



By email

ministre-mffp@mffp.gouv.qc.ca

Québec, December 16, 2020

Mr. Pierre Dufour

Minister

Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs

5700, 4^e Avenue Ouest, Bureau A-413

Québec (Québec) G1H 6R1

Subject: CQFB's Analysis of the Mixedwood Stand Management Strategy for forested lands covered by the Adapted Forestry Regime of La Paix des braves

Dear Minister,

In accordance with the process defined in the Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) of the Paix des Braves (Agreement), the Cree-Québec Forestry Board (CQFB) received on November 9, 2020, a copy of the *Mixedwood Stand Management Strategy* for comment and recommendation.

The Board met on December 2 and 3, 2020, to review and discuss the analysis produced by the CQFB Secretariat. This analysis followed an approach agreed upon by Board members during the September 16 and 17, 2020, meeting. This approach relies on three elements that were reviewed to make sure that they were well considered through the Strategy:

1. Compliance with the Adapted Forestry Regime provisions relating to the *Mixedwood Stand Management Strategy*;
2. Collaboration of the Crees in developing the Strategy and taking their concerns into account;
3. Monitoring the implementation of the Strategy.

The Secretariat analyzed the version of the Strategy submitted by the ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP) and developed in collaboration with the Cree Nation Government. At the last Board meeting, the members were called upon to discuss the Strategy and agreed to send you the following comments and recommendation:

- The Strategy fully addresses the provisions of the Agreement that deal with this issue.
- It describes the approach to managing mixedwood stands to maintain the quality of wildlife habitats on the territory. It considers scientific knowledge on the subject and the Cree vision of the importance of these stands for the maintenance of their traditional activities in the long term.

- The Strategy was developed by the MFFP, in close collaboration with the Cree Nation Government, through a joint committee of professionals and experts representing the two signatory parties to the Agreement.
- Throughout the drafting period, the committee ensured that Cree stakeholders were consulted, in order to incorporate their concerns and take their suggestions into account.
- The Strategy plans for monitoring activities on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance with its implementation and maintenance of the quality of wildlife habitats in the territory of application and on each of the traplines.

For all the above reasons, the Board recommends the implementation of this Strategy.

However, the analysis highlighted certain elements that could constitute opportunities for improvement or clarification that we would like to bring to your attention.

In the case of traplines where mature mixedwood stands are naturally rare (less than 1.5%), the Strategy reiterates that tending treatments could be adjusted as needed in order to attain the desired composition targeted by planners. After discussion, it is thus suggested by the Board to further refine these specific silviculture scenarios to ensure that the objectives of the Strategy are fulfilled.

The Board recognizes that the proposed Strategy and the Wildlife Habitat Management Directives (Directives) currently under development are closely related. In fact, the Strategy states several times that the Directives will consider key elements that are mentioned in the Strategy, but does not provide specific targets.

In the development of future Directives, the Board wishes to suggest to the joint committee responsible for their elaboration, to define, where applicable, specific objectives or targets making it possible to provide clear instructions to forest managers concerning the importance of maintaining connectivity between mixedwood stands considered suitable habitats, the surrounding forest cover and nearby wetlands or riparian areas.

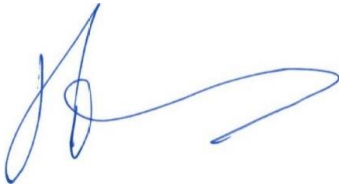
The Board recommends that consideration be given to using the results of the Strategy, monitoring collected over time, be used as an input to the global monitoring of the quality of wildlife habitats in the territory, particularly in the context of the implementation of the Directives currently in development.

To conclude, the members of the Board would like to highlight the excellent work accomplished by the working committee in charge of writing the Strategy. It is a remarkable collaboration accomplishment between the two signatory parties that should not go unnoticed. This level of cooperation fits perfectly within the spirit of the Paix des Braves and sets a precedent towards the implementation and evolution of the AFR in the territory.

Please note that a copy of this letter has also been sent for information to the Grand Chief of the Cree Nation Government, Mr. Abel Bosum.

The Board is at your disposal if you need any more details on this Advice or on the analysis performed by the Secretariat.

Yours sincerely,



Hervé Deschênes
Chairman, Cree-Québec Forestry Board