

Albanel-Temiscamie-Otish Provincial Park Project:

"A Partnership in the Making"

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Outline of Presentation

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2. Historical Background
3. Colonial Era
4. Chronology of events – ATO Park Project
5. Mistissini's Involvement in Park Development
6. Partnerships: i) Government of Quebec
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Mistissini

- Community of Mistissini

  - located 795 km. NE of Montreal,Qc.;
  - 110 km. from the nearest airport in Chibougamau;
  - Population: 3,500 residents;
  - Largest in-land Cree community;
  - At the southern-east end of Mistassini Lake.



Historical Background

- For millennia, Mistissini Cree lived in the Mistassini and Albanel Lakes region;
- Prior to contact with Europeans (early 1600's), Cree had, and still maintain, an intimate, "holistic" relationship with the land (Eeyou Istchee);
- Land provided resources for survival: food, clothing, shelter and medicines;

Historical Background – cont'd

- Cree's initial contact with Europeans was in early 1600's; first Europeans were fur traders and missionaries;
- Hudson's Bay Company built numerous trading posts on Cree territory:

  - present location of Mistissini, a site of a HBC's trading post built in the 1800's;
- Contact with Europeans changed the way the Cree hunted:

  - introduction of "tallyman" system of familial territories;

  - new hunting practices and encroachment of non-Cree hunters in Cree territory depleted beaver and other game.

Colonial Era

- Depletion of beaver and other game created hardships for the Cree in the 1920's and 30's; famine and other hardships prompted the introduction of Federal and Provincial social services programs to Cree;
- Offer of services entailed the relocations of Cree members from three other communities (Nitchiquin, Neosweskau, & Nemaska) to Mistissini;

