

2024
2025



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Board Chairman's Message

Maïté Blanchette Vézina
Minister of Natural Resources and Forests
Minister Responsible for the Bas-St-Laurent Region
and the Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine Region

Paul John Murdoch
Grand Chief / Chairman

Grand Council of the Crees/ Cree Nation Government

I am pleased to present the Cree-Québec Forestry Board Annual Report for 2024-2025, which is the twenty-second operating year of the Board. The Board held five meetings during the year. I note that the Board continued its work in accordance with its 2020-2025 strategic plan and its annual action plan. The Board carried out its mandate in compliance with the Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) implementation mechanism harmonizations.

During the year 2024-2025, the results obtained following the completion of several projects, some of which had been initiated a few years previously, have provided a better understanding of the impact of the implementation of the provisions provided for in relation to the AFR on Paix des Braves territory. After more than twenty years of AFR implementation, these knowledge acquisition projects make it possible to measure the progress made and will represent an essential source of information for its development. In particular, these projects have made it possible to:

- Establish a habitat quality index (HQI) for moose, which notably includes traditional Cree knowledge, and to measure changes in the quality of moose habitat since the AFR came into force
- Establish a baseline of the economic benefits of the forestry sector for the Crees
- Measure compliance with the provisions of the AFR across all areas that make up the areas of wildlife interest for the Crees (25%)
- Measure the level of satisfaction of Cree users and other stakeholders and to identify avenues for improvement as part of the 2018- 2023 assessment of AFR implementation.

In accordance with the communication plan in force, the Board has assigned itself the mandate to meet with Cree users, community representatives, and other stakeholders in order to share the current state of knowledge and AFR provisions. The Board is committed to carrying out this activity during the year 2025-2026.

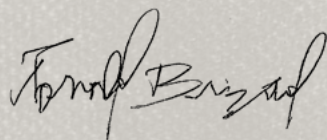
In addition, over the next year, the Board has committed to continuing its efforts to document certain files for the improvement of the implementation of the AFR provisions, including:

- Monitoring the provisions governing the implementation of the second pass of mosaic cutting
- Monitoring biodiversity indicators.

Since the parties have approved the letter of agreement regarding the relocation of the Board Secretariat to Waswanipi, the implementation of the recommendations submitted by the Bipartite Committee can be deployed over the next year.

Furthermore, I would like to highlight the work and collaboration of the tallymen, coordinators and members of the Joint Working Groups and all those involved in the management plans. In this regard, I must emphasize that, despite the challenges posed by the implementation of the AFR provisions, the management plans are carried out in a context of sustainable development while allowing for a better consideration of the traditional Cree way of life and Cree participation in the form of consultation at each stage of their implementation. The progress made and the results obtained are significant.

Finally, I would like to highlight the quality of the work accomplished and the commitment of the Board members who play a key role in this collective project. I would especially like to thank the Secretariat staff for their great availability and the high quality of their work.



Ronald Brizard,
Chairman of the Cree-Québec Forestry Board



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Arnold Brunel

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Chairman's Statement

To the best of my knowledge, the 2024-2025 Annual Report:

- Accurately describes the Cree-Québec Forestry Board's mission, sectors of activity, strategic directions, and priorities;
- Presents accurate, reliable data covering all of the Board's activities and indicates the extent to which the target objectives were achieved.

Throughout the 2024-2025 fiscal year, in accordance with its mandate, management maintained internal accounting and management information control systems to facilitate sound management of its operations and ensure accountability with respect to the commitments resulting from its strategic directions and objectives for 2024-2025.

I declare myself satisfied with the practices and methods used to produce the information in this annual management report.



Ronald Brizard
Chairman

The Agreement and Chapter 3 on Forestry

The Adapted Forestry Regime's Objectives and Main Adaptations

On February 7, 2002, the Québec government and the Crees of Québec (Eeyou Istchee) signed the Agreement concerning a new relationship between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec. This historic agreement, lasting fifty years, marked a new era in Cree-Québec relations.

Negotiated on a nation-to-nation basis, this agreement, commonly called the Paix des Braves, is intended to forge a common desire to harmonize management of Northern Québec's natural resources, thereby promoting greater autonomy among the Crees and encouraging them to take charge of their nation's development. It includes provisions linked to forestry, mining, hydroelectric development, and the Crees' economic and community development based on the respective commitments made by the parties under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement.

Chapter 3 of the Agreement, commonly called the Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR), is devoted to forestry, defining the objectives and setting out the specific provisions for managing forest activities in Agreement territory. The Québec Forest Regime applies throughout Agreement territory with adaptations. The AFR seeks to better reflect the Crees' traditional way of life and accord greater attention to sustainable development concerns, paving the way for increased participation by the Crees, via consultation, in forestry activity planning and management processes, ranging from planning to implementing and monitoring forest management plans and collaboration, in the form of concerted action, by the Cree Nation Government (CNG) and the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government (EIJBRG) in the participation process for the planning.

The main adaptations to the Québec Forest Regime deal with, among other things, defining the management units formed by grouping traplines, identifying and protecting sites of interest for the Crees, allotting a greater percentage to mosaic cutting, introducing maximum forest operations thresholds and rates per trapline, including additional terms and conditions for protecting forests adjacent to watercourses, protecting and developing wildlife habitats, developing the road access network and siting residual forest blocks in conjunction with the tallymen.

