

Regulations and other acts

Gouvernement du Québec

O.C. 484-2004, 19 May 2004

Natural Heritage Conservation Act
(R.S.Q., c. C-61.01)

Temporary protection of certain lands in the domain of the State as a proposed aquatic reserve or proposed biodiversity reserve

WHEREAS, under the first paragraph of section 27 of the Natural Heritage Conservation Act (R.S.Q., c. C-61.01), for the purpose of protecting land to be established as a new protected area, the Minister of the Environment shall, with the approval of the Government, prepare the plan of that area, establish a conservation plan and assign temporary protection status to the area as a proposed aquatic reserve, biodiversity reserve, ecological reserve or man-made landscape;

WHEREAS, by reason of the heritage and ecological value it represents, it is expedient to assign the status of proposed aquatic reserve to the Upper Harricana river, to prepare the plan of that area and to establish a conservation plan for the duration of the period during which temporary protection status is assigned to it, those plans being attached hereto;

WHEREAS, for the purpose of maintaining biodiversity, it is expedient to assign the status of proposed biodiversity reserve to seven other territories of Québec in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands, namely Taibi lake, the Decelles reservoir, the Parent lake marshlands, Waskaganish, the Piché-Lemoine forest, Opasatica lake and Des Quinze lake, to prepare the plan of those areas and to establish their conservation plan for the duration of the period during which temporary protection status is assigned to them, those plans being attached hereto;

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

THAT the Minister of the Environment be authorized to assign the status of proposed aquatic reserve to the Upper Harricana river, and that the plan of that area and the proposed conservation plan, attached to this Order, be approved;

THAT the Minister of the Environment be authorized to assign the status of proposed biodiversity reserve to seven other territories of Québec in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands, namely Taibi lake, the Decelles reservoir, the Parent lake marshlands, Waskaganish, the Piché-Lemoine forest, Opasatica lake and Des Quinze lake, and that the plans of those areas and the proposed conservation plan for each, attached to this Order, be approved.

ANDRÉ DICAIRE,
Clerk of the Conseil exécutif

PROPOSED UPPER HARRICANA
AQUATIC RESERVE
(provisional name)

CONSERVATION PLAN

March 2004

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The location and boundaries of the proposed Upper Harricana aquatic reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed Upper Harricana aquatic reserve is located between 48°46' and 50°14' north latitude and 77°58' and 78°58' west longitude. Most of the proposed aquatic reserve lies within the territory of Municipalité de Baie-James, in the Nord-du-Québec administrative region. The upstream part of the proposed aquatic reserve crosses Municipalité de Saint-Dominique-du-Rosaire and the unorganized territory of Lac-Chicobi, in Municipalité régionale de comté d'Abitibi forming part of the Abitibi-Témiscamingue administrative region.

The southern boundary of the proposed aquatic reserve is situated approximately 25 km north/north-east of Ville d'Amos.

The proposed aquatic reserve covers an area of 177.2 km². It forms a corridor that takes in a 200-metre-wide strip of land on either bank of the Harricana river, protecting the main bed of the river and riparian habitats

over a distance of approximately 190 kilometres. From upstream to downstream, it extends from Obalski lake to the proposed North Harricana river aquatic reserve. The private lands that overlap the 200-metre strip in the upstream section of the area are excluded from the proposed aquatic reserve.

To the north-east, the proposed aquatic reserve is bounded by the proposed Muskuchii hills biodiversity reserve, to which temporary protection status similar to the status of the North Harricana river aquatic reserve was assigned for a period of 4 years beginning on May 7, 2003.

1.2. Ecological overview

The area is in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. From upstream to downstream, it drains the Abitibi Plain and Turgeon River Plain natural regions. The dominant landscape is a plain with a slight north slope and an elevation ranging from 180 to 315 metres.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The proposed aquatic reserve is for the most part characterized by a cold, subpolar and subhumid continental climate, with a middle growing season. The downstream part is characterized by a subpolar and subhumid continental climate, with a middle growing season. From south to north, the proposed Upper Harricana aquatic reserve straddles the balsam-white birch and spruce-moss bioclimatic fields.

Geology and geomorphology: The territory of the proposed aquatic reserve is part of the Superior geologic province, whose basement is Archean (over 2.5 billion years). From upstream to downstream, the Harricana river flows over a wide variety of geological formations. The basement is mainly formed of mafic to felsic volcanic rock, especially basalt, andesite and rhyolite, and gabbro. The geological base is also composed of intrusive felsic rock (granitic rock) and, less frequently, sedimentary rock (clay, siltstone and argillite). During the Quaternary, the southern part of the territory was covered by the proglacial Ojibway lake which deposited a thick layer (> 200 m) of clay and silt. The substratum in the northern half of the proposed aquatic reserve is covered by a layer of clay till of glacial origin.

Hydrography: The Harricana river is a Strahler 7 watercourse. It is one of the main watercourses in the natural province together with the Nottaway, Broadback, Rupert and Eastmain rivers. As a major watercourse, it drains an area of almost 30,000 km², 20% of which is located in the province of Ontario. Its sources are in

lakes Blouin, De Montigny, Lemoine and Mourier, close to Val d'Or. It flows northward, crosses the Ontario border and empties into Hannah Bay, an indentation in the shoreline of James Bay, after a course of some 533 km. The Harricana river follows a sinuous path within the proposed aquatic reserve, in particular in its upper course.

Vegetation: In the Abitibi Plain, the Harricana river flows through forest cover of mixed and softwood stands. The dominant species are black spruce (*Picea mariana*), balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*), white birch (*Betula papyrifera*) and trembling aspen (*Populus tremuloides*). Alder groves are also established on the poorly-drained soils of the riverbanks. Further north, in the Turgeon River Plain, peat bogs and black spruce-moss stands constitute the major part of the riparian ecotones of the Harricana river.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The proposed aquatic reserve protects the sites of four plant species likely to be designated as threatened or vulnerable because of their restricted distribution and loss of habitat. They are the prairie aster (*Solidago ptarmicoides*), *Polygala senega*, Clinton's bulrush (*Trichophorum clintonii*) and *Salix pseudomonticola*.

The Harricana river is of exceptional cultural interest. Because of its high flow rate and low gradient, the Harricana river has always been a major transportation route within the region. First used by the Algonquin community of Abitibiwinini to access hunting territories, the river known as the "rivière aux biscuits" facilitated the establishment of forest and mining entrepreneurs and early settlers in the region at the beginning of the 20th century. Its total navigable length of some 170 km makes the Harricana river the second longest navigable river in Canada.

1.3. Occupation and main land uses

The occupations and main land uses in the proposed Upper Harricana aquatic reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed aquatic reserve is classified as Category III land under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA) signed in 1975 and the Act respecting the land regime in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. R-13.1) enacted in 1978. The territory of the proposed aquatic reserve lies partially within the territory covered by the environmental protection regime applicable pursuant to section 22 of the JBNQA (see Chapter II of the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2)). The territory of the proposed

aquatic reserve lies within the territory covered by the hunting, fishing and trapping regime applicable pursuant to section 24 of the JBNQA (see the Act respecting hunting and fishing rights in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. D-13.1)).

The territory lies in the Nottaway beaver reserve in the north and in the Abitibi beaver reserve in the south where the Cree community of Waskaganish and the Algonquin community of Pikogan, respectively, have special rights regarding the hunting and trapping of fur-bearing animals. In the south, the proposed aquatic reserve overlaps traplines forming part of fur-bearing animal management unit (FAMU) 04.

Numerous mining titles are staked out along the Harricana river, particularly between the Coigny and Turgeon rivers. Even so, the portion of the proposed Upper Harricana aquatic reserve located to the south of Tekacaowe island (to the south of the proposed Muskuchii hills biodiversity reserve) is reserved to the State, and the northern sector is withdrawn from staking.

The territory is served by forest roads accessible from Route 109 which links Amos to Matagami. Other forest roads link Route R 1036 at Villebois to Route 109 at Authier-Nord. Three major bridges cross the river in this area (Route 109 Nord, Route Joutel and a forest road in the north of the protected area).

Two 120 kV power transmission lines (the Amos-Coigny line (line 1321) and the Joutel-Selbaie line (line 1346)) cross the proposed protected area. The right-of-way of those two power lines is withdrawn from the protected area.

Some sixty land rights have been granted within the perimeter of the proposed aquatic reserve as follows :

- 40 leases for the construction of a rough shelter in the forest ;
- 12 leases for community purposes (shelter, refuge, station or stand) ;
- 7 leases for personal vacation purposes (cottage) ;
- 2 leases for diverse purposes (rights of way for trails) ;
- 1 lease for municipal purposes (recreational, sport and/or educational).

The economic development service AMIK-Pikogan offers one- to seven-day guided expeditions on the Harricana river under the name “Bercé par l’Harricana”.

This ethno-cultural excursion, with its many rest areas, camping sites and interpretation sites, introduces participants to both the traditional and modern-day culture of the Algonquin community of Abitibiwinni.

2. Protection status

The proposed aquatic reserve safeguards one of the largest watercourses in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. It preserves the integrity of the proposed North Harricana river aquatic reserve established in February 2003 and ensures the protection of a wide range of riparian habitats.

Aquatic reserve status would allow the pursuit of the following conservation objectives :

- the conservation of a river representative of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands ;
- the preservation of biodiversity in aquatic ecosystems and riparian ecotones ;
- the acquisition of new knowledge concerning natural and cultural heritage.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the boundaries of the proposed Upper Harricana aquatic reserve are governed by the Natural Heritage Conservation Act (R.S.Q., c. C-61.01).

