



Cree Trappers' Association
Annual Report 2024-2025

One heart, one land, one future

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Message from Clayton Tomatuk Chair of the Board

Wachiya to our members,

This year marks my first year as the Chairman of the Cree Trappers' Association (CTA), and I am both humbled and excited to serve our members. It has been an honour to be a part of our nation's deep commitment to protect and preserve the Cree Way of Life.

The forest fires of 2023 tested our people but as we have done for generations, we stood strong together. Our communities have shown resilience in the face of these challenges. The CTA was proud to lead the rebuilding of cabins this summer, helping our hunters and trappers return to the land.

One of my greatest priorities is ensuring our youth remain connected to Eeyou Pimaatsiun—our traditional way of life. It is inspiring to see young people learning, practising, and embracing the knowledge passed down to us. They are our leaders of tomorrow, and it is important that the CTA continue to promote the passing on of knowledge between generations.

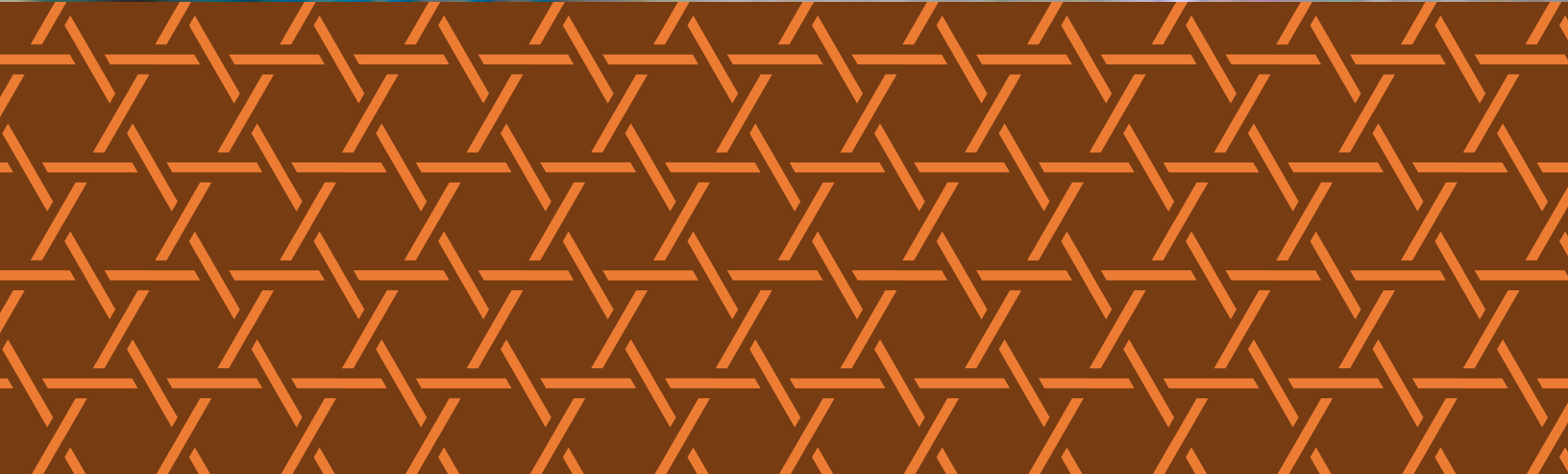
As we look in the coming year, the CTA is focused on continuing to serve our members and communities. We look forward to rebuilding additional cabins, re-establishing the cabin insurance program, and continuing our programs that encourage access to the Cree way of life. We are also committed to supporting youth programs and documentation of traditional knowledge so that these vital skills live on for future generations.

On behalf of the CTA, I thank you for your continued trust and support. Together, we will continue to protect, preserve, and live by our values as Eeyouch.

Meegwetch,

Clayton Tomatuk





Message from Allan A. House Chief Financial Officer and Interim President/Chief Executive Officer

Another year has passed, and on behalf of the Regional Cree Trappers' Association, it is once again both a privilege and an honour to present our Annual Report for 2024–2025. We have encountered many challenges, and our commitment remained strong to support our members in preserving and living our Eeyou traditional culture.

Our mandate has always been to protect and promote the interests and values of Eeyou/Eenou trappers, support traditional pursuits, and uphold the governance of our hunting territories in Eeyou Istchee while caring for the land and the environment. The CTA continues to offer initiatives that help members return to the land, inspiring to see both Youth and Elders spending time on the land in safe and meaningful ways, while adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Steady progress has been made in the rebuilding of non-insured cabins lost to forest fires, an initiative that is vital for our community. None of this work would be possible without the generous support and collaboration of our partners. We are especially grateful to our Cree partners — Niskamoon Corporation, Cree Nation Government, Cree Hunters Economic Security Program, and the Eeyou-Eenou Community Foundation — for their steadfast commitment. We also acknowledge the many exploration and mining companies for their solidarity and contributions in moving this important work forward.

We have always placed great importance on our Elders — as the wisdom keepers of our lands and Eeyou Istchee — in preserving the Cree way of life through our initiatives. Looking ahead, we remain committed to ensuring that our members can occupy the land. Together, we share the responsibility of keeping our culture strong, protecting Eeyou Pimaatisiun, and safeguarding our language for generations to come.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Cree Trappers' Association Board of Directors for their trust and support, especially as we navigated changes in management and leadership while reaching the final phase of our reorganization. It has been an honour to serve as interim President and Chief Executive Officer, carrying this responsibility with dedication to our hunters, trappers, and members, while remaining true to our mission and vision.

We are deeply thankful for the ongoing support of our Cree entities. With funding from the Cree Nation Government, Board of Compensation, Niskamoon Corporation, and others, we were able to extend our capacity and deliver important projects and programs for our members throughout the year, including assistance and subsidies for Indoohoo Eenouch/Eeyouch.



I would like to acknowledge and thank the leadership of John Shem as President and CEO of the CTA. We need to highlight the dedication of the Cree Nation Government for working with us in the best interests of our Nation and for engaging with our people through gatherings and information meetings. With new leadership taking office in the summer of 2025, we look forward to continuing a strong and collaborative relationship with the incoming Grand Chief, Paul John Murdoch, and Deputy Grand Chief, Linden Spencer.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the Honorable Mandy Gull-Masty for her trust and support of the Cree Trappers' Association. We warmly congratulate you on your appointment as Minister of Indigenous Services of Canada and wish you every success in this important role.

Finally, I extend a heartfelt thank you to all my colleagues for their dedication and determination. Together, we continue to advance our goals by updating our strategic plan and introducing new projects and programs. The success of our work is built on teamwork, shared wisdom, and mutual respect. Your contributions are deeply valued and appreciated.

Thank you, *Meegwetch*,

Allan A. House



About the Cree Trappers' Association

History

In 1975, the Grand Council of the Crees signed the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA) with the objective of ensuring that the traditional activities of the Eeyou/Eenou people could continue to be exercised freely and without undue restriction. Three years later, the Cree Trappers' Association (CTA) was established as a not-for-profit organization, in accordance with the provisions of that agreement.

Over the years, several landmark agreements have strengthened the recognition of Cree rights and institutions. The Agreement Respecting a New Relationship between the Cree Nation and the Government of Quebec (Paix des Braves), signed in 2002, and the Agreement Concerning a New Relationship between the Government of Canada and the Crees of Eeyou Istchee, signed in 2008, both reaffirmed the importance of protecting the rights, uniqueness, and distinctiveness of Eeyou/Eenou trappers and hunters, while providing the CTA with the means to continue this mandate.

The Eeyou Marine Region (EMR) Land Claims Agreement, also known as the Offshore Agreement, signed in 2012, concluded decades of negotiations between the Crees and the Government of Canada regarding rights and responsibilities in the offshore areas of Eeyou Istchee. This agreement explicitly recognizes the role of the Cree Trappers' Association and its local committees in wildlife management within the offshore region—an authority that was not acknowledged under the original JBNQA.

The Cree Trappers' Association (CTA) continues to play a central role in the management of wildlife and natural resources across Eeyou Istchee, ensuring that traditional knowledge and practices guide territorial governance. This role has been strengthened and supported by the Governance Agreement on Eeyou Istchee James Bay (2012–2014) with Quebec and the Cree Nation Governance Agreement (2017) with Canada, which have consolidated Cree self-government and confirmed the CTA's involvement in decision-making within the territory.





General Review of the Year

2024–2025 Annual Review – Cree Trappers' Association (CTA)

The 2024–2025 year was busy with community projects, training, and important planning. The CTA prepared the 3rd cohort of Eeyou Ituun, supported local committees with strategic planning, and ran workshops in Chisasibi for local administrators, EMR, and leadership. Last year's Maamu Upihkaapuutau Nihtaaminaahuu gatherings in Chisasibi and Mistissini—attended by over 500 people—led to points of action that were followed up this year. The CTA also took part in a mining consultation with the Cree Nation Government, bringing the perspective of land users and tallymen.

The year saw strong financial management. General revenues grew to \$3.99M, and project revenues rose to over \$5.3M, helping fund major initiatives like the Cabin Rebuild Project, which rebuilt 48 cabins across seven communities. Other programs included the Trapper's Training Project, the Canadian Firearms Safety Course, and the Community Freezer Project, supporting safety, culture, and access to traditional food.