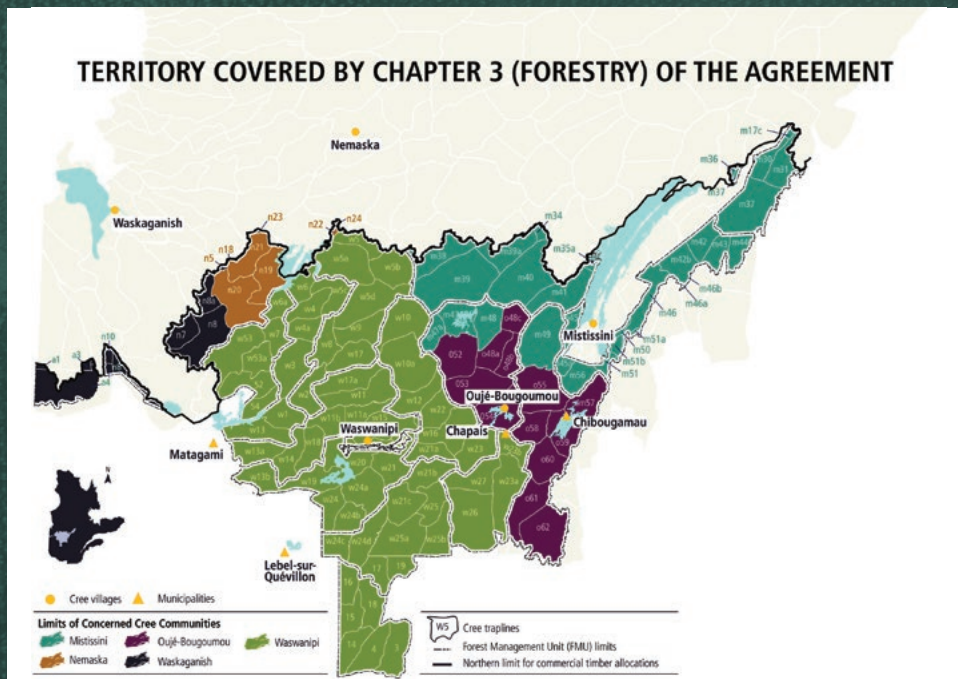
Where economic development is concerned, certain Agreement provisions confirm that timber volumes will be made available to the Crees and that Cree access to forest management activity-related employment, contracts and partnerships will be promoted.

To ensure implementation of the Agreement's chapter on forestry, three mechanisms were created: the Joint Working Groups (JWGs), the JWG coordinators and the Cree-Québec Forestry Board (CQFB). As set out in Chapter 3 and Schedule C of the Agreement, these mechanisms have specific, separate duties but must work closely

together to implement various provisions of the Adapted Forestry Regime; promote, where relevant, development of new operating approaches among stakeholders and mediate and manage conflicts that may arise. While the core activities of these mechanisms are to contribute to the development of forest management plans, conduct consultations and perform monitoring, these implementation mechanisms work on different, but complementary, levels.

Territory Covered

The territory covered by the Agreement's forestry regime is included in the territory governed by the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. Bordered by Québec's northern limit for commercial timber allocations to the north, the Adapted Forestry Regime includes the five Cree communities of Mistissini, Nemaska, Oujé-Bougoumou, Waskaganish and Waswanipi. The territory defined in Schedule C of the Agreement spans a total of 66,010 km². Its productive forests account for 7% of Québec's allowable cut.



Statistics Pertaining to the Territory Covered by Chapter 3 of the Agreement

Population

Cree Communities		Non-Native Communities	
Mistissini	3,731	Chapais	1,468
Nemaska**	832	Chibougamau	7,233
Oujé-Bougoumou	797	Lebel-sur-Quévillon**	2,091
Waskaganish**	2,536	Matagami*	1,402
Waswanipi*	1,759		

Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2021

* Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2016

** Outside the territory covered by Chapter 3

Territory

	Chapter 3	Québec	Proportion
Total area of Chapter 3 (km ²)	66,010		
Total area of forest management units* (km ²)	51,787	451,895	11.4%
Forest area used to calculate allowable cut* (km ²)	34,023	269,080	12.6%

Number of forest management units: 15

Number of Cree traplines affected: 121

Forest resource

	Chapter 3	Québec	Proportion
All species	2,414,900	34,297,400	7.04%

* Chief Forester's data (after 2023 forest fires allowable cut calculations review)



The Cree-Québec Forestry Board

Board Mandate

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board was created in September 2003 under the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec (Agreement), more specifically Chapter 3, which discusses the Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR).

The AFR objectives are: better take into account the Cree traditional way of life; allow greater integration of concerns relating to sustainable development; ensure participation, in the form of consultation, by the Crees in the various forest development activities planning and management processes; and promote collaboration, in the form of concerted action, by the Cree Nation Government and the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government in the forest plan development, consultation and monitoring process.

The AFR also provides for the application of specific management standards to maintain or improve the habitat of wildlife species that are very important for the Crees (moose, marten, beaver, hare, fish, caribou, partridge). To do so, portions of each trapline benefit from specific protection to improve the level of harmonization between forest management activities and traditional activities, including hunting, fishing and trapping. Within the selected areas, forest management activities are planned first and foremost to maintain and increase ecoforest stand diversity in terms of plant species, age classes and spatial distribution.

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board is responsible for monitoring, analyzing and assessing the implementation of the Agreement's forestry provisions. The Board forwards advice letters regarding the forest management plans to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forests.

The Board recommends adjustments or modifications to the Agreement's forestry provisions to the parties, ensuring that these recommendations comply with the measures and spirit of the Agreement and AFR evolution. The Board calls the Minister's attention to proposals, preoccupations and comments related to intervention practices in the field and activities related to developing all integrated forest management plans.

The Board also reviews the implementation mechanisms at the Joint Working Group level related to developing, holding consultations on and monitoring all integrated forest management plans applicable in the territory. As such, the Board is involved in the different processes for planning forest management activities concerning the territory and participates in the different stages of forest activity management.

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Board Strategic Directions

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board's strategic plan is defined by four main directions that guided the activities of the organization throughout the year. The strategic directions used for annual activity planning are as follows:

Strategic Direction 1

Rigorously, objectively and effectively evaluate the implementation and the effectiveness of the forestry chapter of the Agreement, according to a continuous improvement approach.

Strategic Direction 2

Provide support to its members, coordinators and JWG members in order to facilitate their synergy and optimize their contributions for the effective operation of the Agreement.

Strategic Direction 3

Concretely demonstrate the benefits and results of the Agreement's AFR by improving the Board's internal and external communications to promote better knowledge, understanding and application of the Agreement's AFR.

Strategic Direction 4

Ensure flexibility in the operations of the Board and its secretariat relocated in the Territory, in order to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency necessary to meet the requirements of its mandate.

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Board Composition and Administrative Organization

The Board is an independent body made up of eleven members: five designated by the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government, five by the Québec government and a Chairman appointed by the Québec government after consultation with the Cree party.

The following list shows the members that were sitting on the Cree-Québec Forestry Board as at March 31, 2025.

