



Brador hills biodiversity reserve

Conservation plan



September 2003

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The plan of the proposed Brador hills biodiversity reserve and its location are shown on the maps in Schedules A.1 and A.2.

The proposed Brador hills biodiversity reserve is located in the Côte-Nord administrative region, between 51°32' and 51°36' north latitude and 57°07' and 57°13' west longitude. It is situated approximately 15 km north of Lourdes-de-Blanc-Sablon.

The northern quarter of the reserve lies within the unorganized territory of Petit-Mécatina and is part of Municipalité régionale de comté de la Minganie. The remainder of the territory is in Municipalité de Blanc-Sablon and is part of Municipalité régionale de comté de la Basse-Côte-Nord.

The proposed biodiversity reserve covers a total area of 32.3 km².

1.2. Ecological overview

The protected area is in the natural province of the Lower North Shore Plateau. It protects exceptional landscapes and habitats in the middle Saint-Augustin hills natural region.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The Brador hills watershed is characterized by a subpolar, humid continental climate with a short growing season. It belongs to the bioclimatic field of mossy spruce stands.

Geology and geomorphology: The reserve is wholly within the Grenville geologic province of the Canadian Shield. The landscape consists of low tabular hills of carbonate rock (limestone and dolomite) emerging from the Precambrian basement. Embedded in a felsic matrix (granite), this geological formation is rare in the Lower North Shore natural province. In the south, the substratum is also formed of metamorphic rock, namely gneiss and paragneiss. The altitude in the protected area varies between 170 m and 370 m.

Hydrography: Courtemanche lake has an area of approximately 3.8 km² and occupies the depression at the centre of the protected area. This headwater lake feeds the Brador Est river, which is a Strahler 2 river.

Vegetation: The territory of the protected area is covered by dry heath, a plant formation almost devoid of trees that consists of stunted shrubs, grasses, mosses and lichens. The flora is formed of vascular plants adapted to dry and marginal soils, including a milk vetch (*Oxytropis campestris*) and a dwarf Arctic form of

rhododendron, the Lapland rose-bay (*Rhododendron lapponicum*). These plants are generally associated with *Rhytidium rugosum*, a moss species.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The waters of the Brador Est river provide spawning and rearing habitat for Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*). The river has salmon river status.

The calcareous Brador hills, by reason of their geologic specificity, support a unique flora that could include rare or threatened plants, or plant species likely to be rare or threatened.

1.3. Occupation and main land uses

The land occupations and uses in the proposed Brador hills biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in Schedule A.3.

The territory lies within the Saguenay beaver reserve in which the Native communities have special rights regarding the hunting and trapping of fur-bearing animals.

The entire territory of the proposed biodiversity reserve lies within fur-bearing animal management unit (FAMU) 66.

No land rights have been granted within the perimeter of the protected area.

2. Protection status

Biodiversity reserve status would allow the pursuit of the following conservation objectives:

- ✓ the conservation of an exceptional geologic landscape in the middle Saint-Augustin hills natural region;
- ✓ the preservation of biodiversity in calcareous dry heaths;
- ✓ the protection and restoration of Atlantic salmon habitat;
- ✓ the acquisition of new knowledge concerning natural heritage.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the proposed Brador hills biodiversity reserve are governed by the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act* (R.S.Q., c. C-61.01).

This conservation plan does not specify any prohibited activity other than those prohibited in biodiversity reserves by the Act; nor does it authorize any other activities, or set any additional constraints on the activities permitted by the Act.

3.1. Prohibited activities

It is important to note that under the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act*, the main activities prohibited in an area designated as a proposed biodiversity reserve are:

- mining, and gas or petroleum development;
- mining, gas or petroleum exploration, brine and underground reservoir exploration, prospecting, and digging or boring, where such activities necessitate stripping, the digging of trenches, excavation or deforestation;
- forest management activities within the meaning of section 3 of the *Forest Act* (R.S.Q., c. F-4.1);
- the development of hydraulic resources and any production of energy on a commercial or industrial basis;
- any new allocation of a right to occupy land for vacation resort purposes;
- earthwork or construction work.

3.2. Activities governed by other statutes

All activities likely to be carried on within the boundaries of the proposed Brador hills biodiversity reserve remain governed by the other applicable legislative and regulatory provisions, including those that require the issue of a permit or authorization or the payment of fees. The carrying on of certain activities may also be prohibited or limited by other Acts or regulations applicable within the boundaries of the proposed biodiversity reserve.

