

Regulations and other acts

Gouvernement du Québec

O.C. 1364-2003, 17 December 2003

Natural Heritage Conservation Act
(2002, c. 74)

Ecological reserves

— Approval of the conservation plans of four reserves and the termination of the setting aside of five others

Approval of the conservation plans of four proposed ecological reserves and the termination of the setting aside of five others

WHEREAS, under section 86 of the Natural Heritage Conservation Act (2002, c. 74), that Act replaced the Ecological Reserves Act (R.S.Q., c. R-26.1);

WHEREAS, under section 88 of the Natural Heritage Conservation Act (R.S.Q., c. C-61.01), the proposed ecological reserves in whose respect a notice was published in the *Gazette officielle du Québec* before 19 December 2002 are maintained, are deemed to have been set aside, in accordance with Title III of the Act, for a period of 4 years beginning on 19 December 2002, and the Minister of the Environment has one year to have the Government approve their conservation plan;

WHEREAS nine areas set aside as proposed ecological reserves are subject to section 88, namely:

- the proposed Paul-Provencher ecological reserve;
- the proposed Ruisseau-Clinchamp ecological reserve;
- the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion);
- the proposed Grande-Rivière ecological reserve;
- the proposed Chicobi ecological reserve;
- the proposed Coleraine ecological reserve;
- the proposed Manche-d'Épée ecological reserve;
- the proposed Léon-Provancher ecological reserve;
- the proposed Lac-Malakisis ecological reserve (western and north-eastern portions);

WHEREAS the Minister of the Environment has prepared conservation plans for four of those reserves, namely the proposed Paul-Provencher, Ruisseau-Clinchamp, Matamec (northern portion) and Grand-Rivière ecological reserves, the conservation plans being attached to this Order in Council;

WHEREAS the conservation plan of the proposed Ruisseau-Clinchamp ecological reserve provides for the possibility of mining exploration activities being carried on so that, should mineral potential considered significant by the Ministère des Ressources naturelles, de la Faune et des Parcs be identified, the boundaries of the land to be protected may be modified to allow the potential to be developed;

WHEREAS it is expedient to approve those four conservation plans;

WHEREAS the five other proposed ecological reserves subject to section 88 are residual portions of larger areas that had been set aside, the majority of which have been established as ecological reserves;

WHEREAS the Minister of the Environment does not envisage assigning permanent protection status to the excess land which forms the area of the following five proposed ecological reserves:

- the proposed Chicobi ecological reserve;
- the proposed Coleraine ecological reserve;
- the proposed Manche-d'Épée ecological reserve;
- the proposed Léon-Provancher ecological reserve;
- the proposed Lac-Malakisis ecological reserve (western and north-eastern portions);

WHEREAS it therefore appears neither necessary to propose a conservation plan for each of those five proposed ecological reserves nor appropriate to maintain the temporary protection status of the five areas;

WHEREAS, under section 32 of the Natural Heritage Conservation Act, land ceases to be set aside when permanent protection status is assigned, when the term for which the land has been set aside expires, or on publication in the *Gazette officielle du Québec* of a notice of revocation of the plans by the Minister, with the approval of the Government;

WHEREAS it is advisable to authorize the Minister of the Environment to terminate the setting aside of the land of the five proposed ecological reserves by the publication of a notice of revocation of their respective plans in the *Gazette officielle du Québec*;

IT IS ORDERED, therefore, on the recommendation of the Minister of the Environment;

THAT the conservation plans prepared and attached to this Order in Council be approved for the following proposed ecological reserves:

- the proposed Paul-Provencher ecological reserve;
- the proposed Ruisseau-Clinchamp ecological reserve;
- the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion);
- the proposed Grande-Rivière ecological reserve;

THAT the conservation plans take effect on the date of publication of this Order in Council in the *Gazette officielle du Québec*;

THAT the Minister of the Environment be authorized to terminate the setting aside of the land of the following proposed ecological reserves by the publication of a notice of revocation of their respective conservation plans in the *Gazette officielle du Québec*:

- the proposed Chicobi ecological reserve;
- the proposed Coleraine ecological reserve;
- the proposed Manche-d'Épée ecological reserve;
- the proposed Léon-Provancher ecological reserve;
- the proposed Lac-Malakisis ecological reserve (western and north-eastern portions).

ANDRÉ DICAIRE,
Clerk of the Conseil exécutif

CONSERVATION PLAN FOR THE PROPOSED PAUL-PROVENCHER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

October 2003

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The plans of the boundaries of the proposed Paul-Provencher ecological reserve and its location are shown on the maps in the schedules.

The proposed Paul-Provencher ecological reserve is located at the head of Fléché lake 85 kilometres north of Baie-Comeau in Municipalité régionale de comté de Manicouagan. The territory covers an area of 5,306 hectares and straddles Leblanc, Charlie and Fléché lakes for its northern, southern and western boundaries, respectively. The eastern boundary is, for the most part, defined by an unpaved road.

1.2. Ecological overview

The land of the proposed ecological reserve is part of the Manicouagan plateau natural region situated in the Central Laurentian natural province.

The proposed Paul-Provencher ecological reserve aims to protect a representative sample of the Manicouagan plateau natural region. The natural region is characterized mainly by low hills (variation in height between 100 and 200 metres) on which thin till deposits and rock outcrops are found.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: Most of the land of the proposed ecological reserve is characterized by a cold subpolar, subhumid climate with a short growing season. About 10% of the land has a climate with a warmer average annual temperature and a longer growing season.

Geology: The bedrock is part of Grenville Province and is formed mainly of gneisses and migmatites.

Vegetation: Black spruce stands are the most common and occupy more than 35% of the land of the proposed ecological reserve. Black spruce-balsam fir or black spruce-white spruce stands are also present in a sizable part of the area.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The proposed Paul-Provencher ecological reserve has no threatened or vulnerable species.

1.3. Land occupation and uses

The land is public property. No right has been granted on the land of the proposed ecological reserve.

2. Protection status

The proposed Paul-Provencher ecological reserve aims to protect a sample of land representative of the Manicouagan plateau natural region.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the proposed Paul-Provencher ecological 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 proposed ecological 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

- General prohibitions under the Act

For reference purposes, it is important to note that under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act, the main activities prohibited in an area designated as a proposed ecological reserve are:

- mining, and gas or petroleum development;
- mining, gas or petroleum exploration, brine and underground reservoir exploration, prospecting, and digging or boring where those activities necessitate stripping, the digging of trenches, excavation or deforestation;
- forest management 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; and
- earthwork or construction work.

3.2. Activities governed by other statutes

All activities likely to be carried on within the boundaries of the proposed Paul-Provencher ecological 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 ecological reserve.

A special legal framework may, within the proposed ecological reserve, govern permitted and prohibited activities in connection with the development of wildlife resources (measures contained in the Act respecting the conservation and development of wildlife (R.S.Q., c. C-61.1)).