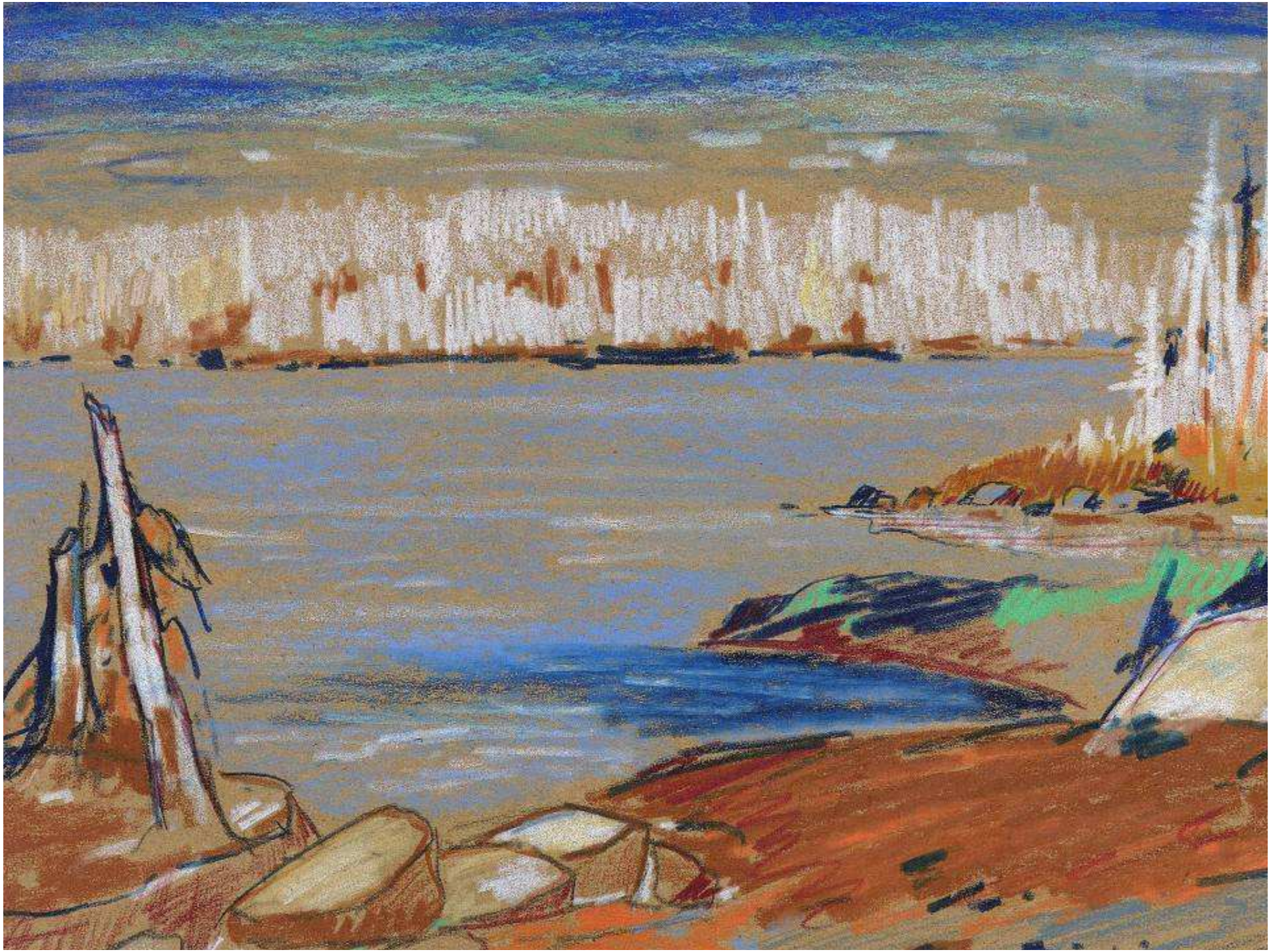
Colonial Era – cont'd

- Forced relocation of Cree people was the federal government's initial imposition of its policies upon the Mistissini Cree through the Department of Northern and Indian Affairs (DIAND);
- By 1950's, Cree children flown from their home communities to attend residential schools in Ontario and later, Quebec;
- Centralization of power under DIAND over Aboriginal communities effectively weakened and undermined Aboriginal self-governance and economic independence;
- Until recently, industrial development (mining, forestry and energy) on Cree territory not respectful of Cree interests leading to negative environmental and socio-economic impacts, conflicts with the traditional land use of Cree trappers and without any economic benefits for the community.



Resurgence of Cree Self-Governance

- In 1975, Cree signed the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) with Canada and Quebec;
- JBNQA and Cree Naskapi Act provided the Cree (and Naskapi) with opportunity to regain some semblance of self-government; although much of this self-governance amounted to self-management; these two legislations provided the Cree with the opportunities to begin the journey back to self-government;
- In 1978, Cree Trappers' Association (CTA) incorporated; re-enforcement and recognition of Cree stewardship of traditional lands; opportunity for Cree to continue traditional conservation and preservation practices;
- In 2002, Cree and Government of Quebec signed the "Paix des Braves" Agreement; recognition of the importance of Cree consultation and involvement in industrial development within Cree territory.



Chronology: Development of ATO Park Project

- 1975: Cree signed James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement;
- 1992: Government of Quebec consults with Cree Nation of Mistissini to develop a Provincial Park in the Mistassini and Albanel region;
- 1993: MOU sent to Ministry of Recreation, Fish and Game to begin negotiations in good faith;

Chronology: Development of ATO Park Project – cont'd

- 1997: Study titled "Conservation Parks in Cree Territories" by James Morrison released;
- 2001: Establishment of a Working Group to begin discussions concerning the Co-management and development of the Albanel-Mistissini-Waconichi Wildlife Reserve and the Albanel-Temiscamie-Otish Proposed Park;

Chronology: Development of ATO Park Project – cont'd

- 2002: Cree Nation of Mistissini and Quebec exchanged letters to appoint respective representatives of the Working Group;
- 2002 – 2005: Working Group held series of meeting to fulfill mandate in the co-management of AMW Wildlife Reserve and development of ATO Park Project;
- 2005: Cree Nation of Mistissini and SEPAQ sign Partnership Agreement;
- 2006: Quebec appoints Qussaï Samak as Chairman for the Public Hearings; January 2006, Public Hearings held in Mistissini and Chibougamau; and
- 2007: Government of Quebec announced creation of ATO Bio-diversity Reserve, later to be ATO Park;



