



Summary Statement of the President of the Cree Trappers Association  
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The Crees inhabit a large part of the Boreal Forest in the province of Quebec. Even when the Canadian government settled them into villages in the 1960's, the Crees lived in dispersed families, relying on subsistence fishing, hunting and trapping.

Their natural heritage and culture were challenged and altered by further development and expropriations of the forests, waters, lands, and perhaps, even the skies.

The relationship with the land, the animals, the fowl and the fish remains to be a concern never to be neglected and forgotten by the Crees.

The boreal forest represents 25% of earth's remaining forests. Ecosystems can be found in some of the world's largest wetland areas. Together, the forest and wetlands are essential components in the earth's air conditioning system. The planet's temperature rises, but the boreal forest remains to be the major terrestrial sink slowing the global warming.

The Plan to "harvest" this slow growing, low biomass ecosystem for the giant paper mills, hydro electric utilities, mining companies and northern expansions of municipalities have become a threat to us all.

Even to this day, the Crees use what is seemingly left of their natural heritage and culture in the continued traditional practice of fishing, hunting and trapping.

All through their existence, the Crees have always held on to these practices, as well as, involving stewardship and management of the natural resources.

From time immemorial, with the wisdom of their ancestors and Elders continually passed down, and these archetypes living as perfect examples in the sacred trust of stewardship and management, this practice lives on within Cree astchee (lands).

The Cree harvesters propose that all matters related to management and their continued rightful use of the land, forests, water, and skies be seriously considered and maintained as a priority issue in the agenda of development.

Hunting, fishing and trapping are rights of subsistence protected by the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights.

The Cree Trappers Association assumes the responsibility for the protection of the rights associated with the traditional economy. The C.T.A. has formal responsibilities for the mandate under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Wildlife management, Trapline management and Wildlife conservation remain the three priorities of Resource Management because of their continued use of all these natural resources and their pursuit in traditional harvesting.

The government(s) cannot assume to match the traditional wildlife and trapline management expertise of the Cree tallymen. This expertise has been preserved and has been continually passed on from past generations and continuing for future generations.

The professional interest in the use of traditional knowledge in wildlife biology attests its validity and importance. Anything less cannot be of Cree origin and of grand importance.

The Cree land rights use, must be taken into account, and therefore consciousness and guided effectiveness must be observed in the development process.

Our Cree heritage, our Cree values gives us this day of reflection.

In conclusion, if our moral values don't reconcile us together, in protecting these lands on which we stand, the inevitable penalty will come in the future. Every moral call is being brought to your attention this evening.

Thank you all and may your stay in Cree land be unforgettable.