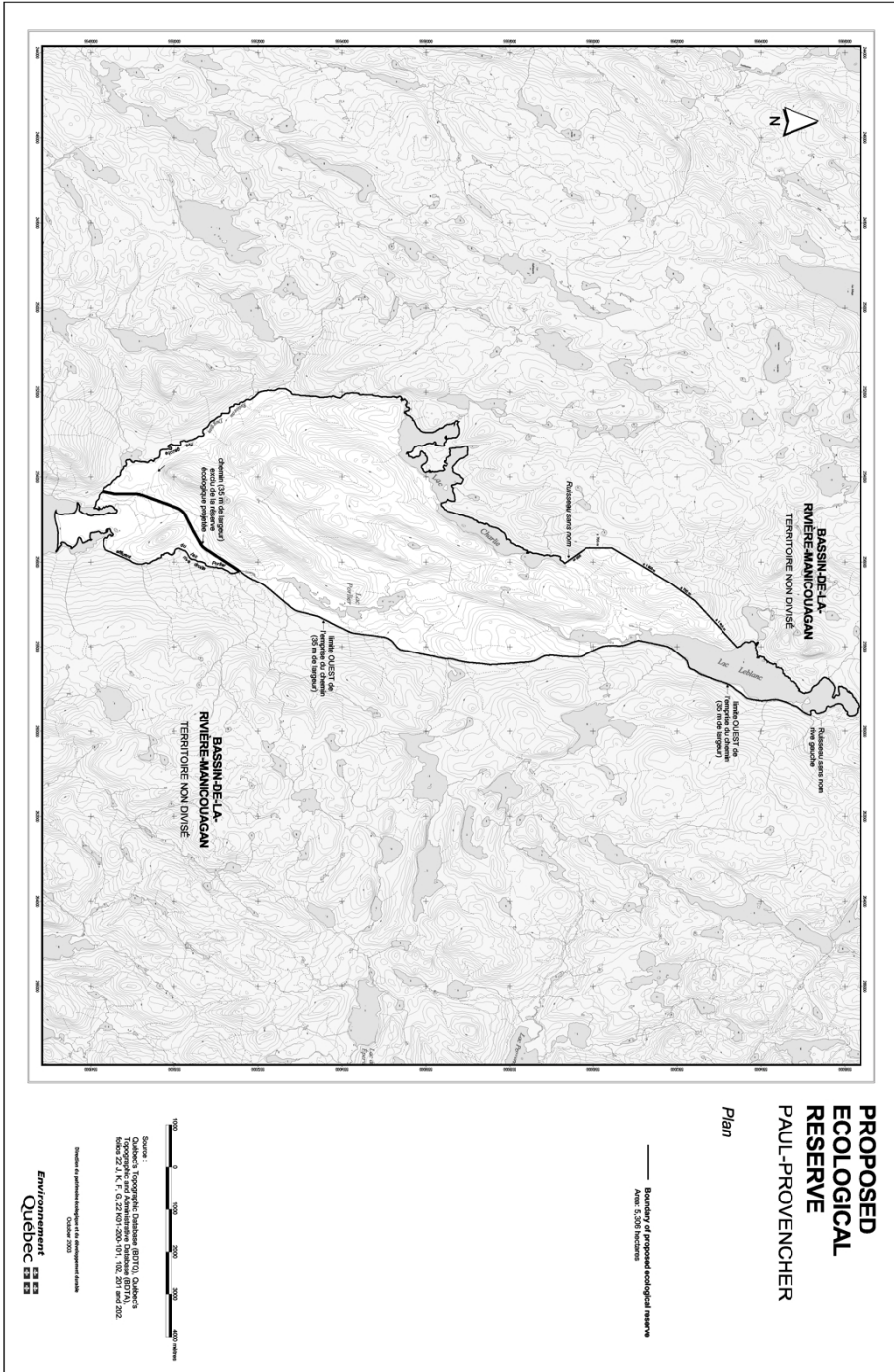
3.3. Supervision of activities

The Minister of the Environment is responsible for the application of the Natural Heritage Conservation Act, and is therefore responsible for proposed ecological reserves and those established under that Act. The Minister will supervise and monitor the measures contained in the Act with regard to permitted activities in protected areas. In addition, the Minister has authority over these lands which form part of the domain of the State.

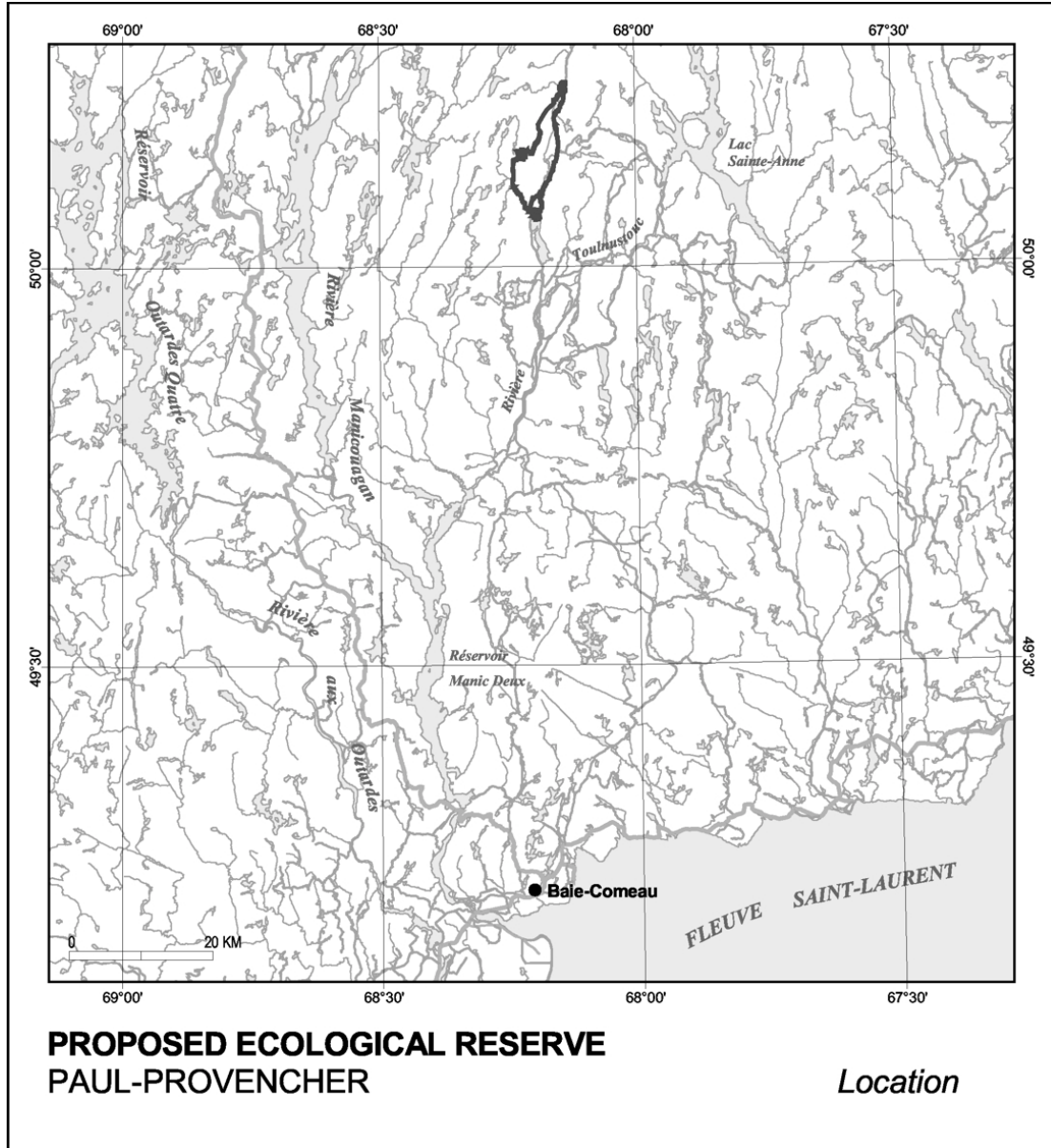
4. Permanent protection status

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 Paul-Provencher ecological reserve



A.2. Map showing the location of the proposed Paul-Provencher ecological reserve



CONSERVATION PLAN FOR THE PROPOSED RUISSEAU-CLINCHAMP ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

October 2003

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The plans of the boundaries of the proposed Ruisseau-Clinchamp ecological reserve and its location are shown on the maps in the schedules.

The proposed Ruisseau-Clinchamp ecological reserve is located within the territory of Ville de Rouyn-Noranda (outside the RCM). The proposed ecological reserve covers an area of 2,430 hectares. Its boundaries coincide with numerous watercourses and lakes, including Dasserat and Lusko lakes to the east and Faily, Marron and Monarque lakes to the west.