Cree Involvement in Development and Management of Parks

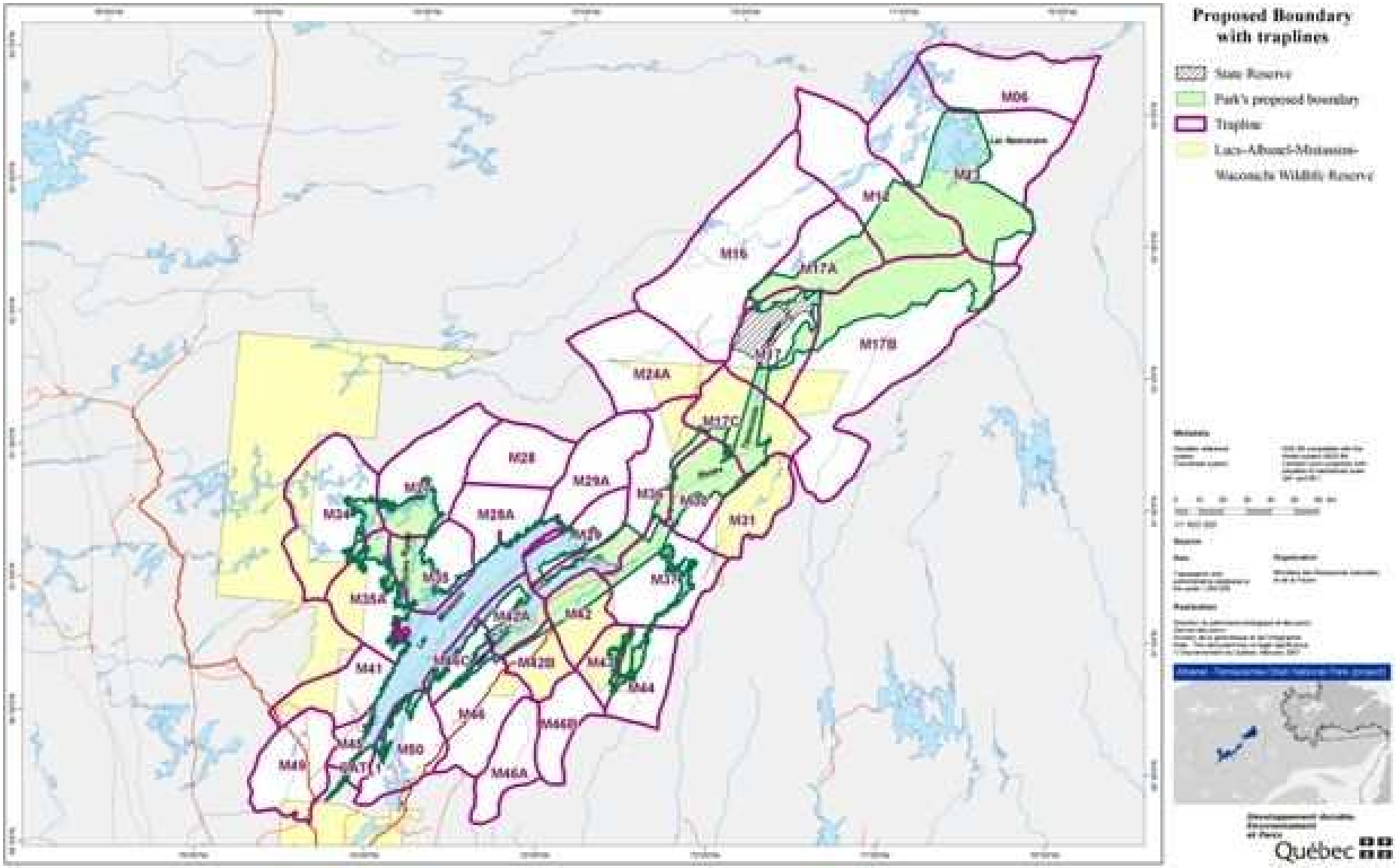
- Involvement of Cree communities in the development and management of Parks entails an adjustment in the federal and provincial governments' approaches for parks development;
- In discussing how landscapes are shaped by the interactions of people and landscapes, Canada Parks Council states: "conservation approaches need to reflect traditional connections to the land and engage people in stewardship of place."

