

The ultimate objective is to establish biodiversity reserves in the TRPPAs. In some instances, portions of the territory could receive the protected status of a national park.

The establishment in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory of the new protected areas is enabling the government to contribute significantly to fulfilling its environmental and biodiversity conservation commitments both among its immediate partners and abroad.

Indeed, the Québec government committed itself to preserving by the end of 2020 17% of Québec's land and freshwater territory in protected areas, 20% of them north of the 49th parallel. The latter objective was transferred to the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory during the regional planning process of the network of protected areas for this region. Consequently, the new designations add 2.6% to Québec's network of protected areas in the terrestrial and freshwater environment, for a total of 15.8%, equivalent to a 3.3% increase north of the 49th parallel, thereby contributing to the attainment of Québec's objectives in this respect.

"This unique approach that we are highlighting today allows for the conservation of outstanding natural environments in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory and the preservation of its cultural values. It stems from a unique Nation-to-Nation partnership under the Grand Alliance. I would like to thank all our partners who have facilitated this positive outcome. Together we are not only protecting outstanding territories in the Nord-du-Québec region but also contributing to the attainment of Québec's objective of protecting at least 17% of its land and freshwater territory before the end of 2020."

Benoit Charette, Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change and Minister Responsible for the Laval Region

"It is through a sustained effort and significant collaboration with all the partners that we have achieved balanced consensus that enabling Québec to establish a network of protected areas to protect biodiversity while limiting the impact on Québec's economic potential. I am especially proud of the collaboration established between the Québec government and the Cree Nation Government and with the partners from the Jamesian communities, which has enabled us to attain the targeted proportion of protected areas in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory. By continuing to work together, we will pursue the territory's balanced development in keeping with the perspective of its residents. Québec is thus continuing to demonstrate its leadership and pragmatism in the realm of sustainable development and offering, at last, predictability in the realm of economic development for the region."

Jonatan Julien, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and Minister Responsible for the Côte-Nord Region

"The protection of these territories will foster the conservation of ecological components that are representative of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory's ecosystems and enhance the connectivity between the existing protected areas in synergy those in the network. Moreover, this will help protect key habitats for woodland caribou in the sector. This announcement illustrates the importance of partnerships between stakeholders in the Nord-du-Québec region for the harmonious development of the Québec network of protected areas."

Pierre Dufour, Minister of Forests, Wildlife and Parks and Minister Responsible for the Abitibi-Témiscamingue Region and the Nord-du-Québec Region

“The efforts of the Québec government and the Cree Nation Government have produced admirable results in a very short time to consider both the attainment of targets concerning protected areas within the time frame stipulated and to implement the commitments stemming from the significant agreements concluded over time with the Cree Nation. The choice of territory to protect areas of ecological, environmental, and cultural importance for the Cree has been made with a paramount concern for balance. Our initiatives today will affect the next seven generations.

Ian Lafrenière, Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs

“Today’s announcement is the result of many years of regular community engagements with land users and tallymen who guided this important announcement with their expertise. The Grande Alliance is about planning for an inclusive future of Eeyou Istchee, where sections 22 and 24 of the JBNQA take center stage. It is a new way of preparing the landscape so that development can happen in a way that makes sense for everyone, instead of the opportunistic exploitation of our resources. It is a way of creating a vision for the future where the Cree and the Jamesian communities feel valued, and encouraged to contribute to the future of Eeyou Istchee.”

Dr. Abel Bosum, Grand Chief and Chairperson of the Grand Council of the Crees

“This impressive accomplishment would not have been possible without the guidance from land users, tallymen, community leadership, as well as dedicated staff of the Cree Nation Government over the last 10 years. We are proud to announce the results that have come from a concerted effort by so many with the same objective: protecting our territory and the traditional activities of our people while providing a balanced and sustainable management approach of Eeyou Istchee. This collaboration with Quebec has demonstrated what is achievable when we work with common objectives and in respect of treaty rights and inclusion of all.”

Mandy Gull, Deputy Grand Chief and Vice-Chairperson of the Grand Council of the Crees

“This announcement of 23 new territories reserved for the purposes of a protected area (TRPPAs) is good news indeed. Sound environmental practices and biodiversity conservation are important values for the residents of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory and the mainstays of the quality of life there.”

Denis Lamothe, MNA for Ungava and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs and the Minister of Forests, Wildlife and Parks (wildlife and parks sections)

Highlights:

- The TRPPA allows for a territory to be recorded in the Register of Protected Areas until the Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change can propose to the government legally protected status for the territory.
- In addition to helping to preserve the biodiversity that is representative of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory, inclusion in the Register of Protected Areas protects territories of ecological, environmental, or cultural importance for the Cree. It respects existing modes of occupancy and use of the territory, which ensures the pursuit of traditional Cree activities

carried on there. Furthermore, administrative and legal provisions have been adopted to prohibit there any natural resource exploitation activities (forest, mining, and energy activities).

- Several of the new protected areas will foster the connectivity of existing protected areas by safeguarding the key habitats of woodland caribou in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory.
- In the longer term, the biodiversity reserves created in the territories could facilitate the development of tourist activities with a view to promoting the network of protected areas in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory.
- The designation of new TRPPAs is subject to a consensus in the government departments and bodies concerned, including the Ministère de l'Énergie et des Ressources naturelles and the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs. The same is true of the Cree Nation Government.
- The configuration of the new TRPPAs maximizes ecological and social gains while minimizing lost economic potential. It is a cornerstone of the Grande Alliance and fosters integrated, sustainable, socially acceptable territorial development.
- Inspired by the Peace of the Braves and made possible through the collaboration of the Québec government and the Cree Nation Government, the Grande Alliance represents a Nation-to-Nation partnership perspective that will, over a period of 30 years, support infrastructure development in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory, better connect communities, and protect the territory.

To obtain additional information:

- Fact sheets on the TRPPAs in the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Territory : www.environnement.gouv.qc.ca/biodiversite/reserves-territoires/index.htm

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Sources:

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Photo:

A day of celebration for the Grand Alliance partners (from top left to bottom right):
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