Chairman	
Ronald Brizard (2023-05-22 to –)	
Québec members	Cree members
Hugo Jacqmain (2014-11-19 to –) Director of Environmental Affairs and Sustainable Development Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts	Gillman Ottereyes (2020-11-04 to –) Director of the Department of Forestry Cree Nation Government
Geneviève Labrecque (2014-11-19 to –) Forestry Engineer Chantiers Chibougamau Ltée	Geoff Quaile (2009-06-04 to –) Senior Advisor, Forestry Department Cree Nation Government
Simon St-Georges (2022-03-09 to –) Respondent in Aboriginal Affairs Management of Coordination and Strategic Directions Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts	Ian Saganash (2023-03-16 to –) Local guardian Community of Waswanipi
Marco Trudel (2017-06-07 to –) Director General of north-west Forest Management Ministère des Ressources naturelles et des Forêts	Nadia Saganash (2012-04-16 to –) Director of Relations with Québec and Indigenous Peoples (interim) Cree Nation Government
Denis Vandal (2015-08-11 to –) Retired – Consultant	Isaac Voyageur (vice-president) (2007-01-24 to –) Director – Environment and Remedial Works Cree Nation Government

Administratively speaking, each party to the Agreement covers the cost of its designated members' participation on the Board and half of the organization's operating budget. The Chairman's salary is paid by the Québec government.

The Agreement defines the Board's main operating terms and conditions, stipulates very specific duties concerning the Adapted Forestry Regime's implementation and requires production of an Annual Report that must be submitted to the parties.

In carrying out their mandates, the Chairman and members of the Cree-Québec Forestry Board can count on the support of a Secretariat, headed by the Executive Director, who oversees the organization's human, financial, material and informational resources. The Secretariat is in charge of preparing Board meetings, producing minutes, and following up on decisions and measures that have been formally approved by Board members. With the support of consultants and other collaborators, depending on the nature of the file involved, the Secretariat develops and analyzes the files, identifying the problems and issues submitted for the Board's consideration, and drafts the CQFB's official documents (letters of advice, comments, reports), including the Annual Report for Board members' review and approval. The Secretariat is also responsible for document management and archiving. In addition, it supports the Board members' communications activities and provides outreach and liaison with various bodies and organizations.

As at March 31, 2025, three employees made up the Secretariat team:
Patrick Léveillé-Perreault, Executive Director, Amélie Dussault, Analyst/Advisor,
and Annette Hayden, Executive Assistant.

Review of Board Activities

Board Context in 2024-2025

The 2024-2025 operating year, the Board's 22nd, was marked by the mechanisms, processes and provisions of the Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR) of the Agreement (Paix des Braves), as amended and officially published in December 2019. Following the coming into effect of the *Sustainable Forest Development Act* (SFDA) in 2013, the signatories negotiated a sixth amendment to the Agreement, an update to reflect the new Québec forest regime.

The Board carried out its mandate fully in compliance with the harmonizations made to the AFR implementation mechanisms, carrying out its activities in keeping with the strategic directions and file priorities defined in its annual action plan. The Board continued to closely and continuously monitor the parties' commitments and resulting actions and pursued projects, implemented in previous years, to assess the effectiveness of certain participation mechanisms and implementation of specific AFR provisions.

In the 2024-2025 operating year, the Board held five meetings: April 16, 2024 (videoconference), June 18-19, 2024 (Chibougamau), September 25-26, 2024 (Montréal), December 10, 2024, and February 4, 2025 (videoconference).

Strategic Direction 1

Rigorously, objectively and effectively evaluate the implementation and the effectiveness of the forestry chapter of the Agreement, according to a continuous improvement approach.

Review of 2023-2028 PAFIOs

Review of the operational integrated forest management plans (PAFIOs), an integral part of the Board's responsibilities, aims to assess the effectiveness of the processes provided for in the Agreement and implementation of the provisions concerning Cree participation, in the form of consultation, in the various forest management activity planning and management processes. In particular, this assessment targets Cree participation at the plan finalization and monitoring stage, consideration of the Cree traditional way of life and the Joint Working Group (JWG) mandate that involves development and monitoring of all PAFIOs applicable in the territory as well as the related consultations.

Based on analysis of the modifications made to the 2023-2028 PAFIOs in the fall 2023 and fall 2024 consultation periods, the Board members worked together to draft an advice letter to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF). This advice letter was sent to the Minister along with recommendations for improving the consultation process.

2018-2023 Status Report on Implementation of Forestry-Related Provisions

The Board monitors, reports on and assesses implementation of the Agreement's forestry-related provisions, which aim to implement the territory's Adapted Forestry Regime (AFR).

By assessing the Agreement's provisions, the five-year status report exercise is essential since it concretely identifies opportunities to continuously improve the processes involved. This review also provides an opportunity to meet with a representative number of Cree tallymen, the Agreement's main beneficiaries, and other stakeholders (Joint Working Groups, forest industry representatives and planners) to get their assessment and comments.

In the context of the 2018-2023 status report, a total of 33 tallymen and 28 stakeholders were met with.

The main positive observations expressed by these respondents were:

- The parties' implementation of Chapter 3 continued to progress in the period 2018-2023
- Ratification of the 6th amendment to the Agreement made it possible to implement a number of changes
- The consultation process is appreciated, clear and well-defined
- A Forestry Department was created within the Cree Nation Government (CNG)
- The Mixedwood Stands Management Strategy was implemented
- Good collaboration between the parties moved certain files forward during the five-year period
- A number of projects and initiatives aimed at improving processes were implemented, e.g., guides for harmonization request management and for dispute settlement.

However, stakeholder consultation in the context of status report drafting showed that a number of uncompleted files negatively impacted AFR implementation and adversely affected Agreement and AFR mechanism operation overall. In addition to their impact on Agreement mechanisms, some files also affect the work environment among party stakeholders and Cree confidence in AFR processes. These files are:

- Development of the Wildlife Habitat Management Directives
- Woodland Caribou Recovery Plan
- Finalized implementation of the collaborative regime
- Benefits for the Cree of implementing the economic provisions (Agreement sections 3.64-3.70).

The following consultation-related issues persist:

- Problems with meeting organization, schedule compliance and tallymen absenteeism
- Tallymen dissatisfaction with: their level of influence on planning, refusal of their requests (particularly those concerning roads and riparian buffers) and lack of monitoring the status of their harmonization requests
- Significant delays in harmonization and conflict resolution.

