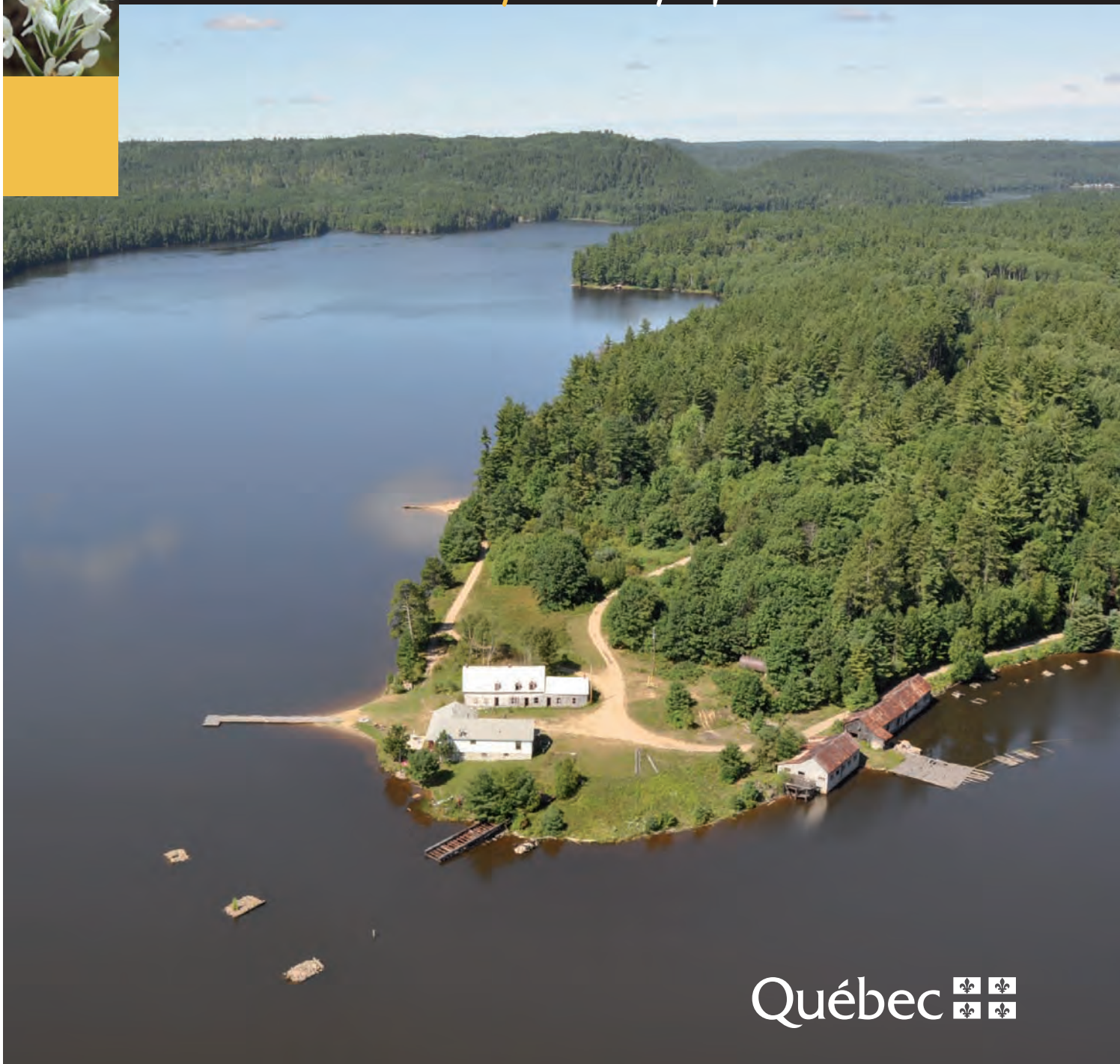


Provisional Master Plan

An historic stop under the tall pines



Parc national d'Opémican project



Québec 

Provisional Master Plan

An historic stop under the tall pines



Parc national d'Opémican project

This document was produced by:

Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs
Direction du patrimoine écologique et des parcs
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Foreword

