

# Boumhouan NewsFlash

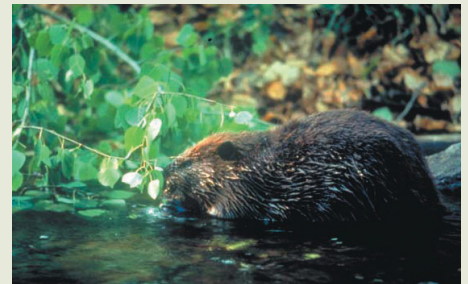
Eastmain-1-A Powerhouse and Rupert Diversion

No. 9, July 2005

## Large and small wildlife

With the environmental impact assessment for the Eastmain-1-A powerhouse and Rupert diversion project now complete, the members of the Boumhouan 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. 9 talks about the project's impacts on large and small wildlife and the mitigation measures planned to minimize them.



## FINDINGS



### Large wildlife

#### Caribou

In 2002, only eight caribou were seen in the Rupert diversion bay section. The caribou population changes very fast; over 10,000 caribou were seen in 2003, whereas 15,000 were observed in 2004, less than 10 km from the tailbay.

#### Moose

In general, moose populations in the study area are small — less than one individual per 10 km<sup>2</sup>. These numbers are typical of the densities found on the Québec taiga for the past thirty years; no moose trails were observed in the Rupert diversion bays in 2002, and only two animals were seen in the tailbay in 2004.

### Small wildlife

Aerial and land surveys indicate that hare, marten and squirrel are the most abundant species in the diversion bay area.

## IMPACTS

### Large wildlife

Creation of the diversion bays will result in the displacement of large animals. However, replacement habitat areas are available nearby.

To prevent bears from being caught in their dens when the diversion bays are filled, the tallymen will trap or relocate them before impoundment.

In winter, the presence of the diversion bays will have a positive impact on migratory caribou, which use large bodies of water as travel routes.

## Small wildlife

Land clearing and impoundment of the Rupert diversion bays will disturb about 60 beaver lodges. The lower level in the Rupert River will displace some beaver colonies, but the presence of the weirs and the development of new riparian habitat areas along the exposed shores should help the animals become established on a number of stretches of the river.

In Lake Boyd and Sakami Lake, few beaver lodges will be affected by the higher water level. As for the diversion bays and Rupert River, a relocation or trapping-out program will be carried out in certain areas, at the discretion of the tallymen, to limit the number of animals affected.

The creation of the diversion bays will also cause a loss of habitat for other fur-bearing animals and grouse, but the densities of these species are generally low. The construction and clearing activities will contribute to reducing the number of animals that could be affected by impoundment of the diversion bays. Moreover, surveys carried out in 2002 show that the shores of Lake Boyd and Sakami Lake are intensively used by small animals, and in the long run, this should be the case in the Rupert diversion bays as well.

Along the banks of the Rupert River, some small wildlife species will experience a temporary loss of habitat as a result of the changes in the river's flow. Others will benefit from the increase in wetlands, and from the restored habitat in exposed areas that will be seeded.

## Mitigation measures

- In cooperation with the tallymen, beaver in the Rupert diversion bays, along stretches of the Rupert River not controlled by hydraulic structures, and around Lake Boyd will be trapped out or relocated
- Bear in the diversion bay area will be trapped or relocated in cooperation with the tallymen
- During impoundment, fly-overs of the diversion bays will be conducted to find endangered animals and relocate or trap them

## Follow-up program

- Inventory of moose and caribou in the diversion bay section
- Inventory of beaver colonies on the shores of the diversion bays and along the Rupert River
- Assessment of use by small animals of developed wetlands, diversion bay shores and Rupert River banks
- Survey of special-status species, such as the pygmy shrew and the southern bog lemming, in developed and seeded wetlands



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