

COURTESY TRANSLATION

Quebec City, April 22nd, 2004

Mr. Sam Hamad and Mr. Pierre Corbeil
600-0117 Cabinet du ministre des Ressources naturelles, de la faune et des parcs
5700, 4th, Avenue West
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Subject: Draft directives on the protection and development of wildlife habitats

Mr. Ministers,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Cree-Quebec Forestry Board (CQFB) in accordance with article 9 of the Agreement amending the Paix des Braves and concerning the draft directives on the protection and development of wildlife habitats.

Since its creation last September, the CQFB has undertaken its mandate with determination, diligence and in a collaborative spirit. In particular, the CQFB brings great attention to articles 59 and 60 of Schedule C that provide for the “elaboration of draft directives aimed at introducing into the forest management planning process strategies that can take into account the protection and development of wildlife habitats”.

Mr. Ministers, these directives represent a major addition for the implementation of an adapted forestry regime in the territory of the Agreement since the wildlife problematics constitute for the Crees a core element in the protection and maintenance of their traditional way of life. The postponement for a year of the allowable cut calculation announced last March 29th, gives us the opportunity to use this extension to further develop these directives so they can be considered when drawing-up the general forest management plans.

For the year 2004, the CQFB’s objective is to establish a process for the elaboration of guidelines on the protection and development of wildlife habitats. One crucial step is to integrate the traditional knowledge of the Cree tallymen to the available scientific knowledge. This process will include to proceed to diagnosis of the state of forest and wildlife resources within the Cree territory. We envision this process as an evolving one

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in order to take into account the availability of information and also to meet the training and coaching needs of the numerous participants involved in the implementation of this kind of approach.

This process should also take into account the different levels of forestry planning: the strategic level (general forest management plans or GFMPs) and the operational level (annual forest management plans or AFMPs) as well as the forest protection and development objectives. We express the desire, Mr. Ministers, that the representatives of both *Forêts et Faune* sectors of the Department and of the Cree party work closely on this project.

Over the coming year, the CQFB expects to achieve the following results:

- In a first step, establish the priority issues in terms of wildlife protection and development objectives;
- Next, to identify the priorities in terms of specific habitats and species to be protected and the nature of intervention measures to be considered;
- And, finally, to select the targeted areas for implementation of protection measures. At this stage, one can envision the development of pilot projects which will lead to the improvement and adaptation of the proposed approaches and tools.

We do recognize, Mr. Ministers, that this process will be implemented in a progressive fashion. At this time next year, we should be in a position to submit more specific recommendations to ensure the protection of priority habitats and species within the framework of the future general forest management plans and the process of preparing the annual forest management plans.

We also do acknowledge that this approach is innovative and represents a real challenge but we are determined to meet it and bring about creative solutions. Rest assure, Mr. Ministers, of the full cooperation of all members of the Cree-Quebec Forestry Board.

Board Chairman

Jean-Pierre Gauthier