A special legal framework may, within the boundaries of the proposed biodiversity reserve, govern permitted and prohibited activities in connection with:

- **Archaeological research** (especially the measures contained in the *Cultural Property Act* [R.S.Q., c. B-4]);
- **Development of wildlife resources** (especially the measures contained in the *Act respecting the conservation and development of wildlife* [R.S.Q., c. C-61.1] and, where applicable, the measures contained in any applicable federal legislation);

- **Access** (especially the measures contained in the *Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State* [R.S.Q., c. T-8.1]);
- **Land rights** (especially the measures contained in the *Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State* [R.S.Q., c. T-8.1] and in leases issued by the Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks).

3.3. Supervision of activities

The Minister of the Environment is responsible for the application of the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act*, and is therefore responsible for the proposed biodiversity reserves established under that Act. The Minister will supervise and monitor the measures contained in the Act with regard to permitted activities in protected areas.

All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities as set out in the legislative and regulatory texts that apply within a proposed biodiversity reserve.

The Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks will supervise all activities subject to the Minister's authority within the territory of the proposed Brador hills biodiversity reserve, in particular as regards permitted forms of land occupation.

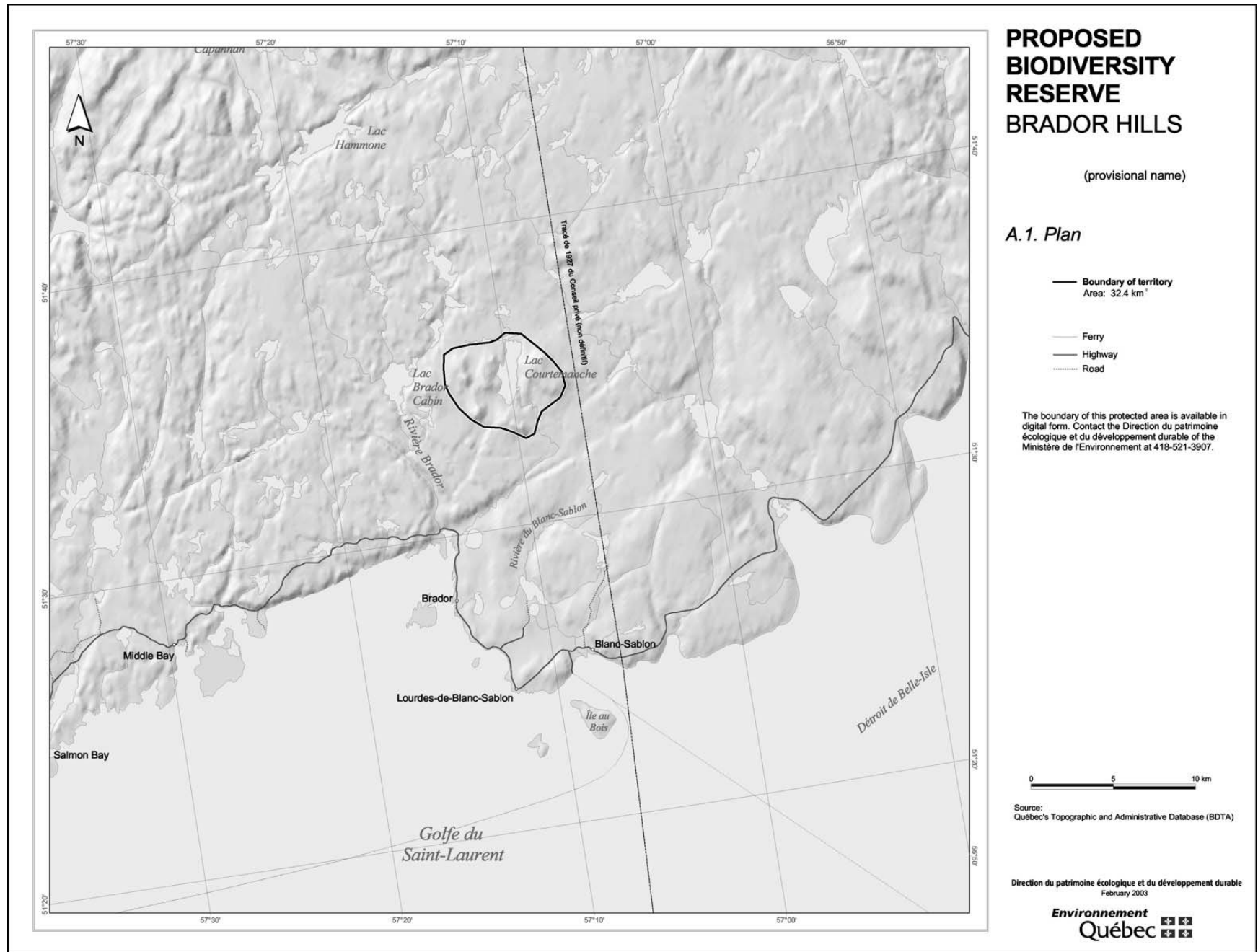
The Société de la faune et des parcs du Québec (FAPAQ) remains responsible for supervising the activities relating to wildlife protection and management that are under its responsibility.

