in table 3 were renovated with the aim of improving the living conditions, addressing health and safety issues, enhancing energy efficiency, and modernizing outdated designs

Training for Maintenance

Through collaboration with Vector Solutions, offering industry-specific courses to build skills, ensure compliance, and drive readiness for maintenance workers, an online training was provided to improve workforce performance with unified, trackable training and compliance.

Collaboration with Human Resources

CWS collaborates with the CNG’s Human Resources department to upkeep the staff housing units and to provide service to tenants requesting maintenance or repairs, when needed. Monthly meetings are scheduled to organize and coordinate housing issues.

Housing Units by Department

In collaboration with Human Resources and Eeyou Eenou Police Force’s Material and Resources involving the housing units, CWS established a coordination group to work on the housing file for CNG-owned housing. Some activities worked on are as follows:

- Housing Unit Management.
- Review and update of Operational Process, Roles, and Responsibilities of HR and CWS.
- Inventory Checklist of Semi-Furnished and Fully Furnished Housing.
- House Inspections.
- Moving-In and Moving-Out Procedures.
- Developing housing policies.

The coordination team meets on a monthly basis to follow-up on certain issues pertaining to housing matters. The team continues to work together to improve the overall housing management for all units.

High-Level Requirements for 2025-2026

1. Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS)

The existing maintenance software includes the following types of operations and activities:

- *Kompanion* is an application linked with our CMMS database. This application is available on both Apple and Android mobile devices, and as of the 2022-2023 all CNG maintenance now receives their preventive and corrective work orders through their mobile devices from our regional CMMS technician.
- *Internal CMMS Software & Database* – updated all equipment built into CNG Buildings and CNG Housing Equipment.
- In 2025-2026, 202 corrective work orders and 977 preventative work orders were issued to regional CNG Maintenance (see figure 3).

2. Maintenance:

The activities carried out by the Maintenance Workers are the following:

- Inspect building envelope, HVAC systems, plumbing, and electrical components.

Figure 3. Corrective vs. Preventive Work Orders

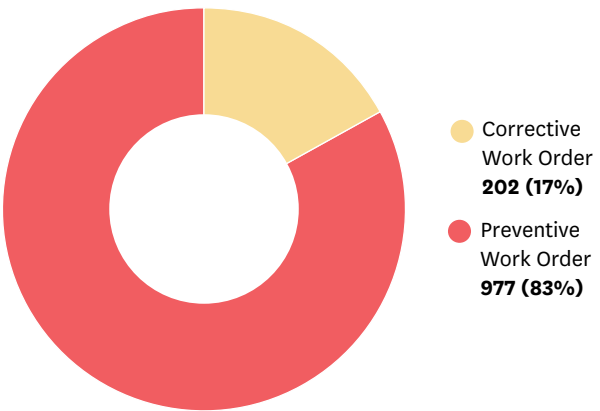
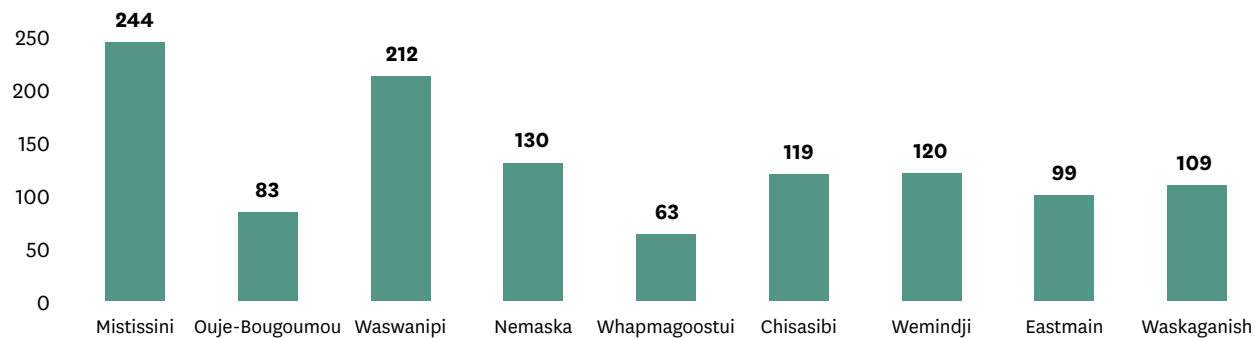


Table 3. Renovation activities carried out on residential units in 2025-2026

Community	Address	Type of Renovation	Status
Nemaska	6 Marten Trail	Interior & Exterior	Complete
Nemaska	7 Marten Trail	Exterior & Balcony	Complete
Waskaganish	21-C Kapataagan	Interior	Complete
Chisasibi	522-D Wishkichansh	Interior	Complete
Chisasibi	172-C Salt	Leak Repairs	Complete
Chisasibi	516-D Wishkichansh	Re-Painting	In progress
Nemaska	5-B Fox Trail	Interior	In Progress
Nemaska	2 Marten Trail	Balcony Replacement	In Progress
Mistissini	12-B Coon-Come	Bathroom Renovation	In Progress

Figure 4. Total Work Orders Per Community



- Assist with professional services such as (HVAC) Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning, plumbing, electrician.
- Fixing and replacing doors, windows, replacing light-bulbs, repairing or replacing appliances.
- Winter snow removal at entrances, summer landscaping.
- Transport – boxes from airport to their communities when asked or within CNG office buildings to storage areas.
- Assisting when departments' request help to move furniture

3. Janitorial:

The janitorial duties are provided for all our departments such as Justice, EEPF, Forestry, Commerce, CNG head office, EEPF head office. The daily tasks included general cleaning of surfaces, walls, and furniture within the buildings and keeping them in good condition.

CAPITAL AND URBAN PLANNING SUPPORT

New Relationship Agreement Capital Planning

CWS continued to plan and monitor the capital projects to be carried out at the Local Administration level through funding provided by the Canada-Cree New Relationship Agreement (NRA).

Specifically, CWS manages the administration and annual update of the NRA Capital Plan, incorporating projects from

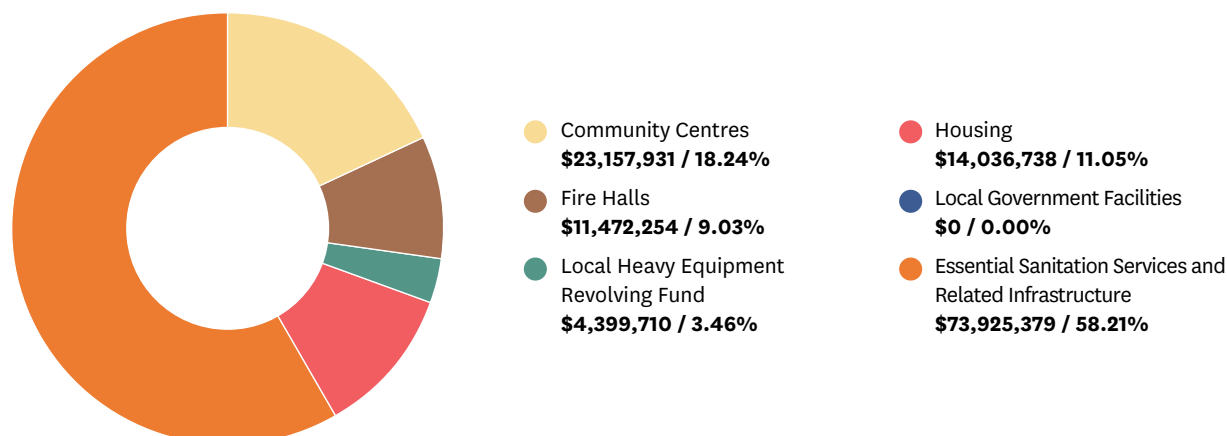
all nine communities. CWS ensures that technical standards are respected per project, prior to the recommendation of project funding. A total of \$126,992,012 worth of projects for all nine communities was approved by Board/Council for 2025-2026 for projects relating to Local Governance, Essential Sanitation Services, Community Centres, Firehalls, Local Heavy Equipment and Housing, as per figure 5.

Project Reporting & Monitoring

CWS is responsible for maintaining a record of all capital projects realized with NRA funding. This involved keeping an inventory of supporting documentation for all projects funded through the NRA, including copies of contracts, proposals, cost estimates, as-built plans, final completion certificates, etc. The information collected will support the NRA renewal negotiations with an accurate and detailed account of how the NRA funds were used.

Lastly, CWS conducted a Fall Community Tour of all NRA-funded facilities and infrastructures. The purpose of the tour was to ensure the proper execution and maintenance of all capital projects. A selection of pictures from the Fall 2025 Community Tour are included on the following pages.

Figure 5. NRA funding approved for 2025-2026, per program





Eastmain capital planning session, 2025-08-26



Waskaganish discussions on future recreational infrastructures, 2025-08-28



Whapmagoostui social housing construction site visit, 2025-08-21



Chisasibi new Firehall site visit, 2025-09-22



Ouje-Bougoumou community entrance infrastructure site visit, 2025-09-18



Waswanipi Aquatic Centre visit, 2025-09-17

FIRE PROTECTION SUPPORT

The Fire Protection team, comprised of the Fire Marshal, Fire Prevention Officer, and Fire Protection Administrator, have been actively engaged in various projects throughout 2025-2026. Efforts have been particularly focused on supporting Cree communities with a Fire Master Plan, Fire Officer Training, Fire Officer Mentorship in collaboration with the Fire Departments in Southern Ontario and involving equipment procurement and comprehensive training for fire personnel. This is crucial for effective response to fires and emergencies. The Fire Protection team organized a Fire and Life Safety Symposium and Firefighting Competition in Wemindji. The Fire Protection team also contributed to the Climate Change and Environment Forum, held in Mistissini.

Fire Equipment

Capital equipment acquisitions were facilitated through the CWS procurement team. In 2025-2026, significant purchases included a fire truck and a range of equipment, such as self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), fire hoses and nozzles, thermal imaging cameras, multi-gas detectors. These assets are instrumental in enabling fire departments to operate efficiently during emergency situations.

Training

Training is equally vital for fire protection services, as modern fire departments are tasked with responding to a diverse range of incidents beyond traditional fires. In 2025-2026, the focus has been on training qualified Fire Officers and Fire Instructors. Fire Officers and Instructors hold a leadership role in the Fire Departments and will be able to provide more training to their team, leadership and technical support. The

collaboration between CWS and fire departments ensures ongoing training tailored to support local needs. Certification in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards for various roles, along with professional development workshops for fire officers, underscores the commitment to maintaining high standards within the fire service.

With great success from last year's Fire Prevention Officer Mentorship Program, in 2025-2026, CWS offered a Fire Officer Mentorship Program. The program encompasses 10 Fire Officers from the Cree Nations travelling to Southern Ontario to work in conjunction with 11 fire departments to gain experience in establishing their own programs at home. The program will see each Fire Officer partner with an Ontario fire department for one week and will allow them to bring back valuable fire safety knowledge and experience to their community.

Lastly, Drone Training was provided by CWS, in collaboration with Public Safety and the EEPF. This initiative aimed to equip the community with certified advanced Drone Pilots capable of using drones for reconnaissance and search-and-rescue (SAR) operations.

Conclusion

The Cree Nation Government's dedication to fire protection initiatives, training and improvements underscores its commitment to community safety. Investment in fire stations, fire trucks, equipment, and training reflect a proactive approach to mitigate the risk of fire-related disasters and ensure timely emergency response. By prioritizing fire protection, the Cree Nation continues to safeguard its residents and vital infrastructure against the devastating impact of fires.



Fire & Safety Facilitators for the Fire & Life Safety Symposium in Wemindji, Quebec



Advanced Drone Training Coastal Cohort in Chisasibi, Quebec



Firefighting Competition September 2025 in Wemindji, Quebec



Advanced Drone Training Inland Cohort in Mistissini, Quebec

PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPORT

The Regional Public Safety Officer (RPSO) position is a newly established role that officially commenced in July 2025. As a completely new function within CWS, the position was created to ensure the effective management of public safety programs and the ongoing coordination of all related activities. This includes organizing training sessions, meetings, and ensuring availability of standard public safety equipment for all communities. In this role, the RPSO must work closely with all local Public Safety Departments to support their operational recommendations regarding equipment, training, and services. A summary of the key activities of the RPSO are listed in table 4.

The RPSO also serves as a key liaison between communities, Cree Nation Government departments and external partners, ensuring a coordinated and consistent approach to public safety priorities and initiatives especially for emergency management.

A core responsibility of the RPSO is to assist the communities in the development, review, and continuous improvement of the community Emergency Management Plans. This includes supporting hazard identification and risk assessments, establishing clear response protocols and ensuring alignment with regional and external emergency management frameworks.

As a newly established position, the RPSO plays a supportive role in strengthening the overall Public Safety (Emergency Management) framework within the Cree communities. By improving coordination, supporting training and planning efforts and enhancing collaboration with partners to contribute to safer, more prepared, and more resilient communities across the region.

HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES

The Housing Support Services team provides services relCWS’ Housing team, comprised of the Senior Housing Advisor, Coordinator of Housing, Regional Housing Planner, and Housing Administrator, delivered support services to the Cree communities on housing programs. Housing services are essential throughout the Cree Nation to help communities accommodate the needs of the growing population by providing adequate housing. In 2025-2026, the main housing activities from the housing programs and regional meetings are listed in table 5.

- The CWS housing team’s achievements throughout 2025-2026 can be highlighted as follows:
- Attendance from the Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief at a quarterly meeting.
 - Completion of 3rd annual community housing tour.
 - Participation in the Special Housing Meeting with Board/ Council, Directors General and Treasurers in November 2025.
 - Attended the CSB’s 2nd Edition Higher Learning Building Capacity Conference
 - Hosted a housing inspectors training in Val-d’or, Quebec.

The CWS housing team remains thankful for the Cree Nations continued support and collaboration with the housing departments in advancing on the various housing initiatives across the Nation.

Table 4. A summary of the key activities of the RPSO

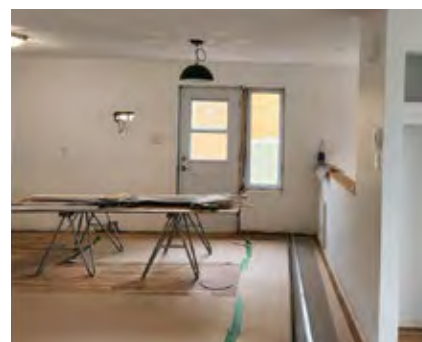
Activity	Description
Quarterly Meetings	Quarterly meetings with the Public Safety Departments.
Monthly Virtual Meeting	Monthly updates and discussions.
Collaboration with partners	Introductory and collaboration meetings with EEPF, CBHSSJB, CSB, Canadian Coast Guard, Canadian Armed Forces (Rangers), Canadian Red Cross, SOPFEU.
Canadian Coast Guard	Contribution Agreement received from the Canadian Coast Guard for an Integrated Marine Response Planning and Environmental Response Training and Exercises, including Search and Rescue.
Associate Certificate in Emergency Management	Approved funding from Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD) supporting the Emergency Management training program for the Public Safety Departments (to commence in September 2026).
SOPFEU	Organized a visit to SOPFEU Headquarters in Quebec City with the PSOs and Fire Officers. Tour and presentations hosted by SOPFEU team.
2025 Climate Change Adaptation and Environmental Emergency Preparedness Workshop	Organized Day 3 of the Climate Change Workshops held in Mississauga focused on Environmental Emergency Preparedness Workshop facilitated by H2Safety and Waswanay.



Special Community Social Housing in Ouje-Bougoumou



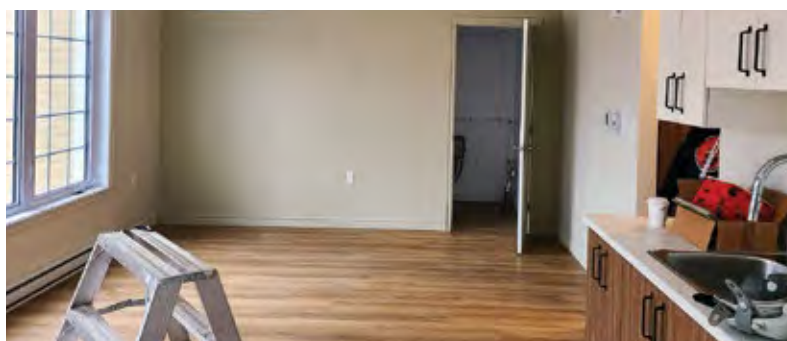
Waswanipi Special Community Social Housing Program 1.3B



Renovation Project in Waswanipi



Special Community Social Housing in Chisasibi



Special Community Social Housing in Wemindji

Table 5. The main housing activities from the housing programs and regional meetings

File	Action	Details
Community Private Housing Initiative Program 1.3A	Implementation	To date, the program has approved 137 subsidies.
Construction Loan for Private Housing Program 1.3A.1	Implementation	Since its launch, the program has provided eleven (11) construction loans.
Eeyou Miichuwaap Meeting	Quarterly meetings	A regional housing meeting for Cree Nation Housing Directors.
Reaching Home Program	Continuation	Data was collected from all projects completed through the program.
Regional Housing Radio show	Host	The housing radio show airs monthly and has produced more than 130 episodes to date.
Renovation and Inspection Services	Implementation	Provides support for urgent housing renovation files and coordinates inspections for the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP), Physical Condition Reviews (PCR), Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Section 95 final inspections, and insurance claims.
Social and Rental Housing Program 1.3	Continuation	Supports Cree communities in meeting CMHC On-Reserve Non-Profit Housing Program (Section 95) reporting requirements.
Special Community Social Housing Program 1.3B	Implementation	Applications are reviewed and presented to the Management Committee for approval. The program has produced 584 units to date.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

CWS provides project management services to Local Governments upon request and works on various regional files for the Cree Nation Government in support of the implementation of the New Relationship Agreement (NRA) and other agreements. In 2025-2026, these activities included providing project management support to the Whapmagoostui First Nation for all projects approved for funding through the NRA and for new housing construction. Project management support was also provided for the Cree Nation of Chisasibi.

Whapmagoostui First Nation

Although minor corrective works remain, construction of new pool and youth centre and the paving of streets were completed. Works continued on the cadastral review. Several projects were also at the planning stage: construction of a cemetery, decontamination of a scrapyard, construction of an eco-centre, construction of a charnel house and construction of additional drinking water wells. Additional support was provided to the Whapmagoostui Capital Works team for the 2026-2027 NRA funding applications.

Cree Nation of Chisasibi

In 2025-2026, CWS provided project management support to the Cree Nation of Chisasibi, specifically related to the construction of the new firehall, and multiple housing units. The support provided involves monitoring costs, coordinating with the contractors and professionals on site, and reporting back to the Cree Nation of Chisasibi's management team.

The construction of the firehall's interior finishes is expected to be completed in July 2026, with exterior work expected to be finalized by September 2026.

Concerning housing, CWS assisted in analyzing the plans and specifications for approval, providing technical advice on construction to maximize energy savings, supervising the construction work, monitoring costs and coordinating with the contractors. The active projects are the following:

- One (1) 6-plex is under construction presently with completion planned for August 2026.
- One (1) 4-plex is under construction presently with completion planned for July 2026.
- Twenty-five (25) duplexes are planned to start in May 2026, for delivery in 2027.

A selection of pictures is provided on the following pages.



Whapmagoostui's new Pool, new Landfill, and newly paved streets.

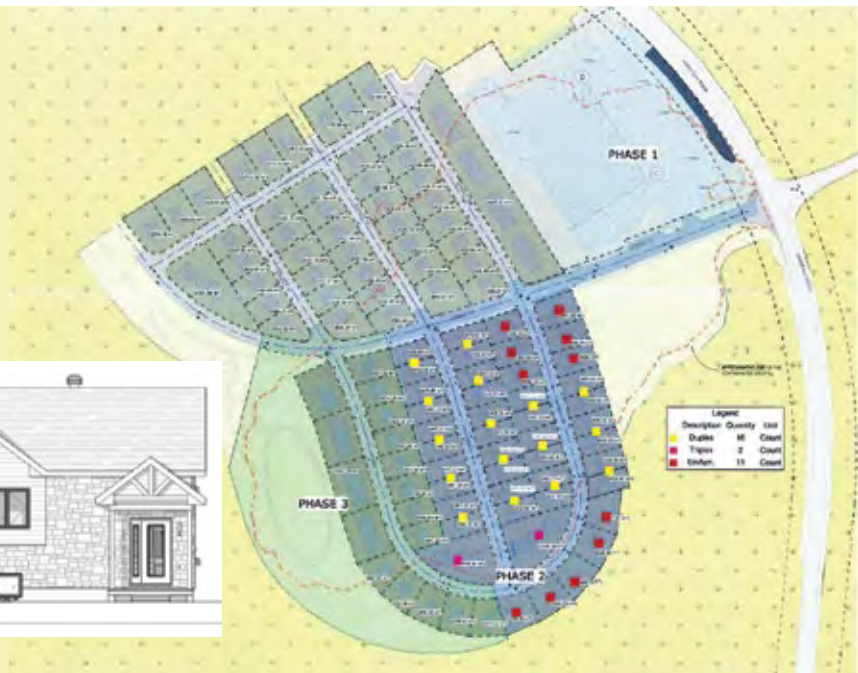


Chisasibi Firehall Exterior, September 2025



Chisasibi Firehall Construction Progress

Chisasibi's planned 25 duplexes for 2027 delivery



Chisasibi 6-plex



Plans of Chisasibi 4-plex

WASTE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Waste management services are provided to both Local and Regional Governments, upon request.

Implementation of the Collection of Household Recyclable Materials

CWS led discussion with *Éco Entreprise Québec* (ÉEQ) regarding the implementation of the collection of household recyclable materials in the region. In 2025-2026, efforts have been made on signing a financial agreement funding communities with an existing recycling program for 2025 and 2026 (Ouje-Bougoumou, Mistissini and Wemindji). Draft agreements were sent for comments and approval. Works also progressed on establishing collection and transport scenarios for the recycling program in the region. Finally, work also progressed on the framework agreement that will ultimately uniformize the collection of recyclable materials in the region.

Implementation of the Deposit-Refund System

CWS led discussion with the Québec Beverage Container Recycling Association (QBCRA) for the implementation of the deposit-refund system in the region. Regional agreement necessary for the implementation was presented during 2024-2025 Q3 at the Board/Council meeting then to CNG's executive committee. Follow-up with the communities to ensure the signature of the regional agreement was completed. Follow-up with retailers to ensure installation of reverse-vending machines was also completed.

Implementation of Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) programs

CWS led discussion with organizations managing Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) programs to formalize the implementation of EPR programs in the region. An agreement was reached with Product Care (responsible for end-of-life non-refillable gas containers) and Commercial Appliance Recovery Society (responsible for end-of-life commercial and industrial cooling appliances). In these agreements, the role of CNG was formalized.

Support to Local Governments

Additionally, technical support was provided to the Local Governments to improve waste management operations, including, but not limited to:

- Whapmagoostui: Support for the operation of a new landfill and support the community on providing training on decontamination of end-of-life vehicles.
- Chisasibi: Support for the collection of old tires.
- Wemindji: Support for the operation of new waste management infrastructures.
- Waskaganish: Coordination on miscellaneous subjects (operations at the eco-centre, extended producer responsibility programs, etc.).
- Eastmain: Support for the start of the operations at the eco-centre.
- Mistissini: Support for the purchasing of equipment related to waste management.

WATER SUPPORT

Water Operators Trainings

In 2025-2026, exams have been conducted for the Waste-water Operator Certification program ("OW-2") for seven (7) water operators with the collaboration of the *Cégep de Shawinigan*. Exam sessions and crash courses were successfully completed in September 2025. This year also marks the first ever cohort of students to graduate the water certification program given in Chisasibi. The region can now rely on five (5) more certified water operators.

Conventions

To improve collaboration between water operators and affiliated partners, the annual water operators convention was held in Montreal in November 2025. During this event, a health and safety campaign was given, including a vaccination clinic and fit test for respiratory protection for all the water operators present. In addition, a training session was offered at the Flygt pump workshop. This activity was targeted for wastewater operators, with the goal of understanding how to troubleshoot and maintain the pumps.

Technical Support

In 2025-2026, the water support services team provided technical support services to the local water plant operators regarding their drinking water treatment systems and water quality sampling and monitoring. They also provide training and support to the local operators for all matters related to drinking and wastewater in the Eeyou Istchee communities. The interventions were focused on Chisasibi's water interruption emergency and Mistissini's disinfection system.

Table 6 below presents the additional activities conducted by the water support service team.

