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**Project to establish a technical landfill site at Danford Lake  
in the Municipality of Allevyn-et-Cawood**

## **Opinions and findings**

In its report, the commission expresses a number of opinions and findings which ensue from its analysis and which are grouped together in this document. Readers should, however, refer to the context to fully grasp the meaning and the scope of these opinions and findings.

### ***Purpose of the project***

Finding – The commission notes that the first principle of the Québec Residual Materials Management Policy 1998-2008 stipulates that after source reduction, reuse, then recycling, resource valorization must be preferred over disposal. The commission notes that the Policy puts regional municipalities in charge of planning the management of residual materials.

Finding – The commission finds that in 2006 the Table des préfets de l'Outaouais (Table of reeves of the Outaouais Region) began a reflection and dialogue process, the aim of which is to regionalize the management of residual materials. In May 2007, the City of Gatineau adhered to this approach.

**Opinion 1** – Given the geographical and demographic characteristics of the Outaouais Region as well as the requirements of the Regulation respecting landfilling and incineration of residual materials, the commission is of the opinion that a regionalization of the management of residual materials is necessary and corresponds to a regional desire. Moreover, this regionalization is in keeping with the spirit of the Québec Residual Materials Management Policy 1998-2008.

**Opinion 2** – The commission believes that the participation of the City of Gatineau, given its demographic weight, is essential in any initiative to regionalize the management of residual materials in the Outaouais Region.

Finding – The commission notes that the Comité ad hoc sur la gestion des matières résiduelles en Outaouais (Ad hoc committee on the management of residual materials in the Outaouais Region) recommends, in its preliminary report, opting for a technology that would make it possible

to achieve the putrescible matter valorization objectives set by the government by means other than the establishment of a separate pick-up and the setting up of a centralized composting facility.

**Finding –** The commission finds that resorting to a technical landfill as the main residual materials management method is not favoured by the Comité ad hoc sur la gestion des matières résiduelles en Outaouais (Ad hoc committee on the management of residual materials in the Outaouais Region). Indeed, this option would presuppose that the valorization objectives set by the government could not be achieved without the establishment of a separate pick-up of putrescible matter and without the setting up of a centralized composting facility, interventions which the Committee deems difficult to carry out in the region.

**Finding –** The commission finds that although the Comité ad hoc sur la gestion des matières résiduelles en Outaouais (Ad hoc committee on the management of residual materials in the Outaouais Region) recommends opting for a valorization technology, it will still be necessary to resort to landfilling to eliminate a certain quantity of final waste.

**Opinion 3 –** The commission is of the opinion that it is important that the location of the regional residual materials management facilities be determined in such a way as to minimize the transport of these materials. As with the choice of the technology, the location of these facilities must receive the assent of the region, which is not the case for the proposed project.

**Finding –** The commission finds that the residual materials valorization solution sought in the region cannot be determined or implemented soon enough to meet the region's needs, notably within the perspective of the upcoming closure of the trench sanitary landfills required for January 2009. While awaiting the choice and implementation of a valorization technology, an interim replacement solution is required over the short term. The commission notes that a number of interim solution proposals are currently being examined by the RCMs of Outaouais and the City of Gatineau.

**Opinion 4 –** The commission is of the opinion that in anticipation of a regionalization of the management of residual materials in the Outaouais Region, it is desirable that the interim solution to deal with the upcoming closure of the trench sanitary landfills emerge from a regional consultation in order to give the region a residual materials management system. It is also important that this interim solution be accessible and advantageous for all parties, including the RCM of Pontiac.

**Finding –** The commission finds that the global capacity of 8 megatonnes proposed over a timeframe of approximately thirty years for the technical landfill site at Danford Lake would far exceed the needs of the Outaouais Region.

**Finding –** The commission finds that in the Outaouais Region only the RCM of Pontiac formally supports the project to establish a large-capacity technical landfill site at Danford Lake. The commission notes that this RCM is the most sparsely and that its own needs would be insufficient to justify the establishment of a large-capacity infrastructure.

Finding – The commission finds that the proponent is counting in particular on residual materials from institutions, businesses and industries, as well as from construction, renovation and demolition activities, and points out that their management is not under the control of municipalities.