Further knowledge and studies are needed to better understand the effects of AFR implementation and the conditions required for its objectives to be achieved. Consequently, in 2024-2025, the CQFB launched knowledge acquisition projects (discussed below). Certain aspects of the AFR continue to cause dissatisfaction or misunderstanding among Agreement stakeholders (forestry activity impacts on wildlife habitats, second mosaic cutting pass, importance of riparian buffers, impact of silvicultural work, etc.). In addition, the climate change context forces us to further question the ability of current management approaches to take these upheavals into account.

Knowledge Acquisition

Assessment of Forested Areas Presenting Wildlife Interest for the Cree (25%)

The Agreement provides for establishment of forested areas presenting wildlife interest for the Cree (TIFs), commonly known as 25% areas, which represent one quarter of each trapline's productive forested area. In these areas, Section 3.10.1 of the Agreement stipulates that:

"Specific management standards are applied to maintain or improve the habitat of very important wildlife species (moose, marten, beaver, hare, fish, caribou, partridge) and portions of each trapline will benefit from specific protection to improve the level of harmonization between forest development activities and traditional activities including hunting, fishing and trapping."

The last status report on AFR implementation (2013-2018) showed that, although Agreement provisions are implemented and complied with, tallymen and Cree users of the territory continue to be dissatisfied with management of the 25% areas. Similar observations were made in the context of the current status report:

- They see no difference in the management approach used in the 25% areas and the approach used in the rest of their trapline
- Wildlife habitat quality is not significantly better in the 25% areas compared to the rest of their trapline.

Given this issue's importance for compliance with the Agreement provisions, the Board wanted to explore further to identify the causes of this dissatisfaction.

This knowledge acquisition project seeks to verify whether the analysis scale explains tallymen's negative perception of the management activities carried out in the TIFs (25% areas). Assessment targeted compliance with the following provisions:

- Use of mosaic cutting as a management practice

- The specific management standards terms governing this type of cutting, i.e., proportion of stands over 7 metres and over 90 years, connectivity between residual forest blocks
- Harvesting rate
- Breaks in the hiding cover.

The results obtained for each block comprising the 25% areas show that:

- The annual rate of compliance with regard to mosaic cutting is 99.64%
- The compliance rate with regard to maintaining the productive areas of stands of 7 metres and over 90 years is 97% for anthropic disturbances related to forest planning
- The annual compliance rate with regard to breaks in the hiding cover is 98.55%
- The annual rate of compliance with regard to the harvesting rate is 98.74%.

On both scales (25% areas and each block comprising these areas), AFR provisions are implemented and complied with at a rate exceeding 97%.

Moose Habitat Quality Index

Various forest monitoring initiatives are carried out in the context of AFR implementation to assess existing processes’ effectiveness. As such, the project to develop a moose Habitat Quality Index (HQI) will, for the first time since the AFR came into force, validate whether the specific management standards applied have allowed moose habitat to be maintained or improved.

A Habitat Quality Index (HQI) is a numerical measure that reflects a given environment’s capacity for meeting a specific species’ needs. Generally ranging from 0 (unsuitable) to 1 (optimal), this index is calculated by combining various habitat variables weighted according to their importance for the species in question. HQIs must not be used as indicators of species presence or density, since the main limiting factors, i.e., hunting and predation, are not included in these models.

For this project, in 2020, McGill University was mandated, in collaboration with the Ministère de l’Environnement, de la Lutte aux changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (MELCCFP – Department of the environment, the fight against climate change, wildlife and parks), to assess moose habitat quality on AFR territory. Cree users’ traditional knowledge was taken into account before and after developing the HQI in order to confirm that the result clearly reflects integration of this knowledge.

Preliminary results show that the specific management standards applied allowed moose habitat quality to be maintained in AFR territory and on forested areas presenting wildlife interest during the period 2000-2022.

Change in HQI for AFR territory and forested areas presenting wildlife interest (TIFs or 25% areas), 2000 and 2022

	2000	2022
AFR territory	0.41	0.43
TIFs (25% areas)	0.48	0.49

Variations in the HQI (increases and decreases) were observed for certain traplines and forested areas of wildlife interest.

Note that, because of its forest composition, AFR territory essentially constitutes low-quality moose habitat.

The summer 2023 forest fires negatively impacted moose habitat quality in the areas affected. The magnitude of these areas reduced the HQI by 19% to its current value of 0.35 for AFR territory. The forest fires’ effect on moose habitat quality will continue to be felt for several years.

Second Mosaic Cutting Pass

The Board agreed to conduct a knowledge acquisition project on the main issues and problems linked to deployment of the second mosaic cutting pass on Agreement territory. These issues are:

- Spatial complexity
- Composition of regenerating stands
- Growth variability in regenerating stands
- Lack of framework for deployment of activities.

In the areas selected, forest management work planning must be carried out primarily to maintain or improve ecoforest stand diversity in terms of plant species, age classes and spatial distribution. Thus, it is possible to intervene to rejuvenate certain stands while maintaining productive habitats in these areas of particular interest for Cree families.

Regenerated forest stand height is decisive for the second mosaic cutting pass. The complexity of assessing variations in regenerating stand height and composition based on information available at the territory level must be taken into account. This project will allow a portrait of the height and composition regenerating stands to be established, following the management standards applied in keeping with the mosaic cutting regime. This portrait will facilitate future management activity planning in accordance with Agreement objectives.

Monitoring Framework

Biodiversity Indicators

In 2014, the Board developed and implemented a monitoring framework in order to effectively and continuously assess implementation of AFR provisions.

One of the framework's priorities is to define biodiversity indicators aimed specifically at validating the effectiveness of the management strategy deployed throughout AFR territory and maintaining the ecological functions associated with the diversity of ecosystems representative of the territory. To do so, two criteria were selected: biodiversity protection and key socio-ecological ecosystem integrity.

Board members agreed to move forward with the following proposal:

- Short-term component: The Board will be responsible for monitoring the habitats of sensitive wildlife species (e.g., spruce-moss stands) and wildlife species of socio-economic interest using existing information.
- Long-term component: The Board will participate in enhancing the MELCCFP's Québec Biodiversity Monitoring Network.

Use of these indicators will allow the criteria "biodiversity protection" and "integrity of ecosystems of importance to the Cree" to be assessed.

Economic Indicators

The Agreement provides for promoting development and economic/business opportunities for the Cree related to forest management activities. Consequently, in 2024, DDM Group was mandated to determine baseline forest sector economic benefits for the Cree communities and to draw up a list of economic monitoring indicators and the appropriate methodology for monitoring them.