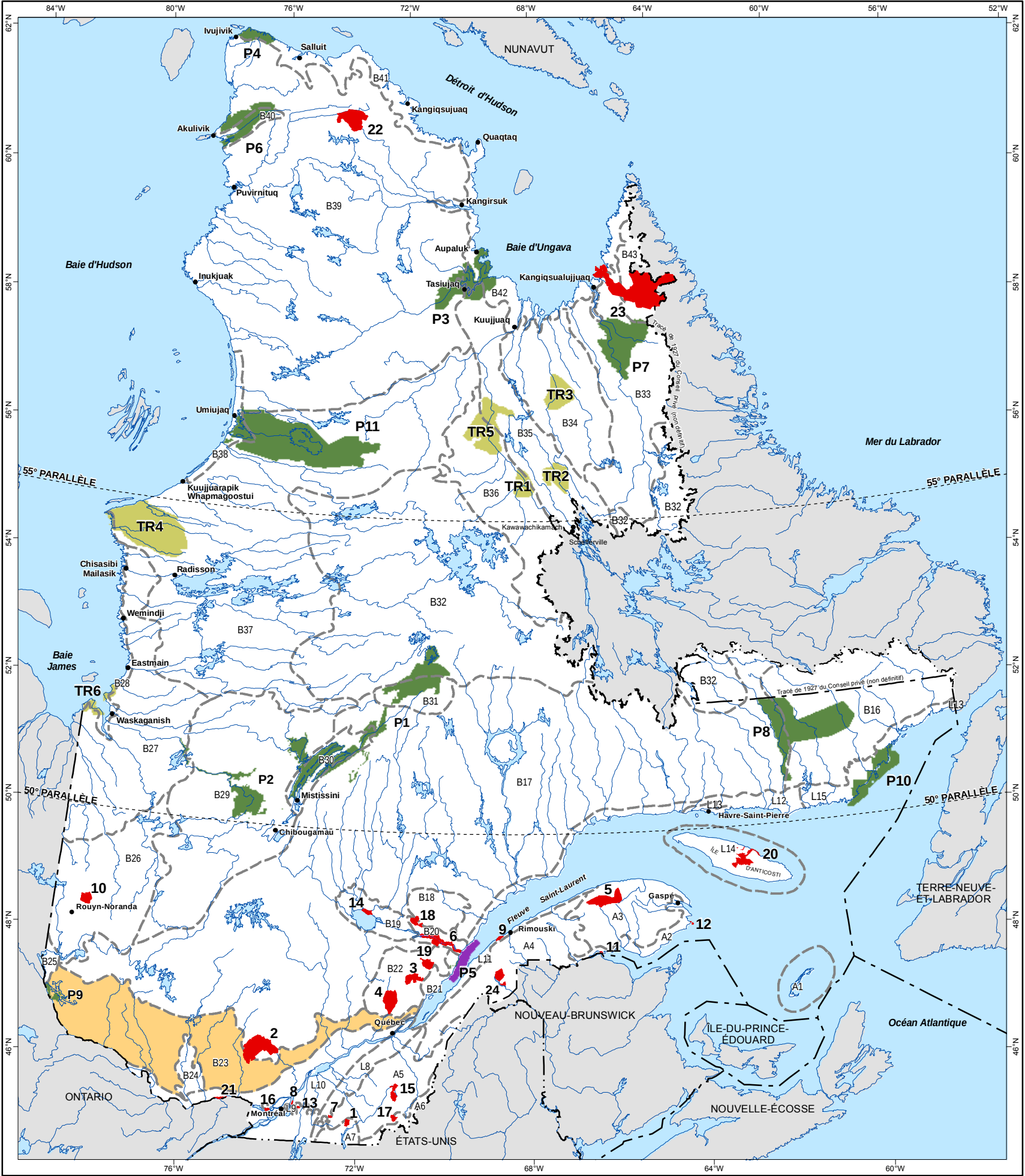
The mission of Québec's national parks is to ensure for future generations the conservation and permanent protection of areas representative of the natural regions of Québec and of natural sites with outstanding features, in particular because of their biological diversity, while providing the public with access to those areas or sites for educational or cross-country recreation purposes¹.

Although the primary mission of Québec's national parks is the conservation of our natural heritage, they are also key growth projects for the local economy. In 2009-2010, 4.1 million people visited Québec national parks, generating \$600 million in economic benefits.

Québec national parks meet the criteria set out by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Thus, they are designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area, and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible. These areas are therefore excluded from forestry, mining and power generation and the routing of pipelines and new power transmission lines is prohibited. Furthermore, in the national parks located outside of the territory governed by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, hunting and trapping is also prohibited.

Since the enactment of the Parks Act in 1977, the Gouvernement du Québec has created 24 national parks (Map 1). In partnership with the federal government and under a special act, Québec also created Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park. National parks contribute to the goal of increasing Québec's network of protected areas to 12% of its total area by 2015.

¹ Preferred form of recreation in Québec's national parks network, characterized by low-density use – in both time and space – that requires only relatively simple equipment and minor development that are associated with low environmental impact.



