

Whapmagoostui-Kuujjuarapik Station

The CEN Whapmagoostui-Kuujjuarapik Station is owned and run by CEN whose secretariat is based at Université Laval, Québec, Canada. It is on Cree land and is run in collaboration with the Cree First Nation of Whapmagoostui. Operational since the 1970s, CEN's principal field station conducts research projects on past and present environments. In 2010, major upgrades were undertaken, with the construction of a Community Science Centre to serve the needs of the circumpolar science community. The Centre offers a conference room, a permanent display on local natural history and on CEN activities. The station also has wet and dry labs, a greenhouse, a dormitory, a cafeteria (full meal services during summer), vehicles for rent, wireless internet, rental of sampling and camping equipment, and onsite station manager.



	Name	Email	Phone Number
Primary Contact	Maxime Saunier	maxime.saunier@cen.ulaval.ca or cen@cen.ulaval.ca	(819) 929-3319
Secondary Contact	Christine Barnard	christine.barnard@cen.ulaval.ca	(418) 656-3340

Owner

[Centre d'études nordiques \(CEN\)/ Centre for Northern Studies](#)

Membership

Regular Member

Website

www.cen.ulaval.ca/en/page.aspx?lien=stationkuujjuarapik
www.cen.ulaval.ca/en/page.aspx?lien=centrecommunautaire

Latitude

55.283333

Longitude

-77.75

Location

The CEN Whapmagoostui-Kuujjuarapik Station is located on the eastern shore of Hudson Bay at the maritime limit of James Bay, and in the side-by-side villages of Whapmagoostui (Cree First Nation) and Kuujjuarapik (Inuit).

Nearest Community

Whapmagoostui-Kuujuarapik

Territory/ Province

Quebec

Aboriginal Government/ Homeland

Kuujuarapik: www.krg.ca and Whapmagoostui: www.whapmagoostuifn.ca

Facility Type

Year-Round Research Station, Community Research Facility, Site for Observing/Monitoring

Research Hinterland

Large River, Ponds, Sporadic Permafrost, Taiga / Boreal forest, Thermokarst Pond

Main Research Disciplines

Archaeology, Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics, Biochemistry, Climatology, Environmental Sciences, Geodesy, Geology and Sedimentology, Geophysics, Geocryology, Geomorphology, Human Biology/Wellness, Hydrology, Limnology, Mapping/GIS, Microbiology, Oceanography, Paleoecology, Paleolimnology, Terrestrial Biology/Ecology, Traditional/Aboriginal Knowledge

Research History

This station is the CEN's principal field station and has operated since the 1970s, with diverse research projects on past and present environments. An overview of past studies in this region is given in: Bhiry, N. et al. 2011. *Ecoscience* 18: 182-203. CEN operates several climate stations in the area. CEN has extensive climate data recorded since 1957 which is available through the data repository Nordicana D (www.cen.ulaval.ca/nordicanad) and upon request (cen@cen.ulaval.ca).

Current Projects

Include work on biodiversity and dynamics of northern aquatic ecosystems; impacts of melting permafrost in the context of global warming; wetlands paleoecology; restoration of vegetation in degraded sites, and research on mercury dynamics.

Power

Solar, External Electrical Grid

Communications

Telephone, Satellite phone, VHF, Internet, Computer, Printer/Scanner, Fax

Local Transportation

Snowmobiles, ATVs and boats (rowboat and zodiac) are available for rent at the station. 4X4 trucks are available for rent in the community. Helicopter services can be purchased from Nunavik Rotors and Whapchiwem.

Equipment Storage

Yes, make arrangements prior to arrival.

Dormitory/Sleeping Facilities

Maximum 35 people

Dining/Kitchen Facilities

1 cafeteria with full meal plan from June to August. From September to May, the fully equipped kitchen is available to visitors

Laboratory Facilities

Wet and dry

Fuel Availability

Available in town.

Research Requirements

Local authorities must be informed of your work. No permitting and licensing required for work within the village, but please contact local authorities: www.whapmagoostuifn.ca, www.krg.ca and the CEN Science coordinator (christine.barnard@cen.ulaval.ca) to inform them of your proposed work. Makivik Corporation is currently working on a research licensing system.

Special Rules and Regulations

N/A

Local External Resources

N/A

Nearest Medical Service

Health Centre in Whapmagoostui-Kuujjuarapik and Hospital in Chisasibi (185 km) by plane.

Safety Considerations

N/A

Cost

www.cen.ulaval.ca/en/page.aspx?lien=stationkuujjuarapik#reservation

Other Information

The climate at Whapmagoostui-Kuujjuarapik is strongly influenced by the proximity of Hudson Bay, and the recent pronounced loss of sea ice in this sector of northern Canada has been accompanied by large increases in air temperature. Discontinuous or scattered permafrost occurs throughout the region and is degrading rapidly. Whapmagoostui-Kuujjuarapik is located at the terrestrial boundary between the taiga and the tundra. The community is built on a sandy headland, at the mouth of the Great Whale River. Granites covered by a thick layer of sand characterize the soils of the region. South of the Great Whale River is the taiga zone (Boreal forest), while north of the river, the forest tundra zone progressively dominates the landscape. This region continues to experience particularly rapid isostatic uplift in response to the retreat of the Laurentide Ice Sheet. Parabolic dunes occur along the coast and are strongly influenced by plant cover. Paleocological studies have documented the Holocene evolution of landscapes, including lakes, wetlands, and forests. The vegetation type is coastal forest tundra, with some 400 recorded species. The Manitounuk Islands, located just a little to the north along the coast, are part of the Hudsonian cuestas found on the eastern shore of Hudson Bay. Rocky beaches on the side facing the open sea and vertiginous cliffs on the coastal side characterize these islands.

The first signs of human occupation in the Whapmagoostui-Kuujjuarapik region have been dated at 3800 BP. The Hudson Bay Company (HBC) established the first fur trade post here in 1750 and marked the onset of continuous occupation. The American army opened a military air base here, using Inuit and Cree workers. Later, the HBC post closed. After the World War II, the military base was transferred to the Canadian government and a Mid-Canada Line radar station was operated. This bicultural community represents the ancestral limit of the Cree and Inuit territories. It is both the northernmost Cree community and the southernmost Inuit community in Quebec. Whapmagoostui-Kuujjuarapik has a population of about 1600 inhabitants. The spoken languages are Cree, Inuktitut, and English with some French. Much work on the social dimensions has been conducted over time. Rapid social, economic, and environmental change initiated in the mid-20th century continues to this day. Whapmagoostui-Kuujjuarapik is only accessible by commercial airlines (Air Inuit and First Air). All research activities must be planned in advance. Local guides and translators are available for hire. Access to the surrounding area by chartered flights, boat and all-terrain vehicles can be organized by the station manager.

Last Updated
2015-05-30