The main indicators documented to date are:

- Contract value
- Number of jobs held by Cree workers
- Payroll of Cree workers
- Direct, indirect and induced impacts of forest value chain (harvesting, transport, processing, silvicultural work, etc.).

Preliminary results show that the share of Cree enterprises in economic activity involving wood supplying in 2022 represents \$13.6 million. This figure represents 33% of the potential provided for in the AFR, based on a 350,000-m³ volume of wood allocated annually to Cree communities (estimated at \$39 million). More specifically, transport and roadwork activities have the greatest growth potential.

Value of contracts awarded to Cree in 2022 (\$ million) and potential value of wood supply activities under AFR provisions (\$ million)

	Contracts awarded in 2022	Potential (AFR) 350,000 m³
Harvesting	5.4	11.2
Roadwork	2.6	7.4
Transport	0	8.4
Other activities	5.6	11.9
Total	13.6	38.9

In addition, in-plant processing activities would generate an additional \$32 million annually if performed by a Cree enterprise.

Contracts awarded to Cree enterprises for silvicultural work in 2022 are estimated at \$2.1 million.

The economic benefits (direct, indirect and induced) of wood supply and silvicultural activities in 2022 represent \$14.3 million, of which \$7.6 million are direct benefits for the Cree. In terms of employment, these activities created 141 jobs (direct, indirect and induced), with 24 direct jobs held by Cree.

Strategic Direction 2

Provide support to its members, coordinators and JWG members in order to facilitate their synergy and optimize their contributions for effective operation of the Agreement.

Joint Working Group (JWG) Coordinators

The main duty of the JWG coordinators is to ensure that the JWGs contribute to implementation of the Agreement’s AFR, especially implementation of the forest management plan development and monitoring processes and the related consultations. The coordinators ensure good communication among the three Agreement implementation mechanisms: the Board, the JWGs and the coordinators themselves.

The coordinators regularly inform the Board members about the tallymen consultations in the communities.

Overall, consultations on modifications to the 2023-2028 PAFIOs and the 2025-2026 annual plan (PRAN) involved 97 tallymen in four communities: Nemaska (1), Mistissini (28), Oujé-Bougoumou (12) and Waswanipi (56).

A number of difficulties were noted in this last round of consultations. Various factors caused significant delays in the 2023-2028 forest planning harmonization process.

The fall 2024 consultations took place in a context of uncertainty. The lack of wildlife habitat management directives complicates consultations, particularly in Waswanipi, and the summer 2023 forest fires continued to impact the processes provided for in the Agreement. This unique situation explains some of the difficulties in following the established processes.

Chief Forester

In November 2023, opting for caution and wishing to ensure resource sustainability, the Chief Forester recommended to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry that the 2023-2028 allowable cut be modified for 11 Agreement territory management units (MUs) to reflect the impact of the 2023 forest fires. At the time, the Chief Forester had applied 75% of the fires' effect, given that various information was not yet available, e.g., integration of the November 2023 economic update, forest management standards applied and analysis of management strategies.

This decision reduced the allowable cut by an annual 500,200 m³ gross for AFR territory beginning on April 1, 2024, for a total of 2,414,900 m³ per year.

The Chief Forester had mentioned that, once additional information is available, new analyses will be conducted and, if applicable, allowable cut will be updated again and will come into force on April 1, 2025.

In recent months, the Chief Forester updated the modelling developed in 2023, taking the following into account, among others:

- 2022-2023 technical and financial activity reports (RATFs) for the MUs concerned
- modifications to the silvicultural and territorial strategies of the MUs that were heavily affected by the forest fires
- the Québec government's economic update of November 7, 2023, in which an investment of \$200 million was announced for resumption of production in territories affected by the fires.

Following this update, at the December 10, 2024, Board meeting, the Chief Forester presented the final reduction in allowable cut to 459,900 m³ gross/year for AFR territory effective April 1, 2025 (total of 2,455,200 m³/year) to the Board members.

Spruce Budworm Epidemic Evolution on AFR Territory

In 2024, the spruce budworm epidemic continued to progress on AFR territory.

In the Nord-du-Québec region, the area affected doubled from 2023 to 2024 from 544,000 hectares to 1,043,000 hectares. Considering the spruce budworm's impacts on AFR territory, the Board is monitoring this situation, forwarding relevant information to the Agreement implementation mechanisms and, where necessary, taking the actions provided for in the Agreement:

- Inform the JWG's concerned of potential spraying activities in summer 2025
- Discuss with CNG and agree on terms and conditions of a potential special management plan, if applicable
- Seek local communities' contribution, asking land users to report the insect's presence in the territory (report sheet) in order to direct the Forest Protection Department (DPF) to sectors of the epidemic to be surveyed in 2025.

Cree-Québec Forestry Economic Council (CQFEC)

The CQFEC promotes development of economic and business opportunities for the Cree in the forest management sector.

The means of collaboration between the Board and the CQFEC have been defined and a regular update of CQFEC activities is now forwarded to Board members. These activities include:

- Produce a report on harmonization issues related to site preparation; provide an impact (area and money) monitoring chart related to harmonization issues for site preparation
- Clarify the intent of the supply guarantee holder (Nabakatuk) prior to the MNRF notice on the inactivity period
- Agree on changes to Agreement Section 3.65, which provides for the opportunity to conclude contracts with Cree enterprises for up to 15% of the budget for non-commercial silvicultural work (provide a proposal to Cree enterprises for the 2025-2026 season)
- Present new criteria defining "Cree enterprise" within the meaning of the AFR and the Agreement as a whole.

Strategic Direction 3

Concretely demonstrate the benefits and results of the Agreement's AFR by improving the Board's internal and external communications to promote better knowledge, understanding and application of the Agreement's AFR.

Cree-Québec Forestry Board (CQFB) and Cree-Québec Forestry Economic Council (CQFEC) Governance

The Board and CQFEC members approved a governance model that governs their interactions and initiatives regarding the Agreement's economic provisions.

The governance model adopted specifies that the Board and CQFEC appoint persons responsible for the file, provides for accountability between the Board and CQFEC and improves communication between them.