Section 3.1.2 of the conservation plan provides for the prohibition of activities in addition to those already prohibited in proposed aquatic reserves so as to ensure better protection of the aquatic environment. Mining exploration (section 3.2) is authorized, under certain conditions.

3.1. Prohibited activities

3.1.1 General prohibitions under the Act

It is important to note that under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act, the main activities prohibited in an area designated as a proposed aquatic 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 ;

— any new allocation of a right to occupy land for vacation resort purposes; and

— earthwork or construction work.

3.1.2. Additional prohibitions

Any activity likely to degrade the bed, banks or littoral of the river or to otherwise affect the integrity of any body of water or watercourse within the reserve is also prohibited in the proposed Upper Harricana aquatic reserve.

3.2. Authorized mining exploration

Mining exploration, including prospecting, digging and boring, where those activities necessitate stripping, the digging of trenches, excavation or deforestation, is permitted on land reserved to the State in accordance with section 304 of the Mining Act (R.S.Q., c. M-13.1) within the proposed aquatic reserve provided the following conditions are met:

(1) the activities are prohibited within the Harricana river, on the islands in the river, and on a 50-metre-wide strip on either bank of the river. The width of this strip of land is calculated horizontally from the shoreline marked on the maps in Québec's Topographic Database (BDTQ, scale 1:20,000);

(2) the activities are permitted in the zone lying between 50 and 200 metres from either bank of the Harricana river; the activities also permitted in the bedrock provided the overlying layer of rock is at least 50 metres thick;

(3) the activities are carried on by or on behalf of a person who is authorized to carry on mining exploration, prospecting, digging and boring within the territory of the proposed ecological reserve, in accordance with the measures set out in the Mining Act (R.S.Q., c. M-13.1);

(4) the activities, where they necessitate deforestation, are carried on by or on behalf of a person who is authorized to carry on such activities in accordance with the measures set out in sections 20 and 21 of the Forest Act (R.S.Q., c. F-4.1);

(5) the activities are carried on in conformity with the applicable legislative and regulatory standards and in accordance with the following requirements:

(5.1) a person authorized to carry on exploration work must:

(a) recover all drilling muds;

(b) ensure that no petroleum products are spilled into the environment;

(c) install a lining to protect against the spill of toxic products into the environment;

(d) ensure that materials other than sediments, sludge and cuttings from the work are stored, processed or eliminated outside the proposed aquatic reserve; and

(5.2) a person authorized to carry on the activities may draw water from the Harricana river to meet pumping requirements if the distance between the drilling site and the water intake is greater than 200 metres, on the following conditions:

(a) the person must have written authorization from the Minister of the Environment;

(b) the person must install a protective lining under the pump to protect against spills of toxic products into the environment; and

(c) the person must comply with any conditions of authorization established by the Minister of the Environment with a view to minimizing impacts on the environment.

3.3. Activities governed by other statutes

All activities likely to be carried on within the boundaries of the proposed Upper Harricana aquatic reserve also 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 aquatic reserve.

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

— Archaeological research (especially the measures contained in the Cultural Property Act (R.S.Q., c. B-4));

— 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) and, where applicable, the measures contained in any applicable federal legislation);

— Access (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and provided under the regulation concerning motor vehicle traffic in certain fragile environments made under the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2));

— Land rights (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and in leases issued by the Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks).

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

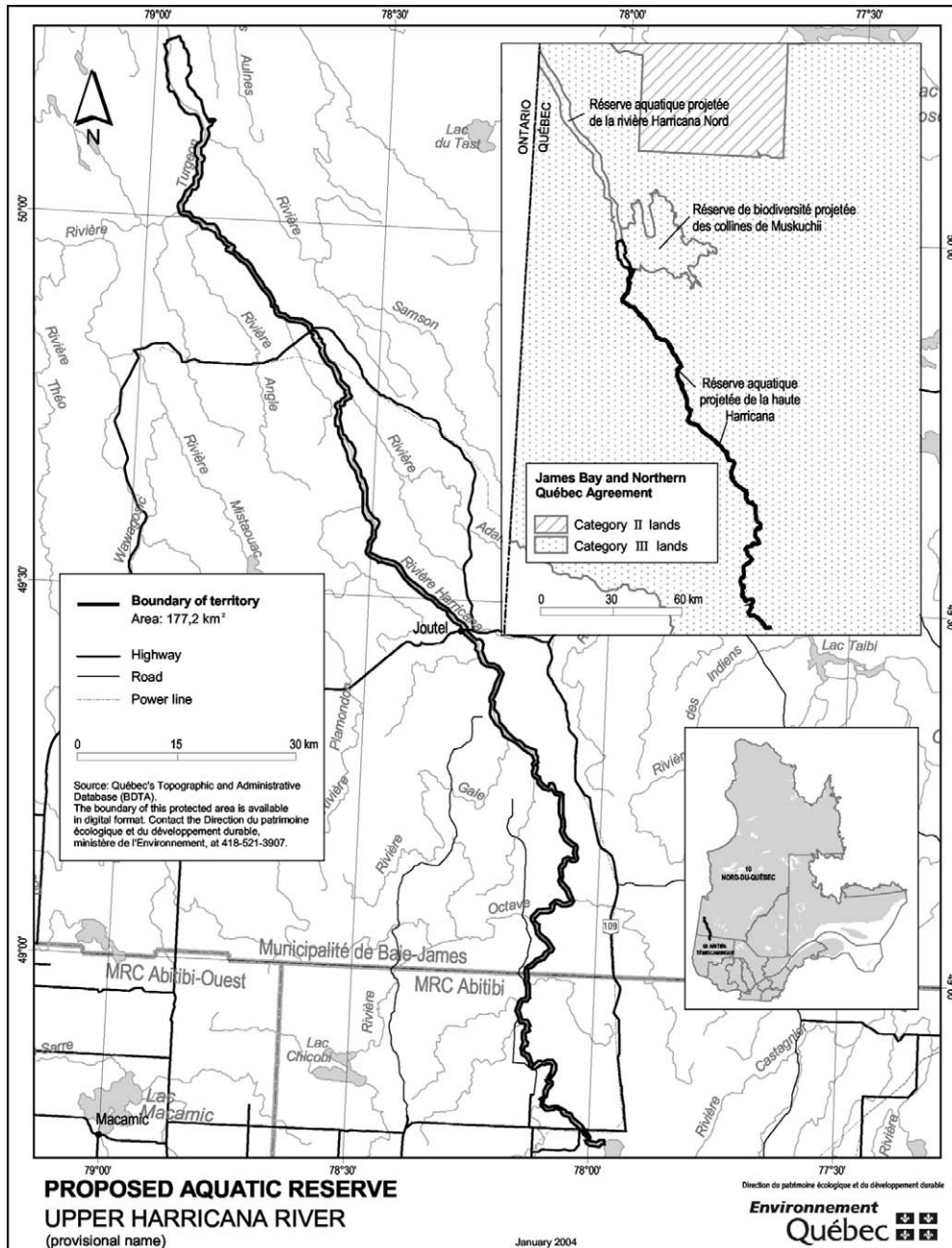
All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities as set out in the legislative and regulatory texts that apply within a proposed aquatic reserve, as provided for under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

4. Permanent protection status

The permanent protection status envisaged for the reserve is “aquatic reserve” status under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

Schedule

Map of the proposed Upper Harricana aquatic reserve (provisional name)



PROPOSED TAIBI LAKE BIODIVERSITY
RESERVE
(provisional name)

CONSERVATION PLAN

March 2004

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The location and boundaries of the proposed Taibi lake biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed Taibi lake biodiversity reserve is located in the Nord-du-Québec administrative region, between 49°20' and 49°30' north latitude and 77°16' and 77°44' west longitude. It is located approximately 50 km north-west of Ville de Lebel-sur-Quévillon and approximately 30 km south of Ville de Matagami and forms part of Municipalité de Baie-James. The protected area covers an area of 266.1 km².

1.2. Ecological overview

The proposed biodiversity reserve is in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. It protects habitats representative of the Abitibi Plain natural region. The topography of the area is generally flat, and the elevation ranges from 260 to 300 metres.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The territory is characterized by a subpolar, subhumid continental climate with a middle growing season. It belongs to the spruce-moss bioclimatic field.

Geology and geomorphology: The territory lies within the Superior geologic province, and is underlain by an Archean basement (over 2.5 billion years). The bedrock consists mainly of felsic rock some mafic volcanic rock, covered for the most part by poorly-drained glaciolacustrine silt deposits and organic deposits.

Hydrography: The protected area forms part of the Nottaway river watershed, which flows towards James Bay. The Bell river runs through the protected area, widening there to form Taibi lake.

Vegetation: The south-western portion of the protected area remains unaffected by major anthropogenic disturbance. It is formed of old-growth black spruce stands (*Picea mariana*) and peat bogs. The remainder of the territory is covered by virgin forest where cutting started

in 1975. The logged portions have regenerated mainly with a mixture of softwood and hardwood species. Also found is virgin forest affected by windfall that has regenerated with softwood and mixed species, and old-growth black spruce stands.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The proposed biodiversity reserve protects a virgin black spruce forest, a type of forest that is increasingly uncommon in the Abitibi area with the extensive forest regeneration that has taken place in the many harvested areas.