Wildlife and environmental research and management projects continued across the entire Cree territory, including initiatives such as wildlife health monitoring, moose research, ptarmigan studies, the FISHES fisheries project, fish telemetry, eDNA sampling, polar bear monitoring, and waterfowl projects—each combining scientific research with Cree knowledge. Community members, including youth, were actively involved, helping monitor wildlife, protect habitats, and share traditional skills.

Overall, the year showed strong teamwork, community engagement, and continued support to Eeyou Pimaatisiun.



Our Board of Directors and Executive Committee 2024-2025



Clayton Tomatuk
Chair of the Board
Eastmain



Elijah Sandy
Vice Chair
Whapmagostui



Don Saganash
Executive Committee Member
Waswanipi



Keith Bearskin
Director
Chisasibi



Evelyn P. Gunner
Mistissini
(February 13, 2025)



Bill Blackned
Nemaska



James Wapachee
Oujé-Bougoumou



Adrian Chiskamish
Chisasibi
(February 13, 2025)



Abel Neeposh
Mistissini



Pauline T. Hester
Observer
Washaw Sibi



Redfern Blueboy
Waskaganish



Arden Visitor
Wemindji



Peter Kapashesit
Observer
MoCreebec

Our Staff



John Shem
President and CEO



Allan A. House
CFO



Jacinthe Beaudoin
Controller



Stephanie Varty
Environmental Manager



Judy Coon-Come
Eeyou Ituun Coordinator /
Communications Officer



Sophia Cheezo
Corporate Secretary



Thomas Stevens
Special Projects Coordinator



Samuel Moses
Special Projects Assistant



Phyllis Tomatuk
Secretary Receptionist



Gordon Louttit
Accountant Clerk





2024-2025 Review - Finance and Administration

Overview of Global Revenues and Expenditures for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2025:

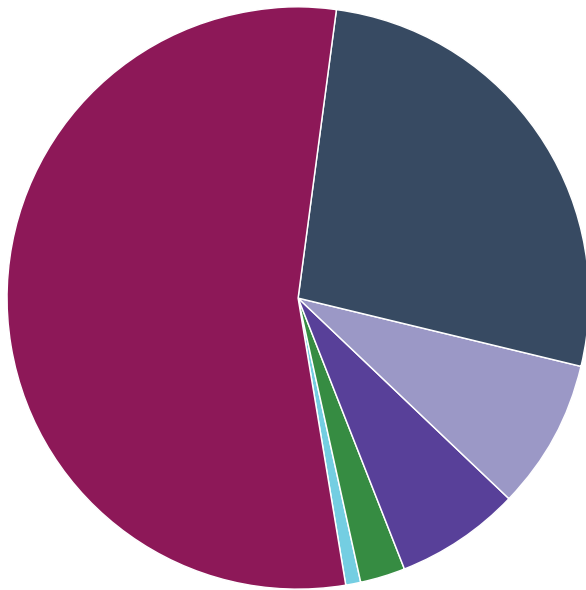
In 2024–2025, general revenues rose to **\$3,993,346**, up **13%** from \$3,527,930 the previous year. General expenses increased to **\$3,122,122**, resulting in a surplus of **\$871,224**, compared to \$766,077 in 2023–2024. This reflects steady growth in core operations and strong financial management.

Project revenues more than doubled, reaching **\$5,308,877** from \$2,179,030, driven by the **Federal New Relationship Agreement (FNRA)**, and contributions from the **Eenou Eeyou Ltd Partnership (EELP)** and **Niskamoon Corporations**. Project expenses rose to **\$5,655,732** from \$2,633,315, reflecting the expanded efforts in **cabin rebuilding following the 2023 forest fires**. The net project balance improved to **-\$346,855**, compared to **-\$454,285** last year, demonstrating better cost coverage despite larger-scale activities.

External and specific revenues (EMR) increased to **\$785,665** from \$703,202, a **12% rise**, due to higher funding from **EMRWB**, contributions from **Génomex Québec, Université Laval** and deferred revenues. EMR expenses matched revenues, resulting in a balanced outcome compared to a prior deficit of \$29,743.

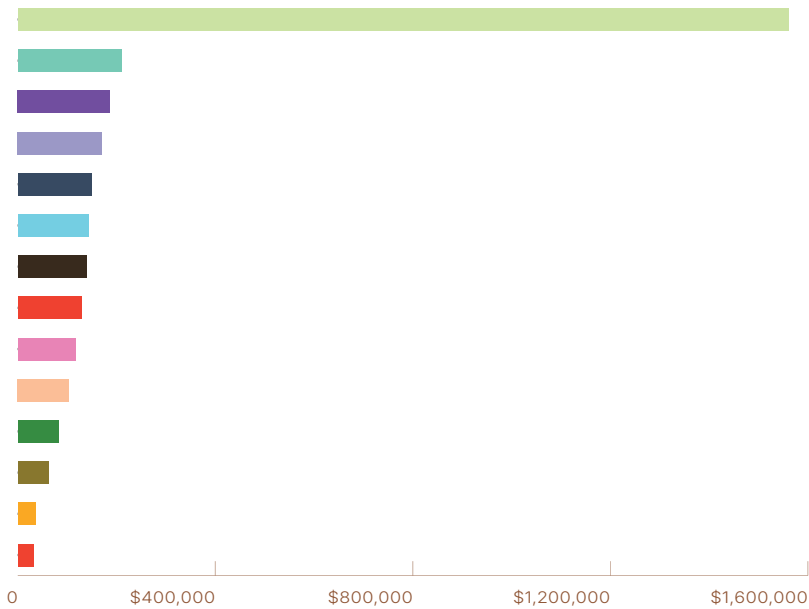
Overall, the organization experienced strong growth across all revenue streams. Increased funding enabled expanded projects and program initiatives, while core operations and EMR programs remained well-managed, highlighting financial stability and effective stewardship of resources.

**General Fund
Revenues 2024-2025**



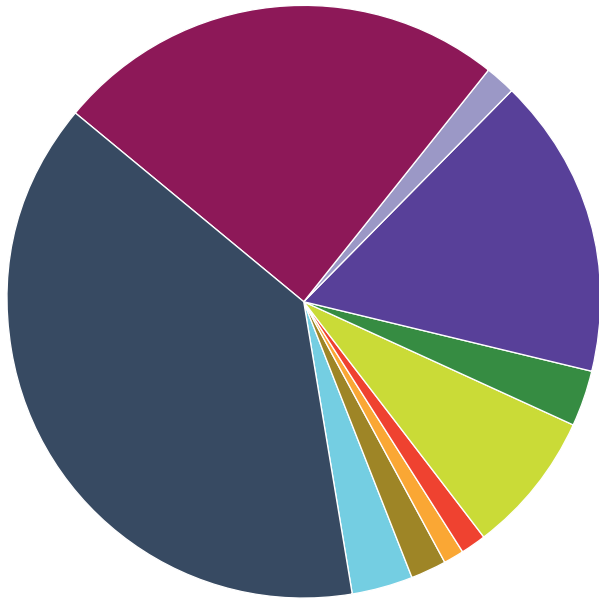
Federal New Relationship Agreement	\$ 2,600,386
Eenou Eeyou Ltd Partnership	\$ 1,261,508
Board of Compensation	\$ 397,570
Net investment Income	\$ 316,300
Administration Fees	\$ 120,776
Other Revenue	\$ 36,578

General Fund - Expenses 2024-2025



Salaries & Benefits	\$ 1,560,406
Travel and related expenses	\$ 209,800
Staff Training	\$ 187,229
General Assembly	\$ 170,825
Honoraria	\$ 149,775
Board of Directors meetings	\$ 142,790
Office & residence occupancy costs	\$ 139,295
Professional Fees	\$ 129,120
Office expenses and telecommunication	\$ 116,638
Contracted Services	\$ 103,650
Executive meetings	\$ 82,938
Contributions to other organizations	\$ 62,098
Management meetings & travel	\$ 36,114
Other expenses	\$ 31,444

**Projects & Programs
Revenues 2024-2025**



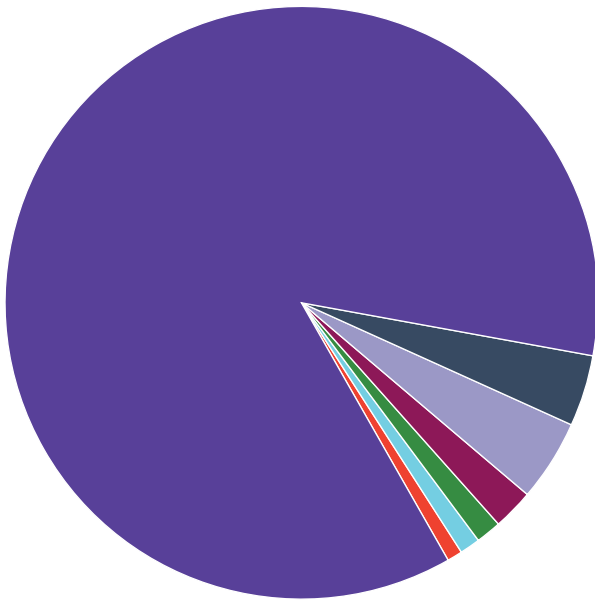
Federal New Relationship Agreement	\$ 1,311,809
Apatisiwin Skills Development	\$ 97,392
Niskamoon Corporation	\$ 872,108
CNG	\$ 161,077
Cree Hunter Economic Security Board	\$ 400,000
Indigenous Services Canada	\$ 81,880
RIFFF (mining companies)	\$ 60,000
CBHSSJB	\$ 100,000
Other	\$ 170,827
Eenou Eeyou Ltd Partnership	\$ 2,053,784

