

Questions on the Environmental Impact Statement for the La Romaine Hydroelectric Generation Project by Hydro-Québec

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has identified the following concerns about the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared by Hydro-Québec for the Romaine Hydroelectric Complex Project and believes that Hydro-Québec should address these concerns and questions during the environmental assessment.

MAPPING

Why has Hydro-Québec used inaccurate boundaries on its maps?

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The EIS should contain a comprehensive analysis of the predicted environmental effects (positive and negative, direct and indirect, short and long term, etc.) in Labrador. Adequate baseline information must be provided to support the predicted environmental effects in Labrador.

As a general question, will the project have adverse environmental effects in Labrador?

How did Hydro-Québec determine the study area?

Lands

There are 7 remote cottage titles issued in Labrador very close to the catchment area. What impact, if any, will there be on accessibility to these cottage titles?

Wildlife Species

What are the potential impacts this development might have for Wildlife Species in Labrador? The primary concerns regard wide ranging species that might have part of their range in or might spend part of their life cycle in the area to be flooded.

Woodland Caribou

How significant will the loss of habitat associated with flooding be for woodland caribou herds (Red Wine and Lac Joseph herds in particular) that straddle the terrestrial interprovincial boundary? How do any effects relate to the recovery goals outlined in the Québec and/or Newfoundland and Labrador Recovery Strategies for the Woodland Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*), Boreal population? What is the potential for increased road construction to provide increased access for illegal hunting activities as well as for increased disturbance to woodland caribou (snowmobile, ATV use etc.)?

Other large mammals

Will there be any effects similar to the potential effects highlighted above for other large mammal species? Wolverine are considered extirpated in Labrador. Does the project have the potential to negatively affect wolverine in the area this could have implications for recovery in Labrador?

Impacts to species like bear and moose would not likely be of concern as the populations are not at risk but, if the effects of flooding cross the border then there might be some concerns.

Fish and aquatic species

Will the impoundment associated with the dam/reservoir at Centrale La Romaine-4 have any effect on inland fish species in Labrador. It is unclear how far upstream the impacts of the Romaine 4 dam will be felt.

Increased road access could provide increased pressure on recreational fish stocks. Without a clear understanding of the road and transmission line network, it is difficult to determine if there will be any impacts. If access to Labrador lakes and streams will be facilitated by the development then, will recreational fish stocks in the potentially affected area be surveyed prior to construction and establishment of a long-term monitoring program?

Hydro-Québec acknowledges that methyl mercury contamination in fish species will occur as a result of increased mercury levels in the proposed Romaine Reservoir No.4 system. What are the potential impacts on fish resources in the waters of Newfoundland and Labrador that are connected to the Romaine River system? If there is an impact on the fish what would be the potential impact on people or wildlife which consume these fish within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador?

Water Resources Management

Can Hydro-Québec state with certainty that the project will not have any adverse effects on waterways and/or tributaries in Labrador?

JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROJECT

In the Environmental Impact Statement, Hydro-Québec has justified this project with reference to the need to export renewable energy to external markets in North America. In the brief section on alternatives to meet this demand, it considers wind, thermal, nuclear, geothermal and solar but not other hydro-electric projects. Has Hydro-Québec considered whether other projects within or outside of Québec can address North American demand for clean renewable energy with a smaller environmental footprint than the Romaine project?

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