



Cree-Québec Forestry Board

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Annual Report 2023-2024



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Board Chairman's Message

Maité Blanchette Vézina
Minister of Natural Resources and Forests

Minister Responsible for the Bas-St-Laurent Region
and the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine Region

Mandy Gull-Masty
Grand Chief / Chairperson
Grand Council of the Crees / Cree Nation Government

I am pleased to present the Cree-Québec Forestry Board 2023-2024 Annual Report. Over its 21st operating year, the Board held five meetings, four of which took place after my appointment as Chairman in May 2023. Since taking up my duties, I have seen that the Board carries out its work in keeping with its 2020-2025 strategic plan and annual action plan and performs its mandate in compliance with the Adapted Forestry Regime implementation mechanism harmonizations.

The year 2023-2024 presented numerous challenges for the Board with regard to implementing Paix des Braves provisions. Wildfires, whose scope had been unprecedented since the signing of the Agreement, impacted Paix des Braves territory, the Cree and Jamesian citizens living there, sites of wildlife interest, wildlife habitats and forest management plans.

The absence of Wildlife Habitat Management Directives and the context of uncertainty created by the wildfires adversely affected the forest management plan consultation and development process to the point that the Board was unable to obtain the information needed to issue its comments on the 2023-2028 PAFIOs (operational integrated forest management plans) and the 2023-2024 PRAN (annual plan).

However, the Board undertook and made progress on a number of files of importance for improving implementation of Paix des Braves provisions, including:

- Moving forward a project to assess the rate of disturbance of areas of wildlife interest for the Crees (25%), whose results are expected in spring 2024;
- Monitoring development of a moose habitat quality index (HQI) integrating traditional Cree knowledge among other things, whose results are expected in fall 2024;
- Creating a communication channel with the wildlife sector of the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (MELCCFP - Ministry of the environment, the fight against climate change, wildlife and parks) to deal with Paix des Braves wildlife issues;



- Instituting discussions to agree on better Cree-Québec Forestry Board-Cree-Québec Forestry Economic Council alignment as concerns implementation of the Agreement's economic provisions;
- Initiating a process to produce a baseline and periodically measure forestry sector economic spinoffs for the Crees, whose results will be known in fall 2024;
- Adopting a 2024-2025 action plan, a 2023-2028 communication plan and a 2023-2028 sustainable development action plan;
- Beginning work on producing the fourth five-year status report on implementation of the Adapted Forestry Regime, covering the period 2018-2023, whose results are expected in fall 2024.

I would like to highlight Board members' commitment and excellent work. They play a key role on this collective project. I would also like to underscore the work of the Joint Working Group coordinators, the members of the joint working groups, and all involved in producing the special management plans for recovering more than 4 million m³ of burnt timber. Producing these plans and getting them approved so quickly bears witness to the parties' first-rate collaboration in implementing Agreement provisions. Finally, a very special thanks to Board Secretariat personnel for their great availability, their warm welcome when I joined the Board and their outstanding work.



Ronald Brizard
Board Chairman

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Chairman's Statement

To the best of my knowledge, the 2023-2024 Annual Report:

- accurately describes the Cree-Québec Forestry Board's mission, sectors of activity, strategic directions, and priorities;
- presents accurate, reliable data covering all of the Board's activities and indicates the extent to which the target objectives were achieved.

Throughout the 2023-2024 fiscal year, in accordance with its mandate, management maintained internal accounting and management information control systems to facilitate sound management of its operations and ensure accountability with respect to the commitments resulting from its strategic directions and objectives for 2023-2024.

I declare myself satisfied with the practices and methods used to produce the information in this annual management report.

Ronald Brizard
Board Chairman



The Agreement and Chapter 3 on Forestry

The Adapted Forestry Regime's Objectives and Main Adaptations

On February 7, 2002, the Québec government and the Crees of Québec (Eeyou Istchee) signed the Agreement concerning a new relationship between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec. This historic agreement, lasting fifty years, marked a new era in Cree-Québec relations.

Negotiated on a nation-to-nation basis, this agreement, commonly called the Paix des Braves, is intended to forge a common desire to harmonize management of Northern Québec's natural resources, thereby promoting greater autonomy among the Crees and encouraging them to take charge of their nation's development. It includes provisions linked to forestry, mining, hydroelectric development, and the Crees' economic and community development based on the respective commitments made by the parties under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement.

Chapter 3 of the Agreement, commonly called the Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR), is devoted to forestry, defining the objectives and setting out the specific provisions for managing forest activities in Agreement territory. The Québec Forest Regime applies throughout Agreement territory with adaptations. The AFR seeks to better reflect the Crees' traditional way of life and accord greater attention to sustainable development concerns, paving the way for increased participation by the Crees, via consultation, in forestry activity planning and management processes, ranging from planning to implementing and monitoring forest management plans and collaboration, in the form of concerted action, by the Cree Nation Government (CNG) and the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government (EIJBRG) in the participation process for the planning.

The main adaptations to the Québec Forest Regime deal with, among other things, defining the management units formed by grouping traplines, identifying and protecting sites of interest for the Crees, allotting a greater percentage to mosaic cutting, introducing maximum forest operations thresholds and rates per trapline, including additional terms and conditions for protecting forests adjacent to watercourses, protecting and developing wildlife habitats, developing the road access network and siting residual forest blocks in conjunction with the tallymen.

Where economic development is concerned, certain Agreement provisions confirm that timber volumes will be made available to the Crees and that Cree access to forest management activity-related employment, contracts and partnerships will be promoted.

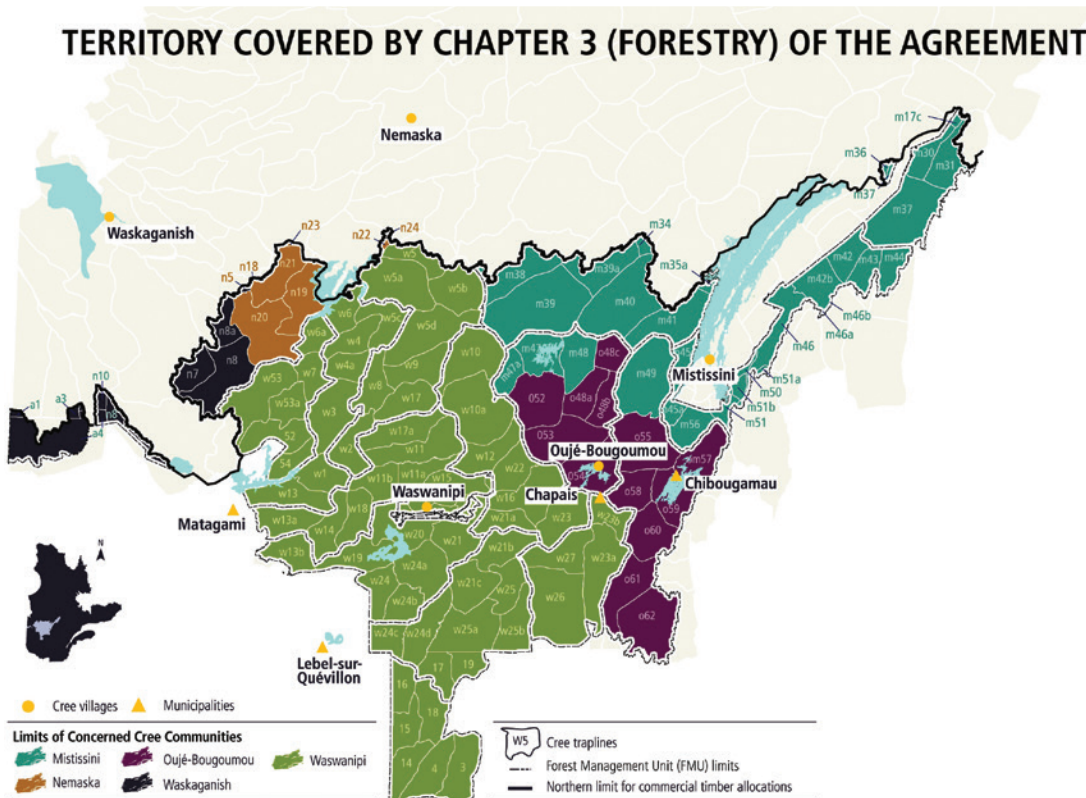
To ensure implementation of the Agreement's chapter on forestry, three mechanisms were created: the Joint Working Groups (JWGs), the JWG coordinators and the Cree-Québec Forestry Board (CQFB). As set out in Chapter 3 and Schedule C of the Agreement, these mechanisms have specific, separate duties but must work

closely together to implement various provisions of the Adapted Forestry Regime; promote, where relevant, development of new operating approaches among stakeholders and mediate and manage conflicts that may arise. While the core activities of these mechanisms are to contribute to the development of forest management plans, conduct consultations and perform monitoring, these implementation mechanisms work on different, but complementary, levels.