Parc national d'Opémican project

Map 1
QUÉBEC'S NATIONAL PARKS
AND NATURAL REGIONS

NATIONAL PARK (order by creation date)

- 1 MONT-ORFORD, DU
- 2 MONT-TREMBLANT, DU
- 3 GRANDS-JARDINS, DES
- 4 JACQUES-CARTIER, DE LA
- 5 GASPÉSIE, DE LA
- 6 SAGUENAY, DU
- 7 YAMASKA, DE LA
- 8 ÎLES-DE-BOUCHERVILLE, DES
- 9 BIC, DU
- 10 AIGUEBELLE, D'
- 11 MIGUASHA, DE
- 12 ÎLE-BONAVENTURE-ET-DU-ROCHER-PERCÉ, DE L'
- 13 MONT-SAINT-BRUNO, DU
- 14 POINTE-TAILLON, DE LA
- 15 FRONTENAC, DE
- 16 OKA, D'
- 17 MONT-MÉGANTIC, DU
- 18 MONT-S-VALIN, DES
- 19 HAUTES-GORGES-DE-LA-RIVIÈRE-MALBAIE, DES
- 20 ANTICOSTI, D'
- 21 PLAISANCE, DE
- 22 PINGUALUIT, DES
- 23 KUURURJUAQ
- 24 LAC-TÉMISCOUATA, DU

MARINE PARK

SAGUENAY - SAINT-LAURENT, DU

NATIONAL PARK PROJECT

- P1 ALBANEL-TÉMISCAMIE-OTISH
- P2 ASSINICA
- P3 BAIE-AUX-FEUILLES, DE LA
- P4 CAP-WOLSTENHOLME, DU
- P5 CÔTE-DE-CHARLEVOIX, DE LA
- P6 MONTS-DE-PUVRINITUQ, DES
- P7 MONTS-PYRAMIDES, DES
- P8 NATASHQUAN-AGUANUS-KENAMU, DE
- P9 OPÉMICAN, D'
- P10 RÉGION DE HARRINGTON HARBOUR, DE LA
- P11 TURSUJUQ

TERRITORY RESERVED FOR
THE CREATION OF A PARK

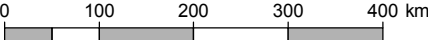
- TR1 CANYON-EATON, DU
- TR2 COLLINES-ONDULÉES, DES
- TR3 CONFLUENCE-DES-RIVIÈRES-À-LA-BALEINE-ET-WHEELER, DE LA
- TR4 LAC-BURTON-RIVIÈRE-ROGGAN-ET-LA-POINTE-LOUIS-XIV, DU
- TR5 LAC-CAMBRIEN, DU
- TR6 PÉNINSULE-MINISTIKAWATIN, DE LA

NATURAL REGION

- A1 MAGDALEN ISLANDS
- A2 CHALEUR BAY SLOPE
- A3 GASPÉ MASSIF
- A4 NOTRE-DAME MOUNTAINS
- A5 ESTRIE, BEAUCE AND BELLECHASSE SECONDARY RANGES
- A6 BOUNDARY MOUNTAINS
- A7 SUTTON MOUNTAINS
- L8 APPALACHIAN LOWLANDS
- L9 MONTEREGIAN HILLS
- L10 ST-LAWRENCE LOWLANDS
- L11 SOUTH SHORE OF ESTUARY
- L12 UPPER NORTH SHORE AND MID-NORTH SHORE LOWLANDS
- L13 NORTH SHORE CUESTAS
- L14 ANTICOSTI ISLAND
- L15 LOWER NORTH SHORE ROCKY COASTLINE
- B16 PETIT MÉCATINA PLATEAU
- B17 NORTHERN LAURENTIANS
- B18 MONT VALIN MASSIF
- B19 LAC-SAINT-JEAN - SAGUENAY LOWLANDS
- B20 SAGUENAY FJORD
- B21 CHARLEVOIX COAST
- B22 LAURENTIAN MASSIF. NORTH OF QUÉBEC CITY
- B23 SOUTHERN LAURENTIANS
- B24 GATINEAU VALLEY
- B25 TÉMISCAMINGUE LOWLANDS
- B26 ABITIBI CLAY BELT
- B27 JAMES BAY LOWLANDS
- B28 JAMES BAY ISLANDS AND MARSHES
- B29 RUPERT PLATEAU
- B30 MISTASSINI LAKE
- B31 OTISH MOUNTAINS
- B32 CENTRAL LAKE PLATEAU
- B33 GEORGE RIVER PLATEAU
- B34 RIVIÈRE À LA BALEINE PLAIN
- B35 LABRADOR TROUGH
- B36 CANIAPISCAU PLATEAU
- B37 HUDSON PLATEAU
- B38 HUDSON CUESTAS
- B39 UNGAVA PLATEAU
- B40 PUVRINITUQ MOUNTAINS
- B41 HUDSON STRAIT. FJORD COAST
- B42 UNGAVA BAY COASTLINE
- B43 TORNGAT MOUNTAIN FOOTHILLS

