



Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association (COTA)

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Jean Crépault, Panel Manager
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
200 Sacré-Coeur Blvd.
13th. Floor, Fontaine Building
Hull QC
K1A 0H3



May 27, 2003

Dear Mr. Crepault,

On behalf of the Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association (COTA), I am pleased to enclose a copy of the proposed directives for the Eastmain-1-A and Rupert Diversion Project. I also am enclosing a copy of our oral presentation, which we plan to table at the public consultation in Montreal on May 28, 2003.

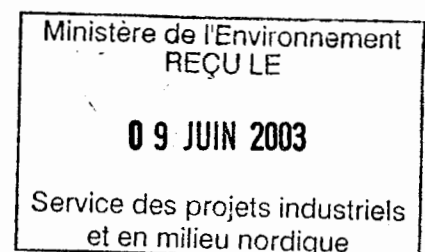
Subject to further consultations with COTA's Board of Directors and the membership, COTA may present an addendum and/or further suggestions to the attached directives at one of the public consultations scheduled to be held in Mistissini, Waskaganish or Nemask.

I would be pleased to meet with you to discuss these directives at your convenience.

Sincerely yours

Robin McGinley
Executive Director

c.c. Secrétariat du Comité d'évaluation (COMEVE)
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Comité d'évaluation
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Presentation of Draft Directives for the Eastmain-1-A and Rupert Diversion Project at the Public Consultation Montreal, May 28, 2003

By the

The Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association (COTA)

Introduction

The Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association (COTA) is pleased to present a series of draft directives in connection with the environmental assessment of the proposed Eastmain-1-A and Rupert Diversion Project.

COTA was established in 2000 in accordance with Sections 28.4 and 28.6 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. COTA's Board of Directors and its membership represent the interests of all the Cree communities, tourism operators and other tourism-related stakeholders in Eeyou Istchee—the Cree Traditional Territory. The Eastmain 1-A and Rupert Diversion project is located within the Eeyou Istchee. Therefore, the construction, post-construction, cumulative and long-term impacts of the proposed project on the tourism and related cultural industries (e.g., arts and crafts) economies are of great interest to COTA and to other Cree tourism related organizations such as the Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association (CNACA)

There is a range of tourism and tourism related activities that are already taking place, and, in particular, that potentially could take place, within the Eastmain-1-A and Rupert Diversion project area. These include traditional outfitting, fishing and hunting operations, as well as a growing market in specialized tourism activities such as ecotourism, adventure tourism, learning tourism and cultural tourism.

Together, the travel, tourism and cultural industries (e.g., arts and crafts) are already among the largest industries in the World.¹ Therefore, the development of a variety of tourism activities in the project impact area is expected to make substantial contributions to the future diversification of the Cree economy. The building of a sustainable cultural tourism market also is expected to have a positive impact on the promotion of Cree culture and on the further development of the Cree arts, crafts and other cultural industries. The latter area is the responsibility of the newly formed Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association (CNACA).

COTA has been mandated to assume a leadership role for the development of tourism in Eeyou Istchee. A mission statement, operating principles and objectives, guides COTA's activities.

The COTA mission statement includes:

- A collective vision for a world-class sustainable tourism industry in Eeyou Istchee.
- Tourism development that is in harmony with Cree culture and values; and
- Tourism development based on partnerships among Cree communities, businesses and related institutions such as the Cree Native Arts and Crafts Association.
-

COTA's Operating principles that are relevant to the Eastmain 1-A and Rupert Diversion project are:

- The protection and preservation of the Cree way of life;
- The recognition of a stewardship role regarding the environment;
- The development and implementation of high-quality and authentic Cree tourism products and experiences;
- The encouragement of business opportunities through partnerships;
- A commitment to communicate cultural pride and a respect for Cree values, including spirituality, self-reliance and sharing.

COTA's Objectives include:

- Implementing Section 28.6 of the JBNQA;
- Developing Cree tourism as a sustainable industry;²

¹ According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), travel and tourism is the largest industry in the world, transporting millions of people internationally and generating trillions of dollars in gross economic output. There are no reliable figures on tourism in the circumpolar Arctic. Arctic tourism is predominantly nature based consumptive (i.e., hunting and fishing) and non-consumptive (i.e., cultural and ecological based) tourism. Arctic tourism is widely categorized as "niche" or "specialized" tourism.