Territory Covered

The territory covered by the Agreement's forestry regime is included in the territory governed by the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. Bordered by Québec's northern limit for commercial timber allocations to the north, the Adapted Forestry Regime includes the five Cree communities of Mistissini, Nemaska, Oujé-Bougoumou, Waskaganish and Waswanipi. The territory defined in Schedule C of the Agreement spans a total of 66,010 km². Its productive forests account for almost 10.5% of Québec's allowable cut.

TERRITORY COVERED BY CHAPTER 3 (FORESTRY) OF THE AGREEMENT



Statistics Pertaining to the Territory covered by Chapter 3 of the Agreement

POPULATION

Cree Communities		Non-Native Communities	
Mistissini	3,731	Chapais	1,468
Nemaska**	832	Chibougamau	7,233
Oujé-Bougoumou	797	Lebel-sur-Quévillon**	2,091
Waskaganish**	2,536	Matagami*	1,402
Waswanipi *	1,759		

Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2021

*Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2016

** Outside the territory covered by Chapter 3

TERRITORY

	Chapter	Québec	Proportion
Total area of Chapter 3 (km ²)	66,010		
Total area of forest management units* (km ²)	51,787	451,895	11,4%
Forest area used to calculate allowable cut* (km ²)	34,023	269,080	12,6%

Number of forest management units: 15

Number of Cree traplines affected: 121

*Chief Forester's data (modified in 2016 and 2018)

Status report: Summer 2023 wildfires on Paix des Braves Adapted Forestry Regime application territory

Scope of wildfires

In summer 2023, widespread drought and the passage of a squall line (a series of severe thunderstorms) generated conditions conducive to one of the worst years in terms of forest fires on Paix des Braves Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) application territory. This insert in the Cree-Québec Forestry Board Annual Report has been produced to clearly reflect the impact these wildfires had on the members of the Cree communities and Jamesian municipalities and on activities involving implementation of Paix des Braves provisions in 2023-2024.



According to SOPFEU, 99.9% of the summer 2023 wildfires were caused by a squall line that formed on June 1. Across Québec, these wildfires affected more than 1.1 million hectares in the intensive protection zone (habitable zone), including 612 000 hectares in Paix des Braves AFR application territory, the area by far most heavily impacted in Québec. The area burnt in Paix des Braves AFR application territory represents approximately three times more than its size (relative weight) within Québec. More specifically, it represents 16% of the Paix des Braves AFR application territory's productive area, the equivalent of 10 years' harvest.

Impact on the population

With the first signs of wildfires on the territory, protecting the population affected became a priority for the leaders of the Cree communities and Jamesian municipalities and the Ministère de la Sécurité publique (Ministry of public safety). Threatened by the flames and/or bothered by the dense smoke, some 27 000 residents had to be evacuated Québec-wide, including 15 000 members of Cree communities and Jamesian municipalities located entirely or partly in Paix des Braves AFR application territory. Some were evacuated more than once, representing more than half of all evacuations throughout Québec province. Numerous road closures were also necessary during the intense wildfire period.

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF RESIDENTS EVACUATED, BY CREE COMMUNITY AND JAMESIAN MUNICIPALITY¹

Cree communities located in Paix des Braves AFR application territory	Number of residents evacuated
Waswanipi	748
Mistissini	1,300
Oujé-Bougoumou	1,000
Nemaska	135
Waskaganish	326
Cree communities located outside Paix des Braves AFR application territory	
Chisasibi	189
Eastmain	684
Eeyou Istchee Baie-James	111
Wemindji	401
Municipalities located in Paix des Braves AFR application territory	
Chapais	800
Lebel-sur-Quévillon	2,000
Chibougamau	7,315

¹ Data taken from SOPFEU 2023-2024 Annual Report.

Wildfire impact on provisions of Chapter 3 of the Paix des Braves

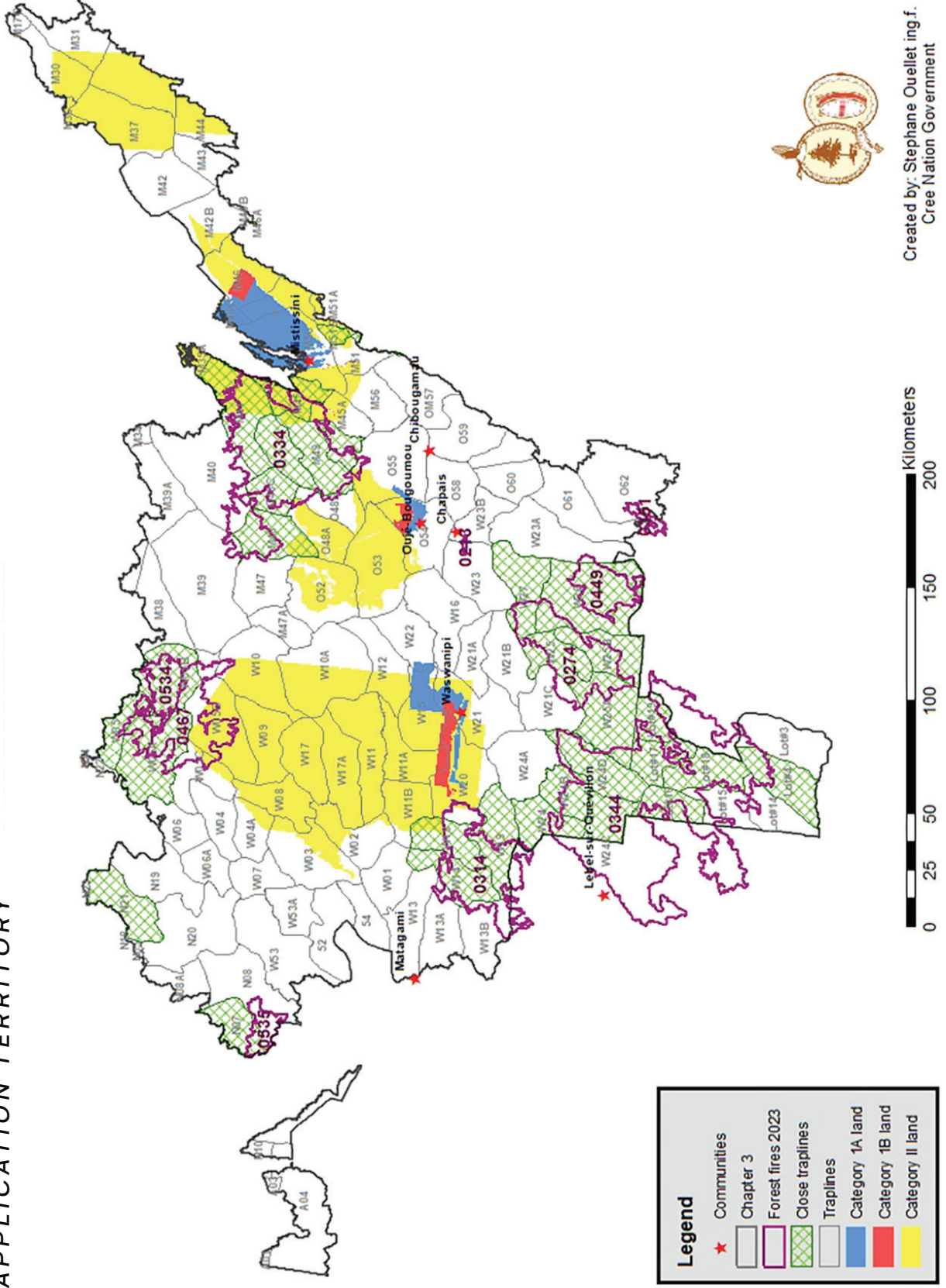
Wildfire damage has heavily impacted Cree tallymen's traditional way of life. Chapter 3 of the Paix des Braves contains provisions designed to take such events into account. For example, when more than 40% of a trapline is affected by harvesting or a forest fire, the trapline is closed to future harvesting. This threshold is 50% for areas presenting wildlife interest. In this respect also, the summer 2023 wildfires were devastating. More than 27 traplines will be closed to harvesting for at least 20 years and 31 areas presenting wildlife interest will be closed to harvesting until recovered, post-fire vegetation has reached a height of 7 metres.