Metadata

Geodetic reference system NAD 83 compatible with the World WGS 84 system
Map projection Lambert conical conserved along two standard parallels (46° and 60°)



1/8 000 000

Sources

Data	Organization
Base générale et administrative du Québec (BGAQ)	Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune
The natural regions	Ministère du Loisir, de la Chasse et de la Pêche, 1986

Realization

Direction du patrimoine écologique et des parcs
Service des parcs
Division de la géomatique et de l'infographie

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1 Introduction



1

Photo: Maryse Cloutier

The objectives of Creating Parc national d'Opémican

The Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs (MDDEP) proposes to create Parc national d'Opémican to protect a representative sample of the Southern Laurentians natural region (Map 1). Located in the southern portion of the Canadian Shield, it covers an area of 47,914 km² from near Lac Kipawa in the west to the Québec City area in the east. While it includes a considerable variety of landscapes, three major relatively homogeneous sub-regions stand out: the foothills in the south and east, the Mont-Tremblant massif in the centre, and the Laurentian Plateau in the west. The territory selected for the Parc national d'Opémican project, at the western limit of the natural region, is thus associated with the Laurentian Plateau. The creation of Parc national d'Opémican

would also contribute to protecting the biodiversity of the Southern Laurentians natural province of the Québec ecological reference framework.

The area of the proposed park includes many natural and cultural attractions that give a unique character to the Parc national d'Opémican project. Located where the hardwood and boreal forests meet, it is dominated by tall white and red pines. Nestled between lakes Témiscamingue and Kipawa, it offers varied landscapes and good potential for developing recreational tourism. The area is rich in history from the passage of Aboriginal populations, voyageurs, lumberjacks and the first colonists. Opémican historic site, in the heart of the park, is clearly an attraction that will help differentiate the park from others in the Québec national parks network.

Creating Parc national d'Opémican will ensure the preservation and enhancement of the historic buildings at Pointe Opémican². By facilitating visitor access to part of the area, the national park will have a major leveraging effect on regional tourism, contributing to the range of outdoor activities and generating spinoffs for businesses offering related products and services.

Project History

2

The Parc national d'Opémican project started in 2002 when various regional organizations asked the minister responsible for parks to give national park status to Opémican regional park. Since the existing park did not meet the goal of a national park to protect a representative sample of natural region of Québec, the MDDEP Service des parcs undertook the steps necessary to delimit a larger study area. In 2005, it proposed a territory of 304 km² that included the primary representative elements of the Southern Laurentians natural region.

In 2007, pursuant to the *Stratégie québécoise sur les aires protégées* (Québec strategy on protected areas) and in order to protect the majority of the study area (238 km²) until the park was created, it was given the temporary status of proposed biodiversity reserve³ for the purposes of creating a national park. The proposed biodiversity reserve does not cover the entire study area since it excludes areas subject to active mineral titles. Then in 2008, the Service des parcs began inventory work that continued until 2011.

These studies led to the publication of the document *Parc national d'Opémican Project Status Report*, which paints a portrait of the study area's biophysical and human environments and places it in the regional framework of the Témiscamingue area.

² The official toponym of the point is Opimica, which means "the long road the Indians follow." However, locally the name Opémican is commonly used to designate both the area and the historic site. For that reason, the name Opémican is used in this document.

³ Industrial activities such as mining, forestry and hydroelectric development are prohibited in proposed biodiversity reserves.

Since 2009, a working group serves to maintain the lines of communication with people in the region. It is made up of representatives from the regional county municipality (RCM) of Témiscamingue, aboriginal communities, the mayors of the municipalities affected by the park, various regional interest groups (tourism, economy, environment) and MDDEP. In 2009, in response to working group suggestions, the Service des parcs increased the area of the study area to 341 km².

The Provisional Master Plan

This Provisional Master Plan is based on detailed knowledge of the territory and consists of several sections. It begins by presenting a synthesis of the knowledge collected about the study area for this park project. This helps to recognize and determine landscape units, fragile and significant conservation areas and sectors with strong development potential within the study area.

