



PRESS RELEASE
Québec and Nunavik Announce New Protected Areas

Quebec City, Québec – October 7, 2008 – Earlier today in the presence of representatives from Nunavik, Premier Jean Charest and Line Beauchamp, Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks, officially announced the creation of three new protected areas in Nunavik. These areas include portions of Leaf Bay, the Corrugated Hills and an expanded territory along the George River. The Council of the Kativik Regional Government along with the executive of the Makivik Corporation approved the designations a few weeks ago.

“This status corresponds with the environmental conservation objectives that the KRG and Nunavimmiut share with the Québec government,” stated KRG Chairperson Maggie Emudluk at the announcement. “It brings to roughly 8%, the territory of Nunavik currently protected from natural resource and hydroelectric commercial development.” The region’s first national park is at Pingualuit, and two other park projects are very near completion, Kuururjuaq along the Koroc River and Tursujuq encompassing Lake Guillaume-Delisle and Clearwater Lake.

Specifically about the three areas concerned by today’s announcement, the Leaf Bay area, which covers roughly 5000 km², is located next to Ungava Bay, north of the tree line. The tides of Leaf Bay are among the highest in the world, and the area is along the migratory route of Nunavik’s many caribou. The Corrugated Hills area encompasses 1530 km². This zone includes many geological features that are unique in Québec.

The third area included in the announcement is along the George River. While the Pyramid Mountains park project had already for some time covered 1551 km² of this region, protection has been expanded to cover more than 9000 km². The George River skirts the foothills of the Torngat Mountains and is a very productive habitat for Arctic char and Atlantic salmon, not to mention the caribou that calve every year here. Traditionally Inuit have shared sections of this area with the Naskapi of Kawawachikamach and the Innu of Matimekush–Lac John.

Park development in Nunavik is one of the major goals set out in the *Partnership Agreement on Economic and Community Development in Nunavik* (Sanarrutik). The Sanarrutik Agreement has played an important role in the development of the region in recent years. It was signed by the Makivik Corporation, the KRG and the Québec government in April 2002 to strengthen the political, economic, and social relations between Québec and Nunavik Inuit, nation-to-nation.

The KRG is a non-ethnic public organization created in 1978, under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. The organization has jurisdiction over nearly the entire territory of Québec north of the 55th parallel. The KRG administers public affairs in Nunavik in the areas of municipal matters, transportation, the environment, policing, employment, labour training, income security, childcare services, renewable resources, land-use management, civil security and economic development.

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