

Public Consultation

Québec, September 14, 2006 – Mr. Claude Béchar, Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks, has entrusted the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) with the mandate of holding a public consultation on the Belmont and Magpie lakes massif, Lac aux Sauterelles knolls, Guernesé lake foothills and Brador hills biodiversity reserve projects in the Lower North Shore Plateau natural province, whose territories have been set aside and have been assigned a temporary protection status as biodiversity reserves. This mandate begins today (**September 14, 2006**) and will end on **February 14, 2007**. The commission in charge of examining the project and holding the public consultation will be chaired by Mr. Pierre Béland.

Documentation made available

Starting today (**September 14, 2006**), the BAPE is making available the documentation pertaining to these protected areas, including notably the draft conservation plans of the territories in question as well as the protection and management frameworks for the four biodiversity reserve projects in the Lower North Shore Plateau natural province.

This documentation will be put at the public's disposal at the BAPE office in Québec City, located at 575, rue Saint-Amable, bureau 2.10 and in Montréal, at the central library of Université du Québec à Montréal, Pavillon Hubert-Aquin, 1255, rue Saint-Denis, local A-M100, as well as at the following regional consultation centres:

- Municipal Library of Havre-Saint-Pierre, 1016, rue de la Dulcinée, Havre-Saint-Pierre;
- Council of the Innu of Ekuanitshit, 35, rue Manitou, Mingan;
- Council of the Innu of Ekuanitshit, 35, rue Manitou, Mingan;
- Municipality of Blanc-Sablon, 1149, boulevard Docteur-Camille-Marcoux, Lourdes-de-Blanc-Sablon ;
- Municipality of Rivière-au-Tonnerre, 473, rue Jacques-Cartier, Rivière-au-Tonnerre;
- Office municipal de la Municipalité de Saint-Augustin.

The documentation may also be consulted at any time on the BAPE's web site at the following address: www.bape.gouv.qc.ca under the heading "*Mandats en cours*".

Work of the BAPE

The BAPE will soon be holding a public hearing in the Côte Nord region with the objective of closely associating the public and community partners in this initiative. The data pertaining to the holding of the hearing will be announced later.

Once the public consultation has ended and the commission's report has been drafted, the BAPE will submit its report to the Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks, who will make his recommendation to the government concerning the possibility of conferring on the set aside territories a permanent protection status and the applicable conditions, if any. Ultimately, it will be up to the Cabinet to rule on the permanent nature of the proposed biodiversity reserves.

To receive information

To be informed of the BAPE's activities in the specific matter of the four biodiversity reserve projects in the Lower North Shore Plateau natural province, you can register by e-mail at the following address: reserves_basse_cote_nord@bape.gouv.qc.ca.

However, if you would like to receive information pertaining to each of the protected area projects for which the BAPE will hold a public consultation, you can register at the following address: aires-protegees@bape.gouv.qc.ca.

In both cases, you can also register by calling 418 643-7447 or, toll-free, 1 800 463-4732.

Individuals wishing to obtain more information can get in touch with Ms. Anne-Lyne Boutin, coordinator of the commission's secretariat, by calling the aforementioned telephone numbers or by e-mail at the following address: reserves_basse_cote_nord@bape.gouv.qc.ca.