





# AN INDEFENSIBLE PRIVILEGE:

WIPING OUT THE BETSIAMITES RIVER SALMON  
TO LIGHT UP CITIES

Pessamit Innu First Nation  
September 29, 2016



# THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

Pessamit Innu First Nation  
September 29, 2016

# THE PESSAMIULNUT WERE DISPOSSESSED AT THE PROFIT OF HYDRO-QUEBEC



# THE GOVERNMENT'S REMARKABLE EFFICIENCY IN OVERSTEPPING PESSAMIT'S ANCESTRAL AND TREATIES RIGHTS TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Until 1973: It was strictly forbidden for First Nations to hire lawyers to defend their rights in court.

1990: Aboriginal rights to fish for food and for cultural purposes were finally recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada. Infringement of aboriginal rights could be justified if:

- The least amount of harm is done.
- Fair compensation is paid to the aboriginal group.

THE GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC AND HYDRO-QUEBEC HAVE NEVER MET THESE  
CONDITIONS. MOREOVER, QUEBEC REGARDED THE JUDGMENT AS NOT  
RELEVANT TO THE PROVINCE

# THE GOVERNMENT'S REMARKABLE EFFICIENCY IN OVERSTEPPING PESSAMIT'S ANCESTRAL AND TREATIES RIGHTS TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1996: The Supreme Court of Canada contradicted Quebec's historical position and confirmed that First Nations possess ancestral rights in the Province.

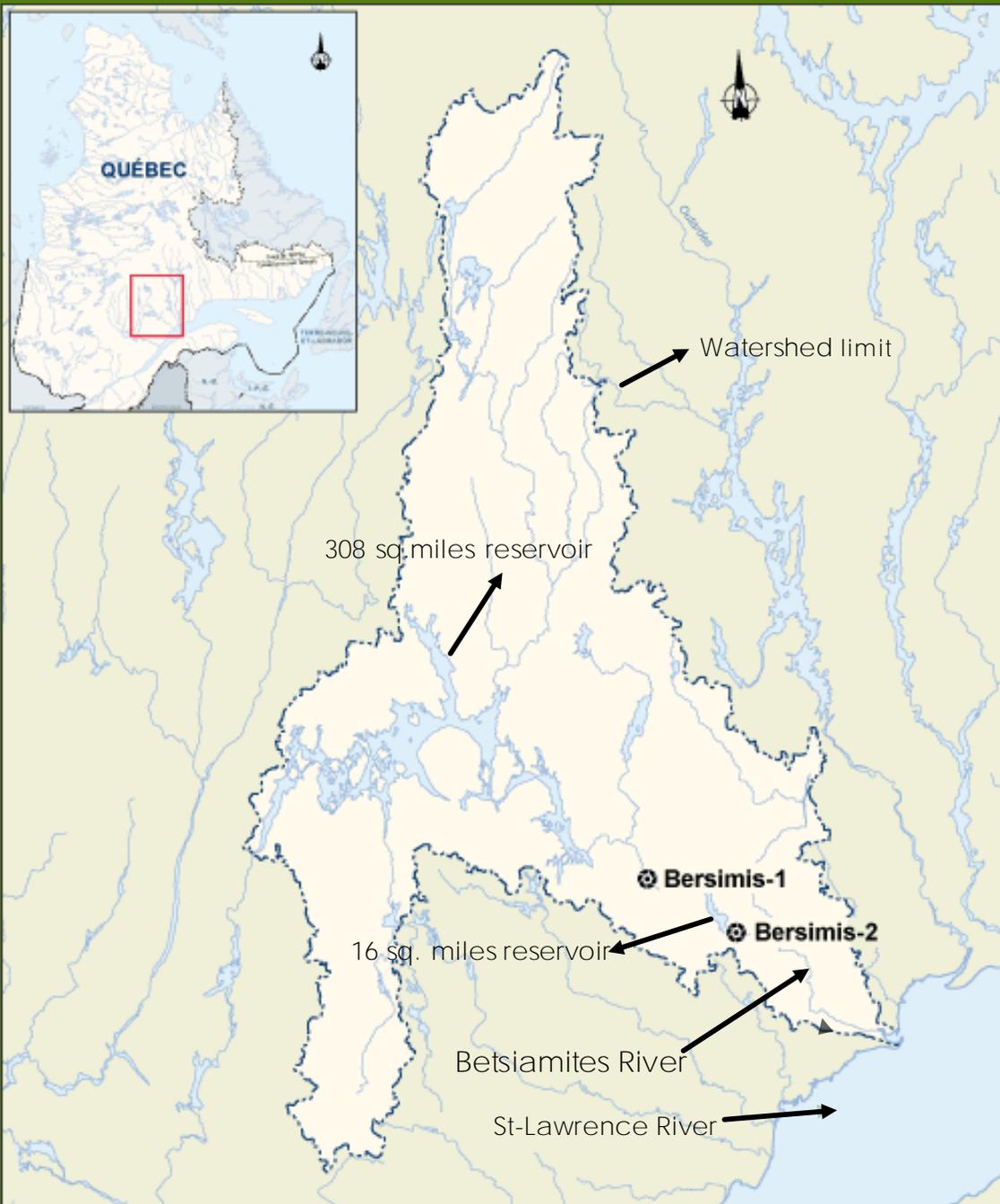
2016: Quebec's chronic reluctance to negotiate a fair-minded settlement.



THE BETSIAMITES  
RIVER:

*A former renowned  
productive  
salmon river.*

*Salmon has been the  
Pessamiulnt's main  
traditional summer  
food since time  
immemorial.*



## THE BERSIMIS HYDROELECTRIC COMPLEX –HQ

- Bersimis-1 completed in 1956: 1178 MW
- Bersimis-2 completed in 1959: 869 MW

### BOTH FACILITIES BUILT:

- Without impact assessment studies.
- Without Pessamit's consent.
- Without compensation.
- Flooding 168 miles<sup>2</sup> of hunting grounds.
- Disrupting 43.5 linear miles of prime salmon habitat.
- Causing loss of sustainably exploited traditional food.
- Infringing Pessamit's cultural values.
- Beaching constitutional obligations and treaties.



**BERSIMIS-2  
POWER  
STATION AND  
DAM AT  
MILE 43.5 OF  
BETSIAMITES  
RIVER**