

Message from Grand Chief



Dr. Matthew Coon Come

It is my pleasure to present to the Cree people our Cree Nation Mining Policy. This document was developed over a period of time, presented to the Grand Council/Cree Regional Authority Council/Board which reviewed it and subsequently gave its approval to it. It is now Cree Nation policy.

This policy is one of the positive outcomes of decades of effort on the part of the Grand Council to secure recognition and acknowledgement of Cree rights. It is an expression of how our fundamental human rights and our Cree rights are applicable in the context of mining development within Eeyou Istchee.

This policy confirms the long held Cree position that we are not “anti-development”, but rather, we are prepared to support and participate in resource development within our Traditional Territory provided that our rights are respected, appropriate measures are taken to protect the environment, and benefits flow to our communities.

This policy represents another step in the evolution of the Cree Nation with the understanding that our land has always sustained us in the past, and that the land will continue to sustain us in the future. While our activities on the land and the way in which we use the land may become more diversified, our attachment to the land and our special relationship to the land remains in tact and fundamental.

It is clear in our policy that no mining development will occur within Eeyou Istchee unless there are agreements with our communities. Those agreements will need to address a wide range of social, economic and environmental concerns on the part of our communities. Through these agreements we will ensure that mining development is in keeping with our traditional approach to sustainable development.

This mining policy is significant, not only for the guidelines which it establishes to regulate mining activity within Eeyou Istchee, but it also sets the template for other resource development activities involving other resource sectors. The future of Eeyou Istchee will unfold with Cree people in the center.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Coon Come". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Meegwetch.

Cree Nation Mining Policy

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CREE NATION MINING POLICY

Introduction

The Crees of Eeyou Istchee (“The Peoples Land”) support and promote the development of mineral resources in the James Bay region of Northern Quebec.

The Crees of Eeyou Istchee recognize the increased economic and social opportunity offered by the mining sector, subject to ensuring that their unique social and environmental regime is adhered to. Accordingly, we have developed the present Mining Policy which provides guiding principles for the conduct of mineral exploration and mining activities within a sustainable manner and in a manner that is respectful of Cree rights and interests.

The purpose of the policy is to develop a standardized, consistent and effective approach for Cree involvement in all mining related activities occurring on the Territory, including but not limited to, exploration, extraction and the closure of mining projects.

Mining activity in Eeyou Istchee is not a new trend. In the 1950s, mines opened in many locations in the southern part of the territory and adjacent areas to the south. By the 1970s, exploration activity continued to be strong, decreased significantly in the early 1980s and did not recover previous levels until after 2000. The number of claims made in the territory in recent years and the variety of minerals found suggest that one can expect continuing interest in mineral exploration activity and the opening of more new mines in Eeyou Istchee. Several new mines are still in the developmental stage and are either in the process of impact assessment or will be moving on to environmental review in the near future.

The Crees have already gained mining experience, mostly from the Troilus mine, an open pit gold and copper mine located west of Lake Mistissini, which operated for about 15 years. It is the first mining operation in Eeyou Istchee to have been the subject of a comprehensive negotiated agreement to address issues related to employment, economic development and environmental protection. This first experience allowed the Crees to identify the opportunities and challenges of Cree participation in the mining sector.



Governance

The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) is the political body that represents the approximately 17,000 Crees or “Eeyouch” (“Eenouch” – inland dialect), as we call ourselves in our language. The Council is constituted of twenty (20) members including: a Grand Chief and Deputy-Grand Chief elected at large by the Eeyouch, the chiefs elected by each of the nine (9) recognized Cree communities, and one (1) other representative elected by each community.

The Cree Regional Authority (CRA) was set up by virtue of the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement as the administrative arm of the Cree Nation Government. It has responsibilities in respect to environmental protection, the hunting, fishing and trapping regime, economic and community development, Cree governance and other matters as decided by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of the CRA is the same joint governing body that manages the Grand Council of the Crees and is referred to as the “Council/Board”.

