

Landmark deal for Algonquins

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BARRIERE LAKE, Que. (CP)
— The Quebec government has signed a landmark deal that gives the small Algonquin band here a say in protecting its ancestral lands from loggers.

The deal follows years of bitter negotiations and road blockades by the Barriere Lake Algonquin Band.

The deal is the first in Canada to give a native community some control over its traditional lands, Quebec Native Affairs Minister Christos Sirros said Tuesday.

Sirros visited the 450-member community in the La Verendrye wildlife reserve, about 220 kilometres north of Ottawa, for a signing ceremony.

The band lives on 59 hectares of native land in the middle of the wildlife reserve, the largest in Quebec. It claims half the park and some land outside as its ancestral territory.