4. Permanent protection status

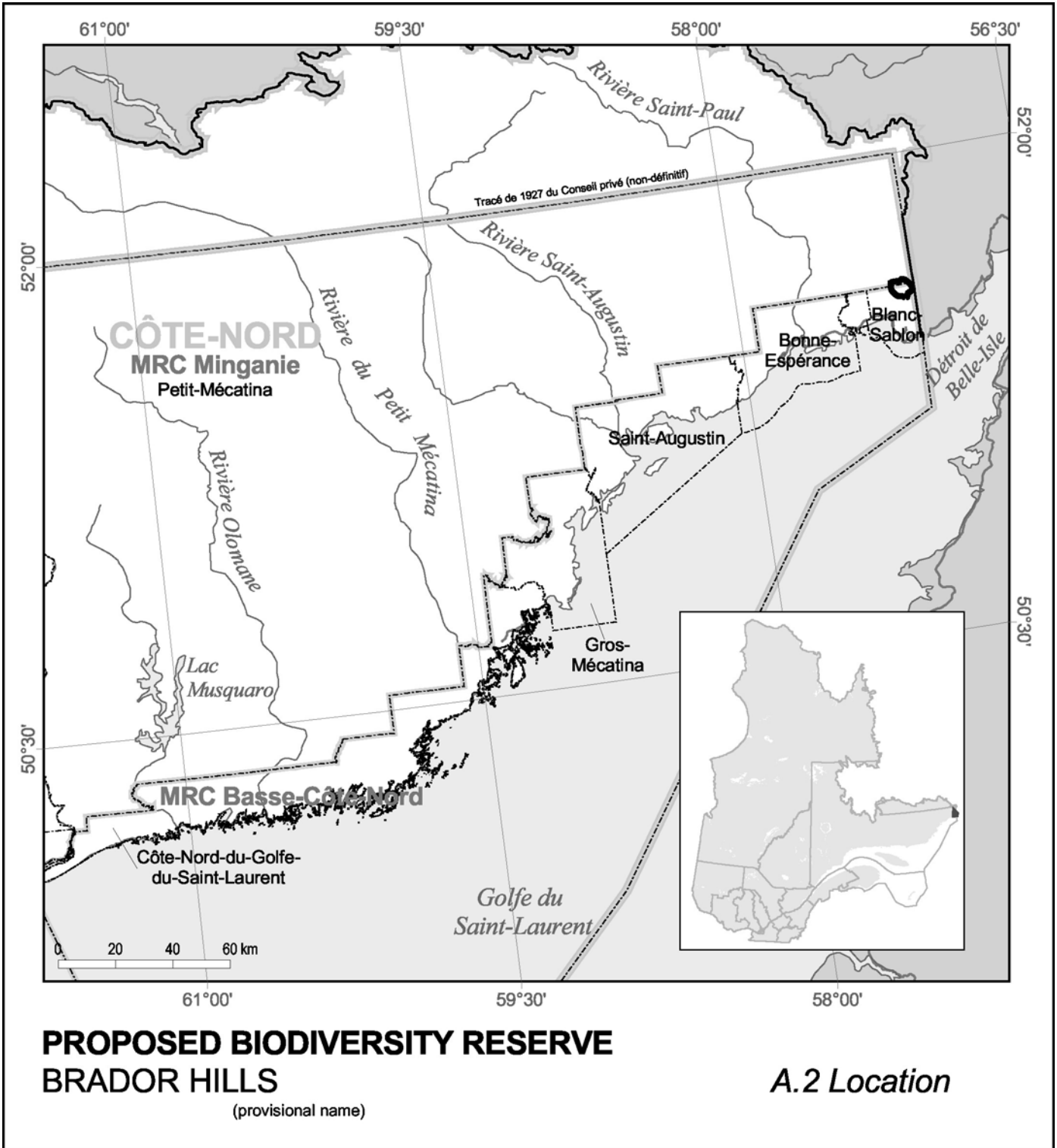
The permanent protection status envisaged for the reserve is "ecological reserve" status under the *Natural Heritage Conservation Act*.

Schedules

A.1. Plan of the proposed Brador hills biodiversity reserve (provisional name)



A.2. Map showing the location of the proposed Brador hills biodiversity reserve (provisional name)



A.3. Map showing land occupation and uses in the proposed Brador hills biodiversity reserve (provisional name)