The community of Waswanipi was hardest hit: 80% of the traplines to be closed following the wildfires fall under the responsibility of tallymen from this community. These closures will have economic repercussions for the region's forest companies and the communities affected. They will also impact Cree users in terms of access to their lands, given that development activities have ceased.

Finally, the wildfires have had a definite impact on Cree tallymen's traditional way of life. In addition to trapping camps that were destroyed, ancestral grounds and wildlife habitats will be disturbed for a long time to come. To reflect these situations, Paix des Braves provisions allow the tallymen to relocate sites of interest (1%) and sites of wildlife interest (25%) on their territory.



IMPACT OF SUMMER 2023 WILDFIRES ON AFR APPLICATION TERRITORY



Created by: Stephane Ouellet ing.f.
Cree Nation Government

TABLE 2. TRAPLINES CLOSED TO HARVESTING FOLLOWING SUMMER 2023 WILDFIRES, BY MANAGEMENT UNIT

Management unit	Trapline	Closure	Management unit	Trapline	Closure
2661	M41	X	8666	W05A	X
2662	M45	X	8666	W05B	X
2662	M46A	X	8666	W05D	X
2662	M51A	X	8762	L17	X
2662	M51B	25% only	8762	L19	X
2663	M48	X	8762	W24C	X
2663	O48C	X	8762	W24D	X
2664	M49	X	8762	W25	X
2666	W26	X	8762	W25A	X
2666	W27	25% only	8762	W25B	X
8462	L4	X	8763	W24	25% only
8462	L16	X	8763	W19	X
8462	L18	X	8763	W24B	X
8663	N21	25% only	8764	W14	X
8663	N07	X	8764	W18	X
8666	W05	X			

For cases involving major disturbances, such as forest fires, the Paix des Braves provides for mechanisms allowing economic activity to be maintained in the territory through recovery of the timber volumes affected. These mechanisms take maintaining the territory's ecological attributes and biodiversity into account and provide for attenuating impacts on wildlife populations and the Cree traditional way of life. In 2023, the first step in this process was to cease development activities scheduled in the 2023-2024 PRAN (annual plan) and to develop special management plans for recovering the timber affected by the fires. In this regard, in 2023-2024, the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts (MRNF) produced eight special management plans to recover timber affected by the wildfires. The volume to be harvested under these plans is estimated at 4.5 million m³ of a total volume of

timber affected of 12.5 million m³. Overall, on Paix des Braves AFR application territory, the total volume of mature timber affected by the summer 2023 wildfires is evaluated at 23 million m³.

To be able to produce and approve special management plans, the Paix des Braves implementation mechanisms, including the Joint Working Groups and their coordinators, must be mobilized in order to consult the tallymen. For the summer 2023 wildfires on Paix des Braves AFR application territory, even before the last ashes settled, teams from the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts and the Cree Nation Government, as well as the five forest communities' Joint Working Groups and their coordinators, had already begun the colossal task of developing, consulting on and implementing the plans for recovering the burnt timber. The result was

that burnt timber recovery activities in the field could begin soon after forest companies received confirmation that it was safe to access the forest. Given the exceptional circumstances, this was quite a feat. Over and above the Paix des Braves provisions, particularly those linked to characterizing burnt areas, the parties did everything possible to achieve the recovery plans' objectives, especially the objective to attenuate adverse impacts on timber supply. The Paix des Braves Agreement was signed in the spirit of a new relationship between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec. Its very foundation is based on trust and collaboration between two nations.

Wildfire impact on allowable cut in Paix des Braves AFR application territory

The summer 2023 wildfires' historic scope in terms of surface area will impact AFR allowable cut - 15% of the Paix des Braves AFR application territory under management was burnt and 27 out of 110 traplines will be closed to harvesting. In Québec, the Chief Forester is responsible for determining allowable cut every five years or when major disturbances, such as the 2023 wildfires, occur.



In December 2023, the Chief Forester presented the updated allowable cut for Paix des Braves AFR application territory following the summer 2023 wildfires to the Cree-Québec Forestry Board members.

The new allowable cut figures determined by the Chief Forester will reduce the volume that can be harvested on Paix des Braves application territory by 691 000 m³. To reflect the incomplete nature of the information available to him when determining the allowable cut, the Chief Forester recommended applying a 75% reduction to this decrease in allowable cut. This recommendation was accepted by the Minister of Natural Resources and Forests. Consequently, for Paix des Braves AFR application territory, an annual decrease of 500 200 m³ (431 300 FSPL and 68 900 hardwoods) will be in effect as of April 1, 2024. This decrease in allowable cut represents 80% of the reduction Québec-wide (500 200 m³/619 400m³), once again illustrating the unique nature of the summer 2023 wildfire season on Paix des Braves AFR application territory.

In addition, the Chief Forester expects failed regeneration of burnt areas on 113 000 hectares (28% of the territory affected).


The Chief Forester's final assessment of the summer 2023 wildfires' impact will be carried out in 2024 based on up-to-date information available to him with regard to the forest fires' exact boundaries, the burnt timber recovery rate and silvicultural work programs for future years.

TABLE 3. ALLOWABLE CUT REDUCTION IN REGIONS COMPOSING THE AFR COMPARED TO THE REST OF THE PROVINCE ²

Region	2023-2028 (m ³ of timber/ year)	April 1, 2024 (m ³ of timber/ year)	Reduction (m ³ of timber/year and %)
Nord-du-Québec	2,652,500	2,214,200	-438,300 (-16.5%)
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	262,600	200,700	-61,900 (-23.6%)
Total AFR	2,915,100	2,414,900	-500,200 (-17.2%)
Total Québec	34,916,800	34,297,400	-619,400 (-1.8%)

² Chief Forester's data as at December 12, 2023.





The Cree-Québec Forestry Board

Board Mandate

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board was created in September 2003 under the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec (Agreement), more specifically Chapter 3, which discusses the Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR).

The AFR objectives are: better take into account the Cree traditional way of life; allow greater integration of concerns relating to sustainable development; ensure participation, in the form of consultation, by the Crees in the various forest development activities planning and management processes; and promote collaboration, in the form of concerted action, by the Cree Nation Government and the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government in the forest plan development, consultation and monitoring process.

The AFR also provides for the application of specific management standards to maintain or improve the habitat of wildlife species that are very important for the Crees (moose, marten, beaver, hare, fish, caribou, partridge). To do so, portions of each trapline benefit from specific protection to improve the level of harmonization between forest management activities and traditional activities, including hunting, fishing and trapping. Within the selected areas, forest management activities are planned first and foremost to maintain and increase ecoforest stand diversity in terms of plant species, age classes and spatial distribution.

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board is responsible for monitoring, analyzing and assessing the implementation of the Agreement's forestry provisions. The Board forwards advice letters regarding the forest management plans to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forests.

The Board recommends adjustments or modifications to the Agreement's forestry provisions to the parties, ensuring that these recommendations comply with the measures and spirit of the Agreement and AFR evolution. The Board calls the Minister's attention to proposals, preoccupations and

Board Composition and Administrative Organization

The Board is an independent body made up of eleven members: five designated by the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, five by the Québec government and a Chairman appointed by the Québec government after consultation with the Cree party.

The following list shows the members that were sitting on the Cree-Québec Forestry Board as at March 31, 2024.

CHAIRMAN

Ronald Brizard (2023-05-22 to –)

QUÉBEC MEMBERS

Hugo Jacqmain (2014-11-19 to –)

Director of Environmental Affairs and Sustainable Development
Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts

Geneviève Labrecque (2014-11-19 to –)

Forestry Engineer
Chantiers Chibougamau Ltée

Simon St-Georges (2022-03-09 to –)

Respondent in Aboriginal Affairs
Management of Coordination and Strategic Directions
Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts

Marco Trudel (2017-06-07 to –)

Director General of north-west Forest Management
Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts

Denis Vandal (2015-08-11 to –)

Retired – Consultant

CREE MEMBERS

Gillman Ottereyes (2020-11-04 to –)

Director of the Department of Forestry
Cree Nation Government

Geoff Quaile (2009-06-04 to –)

Senior Advisor, Forestry Department
Cree Nation Government

Ian Saganash (2023-03-16 to –)

Local guardian
Community of Waswanipi

Nadia Saganash (2012-04-16 to –)

Director of Relations with Québec and Indigenous Peoples
Cree Nation Government

Isaac Voyageur (vice-chairman) (2007-01-24 to –)

Director – Environment and Remedial Works
Cree Nation Government



Administratively speaking, each party to the Agreement covers the cost of its designated members' participation on the Board and half of the organization's operating budget. The Chairman's salary is paid by the Québec government.