Projects & Programs - Expenses 2024-2025



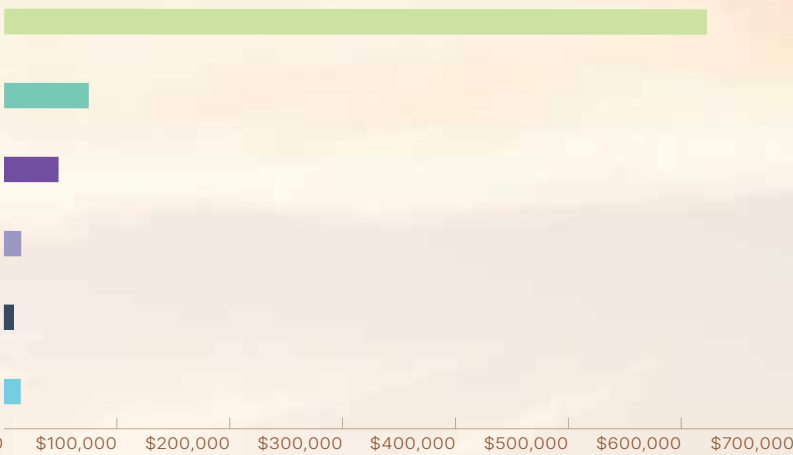
Local CTA Programs & Projects	\$ 2,819,811
Rebuilding of burnt cabins	\$ 2,005,502
Cree Hunting & Trapping Skills	\$ 148,982
Community Freezers	\$ 147,841
Coordinator Special Projects	\$ 146,489
Access to Traditional Food	\$ 108,926
Strategic Planning	\$ 106,565
Moose Mangement	\$ 49,925
Other	\$ 121,691

**Eeyou Marine Region
Revenues 2024-2025**



EMRWB	\$ 676,728
Deferred Revenue	\$ 31,452
Laval University	\$ 35,029
Nunavik Marine Region Wildlife Board	\$ 18,014
Concordia University	\$ 10,566
Génome Québec	\$ 7,454
Other	\$ 6,422

Eeyou Marine Region - Projects Costs 2024-2025



EMR Land Claim Agreement	\$ 623,188
Polar Bear Ecology	\$ 74,980
FISHES	\$ 48,338
Environmental DNA	\$ 15,326
Fish Telemetry	\$ 8,966
Other	\$ 14,867



Local EELP & FNRA Funds 2024-2025

In 2024-2025, the CTA allocated a total of \$3.1 millions to all nine communities; each community receives a base amount and an amount based on their memberships sold the previous year. Further funds are attributed depending on the size or location of the community.

	Amount allocated for 2024-2025	Amount carried over from 2023-2024	Total funding 2024-2025	Total amount spent in 2024-2025	Balance to carry over in 2025-2026
Chisasibi	\$ 501,511	\$ 227,191	\$ 728,702	\$ (447,210)	\$ 281,492
Eastmain	\$ 248,063	\$ (79,495)	\$ 168,568	\$ (198,136)	\$ (29,568)
Mistissini	\$ 641,427	\$ 13,211	\$ 654,638	\$ (490,397)	\$ 164,241
Nemaska	\$ 251,412	\$ (17,804)	\$ 233,608	\$ (173,226)	\$ 60,382
Oujé-Bougoumou	\$ 225,413	\$ 44,831	\$ 270,244	\$ (238,975)	\$ 31,269
Waskaganish	\$ 292,733	\$ 6,462	\$ 299,195	\$ (252,638)	\$ 46,557
Waswanipi	\$ 303,297	\$ (209)	\$ 303,088	\$ (244,942)	\$ 58,146
Wemindji	\$ 276,586	\$ 23,715	\$ 300,301	\$ (237,797)	\$ 62,504
Whapmagoostui	\$ 400,212	\$ 37,694	\$ 437,906	\$ (345,309)	\$ 92,597
Total	\$ 3,140,654	\$ 255,596	\$ 3,396,250	\$ (2,628,630)	\$ 767,620

Governance and Meetings 2024-2025

The Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and Management Committee meet regularly to ensure the CTA is well-governed and operates effectively.

Board of Directors' Meetings

2 Regular Board Meetings:

- June 19–20, 2024
- December 3–5, 2024

3 Special Board Meetings:

- October 2, 2024
- October 23, 2024
- February 13, 2025

Annual General Assembly

August 23–24, 2024, in Nemaska

5 Executive Committee Meetings

- April 19, 2024
- June 7, 2024
- August 8, 2024
- September 11–12, 2024
- November 15, 2024

Management meetings were also held regularly to deal with day-to-day operations.



2024-2025 Review - Special projects

Overview of Special Projects for 2024-2025

Cabin Rebuild Project (2024-2025)

The Cabin Rebuild Project was launched in April 2024 in response to the 2023 forest fires, which destroyed many cabins essential to the way of life for hunters and trappers. Led by the Cree Trappers' Association (CTA) in partnership with Niskamoon and the Cree Nation Government, the project aims to replace cabins so that Cree beneficiaries can continue their traditional and cultural activities in safe, functional spaces. Planned over at least three years, the initiative focuses on rebuilding cabins in communities with the greatest need, with the CTA managing all aspects of the project, including purchasing materials, coordinating transport, hiring workers, and overseeing funds.

Funding comes from Niskamoon, the Cree Nation Government, the CTA, and the Eeyou-Eenou Community Foundation. These resources support the purchase of high-quality materials, construction equipment, and transportation by road, boat, and air. In April 2024, funds were deposited for materials for 50 cabins, ready for June delivery. Transportation began in July with support from Mistissini-based carriers and Air Tunilik flights, including deliveries by otter plane. Using Mirage Outfitter as an alternative base saved approximately \$150,000 and ensured timely delivery to remote locations despite logistical challenges.

Community involvement remains central to the project. Local carpenters, laborers, and transporters have been hired to support construction and delivery. Communities such as Mistissini and Chisasibi played key roles in moving materials, cleaning camp sites, and preparing grounds for cabin rebuilding. This participation not only created local employment but reinforced the importance of Cree communities working together to protect their way of life. Beneficiaries are selected by local CTA committees according to shared criteria to ensure fairness, with priority given to active land users, Economic Security Program (ESP) recipients, and those committed to traditional activities such as hunting and trapping. Full-time workers may also be eligible if they demonstrate continued involvement in harvesting. Once a cabin is built and handed over, the recipient is responsible for its upkeep and long-term use.



Insured Cabin Rebuilding forms a complementary component of the project. Following the 2023 fires, 13 insured cabins were reported destroyed, with insurance reimbursements totaling \$500,653.27. In 2024–2025, 10 of these cabins were successfully rebuilt, with the remaining three scheduled for reconstruction in the next fiscal year. This aspect of the program reflects the CTA's commitment to restoring essential infrastructure for hunters and trappers, ensuring continuity of traditional land use and preservation of cultural practices.

The first year of the Cabin Rebuild Project showed strong progress. Careful financial oversight by the CTA finance team ensured that all costs were managed appropriately and that reports were produced on time. The combination of clear planning, reliable funding, and dedication from

local communities allowed the project to meet its initial targets. Beyond providing 58 new cabins, the project has strengthened community ties, supported local employment, and demonstrated the value of collaboration between Cree organizations and governments.

Looking ahead, the Cabin Rebuild Project will continue, with additional cabins scheduled for construction each year. As further funding becomes available, more families and land users will benefit from safe and durable cabins. This initiative remains a powerful example of resilience and unity, showing how Cree communities can recover from challenges, protect their culture, and ensure that traditional practices continue for future generations.

Community	Total Cabin Rebuilt	ESP	Non-ESP	Insured
Chisasbi	8	8	-	-
Mistissini	18	14	2	2
Waskaganish	12	4	4	4
Wemindji	8	4	2	2
Nemaska	4	2	1	1
Waswanipi	8	6	1	1
Total	58	38	10	10



Canadian Firearms Safety Course

The Cree Trappers' Association (CTA), in a long-standing partnership with the RCMP and provincial Chief Firearms Officers, delivers the Canadian Firearms Safety Course (CFSC) to promote safe and responsible firearm use. Between April 2024 and March 2025, nine sessions were held in Whapmagoostui, Oujé-Bougoumou, Wemindji, Eastmain, and Waskaganish, certifying over 100 participants.

A key strength of the program is its certified Cree instructors, who provide bilingual instruction in Cree and English, ensuring both comprehension and cultural relevance. Instructors also assist participants with Possession and Acquisition License (PAL) applications and renewals, reducing barriers and streamlining access to licensing.

