

Public Consultation – Proposal to allocate permanent status as biodiversity reserves to seven areas, and permanent status as an aquatic reserve to one area, in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue Administrative Region

INVITATION TO VOICE YOUR OPINION BEGINNING ON JANUARY 15, 2013

Québec, December 14, 2013 – The commission of the Bureau d’audiences publiques sur l’environnement (BAPE), chaired by Anne-Marie Parent who is assisted by Commissioner John Haemmerli, will be holding, and beginning on **January 15, 2013, at 7:30 p.m.**, the second part of the public hearing on the *Projets de réserves de biodiversité pour sept territoires et de réserve aquatique pour un territoire dans la région administrative de l’Abitibi-Témiscamingue*. In the course of this second part of the public hearing, the commission will hold sessions at the following locations:

<p>Beginning on January 15, 2013 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Val-d’Or (Dubuisson sector) Maison du citoyen 1405, St. Philip road</p>
<p>January 17, 2013 1:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Témiscaming Le Centre Salle de l’âge d’or 20, Humphrey street</p>
<p>January 23, 2013 1:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Campbell’s Bay Centre récréatif 2, Second street</p>

The sessions will continue depending on the needs of the public and the commission.

This second part will be devoted to hearing the briefs of individuals, municipalities, organizations and groups wishing to express their opinion to the commission as well as to the oral suggestions and opinions of the public.

WEB BROADCAST OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

The public sessions planned during the second part of the public hearing will be broadcast live in audio mode on the BAPE’s website at the following address: www.bape.gouv.qc.ca. This audio broadcast on the Internet will allow those who so wish to follow the unfolding of the public hearing.

WRITING A BRIEF

A brief is a document that presents opinions or concerns on a specific subject. It allows the author to develop and state the arguments in support of this opinion.

As a general rule, a brief contains the following elements: a short presentation of the individual, the group, the organization or the municipality tabling the brief, a brief explanation of the interest that the author has in the project, opinions on the project as a whole, concerns related to the project and, as the case may be, any suggestions and comments likely to improve it. Those individuals who do not wish to

write a brief can express their opinion verbally at the public hearing. A verbal presentation may be developed in the same way as a brief. This advice is provided, for information purposes only. It is also available on the English section of the BAPE's website under the heading "Taking part".

PRESENTING AND SUBMITTING A BRIEF

To ensure the smooth planning of the unfolding of the public sessions of the hearing, every individual, group, organization or municipality wishing to make known its point of view by either presenting a brief or giving an oral presentation is asked to inform, as soon as possible, **Ms. Marie-Josée Harvey**, by calling 418 643-7447 or, toll-free, 1 800 463-4732, extension 432. The tabling of a brief without public presentation is also possible.

To allow the commission to read the brief prior to the public session, the document that will be presented must be sent, **no later than December 18 at 4:00 p.m.**, to the secretary of the BAPE, at 575, rue Saint-Amable, bureau 2.10, Québec (Québec) G1R 6A6, **to the attention of Ms. Marie-Josée Harvey**.

Persons wishing to submit their brief by e-mail can address it to: 8reserves-abitibi-temiscamingue@bape.gouv.qc.ca and an original copy will have to follow by mail. As soon as the briefs have been made public by the commission, they will be tabled in the consultation centres and disseminated on the BAPE's website.

AVAILABLE DOCUMENTATION

All of the documents pertaining to this project are available by free Internet access as well as the transcriptions of the public sessions of the first part of the hearing at the following regional consultation centres :

- Bibliothèque La Bouquine de Ville-Marie ;
- Bibliothèque de Fort-Coulonge ;
- Bibliothèque Bowater de Gatineau ;
- Bureau du Conseil de la Première Nation de Long Point ;
- Bureau du Conseil de la Nation Anishnabe du Lac-Simon.

All of the documents pertaining to this project are also available in print for consultation at the following regional consultation centres :

- Bibliothèque municipale de Rouyn-Noranda ;
- Bibliothèque municipale de Senneterre ;
- Bibliothèque d'Amos ;
- Bibliothèque de Val-d'Or ;
- Bibliothèque de Témiscaming ;
- Bureau du Conseil des Anicinapek de Kitcisakik ;
- Bureau du Conseil des Atikamekw d'Opitciwan.

