



EYYOU MARINE REGION
REFERENDUM PERIOD

JANUARY 18 TO MARCH 26, 2010

YOUR VOTE IS IMPORTANT

THE GRAND COUNCIL
OF THE CREES
(EYYOU ISTCHEE)

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Canada

MESSAGE FROM GRAND CHIEF MATTHEW COON COME

Kwey Kwey Watchia!

On June 29, 2009, Cree and Canada negotiators initialled the proposed *Cree Offshore Agreement*.

Under this proposed treaty, Cree rights to continue to occupy and use the offshore area will be officially recognized by the Constitution of Canada.

As the world population and the need for commodities increase and as northern waters become used for the transportation of goods, the Crees will be provided in this Agreement with the means to ensure that they can protect their traditional land use and also that future development benefits our people to the maximum extent possible.

This is an important and historical agreement and I will be coming to the Cree communities to inform you of its content and to hear your views.

Through a Cree referendum process, from January 18 to March 26, 2010, you will decide on the acceptance of this Agreement. Because of its importance to the Cree Nation, all communities, inland and coastal, will be asked to vote in the referendum.

For this Agreement to be approved, over 50% of all Cree beneficiaries eligible to vote must have voted in favour of it.

Therefore, I ask all of you who are old enough to vote (18 years as of March 26, 2010) to exercise your right to decide on this Cree Offshore Agreement.

WHY THIS IS A GOOD AGREEMENT FOR THE CREE NATION

Among other benefits, the Cree Offshore Agreement includes:

- Constitutional protection for our collective and ancestral rights
- Cree ownership of 80% of islands in Eastern James Bay and Southern Hudson Bay
- Cree ownership of subsurface resources on Cree islands
- Cree right to decide on future development of the offshore area
- \$50 million capital transfer and \$5 million for the implementation of the Agreement
- Cree preferences in contracts and procurement in offshore
- Creation of a Land Use Planning Commission, a Wildlife Management Board and an Impact Review Board, all with substantial Cree representation
- Important role for Cree Trappers Association in the carrying-out of wildlife studies with a \$5 million fund set up for that purpose
- Separate implementation agreement providing for the operation of various Cree bodies of public government in Eeyou Istchee communities
- Guarantee that the Cree Nation will not be impeded by the agreement in the extension of its government to offshore region

THE REFERENDUM QUESTION

Eligible voters will have to answer “YES” or “NO” to the following question:

Do you approve the proposed Agreement between the Crees of Eeyou Istchee and Her Majesty the Queen in the right of Canada concerning the Eeyou Marine Region?

OFFSHORE AGREEMENT INFORMATION SESSIONS TO BE HELD IN THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITIES

Chisasibi	Eastmain
Mistissini	Nemaska
Oujé-Bougoumou	Waswanipi
Waskaganish	Wemindji
Whapmagoostui	Amos
Montreal	Rouyn-Noranda
North Bay	Sudbury
Ottawa	MoCreebec

IMPORTANT

The community tour will take place between January 18 and March 12, 2010. Specific date, time and place will be announced by your local Band Council. You can also check this and other information with the office of the Chief Referendum Officer toll-free 1-888-761-1655.

HOW TO VOTE IN THE CREE REFERENDUM AGREEMENT

Every Cree beneficiary of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* residing in or outside an Eeyou Istchee Cree Community who will be 18 years old as of March 26, 2010, is an eligible voter in the referendum.

There are 3 ways to vote:

1) **By mail-in ballot:** from January 18 to March 26, 2010;

or

2) **In person:** during 10 business days from March 15 to March 26, 2010, in the voting centers located in the Eeyou Istchee Cree Communities, including Washaw Sibi, and in Montreal, Ottawa, Val d'Or, North Bay and Moose Factory;

or

3) **By requesting the attendance of a roving poll:** during 10 business days from March 15 to March 26, 2010, for those eligible voters living in each Eeyou Istchee Community, including Washaw Sibi.

QUESTIONS AND INFORMATION

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW:

- If your name is on the list of Cree eligible voters in the Cree Offshore Agreement Referendum
- The details about the public community information session on the proposed Agreement
- Where, when and how to vote
- How to obtain the official text of the proposed Cree Offshore Agreement, its summary or other available documentation
- Any other information on the proposed Agreement and/or the referendum process

YOU CAN:

- 1) Call the office of Mr. Lawrence Jimiken, the Offshore Agreement Chief Referendum Officer, during normal business days and hours, at the following toll free number:

[1-888-761-1655](tel:1-888-761-1655)

or

- 2) Consult the Special User-Friendly Offshore Agreement Referendum section on the Grand Council of the Crees website at:

WWW.GCC.CA