Table 5. Activities conducted by the water support service team

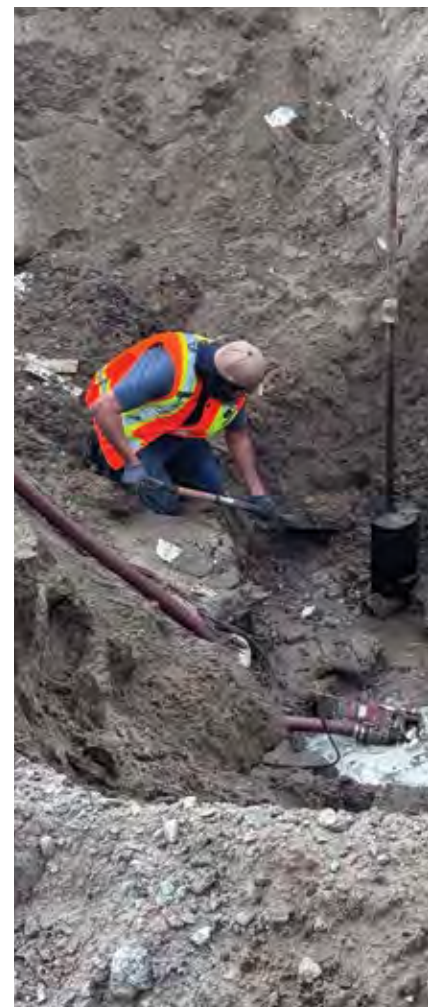
Community	Activity
Chisasibi	New water treatment plant commissioning and Hydro-Québec intervention (Atkins Realis).
Wemindji	Water treatment plant upgrades.
Eastmain	Water supply committee with Hydro-Québec and Operational Support.
Nemaska	Public works training and fire hydrant modifications.
Oujé-Bougoumou	Leak Detection.
Waswanipi	Lagoons sludge removal.
Mistissini	AGA presentation and new water treatment plant design.



The water support team at the Mistissini AGA



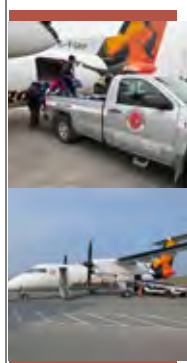
CWS presenters at the Water Operator Convention, Montreal, November 2025



Leak detection and repair



Chisasibi's emergency repair during water interruption



Keep it flowing

A state of emergency over a community water crisis in Chisasibi was lifted after potable water was restored June 6. Tests confirmed that water was safe for consumption, although the reservoir was not yet at full capacity.

The emergency was declared when a lightning strike damaged the water treatment plant on June 3. Workers saw a flash of light, then smoke coming from control panels. Chief Daisy House knew something was wrong when she saw Barry Bearskin, the community's director general of operations, when she went for coffee that morning.

"I'd never seen his face look so down," Chief House recalled. "There were so many unknowns. We had just finished our plant in the fall and were still using the old one. At 11:35am, we declared a state of emergency because we wanted to make sure we had potable water, that was the number one thing."

Chisasibi leaders thanked local workers for their dedication.

"We witnessed your hard work around the clock, often under challenging conditions, and we are truly grateful for your efforts," shared the Cree Nation of Chisasibi. "Situations like this highlight how vital it is to have a team like ours, ready to respond when our community needs it most."

Chisasibi was already suffering a water shortage due to abnormally low levels in La Grande River. A boil-water advisory was issued June 2, before a complete system shutdown came later that day. Hydro-Québec had been contacted to release more water from upstream dams.

La Grande is the second longest river in the province, flowing about 900 km to James Bay, extensively developed by Hydro-Québec. Among the eight dams in Chisasibi territory, the LG-1 generating station is about 30 minutes from the community and the LG-2 about an hour upstream.

by Patrick Quinn, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Chisasibi resolves water emergency – for the short-term

With sediment and organic matter clogging the community's water intake, CNG engineers and other water experts worked to install floating pumps to bypass the issue. Unfortunately, a fuse on one of the pumps wasn't working and another cable was too short, so missing parts had to be ordered.

Facing critically low water levels in the community reservoir, the supply was briefly returned intermittently before being closed again to conserve remaining resources. Air Creebec, the Cree Construction and Development Company and food wholesalers helped deliver bottled water beginning June 3.

Residents were urged to limit non-essential usage while tubs of river water were made available on the shoreline for flushing toilets. All schools and daycare centres were closed until further notice.

"It was like one thing after another, but we still had high hopes," explained Chief House. "Everybody was so understanding, patient and cooperative. We know how to live without running water at our camps already. There are a lot of overcrowded homes, and we didn't want to overburden the healthcare system."

As hemodialysis treatment is impossible without water, patients were flown to Montreal. The Chisasibi dialysis team worked with the Montreal General Hospital so patients could receive treatment without delay. Water samples had to be sent to Quebec's public health labs for analysis before patients could return, which was expected around June 18.

Community members were regularly updated about the evolving situation through radio announcements, social media posts and the Chisasibi app, which filters messages to various groups.

By June 5, the water station crew had removed filters to clear river debris. Sampling of the restored supply was conducted the following day before the state of emergency was lifted. Water treatment technicians worked tirelessly throughout the crisis – one worked 29 hours straight.

"Environmental factors forced us to intervene to fix the problems temporarily," said Kyle Sam. "A mid-term solution will be implemented in coming weeks, the next part of the upgrade. Things are heading in the right direction. In a sense, I'm trying to drive a Ferrari without full throttle – engine is complete but need the tires."

Praising the efforts of Bearskin and CNG water quality coordinator Laurence Truong, Sam said there is high demand for water technicians, especially with many in Eeyou Istchee nearing retirement. While transitioning to the new treatment plant, Sam said they had used the same intake pit in the old building.

"Now they have to install the chamber grid and a new water pit for the new treatment plant," said Chief House. "That's another \$5 or \$10 million for the medium-term upgrades they'll finish this fall. But we need to resolve the long-term issues for our growing community."

While some suggest a pipeline or wave break, resident Roger Orr favours a water tower. Capable of storing over a million gallons of drinking water, these towers use gravity-driven hydrostatic pressure to guarantee a stable supply. Orr joked that Chisasibi's tower could say "Skoden", like one was once spray-painted in Timmins.

Although the kitchen at Orr's Retro Daze Café needs lots of water, he said he is crisis-proof because he's always used spring water for coffee and tea because of the water uncertainty over the last 20 years, noting the river's levels have dropped substantially.

Many expressed relief that there were no fires during the water emergency, though the community's dump had burned the week before and a health board unit burned the following week. Recalling the panic that spread in 2018 after a false rumour that a nearby dam had broken, Orr asserted that the community needs a backup solution for emergencies.

"We need sirens, with only a few individuals allowed to sound the alarm if something's going on up the river," said Orr. "Imagine if it was real. When a crisis like this happens, it's an opportunity to improve."

ROCK COMPETITION – LEARN FROM THE LAND!

The Cree Mineral Exploration Board's Rock Competition to reward new mineral discoveries in Eeyou Istchee

General Category 1st place: \$1,500 2nd place: \$1,000 3rd place: \$500	Requirements: New Site Sample must be the size of a fist Sample Rough Location Complete the application form	Deadline and shipping: CMEB assumes the analysis expenses of the participating samples The contest ends on October 31 Shipping is at participant's expense
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Do not forget:

Hint: on the ground, look for rusty surfaces

Hint: after breaking, sample metallic minerals

Hint: the beauty of the crystals and the fossils

SAMPLE LOCATION PLACE NAME: Eeyou Istchee

NAME: _____ **ADDRESS:** _____ **COMMUNITY:** _____ **SIGNATURE:** _____

SAMPLE COLLECTED FROM: ☐ Stream ☐ Roadside ☐ Quarry ☐ Other _____

Sent to: CMEB 12 Tuckish Rd, P.O. Box 130, Whistler, BC Canada J0H 1L0 Tel: 416-875-2038 ext. 1001 Email: info@cmeb.org





MIYUHPICHINAAUSUWIN APATISIWIN

Message from the Director
Kelly-Lee Pepabano



We are proud to share the activities and achievements of the Miyuuhpichinaausuwin Apatisiwin Department for the 2025–2026 year.



First, we want to thank all the dedicated childcare staff across Eeyou Istchee. Your hard work and commitment to caring for our young children make a big difference every day. You are the heart of our services and the reason we continue to grow stronger as a network.

We also thank our regional and local partners in Eeyou Istchee and the province. Your support helps us provide the best care and learning experiences for children aged 0 to 5.

Our department offers more than just childcare. We manage a variety of programs that support children and families, made possible through two key agreements — one with Indigenous Services Canada, which includes the Head Start, Maternal and Child Health, and Midwifery programs, and another with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, supporting the First Nations Childcare Initiative and the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework. Together, these agreements create a strong pipeline of services that supports Cree children and families from pregnancy through the early years, so that no family falls through the cracks.

Thanks to strong teamwork and planning, our childcare centres offer services that go beyond what is found in many other parts of Canada. Our goal is to meet each child and family's unique needs in a caring, culturally grounded, and respectful way.

We also continued to work closely with our partners at the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, the Cree School Board, and Cree Nation Government to coordinate services and strengthen our network across all nine communities.

Lastly, we thank our Cree leadership. Your support allows us to keep building strong programs that help Cree children and families grow and thrive. We are deeply grateful.

Chiniskuumidinaan mishtee.

Kelly Pepabano
Director of Miyuuhpichinaausuwin Apatisiwin

OUR VISION

Ensuring a strong early childhood foundation to foster a stronger future in Eeyou/Eenou Istchee

OUR MISSION

We support and empower all early childhood programs in Eeyou/Eenou Istchee

MIYUHPICHINAAUSUWIN APATISIIWIN PERSONNEL

The Miyuuhpichinaausuwin Apatisiwin (MA) Department's head office is based in Mistissini and operates with a team of five full-time employees. One employee is located in Waswanipi, three in Montreal, one in Quebec City, and seven in Chisasibi. This distribution allows us to maintain presence and visibility in multiple communities throughout our territory, something we value deeply.

The MA Department, under the Cree Nation Government (CNG), oversees and administers the CNG's obligations under the funding agreement with the Ministère de la Famille. Our primary role is to implement and supervise all Cree childcare services across Eeyou Istchee. This includes monitoring service quality in Cree childcare centres, ensuring compliance with applicable acts and regulations, and upholding the highest standards.

We aim to empower childcare centres and establish a strong network of leaders and professionals in childcare management through the Cree Child and Family Services Centres Association. By providing support and guidance, we aim to facilitate the delivery of quality services that align with our Cree values, culture, and language, benefiting children and families alike.

Our goal is to
meet each child
and family's
unique needs
in a caring,
culturally
grounded, and
respectful way.



Photo: Brendan Forward

As of the end of the 2025-2026 fiscal year, over 450 Crees were employed in child and family service centres, predominantly in permanent full-time positions, with some serving as replacement educators. Furthermore, more than two-thirds of educators now possess college-level diplomas, representing a significant educational achievement.

Each childcare centre typically hires a director responsible for overall management, including human resources, finance, materials, administration, and service delivery. Directors are supported by facility coordinators and administrative assistants. Centres also employ multiple educators, including resource educators and, in some cases, home visit educators. Cooks and janitors are also part of the regular staff at all centres. In addition, most centres have pedagogical counselors and coordinators specifically designated for their Head Start programs.

IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR ACTION PLAN

Throughout the fiscal year 2025-2026, the Miyuuhpichinaau-suwin Apatisiwin Department was engaged in a diverse range of activities including the following.

Programs and Agreements

Our department successfully allocated funds from various programs and agreements to local childcare centres, ensuring their continued operation and support. The implementation of these programs and agreements has proven to be instrumental in fostering economic vitality within our communities, injecting a total of \$36.5 million in local services, facilitating renovation projects, and implementing training programs.

The Agreement concerning Childcare Centres, established between the *Cree Nation Government (CNG)* and the *Government of Québec*, entrusts us with a range of crucial responsibilities. These include the renewal of permits for childcare centres, the implementation of our own budget regulations, conducting inspections, facilitating background checks for all staff and board members, addressing local and regional complaints, and offering technical and professional support to the centres.

The *First Nation Childcare Initiative Program* and Transformative Initiative known as the “*Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework (IELCC)*” is funded through an agreement between CNG and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC).

The FNICCI program aims to enable local childcare centres to optimize the ratio of children to educators, resulting in an elevated level of service quality.

The IELCC program aims to provide support for projects that strive to enhance the quality of early learning and childcare by integrating Indigenous culture, language, and traditional practices.

The *Cree Head Start, Maternal and Child Health, and Midwifery Programs* operate under an agreement between the

CNG and Indigenous Service Canada as part of the Healthy Child Development Initiative.

The Cree Head Start provides early learning activities at childcare centres or through home visits for families whose children do not attend. The program supports all areas of child development, including special needs services, playgroups, and parent-child activities.

The Maternal and Child Health, through the *Â Mash-kûpimâtsit Awash* program, promotes the health of mothers and children, focusing on prenatal and postnatal care, newborn health, nutrition, and early learning.

The Midwifery Services offer culturally sensitive prenatal, postnatal, and birthing care, supporting families through every stage of pregnancy and early parenting.

These programs are jointly supported by the CNG and the Cree Board of Health and Social Services to improve the well-being of Cree children and families within the Cree Nation.

Support to Childcare Centres in the Nine Cree Communities

During the 2025-2026 period, the department continued its commitment to supporting management teams of the child and family service centres, as well as their respective boards of directors. This support focused on strengthening governance and ensuring the effective delivery of high-quality childcare services across all centres.

Ongoing technical and professional assistance was provided to directors and staff within both childcare and Head Start programs. This included support in key operational areas such as legal compliance, facility maintenance, procurement, resource management, staff training, program development, communications, overall centre coordination, and day-to-day problem solving. To remain current and well-informed, the department also gathered and reviewed relevant childcare information from government sources, professionals, and partner agencies, and shared timely updates and resources with teams as needed.

In addition, the department introduced new tools and systems designed to strengthen supervision and improve administrative efficiency for program directors. Regular monitoring of maintenance needs and essential services was also maintained across all sixteen childcare facilities to ensure safe, reliable, and well-functioning environments for children, families, and staff.

Accessibility and Affordability of Child and Family Services

By the end of the 2025-2026 fiscal year, 1,208 subsidized childcare spaces were available across the nine communities. Furthermore, free spaces were provided for children of parents or guardians who were either receiving social assistance or were beneficiaries of the Income Security Program. To further support vulnerable families, each childcare

centre reserved between two and six spaces for children under Youth Protection, services depending on community needs and capacity.

The Head Start program also ensured that families whose children did not regularly attend childcare centres had access to a range of valuable services. It was specifically designed to support low-income families and those with children requiring specialized care due to special needs or challenging circumstances.

College-Level Trainings

To promote the overall development of children and incorporate Cree heritage and culture into our programs, it is important for the Department to provide opportunities for training and development for staff members and individuals interested in pursuing a career in early childhood development.

Here is an overview of the measures taken in 2025-2026:

During this fiscal year, one ECS training program was successfully completed, while three others remain in progress: two Early Childhood Services programs and one online Special Needs Educator program.

College-Level Training Programs

Each childcare centre is required to meet the provincial Act and Regulations ratios, which stipulate that two out of three educators working in childcare centres need to have completed college-level training programs. This ensures that our centres maintain high-quality standards in providing care and education.

Education in Childhood Services (ECS)

In September 2025, nine students from the Cree Nation of Nemaska began their ECS training. They are expected to complete the program in October 2026.

Also in September 2025, nine students from the Cree Nation Eastmain began their ECS training. They are expected to complete the program in December 2026.

Special Needs Education - Online (SNE)

Childcare centres across all communities have expressed considerable interest in Special Needs training. In response, a hybrid training approach was launched as a pilot project to increase accessibility. This represents the first online delivery of this program. Seven students from the nine communities began their Special Needs Educator training in October 2025 and are expected to graduate in December 2026.

This year, one graduation ceremony took place in Eeyou Istchee.

Education in Childhood Services (ECS)

Ten students from the Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation graduated from the CEGEP de St-Félicien's Education in Childhood Services training program.

The ECS and Special Needs programs continue to be in high demand throughout Eeyou Istchee, reflecting the local needs for skilled educators, special needs professionals, and management-level personnel in the communities.

The department acknowledges with sincere gratitude the support provided by Apatisiwin Skills Development, the CNG, and CEGEP de St-Félicien in enabling the delivery of these critical programs throughout Eeyou Istchee. We also recognize the exceptional commitment of CEGEP instructors, whose contributions serve as an inspiration to students and childcare professionals alike in their pursuit of excellence.

We extend our warmest congratulations to all graduates who have demonstrated unwavering dedication to supporting children and families across Eeyou Istchee. Through their hard work, they have earned their diplomas and are now recognized as qualified Early Childhood Educators, strengthening early learning in our communities.



Ouje-Bougoumou Graduates



Specific Program Updates (CEP, IELCC, Head Start, Special Needs, MCH)

Cree Educational Program & Child Education Record

Our team continued to deliver training to pedagogical counsellors, special needs educators, Head Start workers, and childcare coordinators across all nine communities, reinforcing our shared commitment to culturally rooted early childhood education.

Development of a Survey to Identify the Cree Educational Program Progress

A planning session held in Val-d'Or led to a strategic shift toward the Cree Educational Program and the development of a survey aimed at identifying the educational program's progress and identifying the areas of support and improvement. The survey was distributed to childcare educational staff across all communities, and the following is a brief summary of the feedback gathered:

- Educators expressed a strong preference for the old planning sheet and requested its return
- A desire to return to theme-based planning was identified, with emphasis on maintaining the integration of Cree culture and language
- Educators noted difficulty accessing cultural materials and resources for their classrooms
- Requests were made for traditional handmade items such as toys, log houses, skidoos, dolls, and clothing to enrich the learning environment

In response to the feedback, work is currently underway on the creation of a resource book that includes sample planning sheets to support educators in their practice. Our Pedagogical Advisor played a crucial role in providing essential support for the educational program implemented for educators across our childcare centres. Their expertise and guidance contributed significantly to the professional growth and development of our dedicated staff.

Development of Cree Child Education Portrait

Beginning in April 2025, the team transitioned from conducting childcare centre consultations to the development of the Child's Education File. Following the analysis of

consultation findings in May, the Guidebook and Periodic Portrait were drafted.

By November, an updated Periodic Portrait was completed.

Throughout the remainder of the year, work continued revising the Guidebook, developing a PowerPoint-based training tool, and creating age-specific Periodic Portraits as part of the ongoing updates to the Child's Education File.

IELCC program funding – Community and Childcare Based Project Funding

Under the IELCC funding, various projects were supported to enhance the services provided by childcare centres and other community entities. Here are a few initiatives that were carried out:

Staffing Support to childcare centres:

- Allocated salary funding for Pedagogical Support and Resource Educators across all sixteen facilities
- Allocated salary funding for team assistants at those communities that only have one centre to help support the director.

Program Enhancement:

- Provided annual funding to all centres for local training and workshops
- Delivered regional training on Mindfulness, Special Needs, and Head Start programs

Infrastructure and Resources:

- Provided specialized equipment and materials funding to enhance programming and support children's developmental needs
- Funded digitalized parent communication through iPad purchases and specialized apps
- IT upgrades for all 16 childcare centres

Partnership Programs:

- Growing Together - Early Intervention (Cree Board of Health and Social Services)
- Parent and Toddler Program (Cree Nation of Chisasibi)

Since 2021, we have continued our collaboration with the Youth Councils, allocating funds once again for Goose Break Bundles for young families. The program's remarkable success has garnered widespread appreciation, particularly from parents, highlighting its significance. The primary aim of this endeavour is to promote and assist families in engaging with the outdoors and traditional lands.

Given the program's success, we decided to expand our funding for cultural activities throughout the year and not just during Goose Break to support greater cultural awareness and community involvement.

The Maamuu Committee is continuing to develop a dedicated website aimed at consolidating essential resources for early childhood in a single, accessible platform. By bringing together these resources, the website will serve as

a valuable resource for parents, caregivers, and professionals, supporting their efforts in nurturing and fostering the well-being of young children.

Over the years, we have provided support to over 500 families every year, enabling them to practice Cree traditions. Here are some pictures of families who participated.

Financial Administration and Bookkeeping

The regional finance team maintained ongoing collaboration with administrative staff responsible for childcare centre financial administration throughout the reporting period. Significant time and effort were invested in compiling the documentation necessary for annual audits. Their commitment and attention to detail ensured accurate and comprehensive financial reporting, reinforcing transparency and accountability within the childcare centres' financial operations.



Infrastructure & Inspections

Maintenance of Our Facilities

Throughout the 2025–2026 period, we maintained a strong partnership with the Department of Capital Works and Services (CWS), which provided ongoing support for the maintenance and repair of our thirteen childcare facilities. This collaboration helped ensure that our centres remained safe, functional, and welcoming environments for children, families, and staff, while also supporting improvements needed to meet the evolving needs of each community.

We developed a Maintenance Work Order Form to accurately document maintenance issues, with dedicated sections for detailed descriptions, photos, and maintenance worker's feedback on completed work and required follow-up. The form also supports the timely updating of maintenance records in collaboration with Capital Works and Services.

Several important facility projects were completed or advanced during the year. In Nemaska, the childcare facility expansion, including the addition of a gymnasium and playroom, was completed in October 2025. In Whapmagoostui, roofing renovations and playground enhancements are currently underway, with completion expected this spring. In Waskaganish, roofing repairs for Facility #2 were successfully completed in fall 2025, helping to maintain the quality and long-term sustainability of the centre.

We are grateful for the dedicated support and assistance provided by the CWS maintenance personnel in addressing these maintenance needs and upholding the quality of our childcare centres. Their commitment to ensuring a safe and well-maintained environment for our children is greatly appreciated.

Inspection of Our Facilities

Following the departure of the previous inspector, the department successfully recruited a new inspector, Mr. Brian Sam. Mr. Sam is currently in the onboarding and training phase and has completed training provided by the *Ministère de la Famille* to develop the competencies required for the position.

Full inspections were completed in Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou, Wemindji, and Chisasibi, with a follow-up inspection also conducted in Wemindji.

Although not all childcare facilities in the nine communities were inspected during this fiscal year, the Officer did provide valuable recommendations for changes and improvements, as necessary. Additionally, he diligently followed up on all inspections conducted throughout the fiscal year, ensuring that appropriate actions were taken based on his findings.

Department Activities & Professional Development

Department Professional Development

University of Concordia

Our department participated in a customized continuing education program with Concordia University, focusing on leadership, HR management, administration, and team building. The program was completed in September 2025.

First Aid & CPR/AED – RCR Ottawa

In December 2025, the department completed its recertification in Emergency Childcare First Aid & CPR/AED Level B. This training was also provided to new staff members to ensure they met certification requirements and were fully prepared to respond to emergencies in the childcare setting.

Sharing Our Story – Connecting to collaborate

During the 2025–2026 year, the department participated in a “Sharing Our Story” training session focused on the history and growth of the department and childcare centres. This provided an opportunity to reflect on the early beginnings and recognize the many milestones achieved over the years.

The session also highlighted the important contributions of Miss Lucie Bergeron, whose leadership and dedication were instrumental in the establishment of the department and childcare services in Eeyou Istchee.

In recognition of her legacy, the department has committed to establishing the “Lucie Bergeron Award”, to honour childcare centre staff who demonstrate outstanding commitment, professionalism, and dedication to children and families.

IELCC Funding - Local Parenting Conferences

The MA Department is in the early stages of planning the local Parenting Conferences aimed at supporting families with young children aged 0–6. The first conference will be held in Chisasibi in September 2026. These gatherings will bring parents and caregivers together in a welcoming and supportive environment to share workshops and teachings focused on Cree language, culture, values, and traditional parenting knowledge. The conferences are intended to strengthen connections among families and provide opportunities for learning, sharing, and cultural renewal.

Partnership & Liaison Work

We coordinated regional meetings throughout the year with the Cree Child and Family Services Centres Association, providing a collaborative forum for local centres to address shared priorities, including collective agreement renewal processes at two unionized facilities. Technical support was provided to strengthen the Association's operational capacity.

Our department served as a liaison between First Nations organizations on childcare matters, facilitating coordination and knowledge-sharing to ensure coordinated and well-informed actions.

We maintained collaborative relationships and fostered partnerships with the CNG, local Cree Nation Administration offices, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services, Community Miyupimaatisiun Centres, the Cree School Board, local schools, as well as Provincial and Federal Governments. These partnerships aimed to deliver inclusive, holistic, and adaptable childcare programs for Cree children, including those with special needs.

OUR NETWORK OF SERVICES, 2025-2026



Photo: Katherine Dehm

Cree Nation Government
Miyuuhpichinaausuwin
Apatisiwin Department

**Cree Child and
Family Services
Association**
composed of all 9 Child and
Family Services Directors

**Waaseskun
Child and
Family
Services Centre**
Waskaganish

**She She Guin
Childcare
Centre**
Nemaska

**Awaash
Shiishiikunkamik
Childcare
Centre**
Waswanipi

**Waspshooyan
Childcare
Centre**
Ouje-Bougoumou

**Awash
Child and
Family Service
Centre**
Mistissini

2 facilities
80 children
in each

1 facility
63 children

2 facilities
70 children
in each

1 facility
70 children

3 facilities
80 children
in each

**Head Start
Program**

**Head Start
Program**
Band operated

**Head Start
Program**

**Head Start
Program**

**Head Start
Program**





JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Message from the Director
Donald Nicholls,
M.S.M., B.A., LL.B, B.C.L, LL.M



I am pleased to present this annual report on the work our Department has done to develop and deliver culturally grounded, community-centered legal supports, programs, projects and events dedicated to improving community safety, equity, healing and justice.