The entire file is also available at the BAPE office in Québec, 575, rue Saint-Amable, bureau 2.10, at Bibliothèque centrale de l'Université du Québec à Montréal, Pavillon Hubert-Aquin, 1255, rue Saint-Denis, local A-M100, as well as on the BAPE website at **www.bape.gouv.qc.ca**, under the heading « Mandats en cours ».

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS ESSENTIAL

Public participation is essential for the commission. It allows the commission to hear the arguments, opinions and suggestions of participants before drafting the report that will be submitted to the Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment, Wildlife and Parks.

Individuals wishing to obtain more information can get in touch with Ms. Marie-Josée Harvey, coordinator of the commission's secretariat, or Mr. Alexandre Corcoran-Tardif, communications

advisor, by calling the 418 643-7447 extension 538 or, toll-free, 1 800 463-4732 or by e-mail at the following address : 8reserves-abitibi-temiscamingue@bape.gouv.qc.ca .

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Source: Alexandre Corcoran-Tardif, Communications Advisor
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***Technical sheet enclosed**

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The Proposals

The proposals presented by the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement, de la Faune et des Parcs for the administrative region of Abitibi-Témiscamingue are intended to create seven biodiversity reserves, namely Lac Parent, Lac Wetetnagami, Lac Saint-Cyr, Dunes-de-la-Rivière-Attic, Wanaki, Basses-Collines-du-Ruisseau-Serpent and Vallée-de-la-Rivière-Maganasipi, and one aquatic reserve, Rivière-Dumoine.

Under the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act*, the main activities that are prohibited in these areas are forestry, mining and hydraulic operations. Activities such as hunting, fishing and traditional Aboriginal activities can continue to take place, and all current vacation rights are maintained.

The **Lac Parent Marshlands Biodiversity Reserve** is located within the territory of the Ville de Senneterre in the La Vallée-de-l'Or RCM. It is situated roughly 35 km north-east of the Senneterre urban core, and roughly 25 km south of Lebel-sur-Quévillon. The proposed reserve covers an area of 402.8 km², and despite its name, protects only a small portion of Lac Parent, namely the sector connected most directly to the marshland, accounting for roughly 4 km² of the lake's total area of 122 km². The proposed reserve protects the marshlands themselves, along with adjacent land that impacts upon their quality, and a large wetland area.

The **Lac Wetetnagami Biodiversity Reserve** is located within the territory of the Ville de Senneterre in the La Vallée-de-l'Or RCM. It is situated roughly 70 km north-east of the Senneterre urban core, and roughly 55 km south-east of Lebel-sur-Quévillon. The proposed reserve covers an area of 234.2 km² and would protect part of a low, till-covered hilly complex with rock outcrops, along with ecosystems based on less pronounced physical environments located further north, including Lac Wetetnagami. The proposed reserve at Lac Wetetnagami would play a significant role in helping to protect old-growth forests and numerous other environments hosting the main types of vegetation found in these ecosystems, namely black spruce-moss, black spruce-heath and balsam fir-white birch stands.

The **Lac Saint-Cyr Biodiversity Reserve** is located within the territory of the Ville de Senneterre in the La Vallée-de-l'Or RCM. It is situated roughly 95 km north-east of the Senneterre urban core, approximately 90 km south-east of Lebel-sur-Quévillon and approximately 50 km west of the village of Obedjiwan. The proposed reserve covers an area of 143.1 km². Although it excludes three large lakes (Mesplet, Cherrier and Saint-Cyr) and Rivière Saint-Cyr, the proposed reserve would nevertheless help to protect ecosystems in the Lac Mégiscane plains physiographic unit, since it would be the unit's only protected area. It would therefore protect an area where virtually all the land feeds the three excluded lakes. In addition, it would help to protect old-growth forests.

