

# MINISTIKAWATIN PENINSULA BIODIVERSITY RESERVE

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*The geographic name Ministikawatin comes from the Cree ministik and kawatin, which translate literally as « Northern Island »*

The proposed Ministikawatin Peninsula biodiversity reserve is located southeast of James Bay, 40 km west of the Cree community of Waskaganish. It lies within the territory of the Baie-James Municipality, to which the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement applies, and covers an area of 849.9 km<sup>2</sup>. To the west, its boundary follows the boundary between Québec and Ontario.



The area is in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. It is home to habitats representative of the natural region of the James Bay Coastal Plain and belongs to the bioclimatic field of mossy spruce stands.

Ministikawatin Peninsula, which is about fifty kilometres long and forty kilometres wide, is part of the watershed of Hannah and Rupert bays. The higher land rarely exceeds 45 m in height. Two-thirds of the proposed reserve is covered by oligotrophic and minerotrophic peat bogs. The terraces are home to very low-density stands of black spruce (*Picea mariana*) and dry heathland.



Ministikawatin peninsula <sup>(1)</sup>

The proposed biodiversity reserve is home to five plants likely to be designated as threatened or vulnerable species: a type of willow, the *Salix maccalliana*; a shrub, the Whiteberry or *Elaeagnus commutata*; a perennial herbaceous, the *Thalictrum dasycarpum*; and two species from the sedge family, the Sartwell's Sedge (*Carex sartwellii*) and the Prairie Sedge (*Carex prairea*).



Boreal Chorus Frog <sup>(2)</sup>

Ministikawatin Peninsula is also a mosaic of habitats used for nesting or as staging areas by the Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*), a wader that is rare in Québec. Moreover, the reserve's wetlands are home to the Boreal Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris maculata*). This small frog species was formerly quite abundant in Québec, but is now a vulnerable species because of a worrying decline in its population, caused by habitat destruction.

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## Conservation Objectives

Biodiversity reserve status would allow the pursuit of the following conservation objectives:

- the conservation of a natural environment representative of the regional ecological conditions;
- the protection of threatened or vulnerable species of flora and fauna;
- the preservation of biodiversity in aquatic and peat-based ecosystems;
- the acquisition of new knowledge concerning natural and cultural heritage.

The objectives implementation and site management will be based upon a partnership between the ministère de l'Environnement and the local stakeholders.

## Activity Regulation

From now on, the territory of Ministikawatin Peninsula biodiversity reserve is excluded from all forms of forestry operations, mining exploration and operations as well as energy production.

The practices and rights in effect regarding fishing, hunting and trapping are maintained.

## Next Events...

According to the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act*, adopted by the Government in December of 2002, public hearings on the proposed biodiversity reserves shall be held to allow the population, organizations and enterprises to comment on the conservation plan to be adopted, and that, before the final deposit of the conservation plan. These hearings shall be held in compliance with the provisions of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement.



Ministikawatin peninsula <sup>(1)</sup>



Whiteberry <sup>(1)</sup>



Sandhill Crane <sup>(2)</sup>

Photos :

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