1.3. Occupation and main land uses

The occupations and main land uses in the proposed Taibi lake biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed biodiversity reserve is classified as Category III land under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA) signed in 1975 and the Act respecting the land regime in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. R-13.1). The territory of the proposed reserve lies partially within the territory covered by the environmental protection regime applicable pursuant to section 22 of the JBNQA (see Chapter II of the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2)). The territory of the proposed reserve lies within the territory covered by the hunting, fishing and trapping regime applicable pursuant to section 24 of the JBNQA (see the Act respecting hunting and fishing rights in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. D-13.1)).

The entire area lies within the Abitibi beaver reserve, where the Cree community of Waswanipi and the Algonquin community of Pikogan have special rights regarding fishing, hunting and trapping, especially of fur-bearing animals.

A forest road (N800) linking Lebel-sur-Quévillon to Matagami crosses the protected area. A number of logging roads were also constructed in the past (approximately 8 kilometres).

The Bell river is host to a canoe-kayak route that crosses the area, through the Chenal de l'Ouest and along the Bell river.

Eight land rights have been granted on the territory :

- 5 leases for rough shelters ; and
- 3 leases for a vacation resort.

2. Protection status

The proposed biodiversity reserve protects old-growth black spruce stands and peatlands.

Biodiversity reserve status would allow the pursuit of the following conservation objectives :

- the conservation of old-growth boreal forest ;
- the preservation of biodiversity in peatland ecosystems ;
- the acquisition of new knowledge concerning natural and cultural heritage.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the proposed Taibi lake biodiversity 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 biodiversity 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 biodiversity 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 stripping, 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 Taibi lake biodiversity reserve also

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 biodiversity reserve.

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

- Archaeological research (especially the measures contained in the Cultural Property Act (R.S.Q., c. B-4)) ;
- 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), the regulation concerning beaver reserves and the measures contained in the Act respecting hunting and fishing rights in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. D-13.1)) ;
- Access (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and provided under the regulation concerning motor vehicle traffic in certain fragile environments made under the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2)) ;
- Land rights (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and, where applicable, in leases issued by the Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks).

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

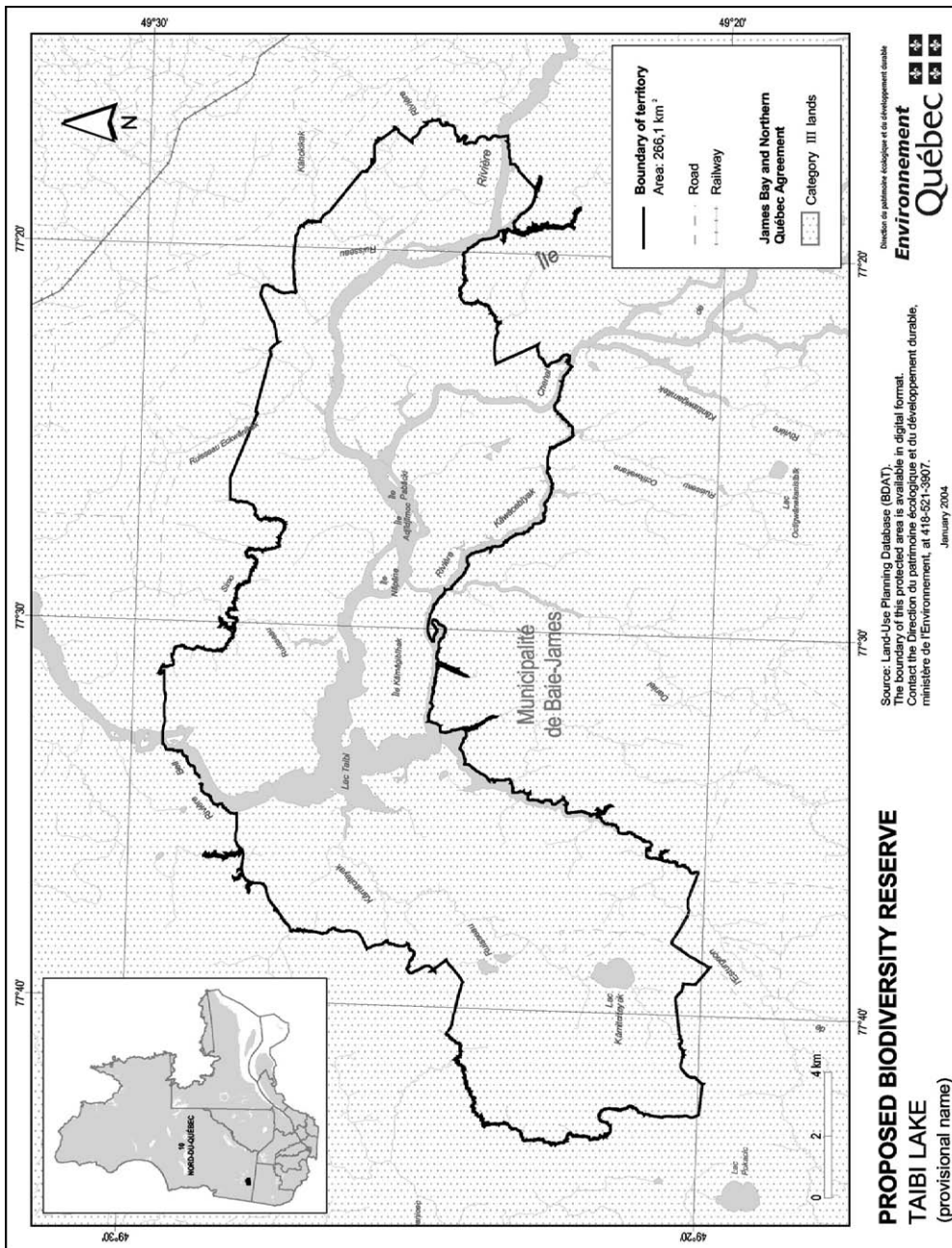
All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities as set out in the legislative and regulatory texts that apply within a proposed biodiversity reserve, as provided for under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

4. Permanent protection status

The permanent protection status envisaged for the reserve is “biodiversity reserve” status under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

Schedule

Map of the Taibi lake biodiversity reserve (provisional name)



PROPOSED BIODIVERSITY RESERVE
TAIBI LAKE
 (provisional name)

Source: Land-Use Planning Database (BDAT).
 The boundary of this protected area is available in digital format.
 Contact the Direction du patrimoine écologique et du développement durable,
 ministère de l'Environnement, at 418-521-3807.
 January 2004

Direction du patrimoine écologique et du développement durable
Environnement Québec

PROPOSED DECELLES RESERVOIR
BIODIVERSITY RESERVE
(provisional name)

CONSERVATION PLAN

March 2004

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The location and boundaries of the proposed Decelles reservoir biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed Decelles reservoir biodiversity reserve is located in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue administrative region, between 47°43' and 47°50' north latitude and 78°10' and 78°31' west longitude. Most of proposed biodiversity reserve lies within the territory of Municipalité de Rouyn-Noranda, in the regional county municipality of the same name. To the east, the proposed biodiversity reserve is located in Municipalité de Val-d'Or, in Municipalité régionale de comté de la Vallée-de-l'Or.

The proposed biodiversity reserve is situated to the north-west of the Decelles reservoir, approximately 30 km south-west of Val-d'Or. It covers an area of 81.2 km². To the east, the proposed biodiversity reserve borders on the Dunes-de-la-Moraine-d'Harricana ecological reserve, which covers an area of 5.3 km² along Boston bay.

At the edge of the Decelles reservoir, the boundary of the protected area coincides with the line which marks the 311-metre point above sea level. To the north, the protected area is partially bounded by power transmission line 1339 (Rapides-des-Quinze/Rapide-7 substations). The right-of-way of that power line is excluded from the proposed biodiversity reserve to allow access to equipment, and operations and maintenance work. The Rapide-7 generating station and substation are also excluded from the proposed biodiversity reserve.

1.2. Ecological overview

The proposed Decelles reservoir biodiversity reserve is in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. It protects ecosystems representative of the Lake Témiscamingue Lowlands natural region. The topography is characterized by a complex of mounds and low hills. The elevation of the territory ranges from 295 to 430 metres.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The territory is characterized by a mild, subpolar and subhumid continental climate, with a long growing season. The proposed biodiversity reserve belongs to the balsam fir-yellow birch bioclimatic field in the west and to the balsam fir-white birch bioclimatic field in the east.

Geology and geomorphology: The proposed biodiversity reserve is part of the Superior geologic province, whose basement is Archean (over 2.5 billion years). The substratum is mainly formed by felsic igneous rock (granodiorite and granite) and metamorphic rock (gneiss). During the Quaternary period, the basement rock, which outcrops in many places, was covered by moraine till or by glaciolacustrine clay and silt deposits. On the periphery of the Dunes-de-la-Moraine-d'Harricana ecological reserve, the territory of the proposed biodiversity reserve alternates between ombrotrophic and minerotrophic peatlands and dunes and is also characterized by the presence of sandy-gravelly materials of glaciofluvial origin.

Hydrography: The proposed biodiversity reserve belongs to the Outaouais river watershed. It includes several lakes, the largest of which are Godard and Strong lakes. The drainage system is not very well-developed and consists mainly of intermittent watercourses.