We are committed to collaborate with communities and regional organizations to work over the next year to increase the impact we can have on addressing issues of concern to the Cree Nation in the area of justice and social issues.

The CONNECT Leadership Forum in Chisasibi was a starting point for discussions on how we link our services and programs together. It set out some Calls to Action, including some specifically in justice, and we look forward to engaging with others to create and implement plans on each of these. The Community Justice Committees will be key organizations in communities to lead such ideas, and they will be administered and established by each local government to have the necessary authority and support to accomplish their tasks.

The new Judicial Advisory Committee (JAC) members appointed by Board Council have started off 2026 in an active way. The circumstances of some traumatic community events have driven a focus on supporting new roles for the Justice Committees and a commitment by the JAC to be more involved in the further development of the Justice Committees. In February, Chief Michael Petawabano assumed the role of the new Chair of the JAC as it rotates every two years between Cree and Québec representatives. We thank Alain Bellefeuille for his Chairing over the past two years. We look forward to changes that will allow the Department to focus more on programs and services over the next year.

This year also marks the retirement of two long time standing members of the Department. Louise Coonishish has been a Community Justice Officer since the Department was established in 2008. Louise had held this role previously for the Cree Nation of Mistissini. She has been a champion of land-based programs, and will be missed for her contributions. We send her our best for her retirement. Losty Mamianskum has been a Chair of the Justice and

Healing Committee in Whapmagoostui, a Chair of the JAC, a frontline worker in rehabilitation and reintegration, and the Manager of Correctional Services for the Department. His insight and contributions have been significant in how his team approaches difficult situations and with clients moving throughout the system. His leadership in this area will be missed and we wish him well in his retirement as well. We welcome both to continue to stay connected with us and their communities by sharing their knowledge and wisdom.

Working with Cree youth ages 10-17, the Youth Enrichment Services (YES) program, is a referral program and has opened a new site in the Cree Nation of Waswanipi this past year. It was the strong support of the local leadership and principal that has led this program to start off with great success. The YMCA of Québec provided some funding to help support the creation of this new site. We look forward to opening other sites in the future. The YES program also launched a Y Mind program that works with youth who have anxiety. We hope, with the collaboration of partners in the communities, to expand this type of program in the next year. We have met with the principals and vice principals to discuss areas where we could improve delivery and have been informed that we will have a grant over the next few years to further improve the program for this age group.

The Tiny Home Communities have almost been completed in the Cree communities. They were designed to be halfway houses and were put in place in the communities with the highest numbers of members in the system. The Department will then focus on programs that will be delivered in all communities where people are exiting the system. They will be developed and delivered with the involvement of local Justice Committees along with other organizations given direction on needs. Our frontline workers continue to receive specialized training so that they can be resources in areas with the most prevalent crimes in our communities. We will continue to look at types of services and aftercare to assist with reducing harm and recidivism in communities.

The Department went to the Cree School Board's Higher Learning, Building Capacity Conference 2026 in Ottawa to connect with students and other organizations. The Department has provided some funding for the MEIRA Conference in Ottawa to help with the Cree Men's initiative. We also attended the 2nd Youth Councils of Eeyou Istchee Summit in Québec City to continue to connect there and to listen to the needs and focus on what they have identified for the future. We look forward to the other opportunities for us to connect in the communities on social issues and new processes in the Cree Nation over the next year as well. We know there are plans for follow-ups to the Connections meeting as well as a Domestic Violence Conference in the fall.

The land-based programs generated by frontline staff and local Justice Committees continue to occur throughout the Cree communities. Cree CAVAC support for victims also has been working alongside the EEPF. Recently we had a meeting with all EEPF Captains and Lieutenants to go over victim services, Justice Committees and other areas where we could provide collaborative support. Detention-based support continues to occur in detention, and we also have some aftercare or reintegration programs in the Cree communities. Additionally, Apatisiwin Skills Development (ASD) provides support for a work program for those returning to communities with local businesses. We have also been meeting with Youth Protection Services and Youth Healing Services to see how we can collaborate on some social issues they may be working on.

At the end of the year, we had a good meeting with all the Cree Health Board programs in Gatineau to listen to what each part of the Board does. This was also an opportunity for Justice, the EEPF and Social Development to discuss what we are doing.

We look forward to what the next year will bring in terms of connecting with local and regional resources in more ways to address our communities' priorities.



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OUR PEOPLE

The people who deliver our services and make this work possible are community members with local relationships and knowledge. We have deliberately built into these existing networks and invested in developing skills locally so that each community benefits from them. We are fortunate to work with people who are deeply committed to creating better opportunities for growth and change in the lives of others. We would also like to take this opportunity to recognize the contributions of our staff who celebrated hitting the 10-year milestone with us this year: Kenneth Matoush, Correctional Release Support Officer, Val d'Or; Jessica George, Community Reintegration Officer, Whapmagoostui; Nora Tetreault, Financial Program Administrator, Montreal; and Sherry Ann Louttit, Prevention Program Officer, Chisasibi. Thank you for your continued service and dedication.



ADMINISTRATION	PREVENTION PROGRAMS	JUSTICE SERVICES	CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
- DOJCS Director - Manager of Strategic Planning - Administrative Technician - Translator - Art and Graphic Technician - Financial Program Administrator	- Manager of Prevention Programs - Manager of Youth Services and Administration - Prevention Program Officers - Primary Youth Workers - Prevention Program Assistants	- Manager of Justice Services - CAVAC Officers - Community Justice Officers - Program Support Officers - CAVAC Sexual Violence Advisor	- Manager of Correctional Services - Community Reintegration Officers - Correctional Release Support Officers - Coordinators of Transitional Housing Program - Corrections Liaison Officers

OUR DEPARTMENT EMPLOYS OVER

80

STAFF MEMBERS

With **EXPERIENCE** and **EDUCATION** in:

Correctional Services	Criminology	Law	Policing
Media & Communications	Youth Programming	Finance	Administration
Justice Services	Social Work	Youth Protection	Psychology

~ ~ This year, **2** of our team members **ARE RETIRING:** ~ ~



LOSTY MAMIANSKUM

Manager of Correctional Services



LOUISE COONISHISH

Community Justice Officer

We **THANK YOU** for your service and wish you a **PEACEFUL RETIREMENT!**

[illegible]

The Department continues to invest in our people. Our receptionists are often the first voice or face a person meets in our justice facilities, so this year they received training and workshops to strengthen their communication skills. Since those who come to us may be under stress, it is important to prepare our receptionists to direct them to the right staff and respond with care in difficult situations. Staff across the Department also took part in culturally grounded training on trauma and healing, and on recognizing the impact of colonization and intergenerational trauma.

Our staff participated in the following **TRAINING SESSIONS** throughout the year:

Trauma: Counselling Strategies for Healing and Resilience

DATE	TRAINING DESCRIPTION
<i>December 2025</i>	<i>Building practical counselling</i>
PARTICIPANTS	<i>skills to support clients</i>
<i>Justice Staff</i>	<i>through trauma</i>

Anxiety: Practical Intervention Strategies

DATE	TRAINING DESCRIPTION
December 2025	Equipping staff with practical
PARTICIPANTS	tools to recognize and respond
Justice Staff	to anxiety with clients

Crisis Response Planning: Creating a Compassionate Response Plan

DATE	TRAINING DESCRIPTION
April 2026	Developing structured response plans to better support individuals and families

Walking with Grief: Supporting Others Through Loss

DATE	TRAINING DESCRIPTION
April 2026	Strengthening staff capacity to walk alongside clients with grief and bereavement
PARTICIPANTS	
Justice Staff	

Justice Committees Bootcamp #1 (4-Day Session)

DATE	TRAINING DESCRIPTION
November 2025	Developing key tools and skills
PARTICIPANTS	for community-based CJC
CJC Members	justice processes

Justice Committees Bootcamp #2 (4-Day Session)

DATE	TRAINING DESCRIPTION
March 2026	Developing key tools and skills
PARTICIPANTS	for community-based CJC
CJC Members	justice processes



PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Prevention is a cornerstone of our community's wellness, health and safety. Working with our partners, we tailor programs to the needs of each community's and organization's needs and capacities. By engaging early with young people to build skills and habits for thoughtful decision-making, greater self-awareness and community awareness, we help them thrive and grow.

In addition to the Community Justice Committee and Employee Projects that are on-going prevention and recidivism reduction efforts, the following are some of the programs that **strengthen our social bonds and foster individual resilience.**

PREVENTION PROGRAMS:





CREE SNAP®

This program is a **COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE** in partnership with:



**CREE SCHOOL
BOARD**

STUDENTS

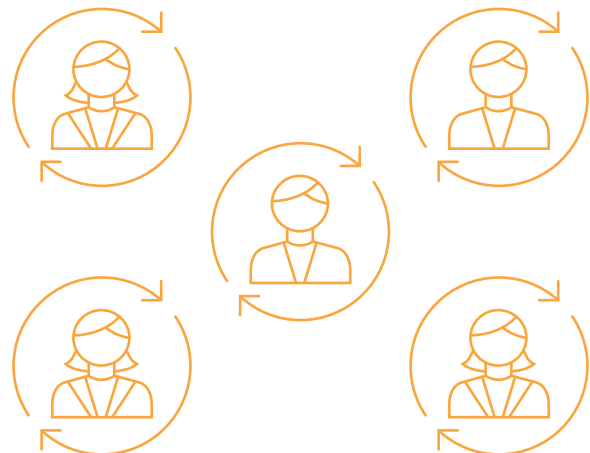
1,274

▲ - - - This we achieved through: - - - ▲

93

5

1-ON-1 SNAP SESSIONS



This year, our **CREE SNAP® TEAM** delivered a rich program across Eeyou Istchee by running **18 PROJECTS** including:





YOUTH ENRICHMENT SERVICES

Our Youth Enrichment Services (YES) program supports high school students referred by their schools. These students receive help with their schoolwork while taking part in workshops that support them with any challenges they may be facing. Already established in three communities — Waskaganish, Mistissini and Oujé-Bougoumou — YES opened a fourth site in Waswanipi and trained staff in preparation for opening in January 2026.

These same four communities will also see the Y Mind stress-management program launch this year. Nemaska now has a Youth Development Officer who will create, maintain and coordinate partnerships between youth and community services. Waskaganish students benefited from a new breakfast program.

This program is a **COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE** in partnership with:



DOJCS



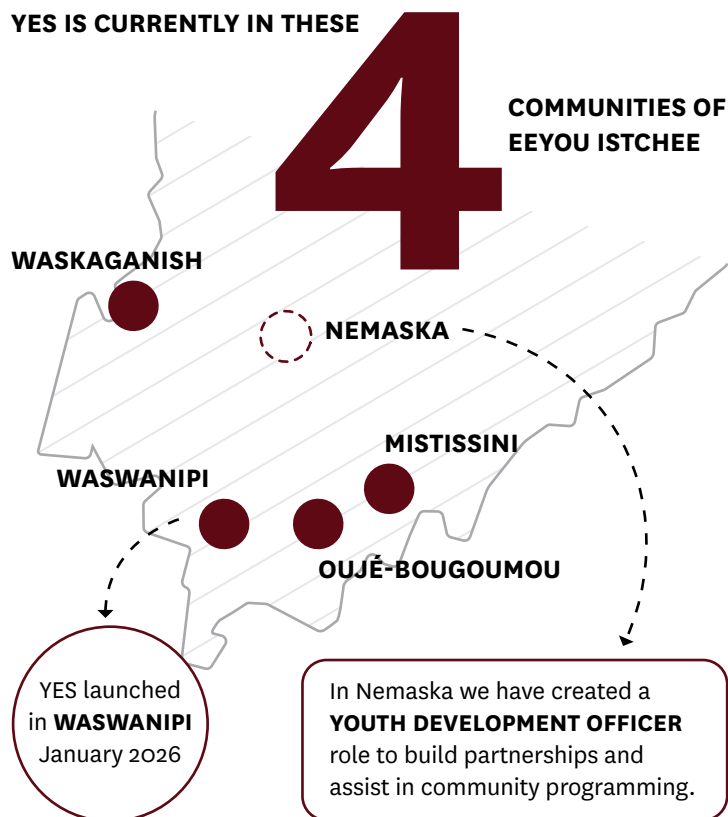
YMCA



CREE SCHOOL BOARD



YES IS CURRENTLY IN THESE



WE WORK WITH **STUDENTS** ON:



SET BALANCE



SET GOALS



REGULATE EMOTIONS



OFFER WORKSHOPS

This year **YES**
SUPPORTED
a total of

38
STUDENTS



BOYS

13



GIRLS

17



X / OTHER

1



NOT NOTED

7

SOME OF THE REASONS for referrals were (not a complete list):

7



**DISRUPTIVE
BEHAVIOUR**

1



**SUBSTANCE
USE**

9



**LACK OF
MOTIVATION**

4



ABSENTEEISM

3



**VERBAL
ABUSE**

5



BULLYING

In addition to the YES student program that supports children in school, **OUR TEAM ALSO ORGANIZES:**

SUMMER SONRISE CAMP

Promoting building healthy lifestyles and community connections through traditions, Cree values, and positive role models.

12

YOUTH

1-WEEK

ANNUAL SUMMER EXPERIENCE

3

COMMUNITIES SENT YOUTH

Mistissini | Waskaganish | Oujé-Bougoumou

Y MIND PROGRAM LAUNCH

Early-intervention program that teaches practical coping skills for anxiety and difficult emotions; not therapy, but psychoeducational support.

NEW

PROGRAM

JAN2026

LAUNCH DATE OF THE PROGRAM

4

COMMUNITIES

Mistissini | Waskaganish | Oujé-Bougoumou | Waswanipi

ᐃᐱᐳᐱ CICR

CREE CICR

Our Cree CICR program blends the practical, hands-on training of the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution with Cree values and traditions. This program gives us the tools to facilitate conflict resolution, mediation and other peacebuilding methods while respecting and recognizing the needs of groups and individuals. Understanding human behaviour and restoring dignity and trust through coaching and community dialogue are among the skills we draw on to maintain and practice peace. Understanding the root causes of the behaviour that leads to conflict is one of the most important parts of this training: it equips our frontline workers and partners to recognize the unmet needs of the people they work with.

This program is a **COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE** in partnership with:



GRADUATES OF
2025-2026

15



SINCE
STARTING
IN 2011, we
have had:

268

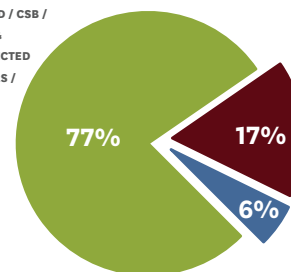
GRADUATES



Breakdown of 268 GRADUATES

209 of 268

CNG / DOJCS / ASD / CSB /
CWEIA / HEALTH &
PROTECTION / ELECTED
COUNCIL MEMBERS /
PRIVATE
COMPANIES /
JUSTICE



Through our **1-WEEK CAPACITY BUILDING IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM** with the CSB we had:

10



GRADUATES

Some of the feedback that we received **FROM PARTICIPANTS:**

“ ”

Loved every minute of the program

“ ”

Thank-you for an awesome week of my life

“ ”

Gaining confidence and breaking my ice

“ ”

Fully, I am confident in my abilities. Ready to implement in my community

CICR focuses on trying to resolve conflict by understanding and working with **HUMAN IDENTITY NEEDS**



Developed by
Vern Neufeld
Redekop



Graduates of the 15th instalment of the Department of Justice and Correctional Services' signature Cree CICR program.



10 leaders completed the CSB Capacity Building program this year.



Nicole Charron, a CICR trainer and peace practitioner, preparing to give a workshop at the Cree Nation Youth Summit in Québec City.



CREE JUSTICE FUNDS

Our Prevention Funds program is divided into two categories: Youth Engagement and Crime Prevention. By focusing on these as separate areas, we are better able to direct our funding to advance the well-being and resilience of our nine Cree communities. Staff of the DOJCS may apply for funding to start or further develop programs in the community, and to create new relationships and collaborations for a stronger, safer and healthier future.

The Youth Engagement Fund supports the development of programs and initiatives designed specifically for Cree youth by Cree First Nations, the Cree Nation Youth Council or local youth councils. These programs are run in accordance with the provisions of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement and the Justice Agreement.

The Crime Prevention Fund supports the creation of safer communities by preventing and combating crime through the best and most current practices, in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Justice Agreement.

A fund to prevent and combat crime and support the creation of safer communities.



A fund to empower the Cree youth while promoting their general welfare.



Request an **APPLICATION** form at your local community Justice facility or online.

Complete the entire application in **AS MUCH DETAIL** as possible, and then return the form to the Justice facility for review.

We will review your application **INTERNALLY**, we might also reach out to you if we have questions or need further clarifications about your application.

The Cree-Québec Judicial Advisory Sub-Committee recommends the project to the **CREE NATION GOVERNMENT** who decides whether or not to approve your application.

**IF
APPROVED,
YOUR
PROJECT
BEGINS**

JUSTICE SERVICES

We advocate for the respect of the Cree language, values and frames of reference so that each step of the legal process is **accessible and easy to understand**.

The icons are arranged horizontally. From left to right: 1. CAVAC logo with the text 'Crime Victims Assistance Centre' below it. 2. A circle containing eight small icons representing various community justice committees. 3. A circle containing a gavel icon, representing 'Hosting Various Courts'. 4. A circle containing an icon of a document with a pencil, representing 'Gladue Reports'.



CAVAC (SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME)

CAVAC
Crime Victims Assistance Centre

WHAPMAGOOSTUI

CHISASIBI

WEMINDJI

EASTMAIN

WASKAGANISH

NEMASKA

WASWANIP

MISTISSINI

OUJÉ-BOUGOUMOU

5

THROUGH OUR

CREE CAVAC OFFICES
we support all victims
throughout Eeyou Istchee

Our **CREE CAVAC OFFICERS** responded to:

484

SERVICE REQUESTS



These requests being composed of **SERVICES SUCH AS:**



**ACCOMPANIMENT
TO COURT**

80



**GENERAL
INFORMATION**

375



REFERRALS

5



**TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE**

8



**POST-TRAUMATIC
INTERVENTION**

16

If you or a loved one have been a victim or have witnessed a crime do not hesitate to **REACH OUT TO OUR TOLL-FREE NUMBER** which will put you in direct contact with **ONE OF OUR CAVAC OFFICERS:**

1(877)342-2822

E I C A V A C

COMMUNITY JUSTICE COMMITTEES

Our Justice Committees play a vital role in justice delivery for our people. Courts may impose a range of sentences or combinations of penalties, and often part of a sentence will involve a Justice Committee. A client may be required to check in regularly with their Justice Committee. They may also be required to attend Justice Committee programming. In addition, the Community Justice Committees help select participants for programs and provide counselling and mentoring to clients. This can help Cree individuals receive fair and culturally adjusted sentences.

The impact of Justice Committees was recognized in 2019, when the Court of Québec acknowledged their expanded role and gave them important responsibilities. This means that when court orders provide for it, they can work closely with probation officers and follow clients after their release.



A key part of the work the CJs do is the **HANDLING OF COURT CASES** that are diverted to them

THIS YEAR, THE COURTS DIVERTED

30

CASES TO JUSTICE COMMITTEES



In addition to overseeing diverted cases, CJs are **ALSO INVOLVED** in:



Meetings for case hearings and discussion of **ALTERNATIVE MEASURES**



Meet with people in **NEED OF SUPPORT**, and involved in conflicts



Participate in **COMMUNITY EVENTS** to raise awareness



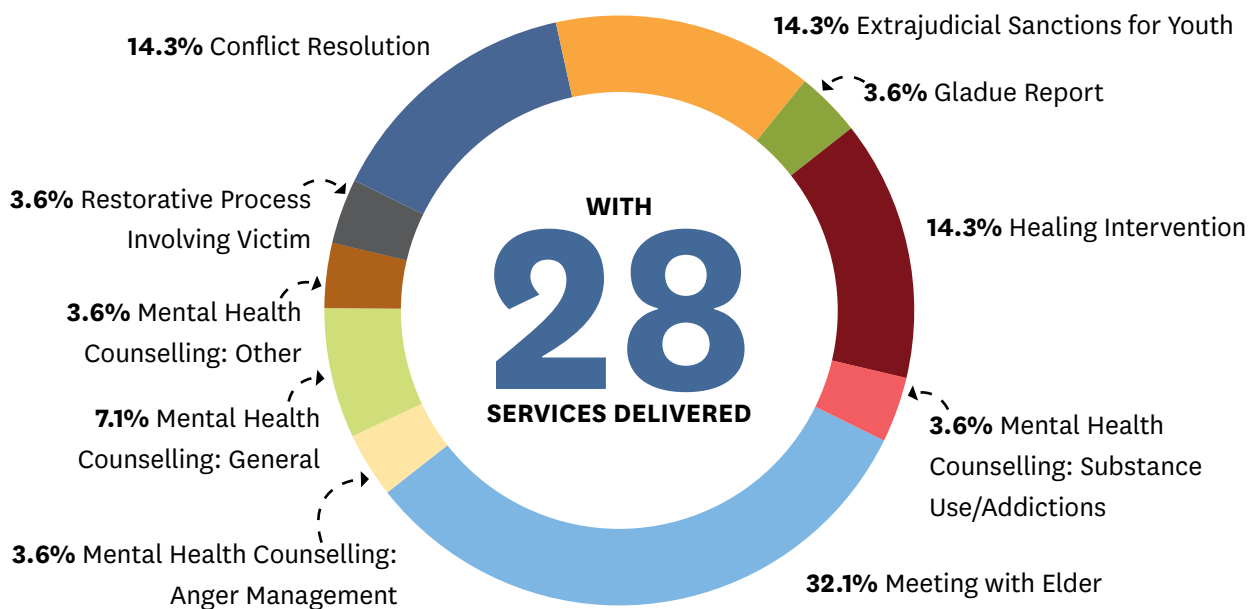
MONITOR diversions and alternative measures



IMPLEMENTATION of community crime prevention and reduction **PROGRAMS**



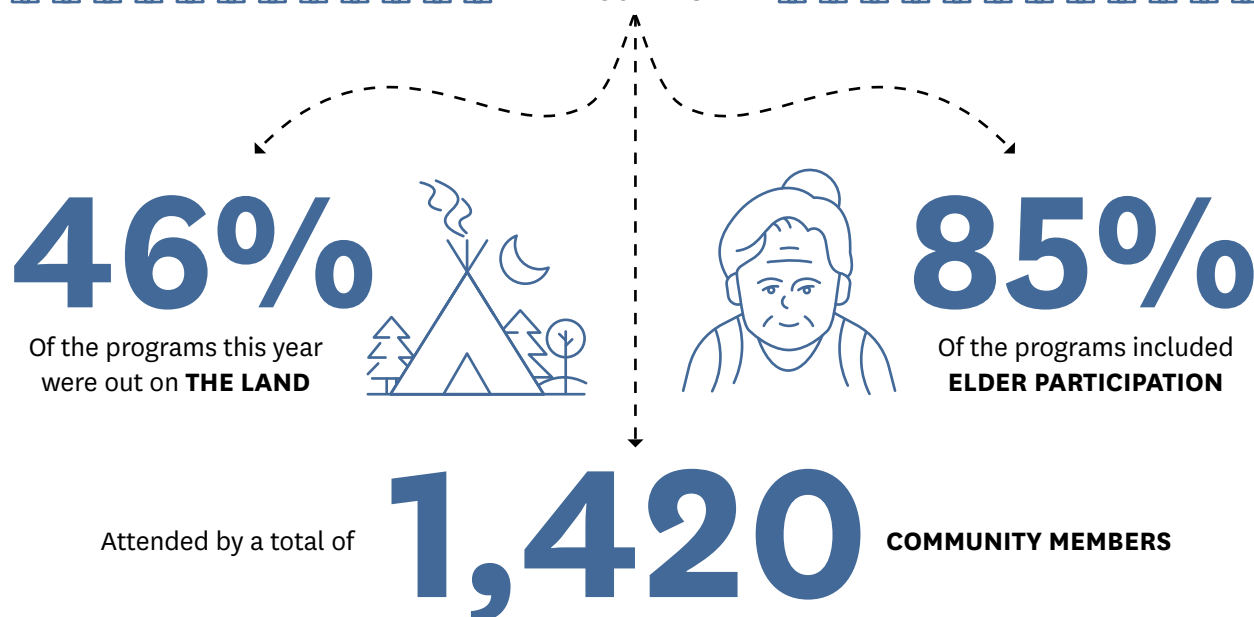
HELP youth and adults of the community **AFTER RELEASE** from custody



This year we had

169

PROGRAMS



\$ 1,091,452



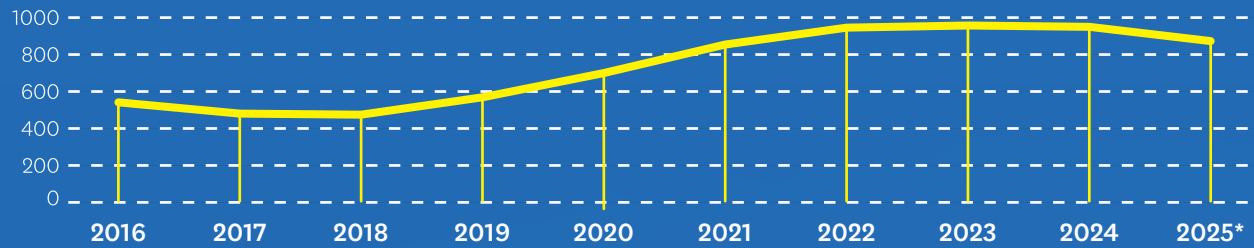






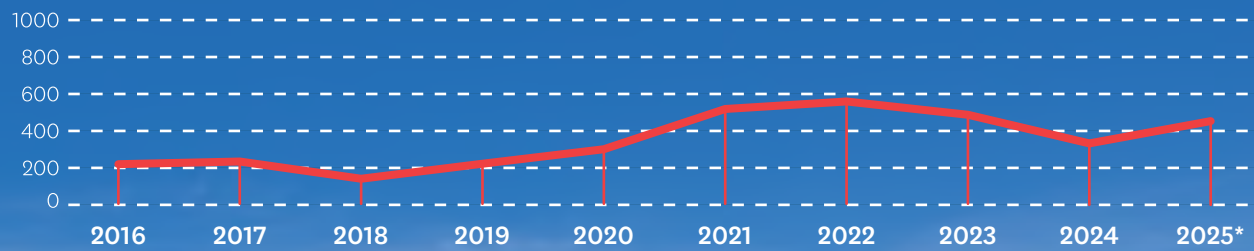


ACTIVE CASES - CRIMINAL OFFENCES



*The data for 2025 is partial and preliminary as of May 7, 2026.