1.2. Ecological overview

The proposed ecological reserve lies in the Lake Témiscamingue Lowlands natural region at the heart of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands natural province.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The proposed ecological reserve belongs to the bioclimatic field of balsam fir-white birch stands. It straddles two climate zones. One portion of the proposed ecological reserve is characterized by a subpolar, subhumid climate with a medium growing season (167 days), another by a mild subpolar, subhumid climate with a long growing season (180 days). Annual precipitation is essentially the same in the two climate zones, being in the range of 980 millimetres.

Geology: The bedrock is formed mainly of basalt and metabasalt (mafic rocks). The southern part of the proposed ecological reserve is dominated by wacke (from clay), conglomerate, tillite (consolidated till) and argillite.

Vegetation: The landscape of the proposed ecological reserve is largely dominated by white birch (*Betula papyrifera*). The forest communities in which white birch predominates include white birch-balsam fir stands, white birch stands with balsam fir and Eastern white cedar, and white birch-white spruce stands. Black spruce stands, black spruce-white birch stands, cedar stands with Eastern white cedar and white birch and Eastern white cedar-balsam fir stands are also present.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

Several forest communities at the heart of the proposed ecological reserve are exceptional because of the age of their forest species and, in certain cases, because of their scattered distribution. A number of these forest communities are likely to be designated exceptional forest ecosystems (EFE).

Sugar maple-white birch stands have been inventoried in the proposed ecological reserve. These sugar maples (*Acer saccharum*) are found more than 75 km to the north of the northern limit of the sugar maple-yellow birch domain, making them a rare occurrence at this latitude. These exceptional sugar maple stands cover an area of approximately 3 hectares and include a number of specimens close to 200 years old.

Also found in the proposed ecological reserve are white birch-balsam fir stands which cover some 191 hectares and contain a number of specimens over 300 years old. These stands, situated to the west and south of Clinchamp stream, are rare in this region today.

Eastern white cedar-balsam fir swamps, classified as rare, old-growth stands, are also found in the territory. Some of the Eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) in these stands which colonize sites on the periphery of Labyrinthe lake are 400 years old. Old-growth forests of balsam fir-white birch and Eastern white cedar stands to the south-east of Labyrinthe lake are also present.

1.3. Land occupation and uses

The entire territory of the proposed ecological reserve is public property. Various rights have been granted within the territory, including mining rights and a number of leases for rough shelters.

2. Protection status

The proposed ecological reserve will protect old-growth virgin forests, some of which contain forest species with a scattered distribution, not typically found at latitudes so far north.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the proposed Ruisseau-Clinchamp ecological 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 proposed ecological reserves by the Act; it authorizes, subject to certain conditions, the carrying on of mining exploration.

3.1. Prohibited activities

– General prohibitions under the Act

For reference purposes, it is important to note that under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act, the main activities prohibited in an area designated as a proposed ecological reserve are:

- mining, and gas or petroleum development;
- forest management 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;
- mining, gas or petroleum exploration, brine and underground reservoir exploration;
- any new allocation of a right to occupy land for vacation resort purposes; and
- earthwork or construction work.

3.2. Authorized mining exploration

Mining exploration, including prospecting, digging and boring, where those activities necessitate stripping, the digging of trenches, excavation or deforestation, may be carried on within the territory of the Ruisseau-Clinchamp ecological reserve provided that:

- (1) the activities are carried on by or on behalf of a person who is expressly authorized in writing by the Minister of the Environment to carry on mining exploration within the territory of the proposed ecological reserve;
- (2) the activities are carried on by or on behalf of a person who is entitled to carry on mining exploration, prospecting, digging or boring within the territory of the proposed ecological reserve, in accordance with the measures set forth in the Mining Act (R.S.Q., c. M-13.1);
- (3) the activities, where they necessitate deforestation, are carried on by or on behalf of a person who is entitled to carry on such activities, in accordance with the measures set forth in sections 20 and 21 of the Forest Act (R.S.Q., c. F-4.1);

(4) the activities are carried on in conformity with the applicable legislative and regulatory standards; and

(5) the activities are carried on in conformity with the authorization issued by the Minister.

3.3. Activities governed by other statutes

All activities likely to be carried on within the boundaries of the proposed Ruisseau-Clinchamp ecological 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 ecological reserve.

In particular, in addition to the legal framework under the Mining Act and the Forest Act as described in paragraph 3.2, the carrying on of certain activities may be subject to the provisions of the Act respecting the conservation and development of wildlife (R.S.Q., c. C-61.1), the Cultural Property Act (R.S.Q., c. B-4) regarding archaeological research, and the Environment Quality Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2).

3.4. Supervision of activities

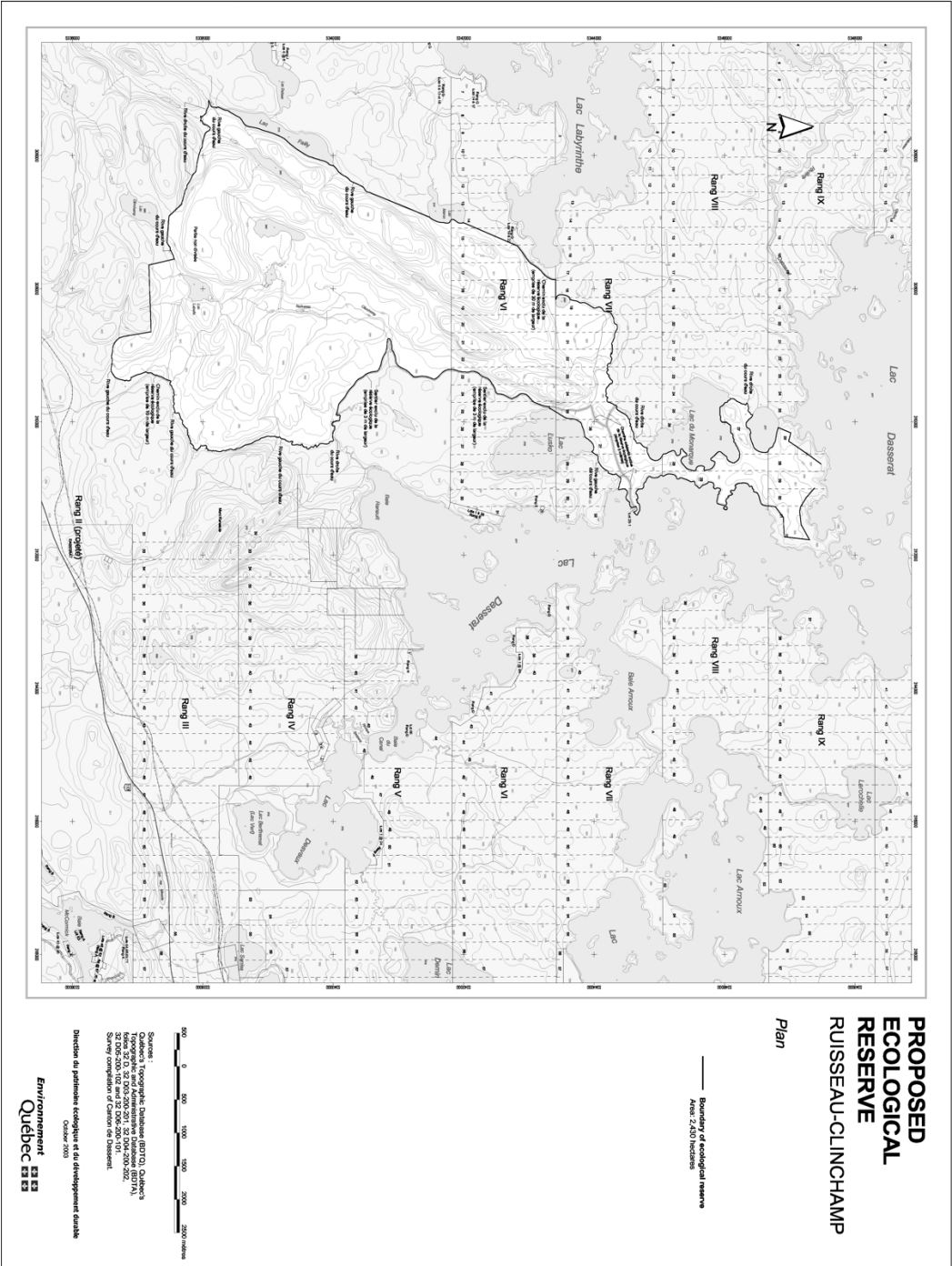
The Minister of the Environment is responsible for the application of the Natural Heritage Conservation Act, and is therefore responsible for proposed ecological reserves under that Act. The Minister will supervise and monitor the measures contained in the Act with regard to permitted activities in protected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

The Minister has authority over these lands which form part of the domain of the State.