The **Dunes-de-la-Rivière-Attic Biodiversity Reserve** is located within the territory of the Ville de Senneterre in the La Vallée-de-l'Or RCM. It is situated roughly 35 km east of the Senneterre urban core. It covers an area of approximately 77.1 km² and would protect a rare element, namely the eolian dunes, which are the reason for the area's considerable importance. Although small in size, the proposed Dunes-de-la-Rivière-Attic Biodiversity Reserve would protect a range of land forms and surface deposit types (glacio-lacustrine, sandy, organic, fluvio-glacial, glacial) that are under-represented in the natural region's existing network of protected areas. In addition, the new reserve would protect a large number of environments hosting vegetation types that are also under-represented in the region, including black spruce-sphagnum, black spruce-lichen, black spruce-moss, black spruce-heath, balsam fir-white birch,

balsam fir-black spruce and balsam fir-sphagnum stands. It would also protect a variety of major wetland areas, including ombrotrophic bogs and shrub swamps.

The **Wanaki Biodiversity Reserve** forms part of the Réservoir-Dozois unorganized territory, located in the La Vallée-de-l'Or RCM. The reserve is situated roughly 65 km south-east of downtown Val-d'Or, close to the Algonquin community of Kitcisakik. It covers an area of 137.9 km² and would, virtually on its own, help to protect the physiographic types in the Lac Cawatose plains physiographic unit, including a large percentage of fairly flat land with fluvio-glacial deposits and small, till-covered, knolls with less specific morphology. The proposed reserve would also protect yellow birch stands, which are the most common type of natural vegetation in the Boutons de La Vérendrye natural region, as well as balsam fir-cedar stands. Overall, the area has maintained its natural appearance, and there are very few signs of human activity.

The **Basses-Collines-du-Ruisseau-Serpent Biodiversity Reserve** is located partly within the territory of the Ville de Témiscaming and partly in the unorganized territory of Les Lacs-du-Témiscamingue, in the Témiscamingue RCM. It is situated roughly 25 km south-east of downtown Témiscaming. It currently covers an area of 112.3 km² and would protect till-covered knolls and valleys that are representative of the Lac Esber low hills physiographic unit. It would be one of the only protected areas in this natural region to protect glacio-lacustrine deposits. It would also play a role in protecting the region's most common types of potential vegetation, namely yellow birch-fir-sugar maple, yellow-birch-fir, sugar maple-yellow birch and white pine stands. At the same time, it would also protect some much rarer hemlock forests and sugar maple-red oak forests

The **Vallée-de-la-Rivière-Maganasipi Biodiversity Reserve** is located in the unorganized territory of Les Lacs-du-Témiscamingue, which forms part of the Témiscamingue RCM. It is situated roughly 45 km west of the municipality of Rapides-des-Joachims and roughly 55 km south-east of the Ville de Témiscaming. It covers an area of 89.6 km² and would mainly protect glacial deposits, rock outcrops and fluvio-glacial deposits commonly found in the Dumoine plateau natural region. It would also play a significant role in protecting old-growth forests, which account for two-thirds of its forest cover. In addition, it would protect an area that includes a habitat used by the bald eagle, a species designated as vulnerable.

The **Rivière-Dumoine Aquatic Reserve** is located in the administrative regions of Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Outaouais. The portion situated in Abitibi-Témiscamingue lies mainly in the unorganized territory of Les Lacs-du-Témiscamingue, in the Témiscamingue RCM. However, the northern portion is located in the unorganized territory of Réservoir-Dozois, in the La Vallée-de-l'Or RCM. Virtually all the portion situated in Outaouais is located in the unorganized territory of Lac-Nilgaut, in the Pontiac RCM. The proposed reserve is roughly 140 km long. The southern section is located approximately 10 km west of Rapides-des-Joachims, and the towns of Témiscamingue and Belleterre are located respectively 85 km and 60 km to the west of the reserve. In all, the reserve would cover an area of 1,445 km², and its main purpose would be to protect Rivière Dumoine, its valley and its immediate watershed. Because of its considerable size and length, the proposed reserve covers several ecological units and would play a role in protecting different types of physical environments in four physiographic units, namely the Lac Bruce hills, the Lac Desjardins hills, the Lac Memekin buttons and the Lac Esber low hills. In addition, it would provide significant representation for the natural region's old-growth forests.

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