ACTIVE CASES - CREE LAWS AND FEDERAL STATUTORY OFFENCES



*The data for 2025 is partial and preliminary as of May 7, 2026.



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Gladue principles were established in the Supreme Court of Canada's 1999 ruling in *R. v. Gladue* and require judges to consider the specific challenges and systemic circumstances facing Indigenous people in matters of justice. We are committed to providing increasingly meaningful alternative sentencing within the mainstream criminal justice system and to building upon the Cree Nation's growing role in the administration of justice. We have recently hired two full-time Gladue report writers who produce a report detailing a person's background, experience, and history for consideration by the justice system.

ABOUT GLADUE REPORTS?

WHY	HOW	WHAT	WHO
It stems from a Supreme Court decision in 1999 and section 718.2 (e) of the <i>Criminal Code</i> of Canada.	It looks at the impact of historical trauma on the culture, identity and lived experiences of Indigenous offenders.	It offers alternatives to incarceration for consideration by the court for accused Indigenous People.	Gladue Reports are prepared by writers trained in research, interviewing and the requirements of this process.

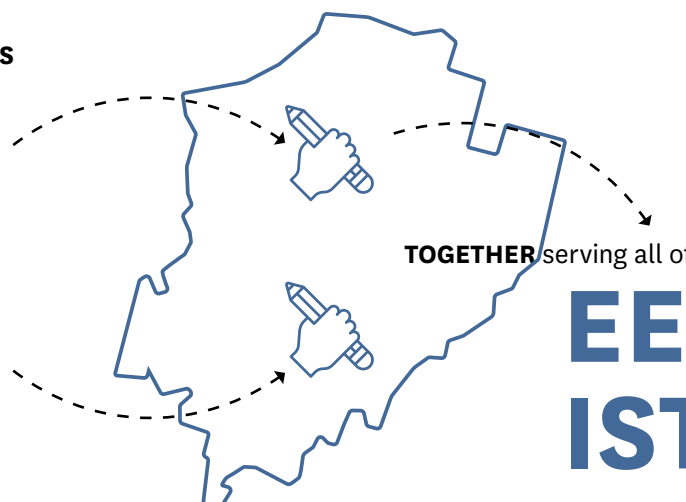
The Gladue Report **WRITING PROCESS**

- 1 An Indigenous person is **CONVICTED** of a criminal offence.
- 2 A Gladue writer receives a request **FROM THE COURT** for a Gladue Report.
- 3 **BOTH** the Gladue writer and the client **AGREE** to begin the Gladue process.
- 4 The client and/or friends and family are **INTERVIEWED** and recorded.
- 5 The writer drafts the report, which is then sent to a **PROOFREADER**.
- 6 A final report is submitted **TO THE COURTS** prior to the client's hearing.

Our department
CURRENTLY EMPLOYS

2

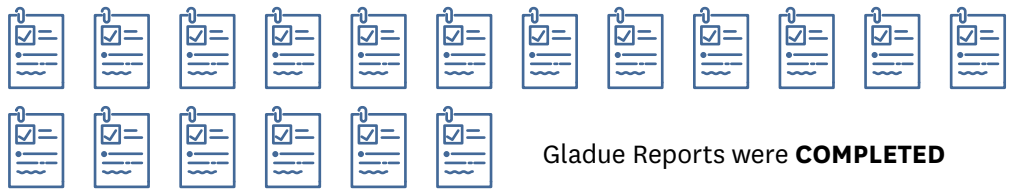
**FULL-TIME
GLADUE WRITERS**



TOGETHER serving all of

EEYOU ISTCHEE

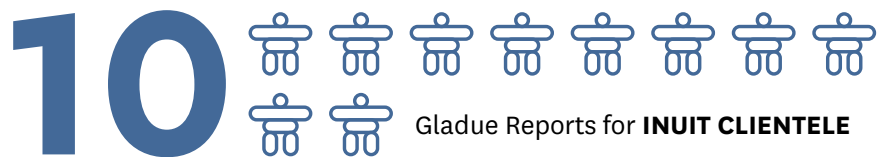
THIS YEAR
18



WHILE
10



As in previous years, and in the spirit of **PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION** with our neighbours, we also wrote



The Department of Justice and Correctional Services continues to partner with the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism at McGill University. In Summer 2025, the Department hosted three McGill law interns, Ricardo Lamour-Blaise (top right), Alina Bootwala (bottom right), Aoife McGrory (not present), and one international law student, Anya Gélinas (bottom left). The students were trained on Gladue and wrote legal memos in addition to Gladue Reports.



CORRECTIONS ASSISTANCE AND PROGRAMS

While we do not operate adult correctional facilities, we actively listen and respond when clients share concerns with us. Discriminatory treatment in detention can be a serious issue, so our staff stay committed to checking in with clients and advocating for their rights and fair treatment while in detention.

50

**VISITS TO CLIENTS
IN DETENTION**

A horizontal row of 50 magnifying glass icons, each containing a stylized human figure, representing individual visits to clients in detention. The icons are arranged in a single line, with some overlapping, and are colored in a dark teal or blue shade.

Through a **CREE PSYCHOLOGIST** we provided:

10

THERAPY SESSIONS



DOJCS staff **CONTINUED TO CONDUCT VISITS** to halfway houses to support Cree clients **TRANSITIONING OUT** of detention

The **TRADITIONAL FOOD PROGRAM** also continued to be delivered this year at sites such as **LECLERC**, **ST-JEROME**, and **ARCHAMBAULT**

Staffing challenges at provincial detention facilities periodically made it difficult for DOJCS staff to access clients. In response, the Department of Justice and Correctional Services met in person and online with the Ministère de la Sécurité publique du Québec on several occasions to raise concerns and work toward a resolution. This issue has largely been remedied.



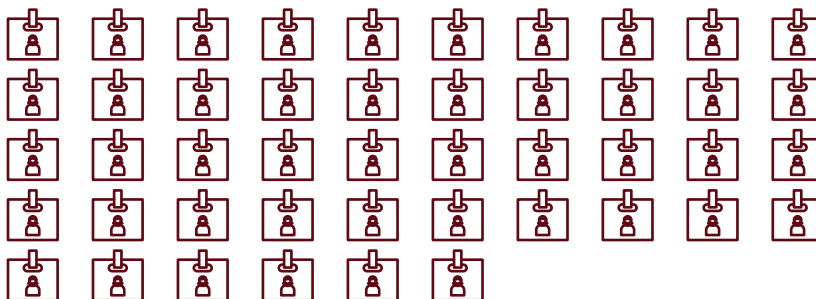
CREE REINTEGRATION, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT (C.R.E.E.)

The C.R.E.E. program was developed in response to the reality that individuals **NEED EXTRA SUPPORT** to connect with others in a professional environment. Thus contributing to a healthier, stronger Cree Nation by encouraging opportunities to develop an understanding of the value of hard work – and to help them acquire necessary skills.

This year, the program supported:

46

PARTICIPANTS



Our staff also **TOOK PART IN TRAINING** to improve the capacity and quality of our services:

Working Effectively with Sexual Offenders – Indigenous Lens

DATE	TRAINING DESCRIPTION
September 2025	Recognizing how historical and intergenerational trauma links with offending behaviour
PARTICIPANTS	
Corrections Staff	

Trauma-Informed, Culturally Grounded Reintegration Support

DATE	TRAINING DESCRIPTION
December 2025	Enhancing capacity to better support Cree clients and their community reintegration
PARTICIPANTS	
Corrections Staff	

MEN'S EYYOU-EENOU ISTCHEE REGIONAL ASSOCIATION (MEIRA)

This project was funded by Québec and the CNG to support the development of men's groups in Cree communities. Its primary aim is to promote gender equality and reduce violence against women and children.

The Rise Up Conference brought men together to support healing, build awareness of the historical and underlying roots of violence, and develop culturally rooted community plans to reduce crime and violence across Eeyou Istchee.

The men's groups continue to work toward addressing the diverse needs of men in Cree communities and supporting their positive contributions to their families and Nation.



The Manager of Correctional Services, Losty Mamianskum, delivering a presentation at the MEIRA conference.

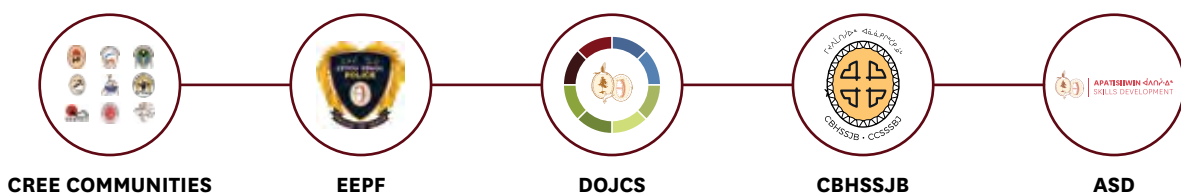
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TRANSITIONAL TINY HOME COMMUNITY

To better support those leaving detention, we have built temporary housing where individuals can gather their strength before reintegrating into their communities. Due to open in 2026, these safe, supported and supervised tiny homes are located in Chisasibi, Mistissini, Waskaganish and Waswanipi, our four most populous communities. Those returning to other communities will be reintegrated through other housing and support programs.

Staff will continue to provide tiny home residents with personalized tools and mental health support to help them navigate the challenges that can arise upon release. Through Cree traditions and cultural teachings, we aim to prepare individuals for healthy, sustainable lives and full participation in their communities.

This project is made possible with the **HELP OF A COLLABORATION** between:



CURRENT SYSTEM

What it fails to provide

- ❌ **PUNITIVE:** Oriented toward penalizing rather than rehabilitating or healing
- ❌ **CULTURALLY DISCONNECTED:** Built on Western frameworks with no Cree language, teachings, or culturally relevant programming
- ❌ **ISOLATING:** Fosters disconnection from community, family, and connection to Eeyou Istchee
- ❌ **UNACCOUNTABLE:** Understaffed and under-resourced causing limited support

TRANSITIONAL TINY HOMES

What it provides instead

- ✓ **HEALING-CENTRED:** Focused on recovery and lasting community reintegration
- ✓ **CULTURALLY GROUNDED:** Delivered in Cree and connected to our traditions, and values
- ✓ **COMMUNITY-BUILDING:** Builds trust and dignity, by connecting individuals to Elders, social workers, and the land
- ✓ **CONSISTENT AND TRANSPARENT:** Recognizes individual progress, gathers relevant data, and statistics

The services will be given to **CREE CLIENTS** that are



Clients with court-ordered conditions



Individuals returning
from detention

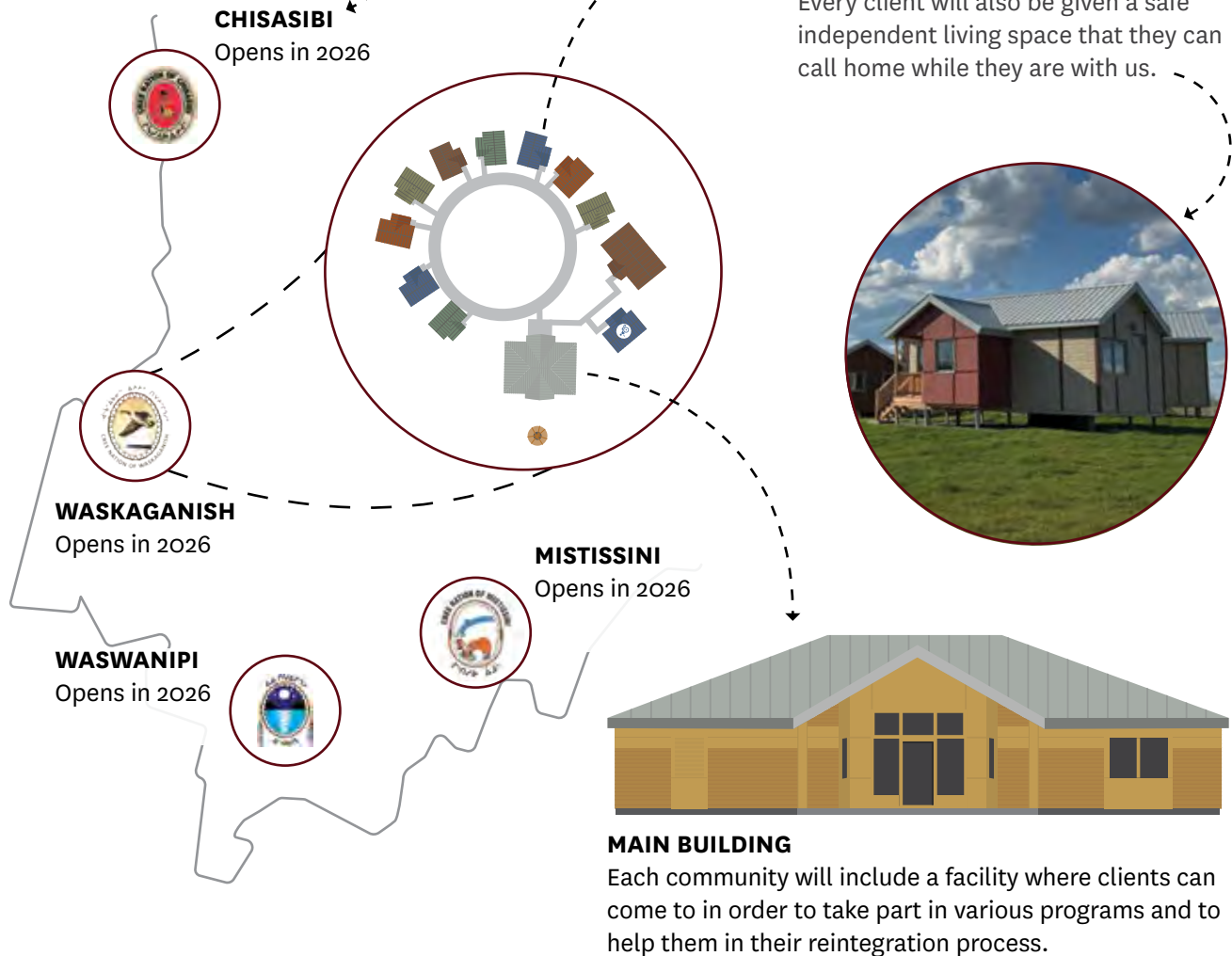


Participants of diversion programs



Individuals who are
unhoused

4 COMMUNITIES



Exact models and distribution of site will vary depending on the lot and community. The Waskaganish Model is used to showcase the overall concept of tiny homes and central building that will apply to all sites.

YEARLY OPERATING BUDGETS will include the cost for food, programming costs (e.g., material, professional fees, travel), and **PERMANENT STAFF** per site such as:


Coordinator


Administrator of
Programming


Full-Time
Cooks


Security Personnel



EVENT PARTICIPATION

The DOJCS is proud to take part in events and programs that bring our staff together with colleagues beyond Eeyou Istchee. Exchanging ideas with others is valuable for raising awareness and fostering widespread participation in finding creative, tradition-based solutions within the justice system.

The Department took part in the Connections meeting in Chisasibi, a starting point for linking services and programs across the region that also produced Calls to Action in justice. The Manager of Correctional Services and Manager of Prevention Programs attended on behalf of the Department.

2ND YOUTH COUNCILS OF EYYOU ISTCHEE SUMMIT - QUÉBEC CITY

Our Department participated in the event to raise awareness of our work and engage with Cree Youth who may be interested in future career opportunities with our team. Our Director was also invited to present on Indigenous Self-Determination and International Engagement.



Wade Gilles (Manager of Youth Services and Administration), Celina Jimikin (Interim Manager of Prevention Programs) and Tim Parr (Manager of Strategic Planning) at the DOJCS promo booth.



Director Donald Nicholls presenting to students on Indigenous Self-Determination and International Engagement.



Some key takeaways from the 2nd Youth Councils of Eeyou Istchee Summit in Québec City.

CSB HIGHER LEARNING, BUILDING CAPACITY CONFERENCE - OTTAWA

The Justice Department hosted a booth at the 2nd Edition Higher Learning, Building Capacity Conference (February 20–22, Ottawa), connecting with nearly 300 Cree post-secondary students to promote career opportunities within our department.



Tim Parr (Manager of Strategic Planning) with the winner of our iPhone (orange) draw.



Christie Hester (Justice Projects Officer), Celina Jimikin (Interim Manager of Prevention Programs), Rachel Mattawashish (Correction Program Officer) and Tim Parr (Manager of Strategic Planning) (left to right), running the Justice booth.



The Director of the DOJCS out with Cree Youth leaders.



EVENT PARTICIPATION



Nelson Mianscum, the Manager of Justice Services, presenting to EEPF Captains and Lieutenants, along with Wade Gilles, Manager of Youth Services and Administration and Donald Nicholls, Director of the DOJCS.



The Director of the DOJCS with Chief Clarence Louie at the 2nd Youth Councils of Eeyou Istchee Summit in Québec City.



DOJCS Director Donald Nicholls joined department heads from the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay in Gatineau, December 17, 2025, coming together with community safety partners to explore collaborative approaches to shared priorities.



LEGISLATION, CASE LAW AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS



ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN INDIGENOUS RIGHTS LITIGATION

In *Saskatchewan (Environment) v. Métis Nation – Saskatchewan* (2025 SCC 4), the Supreme Court of Canada issued a unanimous decision with significant implications for how courts manage overlapping Indigenous rights proceedings.

The case arose from more than twenty years of litigation between the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan and the Province of Saskatchewan. In 1994, the Métis Nation commenced an action claiming Aboriginal title and commercial harvesting rights over land in northwestern Saskatchewan, but those proceedings were stayed in 2005. In 2020, the Métis Nation launched a new action challenging Saskatchewan’s policy of refusing to consult on those claims. In 2021, the Métis Nation filed a further action seeking a declaration that Saskatchewan breached its duty to consult by issuing uranium exploration permits without prior consultation.

Saskatchewan argued that the 2021 action by the Métis Nation constituted an abuse of process, given the overlap with the 2020 action and the risk of inconsistent judicial outcomes.

The Supreme Court affirmed that while the doctrine of abuse of process applies in Indigenous rights litigation, it must be applied with sensitivity to the unique context of such proceedings. Court procedures must facilitate, not impede, the just resolution of Aboriginal claims and the broader goal of reconciliation. The decision also clarified an important doctrinal distinction: proceedings aimed at establishing Aboriginal rights are legally distinct

from proceedings invoking the Crown’s duty to consult and accommodate, which operates as an interim obligation while underlying rights claims remain unresolved.

The ruling strengthens the ability of Indigenous nations to pursue multiple court proceedings in defence of their rights without being foreclosed by procedural objections.



GITXAALA V. BRITISH COLUMBIA (CHIEF GOLD COMMISSIONER) (2025 BCCA 430)

On December 5, 2025, the Court of Appeal for British Columbia rendered its decision in *Gitxaala v. British Columbia (Chief Gold Commissioner)* (2025 BCCA 430). The case involved a challenge by the Gitxaala Nation to British Columbia’s mineral tenure system, under which “free miners” could automatically register claims on Crown land — including Indigenous traditional territories — through an online portal, with no prior consultation with affected First Nations.

The case revolved around *British Columbia’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (S.B.C. 2019, c. 44), which was adopted in 2019 as the first statute in Canada to incorporate the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* into domestic law. Among other things, British Columbia’s UN Declaration Act affirms the application of the UN Declaration to the laws of British Columbia and provides that the government must take all measures necessary to

ensure that provincial laws are consistent with the UN Declaration.

The Court of Appeal held that British Columbia's UN Declaration Act incorporates the UN Declaration into British Columbia's positive law with immediate legal effect. The Court confirmed that all British Columbia legislation must be interpreted consistently with the UN Declaration and declared that the mineral claims regime was manifestly inconsistent with Article 32(2) of the UN Declaration, which requires States to consult and cooperate with Indigenous peoples before approving projects affecting their lands or territories. It further held that courts have jurisdiction to adjudicate inconsistencies between provincial laws and the UN Declaration and to issue declarations that an inconsistency exists and that the Crown has a duty to remediate it through consultation with Indigenous peoples.

While this case is specific to British Columbia and its UN Declaration Act, it is worth noting that, at the federal level, the Supreme Court of Canada has already held that the federal UN Declaration Act incorporates the UN Declaration into federal law, such that federal legislation must be interpreted in conformity with its provisions.



INDIAN ACT STATUS

Bill S-2, *An Act to Amend the Indian Act (New registration entitlements)*, was introduced first in the Senate on May 26, 2025, and is currently before the House of Commons. Bill S-2 would amend the Indian Act (R.S.C. 1985, c. I-5) to provide, among other things, new entitlements to registration in the Indian Register in response to a constitutional challenge to certain provisions of the Act in *Nicholas v. Canada (Attorney General)* (2025 BCSC 1596).

The Bill's most significant development came at the Senate committee stage, where the Senate adopted amendments to address the second-generation cut-off — a rule that, if left unchanged, would gradually deplete the registered Indian population over successive generations. Under the Senate amendment, Indian status would pass to children whenever at least one parent holds Indian status, replacing the current rule that requires both parents to hold Indian status in certain circumstances. This change would allow Indian status to pass indefinitely to future generations.

This issue has attracted international attention. In its concluding observations of April 2, 2026, the UN Human Rights Committee called on Canada to eliminate the remaining discriminatory effects of the *Indian Act* on Indigenous women and their descendants, and to adopt amendments addressing the second-generation cut-off and ensuring equal enjoyment of associated rights and entitlements. The Committee also called for timely processing of registration applications and the elimination of existing administrative backlogs.



QUÉBEC'S CONSTITUTION ACT, 2025 AND INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

Introduced before the National Assembly on October 9, 2025, Bill 1, *Québec Constitution Act*, 2025, would establish Québec's first written constitution. Among other things, the bill affirms the Québec people's collective rights to protect its distinct culture, language, and social values. Its treatment of Indigenous peoples, however, has drawn criticism. Bill 1 mentions First Nations only in its preamble, and First Nations were not consulted on the drafting of the bill.

On February 12, 2026, the Grand Chief appeared before the National Assembly's Committee on Institutions on behalf of the Cree Nation Government and expressed serious concerns regarding the absence in the proposed Constitution of any affirmation of the ancestral and treaty rights of Québec's Indigenous peoples.

Amnesty International called for the withdrawal of Bill 1, stating that several provisions fail to recognize Indigenous rights and Indigenous representative institutions and contravene Indigenous Peoples' rights to self-determination, participation, and free, prior and informed consent.

In a brief submitted to the National Assembly, the Public Protector of Québec recommended that the Constitution should, at minimum, recognize Indigenous nations as peoples holding collective rights, in accordance with the principles of justice, equity, and respect for the rights of Indigenous peoples contained in UNDRIP. The Public Protector also called for a genuine process of consultation and co-creation in which all governments and representatives of First Nations and Inuit are actively and respectfully involved.

The UN Human Rights Committee also expressed concern that Bill 1 fails to recognize Indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination and to their lands, territories and resources, and called for Bill 1 to be amended to fully comply with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and with UNDRIP.