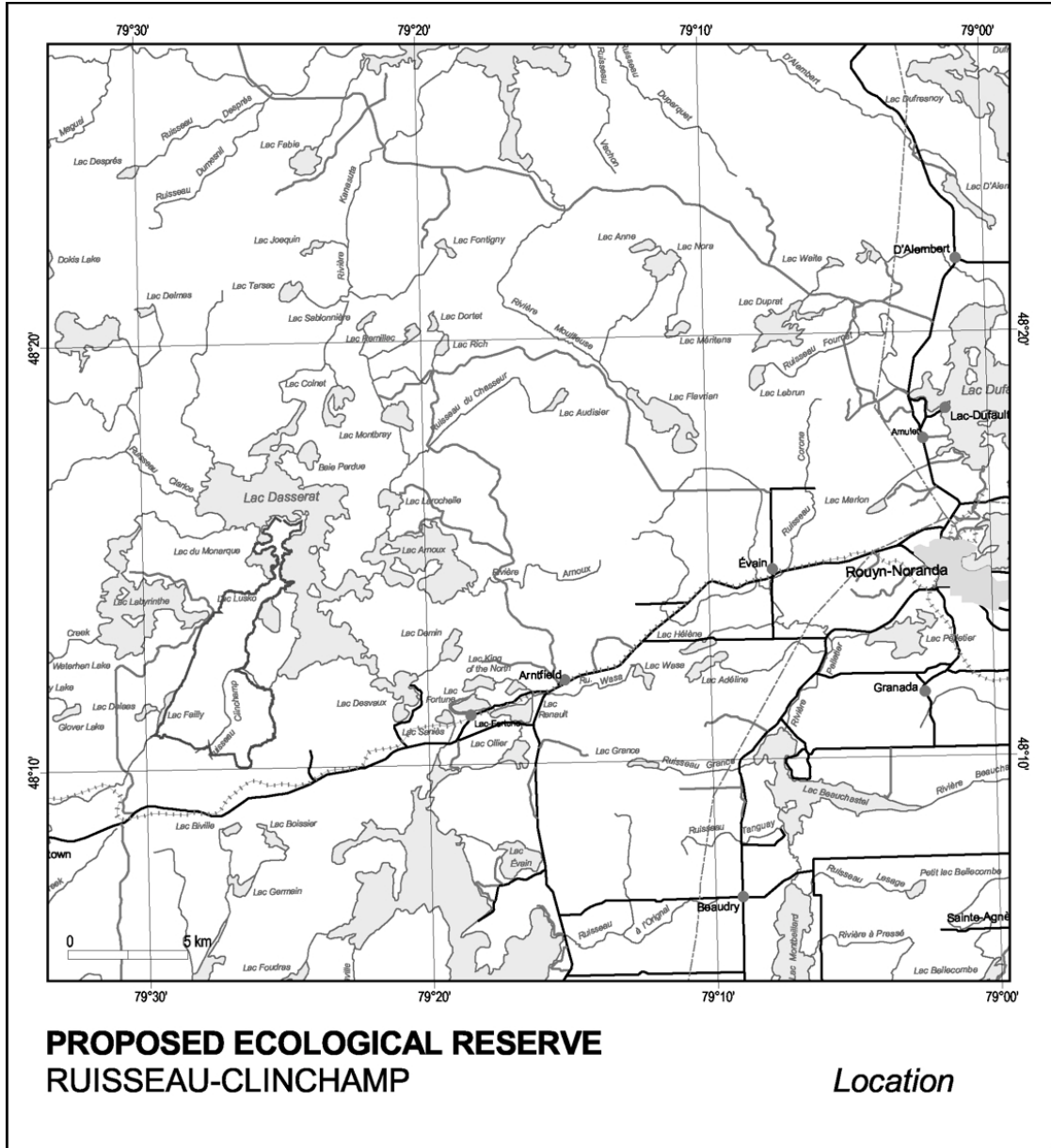
4. Permanent protection status

The permanent protection status envisaged for the reserve is “ecological reserve” status under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act (R.S.Q., c. C-61.01).

Schedules
A.1. Plan of the proposed Ruisseau-Clinchamp ecological reserve



A.2. Map showing the location of the proposed Ruisseau-Clinchamp ecological reserve



CONSERVATION PLAN FOR THE PROPOSED MATAMEC ECOLOGICAL RESERVE (NORTHERN PORTION)

October 2003

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The plans of the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion) and its location are shown on the maps in Schedules A.1 and A.2.

The proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion) is located on the North Shore, between 50°15' and 50°42' north latitude and 65°42' and 66°10' west longitude, within the unorganized territory of Rivière-Nipissis in the north and in Municipalité de Sept-Îles in the south. The proposed ecological reserve is wholly within Municipalité régionale de comté de Sept-Rivières.

The proposed ecological reserve covers an area of 546 km². The southern boundary coincides with the northern boundary of the Matamec ecological reserve. The proposed protected area will contribute to ensuring the ecological integrity of almost the entire Matamec river watershed.

1.2. Ecological overview

The greater part of the proposed protected area lies in the Lower North Shore Plateau natural province and protects ecosystems characteristic of the Magpie lake massif natural region. The sector to the south and west of the river known as rivière aux Rats Musqués, however, lies in the Sainte-Marguerite Plateau natural region, which is part of the Central Laurentian natural province.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The proposed ecological reserve straddles three distinct climate zones. From north to south, it is characterized by a cold subpolar, subhumid climate with a short growing season, a wet subpolar climate with a short growing season, and a subpolar, subhumid climate with a medium growing season. The area lies almost wholly within the bioclimatic field of mossy spruce stands, with the southern extremity lying at the transition with the balsam fir-white birch bioclimatic field.

Geology and geomorphology: The proposed ecological reserve is in the Grenville geologic province. The bedrock is formed mainly by Precambrian mafic and ultra-mafic igneous rocks such as diorite, gabbro and anorthosite. The geologic substrate in the southern part of the proposed ecological reserve, however, also consists of

migmatites and felsic igneous rocks. In terms of its geomorphology, the area can be described as a group of low hills and knolls situated on the southern edge of the Laurentian Plateau. The altitude relief in the area ranges from 110 m to 685 m. The topography of the Laurentian Plateau is rugged and mountainous. Where the bedrock does not outcrop, it is covered with a thin layer of moderately drained till; talus is frequently found at the base of the steepest slopes. The valley bottom of the Matamec river is covered by well-drained to moderately-well-drained sandy fluvio-glacial material.

Hydrography: The proposed ecological reserve covers close to three-quarters of the Matamec drainage basin, which has an area of approximately 669 km². It protects over 20 kilometres of the river, which empties into the St. Lawrence approximately 25 km east of Sept-Îles after a course of 66 km. The Matamec river flows over the bedrock through a deep, narrow valley. Its course is relatively straight because it follows a network of suborthogonal faults. The proposed ecological reserve also has numerous lakes and headwater watercourses characteristic of the North Shore.