By offering local training, the program eliminates the need for travel, lowers costs, and supports compliance with Quebec firearm regulations. Through this strong, long-standing partnership, the CTA continues to make firearm training and licensing more accessible, effective, and culturally grounded, strengthening safety across Eeyou Istchee.

Trapper's Training Project (2024–2025)

The Trapper's Training Project was developed to revitalize and pass on essential trapping knowledge, with a particular focus on sustainable beaver management. It responds to challenges related to out-of-season trapping and the growing need for education and youth involvement in traditional practices. By supporting cultural continuity, food security, and responsible regional wildlife management, the project also provides a structure for intergenerational knowledge transfer, ensuring that traditional skills and values continue to be shared and preserved across generations.

The program began with **Phase 1: Train-the-Trainers**, a 5-day course in Waswanipi delivered in partnership with the Fédération des Trappeurs Gestionnaires du Québec (FTGQ). Combining classroom sessions with field visits to problem areas, the training equipped participants with practical tools to address beaver-related challenges sustainably. Twelve trappers from Waswanipi, Mistissini, Oujé-Bougoumou, Nemaska, and Waskaganish successfully completed this initial phase.

Phase 2: Community-Based Training is expanding these skills to a broader group of Cree trappers. Aiming to train 135 participants across the nine Eeyou/Eenou communities, the three-day sessions integrate classroom instruction, land-based training, and cultural knowledge sharing. Activities have also engaged local youth, including school visits where students learned traditional skills like skinning and cooking beaver. Training has been completed in all communities except Whapmagoostui, making this phase ongoing.

Phase 3: Mapping Beaver Problem Areas has not yet begun. This phase will bring together CTA biologists, local trappers, and provincial authorities to create a regional map of beaver-impacted zones. The map will help prioritize fall and winter trapping, reduce waste, minimize out-of-season harvests, and provide essential data to guide future wildlife management.

The program is not only about wildlife management but also about sustaining Cree cultural identity. By combining technical training, traditional practices, and opportunities for youth, it strengthens community capacity and ensures trapping knowledge is passed on to younger generations. Experienced trappers act as mentors, youth are actively engaged, and communities are equipped to manage local challenges with confidence. Looking ahead, the Trapper's Training Project will continue to expand its impact across Eeyou Istchee, focusing on sustainability, cultural transmission, and responsible wildlife management, ensuring that traditions and land-based practices are preserved for generations to come.

Community Freezer Project

Traditional foods vary by season and include moose, caribou, bear, beaver, goose, ptarmigan, pike, fish and berries. These foods are harvested year-round through fishing, hunting, trapping, and gathering; they are a vital part of Cree culture. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, local hunters and trappers have increasingly provided food to families and elders, but limited freezer space has become a barrier.

To address this, the Regional Cree Trappers' Association (CTA), in collaboration with local CTA committees, launched the Community Freezer Project: freezers are being installed in CTA or band-owned community buildings across Cree communities in the James Bay region of Northern Quebec. Freezer installations are expected to be completed by September 2025.







Access to Traditional Food

This initiative improves access to traditional food for families in need, funded from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, with the support from the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay and other local partners.

In collaboration with the Regional Cree Trappers' Association and local CTA administration officers, the program hired two to four locals' harvesters to provide traditional food for their communities—supporting elders, single-parent households, and low-income families who may not have a hunter in their household or the financial means to go harvesting themselves.

Harvesting activities focus on fish, small game, and waterfowl in areas near communities, with the consent of the respective tallymen.

Cree Medical Bush Kit Training

The Cree Medical Bush Kits program has a long-standing history of providing Cree Hunters and Trappers in Eeyou Istchee with vital medical supplies for use on the land. Supported by the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, the Cree Trappers Association, Niskamoon Corporation, and Apatisiwin Skills Development, the updated program was made available in this training cycle.

This initiative continues to play a critical role in ensuring that hunters and trappers are prepared to manage medical situations safely while engaging in traditional land-based activities.

CTA Wildlife Mobile App

The Cree Trappers' Association (CTA) Wildlife mobile app is designed for local administrators and land users to record wildlife harvests, environmental observations, and GPS locations of key sites. Available on both Apple and Android devices, the app works offline, automatically recording date, time, coordinates, and user identity, and allows data to be uploaded later when connectivity is available.

Users can report harvests, track sightings of key and endangered species, and document environmental changes. On Android devices, the app also enables mapping of cabins, camps, trapline boundaries, and trails using high-resolution satellite imagery. All collected data is synchronized with the CTA Geoportal, integrating wildlife, climate, and GPS information into centralized databases for reliable access and planning.

During 2024–2025, the CTA Geoportal continued to evolve and improve. Mapping of fire-impacted cabins and traplines remained a priority, while the mobile app was updated to meet new operating system requirements and higher-resolution satellite images were loaded on GPS units to preserve records of burned cabins. Maintenance tasks also included updating tallymen in the Trapline Registry and uploading relevant documentation. Technical support was provided to administrators and CTA staff, including the creation of custom maps and reports as needed. CTA representatives also participated in meetings and consultations to discuss evolving community needs, ensuring that the Geoportal remains a practical and reliable tool for all communities in Eeyou Istchee.

Overall, the CTA Wildlife mobile app and Geoportal have continued to develop in 2024–2025, reflecting ongoing improvements that make these tools increasingly effective for sustainable land and wildlife management.

2024-2025 Eeyou Ituun Review

The Eeyou Eenu Ituun program was relatively quiet during 2024–2025, as the CEGEP faced budget cuts and launched a new initiative—the Wildlife Protection Officer Program, in partnership with the Cree Nation Government. This new program includes a land-based component that will wrap up by the end of 2025.

Following a presentation to the Niskamoon Board of Directors, the CTA received approval to retain the funds already allocated for the 3rd cohort. A second presentation was given to the CTA Board to provide an update on the CEGEP's proposed plans for the next cohort. The CTA is also in the process of hiring a new Eeyou Eenu Ituun Coordinator. In addition, the CEGEP hired Nikki Baribeau, a Cree Pedagogical Counsellor, to support the CTA in program delivery. Cohort 3 of Eeyou Eenu Ituun is now planned to begin in February 2026.





The Presence of the CTA in all Nine Communities

The regional Cree Trappers' Association depends on nine Local Administrators—one for each community—to implement and coordinate various community-based projects and programs aimed at protecting and promoting the interests of Cree trappers. These Local Administrators are crucial in delivering CTA programs and services to our members. Last year, they successfully managed all regional CTA programs:

- Air and ground transportation
- Gas subsidy
- Food subsidy
- Equipment subsidy
- Ammunition subsidy
- Purchase of bush radios
- Young trappers' assistance
- Hunting and fishing supplies
- Cabin construction and renovations
- Cultural activities
- Snow removal
- Cabin insurance
- Local committee operations

The Local Administrators work closely with the local trapper committees. While they officially report to the Special Project Coordinator, the local committees provide general direction to the Local Administrators, ensuring that CTA operations align with the priorities of local hunters and trappers.

The CTA Local Administrators also collect fees from local hunters and trappers. Tracking these numbers is essential, as the funding received from the regional CTA is based on local membership.

Community	Adults	Juniors	Total Amount
Chisasibi	2,468	201	\$ 38,628
Eastmain	474	103	\$ 7,934
Mistissini	925	20	\$ 14,035
Nemaska	374	44	\$ 5,962
Oujé-Bougoumou	290	11	\$ 4,438
Washaw Sibi	186	0	\$ 2,790
Waskaganish	1,366	177	\$ 21,906
Waswanipi	955	142	\$ 15,461
Wemindji	597	56	\$ 9,403
Whapmagoostui	429	65	\$ 6,955
Total	8,064	819	\$ 127,512

Local Administrators



Betty Tomatuk
Eastmain



Reggie Bearskin
Chisasibi



Stanley Mianscum
Mistissini



Bill Stewart
Wemindji



Mabel Rabbitskin
Nemaska



Francis Shecapio
Oujé-Bougoumou



Stanley Saganash
Waswanipi



Karilynn Blackned
Waskaganish



Ian Bobbish
Whapmagoostui



Local Administrators' Reports 2024-2025

The Cree Trappers' Association is proud to have a local administrator in each community, carrying out the mission and supporting members.

Gas Subsidy Programs

Communities provided gas subsidies to help members access their traplines and camps.

Community	Recipients	Amount / Volume	Notes
Eastmain	Fall & Winter harvesters (ESP)	205 liters free gas in the fall and winter	Spring allocations applied to fall/winter harvesters
Oujé-Bougoumou	All eligible harvesters	\$44,400	Distributed via local suppliers
Waskaganish	ESP members only	\$21,600 (108 members)	Subsidies limited exclusively to ESP members
Waswanipi	Non-ESP members	\$175,000 (1,388 members)	Spring 2024 allocation
Waswanipi	ESP members	~\$150,000 total	Spread throughout the year

In Wemindji, gas was included as part of equipment pick-up and shop supply programs.

Cabin Construction Programs and Renovation

Cabin assistance remained a strong priority across communities.