The Agreement defines the Board's main operating terms and conditions, stipulates very specific duties concerning the Adapted Forestry Regime's implementation and requires production of an Annual Report that must be submitted to the parties.

In carrying out their mandates, the Chairman and members of the Cree-Québec Forestry Board can count on the support of a Secretariat, headed by the Executive Director, who oversees the organization's human, financial, material and informational resources. The Secretariat is in charge of preparing Board meetings, producing minutes, and following up on decisions and measures that have been formally approved by Board members. With the support of consultants and other collaborators, depending on the nature of the file involved, the Secretariat develops and analyzes the files, identifying the problems and issues submitted for the Board's consideration, and drafts the CQFB's official documents (letters of advice, comments, reports), including the Annual Report for Board members' review and approval. The Secretariat is also responsible for document management and archiving. In addition, it supports the Board members' communications activities and provides outreach and liaison with various bodies and organizations.

As at March 31, 2024, three employees made up the Secretariat team: Patrick Léveillée-Perreault, Executive Director, Amélie Dussault, Analyst/Advisor, and Annette Hayden, Executive Assistant.

Review of Board Activities

Board Context in 2023-2024

The 2023-2024 operating year, the Board's 21st, was marked by the mechanisms, processes and provisions of the Agreement (Paix des Braves) and its Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR), as amended and officially published in December 2019. The coming into effect of the *Sustainable Forest Development Act* (SFDA) in 2013 had required the parties to the Agreement to rework the latter, given that the SFDA introduced a new Québec Forest Regime.

The Board carried out its mandate fully in compliance with the harmonizations made to the AFR implementation mechanisms, carrying out its activities in keeping with the strategic directions and file priorities defined in its annual action plan. The Board continued to closely and continuously monitor the parties' commitments and resulting actions and pursued specific projects, implemented in previous years, aimed at assessing the effectiveness of certain participation mechanisms and specific AFR provisions.

The Board's 2023-2024 operating year occurred in a context of major wildfires, which took place in summer 2023 in Québec and on AFR territory. These wildfires of unprecedented scope had far-reaching impacts on sites of wildlife interest, wildlife habitats and forest planning.

In the 2023-2024 operating year, the Board held five meetings: May 18, 2023 in Waswanipi, September 27-28, 2023 in Mistissini, December 12-13, 2023 in Québec City and February 8, 2024 by videoconference. The Board held a special meeting on July 6, 2023 by videoconference on progress made with regard to the Wildlife Habitat Management Directives (WHMD).

Ronald Brizard was appointed Board Chairman by the *Conseil des ministres* and officially took up his duties on May 22, 2023, replacing his predecessor, Hervé Deschênes, who had held this office for seven years. The Board invited Mr. Deschênes to the September 2023 meeting to mark his departure, giving the Board members an opportunity to voice their gratitude and discuss his time with the Board as well as potential future directions for it.



Strategic Direction 1

Rigorously, objectively and effectively evaluate the implementation and the effectiveness of the forestry chapter of the Agreement, according to a continuous improvement approach.

Forest Plans

In keeping with its mandate, the Board monitors forest plan development and analyzes tactical integrated forest management plans (PAFITs) and operational integrated forest management plans (PAFIOs) in order to issue advice and, if need be, transmit it to the parties' authorities. This analysis also helps further certain elements of the Adapted Forestry Regime Monitoring Framework.

REPORT ON THE SUMMER 2023 WILDFIRES' IMPACT ON THE AFR

The wildfires that swept Québec and AFR territory in 2023 significantly impacted sites of wildlife interest, wildlife habitats and forest planning. Québec forests were very dry when summer began and a squall line in early June caused numerous forest fires. On AFR territory, more than 612 000 hectares of forest burned within a few weeks. Generally speaking, forest fires play an integral role in natural disturbance of the Québec boreal forest. However, the scope of the summer 2023 wildfires was unprecedented.

The September Board meeting gave Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts (MRNF) representatives an opportunity to inform the Board members of the size of the areas affected by the summer 2023 wildfires on AFR territory; the impact on traplines and forest sites of wildlife interest closed to harvesting; and planning and implementation of special plans for salvaging the burnt timber. Joint Working Group (JWG) members, who contributed significantly to consultations surrounding these plans, also joined this meeting.

Board members discussed actions the Board should take in this context of finalizing the special recovery management plans, which had become a priority, and of putting the annual plan (PRAN) harvesting activity cycle back into place. Their discussions addressed the consultation and planning process once these special timber recovery plans have been developed, maintaining Cree traditional activities, including relocation of areas of interest, and plans for regeneration of the burnt sites.

Preliminary data on the wildfires' impact were presented and explained. To develop the 2024-2025 annual plan, more specific data will have to be collected. The MRNF also presented preliminary figures regarding the traplines that could be closed to harvesting.

REVIEW OF MODIFICATIONS TO THE 2023-2028 PAFIOs

In keeping with its mandate, the Board analyzes modifications to the PAFIOs based on various documents supplied by the parties, in particular the 30-day reports and other advice produced by the Joint Working Groups (JWG), tallymen consultation meeting minutes and elements gathered from the MRNF planners. The round of PAFIO consultations was combined with annual plan consultations of the tallymen. This initiative sought to extend the period allotted for verification and to meet tallymen requests before the authorized annual plan (harvesting permit) was issued, scheduled for April 1 each year.

In December 2022, the MRNF invited the Board to review and comment on the new 2023-2028 PAFIOs for 14 of the 15 forest management units on AFR territory. At the February and May 2023 Board meetings, the Secretariat presented the main observations resulting from the preliminary 2023-2028 PAFIO analysis conducted by the Board in fall 2022.

At the September 2023 Board meeting, Board members were not able to comment on recommendations to issue for the 2023-2028 PAFIOs, given that the 30-day reports for four of the five Cree communities were not available in July 2023. The fact that Waswanipi's 30-day report was late is due to the fact that, when the 2023-2028 PAFIOs were tabled, certain tallymen refused to be consulted in the absence of the Wildlife Habitat Management Directives. The critical summer 2023 wildlife situation also contributed to postponing the reports' production. The 30-day reports were finally received between July and October 2023.

The Board members deemed it irrelevant to comment on the 2023-2024 annual plan, given that the majority of the 2023-2024 harvest would consist of recovery cutting of burnt areas and that unburnt areas would be deferred to 2024-2025 and resubmitted to the Board for review.

2023-2028 PAFIO CONSULTATION PROCEDURE FOR 2024-2025

The December 2023 Board meeting provided an opportunity to report on the 2023-2028 PAFIO consultation procedure for 2024-2025. Discussions centred on the context's complexity, given that the PAFIOs had not been approved, that the Wildlife Habitat Management Directives had not been finalized and that uncertainty had been created by the summer 2023 wildfires, due to the significant impact on the forests affected by the fires and on wildlife habitats. The MRNF also presented the approach it plans to take in relation to the consultation procedure.

To take the context into account, 2023-2028 PAFIO consultations in 2024-2025 will be limited to 2023-2024 areas not affected by the wildfires.

CHIEF FORESTER'S CALCULATIONS

At the December 2023 Board meeting, the Chief Forester shared his presentation "Effects of the 2023 forest fires on the 2023-2028 allowable cuts" with the Board members. More specifically, for the AFR, he presented his data on the traplines closed to harvesting, before and after the fires, and data on the risk of failed regeneration.

The Chief Forester also presented his recommendations, reminding the members of his responsibility to change allowable cuts for a given area if circumstances are such that sustainable forest development could be compromised. In this context, his recommendation was to reduce allowable cuts by 500 200 m³ of timber annually (75% of the effect assessed) as of April 1, 2024. He added that the situation would be reassessed over the coming year and as he receives new information.