Over the years, the Crees have signed agreements with both the federal and provincial governments, most notably the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement signed in 1975 with Canada and Québec (modified by numerous complementary agreements), the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between le Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Quebec signed in 2002 (also referred to as the Paix des Braves) and the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between Canada and the Cree of Eeyou Istchee signed in 2008. All of these agreements create a unique legal environment in the Eeyou Istchee Territory.

Guiding Principle

The Cree Government will support and promote the development of mineral resources within the territory of Eeyou Istchee that provides long term social and economic benefits for the Cree and that addresses sustainable development in compliance with the environmental and social protection regime of the JBNQA and that is compatible with the Cree way of life and protection of Cree rights in the Cree Territory.



Pillars

This mining policy is based on three (3) fundamental pillars which together guide mineral exploration and mining activity within the Eeyou Istchee Territory. The pillars of the Cree Nation Mining Policy are:

1. Promotion and Support of Mining Activities - The Crees support and promote the development of Mining as part of their approach to Natural Resource Management and as a tool for social and economic development.

2. Mining and Sustainable Practices - The Crees believe that mining activities shall be done in a manner that is compatible with Sustainable Development, and appropriate existing governance tools such as social and economic agreements, and environmental assessment and remediation processes should accompany all forms and all phases of mining activities.

3. Transparency and Collaboration - The Crees believe that mineral exploration and mining activities in the territory should be a transparent and collaborative process.



Pillar #1: Promotion and Support of Mining Activities

Mineral Rights

The Cree Government will protect the rights, interests and benefits of all Crees collectively over their lands and resources to be impacted by proposed mining projects.

The Cree Government acknowledges and endorses the principles of allocation and acquisition of mineral rights and the corollary right to develop the mineral resources, while prioritizing Cree rights and addressing Cree environmental and social concerns.



Cree Contribution

Proponents of mining projects who adhere to the present policy can expect to receive guidance from the Crees based on their traditional, technical and scientific expertise on land and mineral resources.

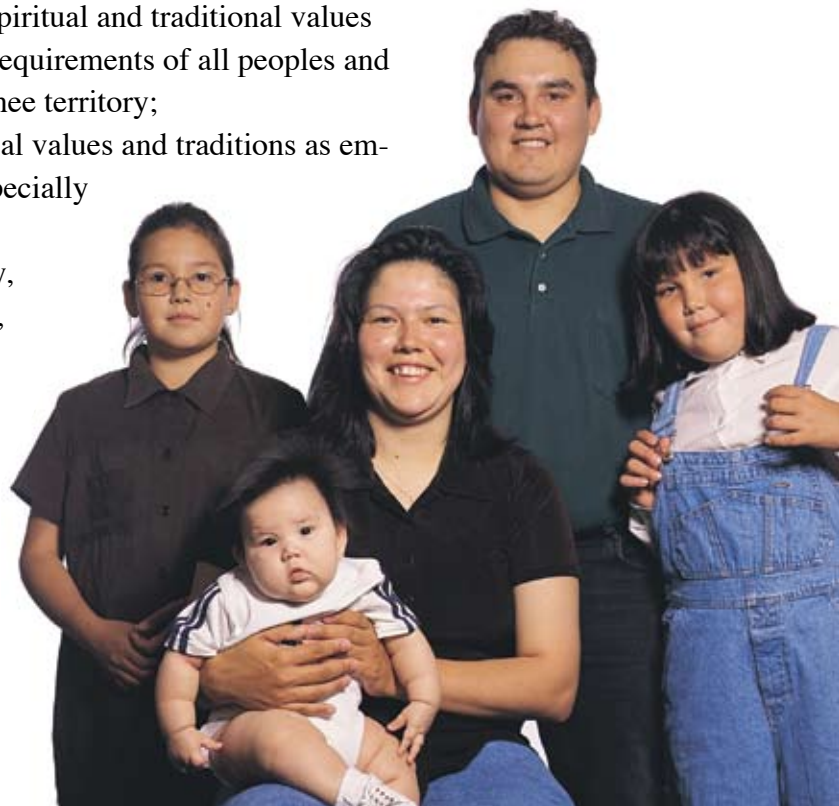
The Cree Government will ensure appropriate and adequate representation and involvement to protect the interests of all Crees and their institutions in all negotiations with mining proponents and governmental authorities.

