

# Boumhounan NewsFlash

Eastmain-1-A Powerhouse and Rupert Diversion

No. 14, October 2005

## Social aspects

With the environmental impact assessment for the Eastmain-1-A powerhouse and Rupert diversion project now submitted, the members of the Boumhounan Committee would like to inform you of the findings of the impact assessment, as well as the mitigation measures proposed for the project.

Issue No. 14 talks about the project's impacts on Cree society and the mitigation measures planned to minimize them.



Clint Flageole

## STUDY FINDINGS

### Socio-economic aspects

The main findings from the studies conducted from 2002 to 2004 are as follows:

- The Cree population has more than tripled since 1970.
- Over one third of the Cree population is under 15 years of age.
- The level of education is on the rise, but is still under the average for Québec as a whole.
- The Crees control their own social, cultural and economic institutions.
- The villages are equipped with complete cultural and public services, but have a serious housing shortage.
- Unemployment is very high. Creating enough employment to handle the large numbers of young people entering the job market constitutes a major challenge for Cree society.
- The Crees consider alcoholism, drug abuse and unemployment to be among their most serious social problems.
- The Crees have maintained hunting, fishing and trapping activities, as well as their relationship with the land, as integral parts of their identity, culture and way of life, despite the rapid and significant changes they have experienced over the past decades.

### Perception of development

According to discussions on Cree views of development, held in Mistissini, Nemaska, Waskaganish and Eastmain, the Crees appreciate development because it has improved living conditions in the villages and facilitated contact between the Cree communities and the outside world. However, people resent the fact that development was imposed on them from the outside, and say that it has had environmental consequences and changed the Cree way of life. In general, the Crees want development that

- involves the Crees fully or is carried out by them,
- has the least possible impact on the land and its resources,
- does not compromise hunting, fishing and trapping, and
- creates permanent, local jobs.



From left to right : Charlie Wapachee, John Wapachee, Mario Paradis, Jonathan Wapachee, André Marcoux, Andrew Wapachee



Harold Coonishish

## Project impacts

- Job creation and increased revenues for the workers and tallymen's families.
- Better distribution of wealth due to job creation for young Crees and environmental work carried out by the tallymen's families.
- More resources that the tallymen's families and Cree workers can use for hunting, fishing and trapping.
- Incentive for young Crees to complete their studies, given the job opportunities created by the project.
- Greater appreciation for the status of the tallymen, because of their participation in the project.
- Possibility of forging closer relations between Cree and non-Cree workers, or between workers and Cree communities, through sporting or recreational events.
- Cree workers may make more use of healthcare services offered in Cree communities near the workcamps during the construction phase.
- The passing down of traditional knowledge associated with certain places will be compromised, due to the fact that these locations will be flooded.



Jerry Matoush

## Mitigation measures

- Pursuant to the *Boumhounan Agreement*, create a training fund for Cree workers and earmark contracts worth \$240 million for Cree companies.
- Award contracts for remedial works to the tallymen and their families.
- Encourage Cree entrepreneurs to remind employees to bring their medications to the workcamps, in order to reduce pressure on healthcare services in nearby Cree communities.
- Pursuant to the *Boumhounan Agreement*, record and preserve traditional knowledge associated with flooded areas.
- Promote involvement by the Crees, especially the tallymen, in mitigation measures, remedial works and follow-up studies.
- Encourage sports and recreational activities that bring together Cree and non-Cree workers, as well as workers and Cree communities.
- Continue to apply the measures developed for the Eastmain-1 project to control alcohol consumption at workcamps and prevent contraband.
- Set up a joint committee to promote harmonious relations between workcamps and Cree communities

- Feelings of loss on the part of users of traplines affected by the project, and of Crees who are particularly concerned with preserving the land.
- Risk of increased alcohol consumption and contraband on the part of Cree workers living in the construction camps.

## Follow-up program

- Relations between Cree villages and the workcamps
- Cree workforce training
- Consequences of the project for participating Cree workers

## Representatives and Coordinators

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