Vegetation: Forest is the main vegetation cover in the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion). The stands are generally between 90 and 120 years old, dominated by softwood species, in particular black spruce (*Picea mariana*), balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*) and white spruce (*Picea glauca*). Krummholz black spruce and fir are sometimes found in extremely wind-exposed topographic positions. Dry heath occupies the rocky outcrops on certain summits and the colluvial deposits on the steep slopes. A few peat bogs dot the plateau; these peat bogs may be bogs consisting of clusters of shrubs or open stands of black spruce, or fens containing larch, alder, bog-myrtle and a number of species from the sedge family. The territory has not been affected by any disturbances, whether natural (fire, windfalls, insect infestations) or anthropogenic (silviculture).

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

In the summer, the waters of the Matamec river are populated by Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*). The watercourse has the status of salmon river protected area. The proposed Matamec ecological reserve is also the only reserve within the network of ecological reserves that has as one of its objectives the protection of the habitat of the Atlantic salmon. The creation of the proposed ecological reserve, while ensuring the integrity of the natural environments at the watershed level, will allow for the reinforcement of protection measures having regard to this particularly fragile species.

It is estimated that the flora in the Matamec drainage basin includes some 325 species of vascular plants well-adapted to boreal regions and over 100 species of mosses and lichens. At least 25 of these species are believed to be at the northern limit of their distribution area. Also found in the proposed ecological reserve are a number of relatively rare or scarce species including bog aster (*Aster nemoralis*), common harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*), purple crowberry (*Empetrum atropurpureum*), pinesap (*Monotropa hypopithys*) and green pyrola (*Pyrola chlorantha*).

1.3. Land occupation and uses

The land occupations and uses in the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion) are shown on the map in Schedule A.3.

The territory lies wholly within the Saguenay beaver reserve, where the Sept-Îles Innu community, residing at Uashat and Malioténam, has special rights regarding the hunting and trapping of fur-bearing animals.

Apart from the mining claims held on a portion of the territory, no land rights have been granted within the perimeter of the proposed ecological reserve.

The territory is served by forest roads accessible from Route 138.

2. Protection status

The proposed ecological reserve, together with the existing ecological reserve, contributes to ensuring the preservation of the entire area drained by the Matamec river. Situated at the confluence of three distinct ecoregions, the territory constitutes an exceptional environment by reason of its biodiversity. Furthermore, the absence of anthropogenic disturbances associated with resource development makes it a choice site for fundamental and applied research in the ecological sciences.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion) 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 ecological reserves by the Act; it authorizes, subject to certain conditions, the carrying on of mining exploration.

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 ecological reserve are :

- mining, and gas or petroleum development ;
- forest management 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 ;
- mining, gas or petroleum exploration, brine and underground reservoir exploration ;
- any new allocation of a right to occupy land for vacation resort purposes ; and
- earthwork or construction work.

3.2. Authorized mining exploration

Mining exploration, including prospecting, digging and boring, where those activities necessitate stripping, the digging of trenches, excavation or deforestation, may be carried on within the territory of the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion) provided that :

- (1) the activities are carried on by or on behalf of a person who is entitled to carry on mining exploration, prospecting, digging or boring within the territory of the proposed ecological reserve, in accordance with the measures set forth in the Mining Act (R.S.Q., c. M-13.1) ;
- (2) the activities are carried on by or on behalf of a person who is expressly authorized in writing by the Minister responsible for the application of the Mining Act to carry on mining exploration within the territory of the proposed ecological reserve, this authorization having been issued in conformity with the provisions of the Entente établissant certaines conditions régissant l'exercice d'activités d'exploration minière à l'intérieur de la réserve écologique projetée de la Matamec (partie nord) entered into by the Minister and the Minister of the Environment ;
- (3) the activities, where they necessitate deforestation, are carried on by or on behalf of a person who is entitled to carry on such activities, in accordance with the measures set forth in sections 20 and 21 of the Forest Act (R.S.Q., c. F-4.1) ; and

(4) the activities are carried on in conformity with the authorization issued by the Minister responsible for the application of the Mining Act, and where those activities necessitate deforestation, in conformity with the terms and conditions set forth in sections 21 and 22 of the Forest Act.

A copy of the above agreement may be obtained from the Direction du développement minéral of the Ministère des Ressources naturelles, de la Faune et des Parcs (Ministère des Ressources naturelles, de la Faune et des Parcs, 5700, 4^e Avenue Ouest, bureau C-408, Charlesbourg (Québec) G1H 6R1) or from the Direction du patrimoine écologique et du développement durable of the Ministère de l'Environnement, Édifice Marie-Guyart, 4^e étage, 675, boulevard René-Lévesque Est, Québec (Québec), G1V 5R7, case 21.

3.3. Activities governed by other statutes

All activities permitted within the boundaries of the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion) 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 ecological reserve.

In particular, in addition to the legal framework under the Mining Act and the Forest Act as described in paragraph 3.2 as regards mining exploration, the carrying on of certain activities may be subject to the provisions of the Act respecting the conservation and development of wildlife (R.S.Q., c. C-61.1) and the Environment Quality Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2).

3.4. Supervision of activities

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

The Minister has authority over these lands which form part of the domain of the State.

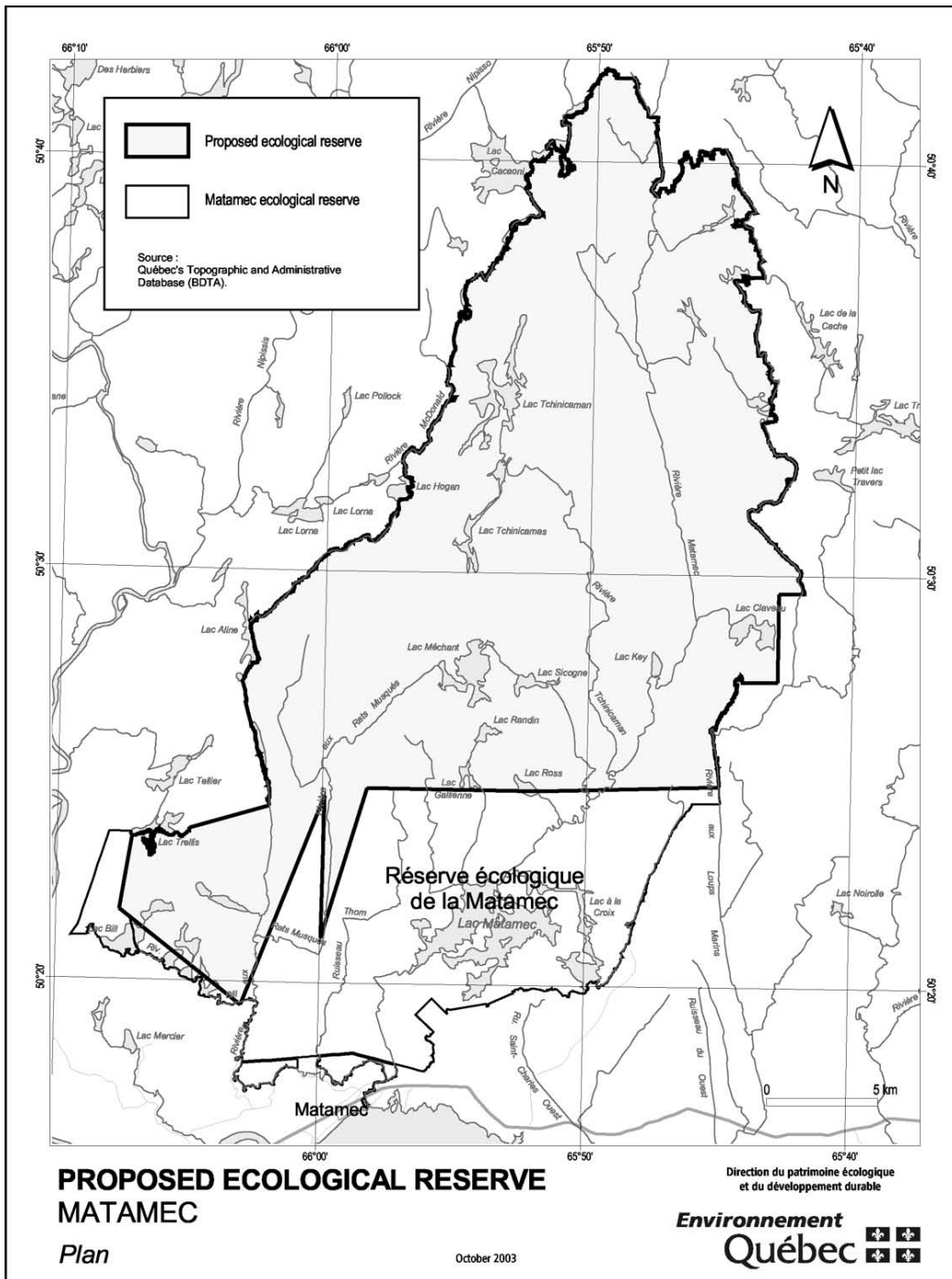
All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities for the management of the activities entrusted to them under the legislative and regulatory texts that apply within the territory and that are not inconsistent with the status of proposed ecological reserve.