Pillar #2: Mining and Sustainable Practices

Sustainable Development Policy

The Cree Government is committed to sustainable development of the Eeyou Istchee, in accordance with the following principles derived from the Eenou Astchee – Eenou Estchee Natural Resources Declaration issued in 1995:

- Recognition of the importance of the system of Cree family land use and occupation of the territory and their continuing management by tallymen;
- Administration of natural resources for the needs of the Crees without compromising the needs of future generations;
- Providing for management of natural resources based on the Cree principle of respect for the land;
- Balancing ecological, productive, spiritual and traditional values to meet the cultural and economic requirements of all peoples and communities within the Eeyou Istchee territory;
- Conservation of cultural and spiritual values and traditions as embodied in the land and notably in specially designated sites;
- Conservation of biological diversity, soils, water and watercourses, flora, fauna, scenic diversity and recreational values;
- Application of the precautionary principle in all decision-making processes related to natural resources;
- Restoration of damaged ecosystems.



Mining must be compatible with Sustainable Practices

The Cree Government recognizes the importance of sustainable mining initiatives within the national and international mining industry standards and best practices.

The Cree Government seeks to improve the economic, social, environmental, cultural and sustainable development of all Crees and their institutions in the context of mining activities on the Territory (Impact Benefit Agreements, respect protected areas, hiring and training of local manpower, sharing of infrastructures, etc) and to ensure that mining projects contribute not only current benefits but also to the development of longer-term alternative employment and business opportunities in non-mining related sectors, and to the productive, traditional and alternative use of the land beyond the life of a mine.

Decision-making and governance tools to ensure sustainability

The Cree Government has an Environmental and Social Protection Regime that is unique to the territory, as described in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and has proved to be a valuable tool for effectively managing development within the territory.

The Cree Government recognizes the importance of agreements. The Paix des Braves specifically mentions that the Government of Quebec will facilitate and encourage agreements between the Crees and proponents of mining projects concerning a wide range of issues, such as remedial works, employment and contracts. The Cree Government views such agreements as the most appropriate instrument to ensure that the social, cultural, economic (employment, business contracts and profit or revenue sharing), and environmental issues are properly provided for as agreed-to with the proponents of mining developments.



Pillar #3: Transparency and Collaboration

A) *Transparency*

The Cree Government will support communities that have established or wish to develop direct and close relationships with mining proponents.

The Cree Government encourages proponents to establish direct and close relationships with the communities and other Cree entities.

B) *Collaboration*

The Cree Government will develop and promote collaborative and flexible approaches that respect the vital role of the communities in shared decision-making processes under this Policy.

The Cree Government will ensure that all concerned Cree parties are to be involved as appropriate, at the earliest possible time in any proposed mining activity or mining projects to ensure that Cree rights, interests and benefits are properly protected and promoted.

