

Madame Hélène Marchand  
Coordonnatrice du secrétariat de la commission  
Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement  
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Wednesday, April 25, 2001

Dear Madame Marchand:

Please find enclosed a few comments and questions regarding the proposed McConnell-Laramé autoroute. If I can be of further help or clarification feel free to contact me notwithstanding that I live on the other side of the river.

Naturally I wish all involved with the BAPE process good fortune.

Yours truly



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Monsieur André Beauchamp, Président  
Monsieur Louis Dériger, Commissaire  
Madame Anne-Marie Laroche, Commissaire  
Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement  
McConnell-Laramé Autoroute - Public Consultation  
Wednesday, April 25, 2001

Dear Mr. Beauchamp, Mr. Dériger and Madame Laroche:

After attending the public meeting yesterday at the St Jean de Bosco church which listened to citizens giving their views on the proposed McConnell-Laramé autoroute, with your permission, I have decided to add my views to the matter at hand. I do apologize for not submitting my views earlier and also for the fact that my views are not the result of a comprehensive research of the approach documents themselves.

1. Biodiversity. After the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, on November 25, 1992 Québec too signed the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, as did Canada. I feel that in part this led to the 1996 Québec Biodiversity Action Plan (Government of Québec). Further, at the Global Biodiversity Forum (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) held in Montreal, June 18-20 1999, Jacques Prescott of the Ministry of the Environment made a presentation titled "Building Biodiversity into Sectoral Planning: the Need for a Biodiversity Action Plan Framework". He quoted from Article 6B of the Convention:

"Integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programs and policies"

So far so good. And we arrive in 2001 in the region of the planet known as Alymer-Hull-Gatineau to discuss a new road project. Where is the actual protected biodiversity at this latitude and longitude? What is the status of the "integrated" land use management plans? A standard species area curve<sup>1</sup> levels off at 1,000,000 hectares (Homo sapiens aside). Where is the nearest protected (sanctioned life-cycles) 1,000,000 hectares for the other species of this planet?

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<sup>1</sup>Reid, M. and Miller, K. 1989. Keeping Options Alive: The Scientific basis for conserving biodiversity. World Resources Institute, Washington D.C.

2. Energy Use and Climate Change. A crucial related matter is that of climate change and the Kyoto protocol. I am unaware of the status of this protocol with respect to Québec? Has it been ratified? The entry into the research of this complex matter can be found the Union of Concerned Scientists out of Boston. Does this project reduce per capita consumption of fossil fuels? Does it comply with the necessary integrated land use management necessary to steer us to a sustainable human community?

3. Politics. Finally, In plain language I would argue that this project is part of a yet to be publicly acknowledged or debated, "ring road", a massive expansion of traditional road infrastructure. On the Ontario side the provincial government and the city of Ottawa have signed a roughly \$600,000 "needs assessment" study for, as I understand the matter, a "series 400" highway to the south of Ottawa. The Terms of Reference are unknown at present but many involve consideration of two bridges.

There is no watershed plan for the Ottawa River basin and the millions of citizens (and other species) whose lives depend on it. It would take much time and money to establish the necessary baselines. Worse it shall take Québec, Ontario and Canada to work diligently together. They never meet in a public protocol.

This autoroute will destroy part of Gatineau Park land which, the obvious politics aside, is managed for the benefit and use of all Canadians. And many would argue tourism. As we inch towards what appears to me a ring road we do so without the direct participation of the government of Canada through such mechanisms as the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA). And worse, on a policy and dollar basis, a total lack of consideration of the economic, social and ecological well being of the peoples living in the Ottawa River Basin.

I close by wishing good fortune to all the people associated with the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement. This is indeed a formidable challenge politically and technically.

Yours truly



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