Vegetation: The proposed biodiversity reserve includes a wide variety of habitats. To the west, the territory is covered mainly by mixed or resinous forest which has been partially harvested. The dominant species are balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*) and yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*). To the east, the vegetation is mainly peat bogs and alder groves on poorly-drained soils or jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) stands in a dune and glaciofluvial environment. Hardwood stands, generally dominated by white birch (*Betula papyrifera*) and trembling aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), cover the valley bottoms.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The proposed biodiversity reserve includes a dune sector, a geomorphological environment that is rare in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands.

Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*) have already been observed within the proposed biodiversity reserve as well as on its periphery. This forest population is experiencing difficult times, in particular because of changes to its habitat caused by predators and hunting activity. Protecting the Decelles lake forest highland would allow

the pursuit of the caribou protection objective established by the regional branch of the Société de la faune et des parcs du Québec.

A number of areas within the proposed protected area provide a habitat suitable for the southern bog lemming (*Synaptomys cooperi*), a small mammal present only in the eastern part of North America that is likely to be designated a threatened or vulnerable species in Québec.

1.3. Occupation and main land uses

The occupations and main land uses in the proposed Decelles reservoir biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The territory lies almost wholly within the Grand-Lac-Victoria beaver reserve where the Anishnabe Algonquin community residing on the western shore of Simon lake, 32 kilometres to the south-east of Val-d'Or, has special rights regarding the hunting and trapping of fur-bearing animals. To the west, the proposed biodiversity reserve overlaps traplines forming part of fur-bearing animal management unit (FAMU) 04.

Power transmission line 1339 (Rapides-des-Quinze/Rapide-7 substations) crosses the proposed biodiversity reserve to the west over a distance of roughly 8 kilometres. The right-of-way of that power line, which is 36.6 metres wide, is withdrawn from the proposed protected area. It constitutes the northern boundary of the biodiversity reserve for some 6.5 kilometres.

The territory is served by some 60 kilometres of gravel forest roads which provide access to Strong lake, the Decelles reservoir and the Rapide-7 dam.

There is one private property within the proposed biodiversity reserve. Sixteen leases have been granted within the perimeter of the protected area as follows :

- 12 leases for the construction of a rough shelter in the forest ; and

- 4 leases for personal vacation purposes (cottage).

Also, ten permits for the harvest of firewood are valid in a part of the proposed biodiversity reserve.

2. Protection status

The proposed biodiversity reserve protects a complex of ecosystems of exceptional interest from an ecological perspective and for their beauty.

Biodiversity reserve status would allow the pursuit of the following conservation objectives :

- the preservation of a mosaic of ecosystems representative of the Lake Témiscamingue Lowlands natural region ;

- the preservation of biodiversity in ecosystems ;

- the consolidation of the protection of the dunes of the Harricana moraine ;

- the acquisition of new knowledge concerning natural heritage.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the boundaries of the proposed Decelles reservoir biodiversity 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 a proposed biodiversity reserve 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 biodiversity 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 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 Decelles reservoir biodiversity 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 biodiversity reserve.

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

— Archaeological research (especially the measures contained in the Cultural Property Act (R.S.Q., c. B-4));

— 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) and, where applicable, the measures contained in any applicable federal legislation);

— Access (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and provided under the regulation concerning motor vehicle traffic in certain fragile environments made under the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2));

— Land rights (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and in leases issued by the Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks).

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

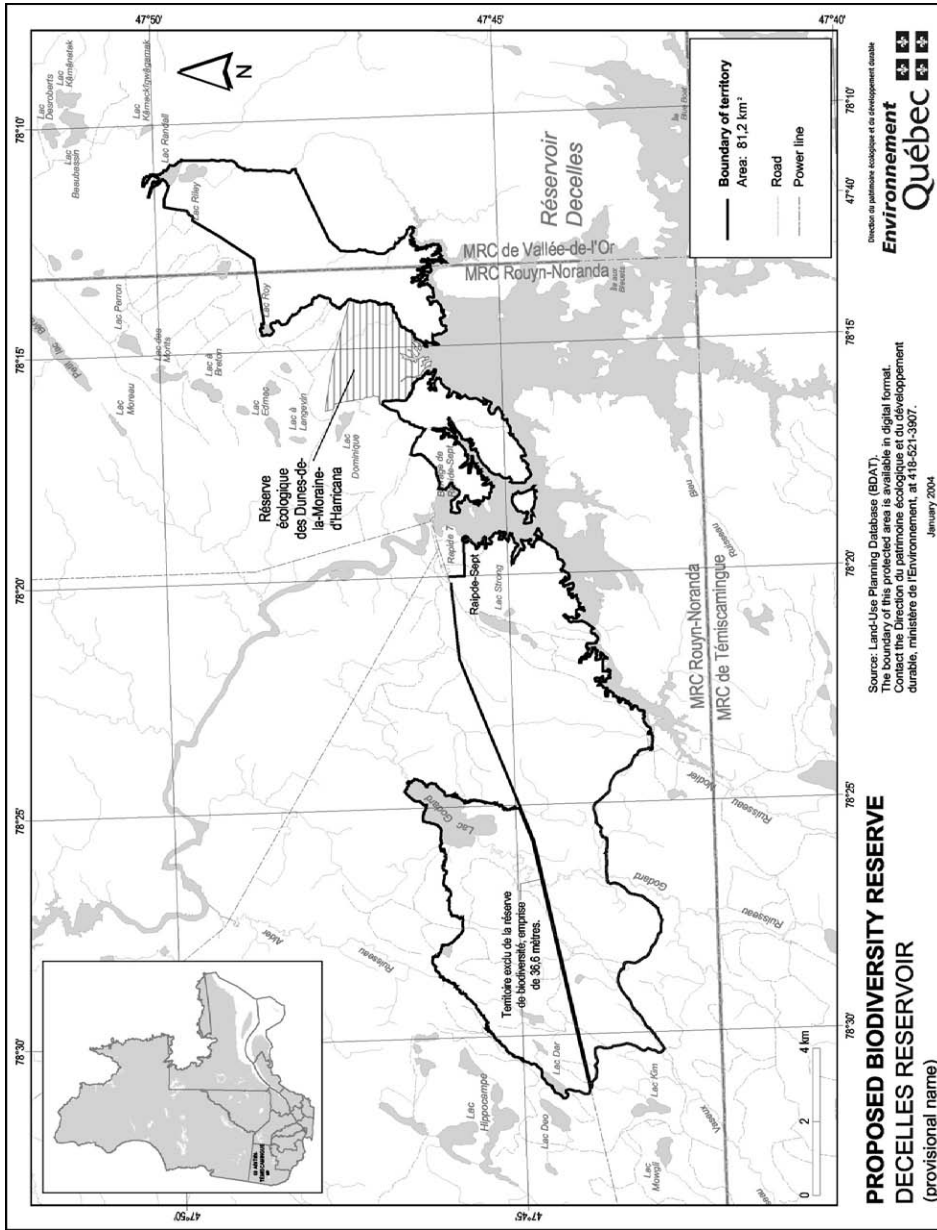
All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities as set out in the legislative and regulatory texts that apply within a proposed biodiversity reserve, as provided for under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

4. Permanent protection status

The permanent protection status envisaged for the reserve is “biodiversity reserve” status under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

Schedule

Map of the proposed Decelles reservoir biodiversity reserve (provisional name)



PROPOSED PARENT LAKE MARSHLANDS BIODIVERSITY RESERVE

CONSERVATION PLAN

March 2004

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The location and boundaries of the proposed Parent lake marshlands biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed Parent lake marshlands biodiversity reserve is located in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue administrative region, between 48°43' and 48°49' north latitude and 76°49' and 76°56' west longitude. It is situated in the territory of Municipalité de Senneterre, in Municipalité régionale de comté de la Vallée-de-l'Or. The proposed biodiversity reserve is situated north-east of Parent lake and covers an area of 54.4 km².

1.2. Ecological overview

The proposed biodiversity reserve lies almost entirely in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. It protects a wetland characteristic of the Abitibi Plain natural region. The topography is characterized a depression bordered to the north and the east by the Mégiscane lake hills. The elevation of the territory ranges from 275 m to 375 m.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The Parent lake marshlands are characterized by a subpolar, subhumid continental climate, with a middle growing season. They are at the interface of the white birch-balsam fir bioclimatic field in the south and the spruce-moss bioclimatic field in the north.

Geology and geomorphology: The proposed biodiversity reserve is in the Superior geologic province, whose basement is Archean (over 2.5 billion years). The substratum is mainly formed of felsic igneous rock, in this instance granodiorite, and of granite and metamorphic rock (gneiss). During the Quaternary period, the geological base was covered by thick deposits of glaciolacustrine silt and clay.

Hydrography: The proposed biodiversity reserve is part of the Nottaway river watershed. It includes the north-east end of Parent lake, at the head of which is one of the largest and best preserved wetlands in the Abitibi-

Témiscamingue area. The integrity of the Parent lake marshlands, which lie at the confluence of the Robin, Lecomte and Delestres rivers, is directly linked to the state of those watercourses which are found for the most part in the natural province of the Mistassini Highlands (G).

Vegetation: Almost two thirds of the territory, including lakes and rivers, is covered by a mosaic of peat bogs, marshlands and alder groves. On the fringe of the wetland, the higher areas are occupied by black spruce-moss stands, mixed stands and, sporadically, intolerant hardwood stands. There has been little disturbance in the forests.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The proposed biodiversity reserve is frequented by a wide variety of avian species. Regionally, the Parent lake marshlands are a major habitat and a recognized staging area for aquatic avifauna, in particular the Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*) and the American black duck (*Anas rubripes*).