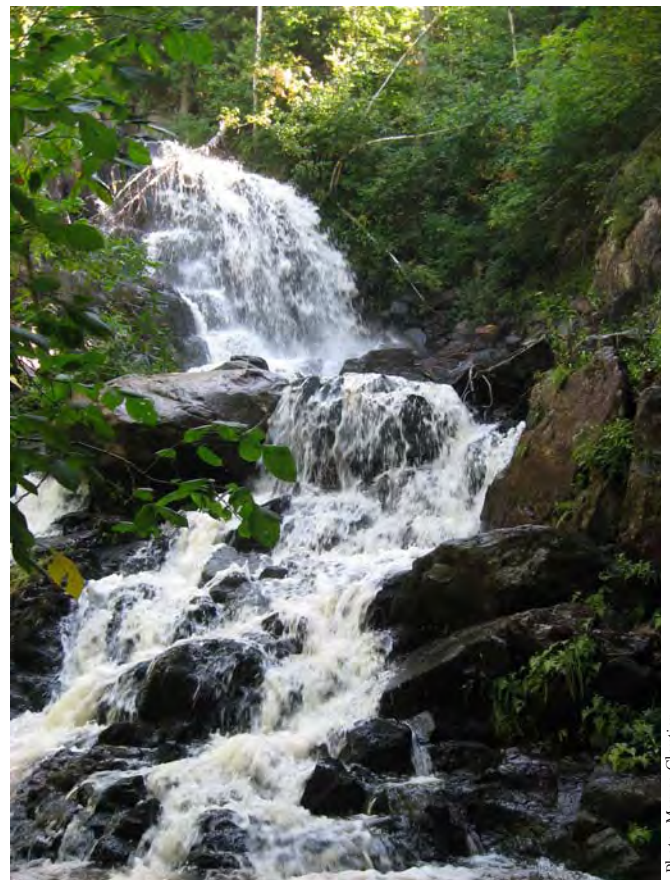


Photo: Maryse Cloutier

The Provisional Master Plan goes on to present the optimal boundaries, a zoning plan and a development concept for the future national park. It also details guidelines for preserving its natural areas and cultural and historical heritage, along with the policies for the park's educational, activity and service offerings.

The Provisional Master Plan is distributed and presented to the public at information sessions approximately two months before public hearings are held. The hearings, held in accordance with the Parks Act (R.S.Q., c. P-9), provide an opportunity for the public to voice opinions and comments on this government plan. These will be considered and will help modify and improve the government's proposed for park boundaries, zoning plan, development concept and management guidelines. The national park project will then be amended based on this feedback and, if accepted by the public, submitted to cabinet, which has the final decision on whether to create the park.

2² Study Area⁴



Photo: Maryse Cloutier

2.1 LOCATION

The territory proposed for Parc national d'Opémican is located in RCM of Témiscamingue, part of the Abitibi-Témiscamingue administrative region. With an area of 341.1 km², the study area for this park project lies between latitudes 46°48' and 47°07' north and longitudes 78°50' and 79°25' west. It consists primarily of public land and is approximately 35 km south of Ville-Marie and 15 km north of the town of Témiscaming. The proposed park is contained within the municipalities of

Témiscaming, Saint-Édouard-de-Fabre and the unorganized territories (TNO) of Laniel and Les Lacs-du-Témiscamingue (Map 2).

To the west, between Rivière Kipawa and Pointe Opémican, the boundary of the study area is the Québec–Ontario border, which bisects Lac Témiscamingue. To the north, it includes the entirety of Rivière Kipawa before striking south a little before the Laniel dam to successively follow a multi-use trail (former railway), Route 101 and an electrical transmission line. To the south-east, it follows the limits of the Ruisseau White⁵

⁴ The information in this section is drawn from the *Parc national d'Opémican Project Status Report*, which provides a detailed description of the study area in the context of the park project and is available on the Ministère's website: <http://www.mddep.gouv.qc.ca/parcs/opemican/index.htm>.

⁵ Following a toponym review in 2010, some place names used herein may not correspond to those used in the *Parc national d'Opémican project Status Report*. In this document, the first occurrence of a new toponym will be followed by the old toponym in parentheses.

(Ruisseau Marsac) drainage basin and encompasses part of the Lac Kipawa shoreline, from near Baie MacLaren to Pointe des Neuf Milles. The Îles du Sandy Portage, Île aux Fraises, Îles aux Hérons, Île McKenzie and the Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau peninsula⁶ are also part of the study area. All areas adjoining Lac Kipawa include a 150-m band of water.

2.2 KNOWLEDGE SYNTHESIS

6

2.2.1 CLIMATE

The study area is found at the same latitude as the city of Québec and has a subpolar, subhumid continental climate. The many bodies of water in the area act as climate moderators and contribute to the formation of micro-climates, particularly around Lac Témiscamingue.

The mean annual temperature is 3.3°C. Mean monthly temperatures reach their maximum in July (18.5°C) and their minimum in January (-14.1°C). Mean annual precipitation is 906.5 mm, while mean monthly values reach their maximum in September (95.4 mm) and their minimum in February (46.1 mm). One quarter of total annual precipitation falls as snow (230.3 cm).