Community Involvement in Park Planning – cont'd

- Cree traditional systems of conservation and preservation were built into traditional Cree hunting practices long before European contact;
- Each family group had a hunting territory; within this territory, the family hunted in a certain area, killing only enough game to ensure survival, then moved to another area the following year to give time for the land to replenish itself thereby creating a nomadic hunting lifestyle that reflected the seasonal rhythms of the land;
- Cree systems of conservation and preservation also complemented the stewardship or tallyman system that was later introduced by the HBC.

Community Involvement in Park Planning – cont'd

- Cree Nation of Mistissini's position regarding the ATO Park Project is to ensure the treaty rights gained under the James Bay and Northern Quebec take precedence and will continue to entrench these hunting, fishing and trapping rights for the Cree;
- "Paix des Braves" agreement includes provisions for Cree consultation and participation in any development within Cree territory;
- Important to ensure Cree knowledge of the land and systems of conservation and preservation have a prominent role in development of the future ATO Park;
- Cree tallymen must have a role in the planning and development of the ATO Park; must incorporate Cree knowledge into future programs and services of the Park.


Proposed Boundary with traplines
State Reserve
Park's proposed boundary
Trapline
Lacs-Albanel-Mistassini-Waconichi Wildlife Reserve
M06
M12
M16
M17A
M17B
M17
M24A
M17C
M28
M29A
M28A
M21
M35A
M42A
M42
M41
M42B
M44
M46
M46B
M50
M49
M46A
Québec

Partnerships in the Making

- Participation in park planning and development is new experience for Cree;
- Park planning closely involves the tallymen; bi-annual meetings held with them by the Working Group;
- All partners concerned will also participate in the integrated enhancement of tourism plan for the proposed ATO park, the wildlife reserve and Land category II (45,000 km^2)

Partnerships in the Making – cont'd

- Partnership with the Government of Quebec:

  - Quebec is willing to work with Cree Nation of Mistissini to plan and develop ATO Park;

  - Quebec's willingness to create the "first inhabited" Park is a recognition of Cree treaty rights;

  - ensure active participation of the members from CNM, especially the tallymen who are most impacted by the Park;

  - yet, Cree participation must not be treated as an "after thought";

Partnership in the Making – cont'd

- Partnership with SEPAQ:

  - Partnership Agreement signed with SEPAQ in 2005;