The proposed biodiversity reserve is also frequented by bird species of particular heritage significance, including the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) – a bird of prey designated as vulnerable in Québec – and the osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*).

1.3. Occupation and main land uses

The occupations and main land uses in the proposed Parent lake marshlands biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The territory is classified as Category III land under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA) signed in 1975 and the Act respecting the land regime in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. R-13.1) enacted in 1978. The territory of the proposed reserve lies within the territory covered by the hunting, fishing and trapping regime applicable pursuant to section 24 of the JBNQA (see the Act respecting hunting and fishing rights in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. D-13.1)).

The territory of the proposed biodiversity reserve lies wholly within fur-bearing animal management unit (FAMU) 05 and straddles three traplines.

Six leases have been granted within the perimeter of the protected area for the construction of a rough shelter in the forest.

2. Protection status

The proposed biodiversity reserve protects a wetland of exceptional interest, from an ecological perspective, as well as for its wildlife and its beauty.

Biodiversity reserve status would allow the pursuit of the following conservation objectives:

- the conservation of a mosaic of representative ecosystems of the natural region of the Abitibi Plain;
- the preservation of a wetland of regional significance for avifauna nesting and migration, particularly the Anatidae;
- the acquisition of new knowledge concerning natural heritage.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the proposed Parent lake marshlands biodiversity 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 a proposed biodiversity reserve 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 biodiversity 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 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 Parent lake marshlands biodiversity reserve also 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 biodiversity reserve.

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

- Archaeological research (especially the measures contained in the Cultural Property Act (R.S.Q., c. B-4));
- 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) and, where applicable, the measures contained in any applicable federal legislation);
- Access (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and under the regulation concerning motor vehicle traffic in certain fragile environments made under the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2));
- Land rights (especially measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and in leases issued by the Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks).

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

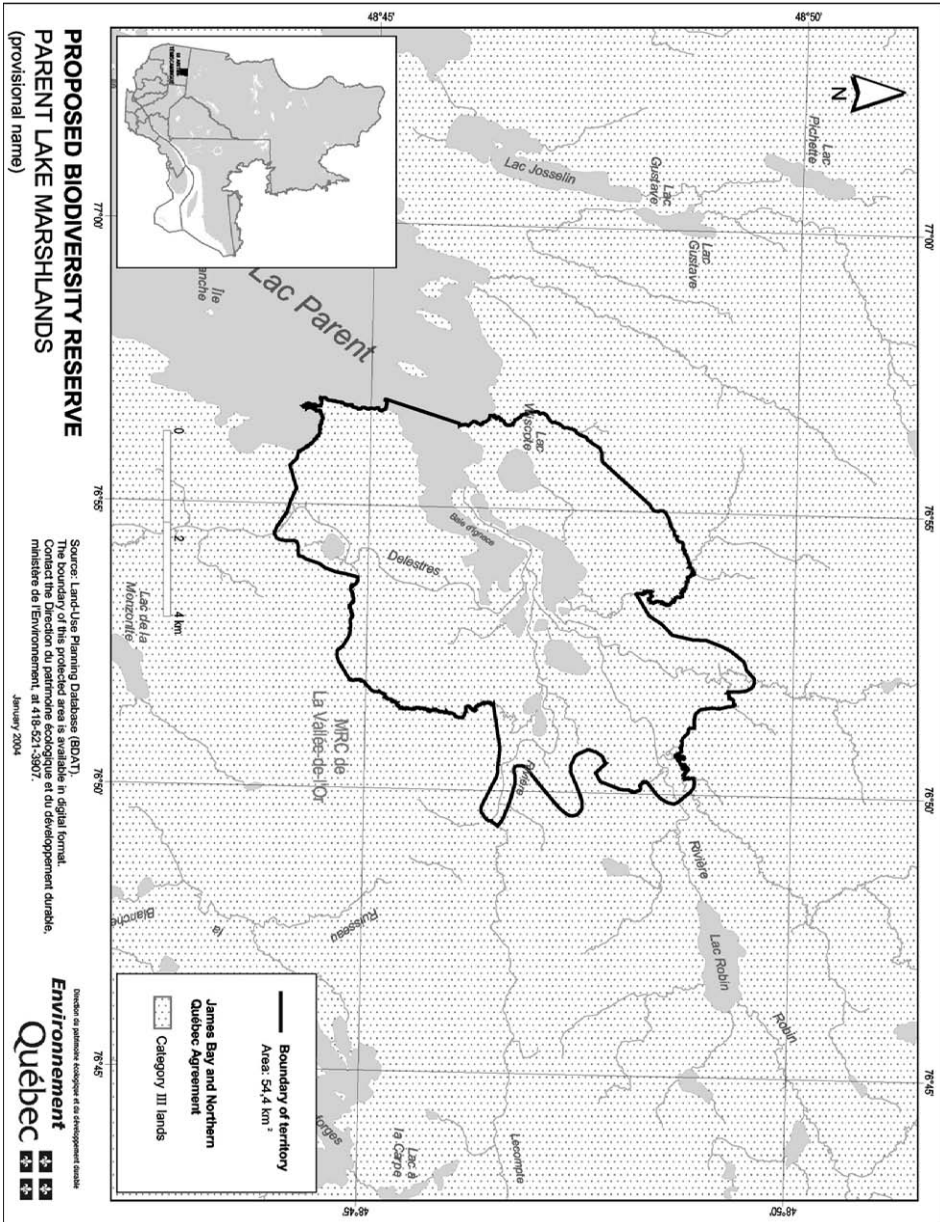
All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities as set out in the legislative and regulatory texts that apply within a proposed biodiversity reserve, as provided for under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

4. Permanent protection status

The permanent protection status envisaged for the reserve is “biodiversity reserve” status under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

Schedule

Map of the proposed Parent lake marshlands biodiversity reserve (provisional name)



PROPOSED WASKAGANISH BIODIVERSITY RESERVE

(provisional name)

CONSERVATION PLAN

March 2004

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The location and boundaries of the proposed Waskaganish biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed Waskaganish biodiversity reserve is located in the Nord-du-Québec administrative region, between 51°21' and 51°38' north latitude and 77°18' and 78°52' west longitude. It is situated in the territory of Municipalité de Baie-James.

The proposed protected area covers an area of 1,127.9 km². It is situated some 40 km east of the Cree village of Waskaganish. The eastern portion of the proposed protected area is accessible by Route 109, which runs through the area over short distances.

1.2. Ecological overview

The major part of the area is in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. It protects ecosystems characteristic of the natural regions of the James Bay Coastal Plain to the west and the Lower Rupert River Plain to the east. At the eastern end, the proposed biodiversity reserve includes part of the Upper Rupert River Plateau located in the natural province of the Mistassini River Highlands. The elevation of the territory ranges from 0 m to 277 m.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The proposed protected area is characterized by a cold, subpolar, subhumid continental climate, with a middle growing season. It belongs to the spruce-moss bioclimatic field.

Geology and geomorphology: The territory lies wholly within the Superior geologic province, whose basement is Archean (over 2.5 billion years). The geological base is mainly metasedimentary rock, namely paragneiss. Locally, there are also intrusions of mafic volcanic rock (basalt) and intrusive felsic rock (granite and granodiorite). The bedrock is covered by organic deposits alternating with marine clays and sands from the post-glacial marine transgression of the Tyrell Sea.

Hydrography: The territory is an integral part of the Pontax river watershed. The Pontax river, a Strahler 5 river, flows through about 80 km of the protected area before emptying into Rupert Bay. The proposed biodiversity reserve includes the entire subwatershed of the Machisakahikanistikw river into which flow about twenty tributaries.

Vegetation: Almost three quarters of the territory of the proposed biodiversity reserve is covered by bogs and fens. The territory is also covered by stands of black spruce (*Picea mariana*), dry heaths and stands of jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*). Certain areas have recently been affected by fire, particularly in the north and east.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The proposed biodiversity reserve includes five islands situated at the mouth of the Pontax river, constituting habitats of exceptional ecological significance as they are at the interface between salt water and fresh water. It also includes ecotones on the edge of Rupert Bay which are conducive to unique species of fauna and flora.

1.3. Occupation and main land uses

The occupations and main land uses in the territory of the proposed Waskaganish biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The territory of the proposed biodiversity reserve is classified as Category II and III lands under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA) signed in 1975 and the Act respecting the land regime in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. R-13.1) enacted in 1978. Category II lands are Québec public lands managed jointly at the municipal level by representatives of Municipalité de Baie-James and the Cree Regional Authority. The territory of the proposed reserve lies within the territory covered by the environmental protection regime applicable pursuant to section 22 of the JBNQA (see Chapter II of the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2)). The territory of the proposed reserve lies within the territory covered by the hunting, fishing and trapping regime applicable pursuant to section 24 of the JBNQA (see the Act respecting hunting and fishing rights in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. D-13.1)).

The territory lies wholly within the Rupert beaver reserve, where the Cree community of Waskaganish, established on Rupert Bay on the southern tip of James Bay, has special rights regarding the hunting and trapping of fur-bearing animals.

No land rights have been granted within the perimeter of the protected area.

2. Protection status

The proposed biodiversity reserve protects ecotones in terrestrial and aquatic environments, and in coastal and fresh waters. It also protects the entire river basin of a river characteristic of the James Bay area.