² According to the World Tourism Organization (and supported by organizations like the World Travel and Tourism Council and the Earth Council) "Sustainable tourism means meeting the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems." The 1992 Earth Summit, Agenda 21 report states that "Because of their position in the world economy, travel and tourism have a moral responsibility to take the lead in making the transition to sustainable development."

- Building community awareness and capacity;
- Tourism education, training and professional development;
- Marketing and promoting Cree tourism locally, nationally and internationally.

The proposed directives are intended to help and to guide the proponent in preparing a project impact statement that will be in line with COTA's Mission, Operating Principles and Objectives as well as the concerns and interests of COTA's members. The proposed directives are organized under three headings;(1) Project impacts (2) Mitigative measures and (3) Environmental monitoring and long-term management programs.

Under the heading of Project Impacts, sixteen proposed directives are focused mainly on insuring that the impact statement includes an inventory and an assessment of all the actual and potential tourism and cultural industry assets and resources located in the project study area or in areas affected by the cumulative impacts of the proposed project. Various kinds of impacts, positive and negative, and ways for dealing with the impacts are identified for inclusion in the impact statement.

Nine directives are proposed under the heading of mitigative and compensatory measures. These directives cover ways in which the proponent could deal with these measures by means of a variety of cooperative and consultative arrangements, including using the skills, expertise and information management systems of Cree organizations such as COTA and its related organization, CNACA.

Six directives are proposed under the heading of Environmental and Long-Term Management Programs. These directives are mainly concerned with long-term consultation and decision making processes that are consistent with COTA's mandate, responsibilities and tourism development interests and that will help build sustainable tourism and cultural industry economies in Eeyou Istchee, the Cree Traditional Territory.

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COTA's Operating principles that are relevant to the Eastmain 1-A and Rupert Diversion project are:

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COTA's Objectives include:

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Proposed directives

In line with COTA's Mission, Operating Principles and Objectives, directives are proposed herein to guide the proponent in preparing the project impact statement.

Project Impacts

1. The features of the natural and sociocultural environment (that are important resources for tourism) attract visitors because of their aesthetic, recreational or educational/scientific value. However, many of the same features are particularly sensitive to disturbances by human activities. Negative impacts resulting from inadequately planned or uncontrolled development in the geographical setting of the Eastmain 1-A and Rupert Diversion project could damage the very environment on which successful development (including tourism development) depends. In other words, without careful attention to the balance between the volume and type of industrial activity being proposed, and the sensitivities and carrying capacities of the resources being developed, tourism in the project study area could not only be environmentally harmful but also economically self-defeating.

The impact statement should therefore present an overview of the tourism and cultural industry resources located in the project area, or adjacent areas potentially impacted by the project. The overview will evaluate impacts on the Cree tourism and cultural economies and potential changes in the diversity, quality and quantity of wildlife, plant, water resources, and other tourism and cultural assets. The proponent will evaluate the availability and use of these assets and resources by Cree and non-Cree outfitters and ecotourism, adventure and cultural tourism operators and by Cree and non-Cree residents and tourists. In addition, the impact

² According to the World Tourism Organization (and supported by organizations like the World Travel and Tourism Council and the Earth Council) "Sustainable tourism means meeting the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems." The 1992 Earth Summit, Agenda 21 report states that "Because of their position in the world economy, travel and tourism have a moral responsibility to take the lead in making the transition to sustainable development."

statement shall estimate the future availability and use of these assets and resources by local communities, by residents of other nearby regions and by tourists for cultural, recreational and tourism purposes.

2. The EM-1A/Rupert hydro-electric development involves the diversion or partial impoundment of two of Quebec's major rivers, the Eastmain and the Rupert, both of which have played a major role in the historical development of trading relationships between the Cree population and the French and British trading companies (and their successors and competitors) involved in the fur trade. The Rupert River, in particular, was part of a major transportation route linking the James Bay trading posts and the St. Lawrence River system and its tributary, the Lac St-Jean basin.

Both the Eastmain and the Rupert rivers also have long been recognized as major 'wilderness' rivers with spectacular scenery and considerable interest for wilderness-based tourism activities. They are both important assets in the Québec inventory of wilderness rivers.

From this perspective, it is appropriate for the proponent to document, for the purposes of the impact assessment, those aspects of these river systems, which are essential for an understanding of their cultural, historical and wilderness values. This evaluation should pay particular attention to the river landscapes on the Rupert River below the diversion and the Great Bend along the Eastmain River.

The proponent also should include in the impact statement an explanation of the steps that it proposes to take to record for posterity the relevant ecological, cultural and historical evidence which will eventually be flooded or otherwise lost following the implementation of the diversion project. This will be important for the future development of cultural tourism in the project impact area.