Under this governance model, the Board is responsible for setting economic objectives and targets, including developing and monitoring indicators of economic benefits for the Cree. CQFEC is responsible for prioritizing files to be dealt with to promote development of economic/business opportunities for the Cree and ensuring implementation of Agreement provisions promoting Cree access to jobs and contracts. Information, consultation and collaboration mechanisms are set up to ensure that the Board's and CQFEC's activities of an economic nature are efficient.

Strategic Direction 4

Ensure flexibility in the operations of the Board and its Secretariat relocated in the Territory, in order to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency necessary to meet the requirements of its mandate.

Board List of Conciliators

Under the Agreement, the Board is mandated to keep an updated list of conciliators.

If mediation fails following a dispute, the Minister appoints a conciliator in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement. The conciliator is chosen from a list previously drafted by the Board.

The conciliator must be the Board Chairman or a person independent of the parties, supply guarantee beneficiaries and holders of harvesting permits for supplying a wood processing plant operating in the territory.

The Board members agreed on a process for updating the list of potential Board conciliators annually and on an updated list of 2024.

To update the list of conciliators, the Board adopted the following approach:

- annually update the list of conciliators
- implement mechanisms ensuring candidate neutrality in accordance with Agreement provisions
- ensure that the parties' decision-making regarding the choice of candidates is informed
- clearly define stakeholders' roles and responsibilities.

This process led to selecting eight (8) candidates and entering their names on the list of conciliators.

The changes adopted will improve Board operations.

Internal Operating Policies

Internal policies were reviewed to identify those that required updating. Two such policies were targeted. Board members approved updates to the General Operating Rules Policy and the Financial Accountability Policy. For the latter, they adopted guidelines governing expenses related to meeting organization, special events and Secretariat activities.

2025-2030 Funding

The Board agreed to submit a funding request to the parties for 2025-2030 in the same amount as for 2020-2025, i.e., an annual \$330,000 per party. The parties accepted this request.

Secretariat staff work, meeting organization and knowledge acquisition project implementation are essential to Board effectiveness and smooth operations.

Board Secretariat Relocation to Waswanipi

In July 2024, Cabinet approved the letter of agreement to be co-signed by the Cree Nation Government (CNG) and the Québec government regarding relocation of the Board Secretariat. CNG approved the agreement in December 2024, thereby confirming the recommendations submitted by the Bipartite Committee and their implementation. As soon as the agreement is ratified by the Québec government, a process for moving the Secretariat to Waswanipi can be put in place.

Conclusion

The year 2024-2025 confirmed the alignment between the management activities carried out on AFR territory since 2002 and the Agreement objectives.

Management activities comply with Agreement provisions on areas presenting interest for the Cree, even when a finer scale of analysis than that in the Agreement is used.

Management activities carried out since 2002 have allowed moose habitat quality to be maintained throughout AFR territory. This confirms achievement of the Agreement objective of maintaining habitat quality for species of importance to the Cree in order to preserve their traditional way of life. Despite these positive findings, the negative impacts of the summer 2023 forest fires will be felt over several years.

On the economic front, the first baseline for forest sector economic benefits for the Cree highlights under-utilized economic development potential and will allow strategic levers to be identified to improve Cree participation in enterprises and the job market and to increase Cree access to forestry contracts.

Changes made to Agreement implementation mechanisms within the framework of the Cree-Québec Forestry Board, Cree-Québec Forestry Economic Council and Joint Working Group mandates are part of a dynamic of continuous improvement and reflect the spirit of openness and collaboration of the members of both of signatory parties to the Agreement.

Chapter

4

Sustainable Development

The Cree-Québec Forestry Board's 2023-2028 Sustainable Development Action Plan

In accordance with its obligations under the Sustainable Development Act, the Cree-Québec Forestry Board adopted its Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) for the five-year period 2023-2028 in 2023. It specifically contributes to four of the five major government directions established for the period 2023-2028.

Below is a report of the actions carried out during the year 2023-2024 that contributed to the achievement of the Board's SDAP.

The Sustainable Development Action Plan can be downloaded from the Board's website.





Government Direction 2 :

Acting in favour of nature and health

Government objective 2.1 :

Conserving biodiversity and ecosystem services

Sub-objective 2.1.1 :

Improving Québec's network of protected and conserved areas

Action	Indicator	Target 2024-25	Results
Following the 2023 forest fires on AFR traplines, relocate territories of special interest to the Crees.	Rate of areas of territories of special interest to the Crees to be relocated following fires that were the subject of official relocation.	25% of the areas of special interest to the Crees have been relocated	The portrait of the areas affected by the forest fires of the summer of 2023 was completed The affected tallymen were met to find out their interest in relocating the areas of the areas of special interest that burned

Government objective 2.2 :

Improving the health of ecosystems

Sub-objective 2.2.1 :

Promote sustainable agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and fishing management and practices

Action	Indicator	Target 2024-25	Results
Improve the consultation processes with the territory's tallymen regarding operational integrated forest management plans.	Number of collaborative activities between the three implementation mechanisms of the Agreement for process improvement. These activities have been interrupted since 2020 and must be reactivated.	A training activity that includes the three Agreement mechanisms.	The organization of this meeting required several preparatory meetings The meeting was held on July 13 and 14, 2024 and brought together the members of the joint working groups, the JWG coordinators and the CQFB. Presentations on process improvement and training on the new tools were held during the event.



Government Direction 3 :
Promoting the participation of all in the sustainable development of Québec

Government objective 3.2 :
Promoting equality and diversity in our society

Sub-objective 3.2.1 :
Promoting social cohesion through cultural dialogue

Action	Indicator	Target 2024-25	Results
Continue to promote the cultural contribution of the Crees in the work of the Board and forest planning in AFR territory.	Number of initiatives integrating Cree traditional knowledge.	One (1) initiative followed by the Board that incorporates Cree traditional knowledge	The moose habitat quality project incorporates Cree traditional knowledge A moose habitat quality index was developed following the evaluation of its habitat quality after 20 years of AFR application The Cree were involved in determining the factors that influence the quality of moose habitat based on their traditional knowledge These inputs were included in the habitat quality index



Government Direction 4 :
Developing communities sustainably

Government objective 4.3 :
Building dynamic and innovative communities

Sub-objective 4.3.1 :
Supporting sustainable regional development

Action	Indicator	Target 2024-25	Results
Promote the implementation of the economic provisions of the Paix des Braves aimed at increasing economic benefits for the Crees.	Rate of increase in economic benefits for the Crees resulting from the economic provisions of Chapter 3 of the Paix des Braves.	Establish a list of significant and measurable indicators and obtain a list of up-to-date available data.	The portrait was produced and presented to the CQFB in April 2025. Recommendations were also made to increase the impact in the future.