Biodiversity reserve status would allow the pursuit of the following conservation objectives :

- the conservation of a mosaic of representative habitats of the natural regions of the James Bay Coastal Plain and the Lower Rupert River Plain ;

- the preservation of the biodiversity in aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems ;

- the acquisition of new knowledge concerning natural and cultural heritage.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the proposed Waskaganish biodiversity 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 a proposed biodiversity reserve 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 biodiversity 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 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 Waskaganish biodiversity reserve also 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 biodiversity reserve.

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

- Archaeological research (especially the measures contained in the Cultural Property Act (R.S.Q., c. B-4)) ;

- 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), the regulation on beaver reserves and, where applicable, the measures contained in any applicable federal legislation) ;

- Access (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and provided under the regulation concerning motor vehicle traffic in certain fragile environments made under the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2)) ;

- Land rights (especially measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and in leases issued by the Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks).

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

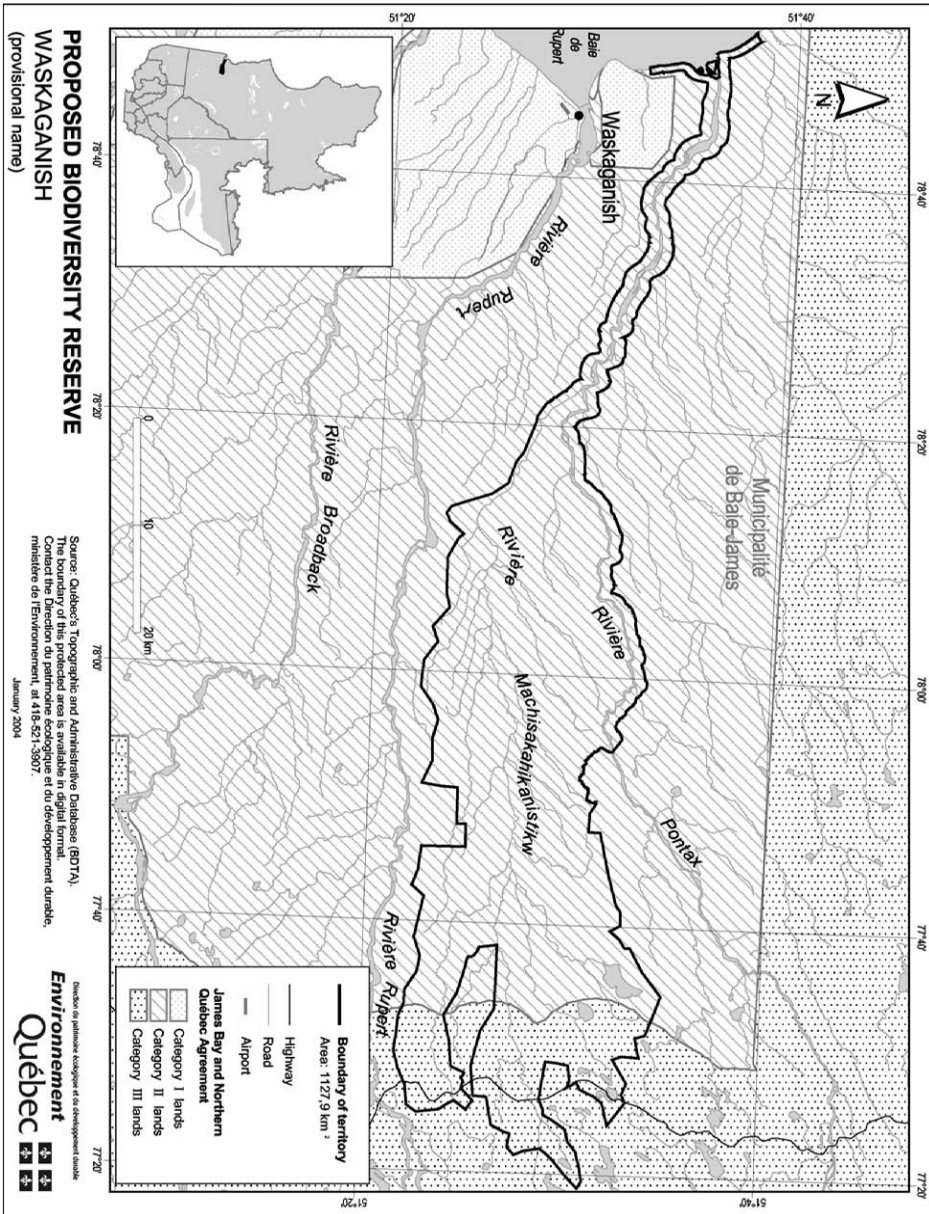
All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities as set out in the legislative and regulatory texts that apply within a proposed biodiversity reserve, as provided for under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

4. Permanent protection status

The permanent protection status envisaged for the reserve is “biodiversity reserve” status under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

Schedule

Map of the proposed Waskaganish biodiversity reserve (provisional name)



PROPOSED PICHÉ-LEMOINE FOREST
BIODIVERSITY RESERVE
(provisional name)

CONSERVATION PLAN

March 2004

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The location and boundaries of the proposed Piché-Lemoine forest biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed Piché-Lemoine forest biodiversity reserve is located in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue administrative region, between 47°56' and 48°06' north latitude and 77°52' and 78°02' west longitude. It lies in Municipalité régionale de comté de la Vallée-de-l'Or, with the greater part being situated in the territory of Municipalité de Val-d'Or, a part on the territory of Municipalité de Malartic and a part in the unorganized territory of Lac-Fouillac.

The proposed biodiversity reserve is found approximately 10 kilometres south-west of Val-d'Or, south of Route 117. It covers an area of 93.8 km². It is partially served by a network of forest roads accessible from Route 117.

1.2. Ecological overview

The protected area is in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. It protects a forest representative of the Abitibi Plain natural region. The topography of the area is generally flat, dotted with a few isolated hills. The elevation of the area ranges from 250 to 360 metres.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The Piché-Lemoine forest is characterized by a subpolar, subhumid continental climate with a middle growing season. It belongs to the balsam fir-white birch bioclimatic field of the continuous boreal forest vegetation subzone.

Geology and geomorphology: The proposed biodiversity reserve lies within the Superior geologic province, and is underlain by an Archean basement (over 2.5 billion years). The bedrock consists mainly of siliceous sedimentary rocks such as sandstone, arkose and greywacke. The geologic substrate is also formed of metamorphic rocks (gneiss and paragneiss), intrusive felsic igneous (tonalite),

and mafic rocks (basalt and gabbro). The area lies on the southern margin of the Abitibi Plain, which was once covered by the proglacial Barlow-Ojibway lake. During the Quaternary era, the basement rocks were covered by thick glacio-lacustrine surface deposits (sands, silts, clays). The few relief features are covered with a thin layer of undifferentiated till.

Hydrography: The proposed biodiversity reserve forms part of the Harricana river watershed. It takes in Lemoine lake, which is 30 km long and 2.6 km wide and covers approximately 24% of the protected area. Lemoine lake is fed by the Piché river and is up to 52 metres deep in places. Lemoine lake, with De Montigny lake further north, is one of the main sources of the Harricana river.

Vegetation: Close to two thirds (61%) of the proposed biodiversity reserve is forested. This forest is formed of stands of mixed species, of softwoods and of hardwoods which cover 38%, 24% and 35% of the area, respectively. Most often, the stands are either young or overmature dominated by black spruce (*Picea mariana*), white spruce (*Picea glauca*), balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*) and white birch (*Betula papyrifera*) or yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*). Black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*) and red maple (*Acer rubrum*) are also found here and there.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The proposed biodiversity reserve is home to old-growth stands of yellow birch. This species, found here at the northern limit of its distribution area, is rare at the regional level.

1.3. Occupation and main land uses

The occupations and main land uses in the proposed Piché-Lemoine forest biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed biodiversity reserve is classified as Category III land under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA) signed in 1975 and the Act respecting the land regime in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. R-13.1) enacted in 1978. The territory of the proposed reserve lies within the territory covered by the hunting, fishing and trapping regime applicable pursuant to section 24 of the JBNQA (see the Act respecting hunting and fishing rights in the James Bay and New Québec territories (R.S.Q., c. D-13.1)).

The lower quarter of the proposed biodiversity reserve lies within the Grand-Lac-Victoria beaver reserve, where the Native communities have special rights regarding the hunting and trapping of fur-bearing animals.

The remainder of the land lies within fur-bearing animal management units (FAMU) 03-B and 04.

There are thirty-three private properties within the proposed biodiversity reserve. Thirty land rights have also been granted within the perimeter of the proposed Piché-Lemoine forest biodiversity reserve, for the most part around Lemoine lake. They are as follows:

- 14 leases for the construction of a rough shelter in the forest;
- 8 leases for personal vacation resort purposes;
- 5 leases for diverse purposes (other rights);
- 1 lease for commercial purposes;
- 1 lease for community purposes (vacation camp);
- 1 lease for incidental personal purposes or to complement an establishment.

A wide range of recreational activities, including cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, the use of all-terrain vehicles and mountain bikes, hunting and fishing are carried on in the Piché-Lemoine forest.

There are also seven kilometres of tertiary forest road.

Lastly, equipment to measure the real effects of silvicultural treatments (planting and pre-commercial thinning) covering 0.1 hectare are present and the two units will require monitoring for the next twenty years.