MEETING WITH THE ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER FOR BIODIVERSITY, WILDLIFE AND PARKS

In October 2022, the forest and wildlife sectors of the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP) were separated. Henceforth, these sectors report to the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts (MRNF) and the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (MELCCFP) respectively. The initiative for this meeting fell under an action provided for in the Board's 2023-2028 communications plan. Given the significant wildlife component of Chapter 3 of the Agreement, it is important to build solid ties with wildlife sector stakeholders. The meeting addressed the following elements: Monitoring Framework Priority I – Identify significant existing wildlife and biodiversity indicators; the desire to obtain further information on the summer 2023 wildfires' impact on wildlife habitats, particularly moose habitat; the joint project on moose habitat quality in Eeyou Istchee on AFR territory (MHQ-EI-AFR); and protected areas.

ADAPTED FORESTRY REGIME MONITORING FRAMEWORK

The Board is responsible for monitoring, analyzing and assessing implementation of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions. This assessment allows it to recommend necessary adjustments and modifications to the parties to ensure that the AFR, which applies to Agreement territory, evolves in keeping with a continuous improvement approach. The Monitoring Framework is a rigorous, flexible, adaptable tool adopted by the Board in 2014 and amended in 2018 to reflect the amended Agreement. It monitors implementation of the forestry-related provisions of Chapter 3 of the Agreement and contains information allowing achievement of its objectives to be tracked on a continuous basis.

The Monitoring Framework is based on the four objectives set out in section 1 of Chapter 3 on forestry. Achievement of each objective is assessed using a series of indicators. The monitoring carried out allows problems to be detected, weaknesses to be specifically targeted, adjustments to provisions to be proposed and corrective action to be taken, if need be.

For 2023, the Secretariat presented a status report on implementation of the following Monitoring Framework priorities:

- Priority B: Document the implementation of the Diagnostic project regarding harmonization measures.
- Priority C: Document the implementation of the Diagnostic project regarding roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and JWG governance.
- Priority D: Monitor the implementation of the mechanism for the relocation of biological refuges.
- Priority E: Assess and track the economic benefits for the Crees, in collaboration with the Conseil Cris-Québec sur l'économie forestière (Cree-Québec Forestry Economic Council – CQFEC). Two Board objectives were presented by the Secretariat.
- Priority G: Monitor the implementation of the Mixedwood Stands Management Strategy. The Secretariat indicated that actions are taking place as planned and that a draft document will be available for consultation with the JWGs and tallymen in June 2024.
- Priority K: Evaluate and monitor criteria and initiatives related to the development and management of the road network.

The Secretariat will continue to report on Monitoring Framework activities at each Board meeting.

Specific File Monitoring

MIXEDWOOD STANDS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVES

The parties continued to develop two key strategic files linked to the Agreement's AFR wildlife-related and forest-related objectives: the Mixedwood Stands Management Strategy and the Wildlife Habitat Management Directives. In response to concerns expressed by the Crees, the parties committed to prioritizing the Strategy and Directives in order to integrate them into the next generation (2023-2028) of PAFITs and PAFIOs.

The Mixedwood Stands Management Strategy was officially implemented in February 2021 and was fully integrated into the 2023-2028 PAFITs.

For the Directives, the Board's priority was monitoring the Bipartite Committee's work on each wildlife species' habitat-related needs, based on scientific and Cree traditional knowledge. Discussions concerning the Directives' content continued over the year at the Committee level and the MRNF shared a Directives development timeline with Board members. This timetable provides for the Board receiving a document on which it can issue its recommendations in June 2023.

At the May 2023 Board meeting, an update presented to the Board reported that discussions have moved forward and that the timeline agree on was being adhered to.

The MRNF submitted an initial draft of the Directives to the Cree Nation Government (CNG) on July 5, 2023. The Board held a special meeting, on July 6, 2023 and a status report was drawn up to respect deadlines and implement the Directives during the fall 2023 consultations.

Finally, the CNG deemed the draft Directives tabled on July 5 by the MRNF inadequate. Discussions between the parties continued over the following months, notably to arrive at a common agreement on their scope. This file is ongoing.

SITES OF WILDLIFE INTEREST (25%) DISTURBANCE RATES PROJECT

At the March 29, 2023 Board meeting, it was agreed that an assessment of the disturbance rates of areas of wildlife interest for the Crees (25%) would be conducted. Although the initiative was still in the early stages, the Secretariat had taken some action since the previous meeting.

In September 2023, the Secretariat presented the project context, methodology and players that would potentially be invited to participate. One of the project objectives is to maintain and improve the communications channel between the MRNF, CNG, JWGs and the Board.

In December 2023, the Secretariat confirmed that the project had been presented at the JWG meeting in November, in Mistissini, and that it had been well-received by the JWG members. The Secretariat also explained that it received three service offers, following a call for tenders aimed at selecting a consulting firm that would conduct the said analyses, and was in the process of evaluating them.

In February 2024, the Secretariat informed the Board members that the Forchemex consulting group had been chosen to conduct the geomatics analysis work. The project's results should be delivered in spring 2024.

MOOSE HABITAT QUALITY PROJECT (MHQ-EI-AFR)

One of the Board's main responsibilities is to monitor, report on and assess implementation of the Agreement's forestry component. In the Agreement, specific management standards are applied to maintain or improve the habitat of wildlife species of key importance for Cree trappers. Parts of each trapline enjoy specific protection (25%) in order to better harmonize forest management activities and Cree traditional activities, including hunting, fishing and trapping. The Board is interested in assessing whether these measures were applied and, if so, in evaluating their effectiveness for maintaining or improving the quality of wildlife habitats in the traplines and forested areas of wildlife interest for the Crees (25%). Moose was chosen from among all species of interest since it is of significant concern to the Crees.

In June 2021, the Board approved signing a research agreement with McGill University. This agreement targeted assessment of moose habitat quality in Agreement territory and development of a Habitat Quality Index (HQI) for this species based on Cree traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge. Thirty-seven traplines were chosen based on certain criteria and, especially, trappers' interest in participating in the project. In late 2021, meetings had been organized and interviews conducted with the Cree trappers in the communities to collect Cree traditional knowledge on moose behaviour and habitat-related requirements. The complete results of these interviews were presented to the Board steering committee members and then to the Board members.

The conceptual framework emphasizes how the Habitat Quality Index (HQI) will be developed by taking scientific and Cree traditional knowledge into account. Two main research questions guided the project design: "What are the key variables affecting moose habitat quality?" and "Have management strategies in the 25% areas been effective for maintaining or improving moose habitat?"

After the February 2023 Board meeting, the project steering committee met to start taking action to organize a workshop designed to determine the variables identified by the two project phases (analysis of GPS collars and acquisition of Cree traditional knowledge) that will be part of the HQI.

At the September Board meeting, Board members were informed that the HQI workshop organized by the research team took place on May 30-31, 2023 in Chibougamau. Before the workshop, the research team had tabled reports containing the results of its research, designed to fuel discussions between participants. This scientific and Cree traditional knowledge coproduction activity sought to identify the variables, their importance and the feasibility of including them in a moose Habitat Quality Index (HQI). Three Board members took part in this workshop.

The research team hopes to be able to present the interim HQI to the steering committee in spring 2024. It confirms that it will use maps and explain the decision-making process and factors taken into consideration. Eventually, it will validate the HQI in the field with the tallymen. HQI finalization is anticipated for fall or winter 2024.

RELOCATION OF BIOLOGICAL REFUGES AND REVIEW OF SITES OF INTEREST FOR THE CREES (1%)

Work to relocate biological refuges and review sites of interest for the Crees (1%) continued in 2022-2023. At the March 29, 2023 meeting, the Cree party had announced that the work was almost completed and that 10 traplines remained to be finalized – 5 in Mistissini, 3 in Waswanipi, 1 in Nemaska and 1 in Waskaganish.

At the September 2023 Board meeting, the Cree party's technical advisor informed the members that the relocation of biological refuges was on hold due to the wildfires' impact on the territory, mentioning that two traplines remained to be completed but that they had been burnt. He explained that interviews would need to be conducted with the tallymen to find out whether they wish to relocate them.

In February 2024, a Cree party member confirmed that a few exercises remained to be carried out and that it might be necessary to revisit certain sites as they could have been burnt.

CREE-QUÉBEC FORESTRY ECONOMIC COUNCIL (CQFEC)

The CQFEC is a mechanism under the amended Agreement mandated to promote the development of economic and business opportunities for the Crees in forest development activities on Agreement territory. The CQFEC encourages forestry companies to employ Cree workers and enterprises and promotes Cree enterprises' access to contracts targeting non-commercial silvicultural work.