3. The opportunities for multiple-purpose recreational and tourism use of the Eastmain-1 reservoir and the impoundments required to effect the Rupert diversion should be considered carefully by the proponent. Reservoir operations, policies for clearing prior to impoundment, and the clearing of debris following impoundment, as well as the provision of secure access facilities are all important components of this evaluation. The impact statement should assess the measures, which will be taken to pursue this objective of multiple-purpose use.

This impact assessment should include Sakami Lake, which will have to accommodate the passage of the flows originating with the Rupert River basin. It also is important that Hydro-Québec describe, in the impact statement, provisions for the development of adequate bathymetric maps and navigational aids for the use of the impoundments, which will be created as a result of this project.

4. Because of the historical and cultural importance of the Rupert River system (among other considerations), particular attention should be paid in the impact

statement to the identification and documentation of portage routes, and, where considered appropriate by the affected communities, the development of trails and information centres as a means of recording this aspect of Eeyou Istchee history.

5. It is understood that the proponent proposes to construct a series of sills or weirs for the purpose of raising and stabilizing water levels along selected segments of the Rupert River valley. The lake-like impoundments created in this manner may have important implications for the collective interests of the affected communities, as well as individual hunters and recreational tourists, etc. Access to these managed sections of river valley should be assessed carefully and the impact statement should document how aesthetic considerations will play an important role in the design and layout of these control structures.
6. The impact statement shall describe the tourism and related economies (e.g. cultural, arts and crafts, and trapping) of the region and of the Cree communities, with particular attention to those communities and areas potentially impacted by the project. The proponent will include a detailed description of the evolution of these related economies from 1975 up to the present. The description should include the value of these economies, the number of people employed or involved in each sector, and the seasonality of the activities. The areas and locations of facilities and other infrastructures used in these activities, segregated by type of activity (e.g., hunting, fishing, winter recreation trails, trap lines, adventure tourism, cultural tourism sites, etc) should be identified. Areas and types of tourism and cultural activities being impacted by the project, or having potential to be developed and/or expanded as a result of the project, also should be identified.
7. The magnitude and scale of project impacts on the Cree tourism and cultural industry economies depends, in part, on the size and type of tourism development opportunities identified during the preparation of the proponent's impact statement. For example, hunting, fishing and certain other types of recreational tourism associated with large construction camps has a greater potential to degrade fragile ecosystems than tourism related projects, such as birding, nature photography or archeology, which attempt to attract visitors with ecotourism, scientific or educational interests. Consequently, to help avoid foreclosing tourism development options, the impact statement shall evaluate the project's impacts that may degrade resources that are especially well suited to a sustainable tourism industry. The proponent's environmental and land-use planning process should also identify tourism opportunities and alternatives in the project area that are able to balance single and multiple use tourism and cultural industry activities.
8. When describing the tourism and related economies of the region and the Cree communities, including their potential for future development, the impact statement shall evaluate the project's impacts in terms of three fundamental issues:

- Access to the Cree traditional territory and to the tourism and cultural industry resources within the geographical setting of the project.
 - The sustainability of the Cree tourism and related cultural economies, keeping in mind COTA's Mission, Operating Principles and Objectives.
 - The capacity of the Cree communities and population to participate in the tourism and cultural economies
9. The impact statement should evaluate certain sociocultural considerations, which are particularly important in the assessment of Cree tourism development opportunities in the Project study area. The influx of relatively large numbers of visitors (e.g., tourists attracted to view the work sites and/or migrant construction workers) could have serious impacts on local Cree communities and the environment. Without proper coordination and planning, service demands on nearby Cree communities (e.g., transportation, health care facilities, arts and crafts products, cultural and tourism information, etc.) especially during seasonal tourism and peak construction periods, may exceed capacity. This could have adverse affects for residents as well as tourists and workers. Large scale, unplanned commercialization of cultural tourism activities and traditional artisan industries also could lead to a loss of authenticity with negative results for the Cree tourism operators and artisans, and possibly for the buyers of these services as well.
 10. With regards to the project study area, the impact statement shall inventory and evaluate the movement of all species of wildlife and shall document and map land and water routes used, or that are identified as potentially being important, in connection with Cree tourism and cultural activities. Whenever possible, the proponent will consult with, and develop working relationships with Cree communities and regional institutions such as COTA and CNACA that have access to local and traditional knowledge as well as expertise concerning these matters.
 11. The impact statement should evaluate the visual as well as the physical impacts of accommodations, temporary facilities, signage and other infrastructures that will be built for use during the construction and post-construction periods, including works that could be converted for future use by visitors. Ease of construction and "efficient" design should be mitigated by considerations for harmony with the surrounding environment and the Cree sociocultural context. The impacts of project infrastructure on tourism resources that are valued for their aesthetics (e.g., waterfalls, gorges, view points, archeological and spiritual sites) should be specifically addressed in the impact statement.
 12. The project's impacts on Cree tourism development activities should include an analysis of the anticipated distribution of costs and benefits. Whereas the benefits of Cree tourism activities in the project area may be assumed to accrue to local