2. Protection status

The proposed biodiversity reserve protects a peri-urban forest of exceptional interest from a social perspective because of its recreational vocation. From an ecological perspective, the proposed biodiversity reserve is of interest because of the stands of old-growth yellow birch found there, a species not commonly found on the southern margin of the Abitibi Plain.

Biodiversity reserve status would allow the pursuit of the following conservation objectives:

- the conservation of a forest representative of the Abitibi Plain natural region;
- the preservation of biodiversity in forest and aquatic ecosystems;
- the preservation of recreational activities that maintain ecological balance;

— the acquisition of new knowledge concerning natural and cultural heritage.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the proposed Piché-Lemoine forest biodiversity 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 biodiversity 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 biodiversity 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 stripping, 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 Piché-Lemoine forest biodiversity reserve also 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 biodiversity reserve.

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

— Archaeological research (especially the measures contained in the Cultural Property Act (R.S.Q., c. B-4));

— 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) and, where applicable, the measures contained in any applicable federal legislation);

— Access (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and provided under the regulation concerning motor vehicle traffic in certain fragile environments made under the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2));

— Land rights (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and in leases issued by the Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks).

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

All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities as set out in the legislative and regulatory texts that apply within a proposed biodiversity reserve, as provided for under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

4. Permanent protection status

The permanent protection status envisaged for the reserve is “biodiversity reserve” status under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

PROPOSED OPASATICA LAKE BIODIVERSITY RESERVE

(provisional name)

CONSERVATION PLAN

March 2004

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The location and boundaries of the proposed Opasatica lake biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed Opasatica lake biodiversity reserve is located in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue administrative region, between 47°52' and 48°10' north latitude and 79°15' and 79°31' west longitude. The greater part of the proposed biodiversity reserve lies in Municipalité de Rouyn-Noranda, in the regional municipality of the same name. The south-western part of the protected area lies within the territory of Municipalité de Nédélec, in Municipalité régionale de comté de Témiscamingue.

The proposed biodiversity reserve is situated approximately 25 kilometres south-west of Rouyn-Noranda. It covers an area of 245 km². It is accessible from routes 117 and 101 in the north and east, respectively.

One sand and gravel extraction site reserved to the State is excluded from the proposed biodiversity reserve, to the south/south-east of Trompeur lake.

1.2. Ecological overview

The protected area is in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. It protects ecosystems representative of the Lake Témiscamingue Lowlands natural region. The area is an undulating plain with a few isolated hills. The elevation of the territory ranges from 263 to 373 metres.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The territory of the proposed biodiversity reserve is characterized by a mild subpolar, subhumid continental climate with a long growing season. It belongs to the balsam fir-yellow birch bioclimatic field of the mixed forest vegetation subzone.

Geology and geomorphology: The proposed biodiversity reserve lies within the Superior geologic province, and is underlain by an Archean basement (over 2.5 billion years). The bedrock consists mainly of felsic rocks, in

particular tonalite. The geologic substrate is also formed of sedimentary and ultra-mafic volcanic rocks, in particular in the west and north of the proposed protected area. The rock, which outcrops in places, is covered by glacio-lacustrine deposits or occasionally by a thin layer of till.

Hydrography: The proposed biodiversity reserve forms part of the Rivière des Outaouais watershed in the east and part of the Blanche river watershed in the west and takes in the whole of Opasatica lake. The lake has an area of 48 km² and is almost 33 km in length. The northern part of the lake is 6 km wide and has large bays with names such as Klock, Lamy, Verte and l'Original. The southern tip of the lake is very narrow in contrast, being not more than one kilometre wide in the Solitaire bay area. This is where the lake drains into the Solitaire river, which feeds Rémigny lake. There are also nine other lakes within the proposed biodiversity reserve.

Vegetation: Two thirds of the territory is forested. The glacio-lacustrine deposits are generally covered by mixed stands and occasionally by communities of tolerant softwoods. The rock outcrops, found primarily in the southern part of the proposed biodiversity reserve, support a forest mosaic of intolerant hardwoods and softwoods. The dominant species are balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*), white birch (*Betula papyrifera*), Eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) and white pine (*Pinus strobus*). Lastly, peat bogs and alder groves are sometimes found in the valley bottoms or topographic depressions.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The Ministère des Ressources naturelles, de la Faune et des Parcs granted the status of exceptional forest ecosystems (EFE) to two old-growth forests within the perimeter of the proposed biodiversity reserve in September 2003. In both cases, the forest is a balsam fir-white birch-Eastern white cedar forest. The first forest community, covering an area of 117 hectares, is situated west of Opasatica lake, while the second, covering 113 hectares, is found on the eastern slope of the Granville river valley.

The Société de la faune et des parcs du Québec has granted the status of wildlife habitat to two islands on Opasatica lake because of the presence of a heronry and of a potentially favourable nesting site for the common tern (*Sterna hirundo*). Also worth mentioning is the presence of a yellow walleye (*Stizostedion vitreum*) spawning ground in the northern part of Opasatica lake and of a number of white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) yards on the periphery of the proposed biodiversity reserve.

Lastly, eight sites of cultural and archaeological interest are found within the proposed biodiversity reserve and nine just outside the boundary of the reserve. Most of the sites are located on the shores of Opasatica lake, this lake having played an important role in the history of the Native peoples owing to its strategic position as the major waterway linking the St. Lawrence to Hudson Bay. Two of the three heritage sites are found close to Buies lake and are included in the proposed biodiversity reserve. There is evidence of prehistoric Native settlement on all the sites and of European and Québec settlement on a few of the sites. One archaeological site dates back approximately 4300 years; another site is among the few sites in Québec where rock paintings may be found. The sites are well-preserved for the most part, but remain extremely fragile because they are close to the surface. Any disturbance could partially or completely destroy them. It must be mentioned that the archaeological potential of the proposed biodiversity reserve may be greater than presently known.

1.3. Occupation and main land uses

The occupations and main land uses in the proposed Opasatica lake biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

There are seventeen private properties within the proposed biodiversity reserve. Also, 75 land rights have been granted within the perimeter of the proposed biodiversity reserve, as follows:

- 71 for the construction of a rough shelter in the forest; and
- 4 for personal vacation resort purposes (cottage).

Some electric power distribution equipment, with a right-of-way of 12 metres, is found within the proposed biodiversity reserve.

A snowmobile trail also runs through the western part of the proposed biodiversity reserve along Hébert lake.

The proposed biodiversity reserve straddles seven traplines forming part of fur-bearing animal management units (FAMU) 04 and 02-B.

Opasatica lake, which is up to 60 metres deep in places, attracts a considerable number of recreational boaters. The proximity of Rouyn-Noranda has promoted the development of vacation sites along the lake's eastern shores. Part of the area is served by forest roads which lead from Route 117 to Pontleroy and Bull Rock lakes. There are also 27 kilometres of main road which serve the forest area in the southern part of the proposed area.

The corporation Archéo-08 has conducted a number of archaeological digs within the proposed biodiversity reserve, in particular on the shores of Opasatica lake. This inventory work started in 1987 has been carried out in close collaboration with the Direction du Patrimoine of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications.

2. Protection status

The proposed biodiversity reserve protects a mosaic of ecosystems of exceptional ecological interest. The landscape in the territory is of exceptional value, and of interest for its rich cultural heritage.

Biodiversity reserve status would allow the pursuit of the following conservation objectives:

- the conservation of environments characteristic of the Lake Témiscamingue Lowlands natural region;
- the protection of biodiversity in a forest and lacustrine ecosystems;
- the preservation of sites of archaeological interest (known and potential);
- the acquisition of new knowledge concerning natural and cultural heritage.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the proposed Opasatica lake biodiversity 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 biodiversity reserves by the Act; it does specify the conditions and restrictions applicable to certain activities permitted on the land within the reserve.

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 biodiversity 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 stripping, 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. Conditions and other restrictions applicable to certain permitted activities

All activities, including earthwork and construction work, to ensure the proper functioning of the electric power distribution system, which includes the laying out of the right-of-way, the maintenance and repair of the lines, and the equipment or other facilities needed, are permitted within the proposed biodiversity reserve if they have been authorized by the Minister of the Environment and if they are carried on in accordance with the conditions fixed by the Minister.

The conditions of authorization fixed by the Minister may pertain to:

— the authorized width for the right-of-way and the nature of pruning work and other authorized activities; and

— the types of materials that may be used for the maintenance or layout of the right-of-way which may be taken from the area.

3.3. Activities governed by other statutes

All activities likely to be carried on within the boundaries of the proposed Opasatica lake biodiversity reserve also 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 biodiversity reserve.

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

— Archaeological research (especially the measures contained in the Cultural Property Act (R.S.Q., c. B-4));

— 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) and, where applicable, the measures contained in any applicable federal legislation);

— Access (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and provided under the regulation concerning motor vehicle traffic in certain fragile environments made under the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2));

— Land rights (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and in leases issued by the Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks).