At the March 29, 2023 Board meeting, members were told that the CQFEC's work was being carried out in collaboration with the Cree communities and, more specifically, with Cree enterprises. Three meetings were held over two months and CQFEC members worked together on the communities' economic development. The communities had mobilized to invest collectively in forestry. Numerous discussions within the CQFEC addressed the quality of the timber offered to Waswanipi Cree enterprises as well as non-silvicultural work. The CQFEC had planned to look at how contracts for non-commercial silvicultural work would be awarded to the Crees and at assessment of implementation of the Agreement's economic component over the next operating year.

At the update given at the March 29, 2023 Board meeting, the Board had agreed to invite CQFEC authorities to present the status of ongoing files, thereby creating an opportunity to discuss collaboration between the two organizations. Discussions on this subject continued between the CQFEC and Board to specify governance and agree on better alignment between the two entities for implementation of the Agreement's economic provisions.

The September Board meeting gave CNG representatives a chance to inform Board members about the organization and holding of a networking activity involving Cree forestry companies and other forestry industry players on August 15 in Chibougamau. The goal of this initiative was to get these different stakeholders together to ensure that Cree enterprises would be involved in recovering the timber burnt by the 2023 wildfires.

In keeping with its 2023-2024 action plan, the Board began the process of hiring a firm to develop a list of meaningful, measurable indicators linked to the Agreement's economic spinoffs for the Crees. Production of a baseline and periodic measurement of forestry sector economic benefits for the Crees are pre-requisites for implementing the provisions of an economic nature contained in the Paix des Braves. Work should begin in 2024.



Strategic Direction 2

Provide support to its members, coordinators and JWG members in order to facilitate their synergy and optimize their contributions for the effective operation of the Agreement.

OPERATIONAL FOREST PLAN PROCESS AND HARMONIZATION MEASURE MONITORING DIAGNOSTIC PROJECT

Since 2013, the PAFIOs and their annual modifications have been prepared according to a multistep process: PAFIO development, consultation of the tallymen, establishment of harmonization measures, dispute settlement (in case of usage conflicts), PAFIO finalization, public consultation and determination of the annual plan.

The action plan aimed at improving the operational forest plan process and harmonization measure monitoring had been developed in close collaboration with the parties and approved by the Board members in February 2019. Two guides were produced through this exercise and presented to the JWG members: a harmonization measure management guide and a conflict resolution management guide. The plan for implementing the diagnostic project was also presented. These guides constitute essential tools for JWG supervision, operations and work, in particular during the tallymen consultations. It is expected that elements of these guides will be integrated into the AFR Monitoring Framework.

At the May 2023 Board meeting, the Secretariat presented the updated action plan for the diagnostic project, potential improvements to processes that can be grouped into three categories of actions and the status of the main actions under way in each category. The three specific categories of actions to implement seek to: agree on common approaches and understanding; produce tools: diagrams, tables, guides and instructions; share, communicate and transfer information to the stakeholders concerned.

The Board will continue close follow-up and will collaborate so that these tools can be finalized and made operational as soon as possible by the parties.

JOINT WORKING GROUP (JWG) COORDINATORS' REPORT

In keeping with its mandate, the Board supports and collaborates with the JWGs and JWG coordinators. It is responsible for implementing initiatives to facilitate dialogue and concertation among the JWGs and the JWG coordinators. The coordinators' duties include periodically reporting to the Board on JWG operations. They are invited to Board meetings to report on JWG activities, progress on forest plan analyses, and issues and problems encountered.

At meetings during the 2023-2024 operating year, the JWG coordinators were invited to report on JWG activities, in particular

- operational plan (2023-2028 PAFIOs and 2023-2024 annual plan) consultations
- preparation of the 30-day JWG reports
- consultation activities linked to the special burnt timber recovery plans
- requests and specific concerns addressed to the Board.

At the September 2023 Board meeting, JWG representatives raised the subject of traplines impacted by the summer 2023 wildfires in the different communities. Discussions

highlighted the important work done by the JWG members during the summer to consult with all tallymen affected by the special burnt timber recovery plans. The Board sent a letter of congratulations to all involved during this difficult time to underscore their excellent collaboration and the results achieved.

The 2024-2025 consultations on the 2023-2028 PAFIOs is a twofold process: the public consultation begun in January and the tallymen consultation begun in February. These consultations were finished before April 1, 2024.

The Board continued to ensure continuous monitoring of the initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue and concertation among its members, the JWGs and the coordinators.

STATUS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FORESTRY-RELATED PROVISIONS (2018-2023)

Since 2023-2024 was the last year in the five-year period 2018-2023, the Board adopted a methodology for preparing the status report on implementation of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions at the May 2023 Board meeting. The status report is an initiative that evaluates each provision of Chapter 3 of the Agreement as well as the parties' satisfaction with the different AFR processes.

Since the Board's Monitoring Framework and its five-year implementation report are both conducting a review of the implementation of Chapter 3 of the Agreement, it was agreed to integrate both initiatives in producing the 2018-2023 status report. The planning stage and interview of parties to the Agreement began in late 2023-2024. The status report results are expected in 2024-2025.

CONCILIATION REPORT ON TRAPLINE W23A

To promote usage harmonization, the JWGs encourage direct dialogue between the parties in question. They may set up meetings

and provide information required to resolve the conflict. They must also document and analyze these disputes and find solutions that the parties deem acceptable. Failing an acceptable solution, the JWG coordinators are informed of the disputes and act as mediators. If mediation fails, both coordinators must present a status report to the Minister with their recommendations. The Minister then appoints a conciliator.

In 2023-2024, following a dispute on trapline W23A and failed mediation, the JWG coordinators recommended:

1. That a conciliator be officially appointed to address this file as soon as possible
2. That the two tallymen be present during the dispute resolution process
3. That the eventual conciliation mandate specific to trapline W23A covers:
 - a. Determining harvesting activities that can be carried out inside and outside forested areas of wildlife interest for the Crees (25%) on trapline W23A for 2023-2024 (2023-2024 annual plan).
 - b. Establishing mitigation measures that could limit damage to the wildlife and cultural areas that are currently causing conflict, hopefully, therefore, harmonizing usages and limiting conflicts related to current and future forest planning.
 - c. Specifying the Cree tallymen's roles and responsibilities with regard to consultation for the rest of the period 2023-2028 so as to promote the harmonization process during current and future forest plan consultations.

Once the conciliation exercise is over, the JWG coordinators hope that the results for trapline W23A can, in similar situations and after analysis on their part, be applied elsewhere in AFR territory in order to promote swift resolution of similar issues, if need be.

The Minister of Natural Resources and Forests appointed a conciliator on November 21, 2023, namely, the Board Chairman. The conciliator tabled his report to the parties on January 15, 2024.

Strategic Direction 3

Concretely demonstrate the benefits and results of the Agreement's AFR by improving the Board's internal and external communications to promote better knowledge, understanding and application of the Agreement's AFR.

BOARD ADVICE TO THE PARTIES

The Board sent no advice letters to the parties in the 2023-2024 operating year.

THE 2023-2028 COMMUNICATION PLAN

Successful implementation of the Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) is based on a very well structured, overall communication plan that commits both parties to the Agreement and the Board in keeping with their respective roles and responsibilities. Those affected directly or indirectly by the Agreement must be aware of all AFR elements, implementation mechanisms, stakeholder roles and responsibilities and results.

At the December 2023 Board meeting, the Secretariat presented an overview of the measures taken under the 2018-2023 communication plan to the members. A discussion then took place with the members about the objectives and measures to prioritize under the next five-year communication plan (2023-2028).

The Secretariat presented the draft 2023-2028 communication plan at the February 2024 Board meeting. The plan was developed based on the seven main communications issues facing the Board. It contains three key objectives and 20 targeted actions that will enable the Board to resolve the problems identified. The actions were presented to the members according to the annual timetable. The presentation ended with an overview of the Board's communication plan clientele, namely Agreement stakeholders and Aboriginal, regional, provincial, national and international organizations.

The Board members adopted the 2023-2028 communication plan, which has been posted on the Board's website.

BOARD ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Board forwarded its 20th annual report, covering the 2022-2023 operating year, to the parties, its partners and stakeholders concerned by application of the Agreement's forestry component. The 2022-2023 report and summary financial statements are available on the Board website.

Strategic Direction 4

Ensure flexibility in the operations of the Board and its Secretariat relocated in the Territory, in order to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency necessary to meet the requirements of its mandate.

