

PRESENTATION – NORTHERN CONSERVATION AREAS DESIGNATION MECHANISM

Sara Marmen, from the Direction des aires protégées of the MELCC, presented the work carried out regarding the development of the mechanism for the designation of northern conservation territories (NCT). She explained that NCTs are a conservation tool that adds to other existing tools such as protected areas and national parks, but are more flexible.

The start of work on the development of the designation mechanism dates back to 2015 and is being co-constructed with Indigenous nations, environmental and industrial organizations and ministries. A working structure bringing together various partners has been put in place for the development of the mechanism. It is made up of various groups: working group (GT30, strategic, non-decisional), the sub-working group (SGT30, more technical), the inter-ministerial committee (for discussion between the ministries, providing solutions that will be sent to the SGT30) and the Table of Indigenous Nations (technical work, brings together the Indigenous nations that have an interest in participating in the development of the mechanism). The proposed mechanism will consist of three separate processes, namely the designation process, the compatibility process and the amendment process.

A pre-consultation took place during the summer of 2021 with a number of partners. Subsequently, the draft mechanism will be presented in the form of a draft regulation which will be subject to a consultation period. Modifications and adjustments will be made based on comments received and then the mechanism will be finalized.

Following Ms. Marmen's presentation, a Q&A period took place during which discussions focused on the participation of the Cree communities in the development of the mechanism and in its application, the flexibility of the designation mechanism and of NCTs compared to other conservation tools available, as well as next steps in the development of the mechanism.

After the departure of Ms. Marmen, the members proposed to form a subcommittee to work on the file and prepare comments, either in the pre-consultation phase or upon publication of the draft regulation. A member of the Cree party volunteered. For the federal and provincial parties, the members will discuss with their respective colleagues and inform the Executive Director of the outcome of their discussions.

FILES

BAPE Commission

The Executive Director described the main objectives of the Commission. She also reminded members that the JBACE is co-chairing the part of the consultation which concerns the Territory. The hearing will take place the next day, September 16, 2021. She informed members that it will be possible to view the session live on the BAPE website and that the recording will be available afterwards.

Regarding the report, as the section on James Bay will be co-signed by the JBACE, approval from the members will be required. The Executive Director informed members that she should send them the document no later than October 15 and that the approval must be sent to the BAPE on October 21 in order to respect the administrative agreement.

National urban and land use plan strategy

The Executive Director reminded members that the JBACE was invited last spring to comment on the strategy. A subcommittee has been formed and is in the process of reviewing draft comments. The deadline for comment has been extended to September 24, 2021.

Development of a MFFP policy on relations with Aboriginal nations and communities

The Executive Director reminded members that this policy is part of the MFFP 2020-2023 action plan and the goal is to present it by the end of the plan. A first round of consultation took place earlier this year. The drafting of the

consultation report is currently underway and will be sent to the Indigenous communities. The draft policy will be published next spring and the JBACE will be consulted. The consultation report on the draft policy will follow in the fall of 2022, and then the policy will be finalized and published in 2023.

The subcommittee has worked on comments but have not yet been sent. The JBACE will still be mentioned as a participant even if the comments are not sent in time.

Fisheries Act

A member summarized the latest activities of the subcommittee. Meetings were held at the beginning of the summer with the DFO on two themes arising from the *Fisheries Act*: cumulative effects and offsetting and fish habitat banking.

Comments on the cumulative effects aspect will be finalized shortly and sent to the DFO. The subcommittee awaits the return of the analyst to complete the drafting of comments regarding the policies on offsetting and fish habitat banks.

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

Discussion among members took place in closed session.

PRESENTATION – MID-CANADA LINE

Daniel Gendron, from the MELCC's Direction du passif environnemental, presented a brief history of the Mid-Canada Line file to the members.

The presentation focuses on three main points:

- Site characterization in terms of soil contamination, debris and hazardous material content;
- The update of the Québec-Canada agreement (according to the National Classification System for Contaminated Sites (SNCLC), 36 sites out of the 43 existing sites are classified and can therefore enter into a memorandum of understanding);
- The continuation of the short-term project concerning seven sites which are excluded from the agreement.

Regarding the excluded sites, Mr. Gendron mentioned that these are supply points located on the coast of waterbodies. The Government of Quebec wishes to work on these sites with the communities. Virtual meetings with First Nations and the Inuit have already taken place as well as several exchanges with the Cree Nation Government (Cameron and Flora) and with the JBACE (Graeme Morin). The preparation of public information sessions as well as the development of a pilot project are the next steps.

Following Mr. Gendron's presentation, the latter and the members had a discussion. It focused on the fact that the Mid-Canada Line crosses territories belonging to the Cree and Inuit nations and that it is essential to discuss with them on the regional impact (fauna, hunting, flora) that land or air transportation resulting from the dismantling may cause. The communities have a good knowledge of their territory, and this will improve the project. Access is a crucial element in this project and the support, and collaboration of the communities and their knowledge of the territory will help a lot. One of the members shared that a clean-up project with little funding had already been initiated in the course of the late 90s-early 2000s and it did not particularly meet expectations. Some sites are located in protected areas and the level of attention and priority will have to be greater with regard to the cleaning work that will be carried out there.

In response to a question about the timeline, Mr. Gendron shared that with the Canadian government, the remediation of the sites will take place over a period of seven to ten years. It is difficult to set a precise timeframe

due to various environmental factors. There is not only the level of execution of the work to be considered but also the involvement of each participant.

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Prepared by Eva Wolf, Secretariat Officer and Michèle Leduc-Lapierre, Executive Director

Reviewed by Graeme Morin, Environmental Analyst

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