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

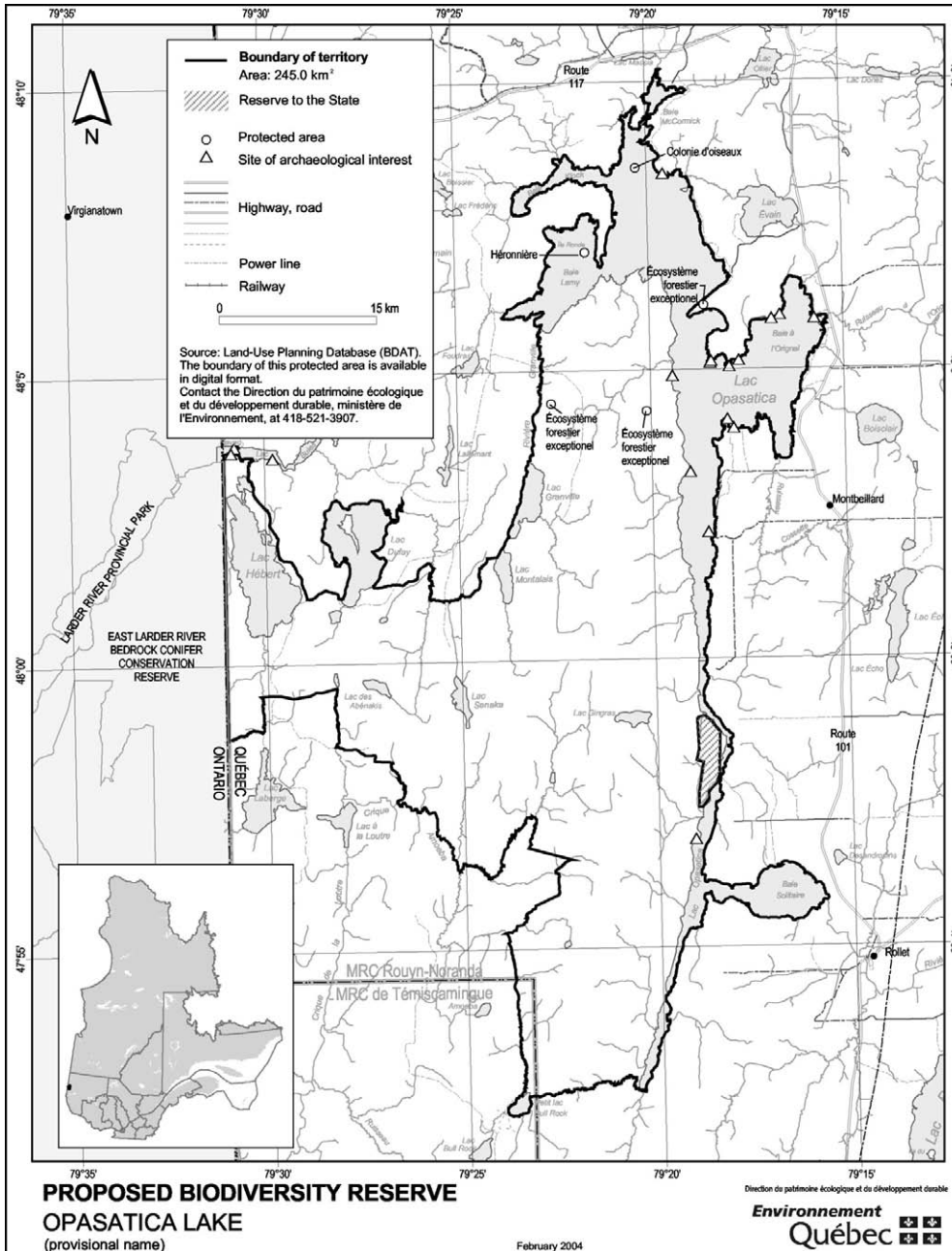
All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities as set out in the legislative and regulatory texts that apply within a proposed biodiversity reserve, as provided for under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

4. Permanent protection status

The permanent protection status envisaged for the reserve is “biodiversity reserve” status under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

Schedule

Map of the proposed Opasatica lake biodiversity reserve (provisional name)



PROPOSED DES QUINZE LAKE BIODIVERSITY
RESERVE
(provisional name)

CONSERVATION PLAN

March 2004

1. Plan and description

1.1. Geographic location, boundaries and dimensions

The location and boundaries of the proposed Des Quinze lake biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The proposed Des Quinze lake biodiversity reserve is located in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue administrative region, between 47°30' and 47°43' north latitude and 78°59' and 79°12' west longitude. It straddles the territories of Municipalité de Rémigny in the north and Municipalité d'Angliers in the south, in Municipalité régionale de comté de Témiscamingue.

The proposed biodiversity reserve covers an area of 158.6 km². It is situated approximately 35 kilometres north/north-east of Ville-Marie, on the eastern shore of Des Quinze lake, which is a reservoir used for hydro-electricity generation. Along the edge of the reservoir, the boundary of the protected area corresponds to the 263.94-metre mark.

The proposed biodiversity reserve is divided by power transmission line 1339 (Rapides-des-Quinze/Rapide-7 substations) over a distance of about 12.5 kilometres. The right-of-way of the power line, which is 36.6 metres wide, is withdrawn from the proposed protected area.

The proposed biodiversity reserve is served by a network of forest roads accessible from Route 101.

1.2. Ecological overview

The proposed Des Quinze lake biodiversity reserve is in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. It protects ecosystems representative of the Lake Témiscamingue Lowlands natural region. The topography of the territory is characterized by a complex of isolated hills. The elevation of the proposed protected area ranges from 218 to 373 metres.

1.2.1. Representative elements

Climate: The territory is characterized by a mild subpolar, subhumid continental climate, with a long growing season. The proposed biodiversity reserve belongs to the balsam fir-yellow birch bioclimatic field.

Geology and geomorphology : The proposed biodiversity reserve is part of the Superior geologic province, whose basement is Archean (over 2.5 billion years). The substratum is formed by gneiss and felsic igneous rock, namely granitic rock. During the Quaternary period, the bedrock was covered by glacio-lacustrine clay and silt deposits.

Hydrography : The proposed biodiversity reserve forms part of the Rivière des Outaouais watershed. Des Quinze and Simard lakes, whose waters are retained by the D'Angliers dam, form the Des Quinze reservoir.

Vegetation : Almost nine tenths (87%) of the proposed biodiversity reserve is forested. Most stands (56%) are mixed. The dominant species is balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*), most often associated with yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*). The forest cover is also made up of softwood and hardwoods, with each of these types of forest covering a little more than one fifth of the territory. The forest within the territory has not recently been harvested. Certain topographic depressions are occupied by peat bogs and alder groves which cover 4% and 3% of the proposed protected area, respectively.

1.2.2. Outstanding elements

The proposed biodiversity reserve is home to a few mature stands of tolerant hardwoods, in particular sugar maple-yellow birch stands. Such stands are rare in the natural province of the Abitibi and James Bay Lowlands. In the proposed protected area, they occupy a little more than 5% of the territory and are mostly found to the south of Des Guêpes and De la Hache lakes.

Although no archaeological sites have been inventoried there, the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications is of the opinion that the land of the proposed biodiversity reserve has significant archaeological potential. The river system within the proposed protected area may hide vestiges of Amerindian occupation, as suggested by the recent discovery of artefacts west of Des Quinze lake that date back more than 1000 years.

1.3. Occupation and main land uses

The occupations and main land uses in the proposed Des Quinze lake biodiversity reserve are shown on the map in the Schedule.

The Lac-des-Quinze dam, situated near the proposed protected area, is under the responsibility of Public Works and Government Services Canada. A 25 MW generating station is planned for the area. The reservoir feeds the Rapides-des-Quinze, Rapides-des-Îles and Première-Chûte generating stations, owned by Hydro-Québec.

Eight kilometres of forest road run through the proposed biodiversity reserve.

There are two private properties within the proposed biodiversity reserve. Fifty-eight land rights have also been granted within the perimeter of the proposed biodiversity reserve as follows:

- 50 leases for the construction of a rough shelter in the forest;
- 5 leases for personal vacation purposes (cottage);
- 2 Native camps; and
- 1 commercial lease for the establishment of an outfitting operation.

The proposed biodiversity reserve straddles eight traplines forming part of fur-bearing animal management unit (FAMU) 04.

2. Protection status

The proposed biodiversity reserve protects a mosaic of ecosystems of exceptional interest from an ecological perspective and for their beauty.

Biodiversity reserve status would allow the pursuit of the following conservation objectives:

- the preservation of a mosaic of ecosystems representative of the Lake Témiscamingue Lowlands natural region;
- the preservation of biodiversity in ecosystems;
- the acquisition of new knowledge concerning natural and cultural heritage.

3. Activities within the reserve

The activities carried on within the boundaries of the proposed Des Quinze lake biodiversity 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 a proposed biodiversity reserve 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 biodiversity 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 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 Des Quinze lake biodiversity reserve also 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 biodiversity reserve.

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

- Archaeological research (especially the measures contained in the Cultural Property Act (R.S.Q., c. B-4));
- 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) and, where applicable, the measures contained in any applicable federal legislation);

— Access (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and provided under the regulation concerning motor vehicle traffic in certain fragile environments made under the Environment Protection Act (R.S.Q., c. Q-2));

— Land rights (especially the measures contained in the Act respecting the lands in the domain of the State (R.S.Q., c. T-8.1) and in leases issued by the Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks).

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

All other government departments and bodies will retain their responsibilities as set out in the legislative and regulatory texts that apply within a proposed biodiversity reserve, as provided for under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

4. Permanent protection status

The permanent protection status envisaged for the reserve is “biodiversity reserve” status under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

Schedule

Map of the proposed Des Quinze lake biodiversity reserve (provisional name)