4. Permanent protection status

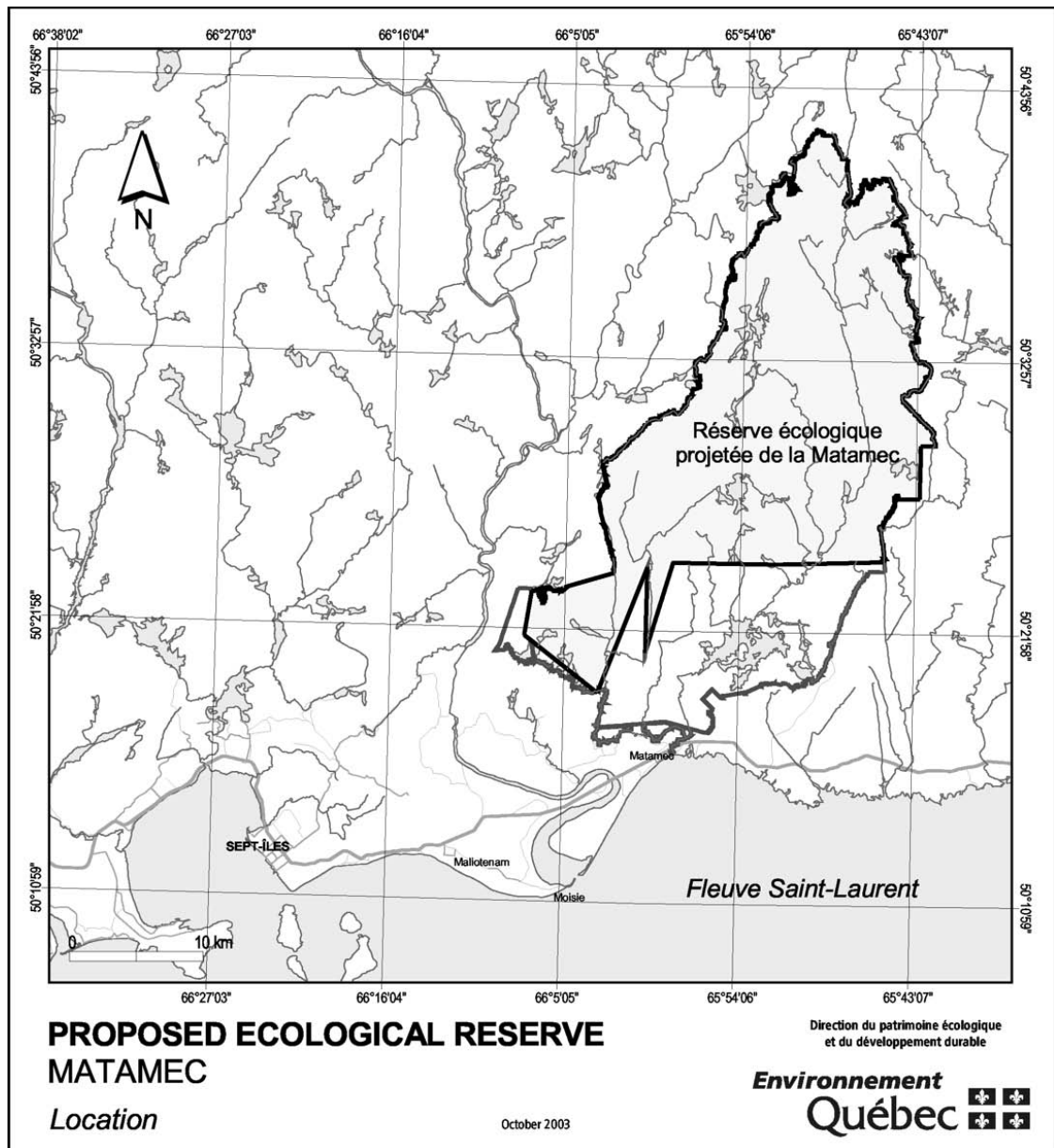
The permanent protection status currently envisaged for the territory is "ecological reserve" status. This status may be reassessed after the public consultation to be held with the Uashatmak Mani-Utenam Native community. The status of "biodiversity reserve" may then be envisaged for a portion of the territory. Protection status as a biodiversity reserve and as an ecological reserve is governed by the Natural Heritage Conservation Act (R.S.Q., c. C-61.01).