2.2.2 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The study area is located in the western portion of the Grenville geological province. This geological province, which is over one billion years old, corresponds to the root of an ancient mountain range that has eroded over time. Grenville province rock is generally highly metamorphosed⁷, having been subjected to intense pressure and heat. The rocks in the study area, which are dominated by gneiss and paragneiss, are highly fractured.

The last glaciation caused heavy erosion and significantly reshaped its landscape. Various surface deposits are present, primarily glacial in origin. When the ice sheet receded, the area was flooded by glacial Lake Barlow, which washed the deposits and acted as a massive

sedimentation basin. Crossing the study area at Pointe Opémican, the Harricana moraine⁸, one of North America's largest glaciofluvial complexes, is particularly important to our understanding of the deglaciation sequence in the region. Between Lac Témiscamingue and Lac Kipawa, the Harricana moraine takes the form of eskers⁹.

Located in the watershed of Rivière des Outaouais (Ottawa River), the largest tributary of Fleuve Saint-Laurent (St. Lawrence River), the study area includes 21 secondary drainage basins. The trellis form of the drainage network was directly influenced by the area's geological structure.

Although the study area is part of the sugar maple-yellow birch bioclimatic domain, sugar maples are relatively scarce and the yellow birch has been replaced by shade-intolerant species (birch, aspen). The forest cover is primarily mixed, with the ubiquitous presence of white and red pine.

The study area is located in the boreal forest–hardwood forest transition zone, which influences the variability of its habitats and consequently its biodiversity. The diversity of plant and animal species likely to be sighted in the study area includes:

- ❖ 465 vascular plant species, including 10 likely to be designated as endangered or vulnerable (Map 3);
- ❖ 42 fish species, including 1 likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable (lake sturgeon);
- ❖ 22 amphibian and reptile species;
- ❖ 183 bird species, including 1 designated as vulnerable (peregrine falcon);
- ❖ 50 mammal species, including 2 likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable (hoary bat and silver-haired bat).

⁶ Non-official toponym. This document uses "Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau peninsula" to describe the easternmost part of the study area from Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau to Passe Hunter, on Lac Kipawa.

⁷ Transformation of solid rock by high temperature or pressure.

⁸ Material deposited at the confluence of two ice lobes when the glacier retreats. This complex extends from Lac Témiscamingue to near the city of Val-d'Or.

⁹ Elongated deposits formed in the beds of subglacial streams.



Photo: Maryse Cloutier



Photo: Jasmin Ouellet

2.2.3 CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL HERITAGE

The study area is rich in history. It includes 9 known archaeological sites (Map 3), all located near Lac Témiscamingue, and 1 historic site at Pointe Opémican. The site and its buildings bear important witness to the beginnings of logging and log driving in the region. The permanent settlement of the Opémican site, long frequented by First Nations peoples travelling on Rivière des Outaouais, began with the arrival of the lumbermen. With the coming of the forestry industry, the Opémican site was used as a forest depot, log drive camp and shipyard. Today, buildings remain on the site that attest to its former occupations. Since Lac Témiscamingue (as part of Rivière des Outaouais) was long the only access route to the region, the area has considerable potential for archaeological discoveries.

2.3 LANDSCAPE UNITS

Landscape units are based on stable natural features visible to the human eye. These include major landscape features (hills and depressions), surface deposits and hydrography (watercourses and water bodies). By combining these features, three landscape units can be defined that range from 25 km² to 240 km² in area (Map 3). Each is described as a function of representative characteristics of its natural region, aspects of its natural and cultural heritage and rare or fragile features that merit special attention. On the whole, the study area has high poten-

tial for creating a national park that is representative of the Southern Laurentians and meets its conservation and development goals.

2.3.1 HILLY PLATEAU

The Hilly Plateau landscape unit is 240 km², covering almost the entirety of the study area, and includes the most important representative elements of the Southern Laurentians Natural Region.

Like the natural region itself, this landscape unit has relatively uniform relief, dominated by flat-topped hills of comparable elevation and crossed by shallow valleys – the roots of an ancient mountain chain that owes its appearance today to heavy glacial erosion. Elevations are generally modest, averaging 280 m. They range from 200 to 370 m and gradually increase from southwest to northeast.



