

Concern

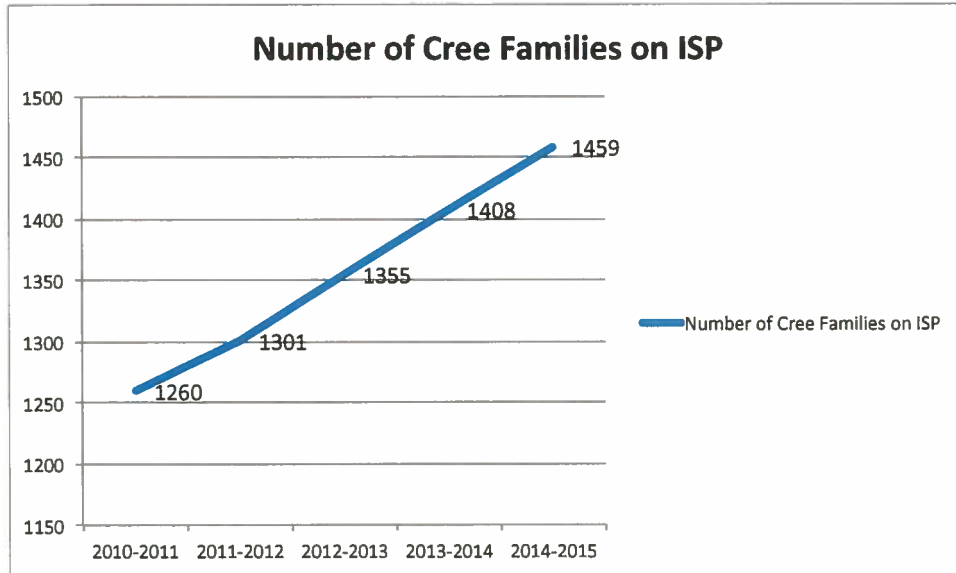
There is a concern among Land Users, Trappers/Tallymen/Hunters and Fishermen of the area concerned, that it could threaten and affect the Land where the Cree Hunters harvest and practice their way of life. It may well threaten the livelihood of those who still occupy and utilize the Land on regular, seasonal or year round basis. Although it is understood that the mineral in question is considered by some of the medical experts to be in demand for medical and health research, it's the very same mineral that could be a health hazard, devastating if not handled with proper and extreme care. Although it is a known fact that Uranium does have health benefits, these are not sufficient to warrant my support.

The risks involved have probably been mentioned repeatedly during the previous consultation processes, but there is a point that I wish to bring to everybody's attention, JBQNA section 24.11.1 states that **the rights and guarantees of the Native people established by and in accordance with this section shall be guaranteed, protected and given effect to with respect to Environmental and Social protection by and in accordance with section 22 and section 23.**

The people and Land users are beneficiaries of the Income Security Program and again in JBQNA. There is a provision in **Section 30.1.8 that states that the program shall ensure that Hunting/Fishing/Trapping shall constitute a viable way of life for the Cree people and that individual Crees who elect to pursue such a way of life shall be guaranteed a measure of economic security consistent with conditions prevailing from time to time.**

There is growing concern with the Environment and its immediate surroundings. Especially towards the downstream direction, this mineral can pose serious complications even if handled with care. Tailings can leak into the watershed and can threaten the environment and water system, even to the extent of contaminating the wildlife (Fauna), Fish and vegetation. The tallymen have serious concerns also related to accessibility; there may be restrictions to use the Land for harvesting purposes. Now if the Quebec Government should allow the mining of this mineral it will be a direct infringement on the JBQNA section 24.11 and section 30 which relate to Cree hunters and Trappers who are the land users.

This infringement is a fundamental issue to the Cree, as the Income Security Program negotiated with the government is the financial backbone of the communities, as it establishes an important protection mechanism for the traditional harvest. The following graph shows that in fact, this program is getting increasingly important to Cree families. The number of family units registered under the program has been steadily growing over the last 5 years. Although jobs are important to the community, traditional harvesting practices are fundamental to its culture and identity.



It is not certain what other complications and implications this can cause, or what detrimental effects it can have on the Environment in the event that something goes wrong.