Schedules

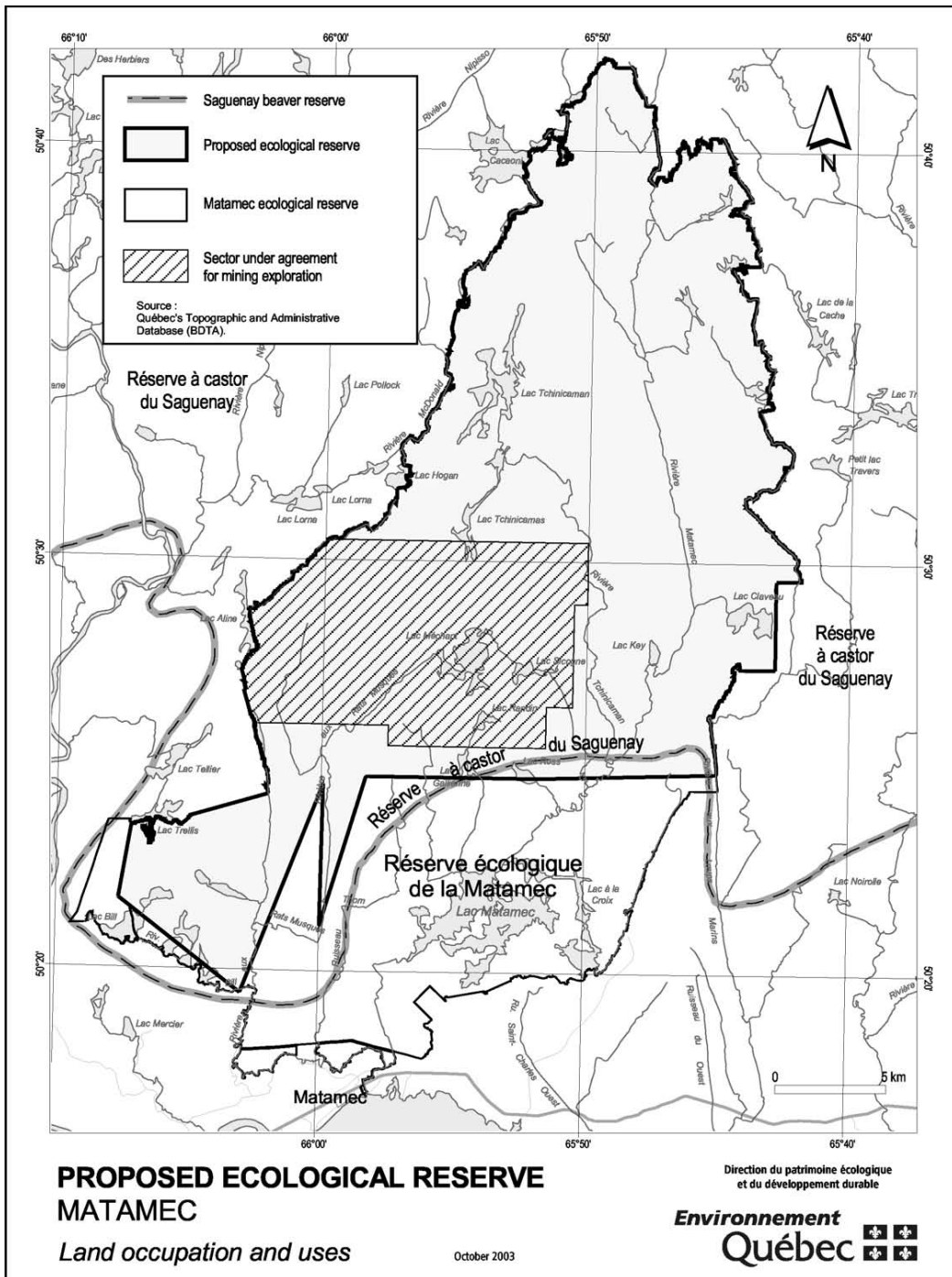
A.1. Plan of the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion)



A.2. Map showing the location of the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion)



A.3. Map showing land occupation and uses in the proposed Matamec ecological reserve (northern portion)



CONSERVATION PLAN FOR THE PROPOSED GRANDE-RIVIÈRE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

October 2003

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The location and boundaries of the proposed Grande-Rivière ecological reserve are shown on the maps in Schedules A.1 and A.2.

The proposed Grande-Rivière ecological reserve is located in the Gaspésie administrative region, between 48°29' and 48°42' north latitude and 64°33' and 64°51' west longitude. Approximately 12 km north of Ville de Grande-Rivière, it lies within the unorganized territory of Mont-Alexandre, in Municipalité régionale de comté Le-Rocher-Percé.

The proposed ecological reserve seeks to ensure the integrity of the Grande-Rivière ecological reserve created in 2001 and which covers an area of 173 km². To the north, the proposed ecological reserve is composed of private lands and several roads enclosed within the Grande-Rivière ecological reserve, for a total area slightly larger than 775 hectares. The southern sector, located downstream from the ecological reserve, is composed of private and public lands covering some 700 hectares. With a total area of almost 15 km², the proposed ecological reserve will reinforce the protection of the riparian ecosystems of the Grande Rivière and the Grande Rivière Nord, as well as the ecological integrity of watercourses.

1.2. Ecological overview

The protected area is in the Appalachians natural province. It protects ecosystems representative of the Gaspé Peninsula natural region.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The territory of the proposed ecological reserve is characterized by a subpolar, subhumid continental climate with a medium growing season. It belongs to the bioclimatic field of balsam fir-white birch stands in the continuous boreal forest sub-zone.

Geology and geomorphology: The bedrock in the proposed ecological reserve is mainly shale, clay, limestone and slate dating back to the Ordovician (500 to 435 million years ago) and to the early Silurian (approximately 440 million years ago) periods, and is covered with morainic till deposited by glaciers during the Quaternary Era.

Hydrography: The protected territory forms part of the Grande-Rivière drainage basin, which is almost 700 km² in area. The Grande Rivière flows into Chaleur Bay after a course of almost 70 kilometres.

Vegetation: The proposed ecological reserve is largely forested. The dominating species are balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*), white spruce (*Picea glauca*) or white birch (*Betula papyrifera*) on the mesic sites, and cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) on the slopes. As the altitude decreases, the plateaus are occupied by stands of white birch and red maple (*Acer rubrum*), while stands of sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) or sugar maple-yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) are established on the sunnier slopes. Generally speaking, those stands are old and have been little or not at all affected by human activities or natural disturbances.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The flora of the proposed ecological reserve is influenced by the Boreal climate. The nature of the bedrock favours the presence of specific calcicole species, including limestone fern (*Gymnocarpium robertianum*), alpine woodsia (*woodsia alpina*) and Drummond's dryad (*Dryad drummondii*). Drummond's dryad, which is over 1,500 kilometres away from its main distribution area, namely the Rocky Mountains, is considered a relic of the last glaciation. The proposed ecological reserve also protects specimens of Anticosti aster (*Symphyotrichum anticostense*), an Asteraceae species endemic to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and designated as a threatened species both in Québec and Canada. All the riparian habitat along the Grande Rivière has been protected since February 2001 under the Act respecting threatened or vulnerable species (R.S.Q., c. E-12.01). The proposed ecological reserve also protects some colonies of northern arnica (*subspecies lonchophylla*) (*Arnica lonchophylla subsp. Lonchophylla*), another species designated as threatened or vulnerable in Québec.

The ecological reserve is also home to the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), a diurnal bird of prey rare in Gaspésie and likely to be designated as a threatened or vulnerable species. The golden eagle nests on the rocky cliffs above the Grande Rivière in the proposed ecological reserve.

1.3. Land occupation and uses

The land occupations and uses in the territory of the proposed ecological reserve are shown on the map in Schedule A.3.

The territory of the proposed ecological reserve can be reached by two unpaved roads suitable for vehicles, accessible from Route de Rameau. It includes certain

road segments and a power transmission line enclosed within the Grande-Rivière ecological reserve.

A salmon (*Salmo salar*) fishing ZEC was established in 1980 on the portion of the Grande Rivière in the public domain. The Grande-Rivière controlled zone (ZEC), administered by the Société de gestion de la rivière Grande-Rivière, a non-profit organization, runs along the river for more than 20 kilometres.

No land rights have been granted within the perimeter of the proposed ecological reserve.

2. Protection status

The territory constitutes an exceptional ecosystem which should be protected by reason in particular of its geological specificity, its role as habitat for uncommon or threatened floristic species, and its little disturbed natural state. The proposed ecological reserve, together with the existing ecological reserve, contributes to extending the protection of the territory drained by the Grande-Rivière.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the proposed Grande-Rivière ecological 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 proposed ecological 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 ecological 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 strip-ping, 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 Grande-Rivière ecological 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 ecological reserve.

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

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 proposed ecological reserves and those established under that Act. The Minister will supervise and monitor the measures contained in the Act with regard to permitted activities in protected areas.