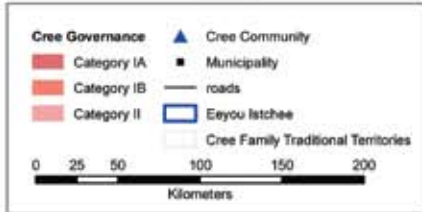
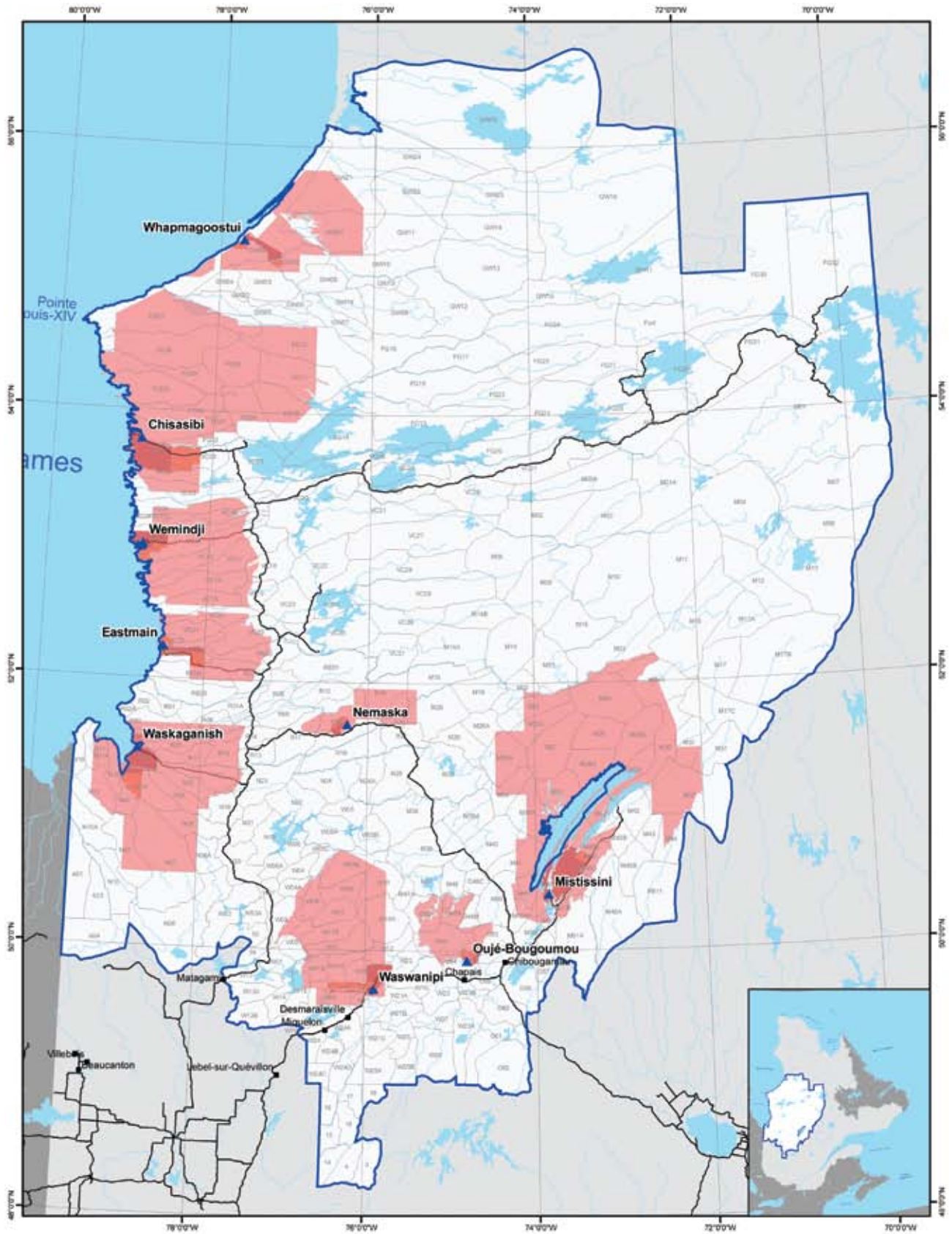
The Cree Government recognizes and supports the principle that Cree involvement in mining projects is fundamental to ensuring that Cree rights are protected. The Cree Government will promote positive relations among all parties.

C) *Support for the Mining Community*

The Cree Government, through the Cree Mineral and Exploration Board (CMEB), will provide support to the mining community by directing proponents to appropriate contacts within the CRA and communities. The mission of the CMEB is to develop mineral exploration in Eeyou Istchee and promote increased involvement of Crees in activities related to the development of natural resources in the mining sector. As part of its mandate, the CMEB assists the Crees in accessing mineral exploration opportunities and facilitates the development of mineral exploration activities by Cree Enterprises.

The Cree Government encourages the proponent to work with the respective communities, the local Cree families, including the tallymen, and Cree entrepreneurs.





Eyeyou Istchee of Quebec
Grand Council of the Crees /
Cree Regional Authority
CreeFamilyTraditionalTerritories

Projection: UTM Zone 18 NAD 83
 Source:
 - Base of thematic geographical information system (GIS) of the Cree Regional Authority (CRA)
 - Cree Traditional Boundaries (2008)
 - Cree Regional Authority (2008)
 - Revised from April 2010

Cree Regional Authority
 July 2010