Community	Number of applicants	Number approved
Eastmain	N/A	N/A
Oujé-Bougoumou	2	2 cabins approved (1 built, 1 pending)
Waskaganish	15 (renovations) + 15 (assistance)	8 approved renovations + 8 assistances
Waswanipi	12 cabins built (7 regional + 5 local)	All completed except 1 pending
Wemindji	1 (roof renovation)	1 approved



Equipment purchase subsidy

Subsidies for equipment purchase and repairs were highlighted in every report.

Members across communities accessed support for snowmobiles, ATVs, boats, outboard motors, and smaller tools such as chainsaws and generators.

In Eastmain, the Equipment Subsidy Program required members to keep and submit their receipts when purchasing eligible equipment. Reimbursements were then provided based on the approved percentage. This process ensured accountability and encouraged members to document their purchases properly.

Oujé-Bougoumou introduced a Trapper Subsidy Fund, where applications were reviewed by the local committee. Members were asked to submit copies of their invoices from the stores where equipment was purchased. During the year, three members applied for this subsidy.

Waskaganish supported trappers through its Small Equipment Subsidy Program, relying on direct supplier payments. Four members applied to the program, and all four requests were approved.

Waswanipi provided substantial assistance to Income Security Program members, investing more than \$75,000 in equipment and repair subsidies. This contribution ensured members had the necessary resources to maintain and upgrade their trapping equipment.

Wemindji also chose to proceed through direct supplier payments for its subsidy program. The community approved four applications, covering the purchase of three sleds and one generator.

Transportation Support

Throughout Cree communities, transportation during hunting and harvesting seasons shifts in response to the land and community needs.

Eastmain fall services included ground transportation for hunters and air transportation for members travelling to the harvest. During winter, snow removal ensured access to road-accessible and inland camps, while ground transportation supported hunters with their equipment. In spring, boat transportation assisted coastal camps with equipment and travel needs, benefiting a total of 18 members.

Waskaganish provided subsidies for flights and supported members by covering a portion of air charter invoices to help reduce overall travel costs.

Wemindji arranged equipment pick-ups by boat at coastal camps and hired locals to mark and groom trails for safety.

These services reduce costs for members and ensure access to hunting and fishing areas year-round.

Firearm Safety Courses and Trapper Training

Several training initiatives were carried out across the communities during the year, supporting both safety practices and the preservation of traditional knowledge.

Community	Number of course	Number of participants
Eastmain	1	10
Oujé-Bougoumou	N/A	N/A
Waskaganish	1	17
Waswanipi	N/A	N/A
Wemindji	4	54

Waskaganish provided support to over 20 members in obtaining firearm licenses, organized a trapper training course for 2 participants, assisted 1 member with firearm registration.

Wemindji coordinated a local trapping course guided by the tallyman, which engaged 5 participants.

Also, Local Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee sponsored a firearm safety course that welcomed 5 participants, further reinforcing skills development and knowledge sharing within the region.



2024-2025 Review - Eeyou Marine Region (EMR) Lands Claim Agreement

The Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement (EMRLCA) took effect on February 15, 2012, covering about 61,270 square kilometers of coastal lands and offshore islands in Eastern James Bay and southeastern Hudson Bay. It involves the five Cree coastal communities of Eeyou Istchee—Waskaganish, Eastmain, Wemindji, Chisasibi, and Whapmagoostui—and includes a shared Cree–Inuit zone with the Nunavik Inuit.

The CTA-EMR department leads work in the region by monitoring wildlife health, protecting harvesting rights, managing and conserving wildlife, and carrying out research based on community priorities. We also contribute to understanding and strengthening the governance of the region between the Cree and the Government of Canada.

This important work is made possible with support from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) through the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board. Together, these efforts help the Cree better understand changes in our territory, reaffirm ancestral rights, and maintain sustainable harvesting for future generations.

FISHES – Fostering Indigenous Small-scale fisheries for Health, Economy and food Security 2020-2025

The FISHES project is a partnership between the Cree Nation Government, Niskamoon Corporation, the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board, the Cree Nation of Mistissini, and the Cree Nation of Waswanipi, with Université Laval and Concordia University. Funded by Genome Québec and Genome Canada, it supports sustainable fisheries, strengthens food security, and improves understanding of how Cree fisheries may respond to environmental and socio-economic change.

Through this collaboration, the CTA-EMR combines Traditional Ecological Knowledge and genomic science to identify key fisheries for protection in Eeyou Istchee. The project has built a genomic “family tree” for whitefish, cisco, and brook trout, revealing distinct populations essential for sustainable harvesting. Research on the genetic resilience of brook trout and lake whitefish helps forecast how these species might adapt to future climate conditions, guiding long-term management strategies rooted in Cree knowledge.



From 2021 to 2023, 65 interviews were conducted with 94 land users from Chisasibi, Eastmain, Waskaganish, and Wemindji. Community Reports are now being finalized, sharing local perspectives to support education and planning across the region.

In December 2024, CTA-EMR joined FISHES project meetings on licensing and data governance, emphasizing the need for ethical data use and Cree control over research outcomes.

In February 2025, project leads presented updates in Whapmagoostui and other coastal communities. Final results and recommendations will be shared in Fall 2025 with the FISHES Regional Advisory Board.

Eeyou Marine Region (EMR) Employees



Natasha Louttit
Wildlife Liaison Officer



Christopher Cox
Local EMR officer
of Chisasibi



George Natawapineskum
Local EMR officer
of Wemindji



Dylan Mayappo
Local EMR officer
of Eastmain



Sanford J. Diamond
Local EMR Officer
of Waskaganish



Robert Fireman
Local EMR officer
of Whapmagoostui

Fish Telemetry Project

In July of 2024, we collaborated with Concordia University to launch a pilot project to tag and track the migration patterns of fish in Eastmain and Wemindji using strategically placed acoustic hydrophones grids that pick up the pings of tagged fish. These networks are designed to measure both small-scale patterns of movement behaviour and long-distance patterns of movement simultaneously for multiple individual fish, targeting species of ecological, cultural, and economic importance, in different waterbodies.

We are currently maintaining contact with Concordia University to re-launch this project proposal and continue our focus of maintaining sustainable fisheries and identifying important waterways that need conservation, by building on our genetic analysis efforts from our FISHES project. This critical baseline data will be able to provide information on long-term changes in movement patterns in response to ongoing environmental and developmental change, as well as providing infrastructure that can be used to design different targeted short-term studies to answer specific questions about fish behaviour in our EMR regions.

Contaminants in Traditional Fisheries of the Eeyou Marine Region

This multi-year study, led by the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board (EMRWB) and the Cree Trappers' Association, responds to community concerns about contaminants in traditional fish species. In 2023, whitefish and cisco were sampled in Waskaganish, Eastmain, and Wemindji. Preliminary results showed low levels of mercury and other long-lasting chemical pollutants—well below federal guidelines—providing reassurance about the safety of consuming these traditional foods. Sampling kits and training were provided to Chisasibi and Whapmagoostui in 2024, with sampling in those communities planned for 2025. Community engagement, training of local CTA-EMR officers, and accessible communications materials have supported local involvement and knowledge sharing throughout the project.

Environmental DNA (eDNA) Sampling and Education

In 2024–2025, the CTA-EMR Department supported the second year of eDNA sampling in partnership with EMRWB and the Centre d'expertise en gestion des risques d'incidents maritimes (CEGRIM), a centre of expertise associated with the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les Changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (MELCCFP).



ARU – Shorebird and Breeding Bird Detections

The bird monitoring project has been ongoing for many years and continued through 2024–2025. Its primary objective is to collect data on shorebirds and breeding birds in potentially significant Species at Risk (SAR) habitats throughout Eeyou Istchee, with the goal of estimating the abundance, density, and occupancy of these species. This long-term initiative is being conducted in partnership with the CTA-EMR, the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board, the Cree Nation Government, Canadian Wildlife Services, and Nature Canada.

Each year, from June to September, Autonomous Recording Units (ARUs) are deployed across coastal habitats, providing a non-invasive method to monitor bird populations. These recordings deepen our understanding of species using the coastal region for breeding, support the evaluation of waterfowl habitat use, and help identify rare and declining bird species. The data are also contributing to the Québec Breeding Bird Atlas and offering valuable insights to the Cree Nation Government on avian species at risk in the EMR.

In 2024, ARUs were successfully deployed in all five coastal communities of Eeyou Istchee. The data collected are currently being analyzed by Canadian Wildlife Services and will add to the long-term knowledge base on avian populations and critical breeding habitats. The results will continue to guide conservation planning and ensure that important habitats and species at risk are recognized and protected.

Motus Towers

Since 2012, Nature Canada, in partnership with the Cree Nation Government, commenced a collaborative initiative with the Cree Nation of Waskaganish to identify Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) through community engagement and targeted field surveys utilizing Motus Towers. Since that time, the CTA and the Eeyou Marine Region Wildlife Board (EMRWB) have become integral participants in the project. Currently, there are five active Motus Towers within the Eeyou Marine Region (EMR): four located in Waskaganish (one at the CTA Office, Charlton Island, the Strutton Islands, -Boatswain Bay) and one in Wemindji.

This past year, the EMRWB, Nature Canada, the Canadian Wildlife Services and the CNG have been focusing on upgrading and performing maintenance of all 5 of our Motus Towers, as well as launching an expansion of the coverage area to incorporate the eastern coast of James Bay.