SENTENCING, GLADUE AND INDIGENOUS VICTIMS

In December 2025, the Supreme Court of Canada

heard arguments in *R. v. Cope*. The case involves the sentencing of Harry Arthur Cope, a Mi'kmaq man who pleaded guilty to aggravated assault against his Mi'kmaq common-law partner, Brittany Sack. The sentencing judge imposed five years' imprisonment, finding that public protection required incarceration despite a sentencing circle's recommendation for community-based, culturally informed services. The Nova Scotia Court of Appeal reduced the sentence to three years, finding that insufficient weight had been given to *Gladue* principles. The Crown appealed to the Supreme Court.

Cope puts before the Supreme Court a complex issue: how to reconcile the *Gladue* framework under section 718.2(e) of the *Criminal Code* — which directs courts to consider alternatives to incarceration for Indigenous offenders in recognition of the legacy of colonialism and over-incarceration — with amendments to the *Criminal Code* enacted following the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, which require courts to treat violence against Indigenous women as an aggravating factor warranting heightened denunciation and deterrence.

The Supreme Court's ruling will provide guidance to trial judges and *Gladue* report writers across all jurisdictions on whether, and how, an offender's Indigenous identity can simultaneously inform the analysis in favour of reduced incarceration and in favour of heightened accountability for violence against Indigenous women. The ruling will also clarify the proper role of restorative processes such as sentencing circles in cases involving violence against Indigenous women.



CALLS FOR ACTION OF THE COMMISSION VIENS

On November 6, 2025, the Public Protector of Québec released a situation report on the implementation of the calls for action of the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec, known as the Viens Commission. The report presents an analysis of the implementation of 129 calls for action made in the Commission's 2019 report.

The Public Protector found that despite progress, concerning gaps remain with respect to First Nations and Inuit rights in Québec public services. These gaps are due in part to the absence of an overall strategy for implementing the calls for action and a tendency to favour ad hoc actions over systemic reforms.

The Public Protector recommended that the scope of the *Act to establish the cultural safety approach within the health and social services network* (C.Q.L.R., c. A-20.1.1) be extended beyond health and social services to encompass public security, justice, and education. The report also noted that the recruitment and retention of First Nations and Inuit staff — essential to genuine cultural safety — remain hampered by precarious employment structures and the lapsing of several funding programs. The Public Protector further identified blind spots in the provisions of the *Charter of the French Language* meant to protect Indigenous linguistic rights. Among other things, First Nations anglophone midwives lose their authority to provide culturally adapted care once a patient is transferred outside the community, and Indigenous youth in rehabilitation centres reportedly continue to be prohibited from speaking their mother tongue with peers.

The Public Protector made a series of recommendations to the government of Québec, including developing a detailed multi-year implementation plan for the *Act to establish the cultural safety approach within the health and social services network*; establishing a government strategy on cultural safety in collaboration with First Nations and Inuit representatives; reconciling the *Charter of the French Language* with Indigenous language rights and cultural safety principles; and engaging, in close collaboration with First Nations and Inuit representatives, in a formal process to develop legislation for the implementation of UNDRIP in Québec.



COMMISSIONER FOR MODERN TREATY IMPLEMENTATION

Bill C-10, *An Act respecting the Commissioner for Modern Treaty Implementation* was introduced in Parliament in May 2025. It received second reading on February 9, 2026, and was referred to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs for consideration. The Grand Chief appeared for the Cree Nation Government before the Committee in support of Bill C-10.

Bill C-10 would establish a Commissioner for Modern Treaty Implementation. The Commissioner would report directly to Parliament, acting as an independent oversight mechanism to hold the federal government accountable for federal implementation of modern treaties. The Commissioner would not affect existing bilateral mechanisms such as the Cree-Canada Standing Liaison Committee, and it should complement, rather than replace or duplicate, the mandate of the Cree-Naskapi Commission and other existing mechanisms or processes.

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CLOSING MESSAGE

The work carried out by the Department in prevention, diversion, victim services, Gladue writing, conflict resolution and correctional support is focused on building a shared sense of agency, safety and well-being. We are thankful to the commitment and hard work our staff put into making a difference in their communities and people's lives. We are also thankful for our partners and the commitment of their people in addressing social issues in our communities. We are committed to working together more in the next year to increase our overall positive impact. We know the connections

event in Chisasibi was the start of setting plans of action in place to make a difference. Every step forward is valued as successes will ripple into our future generations.

What lies ahead is up to us all, and the foundation we build now will be something that future generations can continue to grow. The ultimate goal is a safer and healthier Cree society and to establish working relationships with others that will take us further than if we were on our own. We create relationships that make us stronger as a Nation.



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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
DEPARTEMENT DE JUSTICE ET SERVICES CORRECTIONNELS



SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Message from the Director
Rodney Mark



Greetings, wachiyak, bonjour to the Cree Nation. Another year has passed, and it has been a busy one for our department.



Reflecting on the past year and the foundations we have built, I am excited about our department and the future of our communities. I also found myself thinking of our late colleague, Davey Bobbish. My last conversation with him was about our communities, governance, environment, traditional way of life and our language and the social well-being of our communities. I just remember his calm, gentle excitement.

One of the major initiatives we have had is the Connect Leadership Forum to address social and health issues facing our Cree Nation. As this is important, I would like to include the Calls to Action in this message. I want to thank Mr. Shawn Iserhoff for his work helping to organize this conference. Further, I would like to thank our team for their work, as you will see from this annual report. Our collaboration

with the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay continues to be a big part of our department's work, and it is very exciting. I am personally looking forward to how all this will unfold.

We are following the Calls to Action that are part of the leadership dialogues from the Connect Conference in our daily work. Lets continue to work together for a safe and healthy Cree Nation.

Rodney Mark
Director of Social and Cultural Development



Photo: Brendan Forward

Proposed Calls to Action

- CTA 1.** Establish a permanent inter-agency coordination table with designated representatives and a central coordinator.
- CTA 2.** Develop a regional partnership framework with clear roles, accountability, and aligned mandates.
- CTA 3.** Create integrated communication, data-sharing protocols, and a centralized information system.
- CTA 4.** Establish formal follow-up, reporting, and accountability mechanisms with defined timelines and KPIs.
- CTA 5.** Align funding priorities to include Community Health and Safety and reduce bureaucratic barriers to access.

- CTA 6.** Implement a Housing First approach grounded in equity, needs-based allocation, and depoliticized decision-making.
- CTA 7.** Align housing policies across regional entities and link housing to income, employment, and family stability.
- CTA 8.** Integrate housing with wraparound supports, including wellness, addictions, financial literacy, and employment.
- CTA 9.** Remove systemic barriers to housing, including for returning graduates and workers.

- CTA 11.** Shift all sectors from crisis response to prevention-based, holistic wellness approaches.
- CTA 12.** Establish a coordinated continuum of care from crisis to treatment, recovery, reintegration, and aftercare.
- CTA 13.** Implement joint case management and shared responsibility for high-risk individuals and families.
- CTA 14.** Expand access to mental health, addiction services, detox, and long-term aftercare supports.
- CTA 15.** Develop mentorship, reintegration, and life-skills pathways for individuals in recovery.
- CTA 16.** Normalize and de-stigmatize access to services and support.

- CTA 17.** Develop and implement a Cree Nation Nutritional Policy integrated into laws, programs, and education systems.
- CTA 18.** Strengthen access to healthy and traditional foods through community systems such as freezers and sharing networks.
- CTA 19.** Establish local frameworks for the distribution, sharing, and sustainability of traditional food.
- CTA 20.** Address food insecurity and cost of living through coordinated, community-driven solutions.

- CTA 21.** Implement coordinated early identification and intervention systems for at-risk families across sectors.
- CTA 22.** Provide integrated, in-home wraparound supports including parenting, mental health, and financial guidance.
- CTA 23.** Embed parenting education and life skills into schools, early childhood, and community programs.
- CTA 24.** Promote shared community responsibility in raising children and supporting families.

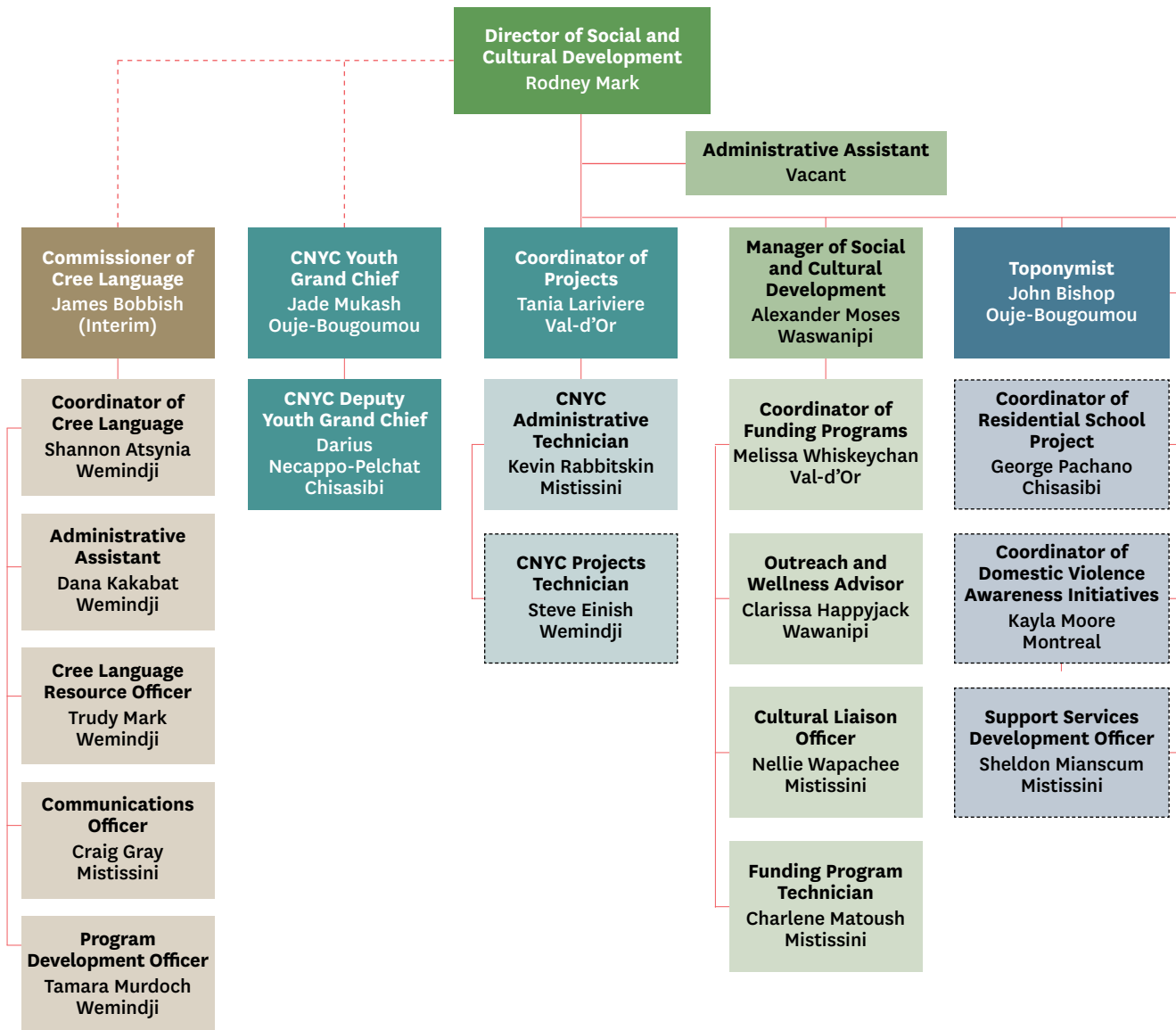
- CTA 25.** Align education systems with Cree history, governance, culture, and community realities.
- CTA 26.** Develop accessible post-secondary, online, and career pathways aligned with local workforce needs.
- CTA 27.** Strengthen youth systems including attendance strategies, youth councils, and transition supports for youth in care.
- CTA 28.** Create structured pathways to retain and bring back talent to communities.

- CTA 29.** Strengthen community-based justice systems, including justice committees and Cree-led restorative justice models.
- CTA 30.** Improve reintegration, addiction support, and accountability systems for offenders while prioritizing victim safety.
- CTA 31.** Strengthen enforcement and prevention related to drugs, bootlegging, gun safety, and community crime.
- CTA 32.** Develop a coordinated community safety framework supported by data and inter-agency collaboration.

- CTA 33.** Promote Cree language, culture, and land-based practices through education and community initiatives.
- CTA 34.** Strengthen the role of Elders, cultural programming, and knowledge transfer initiatives such as Nishiyuu.
- CTA 35.** Promote community pride, responsibility, and cultural awareness among both local and non-local populations.

- CTA 36.** Align economic development, workforce training, and partnerships to support inclusive growth, strong work ethic, and local employment opportunities.

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE



ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

Department Personnel

Welcoming new personnel:

- Administrative Assistant, Marie-Chantal Penosway
- Youth Grand Chief, Jade Mukash
- Deputy Youth Grand Chief, Darius Neacappo-Pelchat
- Cree Language Commissioner, James Bobbish

New Roles:

- Coordinator of Funding Programs, Melissa Whiskeychan
- Funding Program Officer, Charlene Matoush

CONNECT LEADERSHIP FORUM

Executive Summary

The CONNECT Leadership Forum brought together Cree leadership, regional institutions, and community representatives to confront urgent realities affecting health, safety, and psychosocial well-being across Eeyou Istchee. The event held on March 15, 16 and 17 in Chisasibi facilitated discussions that made it clear that the communities face interconnected issues that cannot be addressed effectively by any single entity acting alone.

Across the Forum, participants described the same recurring pressures: housing shortages, homelessness, food insecurity, school absenteeism, mental health and addictions, youth pressures, chronic disease, violence, justice-system gaps, and the weakening of language, identity, and family supports. While each community has its own context, the overall message was consistent - communities are asking less for new stand-alone programs and more for existing organizations to work together in a coordinated way.

Attendees repeatedly emphasized the need to move from crisis response to prevention, from fragmented services to integrated action, and from isolated mandates to shared responsibility. The Forum highlighted the importance of

culturally grounded approaches rooted in Cree language, family, land-based practice, and collective accountability.

The original set of 83 draft Calls to Action was consolidated into 36 refined Calls to Action across nine themes. These themes focus on governance and system integration, housing and basic needs, health and prevention, food security, family support, youth and education, justice and community safety, culture and identity, and economic inclusion.

The strongest conclusion emerging from the Forum was that follow-up is now essential. Participants called for a permanent coordination mechanism, shared protocols, common priorities, stronger accountability, and a commitment to continue this work beyond a single gathering.

The CONNECT Leadership Forum was created because the challenges we face are too important and too complex to face alone. The Cree Nation Government, Cree School Board, Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, and Local Governments each carry distinct mandates in service to our population. Each are making significant efforts — but together, we can do so much more.

The first in a series of events, this Forum is designed to be a safe space for Cree leaders and institutions to share challenges, bring forward ideas, and coordinate action to meet the growing needs of our communities. Over three days, leaders from across Eeyou Istchee shared in dialogue, openly discussing topics that deeply concern the health, safety, and well-being of our people.

Goals of the CONNECT Leadership Forum

- > Strengthen collaboration and trust,
- > Improve information and data-sharing practices,
- > Develop Calls to Action that will allow us to align efforts,
- > Move from dialogue to measurable, coordinated action.



FUNDING AGREEMENTS

The Social and Cultural Development Department negotiates and manages agreements with several provincial ministries and makes funds available to Cree Organizations and Communities through the application process, agreement implementation, support and reporting.

The Department commits funding to local and regional programs and projects across Eeyou Istchee. We have four major funding programs within the Department to support these initiatives through a call-for-proposal process, review, and recommendation to our management committee.

Following are the funding programs and program objectives:

Wiichituutaa Funding Agreement (Previously Cree Solidarity Alliance)

The Wiichituutaa Funding Agreement, formerly known as the Cree Solidarity Alliance, is an initiative that funds programs throughout Eeyou Istchee that address Poverty and Exclusion.

The WFA framework uses regional alliances and partners to deliver and co-fund programs throughout Eeyou Istchee.

The total number of programs funded in 2025-2026 is 11. The total amount of funding provided to the Cree Communities and Cree Entities over the year 2025-2026 is \$434,040.00.

Figure 1. Wiichituutaa Funding by Program Type 2025-2026

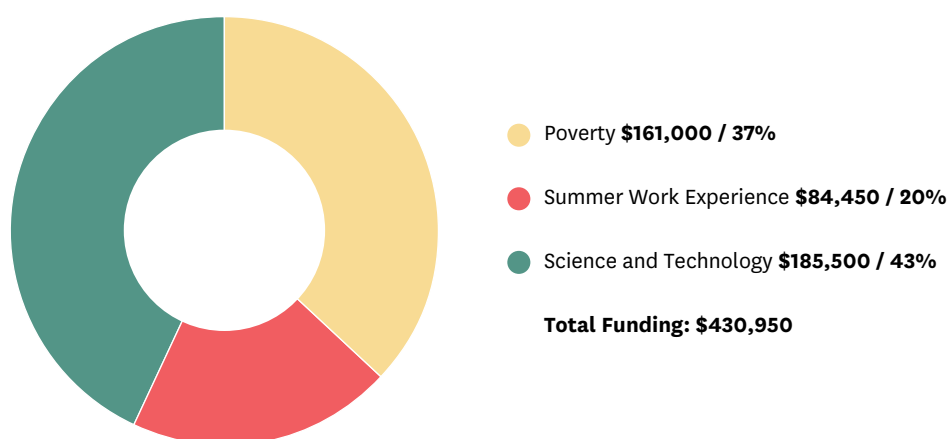


Table 1. Wiichituutaa Funding by Community/Organization for 2025-2026

Project Name	Type of Program	Community/Organization	Approved
Employability Edge	Poverty	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$13,175
Floral Garden - Employment for Special Needs	Exclusion	Mistissini	\$34,450
Traditional Harvesting for Community	Health & Nutrition	CTA Nemaska	\$9,000
Mentorship for At-Risk Youth	Poverty	Whapmagoostui	\$50,000
Breakfast Clubs of Eeyou Istchee 25-26	Health & Nutrition	Breakfast Clubs of Canada	\$90,000
Lunch Program	Health & Nutrition	Waskaganish	\$6,500
Goosebreak Subsidies for Low-Income Families	Health & Nutrition	Waskaganish	\$30,000
Empowering Lives Through Martial Arts	Poverty	New Horizons Sports Management (Waswanipi)	\$29,765
Traditional Food Security and Nutrition	Health & Nutrition	CWEIA	\$50,000
Training in Project and Time Management	Poverty	Wiichihiiwewin	\$28,060
Kaapeshii Mental Health Camp	Exclusion	Portage Kaapeshii (Waskaganish)	\$50,000
Waashtaaukimikw (House of Light)	Poverty	Chisasibi	\$40,000
			\$430,950

Programming Highlight for Wiichituutaau (CSA) Fund 2025-2026

Community Strength & Capacity Initiative

- Location: Cree Nation of Waskaganish
- Project Cost: \$49,190
- Funding: \$49,190
- Time of Delivery: March 1 - October 31, 2025

Overview

This initiative creates a structured community space where participants strengthen their collective capacity to face modern pressures, reduce daily strain, and reinforce personal and family stability. In a context where community members are carrying multiple responsibilities — work, studies, caregiving, and family commitments — increasing pressure can lead to fatigue and disengagement. The program is open to all community members and is designed

to promote resilience, sustained participation in work and education, and intergenerational strength. By reinforcing daily stability, the initiative contributes to sustained participation in employment, education, and economic life. This aligns directly with the Wiichituutaau mission to strengthen community capacity and support full participation in the development of the Nation.

Core Objectives

1. Strengthen collective capacity to manage daily pressures.
2. Reduce mental and emotional strain linked to overload.
3. Support stable participation in employment and education.
4. Reinforce intergenerational knowledge and community cohesion.
5. Increase practical tools for maintaining personal and family stability.

Figure 2. Wiichituutaau Funding for 2025-2026

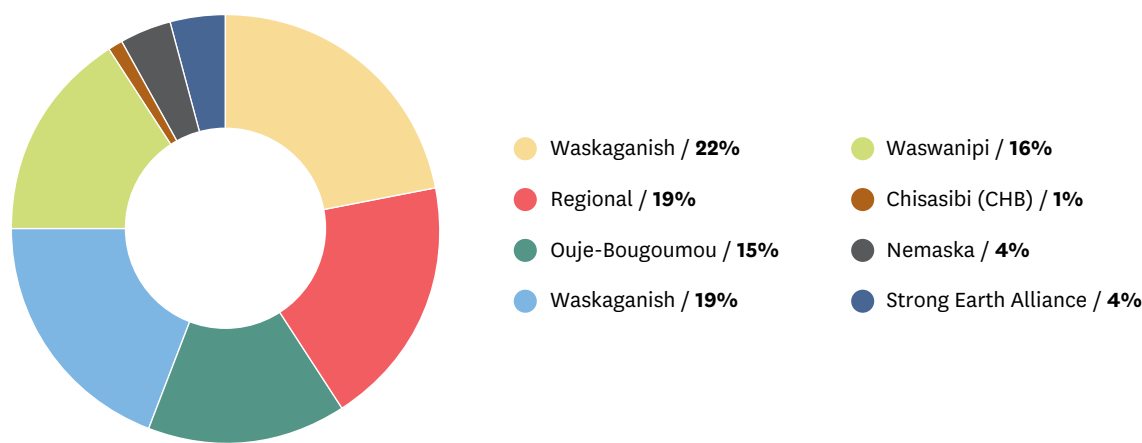


Table 2. Wiichituutaau Funding for 2025-2026

Project	Community/Organization	Amount
Bâmûdeu Travel	Waskaganish	\$20,500
Breakfast Clubs of Eeyou Istchee	Regional	\$100,000
Community Strength	Waskaganish	\$49,190
Youth Cultural Harvest Support	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$30,000
Waskaganish Food Bank	Waskaganish	\$50,000
Homeless Shelter - Waswanipi	Waswanipi	\$50,000
Sports Psychology	Chisasibi (CHB)	\$5,850
Northern Lights: 2SLGBTQ+ Indige	Nemaska	\$20,000
Teachings from the Camp	Strong Earth Alliance	\$20,000
Food	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$50,000
Waswanipi Karate Program	Waswanipi	\$38,500
		\$434,040

Cree Youth Development Fund

Figure 3. Cree Youth Development Fund for 2025-2026

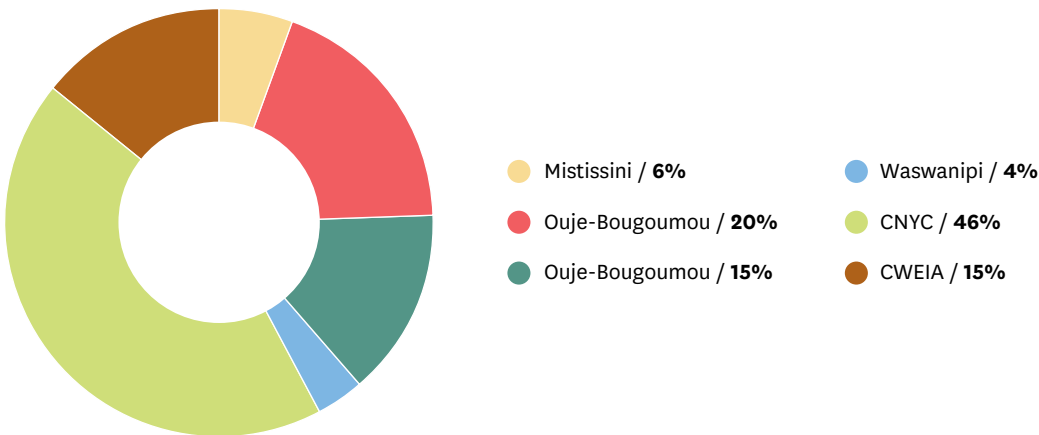


Table 3. Cree Youth Development Fund for 2025-2026

Project	Community/Organization	Amount Approved
Youth Awareness Programs	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$20,000
Youth & Elders Conference	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$15,000
Bimbijou Winter Journey	Mistissini	\$10,000
Roots & Future Program	Waskaganish	\$15,000
Music Skills Development Program	Waswanipi	\$7,500
Miss EE Iskwaau Pageant	CWEIA	\$25,000
Youth Councils of Eeyou Istchee Summit	CNYC	\$80,000
		\$172,500

Eeyou Ayimuwin Funding Agreement

This 3-year initiative is beginning its second year. Communities are each disbursed \$242,684, followed by the submission of a 3-year action plan for the Cree language in their communities. The following communities have received or are in the process of receiving their funding. There is one remaining community that needs the agreement in place to get started.