Photo: Alain Thibault

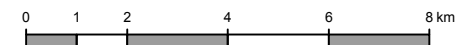
Map 2
**STUDY AREA AND
ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES**

- Limit of the study area
- Limit of the municipalities and unorganized territories (TNO)
- National road
- Multi-use trail (former railway)
- Power transmission line

* Unofficial toponym

Metadata

Geodetic reference system NAD 83 compatible with the world WGS 84 system
Map projection Modified transverse Mercator (MTM), zone 10



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Sources

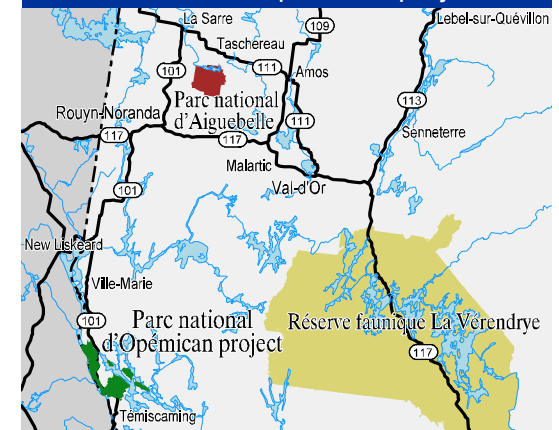
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Système sur les découpages administratifs (SDA) à l'échelle de 1/20 000

Organization
Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune
Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune

Realization

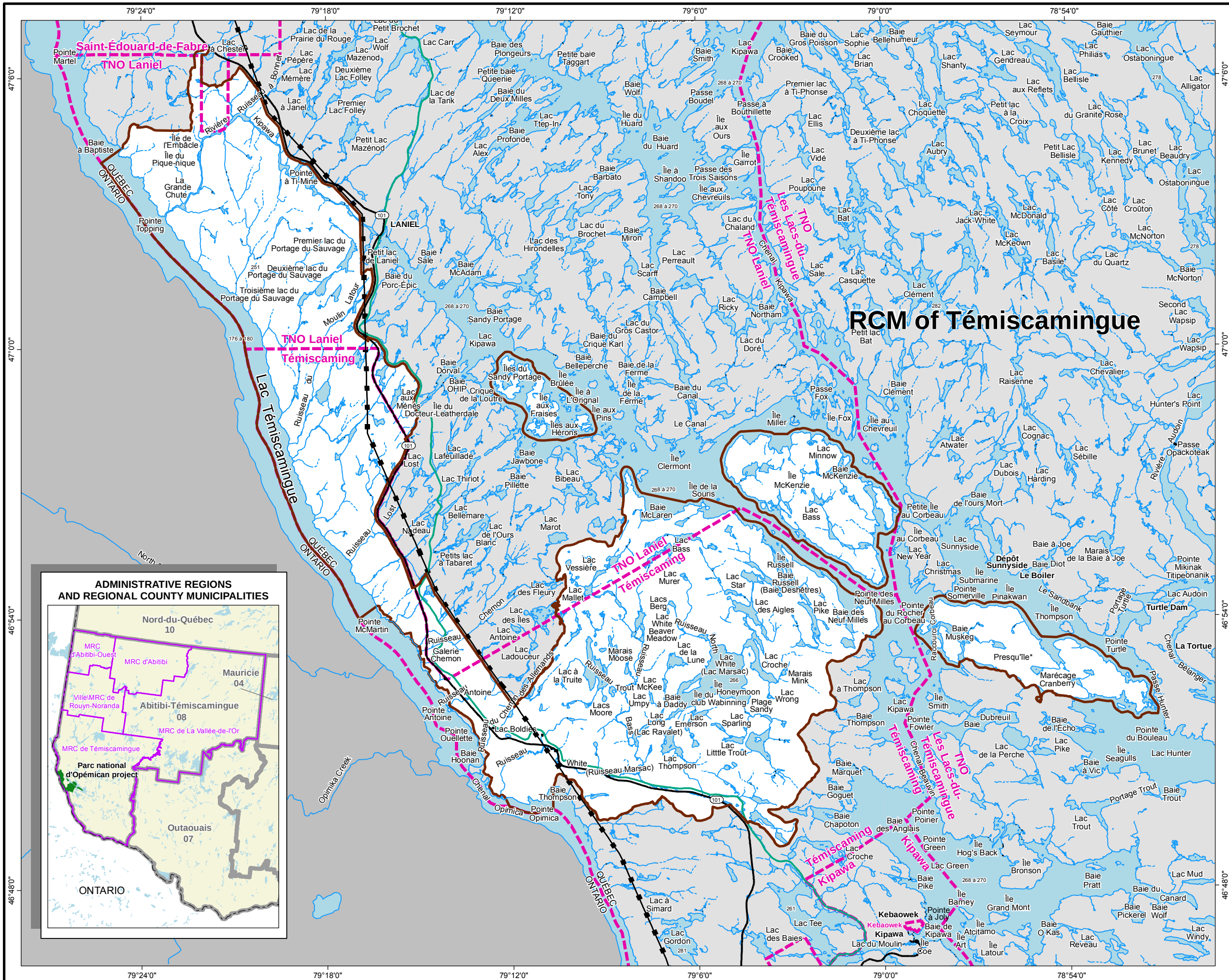
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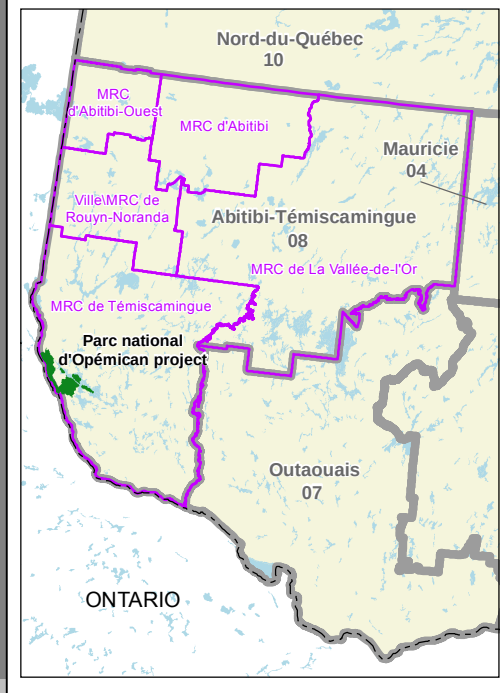