Cree communities, residents and to Cree institutions, these same communities and institutions may incur more of the overall costs (loss of tourism assets and resources, degraded environment, etc.) and may enjoy less of the financial and employment benefits than visitors, non-Cree tourism operators and immigrant workers or commercial intermediaries. For example, if high quality employment opportunities are expected to result through the project's construction and operations, the impact statement should describe how many high-quality tourism related employment opportunities will be made available to local Cree, their communities and to Cree institutions such as COTA and CNACA, and for how long, especially if training is required to qualify them for the work involved.

13. The Cree tourism economy is, and will be affected, by large construction works such as the La Grande complex and the proposed Eastmain-1-A and Rupert Diversion projects. These impacts include the construction of significant infrastructures such as roads, temporary and permanent camps, trails, observation points and the opening up of cultural and spiritual sites such as archeological locations. Because of the many linkages between tourism development and environmental quality and because of the linkages between tourism development and other Cree socio-economic sectors, the impact statement should analyze and report on the project's impacts on these linkages.
14. The potential impacts of the project may have implications on Cree tourism operators and communities other than those immediately affected by the Eastmain 1-A and Rupert diversion project. The impact statement should describe the cumulative impacts of the proposed project taking into consideration the impacts on the Cree tourism economy and the past experience of other similar projects under the proponent's purview, e.g., those existing or potential Cree tourism activities that are located close to the La Grande complex.
15. Depending on the component of the tourism and cultural economies being considered, the impact statement shall take into account the impacts of the proposed project that could extend beyond the immediate geographical setting of the project (e.g., to Cree and non-Cree communities, to the area being impacted by the La Grande Complex and to other regions of the province). The time frame for this analysis should go beyond the project planning and construction period.
16. The impact statement shall examine all those factors where the project impacts could jeopardize or improve safety, security or access conditions within the project area, in particular those areas where there are, or could be, tourism and/or cultural activities and resources. The examination should include impacts on users of the study area (e.g., tourists, hunters, Cree and construction workers) resulting from construction, start-up and operation of such things as project infrastructures, access roads and waterways.

Mitigative and Compensatory Measures

17. Environmental assessment incorporates the concept of evaluating alternatives to the way in which the project can be executed. During the project planning, the proponent should identify Cree tourism and cultural industry development options in the project study area that could be carried out in association with the hydro development. The impact statement should describe these options in ecological, technical, economic and social terms for the benefit of Cree decision makers.

Special impacts associated with each option, their suitability under local conditions and institutional, training and environmental monitoring requirements should be identified and compared to the Cree resources available. Any alternatives identified in the impact statement should address the overall scale of development appropriate for the region. At one end of the range is small-scale, low impact tourism, e.g., a wildlife refuge or a field research station or a viewing site with low numbers of visitors, offering forms of recreation such as hiking and nature photography and oriented towards an educational learning experience for the visitor. At the other end is relatively large-scale tourism, such as the visitor reception centre at the La Grande Complex. The impact statement should also suggest what integrated planning opportunities might be available to the Cree in order to coordinate the implementation of any Cree tourism options in harmony with the proponent's plans.

18. The impact statement shall evaluate how the construction of access routes would impact on the opening up of the Cree Traditional Territory for tourism and cultural industry purposes through transportation links to the South. The proponent shall indicate to what extent access would be improved or not, what other changes would result (e.g., potential users, frequency, seasons, methods of transportation and changes in travel costs in various Cree communities and with communities or destinations in the region and the South). The impact statement shall evaluate the potential for changes in the "sense of identification" with the Cree Traditional Territory that may occur on the part of both local populations and visitors from other regions in the province and elsewhere.
19. Cree tourism development in the study area requires coordinated management and consultations between the Cree agencies responsible for tourism related activities, such as COTA and CNACA, and the project proponent. Management training, legal assistance and the organizational restructuring of COTA (e.g., the hiring of designated staff and specialized committees to monitor and evaluate project impacts) may be required to implement Cree tourism opportunities identified in the impact statement, to establish, monitor and enforce tourism environmental standards, to provide assistance to other impacted Cree institutions working with COTA to prevent deterioration of the natural and cultural resources and to assess socioeconomic effects of the project on local communities and Cree tourism operators. The impact statement should indicate what kinds of institutional support it intends to provide to enable COTA/CNACA to deal with these tourism related impacts of the project.