The EMRWB has confirmed funding to incorporate an additional two (2) towers for the 2025/26 fiscal year. Information can be followed in real-time, using the online website: <https://motus.org/get-involved/>

Between July and September 2024, samples were collected multiple times from Waskaganish, Eastmain, and Wemindji. Results from previous sampling helped track culturally important species like sturgeon and identify new species such as rainbow smelt. The data also revealed areas of unique marine biodiversity, including concentrations of Greenland cod, sand lance, eelblenny, and lumpfish, contributing to baseline knowledge of fish biodiversity in the region.

We have also been working with Genome Quebec on a youth outreach program called Mission eDNA. This year, our outreach included a one-day train the trainer eDNA training in Chisasibi with 13 participants, including staff from CTA, EMRWB, and CERRI. In-class sessions were held with Secondary 3 students in September and October to introduce students to the concept of eDNA, sample collection, and making environmental observations.

In 2025-26, the program will focus on developing a workbook in alignment with the Cree School Board Curriculum and Cree values.

Polar Bear Ecology Project

The Polar Bear Ecology Project entered its fourth year of community-led monitoring along the eastern James Bay coast. In 2024, the project expanded to Whapmagoostui and Kuujuaarapik, where trained local teams deployed seven new non-invasive sampling stations. Across all coastal communities, the July–October field season collected over 100 hair samples and hundreds of photos documenting polar bear presence, genetics, and condition.

Preliminary results show that polar bears rely on diverse food sources, including birds, marine mammals, and terrestrial prey, with offshore islands remaining key habitats. Ongoing genetic work will clarify how the James Bay population connects with neighbouring subpopulations, strengthening management decisions for the Southern Hudson Bay region.

Outreach materials and community updates were shared through posters, social media, and in-person discussions. A documentary film is also in production with Coexistence Films, showcasing Cree leadership in polar bear research.

Project results were presented at major conferences, including ArcticNet (where CTA received second place in the poster competition), the International Bear Research Conference, the Hudson Bay Consortium, and the Polar Bear Technical Committee. Each presentation emphasized Cree community leadership and the importance of local methods in polar bear conservation.

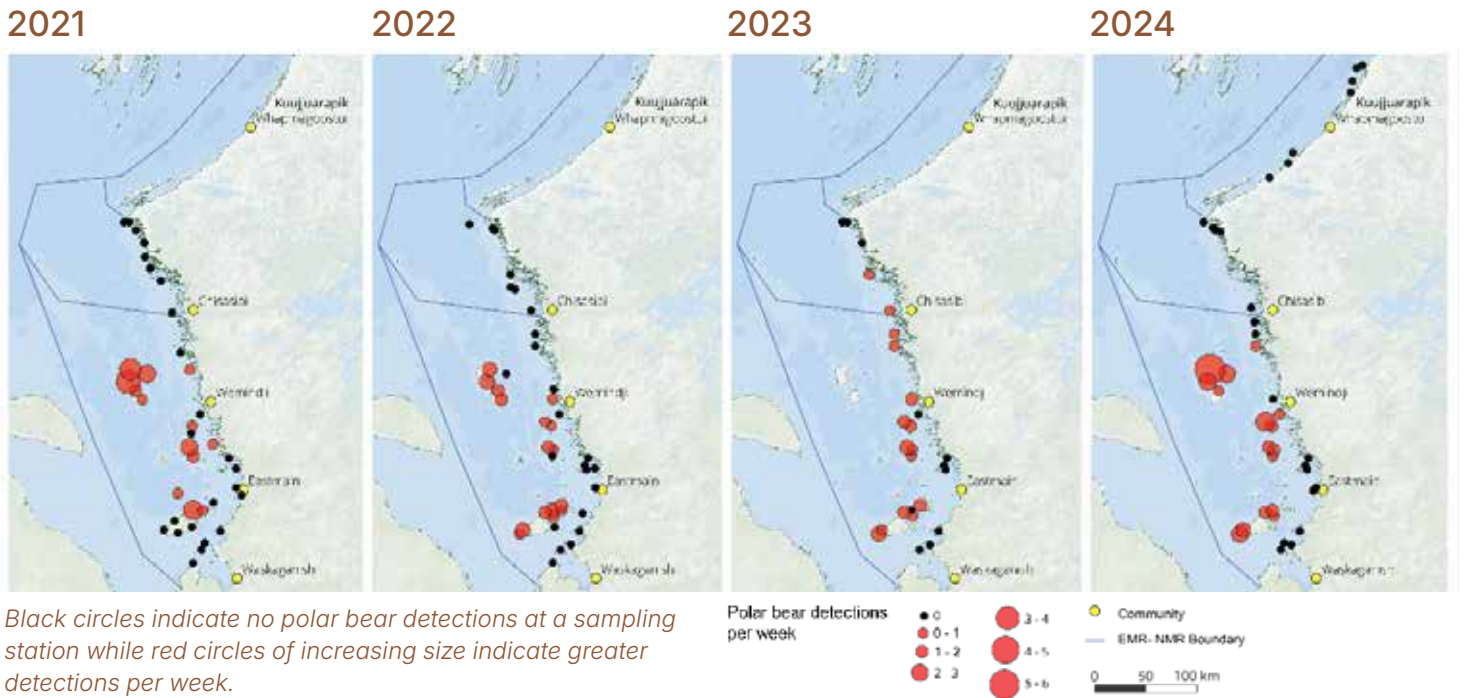
Polar Bear Hair Snare Locations along Cree EMR and Cree/Inuit overlap zones

Identifying areas of high polar bear activity during the ice-free season allows community members to make informed decisions about polar bear conflict risk when travelling on the land. It also provides information on important summer habitats for polar bears that can inform future protected area planning.

Stations were deployed from July through September each year. Through these community-led sampling efforts, polar bear activity hotspots were identified on the offshore islands sampled by Wemindji and Waskaganish teams, with different levels of activity in Chisasibi region depending on the year. Stations deployed by Eastmain did not detect polar bears in any of the years.

Over the past four years, the research team has monitored polar bears' body condition and age classes. Summer body condition provides an important measure of overall population health, as the ice-free season limits hunting opportunities and can affect survival and reproduction. During this period, polar bears can lose approximately 1 kg of body weight per day, which can have population-level consequences in the following year.

Observations over multiple years show some variation, with certain years having a higher proportion of well-nourished bears than others. Overall, the bears in Eeyou Istchee are in average-fat condition, indicating a generally healthy population.





Polar Bear Safety Awareness & Observation Reports

The coastal communities of Eeyou Istchee have historically coexisted with polar bears, which represent the southernmost habitat for these iconic animals. However, as climate change accelerates and ice conditions shift, the CTA-EMR anticipates increased polar bear sightings and encounters, with potential impacts on both the bears and Cree traditional land users.

In response, the CTA-EMR Department, in collaboration with the EMR Wildlife Board (EMRWB), continues to implement an ongoing awareness campaign. This initiative uses posters, brochures, radio announcements, and Facebook posts to keep the community informed and prepared to prevent any unfortunate encounter.

CTA Polar Bear Safety Fund

In 2024, ahead of the spring goose harvest on the offshore islands of Waskaganish—our highest-risk area—the CTA-EMR coordinated with the Waskaganish Local CTA to conduct an aerial survey of the offshore islands and 12 Cree camps. Using a helicopter, the survey allowed the team to confirm the presence or absence of polar bears before families arrived at their traditional hunting sites. During this operation, a mother bear and her cubs were successfully deterred from the Strutton Islands, preventing a potential Dangerous Long-Range Polar Bear Interaction (DLP) incident.

Co-developing Cree-Way Tools for Coastal Wildlife Monitoring

Monitoring the timing and presence of coastal species is increasingly important for Cree land users. The Coastal Habitat Comprehensive Research Project (CHCRP), launched in 2016, is a Cree-led collaboration involving Waskaganish, Eastmain, Wemindji, and Chisasibi, supported by Niskamoon, McGill University, and Hydro-Québec.

Phase 1 documented major ecosystem changes—including eelgrass decline, warmer waters, and shifting goose populations—that affect traditional harvesting. Phase 2 focuses on developing a Cree-led biocultural monitoring framework to track ecological and cultural changes through community observation.

In 2024, CHCRP partnered with the CTA-EMR Polar Bear Ecology Project to pilot new wildlife monitoring stations combining autonomous recording units (ARUs) and motion-activated cameras. This approach provided a more complete view of local biodiversity, including birds, amphibians, mammals, and raptors.

Following the pilot's success, sixteen monitoring stations will be installed in summer 2025 across the four coastal communities. Co-located with polar bear hair-sampling sites, these year-round stations will strengthen local monitoring capacity, support data sovereignty, and reinforce Cree leadership in wildlife and climate research.



Community-based Wildlife and Climate Change Monitoring

The CTA-EMR Department, in collaboration with the EMR Wildlife Board (EMRWB), has launched a community-based wildlife and climate change monitoring campaign. This initiative invites land-users to share their knowledge and report observations of land and wildlife. They can submit sightings of polar bears, tracks or signs (e.g., denning), belugas, shorebirds, waterfowl, nesting colonies, other bird species, invasive species, new or unusual species, and harvest data. Reports can be submitted to a CTA-EMR Local Officer or uploaded via the **CTA Wildlife App**. These contributions are essential for improving our understanding of local ecosystems and supporting effective management strategies.