Government Direction 5 :

Create an exemplary State that acts in favour of innovation

Government objective 5.1 :

Placing sustainable development at the heart of government decisions

Sub-objective 5.1.1 :

Assessing the sustainability of government interventions

Action	Indicator	Target 2024-25	Result
Assess the sustainability of the Board's structural actions in order to ensure that sustainable development is taken into account.	Percentage of the number of the organization's structural activities having been the subject of a sustainability assessment.	10% of our structuring activities have been subject to a sustainability assessment.	The establishment of this list was still awaiting completion at the end of the period.

Summary Financial Statements

March 31, 2025

Independent Practitioner's Review Engagement Report on the Summary Financial Statement

To the Members of Cree-Québec Forestry Board

The summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statement of financial position as at March 31, 2025, and the summary statement of operations and fund balances for the year then ended, are derived from the unaudited financial statements of Cree-Québec Forestry Board for the year ended March 31, 2025, on which we expressed a qualified opinion in our independent practitioner's review engagement report dated July 30, 2025.

Summary financial statements

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian public sector accounting standards. Reading the summary financial statements, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the unaudited financial statements of Cree-Québec Forestry Board.

Management's responsibility for the summary financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements in accordance with the basis of presentation described in Note 1 to the summary financial statements.

Practitioner's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express a conclusion indicating whether the summary financial statements represent a true and fair view of the unaudited financial statements based on our review. We conducted our review in accordance

with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements, which require us to comply with relevant ethical requirements.

A review of summary financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements is a limited assurance engagement. The practitioner performs procedures, primarily consisting of making inquiries with management and others within the entity, as appropriate, and applying analytical procedures, and evaluates the evidence obtained.

The procedures performed in a review are substantially less in extent than, and vary in nature from, those performed in an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion on these summary financial statements.

Conclusion

Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that these summary financial statements, derived from the unaudited financial statements of Cree-Québec Forestry Board for the year ended March 31, 2025, are not a fair summary of these unaudited financial statements, in accordance with the basis of presentation described in Note 1 to the summary financial statements.

*Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton S.E. N.C. R. L.*¹

Québec
July 30, 2025

¹CPA auditor, public accountancy permit no. A128760

Cree-Québec Forestry Board

Summary of Operations and Net Assets and Fund Balances Year ended March 31, 2025

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Revenues		
Partners' contributions		
Quebec Government	330,000	330,000
Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)	330,000	330,000
Money market funds	30,766	37,368
	690,766	697,368
Expenses		
Salaries	345,592	319,097
Internal management	49,549	62,843
Board meetings	10,711	15,717
Service contracts	108,653	59,038
	514,505	456,695
Excess of revenues over expenses	176,261	240,673
Fund balances, beginning of year	1,216,834	976,161
Fund balances, end of year	1,393,095	1,216,834

The accompanying note is an integral part
of the summary financial statements.

Note to Summary Financial Statements, March 31, 2025

1 - Basis of Presentation

The summary financial statements are derived from the unaudited financial statements of Cree-Québec Forestry Board for the year ended March 31, 2025, prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. The information contained

Summary of Financial Position Year ended March 31, 2025

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Assets		
Current		
Cash	566,449	336,356
Term deposits, 2.7% and prime rate (4.95%), maturing in February 2026	816,570	783,668
Accounts receivable	11,977	95,400
Prepaid expenses	11,279	12,248
	1,406,275	1,227,672
Long-term		
Tangible capital assets	4,984	6,946
	1,411,259	1,234,618
Liabilities		
Current		
Trade and other payables	18,164	17,784
Fund balances		
Unrestricted	1,243,111	1,064,888
Invested in tangible capital assets	4,984	6,946
Internally restricted	145,000	145,000
	1,393,095	1,216,834
	1,411,259	1,234,618

The accompanying note is an integral part
of the summary financial statements.

in the summary financial statements has been prepared by management and does not include the statement of cash flows as well as notes to financial statements. However, this information is included in the unaudited financial statements.

The unaudited financial statements are available at the head office of Cree-Québec Forestry Board.

Appendix I

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct of the Cree-Québec Forestry Board

Chapter I

Purpose and Field of Application

1. The present code of ethics and professional conduct has the purpose of preserving and strengthening the citizens' trust link in the Board's integrity and impartiality, promoting transparency within the Board and building up accountability with its members.
2. The present code of ethics and professional conduct applies to the Board members that are named by the Gouvernement du Québec, including the Chairperson, in addition to the members named by the Cree Regional Authority.
3. Concerning the Board staff, it must comply with the ethics and professional conduct standards that apply to it.

Chapter II

Principles of Ethics and Bylaws of Professional Conduct

4. The contribution of Board members to the realization of its mandate must be made in respect of the law, with honour, loyalty, rigour, caution, diligence, efficiency, assiduity and fairness.
5. The Board member is required, in the performance of his duties, to respect the principles of ethics and professional conduct set out in the present code of ethics and professional conduct. A Board member who is also governed by other standards of ethics and professional conduct is also subject to the present code of ethics and professional conduct. In the event of divergence, the most demanding principles and rules apply.

The Board member must, if in doubt, act according to the spirit of these principles and rules. He must also organize his personal affairs so that they cannot hinder the performance of his duties.

6. The Board member is required to exercise discretion concerning what he knows in or during the performance of his duties and is required to respect the confidential nature of the information received in this manner at all times.
7. The Board Chairperson must show reserve in the public expression of his political opinions.

8. The Board member must avoid placing himself in a situation of conflict between his personal interests and his official duties.

He must reveal in writing to the Board Chairperson any direct or indirect interest he has in an organization, enterprise or association liable to place him in a situation of conflict of interest, in addition to the rights he can present against the Board, by indicating, if applicable, their nature and their value. An indirect conflict of interest can occur in cases where a member can receive some sort of benefit in a roundabout way, such as through his children or an enterprise in which he holds shares.

The organizations, enterprises or associations referred to in the preceding paragraph do not include the organizations or associations which represent the Cree Nation (Eeyou Istchee).

In the case of the Chairperson, he must reveal this information in writing to the executive director of the Board, who is in charge of gathering and conserving declarations from all the Board members.