RELOCATION OF THE BOARD SECRETARIAT

Under harmonizations made to the Agreement, the parties are pursuing the project to relocate the Board Secretariat to Waswanipi, as set out in the 2002 Agreement. The Cree-Québec Bipartite Committee, created five years ago, continued to monitor the project to build offices and staff housing.

Construction of the office building and the six housing units added for the CNG and Board began in June 2022. The office was almost completed in December 2023 and moving-in was scheduled for January 2024. However, administrative steps and formalities, including a letter of agreement between the parties, must be finalized to confirm the Board Secretariat's relocation.

BOARD BUDGET AND FINANCING FOR THE COMING YEARS

The Board agreed to maintain its funding for 2024-2025 and to reconsider financial reserve management under a five-year funding agreement (2025-2030), taking into account the costs linked, among others, to relocating the Board Secretariat to Waswanipi. This financial reserve could create new opportunities. Discussions between the members dealt with using a creative approach to propose new projects for the Board to include in its next action plan.

2023-2028 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

At the September 2023 Board meeting, the Secretariat presented an update to the Québec government's 2023-2028 Sustainable Development Action Plan and described the Board's obligations. Four proposals for Board action linked to three government strategic directions were adopted by the members.





Chapter

4

Sustainable Development

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board's 2023-2028 Sustainable Development Action Plan

In accordance with its obligations under the Sustainable Development Act, the Cree-Québec Forestry Board adopted its Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) for the five-year period 2023-2028 in 2023. It specifically contributes to four of the five major government directions established for the period 2023-2028.

Below is a report of the actions carried out during the year 2023-2024 that contributed to the achievement of the Board's SDAP.

The Sustainable Development Action Plan can be downloaded from the Board's website.





Government Direction 2: Acting in favour of nature and health

Government objective 2.1

Conserving biodiversity and ecosystem services

Sub-objective 2.1.1

Improving Québec's network of protected and conserved areas

Action	Indicator	Target 2023-24	Result
Following the 2023 forest fires on AFR traplines, relocate territories of special interest to the Crees.	Rate of areas of territories of special interest to the Crees to be relocated following fires that were the subject of official relocation.	Establish a portrait of the areas of territories of special interest to the Crees to be relocated.	The portrait of the areas affected by the forest fires of summer 2023 was still being calculated at the end of the period. The results are expected in summer 2024.

Government objective 2.2

Improving the health of ecosystems

Sub-objective 2.2.1

Promote sustainable agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and fishing management and practices

Action	Indicator	Target 2023-24	Results
Improve the consultation processes with the territory's tallymen regarding operational integrated forest management plans.	Number of collaborative activities between the three implementation mechanisms of the Agreement for process improvement. These activities have been interrupted since 2020 and must be reactivated.	A training activity that includes the three Agreement mechanisms.	<p>An activity took place in November 2023 but did not bring together all the required stakeholders from the three mechanisms of the Agreement.</p> <p>Several coordination meetings were held to organize a training activity bringing together the three mechanisms of the Agreement. This activity will take place in summer 2024.</p>



Government Direction 3:

Promoting the participation of all in the sustainable development of Québec

Government objective 3.2

Promoting equality and diversity in our society

Sub-objective 3.2.1

Promoting social cohesion through cultural dialogue

Action	Indicator	Target 2023-24	Results
Continue to promote the cultural contribution of the Crees in the work of the Board and forest planning in AFR territory.	Number of initiatives integrating Cree traditional knowledge.	Define a work plan and significant and measurable indicators to carry out the evaluation.	Brainstorming activities were held in early 2024 to discuss projects and initiatives incorporating Cree traditional knowledge. The preliminary work plan was established and is to be approved in April 2024.



Government Direction 4:

Developing communities sustainably

Government objective 4.3

Building dynamic and innovative communities

Sub-objective 4.3.1

Supporting sustainable regional development

Action	Indicator	Target 2023-24	Results
Promote the implementation of the economic provisions of the Paix des Braves aimed at increasing economic benefits for the Crees.	Rate of increase in economic benefits for the Crees resulting from the economic provisions of Chapter 3 of the Paix des Braves.	Establish a list of significant and measurable indicators and obtain a list of up-to-date available data.	The establishment of the list of indicators was delayed while clarifications relating to the project were provided. A firm will be hired in the summer of 2024 to establish the list of indicators and carry out the evaluation of the economic benefits for the Crees.





Government Direction 5:

Create an exemplary State that acts in favour of innovation

Government objective 5.1

Placing sustainable development at the heart of government decisions

Sub-objective 5.1.1

Assessing the sustainability of government interventions

Action	Indicator	Target 2023-24	Result
Assess the sustainability of the Board's structural actions in order to ensure that sustainable development is taken into account.	Percentage of the number of the organization's structural activities having been the subject of a sustainability assessment.	Establish the list of structural activities in connection with the Board's Monitoring Framework and strategic planning.	The establishment of this list was still pending completion at the end of the period.



Summary Financial Statements at March 31, 2024

Independent Practitioner's Review Engagement Report on the Summary Financial Statement

To the Members of Cree-Québec Forestry Board

The summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statement of financial position as at March 31, 2024, and the summary statement of operations and fund balances for the year then ended, are derived from the unaudited financial statements of Cree-Québec Forestry Board for the year ended March 31, 2024, on which we expressed a qualified opinion in our independent practitioner's review engagement report dated July 31, 2024.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian public sector accounting standards. Reading the summary financial statements, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the unaudited financial statements of Cree-Québec Forestry Board.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements in accordance with the basis of presentation described in Note 1 to the summary financial statements.

PRACTITIONER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Our responsibility is to express a conclusion indicating whether the summary financial statements represent a true and fair view of the unaudited financial statements based on our review. We conducted our review in

accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements, which require us to comply with relevant ethical requirements.

A review of summary financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements is a limited assurance engagement. The practitioner performs procedures, primarily consisting of making inquiries of management and others within the entity, as appropriate, and applying analytical procedures, and evaluates the evidence obtained.

The procedures performed in a review are substantially less in extent than, and vary in nature from, those performed in an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion on these summary financial statements.

CONCLUSION

Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that these summary financial statements, derived from the unaudited financial statements of Cree-Québec Forestry Board for the year ended March 31, 2024, are not a fair summary of these unaudited financial statements, in accordance with the basis of presentation described in Note 1 to the summary financial statements.

*Raymond Cholet Grant Thornton S.E. N.C. R. L.*¹

Québec
July 31, 2024

¹CPA auditor, public accountancy permit no. A128760

Cree-Québec Forestry Board

Summary of Operations and Net Assets and Fund Balances Year ended March 31, 2024

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Revenues		
Partners' contributions		
Quebec Government	330,000	330,000
Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)	330,000	330,000
Money market funds	37,368	7,658
	697,368	667,658
Expenses		
Salaries	319,097	313,521
Internal management	62,843	50,069
Board meetings	15,717	12,571
Service contracts	59,038	27,591
	456,695	403,752
Excess of revenues over expenses	240,673	263,906
Fund balances, beginning of year	976,161	712,255
Fund balances, end of year	1,216,834	976,161

The accompanying note is an integral part of the summary financial statements.

Summary of Financial Position March 31, 2024

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	336,356	114,533
Term deposits, 4.5% and 4.7%, maturing in February 2025	783,668	855,000
Trade and other receivables	95,400	9,714
Prepaid expenses	12,248	9,850
	1,227,672	989,097
Long-term		
Tangible capital assets	6,946	8,571
	1,234,618	997,668
LIABILITIES		
Current		
Trade and other payables	17,784	21,507
FUND BALANCES		
Unrestricted	1,064,888	822,590
Invested in tangible capital assets	6,946	8,571
Internally restricted	145,000	145,000
	1,216,834	976,161
	1,234,618	997,668

Note to Summary Financial Statements March 31, 2024

1 - BASIS OF PRESENTATION

The summary financial statements are derived from the unaudited financial statements of Cree-Québec Forestry Board for the year ended March 31, 2024, prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. The information contained in the summary financial statements has been prepared by management

and does not include the statement of cash flows as well as notes to financial statements. However, this information is included in the unaudited financial statements.

The unaudited financial statements are available at the head office of Cree-Québec Forestry Board.



Conclusion

In 2023-2024, the Board fully carried out its mandate in compliance with AFR harmonizations. It continued to conduct close, regular monitoring of the parties' commitments and resulting actions. The Board pursued projects, implemented in previous years, aimed at assessing the effectiveness of certain participation mechanisms and specific AFR provisions. Board activities were carried out in keeping with its strategic directions and the priorities established in the Board action plan.