In addition, CTA-EMR Local Officers provide regular ice-condition updates through Facebook. During the winter and spring, officers share satellite imagery and other information to keep land users informed about ice conditions in the Eeyou Marine Region.

Additional Participation

- ArcticNet 2024, Ottawa, Ontario
- Polar Bears International 2024, Edmonton, Alberta
- Hudson Bay Consortium 2025, Montreal, Quebec
- CTA Staff Training 2024, Montreal, Quebec
- Braiding Knowledges Canada 2025, Ottawa, Ontario
- Local Annual General Assemblies 2024 of Coastal Communities
- CTA Regional AGA 2024, Nemaska, Quebec

Reflections of CTA-EMR Local Officers

Sanford Diamond, CTA-EMR Local Officer Waskaganish

"Wachiya, I'm Sanford Diamond and I'm the CTA-EMR Local Officer for Waskaganish. This fiscal year 2024-2025 was full of participating in fieldwork projects for the CTA-EMR, along with our partner EMRWB and other various entities that we have worked with throughout the year.

It has been a great learning experience in scientific wildlife research, and very rewarding to see the promising results of our fieldwork. Working alongside land users who hold traditional knowledge of the land and waters we occupy has been very helpful for our work. As CTA-EMR Local Officers, we see that without their knowledge and guidance, we wouldn't have achieved the wildlife research projects we participate in. I sincerely want to thank them for their time, support, and contributions.

We have a lot of fun and work well together on field projects, and we truly enjoy our time outdoors. Working under the CTA-EMR Department has its perks—the work environment is never the same, and every day brings something new. You learn to expect the unexpected! We feel fortunate to live in beautiful Eeyou Istchee, surrounded by abundant wildlife and breathtaking sunsets and landscapes."

Dylan Mayappo, CTA-EMR Local Officer Eastmain

"The land and species must be kept in their natural course to sustain our Cree language and culture."

George Natawapineskum – CTA-EMR Local Officer Wemindji

"Last year was an exciting time in the field. With the Polar Bear Project, we deepened our understanding of the bears in our region and trained in safety and hair sampling techniques. The eDNA water sampling project let us explore the bay in a new way, extracting DNA from water to see what fish were present. And the FISHERS Project showed us how fish travel along the coast and the variety of species in our waters.

Working closely with land users on all these projects made the experience even more rewarding, giving us hands-on learning and a deeper connection to the wildlife and ecosystems of our region."

Christopher Cox, CTA-EMR Local Officer Chisasibi

"Nii Christopher Cox, I started working back in November 2024 as the Local EMR officer in Chisasibi. When I started my on-boarding, I received a warm welcome from the team and got caught up to speed on current and passed projects. I wanted to reach out to you to say that I'm ready to dive in and I'm excited to contribute to the Eeyou Marine Region!"





CTA Environment and Wildlife Initiatives – 2024-25 FY Annual Report

Moose Management Activities

In response to a 35% decline in the moose population in Hunting Zone 17 since 2009, the Cree Trappers' Association (CTA), in collaboration with the Cree Nation Government (CNG) and local communities, continued implementing a sustainable moose management plan. The plan includes a Cree-exclusive harvest limit, the development of Moose Management Guidelines, and a new two-moose-per-trapline system. Although implementation faced delays, activities in 2024–2025 centered on education, reporting, and cultural engagement.

Local moose coordinators were hired in Waswanipi and Oujé-Bougoumou to conduct harvest surveys and support community outreach. Tallymen received honoraria for providing harvest data, while traditional workshops—such as moose hide processing—helped promote cultural continuity and elder participation. The CTA also advanced digital tools, promoting the Harvest & Wildlife App and updating the Cree Geoportal. Collaboration with MELCCFP continued through moose tooth collection for population studies. Going forward, the CTA will emphasize adaptive management, community engagement, and the responsible use of technology to balance moose conservation with Cree harvesting rights.

Wildlife Health Monitoring Project

The Wildlife Health Monitoring Project safeguards both human and environmental health by helping hunters and trappers determine whether sick or unusual animals are safe to consume. Samples are analyzed for signs of disease and contamination to support informed harvesting practices.

In 2024–2025, the project expanded to the inland communities of Oujé-Bougoumou, Mistissini, Waswanipi, and Nemaska. CTA staff were trained in proper collection and shipping procedures, and communities received gloves, bags, and freezers to simplify participation. The CTA worked closely with the Cree Health Board and Quebec partners to streamline protocols and shared updates through meetings and Facebook. Next steps include developing portable testing kits and improving how sample results are communicated to participants.

Problem Beaver Management

This program assists Cree trappers in addressing beaver-related damage such as flooding and forest loss, with an emphasis on prevention, fair compensation, and clear communication.

In 2024–2025, the CTA introduced simplified trapping request forms and began designing a tracking database to monitor activities. Consultations with experienced trappers informed new compensation approaches, including insights from the Abitibiwinni First Nation's trapper-priority model. Collaboration with tallymen helped identify high-risk areas and explore beaver activity monitoring tools. In the coming year, the CTA will continue refining compensation guidelines and strengthen early intervention strategies in partnership with local land users.



Mining Information Sessions for Tallymen and Land Users

As mining activity increases across Eeyou Istchee, the CTA and CNG hosted two regional mining information sessions to ensure Cree land users remain central to decision-making. The inland session took place in Mistissini in September 2024 and the coastal session in Chisasibi in January 2025.

Each event featured opening remarks from Cree leadership, guest presentations on rights under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA), and a CTA presentation on the Eeyou Hunting Law. The law reinforces that any development on a trapline must receive approval from the tallyman, impacted community, and local leadership, and must benefit the Cree way of life.

Participants voiced recurring concerns, including limited communication about mining on traplines, loss of access to traditional areas, and insufficient discussion on economic opportunities and environmental impacts. A summary report will be published by the CNG in 2025, and the CTA will continue defining and communicating its role in mining-related processes.

Commercial Fisheries Pre-Feasibility Study

In 2024–2025, the CTA, CNG, and the EMR Wildlife Board launched a study examining the feasibility of sustainable commercial fisheries in the Eeyou Marine Region. Running from May 2025 to February 2026, the study will assess fish abundance, ecological impacts, Cree perspectives, and regulatory considerations. It will also summarize recent bay research (2020–2025). The goal is to ensure any future fishery development aligns with Cree values, protects ecosystems, and supports long-term community well-being.

Environment & Wildlife Committee Participation

Throughout 2024–2025, the CTA represented Cree interests in numerous regional, provincial, and national committees focused on wildlife management and environmental stewardship.

In harvest management and wildlife coordination, the CTA contributed to Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee (HFTCC) discussions on moose, caribou, small game, and species at risk, while participating in working groups on game and aquatic species. In fish and water management, the Association supported implementation of the Cree-led Lake Sturgeon Management Plan and contributed to the FISHES Research Advisory Board on fish movement and stock health.

For caribou and moose stewardship, the CTA advised on caribou protection through the Wildlife Sub-Committee and shared Cree land user knowledge in Moose Committees. In marine and coastal protection, the CTA worked with the EMR Wildlife Board and Eastern Hudson Bay Beluga Management Committee, and contributed to the Hudson Bay Consortium's marine conservation planning.

Additionally, the CTA participated in the CNG Climate Change Advisory Committee, Protected Areas planning, and Phase 2 of the Coastal Habitat Conservation Research Project. The Association also contributed to developing the Cree Nation Research Institute (CNRI) and setting research priorities for the Cree Marine Research Working Group.

Key Research Projects

The CTA continued to support and guide several research initiatives that combine scientific study with Cree knowledge:

1. Coastal Habitat Research – Phase 2: Supported the development of Phase 2 of the Coastal Habitat Conservation Research Project, including research protocols and funding applications.
2. Caribou Ungava Project: Assisted with a regional climate change study on migratory caribou and lichen health, and coordinated fieldwork in Eeyou Istchee.
3. Ptarmigan Genetics Study: Collaborated on research into ptarmigan adaptation and population genetics to support the preservation of winter hunting traditions.
4. Moose Population Studies: Reviewed data from 2021–2022 aerial surveys in Zone 22 and analyzed GPS collar data to study moose movements and responses to forest fires.
5. Fish Habitat Protection (IHPP Project): Helped develop a Cree-informed decision tool for fish habitat compensation, validated during a regional forum in Mistissini with 27 tallymen and land users in July 2024.
6. Sturgeon Spawning Grounds: Partnered with the CNG and MELCCFP to identify and study key sturgeon breeding sites alongside local land users.
7. Moose Habitat Quality Index: Evaluated moose habitat using a Cree-validated model that integrates forestry and wildfire impact data.





2024-2025 Review – Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Regime

Summary of the reports submitted by Miles Smart, Executive Secretary, and Nancy Bouchard, Analyst

The HFTCC serves as the consultation forum between the Cree, Inuit, Naskapi, and provincial and federal governments regarding the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Regime (HFT Regime) under Section 24 of the JBNQA. It collaborates closely with the provincial Ministry of the Environment, Fight against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks on wildlife management and harvesting activities.