In the case of a member named by the Cree Regional Authority, the former must also reveal this information to the Cree Regional Authority.

9. The Board member must inform the Board Chairperson in writing of any contracts or research projects he is participating in and declare the subsidies obtained from any organization, enterprise or association.

In the case of the Chairperson, he must give this information in writing to the Board executive director, who is in charge of gathering and conserving declarations from all the Board members.

In the case of a member named by the Cree Regional Authority, the former must also reveal this information to the Cree Regional Authority.

10. The Board member must abstain from participating in any deliberation or decision involving any organization, enterprise or association in which he has an interest as set out in Articles 8 and 9. Furthermore, he must withdraw from the meeting during the length of the deliberations and vote on this question.
11. The Board Chairperson ensures that the minutes of Board meetings mention any abstention of one of its members from the decisions concerning any organization, enterprise or association in which he has an interest, for the purpose of transparency.
12. The Board member must not mistake Board property for his own and cannot use it to the advantage of himself or a third party.
13. The Board member cannot use any information obtained in or during the performance of his duties to the advantage of himself or a third party.
14. The duties set out in Articles 5, 6 and 13 do not have the effect of preventing a Cree Regional Authority representative to consulting to the Cree Regional Authority, nor does it prevent consulting nor reporting to the members of the Cree Nation (Eeyou Istchee) or the organizations or associations which represent it, unless the information is confidential under the law and that such confidentiality is in accordance with the *James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement* or the Agreement concerning a New Relationship between the Crees of Québec and the Government of Québec.
15. A Board member is allowed to accept and keep a gift, or accept a token of hospitality or other benefits as long as the present is of modest use and value and is offered during an event attended by the receiving member.
Any other gift, token of hospitality or benefit received must be returned to the donor or government.
16. The Board member cannot, either directly or indirectly, grant, solicit or accept an undue favour or benefit for himself or a third party.

17. The Board member must not allow himself to be influenced in his decision-making by outside considerations such as the possibility of an appointment or job openings and offers.
18. The Board member who has ceased to hold office must behave in a manner in which he does not gain any undue benefits from his previous Board duties.
19. The Board member who has ceased to hold office must not disclose confidential information he has received nor give anyone advice based on information unavailable to the public concerning the Board or another organization or enterprise with which he had important and direct relations during the year preceding the end of his mandate.

The Board member who has ceased to hold office but remains with the appointing party, in the context of his dealings with this party or associations which represent it, will have the right to inform it, in order to ensure good governance.

20. The Board chairperson must ensure the respect of the principles of ethics and rules of professional conduct by the Board members.

Chapter III

Political Activities

21. The Board Chairperson intending to run for an elected public function must inform the general secretary of the Executive Board of the Gouvernement du Québec.
22. The Board Chairperson intending to run for an elected public function must leave office.

Chapter IV

Remuneration

23. Each party shall assume the remuneration and the travel costs of its own members, in compliance with Article 3.48 of the Agreement concerning a new relationship between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Crees of Québec and, in the case of a member named by the Gouvernement du Québec, in compliance with the order in force, if the case may be.

The Board member can receive other remuneration for the performance of duties other than those linked to the Board.

Chapter V

Certification

24. The Board member must observe the rules and principles set out in this code. At the time of his appointment, the member must sign the certification document produced in the appendix confirming that he has read and understood the present code and that he agrees to respect it. The signing of the certification by the member already in office must be done within 60 days following the effective date of the present code.

Chapter VI

Effective Date

25. The present code of ethics and professional conduct of the Board members along with the here-attached certification form were adopted during the meeting of June 15, 2004 and are rendered effective as of August 3, 2004.

Certification

WHEREAS the Cree-Québec Forestry Board adopted, on June 15, 2004, a Code of ethics and professional conduct for its members;

WHEREAS article 24 of this Code makes provision that the Board members must certify that they acknowledged the document mentioned above and that they commit themselves to follow the rules enacted in it;

I the undersigned, _____

member of the Board: _____

certify to have acknowledged the Code of ethics and professional conduct of the Cree-Québec Forestry Board; and commit myself to follow the rules provided for in this document so as to preserve the integrity of the Board.

Signed at, _____

the _____ day of _____, 20____.



Appendix II

Members and Coordinators of the Joint Working Groups

The Joint Working Groups (JWGs) and their coordinators are two of the three main implementation mechanisms prescribed under the provisions of Chapter 3 (forestry) of the Agreement. The JWG members are a cornerstone of efforts to implement the Agreement, and are central to communications and information-sharing by the tallymen and Agreement territory timber supply guarantee holders.

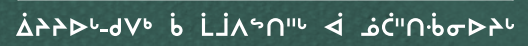
The JWGs are mandated to

- Integrate and implement the specific rules agreed upon in respect of the Adapted Forestry Regime;
- When required, to develop harmonization measures;
- Review conflicting uses in order to find acceptable solutions;
- Ensure the implementation of the processes related to preparation, consultation and monitoring of forest management plans;
- Adopt internal operating rules;
- Ensure that each party places all relevant and available forestry-related information at the disposal of the other party;
- Discuss any technical issues.

As at March 31, 2025, the members of the Joint Working Groups were:

Communities	Representatives	
	MRNF	Cree
Mistissini	Carolann Tremblay <i>Local Coordinator</i>	Vacant Post <i>Local Coordinator</i>
	Jean-Sébastien Audet	Jeremy Linton
Nemaska	Jean-Sébastien Audet <i>Local Coordinator</i>	Vacant post <i>Local Coordinator</i>
	Charles Burgy	Rose Wapachee
Oujé-Bougoumou	Carolann Tremblay <i>Local Coordinator</i>	Jonathan Bosum <i>Local Coordinator</i>
	Olaniran Afoudah	Sarah Cooper
Waskaganish	Jean-Sébastien Audet <i>Local Coordinator</i>	Aaron Blackned <i>Local Coordinator</i>
	Olaniran Afoudah	Bert Moar
Waswanipi	Carolann Tremblay <i>Local Coordinator</i>	Henry George Gull <i>Local Coordinator</i>
	Jean-Sébastien Audet Olaniran Afoudah Charles Burgy	Vacant Post Norman Ottereyes
JWG Coordinators	Sabrina Morissette	Dion Michel





www.ccqf-cqfb.ca