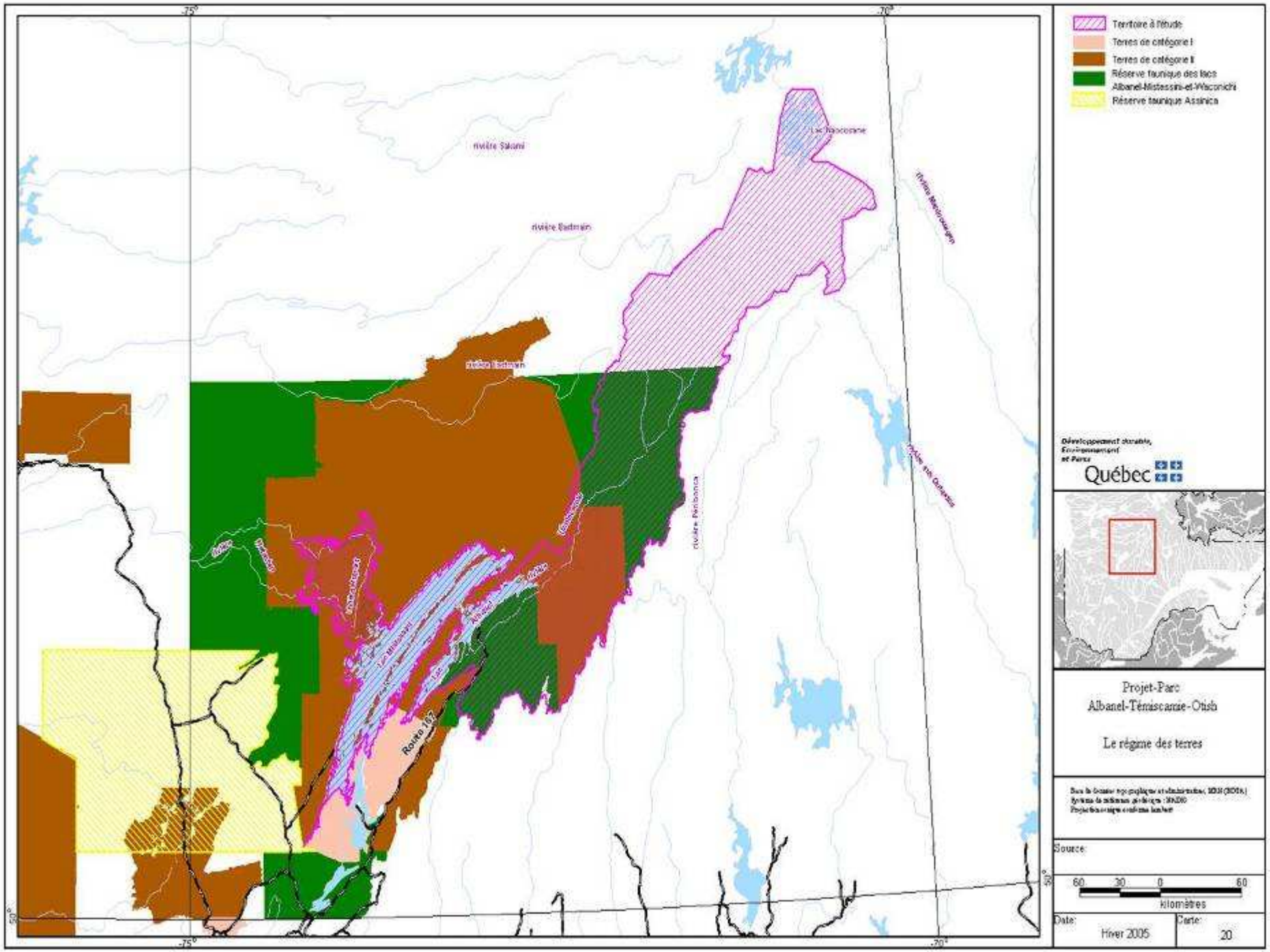
  - Cree recognize SEPAQ's expertise in Park Management;

  - CNM needs SEPAQ's assistance in training Cree personnel for the Park;

  - Challenge will be how to incorporate Cree values and culture into the planning and management of the AMW Wildlife Reserve and ATO Park;

Conclusion

- It is the position of the Cree Nation of Mistissini that the ATO Park Project needs its support to become a reality – a Cree project as well as a Quebec project;
- Partnerships that are set with Quebec and SEPAQ must be equal in all development stages of the ATO Park;
- Because of JBNQA, the ATO Park will be the first “inhabited” park in Quebec wherein Cree hunters and trappers can continue their traditional pursuits;
- Mistissini Cree must have a prominent role in the development and management of the park that will reflect their values and culture;
- The Cree Nation of Mistissini must ensure that the hunting, fishing and trapping rights of its members are protected;
- Mistissini Cree are the only people who can showcase their culture to the outside world and ensure that it is presented in respectful manner.



Territoire à l'étude
Terres de catégorie I
Terres de catégorie II
Réserve faunique des lacs Albanel-Mistessini-et-Waconichi
Réserve faunique Assinica
rivière Sakami
rivière Bastmain
rivière Péribonca
Route 167
Développement durable, Environnement et Parcs
Québec
Projet-Parc
Albanel-Témiscamie-Otish
Le régime des terres
Source:
60 30 0 60
kilomètres
Date:
Hiver 2005
Carte:
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Thank you! Wachiya!

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