Cree members include Deputy Grand Chief Norman Wapachee, Isaac Voyageur, and Nadia Saganash, supported by CNG staff. CTA President John Shem and his team accompany the Cree party, providing coordination and a link to Cree harvesters.

Moose Management: In 2024-2025, the HFTCC maintained the moose sport hunting limits and closures in zone 17. Decisions relied on the Moose Management Technical Committee, formed with Cree communities of Waswanipi, Oujé-Bougoumou, and Waskaganish. The committee established Moose Hunting Guidelines and a Cree harvest permit system to monitor and ensure conservation. These measures, including local reporting, will continue under the HFTCC's oversight. The HFTCC also provided recommendations on the new Moose Management Plan, including monitoring ticks, studying forestry impacts, promoting ethical hunting, and disseminating rights and regime knowledge.

Small Game Management: Consultations continued on the next Small Game Management Plan. The HFTCC emphasized the lack of population data north of the 49th parallel, recommended special research funding, and suggested using the Two-Eyed Seeing (Etuaptmumk) approach. The Waapihyeu Project with Cree collaboration provides new data on willow and rock ptarmigan populations and migration, aiding management decisions.

Migratory Caribou: The HFTCC supports measures to protect the Leaf River and George River herds, including addressing unsanctioned harvesting in Cree Territory and balancing needs with Naskapi and Innu users. A migratory caribou workshop is planned to share information and perspectives on long-term conservation.



Outfitting Regime: HFTCC contributed to the new regulations for outfitter licences and exclusive hunting/fishing leases, ensuring many of its recommendations were incorporated. The collaborative process reflects HFTCC's advisory role under the HFT Regime.

Aquatic Wildlife: HFTCC engaged in pre-consultations on walleye management, sport fishing seasons, lake trout winter fishing, and size/catch limits, with continued discussions planned.

New Working Group: The Wildlife Protection Resources Working Group (formerly Wildlife Protection Officers) is producing a report on challenges in providing adequate wildlife protection. HFTCC looks forward to reviewing its recommendations.

An important partner – The Fur Institute of Canada (FIC)

The Fur Institute of Canada (FIC) is the country's foremost authority on humane trap research and furbearer conservation. It serves as the official trap-testing agency for the Government of Canada and all provincial and territorial governments.

The Cree Trappers Association (CTA) maintains membership with the FIC to ensure that the Cree perspective is represented in discussions about humane trapping practices and furbearer management. This partnership helps the CTA stay informed about best practices and advancements in the industry, supporting the sustainable use of wildlife resources.



Ishtthchiikun

Although fur purchases continued to decline this year, **fur sales performed strongly**, with nearly all furs sold—showing a notable improvement compared to the previous year. It should be noted, however, that **no furs were received from Nemaska, Oujé-Bougoumou, or Waswanipi** during this period.

At the Annual General Assembly held in Wemindji, the **Cree Trappers' Association (CTA)** recognized three **outstanding trappers for 2024–2025**:

- **Rene Atsynia** from Wemindji
- **Billy Georgekish** from Wemindji,
- **John Gunner** from Mistissini.

Their dedication and skill reflect the strength and resilience of Cree harvesting traditions and serve as an example for future generations.

The CTA remains deeply committed to supporting **full-time subsistence trappers** and all members who live and work according to the **Traditional Cree Way of Life**. Sustaining a new generation of capable trappers is vital to protecting Cree identity, culture, and knowledge. Through its programs and services, the CTA continues to create opportunities for youth to learn from Elders and experienced trappers, ensuring that traditional land-based practices remain strong for generations to come.

Fur Purchased by community 2024-2025

Community	Total purchase
Chisasibi	\$ 994
Eastmain	\$ 187
Mistissini	\$ 1,252
Nemaska	\$ -
Oujé-Bougoumou	\$ -
Washaw Sibi	\$ 190
Waskaganish	\$ 573
Waswanipi	\$ -
Wemindji	\$ 3,363
Whapmagoostui	\$ 498
Total	\$ 7,057

Fur Sold by community 2024-2025

Community	Total purchase
Chisasibi	\$ 5,035
Eastmain	\$ 534
Mistissini	\$ 6,874
Nemaska	\$ -
Oujé-Bougoumou	\$ -
Washaw Sibi	\$ 325
Waskaganish	\$ 2,343
Waswanipi	\$ -
Wemindji	\$ 18,164
Whapmagoostui	\$ 3,231
Total	\$ 36,506

Fur purchased by species (From November 2024 to April 2025)

Species	Quantity	Amount Paid	Average Cost
Beaver	BVR 66	\$ 1,361.50	\$ 20.63
Lynx	LYX 9	\$ 180.00	\$ 20.00
Marten	MTN 313	\$ 4,706.00	\$ 15.04
Mink	MNK 1	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.00
Muskrat	RAT 5	\$ 21.00	\$ 4.20
Otter	OTR 21	\$ 235.00	\$ 11.19
Red Fox	RFX 21	\$ 252.00	\$ 12.00
Squirrel	SQU 2	\$ 12.00	\$ 6.00
Weasel	WSL 6	\$ 13.00	\$ 2.17
White Fox	AFX 8	\$ 144.00	\$ 18.00
Castoreum		\$ 131.25	
Total Amount Paid		\$ 7,056.75	



Fur sold by species (Auctions: March & June 2025)

Species		Quantity	Amount Sold	Average Cost (Sale)
Beaver	BVR	210	\$ 4,482.69	\$ 21.35
Lynx	LYX	13	\$ 1,935.00	\$ 148.85
Marten	MTN	313	\$ 27,787.26	\$ 88.78
Mink	MNK	1	\$ 2.43	\$ 2.43
Muskrat	RAT	14	\$ 22.35	\$ 1.60
Otter	OTR	28	\$ 875.54	\$ 31.27
Red Fox	RFX	24	\$ 478.36	\$ 19.93
Squirrel	SQU	28	\$ 41.60	\$ 1.49
Weasel	WSL	11	\$ 125.70	\$ 11.43
White Fox	AFX	10	\$ 405.67	\$ 40.57
Timber Wolf	WLF	1	\$ 179.32	\$ 179.32
Castoreum	CA		\$ 170.45	\$ 170.45
Total Amount Paid			\$ 36,506.37	

The best price increases this year were for **lynx, marten, white fox, otter,** and **red fox**. Lynx and marten sold for much higher prices than what was paid to trappers — more than five times more in some cases. White fox and otter also did very well, with prices about double what they were bought for, while red fox showed a smaller but steady gain.

Overall, the market for good-quality furs was strong, especially for these top species. The **trappers will receive the pay difference** based on the higher auction prices, ensuring that they benefit directly from these strong sales. These results show how important it is to have skilled trappers who can provide high-quality pelts, helping Cree communities continue to earn fair returns and maintain traditional harvesting on the land.

Net Profit on fur sales 2024-2025

Inventory at the beginning	\$ 649
Fur Purchased from December 2024 to April 2025	\$ 7,057
Inventory at the end	\$ (274)
	\$ 7,432
Fur Sales -Auction March and June 2025	\$ 39,971
Less: Fees charged by Fur Harvesters (9%)	\$ (3,465)
	\$ 36,506
Net Profit paid out to the trappers in 2025	\$ 29,075

Cree Trappers' Services Trust

Fur Trust Fund

As of March 31, 2025

Community	Balance Mar-31-24	Expenses	Interest Revenue	Balance Mar-31-2025
Chisasibi	\$ 133,654	\$ (83)	\$ 1,912	\$ 135,483
Eastmain	\$ 42,354	\$ (83)	\$ 606	\$ 42,877
Mistissini	\$ 127,766	\$ (83)	\$ 1,828	\$ 129,512
Nemaska	\$ 1,473	\$ (83)	\$ 21	\$ 1,411
Oujé-Bougoumou	\$ 2,369	\$ (83)	\$ 34	\$ 2,320
Waskaganish	\$ 43,492	\$ (83)	\$ 622	\$ 44,031
Waswanipi	\$ 28,488	\$ (83)	\$ 408	\$ 28,813
Wemindji	\$ 29,929	\$ (83)	\$ 428	\$ 30,274
Whapmagoostui	\$ 17,402	\$ (83)	\$ 249	\$ 17,567
Total	\$ 426,929	\$ (750)	\$ 6,109	\$ 432,288



Cree Insurance Fund

From October 1, 1991, to March 31, 2025

Description	Total
Revenues	
Initial Funding	\$ 241,539
Insurance At \$50 Per Cabin	\$ 52,626
Insurance With BOC	\$ 2,088,551
Sub-Total	\$ 2,382,716
Net Investment Income	\$ 93,821
Contribution From CTA	\$ 41,632
Total Revenues	\$ 2,518,169
Expenses	
Year 2024-2025	
Insurance Cost	\$ 216,989
Audit Fees	\$ 750
Previous Years	
Insurance Cost	\$ 2,021,470
Travel Expenses	\$ 10,939
Contract Services	\$ 34,026
Honorarium	\$ 3,000
Insurance Claims Payouts (Before 2005)	\$ 83,283
Administration & Audit Fees	\$ 19,775
Total Expenses	\$ 2,390,232
Balance Insurance Fund	\$ 127,937