In this 21st operating year, the Board members and Secretariat carried out their actions in keeping with the Board mandate and responsibilities, thus renewing their commitment and capacities in order to help achieve Agreement objectives.



Appendix I

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct of the Cree-Québec Forestry Board

CHAPTER I

PURPOSE AND FIELD OF APPLICATION

1. The present code of ethics and professional conduct has the purpose of preserving and strengthening the citizens' trust link in the Board's integrity and impartiality, promoting transparency within the Board and building up accountability with its members.
2. The present code of ethics and professional conduct applies to the Board members that are named by the Gouvernement du Québec, including the Chairperson, in addition to the members named by the Cree Regional Authority.
3. Concerning the Board staff, it must comply with the ethics and professional conduct standards that apply to it.

CHAPTER II

PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS AND BYLAWS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

4. The contribution of Board members to the realization of its mandate must be made in respect of the law, with honour, loyalty, rigour, caution, diligence, efficiency, assiduity and fairness.
5. The Board member is required, in the performance of his duties, to respect the principles of ethics and professional conduct set out in the present code of ethics and professional conduct. A Board member who is also governed by other standards of ethics and professional conduct

is also subject to the present code of ethics and professional conduct. In the event of divergence, the most demanding principles and rules apply.

The Board member must, if in doubt, act according to the spirit of these principles and rules. He must also organize his personal affairs so that they cannot hinder the performance of his duties.

6. The Board member is required to exercise discretion concerning what he knows in or during the performance of his duties and is required to respect the confidential nature of the information received in this manner at all times.
7. The Board Chairperson must show reserve in the public expression of his political opinions.
8. The Board member must avoid placing himself in a situation of conflict between his personal interest and his official duties.

He must reveal in writing to the Board Chairperson any direct or indirect interest he has in an organization, enterprise or association liable to place him in a situation of conflict of interest, in addition to the rights he can present against the Board, by indicating, if applicable, their nature and their value. An indirect conflict of interest can occur in cases where a member can receive some sort of benefit in a roundabout way, such as through his children or an enterprise in which he holds shares.

The organizations, enterprises or associations referred to in the preceding paragraph do not include the organizations or associations which represent the Cree Nation (Eeyou Istchee).

In the case of the Chairperson, he must reveal this information in writing to the executive director of the Board, who is in charge of gathering and conserving declarations from all the Board members.

In the case of a member named by the Cree Regional Authority, the former must also reveal this information to the Cree Regional Authority.

9. The Board member must inform the Board Chairperson in writing of any contracts or research projects he is participating in and declare the subsidies obtained from any organization, enterprise or association.

In the case of the Chairperson, he must give this information in writing to the Board executive director, who is in charge of gathering and conserving declarations from all the Board members.

In the case of a member named by the Cree Regional Authority, the former must also reveal this information to the Cree Regional Authority.

10. The Board member must abstain from participating in any deliberation or decision involving any organization, enterprise or association in which he has an interest as set out in Articles 8 and 9. Furthermore, he must withdraw from the meeting during the length of the deliberations and vote on this question.
11. The Board Chairperson ensures that the minutes of Board meetings mention any abstention of one of its members from the decisions concerning any organization, enterprise or association in which he has an interest, for the purpose of transparency.
12. The Board member must not mistake Board property for his own and cannot use it to the advantage of himself or a third party.
13. The Board member cannot use any information obtained in or during the performance of his duties to the advantage of himself or a third party.
14. The duties set out in Articles 5, 6 and 13 do not have the effect of preventing a Cree Regional Authority representative to consulting to the Cree Regional Authority, nor does it prevent to consult nor reporting to the members of the Cree Nation (Eeyou Istchee) or the organizations or associations which represent it, unless the information is confidential under the law and that such confidentiality is in accordance with the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* or the Agreement concerning a New Relationship between the Crees of Québec and the Government of Québec.
15. A Board member is allowed to accept and keep a gift, or accept a token of hospitality or other benefit as long as the present is of modest use and value and is offered during an event attended by the receiving member.

Any other gift, token of hospitality or benefit received must be returned to the donor or government.

16. The Board member cannot, either directly or indirectly, grant, solicit or accept an undue favour or benefit for himself or a third party.
17. The Board member must not allow himself to be influenced in his decision-making by outside considerations such as the possibility of an appointment or job openings and offers.
18. The Board member who has ceased to hold office must behave in a manner in which he does not gain any undue benefits from his previous Board duties.

19. The Board member who has ceased to hold office must not disclose confidential information he has received nor give anyone advice based on information unavailable to the public concerning the Board or another organization or enterprise with which he had important and direct relations during the year preceding the end of his mandate.

The Board member who has ceased to hold office but remains with the appointing party, in the context of his dealings with this party or associations which represent it, will have the right to inform it, in order to ensure good governance.

20. The Board chairperson must ensure the respect of the principles of ethics and rules of professional conduct by the Board members.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

21. The Board Chairperson intending to run for an elected public function must inform the general secretary of the Executive Board of the Gouvernement du Québec.

22. The Board Chairperson intending to run for an elected public function must leave office.

CHAPTER IV

REMUNERATION

23. Each party shall assume the remuneration and the travel costs of its own members, in compliance with Article 3.48 of the Agreement concerning a new relationship between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec and, in the case of a member named by the Gouvernement du Québec, in compliance with the order in force, if the case may be.

The Board member can receive other remuneration for the performance of duties other than those linked to the Board.

CHAPTER V

CERTIFICATION

24. The Board member must observe the rules and principles set out in this code. At the time of his appointment, the member must sign the certification document produced in the appendix confirming that he has read and understood the present code and that he agrees to respect it. The signing of the certification by the member already in office must be done within 60 days following the effective date of the present code.

CHAPTER VI

EFFECTIVE DATE

25. The present code of ethics and professional conduct of the Board members along with the here-attached certification form were adopted during the meeting of June 15, 2004 and are rendered effective as of August 3, 2004.

CERTIFICATION

WHEREAS the Cree-Québec Forestry Board adopted, on June 15, 2004, a Code of ethics and professional conduct for its members;

WHEREAS article 24 of this Code makes provision that the Board members must certify that they acknowledged the document mentioned above and that they commit themselves to follow the rules enacted in it;

I the undersigned, _____

member of the Board: _____

certify to have acknowledged the Code of ethics and professional conduct of the Cree-Québec Forestry Board; and commit myself to follow the rules provided for in this document so as to preserve the integrity of the Board.

Signed at, _____ the _____

day of _____ 20_____.



Appendix II

Members and Coordinators of the Joint Working Groups

The Joint Working Groups (JWGs) and their coordinators are two of the three main implementation mechanisms prescribed under the provisions of Chapter 3 (forestry) of the Agreement. The JWG members are a cornerstone of efforts to implement the Agreement, and are central to communications and information-sharing by the tallymen and Agreement territory timber supply guarantee holders.

The JWGs are mandated to

- Integrate and implement the specific rules agreed upon in respect of the Adapted Forestry Regime;
- When required, to develop harmonization measures;
- Review conflicting uses in order to find acceptable solutions;
- Ensure the implementation of the processes related to preparation, consultation and monitoring of forest management plans;
- Adopt internal operating rules;
- Ensure that each party places all relevant and available forestry-related information at the disposal of the other party;
- Discuss any technical issues.

As at March 31, 2024, the members of the Joint Working Groups were:

Communities	Representatives	
	MRNF	Cree
Mistissini	Carolann Tremblay Local Coordinator	Matthew Longchap Local Coordinator
	Jean-Sébastien Audet	Jeremy Linton
Nemaska	Jean-Sébastien Audet Local Coordinator	Vacant post Local Coordinator
	Charles Burgy	Rose Wapachee
Oujé-Bougoumou	Carolann Tremblay Local Coordinator	Jonathan Bosum Local Coordinator
	Olaniran Afoudah	Sarah Cooper
Waskaganish	Jean-Sébastien Audet Local Coordinator	Aaron Blackned Local Coordinator
	Olaniran Afoudah	Wayne Cheezo
Waswanipi	Carolann Tremblay Local Coordinator	Henry George Gull Local Coordinator
	Olaniran Afoudah Jean-Sébastien Audet Charles Burgy	Allan Saganash Jr. Jack Ottereyes
JWG Coordinators	Sabrina Morissette	Dion Michel