**Opinion 5** – The commission is of the opinion that the establishment in the Outaouais Region of a long-term, large-capacity technical landfill site like the one proposed by the proponent could create an obstacle to the establishment of a valorization facility. Yet the first principle of the Québec Residual Materials Management Policy 1998-2008 prefers the valorization of residual materials over their disposal in a landfill.

**Opinion 6** – The commission is of the opinion that if the project to establish a technical landfill site at Danford Lake were authorized before the initiative to hold a regional consultation on the management of residual materials in the Outaouais Region were completed, this would compromise the consultation efforts undertaken for the selection of a management method, a valorization technology and the location of the facilities.

**Opinion 7** – The commission is of the opinion that it is important that the regional choices concerning the management of residual materials ensue from a regional consultation initiative, while respecting the principles and objectives of the Québec Residual Materials Management Policy.

Finding – The commission notes that the industry, business and institution sector and the construction, renovation and demolition sector account for close to two-thirds of the residual materials generated in Québec. The commission finds that the management of these residual materials is not subject to the control of regional municipalities even though the government policy considers that these municipalities should be in charge of planning the management of residual materials.

**Opinion 8** – The commission is of the opinion that in accordance with the principles and the spirit of the residual materials management policy, it would be desirable that regional municipalities be able to exercise control over all residual materials generated on their territory, including those of the industry, business and institution sector and those of the construction, renovation and demolition sector to allow these municipalities to fully assume their leadership role.

### ***Impacts on the environment***

Finding – The Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs considers that underneath the land on which the technical landfill site would be built at Danford Lake there is no free groundwater having a high potential aquifer and that in this respect the site would meet the requirements of the Regulation respecting landfilling and incineration of residual materials.

**Opinion 9** – The commission is of the opinion that in the case of a contamination of the groundwater from the technical landfill site at Danford Lake, it could be difficult to bring the problem under control and to treat the potentially substantial volumes of contaminated water. Such a situation would then lead to additional costs for the proponent as well as for the

organization in charge of overseeing the facility, namely the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs.

Finding – The commission finds that insofar as the discharge standards are respected at all times and the monitoring program is applied meticulously, the effluent from the leachate treatment system of the technical landfill site planned at Danford Lake should have no significant impact on the quality of water of Rivière Picanoc.

Finding – The commission finds that the biogas management system envisaged by the proponent for the operation of the Danford Lake technical landfill site would make it possible to respect, on the edge of the property, the ambient air standards in effect in Québec.

Finding – The commission finds that the carrying out of the technical landfill site project at Danford Lake would lead to a major increase in trucking on Route 301 between Kazabazua and Danford Lake, as well as to a moderate increase on Route 105.

Finding – The commission finds that the Venosta sector of Route 105 is one of the sectors posing the greatest risks of accidents in the Outaouais Region. However, for the entire itinerary that trucks would follow on Route 105, the accident rate does not differ significantly from the provincial average.

Finding – The commission finds that the Ministère des Transports plans to carry out work on Route 105 to improve traffic safety. The commission also finds that the heavy vehicle traffic associated with the transport of residual materials to the planned technical landfill site at Danford Lake would be an additional source of concern for the public.

Finding – The commission invites the Ministère des Transports to reconsider the request of the Municipality of Kazabazua to reduce the speed limit on Route 105 at the northern approach to the village.

**Opinion 10** – The commission is of the opinion that if the project to build a technical landfill site at Danford Lake were to go ahead, the transport of residual materials would not result in a significant increase in the average noise level for the residents of Kazabazua and Danford Lake. Nevertheless, it would result in a greater frequency of peak noise periods.

**Opinion 11** – The commission is of the opinion that in order to evaluate the impact of automobile traffic on the sound climate, it would be desirable that a methodology be developed in order to better take into account the nuisances arising from peak noise periods and their frequency.

Finding – The commission finds that the buildings located near a thoroughfare, particularly the most fragile ones such as certain ancestral buildings, may see the damages to their structure amplified by the vibrations associated with the passage of heavy trucks. The additional trucking generated by the eventual establishment of a technical landfill site at Danford Lake could amplify these effects.

Finding – The commission finds that the technical landfill site of Danford Lake could be visible at certain locations along Rivière Picanoc. However, the distance of the landfill site and the

neighbouring topography would significantly reduce the visibility from Mont O'Brien provided that the wooded areas on the periphery of the site are maintained, which is not a foregone conclusion since these areas do not belong to the proponent.