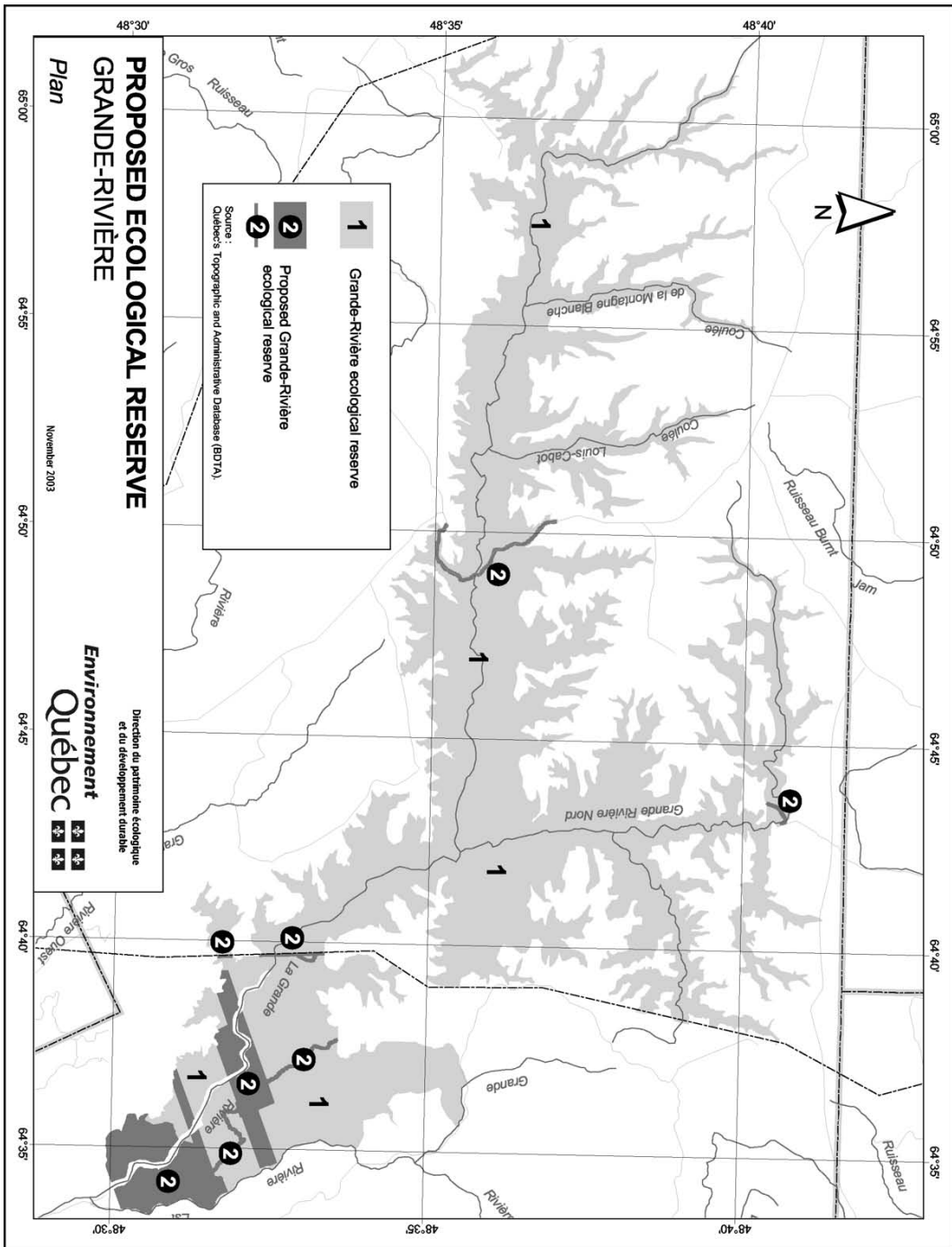
All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities for the management of the activities entrusted to them under other legislative or regulatory texts that may apply in the territory and that are not inconsistent with the status of proposed ecological reserve. The Société de 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.

The Minister has authority over these lands which form part of the domain of the State.

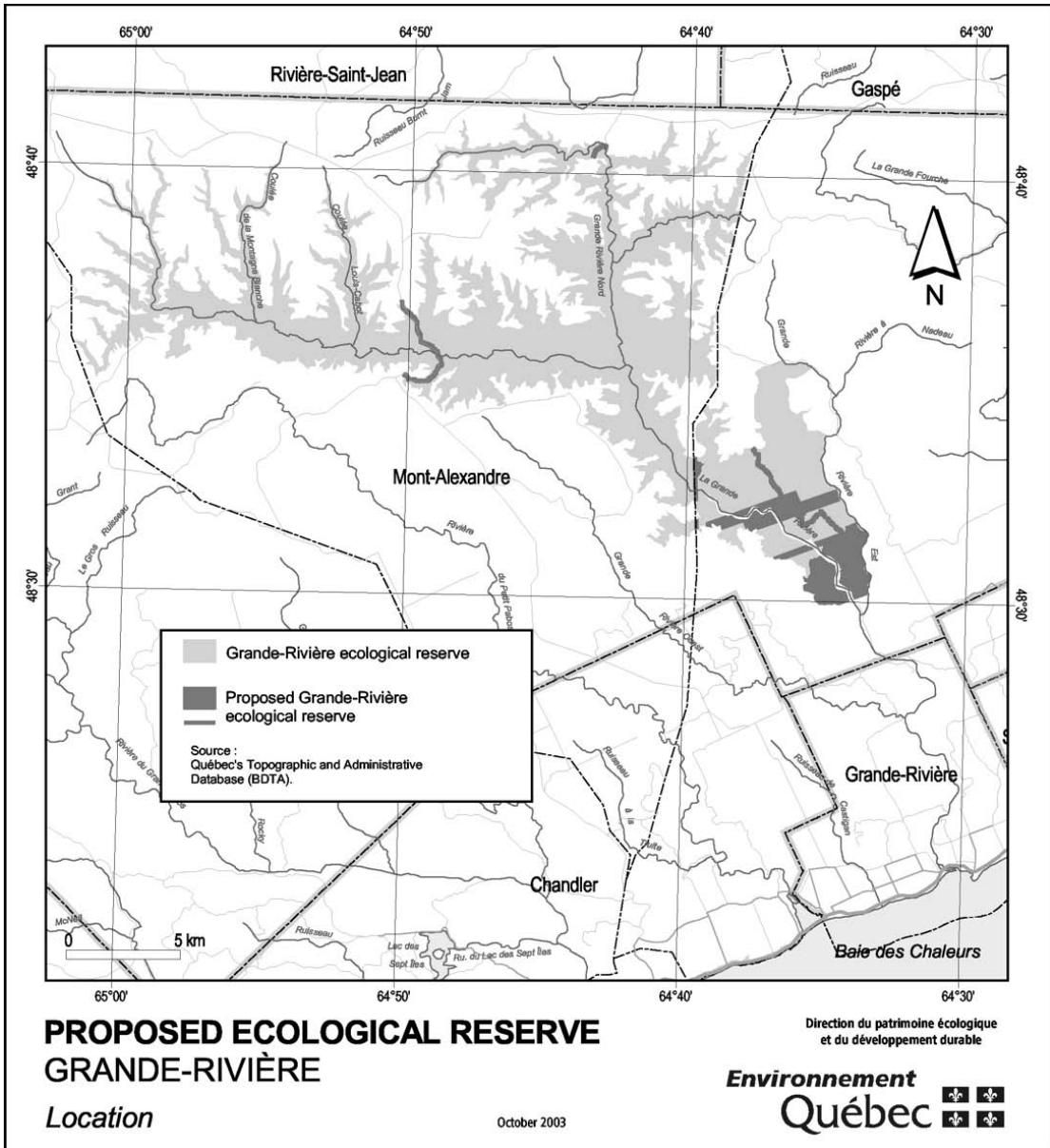
4. Permanent protection status

Two types of permanent protection status are envisaged to protect the territory of the proposed ecological reserve. The private lands located to the north of the valley bottom, as shown by line AB on the plan in Schedule A-3, are to be added to the established ecological reserve, while the private and public lands south of that line are to be granted biodiversity reserve status. Both statuses are governed by the Natural Heritage Conservation Act (R.S.Q., c. C-61.01).

Schedules
 A.1. Plan of the proposed Grande-Rivière ecological reserve



A.2. Map showing the location of the proposed Grande-Rivière ecological reserve



A.3: Map showing land occupation and uses in the proposed Grande-Rivière ecological reserve and envisaged permanent protection status