Mistissini	\$242,684
Waskaganish	\$242,684
Wemindji	\$242,684
Chisasibi	\$242,684
Whapmagoostui	\$242,684
Ouje-Bougoumou	\$242,684
Washaw Sibi	\$242,684
Waswanipi	\$242,684
Eastmain	\$242,684

Elders Program Funding - The Regional Adaptation to Enhance Seniors' Living Conditions in the Cree Communities

The program actively encourages our Elders' involvement in the community by providing direct support and fostering a safe environment for their full participation. Its goal is to continue delivering essential services and programs to improve the living conditions of Elders across Eeyou Istchee. The program also promotes their inclusion in a variety of community activities, helping them connect with others and share experiences. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle by offering resources and opportunities that inspire physical, mental, and social well-being.

Funding for this program is provided through a project under the agreement between the Cree Nation Government and the Government of Québec. This agreement involves the Ministère des Affaires Municipales et de l'Habitation (MAMH), the Minister Responsible for Seniors and the Minister Responsible for Health (MSSS), and the Minister Responsible for Relations with First Nations and Inuit (MRCFC), as well as the Minister Responsible for Canadian Relations and the Canadian Francophonie (MRCFC).

The five-year agreement allocates \$825,000 from 2024-2025 to 2029-2030, with annual contributions of \$165,000. The Cree Nation Government will also contribute matching funding of \$165,000 through the Commerce and Industry Department.

Figure 4. Elders Funding Program for 2025-2026

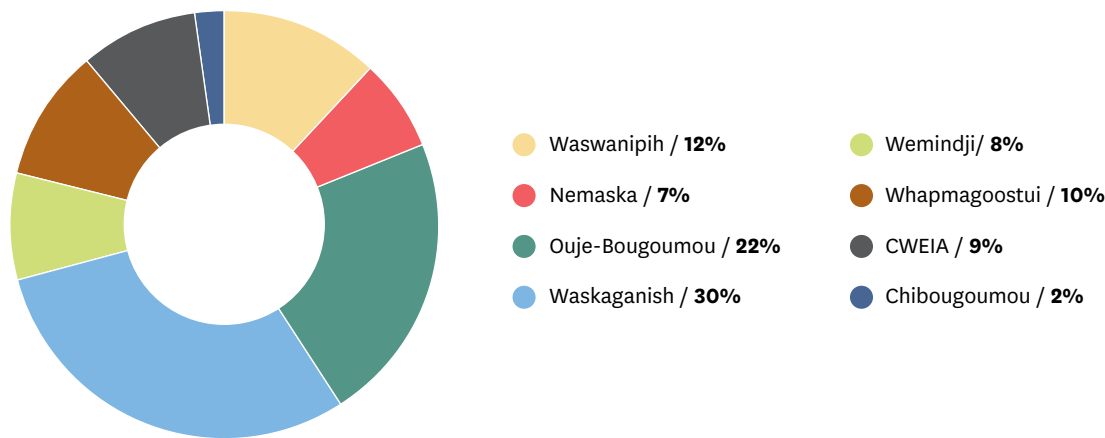


Table 4. Elders Funding Program for 2025-2026

Project	Community/Organization	Amount Approved
Elders Lunch Program	Waskaganish	\$50,000
Elders Teepee Story Telling	Waskaganish	\$50,000
Gathering of our Elders	CWEIA	\$47,000
Bone Crushing Program	Whapmagoostui	\$25,000
Elders Woodcutting Program	Whapmagoostui	\$25,000
Elders Assistance Program	Waswanipi	\$49,000
Elders Activities Program	Waswanipi	\$10,000
Snow Removal for Elders	Wemindji	\$40,000
Canoe Brigade	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$10,000
Sanitary Installations	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$50,000
Elders Social Visits	Le Boreal - (CHSLD & MSDC's)	\$8,500
Elders Outreach Program	Ouje-Bougoumou	\$50,000
Snow Removal for Elders	Waskaganish	\$50,000
Elders Gathering	Nemaska	\$36,850
		\$501,350

Figure 5. PAFILR Funding by Community/Entity for 2025-2026

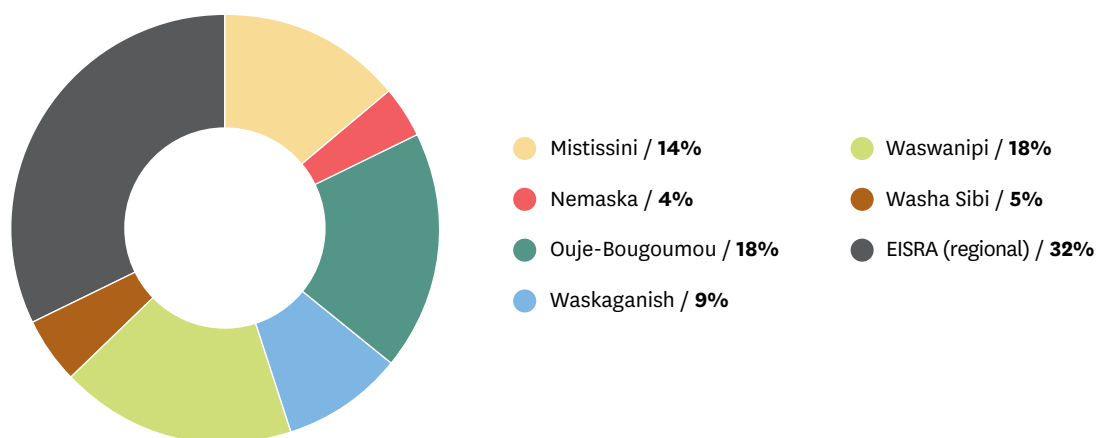


Table 5. PAFILR Funded Programs for 2025-2026

Project Name	Community/Entity	Amount Funded
Minor Hockey & Broomball Program	Mistissini	\$9,000
Softball Program	Mistissini	\$8,000
Soccer Program	Mistissini	\$5,000
Hockey Camp 2025	Washaw Sibi	\$9,000
Softball Clinic	Waskaganish	\$6,510
Mixed Martial Arts Training	Waskaganish	\$5,000
ACTION Program	Ouje Bougoumou	\$9,000
Co-Ed Hockey & Broomball	Ouje Bougoumou	\$9,000
Volleyball & Basketball	Ouje Bougoumou	\$9,000
Volleyball Clinic	Ouje Bougoumou	\$5,750
GALS Program	EISRA	\$9,520
JBM Broomball League	EISRA	\$9,000
JBM Hockey League	EISRA	\$9,000
JBM Softball League	EISRA	\$9,000
Minor Softball Festival	EISRA	\$9,720
Minor Coach Symposium	EISRA	\$9,000
Running Program	EISRA	\$9,000
Adult Hockey Training	Waswanipi	\$5,000
Co-Ed Broomball League	Waswanipi	\$5,000
Healthy Living Club	Waswanipi	\$9,000
		\$158,500

Physical and Outdoor Activity Fund

Programme d'aide financière aux initiatives locales et régionales en matière d'activité physique et de plein air (PAFILR)

The objective of PAFILR is to support local and regional needs for regular physical and outdoor activities. This funding is provided to support these organizations in carrying out new projects or improving existing ones, to directly encourage the regular practice of physical activities in Eeyou Istchee, regardless of age, gender, income, abilities, culture, or living environment.

The agreement, as of 2025-2026, is in its fourth year of the current funding cycle. Each program can be funded for a maximum amount of \$9,999.

The total number of programs funded from 2025-2026 was 22. The total amount of funding provided to the Cree communities and Cree entities over the term of the agreement was \$172,500.

Programming Highlight for Physical Activity Fund (PAFILR) 2025-2026

Nemaska Boardwalk Project

- Location: Cree Nation of Nemaska
- Project Cost: \$247,988.22
- Funding: \$9,000
- Time of Delivery: August 2025 – October 2026

Overview

The Nemaska Boardwalk Project started back in 2008 on the southeast shore of Champion Lake. This initial phase began what is now a network of boardwalk paths on both the south and north sides of the lake. This network now spans a total of 3.4km of boardwalk paths.

The key highlights and milestones of Phase II are the following:

- Total of 193 frames installed (16 ft Frames), representing 965 metres completed
- The boardwalk was completed by Friday, October 24, 2025

The Nemaska Boardwalk is an important addition for our community, helping people get more active. This path makes it easy and inviting for everyone to get outside, walk, and enjoy the beautiful nature around us, giving people a great way to experience connecting with the outdoors and our environment.

The boardwalk gives a real boost to Nemaska's tourism and our local economy. It's a unique attraction that brings in visitors, which then helps our local tourism. With the network of paths growing, we're showing Nemaska as a top spot for people to come and enjoy nature. The boardwalk isn't just a path; it's a testament to our community's hard work and commitment, providing a valuable resource that everyone can use and be proud of for years to come.

Eeyou Istchee Cultural Development Funding

Ministère de la Culture et des Communications de Québec

The Eeyou Istchee Cultural Development Fund has been re-negotiated for a 2-year funding agreement.

With the launch of the funding, the Department will rename the Funding Program to "Eeyou Ituuun Funds".

SPECIAL PROJECTS/FILES & TRADITIONAL PURSUITS

Regional Residential School Response and Support

Our department continues to support the Cree Nation of Chisasibi's investigation of the Fort George residential school sites by liaising among the community, the survivors' committee, and outside agencies – notably CIRNAC's Residential Schools Missing Children Community Support Fund and the specialists needed to conduct the investigations. George Pachano, the Manager of the Residential School Research Project, has continued to play this important role.

We continue to support the ground-penetrating radar search of the Fort George sites – working with Adrian Burke and Jean-Cristophe Ouellete from the Université de Montréal and Dario Izaguirre from Aanischaaukamikw. The team visited Fort George again in July of 2025 and continued their survey of the residential school sites. A report of the findings to date has been provided to the community, who will take the lead in communicating the results. While in Fort George, the archaeologists also trained a number of community members (including staff of the Chisasibi Eeyou Resource



and Research Institute) to use the ground-penetrating radar equipment. Chloe Coombs, Collin Snowboy, Alice Sealhunter, Jessie James Scipio, Peter House and John Lameboy all received the training.

Establishing a Regional Research Capacity

George Pachano and John Bishop (the CNG Toponymist) have also been working to establish a regional research capacity to investigate and document the history of residential school attendance in Eeyou Istchee. This effort complements the GPR search at Fort George and seeks to develop oral history and archival history components – to ensure that the Cree will establish themselves as the experts on this history for generations to come.

As part of this effort, George Pachano has begun building a team that will undertake interviews with residential school survivors. A week-long workshop was held at the Montreal offices of the CNG in November 2025 to train potential interview teams in the use of the necessary video and audio equipment. The workshop was led by David Morgan, a CBC Producer, Waskaganish Iiyiyiu, and Mike McCullough, a cameraman from Winnipeg, MB. Pat Menarick, Louise Rupert, George Pachano, Marie-Louise Chakapash, Sol Awashish, George Diamond, and John Bishop attended the workshop.

An agreement is also being finalized between the Cree Nation Government and a research team based at Laval University to conduct archival research on Cree students

who were sent to residential schools. The team is led by Dr. Pamela Colombo, who started the project in collaboration with the Institute Tshakapesh in Uashat-Maliotenam. Their archival research tracing the attendance of Innu students from the Côte-Nord is innovative and among the best of its kind currently in Canada. The Cree will be joining the project, alongside the Conseil du Nation Atikamekw. This International Research Group will provide a space for members of these nations to work together to document a shared history. The project will also provide an opportunity for Cree researchers and students who are interested in residential school history.

The Cree Place Names Program

Work on the Cree Place Names Program continues, as does the provision of place names data to community partners. Major survey efforts are largely concluded, but interviews continue when and where opportunities arise. Further, this year we obtained audio files from the Quebec Toponymy Commission for interviews conducted by Kenny and Louise Blacksmith in the early 1980s. This closes a years-long effort and signals an improvement in our relationship with the Commission. These recordings will now be fully incorporated into the place names database.

Our work with the Cree Nation Government's GIS Working Group has continued. This work has made significant progress this year, and we are very happy to announce that authoritative layers are now being published to a central

*GPR training on Fort George Island.
Photo: Adrian Burke.*



Participants at the CNG offices for the week-long video workshop.



David Morgan and Sol Awashish at the Video workshop.



Mike McCullough, George and Marie-Louise Pachano, at the week-long video workshop.

data store, including a Cree Place Names layer, burial layers, a heritage-site layer, and a narratives layer. These will be regularly updated and available to GIS professionals and others working for communities, as well as the Cree Nation Government. This ensures that this information can be widely used to support Cree initiatives across the territory. Anyone unsure of how to access this data can contact the CNG Toponymist, John Bishop.

We also successfully applied to the Eeyou EcoFund to support the publication of the first-place names atlas in the territory. We hope this will be the first in a series of published atlases to ensure that the results of the research can be widely disseminated across the territory. These atlases will represent the culmination of 40 years of research with over 600 Cree Elders and knowledgeable land users and will firmly establish the Cree Nation Government as a leader in Canada in indigenous place-names research.

Finally, work also continues the collection of archival documents relating to Cree place names and history on the land.

A Cree Language App

Our department has received 1.9 million dollars in funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage's Indigenous Language Component, to be used through 2028 for the development of an online language learning app for Eastern James Bay Cree dialects. We will be working in collaboration with the organization Say it First and will be adapting the online learning platform that they have developed for Anishnaabemowin in northern Ontario. Work will include the development of a text-to-speech engine as well as lessons focused on teaching vocabulary and verb conjugation. This platform will be freely available for the public and for use in the schools and will be support people wanting to learn to speak as well as fluent speakers wanting to learn to read. For those interested, you can check out the Anishnaabemodaa app at <https://anishinaabemodaa.app>.

OUTREACH AND WELLNESS

Directors of Social and Cultural and Miyupimaatisiun Committees's Gathering 2026

The Social and Cultural Development Department organizes an informational and resources gathering with all of 9 communities of local Directors of Social and Cultural Development and Miyupimaastiiun Committees representatives. Creating a collaborative approach with regional organizations such as the following:

- Cree School Board
- Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay
- Cree Nation Government (ASD & EFPF)
- Cree Nation Youth Council
- Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association

The gathering focuses on building a community engagement session with regional organizations to support and mobilize the Directors of Social and Cultural Development and Miyupimaatisiun Committees with their local priorities and

community plans. The Miyupimaatisiun committees serve as frontline advocates in addressing health initiatives awareness and social concerns. The presentation from regional organization addresses the community challenges we face in today such as the following:

1. Chronic Diseases (Diabetes, substance abuse, etc.)
2. Crime Rates in Eeyou Istchee
3. Food Security
4. Funding Programs
5. Adult Education

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS INITIATIVES

The Social and Cultural Development Department will be hosting its first regional Domestic Violence Awareness Symposium/Gathering, Yaayitinh Saachihiiwewin. This symposium/gathering is in collaboration with CBHSSJB and will be taking place September 14th – 17th, 2026 in Chisasibi, Eeyou Istchee.

Yaayitinh Saachihiiwewin will be a four-day symposium with the purpose of bringing together frontline workers and professionals in the field of domestic and sexual violence across Eeyou Istchee. As well as paraprofessionals who may not be specialized in domestic and sexual violence but work with community members who have experienced or are experiencing domestic and sexual violence. Our aim with this symposium will be to inform, educate, and support community members, professionals, paraprofessionals, and frontline workers on domestic and sexual violence, as well as gathering feedback with the end goal of creating and fostering safe spaces in our communities. This is a critical moment where we have the opportunity to make a change in addressing the reality of domestic and sexual violence in Eeyou Istchee, as well as an opportunity to bring together community members, professionals, paraprofessionals, at a regional and local level, to come together and share information, ideas, recommendations, and build a roadmap for much-needed interventions (i.e. creating safe spaces).

Domestic Violence Awareness Initiatives: Miyupimaatisiun Funding Agreements:

The domestic violence awareness initiatives team is working in collaboration with the CBHSSJB Nishiiyuu Department and the Miyupimaatisiun Committees on domestic violence through a funding agreement developed in October 2025. The goal of this funding agreement is to offer financial support for community engagement initiatives in relation to domestic and sexual violence through a funding agreement and distribution of \$15k per each local Miyupimaatisiun Committee. The goal is to create dialogue and bring awareness to the reality of domestic and sexual violence in our communities.

For more information, please contact:

Rodney Mark, Director of Social and Cultural Development
2 Lakeshore Road, Nemaska, QC J0Y 3B0
T 819-673-2600



YOUTH SECTOR

A Message from the Youth Grand Chief

As your Youth Grand Chief, looking back on this past year fills me with an incredible sense of pride, gratitude, and energy for where we are heading. Serving the Eeyou youth across Eeyou Istchee is a powerful daily reminder of the resilience, drive, and voice that our young people carry. This year, we really focused on making sure our youth aren't just leaders tomorrow, but leaders right now.

We've worked hard to serve as that vital training grounds, giving young people the tools they need to take on roles in politics, business, administration, community health, and anything they set their mind to. From our local youth councils to regional tables, we are making sure our voices are not just heard, but impossible to ignore. We worked hand-in-hand with the Grand Council of the Crees and local leadership to make sure youth perspectives are front and center on everything from climate action to socio-economic strategy.

To every youth leader, coordinator, volunteer, and young person in Eeyou Istchee: thank you. Your ideas, your passion, and your voice are the foundation of the Cree Nation.

Jade Mukash
Youth Grand Chief

'Sup, y'all— welcome to the regional Youth Sector's space! We missed the deadline for last year's report, so we know it's been a while since you've gotten an update from Cree Nation Youth Council (CNYC) in these here pages... we've been pretty busy to say the least!

In a nutshell...

- After a lengthy review timeline, the CNYC's updated Strategic Action Plan and Governance Guidelines will finally be approved August 2026!
- Our programs and projects are now geared with a greater focus on governance, representation, and youth participation.
- In our mission to foster opportunities of capacity development/reinforcement for our young leaders, the CNYC has undertaken the process of formalizing its essential partnerships with other entities and departments to achieve common youth development goals (more to be announced in 2026-2027!)
- Our Administrative Technician, Kevin Rabbitskin, is now a permanent employee. Yay!
- New co-chairs were elected for the term of 2025-2029.
- Last, but not least: we made a major commitment to ensure all our upcoming events take place in Eeyou Istchee to promote local economies and capacities.

The Cree Nation Youth Council (CNYC) is governed by a Board of Directors composed of the elected local youth chief from each of the 10 Cree communities in Eeyou Istchee alongside their local youth coordinators or proxies, and 2 regionally elected co-chairs. Together, they work on the development of CNYC led initiatives that aim to foster the empowerment of youth throughout Eeyou Istchee and the reinforcement of their leadership capacities.

The CNYC Crew

It takes a dream team to make big things happen! Here are the five individuals with the regional mandate to support the youth via the Cree Nation Youth Council's operations:

Elected Co-Chairs

Jade Mukash, *Youth Grand Chief*

Darius Neacappo-Pelchat, *Deputy Youth Grand Chief*

For invitations, connections and collaborations, the co-chairs can be reached at: cnyc.cochairs@cngov.ca

Administrative Staff

Kevin Rabbitskin, *CNYC Administrative Technician*

Steve Einish, *CNYC Project Technician*

Tania Richmond, *Coordinator of Projects*

For presentation requests, general inquiries, and anything else! cnyc@cngov.ca

Representation

I am extremely grateful for this amazing opportunity to serve the youth of Eeyou Istchee as Deputy Youth Grand Chief. I had the privilege of meeting youth across the Cree Nation during my campaign trail, listening to their stories, concerns, ideas, and aspirations. Throughout my first year, I have learned that leadership is not about having all the answers. It is about listening, representing and working together to create positive change. I remain committed to ensuring youth voices are heard and that we continue building opportunities.

Darius Neacappo-Pelchat, *Deputy Youth Grand Chief*

Meetings

Every fiscal year, the CNYC mobilizes its Board of Directors an average of 4 times a year. In between those meetings, the Executive Committee meets to provide additional support to the CNYC and ensure the follow-up on mandates, resolutions, and action items.

During these meetings, Board and Executive Committee members also get to practice their presentation, facilitation, and debate skills when campaigning to host an event and sharing community and representation updates.

Board of Directors

- April 1, 2025 (Ottawa)
- June 17, 18, & 19, 2025 (Amos)
- November 4, 5, & 6, 2025 (Mistissini)
- January 27, 28, & 29, 2026 (Chisasibi)

Executive Committee

- April 15 & 16, 2025 (Montreal)
- June 1 & 2, 2025 (Montreal)
- July 16, 2025 (Virtual)
- January 13 & 14 (Val-d'Or)
- March 9 (Virtual)
- March 27 (Virtual)

Portfolios

In the start of their mandate, the co-chairs have identified key portfolios for which they are assigned to represent. Together, they ensure the youth have a voice in governance matters.

Deputy Youth Grand Chief

- Culture & Language
- Economic & Social Development
- Education
- Sports

Youth Grand Chief

- Healthcare
- Capacity Building
- Harm Reduction
- Land & Environment
- Arts

Notable Events & Projects

With the financial support of Eeyou Eeyou Limited Partnership (EELP) funds, Board of Compensation, Apatisiwin Skills Development, Department of Justice and Correctional Services, Secrétariat à la jeunesse, and the Eeyou Eeyou Community Foundation, the CNYC has accomplished the following:

Treaty Negotiation Simulation

Host: Regional - Ottawa (On)

Dates: November 9-10-11, 2025

Implementing treaties requires knowledge-transfer and skills-building in negotiation and advocacy, and engagement with Indigenous youth who are the emerging leaders. To achieve this, the CNYC partnered with the Gordon Foundation to co-host and facilitate a 3-day Treaty Negotiation Simulation with the goal to:

- Build a network amongst participants and experts for future learning and support;
- Introduce emerging leaders to Treaty and implementation and negotiation practices, issues, dynamics, and implications as one tool among others for self-determination, and;
- Increase interest of emerging leaders in modern-treaty awareness, participation, and implementation.

Assigned to different teams representing the Cree, Regional, and Provincial governments as well as Tallymen, Youth were invited to negotiate the matter of moose management in zone 17 of our region. The highlight of this event was the dedication of the youth who participated in this event and the overall empowerment they felt with a better understanding of treaty implementation. There is definitely a future Grand Chief in that list of attendees!

We would like to thank all the experts who provided their precious knowledge, insights, and support to the youth during this event. We also convey gratitude to the Gordon Foundation team for their precious and very essential collaboration in making this event a success!

Next edition will be hosted during the fiscal year 2027-2028

Journey Through the Heart

Host: Cree Nation of Waskaganish &
Cree Nation of Eastmain
Dates: February 2025

The Winter Journey of 2025 was more than just a walk — it was a step back into the ways of our ancestors. Beginning in Waskaganish, youth, guides, and Elders came together to retrace traditional winter routes, stopping at family camps, hunting, fishing, and learning the roles passed down for generations.

For eight days, sixteen youth worked together under the guidance of experienced local guides. They were joined by Elders who shared prayers, encouragement, and wisdom before the departure. Each camp stop carried its own lessons: from ice safety and navigation to hunting moose and preparing traditional meals.

The path was not without challenges: sudden weather shifts, limited communications, and wet moccasins tested the group's resilience. Yet these difficulties became lessons themselves, teaching perseverance and adaptability.

In the end, what began as a group of strangers walking together became something greater: a family rooted in the land and traditions of our people. The youth carried not only packs on their backs, but also the responsibility to carry these teachings forward.

Thank you to our coordinators, Kaitlynn Hester-Moses and Dylan Mayappo, as well as the youth guides. A special shoutout to our videographer Manuan Lafond for capturing these precious memories!

Inspire Hope Conference

Host: Cree Nation of Nemaska
Dates: March (5)-6-7-8, 2025

The purpose of this conference is to inspire our youth by delivering activities, sharing stories, inviting inspirational and motivational speakers. Geared toward personal development and mental health, this event seeks to empower our youth to be strong leaders and discover their ability to bring inspiration to one another.

This edition featured the first edition of a CNYC cultural day, which is hosted now prior to each of our events. The purpose of this optional (but highly attended) day is to bring participants together to bond prior to an event and experience the host community's culture.

The majority of facilitators who delivered workshops were also youth from Eeyou Istchee, showing our support to the capacities of our youth to teach each other. Activities included: painting, music production, fashion business, candle making, barbering and cooking.

Thank you to local event coordinator Liana Diamond for an awesome job! Shout out to the Nemaska Youth Council as well for being awesome hosts. We look forward to coming back to the Heart of Eeyou Istchee!

Alberta/Quebec Cree Youth Exchange

Host: Ermineskin Cree Nation (Alberta)
Dates: May 2025

As part of an on-going exchange with Ermineskin Cree Nation, the CNYC took a delegation of 40 youth to Alberta to connect with Cree youth from Treaty 6. This exchange was made possible with the support of additional EELP funds provided to the CNYC during Chief Mandy Gull-Masty's term to be used for an exchange.

During this trip, the participants visited different museums, met with different key figures, and experience nêhiyawak culture such as the hand games. Participants were provided with a booklet with reflections to complete and a series of videos was produced to share their journey.

Hay hay, Jason Makinaw for making this connection a reality! We met Jay in his functions of DJ/Producer when he provided a workshop for our youth at the summer games in 2024. However, this time around, we thank him for being a great host in his functions as Ermineskin Cree Nation councillor!