Finding – The commission finds that the disposal on land of large quantities of putrescible matter risks leading to a proliferation of opportunistic species, such as the ring-billed gull and the nuisances associated with such species.

Finding – The commission finds that the environmental monitoring imposes a financial burden on the State which is not assumed by the operators.

**Opinion 12** – Considering the "polluter pays" principle, the commission is of the opinion that the costs associated with the environmental monitoring should be assumed by the operator rather than by the State.

Finding – The commission finds that there are great expectations regarding the efficiency, the credibility and the role that the Danford Lake technical landfill site watchdog committee would be called upon to play.

Finding – The commission finds that the method of designating members of a watchdog committee can greatly influence the credibility and efficiency of such a committee.

**Opinion 13** – The commission is of the opinion that useful and available information dealing with a landfill site, including the inspection and analysis reports of the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs, should be made public and systematically given to the watchdog committee to support its work.

### ***Social acceptability***

Finding – The commission finds that a climate of mistrust has developed within the community regarding the process to establish a technical landfill site at Danford Lake in the Municipality of Allevyn-et-Cawood. Citizens expected that their elected officials would have shown greater transparency in this matter, the scope of which largely exceeded the day-to-day business of the municipality and the consequences of which could alter citizens' quality of life.

Finding – The commission recalls that under a sustainable development approach, it is important that citizens have access to clear and comprehensive information on the projects that concern them and that may impact their living environment.

**Opinion 14** – The commission is of the opinion that the establishment of a landfill site of a regional scope in a small community like that of Danford Lake raises questions of fairness, particularly because this site would be far away from the main centres that generate residual materials in the Outaouais Region. In addition, the commission considers that resorting to a landfill site outside the region, as the Outaouais Region is currently doing, also entails elements of unfairness.

Finding – The commission finds that the local population has not had the opportunity to formally express their opinion to municipal authorities concerning the project to establish a technical landfill site at Danford Lake in the Municipality of Allevyn-et-Cawood.

Finding – The commission finds that the decision of the Municipality of Allevyn-et-Cawood to transfer to the RCM of Pontiac the file concerning the establishment of the proposed landfill site contributed to increasing the social tensions.

Finding – The commission finds that the scope of the project in relation to the receiving environment, the difficulty for residents to participate in the decision-making of municipal authorities and residents' concerns about the control of the environmental repercussions created a climate likely to give rise to serious misgivings in the community.

Finding – The commission finds that over the last two years the social health of the small Municipality of Allevyn-et-Cawood has deteriorated to a point where several citizens fear that the situation is irreversible.

Finding – The commission finds that a common point unites all the citizens having expressed their views during the public hearing, regardless of their opinion about the project to establish a technical landfill site at Danford Lake. It is the deep attachment they feel to their community and to their living environment.

**Opinion 15** – In order for citizens to participate in the decision-making process, the commission is of the opinion that the public consultation, in addition to providing adequate information, must encourage the active participation of everyone and promote the taking into account of the concerns expressed to develop solutions that are acceptable to all stakeholders.

**Opinion 16** – The commission is of the opinion that the population of the Outaouais Region must be closely associated with the choice of a residual materials treatment technology as well as of the site where the facilities will be established. It considers that public participation in the decision-making process promotes regional consensus and the social acceptability of the solutions chosen. The commission believes that such an approach is feasible provided that an interim management solution is developed for the 2008-2013 period.

**Opinion 17** – The commission is of the opinion that it is imperative that the current approach to regionalize the management of residual materials of the Outaouais Region be subject to a rigorous timetable.

### ***Aboriginal considerations***

Finding – The commission finds that the community of Kitigan Zibi considers that the territory identified for the establishment of a landfill site at Danford Lake is part of the traditional lands of the Algonquins, but at the present time there are no comprehensive territorial negotiations with the community. The commission notes that it would first be necessary to rule on the advisability of holding a special consultation of this Aboriginal community before the project is submitted to the Cabinet.

### ***Use of lands in the domain of the State***

Finding – The commission finds that the sale to the private sector of a piece of land in the domain of the State to set up a residual materials landfill site would be a precedent in Québec.

**Opinion 18** – The commission is of the opinion that before selling a piece of land that is owned by the State to establish a facility to valorize residual materials or dispose of them in a landfill, it is important to show that the proposed location is the best one to carry out such a project.