20. Access to the local knowledge of Cree tourism operators, community tourism businesses and Cree tourism related organizations such as COTA/CNACA is essential to an efficient and effective assessment of the project. The impact statement should indicate how the proponent will establish a working relationship with COTA to collect and analyze information as part of the proponent's consultation and research process leading up to the preparation of the impact statement. Part of this working relationship should include the proponent's support of the Eeyou Istchee Tourism Information Management System (EI-TIMS©), which is managed and operated by COTA.
21. Various Cree organizations, such as COTA and CNACA, have already conducted, and continue to collect local information and undertake tourism related studies covering the Cree Traditional Territory. The proponent shall endeavor to work with and support these ongoing activities and the impact statement shall describe any cooperative arrangements so made with these specialized organizations whose work will be impacted by the project.
22. The impact statement will consider in what way the proposed project, its projected impacts and any potential mitigative and compensatory measures as well as environmental monitoring and long-term management programs are compatible with the future development plans of Cree institutions. In particular, COTA's vision, and plans to establish a world-class sustainable tourism industry and CNACA's aspirations to develop a strong, diversified arts and craft and cultural industries economy in Eeyou Istchee should be examined in this light.
23. The impact statement will suggest ways in which the development plans of Cree communities and Cree institutions like COTA and CNACA can be facilitated through project economic spin-offs, employment opportunities and the development and marketing of Cree tourism and cultural industry products.
24. The impact statement shall present options under which its various mitigative, compensatory, environmental monitoring and/or long-term management programs would assist in the implementation of COTA's mission and objectives. It also is important that the impact statement describe how the affected Cree communities, Cree tourism operators and COTA/CNACA will be consulted with regard to any program options that are implemented and that the consultation process be organized in advance of the proponent's construction, and long-term operational phases.
25. The impact statement shall present appropriate strategies for the development of education programs designed and carried out by Cree appointed specialists to heighten awareness of the project's impacts on the development of a sustainable tourism and culture-based economy. The statement also should describe the related business and career opportunities that may be presented through the proponent's mitigative, compensatory, environmental monitoring and/or long-term management programs.

Environmental Monitoring and Long-term Management Programs

26. The impact statement shall present a program of clean-up measures at the end or during the construction and operational periods. Included in the measures proposed will be the restoration of degraded areas, the closing of temporary roads and the removal of waste and toxic materials all of which may have severe negative impacts on the development of a wilderness and culturally-based tourism industry in Eeyou Istchee.
27. The impact statement should present ways in which Cree institutions such as COTA and CNACA can participate in the decision making process as researchers and consultants, and in establishing, collaborating and facilitating the proponent's environmental surveillance, monitoring and long-term management programs.
28. The impact statement shall describe the measures to be taken to ensure that on-site personnel are well informed with respect to the tourism and cultural industry programs, services and products that are available through institutions like COTA and CNACA and its members.
29. The impact statement shall indicate how the proposed project and its impacts on tourism and related cultural industries will be managed and which Cree agencies, such as COTA and CNACA, will be involved in which particular consultative processes during the overall lifespan of the project.
30. The impact statement will describe how the monitoring and long-term management programs that may be prescribed during the project environment review process will ensure that the project remains consistent with the development of a sustainable and equitable Cree tourism and cultural industry. In particular, the impact statement shall indicate how the respective roles of COTA and the Weh-Sees Corporation could be harmonized to insure that the Corporation's mandate will not restrict the scope of COTA's responsibilities and objectives during the planning, construction and operating phases of the project.
31. The impact statement will indicate how the operation, utilization, development, possible rebuilding and/or eventual dismantling of certain facilities, buildings and infrastructure will be handled, taking into consideration the future needs of Cree institutions such as COTA and CNACA and their members. The proponent also will identify whether certain of its installations may be used or turned over to these and/or other Cree institutions for use in connection with the exercise of their missions and mandates.