CNYC Elections

Host: Regional
Dates: Summer 2025

Hello Adrian (former Youth Grand Chief), We hear you're with the CNG's Communications now. Elections are pretty self-explanatory, so I hope you enjoy this section/easter egg now that your capacities and functions have changed! I know you inspired many during your term. With that said, thank you for your four years of service buddy!

As for you, Jordan Masty (former Deputy Youth Grand Chief), I can still hear the eagles cry in the North sometimes. That alone tells me you're still somewhere out on the land or with your local youth council dropping bits of wisdom for us to appreciate. I congratulate you on being a great role model, seeing you and your son elected on your local youth council together is proof you're a great generational leader!

I hope you both can see the fruit of the seeds you have planted; we are definitely in good hands with Jade and Darius who are carrying out the vision with their own brand of leadership.

And finally, thank you Chief Returning Officer Robin Pachanos and her team of Returning Officers for making this election a smooth one!

36th Annual General Assembly

Host: Cree Nation of Wemindji

Dates: September (25)-26-27-28, 2025

Youth Annual General Assemblies provide a space for young people to learn more about governance, representing their communities at a regional level, and exercising their role as advocates within the Cree nation. This year's assembly included a cultural day to encourage bonds among the delegates prior to discussion of youth matters.

The CNYC successfully hosted its 36th Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Wemindji, Quebec, from September 24 to 29, 2025. The event brought together youth delegates, facilitators, and guests from across Eeyou Istchee to engage in workshops, cultural activities, governance sessions, and community-building experiences.

This year's theme focused on youth leadership, cultural pride, and strategic planning for 2025–2029, empowering delegates to contribute to the ongoing growth and direction of the CNYC.

The CNYC 36th AGA in Wemindji was a meaningful and empowering gathering, uniting Cree youth in leadership, culture, and collaboration. Through shared experiences, discussions, and cultural exchanges, participants strengthened their understanding of governance and community development while setting a clear path for the future of Cree youth leadership in Eeyou Istchee.

36th Annual General Assembly delegation

Photo: Katherine Dehm





FORESTRY

Message from the Director Gillman Ottereyes



Once again, I am pleased to share the highlights of our achievements for the last fiscal year. 2025-2026 was a year of transition for the Forestry Department. Many of our key files were influenced by changes in the internal and external political landscape.



For the Cree Nation Government we welcomed in Paul John Murdoch as our new Grand Chief and for Quebec we saw the departure of the Premier and the cycling of many key people at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MRNF). These changes presented challenges for the department on the negotiating front as we reorganized internally and reengaged with new members within the MRNF.

For this, we were pleased to welcome back former Grand Chief Dr. Abel Bosum who was appointed by Board/Council in August to lead our forestry negotiations. Dr. Bosum was in this same role throughout the successful Baril-Moses renegotiations and the last round of amendments to the Adapted Forestry Regime in 2015. Following his appointment, Dr. Bosum convened 3 meetings with the MRNF to reset our working agenda for discussions on the revision of the Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement Program Agreement, the implementation of the Collaborative Forestry Regime for Category II and III lands and the Wildlife Habitat Directives. Unfortunately, with the resignation of the Premier and the upcoming provincial election, the MRNF remains in a holding pattern for these issues.

Negotiations aside, I am pleased to report that the Department has made significant progress on its day-to-day delivery of services to our land users affected by forestry operations. Much of this was made possible by a renewal in our working relationship with Waswanipi's Natural Resources Department. With an engaged new team in Waswanipi, our collaborative efforts resulted in our most thorough and efficient fall consultations in the Adapted Forestry Regime's history. This was notwithstanding ongoing budget and human resource limitations at the MRNF.

Once again, we successfully fulfilled the Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement Program's dual mandate: balancing forestry operations with the preservation of the Cree way of life. Through disciplined administrative oversight, our team oversaw the disbursement for 100% of this year's total budget. Yet, beyond the financial considerations, the true measure of this year's success is found in the tangible improvements delivered to the Cree Tallymen, land users, and community members who directly benefit from these resources.

Thanks to the efforts of our interim Joint Working Group Coordinator, we were also able to assist the MRNF Forest Planners in correcting errors made in the annual operational plans for the upcoming year. After a careful review, our Coordinator discovered that MRNF planners included several harvest blocks that were yet to be harmonized through the consultation process with our land users. This pre-planning scrutiny marks an important addition to our ongoing monitoring efforts which typically only cover post-harvesting activities.

With respect to our Joint Working Group Coordinator, I want to highlight the 5-year contribution that Dion Michel made to the department. Dion left in the fall of 2025 to become a local Joint Working Group member in Mistissini. Additionally, we also welcomed Raven Icebound as our new Administrative Clerk in early 2025.

Gillman Ottereyes, Director of Forestry

MANDATE

The Forestry Department's mandate is to implement the provisions of the Adapted Forestry Regime set out in the *Paix des Braves Agreement*. In its broadest terms the regime is designed to:

- Provide adaptations to the forestry law to better consider the Cree traditional way of life;
- Provide greater integration of concerns relating to sustainable development;
- Provide participation, in the form of consultation, for the Crees in the various forestry planning and management processes.

In addition to these goals, the 2002 and 2015 Baril-Moses Agreements extend this regime to Mistissini and Ouje-Bougoumou traplines east of the height of land. The Cree Quebec Governance Agreement also provided for the establishment of a collaborative forest management regime over Category II lands.

The department also administers the Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement Program, which funds local projects to mitigate the impact of those land users who are affected by forestry. Although not part of the *Paix des Braves Agreement*, this program is jointly funded through an agreement with Quebec and has been renewed 3 times since 2005.

FORESTRY DEPARTMENT STAFF

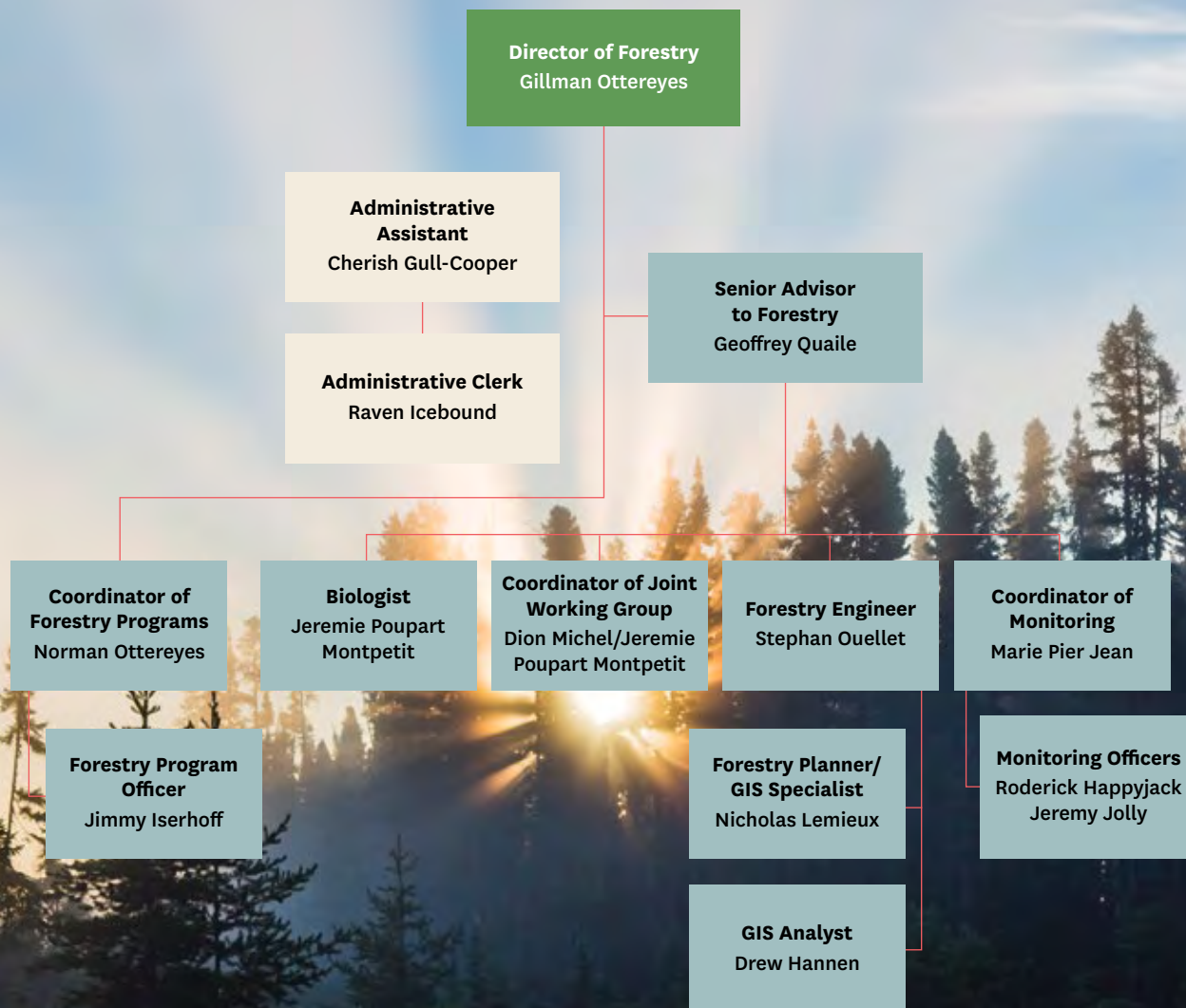


Photo: Brendan Forward

CREE QUÉBEC FORESTRY BOARD

Under the leadership of Ronald Brizard, the Cree Quebec Forestry Board (CQFB) completed or undertook several important projects. Key among this list was research designed to begin the analysis into the “Second Pass Harvesting” which promises to be the next most important evolution of the Adapted Forestry Regime.

Second Pass Harvesting occurs when forestry planners begin to target residual stands of trees left following the application of mosaic harvesting. The Adapted Forestry Regime provisions require residual blocks of standing trees following mosaic harvesting to remain intact until the original harvested trees regenerate to a height of 3 metres. This height requirement is extended to 7 metres in Cree Areas of Wildlife Interest (aka. 25% areas). Typically, it takes be-

tween 25 and 30 years for trees to regenerate to a height of 3 metres. Consequently, many of the mosaic areas that were first cut in the early years of the Adapted Forestry Regime will soon be open to second pass harvesting. This harvesting has the potential to significantly alter the forest landscape, thus, the need to begin an evaluation on how this future harvesting will be managed. In recognition of this upcoming challenge, the CQFB engaged an outside consultant to assess the progress of regeneration for mosaic harvesting in the territory. This analysis will assist the Board in determining further avenues for research on this important issue.

There were several changes for the Cree representation on the CQFB this past year. In February Pamela Macleod and former Deputy Grand Chief, Norman A. Wapachee joined the Board.

FORESTRY PLANNING

Traplines within Chapter 3 territory of application

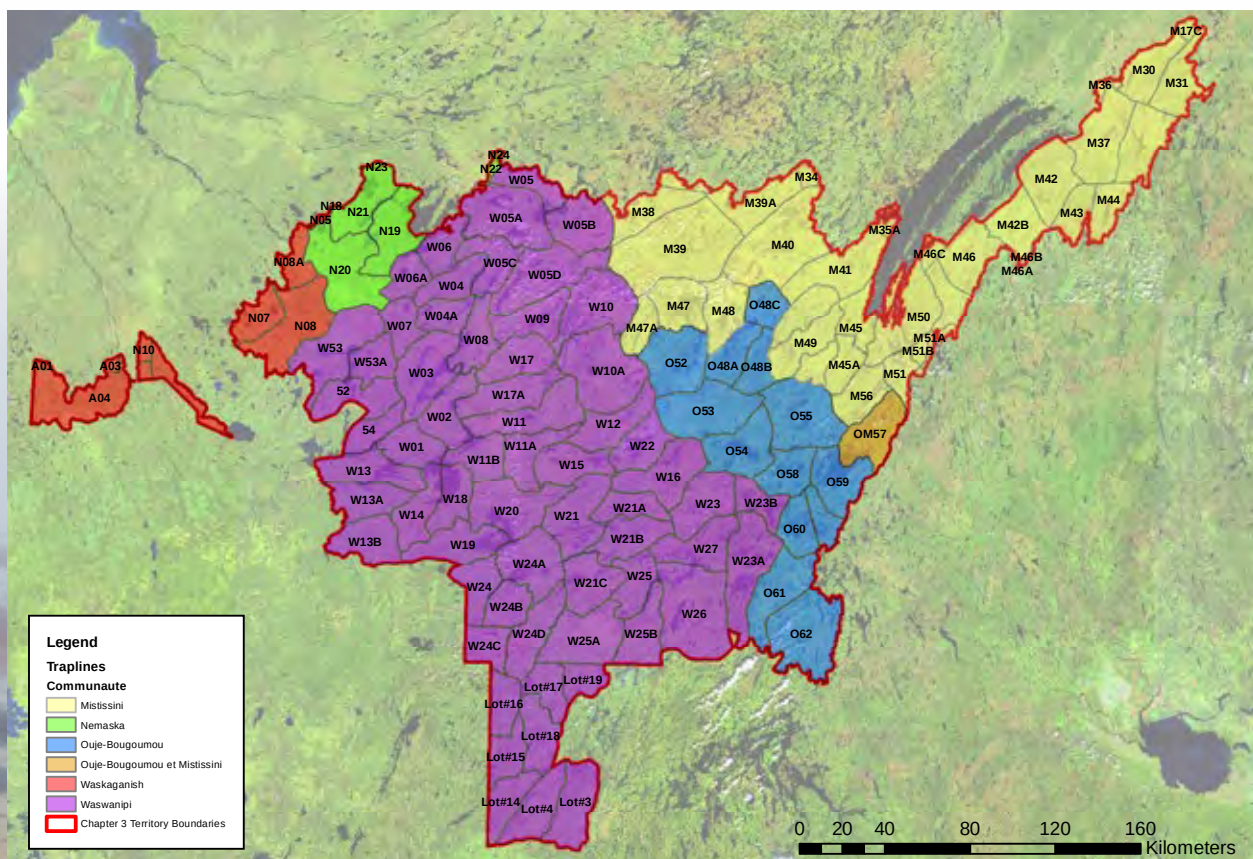


Table 1. Traplines affected by Forestry Activity 2024-2025

Community (Traplines)	Harvesting		Roads		Silvicultural	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Waswanipi (62)	29	33	46	16	46	16
Mistissini (31)	5	26	17	14	17	14
Ouje-Bougoumou (13) (O/M-57)	9	4	11	2	11	2
Nemaska (7)	0	7	0	7	0	7
Waskaganish (3)	0	3	0	3	0	3
Total (116)	43	73	74	42	74	42

Baril Moses Agreement

During the COVID years from 2020 until 2023, a tripartite committee with the Innu and the MRNF worked on an agreement for modalities for implementing the 2015 Baril-Moses Agreement. This effort yielded few results. In 2024 the file was reactivated by focusing on working with the Innu to identify sites of special interest (1%) and sites of wildlife interest exclusive to the Cree and Innu (25 % of the territory). This work was completed in August 2025 and submitted to the main Cree-Pekuakamiulnu table for approval which is still pending.

Paix des Braves Silviculture Allocation

Through amendment six of the *Paix des Braves Agreement*, the Crees were able to secure 15% percent of the silvicultural budget on an annual basis. In 2025-26, \$732 000 in additional funding was made available for Cree Nation Government to help companies that have not accessed the public silvicultural contracting system. We are still awaiting the proposed budget for the 2026 season. Stakun and Dooden were the only Cree enterprises that successfully accessed contracts on the public system since 2023. Weshthau and Enaktuk have yet to successfully access the public contract system. Those enterprises should be fully integrated into the public bidding system by 2026. Miiyunakutaw is no longer a Cree enterprise and thus not eligible for the Paix des Braves special silvicultural budget.

Table 2. Budget distribution for Cree silvicultural enterprises 2025

Enterprise	Public contracts	PDB Budget (15%) (\$)	Total	% of PDB budget
Staakun Enterprise	\$2 527 385	0	\$2 527 385	0%
Dooden	\$83 837	\$ 119 824	\$203 761	16.4%
Weshthau	\$0	\$ 227 000	\$ 227 000	7%
Eenatuk Forestry	\$0	\$384 291	\$384 291	52,5%
Total	\$2 611 222	\$731 711	\$3 342 933	100%

Photo: Brendan Forward

WILDLIFE AND HABITAT PROTECTION

There were several projects addressing habitat protection that our team worked on this past year. Some of this work came through routine analysis and monitoring while others were collaborative research efforts with the CQFB and the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (MELCCFP).

Moose Habitat Quality Index

This project is linked to the Cree Quebec Forestry Board's study on the impact that mosaic harvesting has on the quality of moose habitat over time. To assess if the post harvest landscape provides suitable habitat for moose, it was necessary to develop a moose quality index. The index serves as a tool allowing biologists and forest managers to determine if the landscape has the necessary habitat components that moose require. This index allows for a grading of the habitat. Our biologist, Jeremie Poupart Montpetit, worked with researchers from McGill University, the MRNF, Cree Quebec Forestry Board and community representatives to finalize the index. This project was completed in 2026 and can now be used as tool in further projects to assess the quality of moose habitats on specific traplines.

Second Pass Harvesting Analysis

As detailed in the CQFB section, the department also participated in the "Second Pass" harvesting analysis project. Our Forestry Engineer, Stephane Ouellet and our Biologist/ Interim Joint Working Group Coordinator collaborated with the consultant (AECOM) engaged by the Board to understand and validate their review of stand regeneration and its composition.

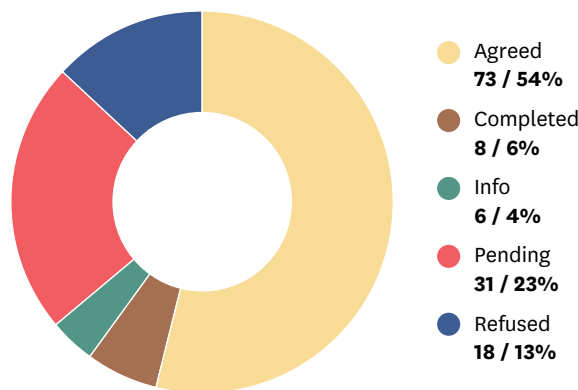
Biodiversity Indicators Project

The summer of 2025 marked the monitoring team's first participation in the MELCCFP Biodiversity Network. This long-term project is to better understand how biodiversity is changing in response to climate change. The department's goal is to contribute to expanding common knowledge to better manage and preserve Eeyou Istchee's biodiversity. Our Monitoring Coordinator, Marie-Pier Jean, organized 10 days of field visits with local and departmental monitors. These visits included protocol training, sample collection and data recording. This work will continue in 2026, particularly in areas affected by the 2023 forest fires.

JOINT WORKING GROUP COORDINATION

As mentioned earlier, the 2025-2026 fall forestry plan consultations saw our most efficient and effective efforts in terms of service delivery to our land users. These consultations were held from November 12 through to February of 2026 by each of our local Joint Working Groups (Mistissini, Ouje-Bougoumou, Waswanipi, Waskaganish and Nemaska) with Tallymen and representatives from 96 traplines. This work was aided by our Biologist, Jeremie Poupart Montpetit, who stepped in as Interim Joint Working Group Coordinator in early September 2025.

Figure 1. New Harmonizations (Total 136)



Key Performance Highlights

- Traplines Harmonized: 95/96
(Nemaska: 1/1 Waskaganish: 1/1 Mistissini: 26/26
Ouje-Bougoumou: 12/12 Waswanipi: 55/56)
- New Harmonizations: 136

Overall, there was a noticeable improvement in the respect of work deadlines and a decrease in the number of conflicts. This can be attributed to an increase in the quality and amount of information that was shared with our land users, including direct memos before the consultations; especially concerning the status of past harmonization agreements. Over the past year, our Coordinator also conducted several training sessions with the local Joint Working Group members with a focus on the importance of follow-up and communication with their client land users. These efforts resulted in 95% of the consultations being completed by the end of January 2026. This is the first time that parties have achieved this outcome as consultations normally extend into March each year.

FIELD MONITORING PROGRAM

Following last year's phase of consolidating our work processes and strengthening collaboration with the communities, we were able to continue diversifying our monitoring capabilities this year.

For example, our field monitors continued their drone pilot training and certification, and we are pleased to report that Roderick Happy obtained his pilot license in the fall. We expect Jeremy Jolly to pass his license test early in the new year. Drew Hannen, our GIS Analyst and Marie-Pier are also now officially certified to fly drones. We will continue to refine our flight skills and better document sensitive areas or concerns to improve the quality of our monitoring data.

In addition, we continued our joint monitoring efforts for land user concerns, Cree Traditional Activity Enhancement projects, harmonization measures, and sensitive areas. Monthly meetings are held with local monitors from Waswanipi, Mistissini and Ouje-Bougoumou and every three

months with Nemaska and Waskaganish. These meetings include presenting updates made to our field monitoring tablets and its app. The use of this constantly advancing technology has increased the amount of field data collected by both our department and community monitors. Drew Hannen assists in the development of these tools.

The data collected is important because it is uploaded and shared with the MNRF on a quarterly basis. This ensures that legal protections under the Sustainable Forest Development Act and the Adapted Forestry Regime are applied to sensitive areas and allows for follow-up with the MRNF regarding harmonization measures or land users' concerns. To continue improving our collaboration with the MRNF, we aim to establish a "Partnered Collaboration" with them via ArcGIS Online by 2026. This will allow them to have direct, real-time access to final monitoring data, thereby improving follow-up.

Over the course of 2025-26, Jeremy Jolly and Roderick Happyjack (Monitoring Officers) and the community monitors have done an impressive amount of work by visiting 82 traplines, following up on 41 harmonization measures, surveying 371 sensitive areas, investigating 46 land user concerns and validating 237 completed CTAE projects. This is nearly double the number of traplines that were visited when we started this program 3 years ago.

GIS ANALYST/DATA MANAGEMENT

Drew Hannen, our GIS Analyst, continues to improve the Department's capacity for geospatial analysis within the Adapted Forestry Regime.

Field Monitoring Application Redevelopment

In 2024, the department introduced digital tablets to be used for direct data logging in the field. These tablets were equipped with a customized application specific to our monitoring focus. Following a training and testing phase for this application, a new version was developed last year to improve ease of use and efficiency. This version was adopted by our monitoring partners in the 5 communities affected by forestry.

GIS Community Support

The Forestry Department continued to provide dedicated geospatial support to the Joint Working Groups and to local and regional CTAE officers.

Using ArcGIS Online, the department developed a suite of interactive, trapline specific maps for each community.

Support activities included:

- One on one training
- Technical assistance for data interpretation
- Regular updates to ensure accuracy and alignment with field observations

The growing use of web based GIS tools demonstrates the increasing importance of digital spatial technologies in local governance and in the implementation of the Adapted Forestry Regime.

FIMS 2.0 – Forestry Information Management System Redesign

The Forestry Information Management System (FIMS) is the core platform used to administer the CTAE program, which distributes over \$3 million annually to Cree land users and communities affected by forestry activities under a shared agreement with the Government of Quebec. FIMS manages project funding applications throughout their lifecycle. Given the program's growing complexity and the rapid evolution of web technologies, a full redesign—FIMS 2.0—is now underway.

The two year redevelopment will include:

- A complete modernization of the system architecture
- Improved efficiency and accuracy in application processing
- Enhanced tools to support program administration and reporting

FIMS 2.0 will significantly strengthen the CNG's ability to manage the CTAE program and respond to evolving operational needs.

Table 3. Monitoring of traplines 2025-2026

Community	Total Traplines	Harmonization Measures	Sensitive Areas	Complaints	CTAE
Waswanipi	45	34	131	34	146
Mistissini	22	2	133	10	63
Ouje-Bougoumou	13	4	98	2	22
Nemaska	1	1	2	0	0
Waskaganish	1	0	7	0	6
Total	82	41	371	46	237

CNG Geospatial Strategy – Year Three Overview

In his role as GIS Analyst, Drew Hannen coordinates with other GIS professionals within the CNG on the Geospatial Strategy. Year three of the CNG Geospatial Strategy marked a period of major implementation, collaboration, and capacity building across the Cree Nation Government and Cree First Nations. The Forestry Department led several key initiatives that advanced geospatial tools, strengthened interdepartmental engagement, and supported community level decision making. These efforts included:

- Participation in the CNG “Lunch and Learn series” which serves as a demonstration on how departments are utilizing geospatial technologies in their work environments.
- ESRI Canada user conference presentation in Toronto which showcased the CNG’s innovative geospatial initiatives

Projects Under Development

In 2025, the Forestry Department acquired two DJI Matrice 4E drones to enhance monitoring and analysis across the territory. These drones will provide high resolution imagery for aerial surveillance, mapping, and environmental assessment. Following the acquisition, several in person training sessions were conducted with professional drone training consultants KoptR Image and Cansel. These consultants assisted the department in refining our piloting and flight path planning skills. This work was held in Waswanipi for members of the Forestry Department and employees of Cree First Nations impacted by forestry, which resulted in several Cree First Nation employees obtaining their basic drone licenses.

