

**GCC(EI) / Cree Nation Government
Annual General Meeting of Members**

SUBJECT: Cree Community Access Roads

WHEREAS the construction of the James Bay Highway (now renamed the Billy Diamond Highway) was completed in 1974, and provided an opportunity for the construction of access roads to the Cree coastal communities of Waskaganish, Eastmain and Wemindji (“Access Roads”) so that these communities could become accessible by land all year round;

WHEREAS the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* (“JBNQA”) contemplated the construction and maintenance of the Access Roads in Section 28 regarding Economic and Social Development for the Crees;

WHEREAS paragraph 28.16.1 of the JBNQA provides that “[n]egotiations will continue between Canada, Québec and the James Bay Crees to construct and maintain access roads to join the settlements of Eastmain, Paint Hills [Wemindji] and Rupert House [Waskaganish] to the main Fort George - Matagami road [James Bay Highway]”;

WHEREAS the Access Roads were constructed as gravel roads between 1994 and 2001, with certain financial contributions from Canada and Quebec;

WHEREAS for many years, the Cree Nation Government has sought to engage Canada and Quebec to undertake the rehabilitation and upgrading of these Access Roads, as well as the road connecting the community of Nemaska to the Route-du-Nord (“Nemaska Road”), which have a combined total length of 313 km, including all portions in Categories 1, 2 and 3 lands;

WHEREAS since at least 2013, Cree representatives have raised this matter on a number of occasions with Canada and Quebec to request them to provide a contribution for the rehabilitation and upgrading of the Access Roads and the Nemaska Road, including through high-level correspondence, and discussions and representations at the Cree-Canada Standing Liaison Committee and the joint Cree-Canada and Cree-Quebec Standing Liaison Committees;

WHEREAS, despite these efforts, the matter of federal funding to upgrade the Access Roads and the Nemaska Road remains outstanding and unresolved;

IT IS RESOLVED:

THAT the delegates of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government 47th/44th Annual General Assembly mandate the Board/Council of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government to diligently pursue discussions with Canada and Quebec to secure their contribution required for the rehabilitation and upgrading of the Access Roads and the Nemaska Road, in compliance with Section 28 of the JBNQA, and to report on the progress of such discussions at each meeting of the GCC(EI)/Cree Nation Government Board/Council.