During the summer of 2026, the Forestry Department plans to initiate two pilot projects. The first will analyze the role silviculture can play in the regeneration of areas affected by forest fires. The second will assess reforestation health and distinguish between natural and replanted forest density to support wildlife centered management.

CREE TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM 2025-2026 (CTAE)

The execution of 482 enhancement projects across 99 traplines represents a significant investment in both community-led infrastructure and traditional knowledge transfer. Initiatives ranging from snow removal and camp renovations to youth excursions and elder workshops directly support the continued exercise of traditional activities. These harmonization efforts ensure our sites remain accessible and safe, fostering the autonomy and self-sufficiency of our people. Furthermore, our strict compliance methodology—yielding 237 randomly spot-checked projects documented with GPS and photographic evidence—ensures that this legacy is built with transparency and accountability.

Context and Objectives

- Enhancement of Traditional Activities:** To strengthen the exercise of Cree hunting, fishing, and trapping activities on an operational basis, while ensuring meaningful integration with forestry management.
- Support for Harmonization:** To complement the implementation of harmonization measures arising from forest management consultations by providing adaptive solutions as needed.



- c) **Resource Accessibility:** To provide Cree Tallymen, land users, and members of eligible communities with greater opportunities to utilize the forest and its diverse resources.
- d) **Promotion of Self-Sufficiency:** To encourage greater autonomy and self-sufficiency among Cree Tallymen and land users through the implementation of projects funded under the Agreement.

The Agreement applies to the five (5) communities impacted by forestry activities, Mistissini, Nemaska, Ouje-Bougoumou, Waskaganish and Waswanipi.

Under the terms of the Agreement, both CNG and Quebec provide funding to support the CTAE Program. This Agreement ended on March 31, 2026, with negotiations underway for renewal.

Cree Traditional Activities Enhancement Program Funding

The total funding for the current period consists of the annual shares from both governments and the surplus carried forward from the previous year. This funding was fully disbursed among the five (5) eligible communities as seen in table 4.

Administration, Management and Monitoring

Effective administration of the CTAE Program relies on a collaborative framework between regional management and local community program officers. The Coordinator of Forestry Programs, Norman Ottereyes, and our Regional Officer, Jimmy Iserhoff, closely oversee the program's general management and facilitate executive-level project approvals.

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, three coordination meetings were convened to maintain administrative consistency and ensure program alignment. Key discussions centered on financial reconciliation, project progress, and addressing operational challenges.

Central to program coordination is the Forest Information Management System ("FIMS"), a dedicated platform for

tracking project applications, budgets, and approvals. As part of a commitment to continuous improvement, technical staff are actively collaborating with Strata360 to develop FIMS 2.0. *(For more details, see: FIMS 2.0 – Forestry Information Management System Redesign)*

Monitoring and Site Visits

As required by our Agreement with Quebec, our Forestry Monitoring Team working in tandem with local monitors now strives to review every new CTAE project utilizing ArcGIS Online ("GIS") to maintain a visual and geographical record. Every spot check documents the quality and completion of work through photographic evidence and precise GPS mapping. Last year the monitoring team reviewed 237 projects.

Enhancement Projects

Forestry activities impact Cree hunting, fishing, and trapping activities both individually and collectively. The Agreement acknowledges these factors and addresses the practical needs of trappers by funding a variety of enhancement initiatives.

Eligible projects include, but not limited to:

- a) **Infrastructure Development:** Building, replacing, or relocating essential facilities, such as camps and docks.
- b) **Travel and Access:** Facilitating travel for trappers through snow removal, road maintenance, and the development or improvement of trail networks.
- c) **Site Upgrades:** Constructing infrastructure like boat landings and upgrading sites of special interest, such as gathering places.
- d) **Traditional Activity Reinforcement:** Implementing measures to support the continued exercise of traditional activities, such as silviculture work, beaver and muskrat relocation, and other wildlife habitat enhancement projects

Table 5 summarizes the total number of projects funded and the number of traplines that benefited from the CTAE Program during this period.

Table 4. Disbursements by Eligible Communities 2025-2026

Community	Traplines Affected	Disbursements
Mistissini	27.5	\$973,757.25
Nemaska	1	\$191,326.45
Ouje-Bougoumou	10.5	\$398,993.73
Waskaganish	1	\$194,343.31
Waswanipi	59	\$2,479,436.87
Total	99	\$4,237,857.61

Table 5. Enhancement Projects 2025-2026

Community	Traplines Enhanced	Total Projects	Community Projects
Waswanipi	27.5	139	1
Mistissini	1	1	5
Ouje-Bougoumou	10.5	43	4
Nemaska	1	4	2
Waskaganish	59	295	11
Totals	99	482	23



EEYOU EENOU POLICE FORCE

Message from the Police Director Shannon Nakogee

Waachiyaah, I am pleased to share the progress and achievements of the Eeyou Eenou Police Force (EPPF) over the past year.



This year marked continued growth for our police force. Guided by our commitment to public safety and the well-being of Eeyou Istchee, we strengthened our efforts in culturally grounded policing, prevention and partnerships. Rooted in Cree values, our approach emphasizes prevention, relationship-building and community accountability. We prioritized visibility, collaboration and modernization, ensuring our services reflect the unique needs of each community we serve. Policing brings both obstacles and achievements, both of which drive us to grow, improve, and serve Eeyou/Eenouch with pride. We are pleased to present an overview of our activities and accomplishments over the past year.

Our Mission

Our mission is to maintain peace, order, and public security, to prevent and repress crime and offences under the law and Cree communities' by-laws throughout Eeyou Istchee. In pursuing our mission, the EEPF and its members ensure the safety of persons and property, safeguard rights and freedoms, as well as respect and remain attentive to the needs of victims. We partner strategically with key stakeholders to uphold the highest level of public security and social wellness for our people throughout the territory.

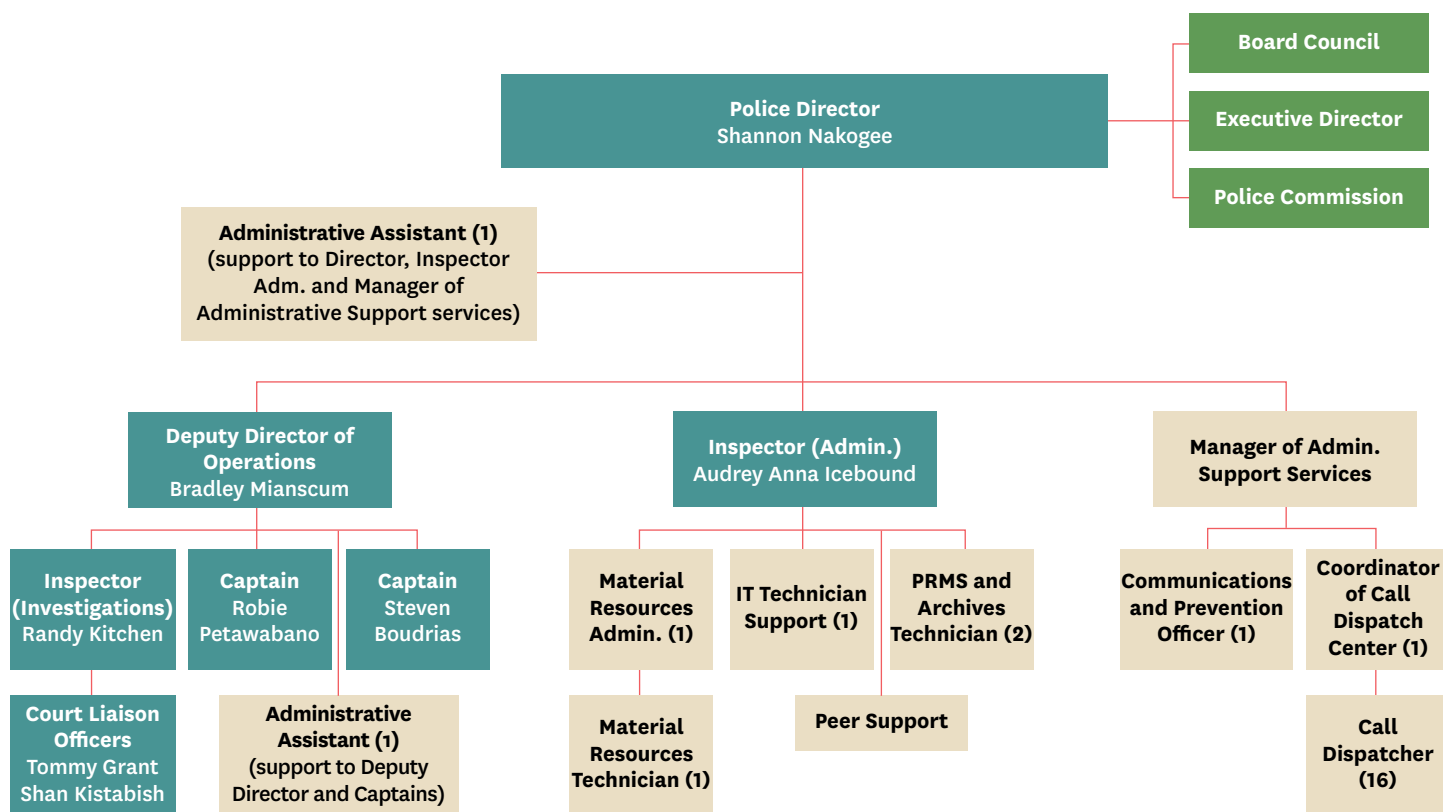
Our values

Our organization and employees are guided by a strong set of core values in serving Eeyou Istchee. These principles reflect our commitment to excellence and shape our actions and interactions each day, ensuring the highest standards of service in policing to our community members. We are dedicated to upholding professionalism, integrity, respect, and accountability in all that we do.

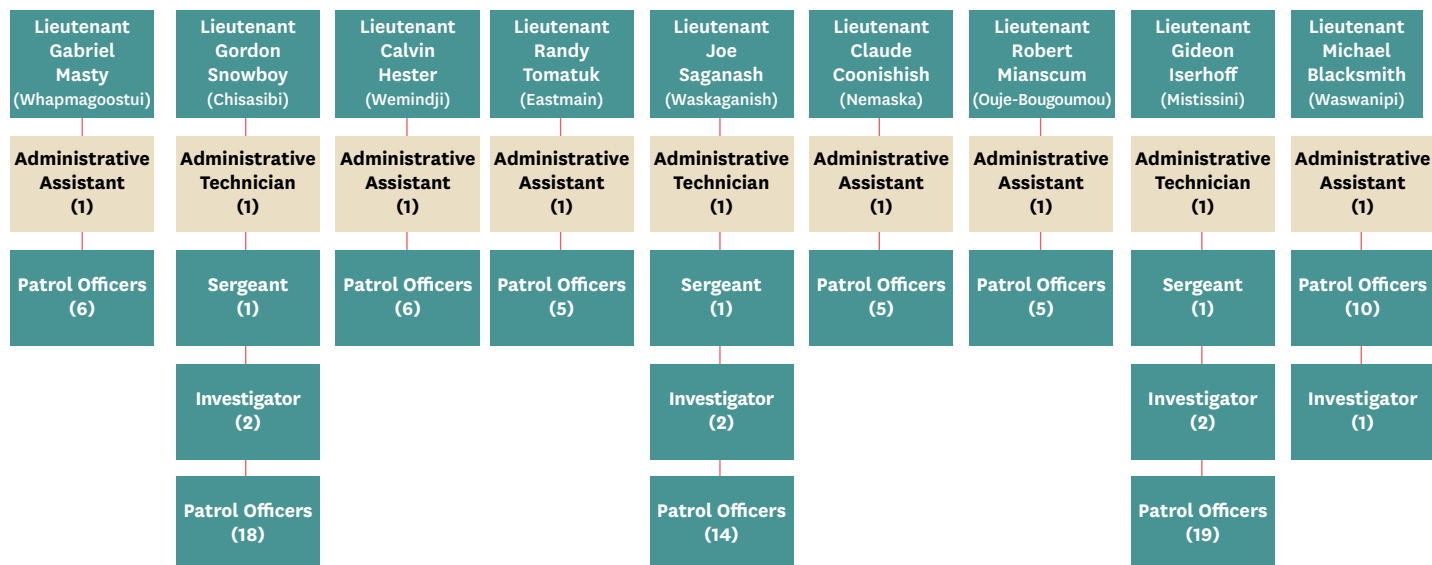


Left to right, top row: Lt Gabriel Masty; Lt Gordon Snowboy, Lt Calvin Hester, Lt Randy Tomatuk, Lt Claude Coonishish, Lt Michael Blacksmith, Lt Gideon Iserhoff, Lt Joe Saganash.
Left to right, bottom row: Cpt Steven Boudrias, Insp. Icebound-Lord, Dir. Shannon Nakogee, Dep. Dir. Bradley Mianscum, Insp. Randy Kitchen, Cpt. Robie Petawabano.

EEYOU EENOU POLICE FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Community Operations



Legend:

Non-Civilians

Civilians

RECRUITMENT

Recruitment remained a priority for the Eeyou Eenuu Police Force as we continue building a workforce that serves and reflects the communities of Eeyou Istchee. Our efforts focused on outreach and improving staffing models to ensure sustainable service delivery across the territory.

In the past year, we have made meaningful progress by successfully recruiting 8 new officers, and are also expecting the onboarding of 8 fully trained officers by September 2026, following the next graduation of the policing cohort from Nicolet.

The Sûreté du Québec continued to provide assistance for our larger detachments and have been instrumental in

maintaining operational capacity as we work toward filling all of our patrol officer positions.

Recruitment efforts remained consistent with our presence in schools and post-secondary institutions, our team having participated in seven career fairs and various Annual General Assemblies throughout the communities, advertising nation-wide, strengthening our outreach and visibility across Eeyou Istchee, Québec and Canada. Physical fitness testing demonstrations, interactive sessions, and stronger social media presence helped increase awareness of policing careers and encouraged youth to consider future opportunities with EEPF.



Graduation ceremony at the École nationale de police du Québec (ENPQ) March 2025



Ofc Metabie and Sgt Manila at John Abbott's Career Fair



Sgt Manila and Ofc Metabie with EEPF's 10th Police Technology Cohort

EEPF/HR committee

To support long-term recruitment and workforce planning, we initiated the development of a joint committee with Human Resources. This committee is designed to align hiring strategies, clarify roles and responsibilities, and address ongoing staffing needs. Scheduled monthly meetings help guide strategic objectives, strengthen collaboration and ensure recruitment efforts are proactive and coordinated.

Schedule full time FIFO

We introduced a pilot project exploring full-time Fly-In/Fly-Out (FIFO) scheduling as a potential model to address staffing gaps in certain communities. Following the project authorization, recruitment efforts were initiated and the pilot was implemented for our detachment in Whapmagoosui. Early observations will help determine the effectiveness, sustainability and impact of this approach on service delivery and officer well-being.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Eeyou Eenou Police Force's 2024-2026 Strategic Plan reflects a renewed commitment to community-centered policing, guided by the core values of respect, professionalism, integrity and accountability. Our plan emphasizes strengthening partnerships with our communities and stakeholders, enhancing communication and collaboration, and promoting approaches that prioritize prevention, wellness, and culturally grounded practices. It also supports modernization efforts within the organization. Our plan reinforces EEPF's vision of fostering peace, safety and well-being across Eeyou Istchee.

CALL DISPATCH CENTER

Eeyou Eenou Police Force efforts continued to strengthen the reliability and effectiveness of the Call Dispatch Center (CDC), ensuring timely and coordinated responses to incidents in all communities. Improvements focused on clear communication procedures and operational consistency to better support frontline officers and enhance service to communities and members.



EEPF Director Shannon Nakogee and Cynthia Vezina, Deputy Director of Human Resources



Pauline Lameboy, Manager of Human Resources and Katie Napash, Recruitment Specialist for EEPF



Advertisement of new fly-in, fly-out format for EEPF's Whapmagoosui detachment

INVESTIGATIONS

Partnership with DPCP

EEPF maintained an active partnership with the Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales (DPCP), reinforcing the quality and continuity of investigative work. Through a structure committee, regular meetings were held to review processes, address challenges and strengthen collaboration between policing and prosecution services. The ongoing dialogue supports efficient case management and improved outcomes within the justice system.

Eeyou Intelligence Drug Line

In response to community concerns related to substance use and drug trafficking, EEPF advanced the implementation of the Eeyou Intelligence Drug Line with its official launch on September 22nd, 2025. This initiative provides a confidential channel, available 24/7, for community members to anonymously share information, supporting intelligence-led policing and help disrupt illegal activities while protecting community members. We have received a total of 66 anonymous tips during this past fiscal year, leading to three successful operations.

Drug Seizures

Illicit drug activity continues to be a significant issue impacting the safety and well-being of our communities across Eeyou Istchee. Enhancing community safety is a priority for Eeyou Eeenu Police Force, and this through our continued efforts to disrupt drug trafficking across the territory. Throughout the year, a series of targeted enforcement actions were carried out in communities including Chisasibi, Waswanipi, Mistissini, Waskaganish, Wemindji and others.

These operations led to multiple seizures, resulting in the confiscation of significant quantities of illicit substances and proceeds of crime.

During this reporting period, enforcement efforts resulted in significant drug and cash seizures, including a total of 9,527 pills; 1,387.9 grams of cocaine; 1,270.8 grams of cannabis and 70.8 grams of hashish. In addition, \$83,357.95 in Canadian cash currency was seized. These activities led to 23 charges related to the possession of trafficking of cocaine, 17 arrests connected to the possession or sale of cannabis, 4 offences involving methamphetamines and 5 offences related to the sale of other narcotics, reflecting our continued strong commitment to addressing drug-related activity in the communities.

Collaborating with frontline Health Providers

EEPF's Investigations team strengthened its collaboration with the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB) through its participation in the 2025 nurse's training, where a dedicated EEPF booth was set up to promote awareness and knowledge sharing. This initiative highlighted the critical role healthcare professionals play in preserving materials that may be considered evidence in investigation cases. Through direct engagement, our investigators provided guidance on proper handling, documentation and safeguarding of potential evidence in clinical settings, reinforcing best practices that support both patient care and the integrity of the legal process. This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to improving intersectoral coordination and ensuring that frontline health workers are equipped to contribute effectively to community safety and justice.



Eeyou Eeenu Intelligence Drug Line Information

OPERATIONS

Alcohol Roadblocks

Regular alcohol checkpoint operations were conducted throughout the year to promote road safety and reduce impaired driving. Emphasis was placed on ensuring all participating officers were properly trained and qualified. These efforts contributed to increased awareness and reinforced the importance of safe driving within the communities and throughout Eeyou Istchee.

CSR/Operational Enforcement

Targeted enforcement operations addressing key risk factors, such as seatbelt use, mobile phone distractions and speeding, were carried out monthly. Continued monitoring indicated positive community engagement, high satisfaction levels and signs of reduced safety risks.

By-law Enforcement

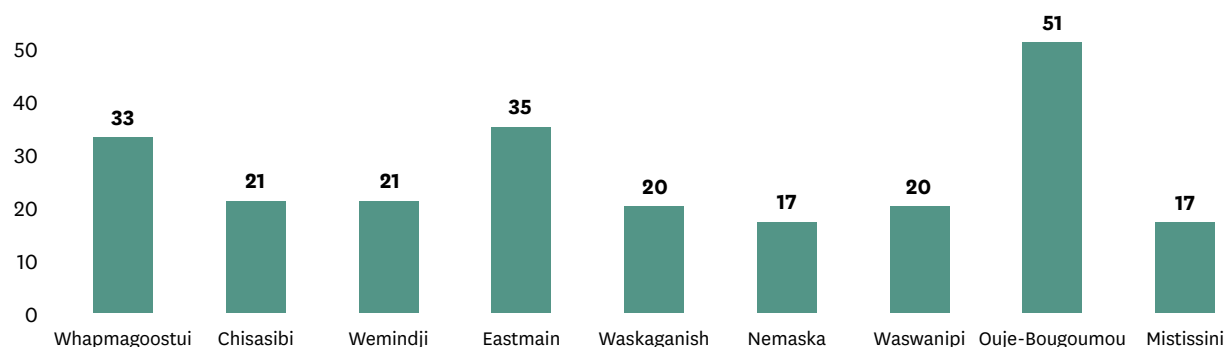
Our operations included improving community awareness and continued work to actively enforce the alcohol by-law in communities, including alcohol seizures, where individuals were found in violation of local regulations. With each community's uniqueness, our local detachments, led by our Lieutenants, foster continued collaboration with local band councils and leadership, addressing local issues and planning the community policing work ahead.

School bus operation

Dedicated school bus safety operations were implemented, including increased patrol presence during pick-up and drop-off times. These efforts aimed to ensure the safety of children and reinforce compliance with traffic laws around school transportation.

In addition, our officers engage directly with students through school visits and safety presentations, helping to build trust and positive relationships with youth.

Figure 1. Roadblocks Overview



Ofc Metabie sharing bus safety with students.



EEPF's new vehicle fleet in Whapmagoostui

ADMINISTRATION

Police vehicle main fleet

The renewal of our police vehicle fleet remained a key administrative priority. Efforts included the acquisition of new vehicles and the introduction of an updated vehicle design to improve visibility, functionality and operational efficiency across Eeyou Istchee.

Implementation of body-worn cameras

This year marked the initial steps toward implementing body-worn camera technology, supporting both officer safety and increased transparency in our policing practices. The adoption of body cameras serves as a valuable tool to document interactions, promote accountability and build public trust through clear and objective records.

Portable interview room

To enhance investigation capacity, we ensured the deployment of portable interview room equipment across our detachments. Training was provided to investigators and officers to support proper use, ensuring that interviews can be conducted in a professional, secure and adaptable environment when needed.

PREVENTION

Throughout the year, EEPF continued to prioritize prevention through a range of community-based initiatives aimed at promoting safety, awareness and positive relationships. Campaigns such as S.A.A.M. (Sexual Assault Awareness Month) helped raise awareness on sensitive issues, while activities like Coffee with a Cop created informal opportunities for dialogue and trust-building with community members of all ages. This year's Coffee with a Cop was held on Elder Wellness Day and some detachments collaborated with local Community Miyupimaatisiun Centres (CMC).



Lieutenant Snowboy with Elders for Coffee with a Cop event on Elders Day in Chisasibi.



Lieutenant Mianscum presenting fraud awareness with Elders in Ouje-Bougoumou.

We also worked in collaboration with the Police de Gatineau to adapt a prevention program, the Programme Parapluie for our communities and hope to launch this initiative by fall of 2026.

We continued to strengthen our collaboration with the Cree Nation Youth Council across Eeyou Istchee, with each detachment collaborating with local Youth Chiefs, recognizing the important roles in building safe and resilient communities. Through ongoing engagement and initiatives such as BBQ with a cop, officers and youth councils came together in each community to build trust and foster positive relationships that support long-term community well-being.

Prevention and law enforcement require a particular approach regarding firearms. Addressing the issue of rising gun calls must be done with acknowledgement of hunting

rights, of our traditional practices and Eeyou Iituun. We partnered with the Cree Trappers' Association, Cree Nation Youth Council and Eenou Eeyou Community Funds (EECF), launching the Eeyou Istchee Resilience Fund supporting initiatives related to firearm safety and responsible use. Our goal is to bring the Canadian Firearms Safety Course to all communities for the youth, highlighting our culture and traditional Cree values that have kept our nation strong since time immemorial. Eeyou Eenou Police Force believe in our youth, recognize them as the heart of our communities and the promise of a strong and positive future.



EEPF's Kid's Corner at a local event



Officers Adrian Coonishish, Daniel Neeposh and Kobe Gunner during BBQ with a cop event with local youth in Mississini.



Eeyou Istchee Resilience Fund

Supporting sustained, community-driven initiatives focused on violence prevention, safety, and community resilience across Eeyou Istchee.

Eenou-Eyou Community Foundation
Fondation communautaire Eenou-Eyou



Scan to donate to the
Eeyou Istchee Resilience Fund!



Safety is part of our culture. By working together, we can build stronger homes and communities for the next generations!

This fund was created in collaboration with:





Advertisement for EECF's Eeyou Istchee Resilience Fund



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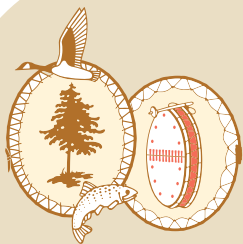
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Deputy Chief Daniel Mark-Stewart
Chief Daisy House
Chief Gaston Cooper

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Deputy Grand Chief Linden Spencer

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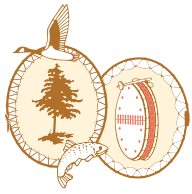
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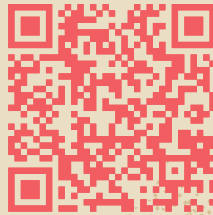
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