Développement durable,
Environnement
et Parcs

Québec



**ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS
AND REGIONAL COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES**



LANDSCAPE UNITS AND ELEMENTS OF INTEREST

GEOLOGY, GEOMORPHOLOGY AND RELIEF

- Cliff
- Undetermined fault
- Reverse fault
- Block field
- Crag-and-tail
- Moraine ridge
- Escher
- Kettle
- Highest summits in the study area

HYDROGRAPHY

- Drainage basin of the Ruisseau White
- Waterfall

VEGETATION

- Forest aged over 80 years old
- Exceptional forest ecosystem (sanctuary)
- Sugar maple dominated stand
- Black ash dominated stand
- Wetland
- Plant species of interest
- Species likely to be designated as threatened or vulnerable in Québec
- Calcicolous species
- Area of interest for vascular flora

WILDLIFE

- Peregrine falcon nesting site
- Silver-haired bat
- Hoary bat
- Walleye spawning area
- Lake trout spawning area (restored)
- Turtle nesting site
- Heronry

ARCHAEOLOGY

- Opémican historic site
- Archaeological site

* Unofficial toponym

Metadata

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- Map projection: Modified transverse Mercator (MTM), zone 10
- Contour interval: 20 metres

0 1 2 4 6 km

1/95 000

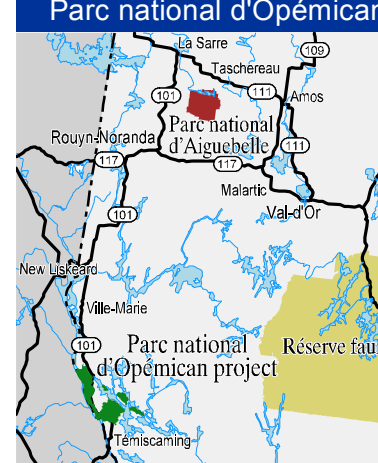
Sources

- Data**
Base de données topographiques du Québec (BDTQ) à l'échelle de 1/20 000
- Organization**
Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune

Realization

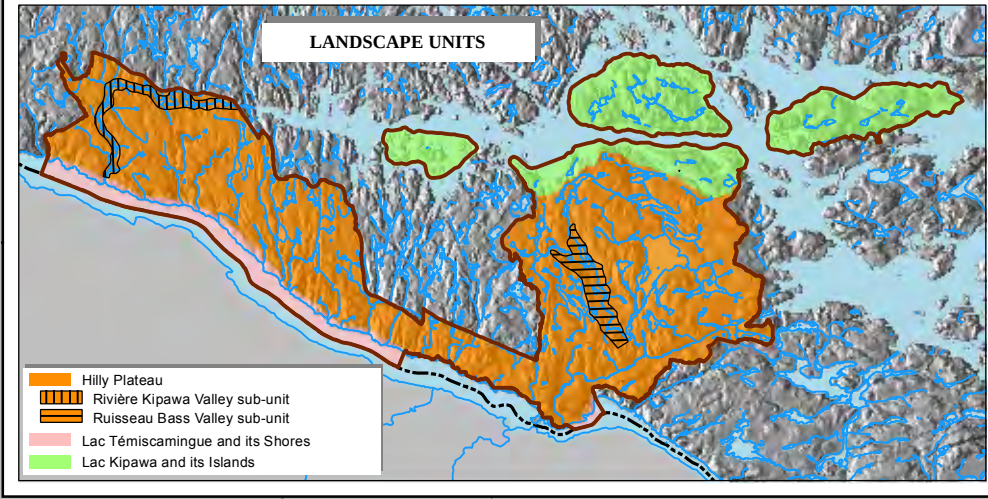
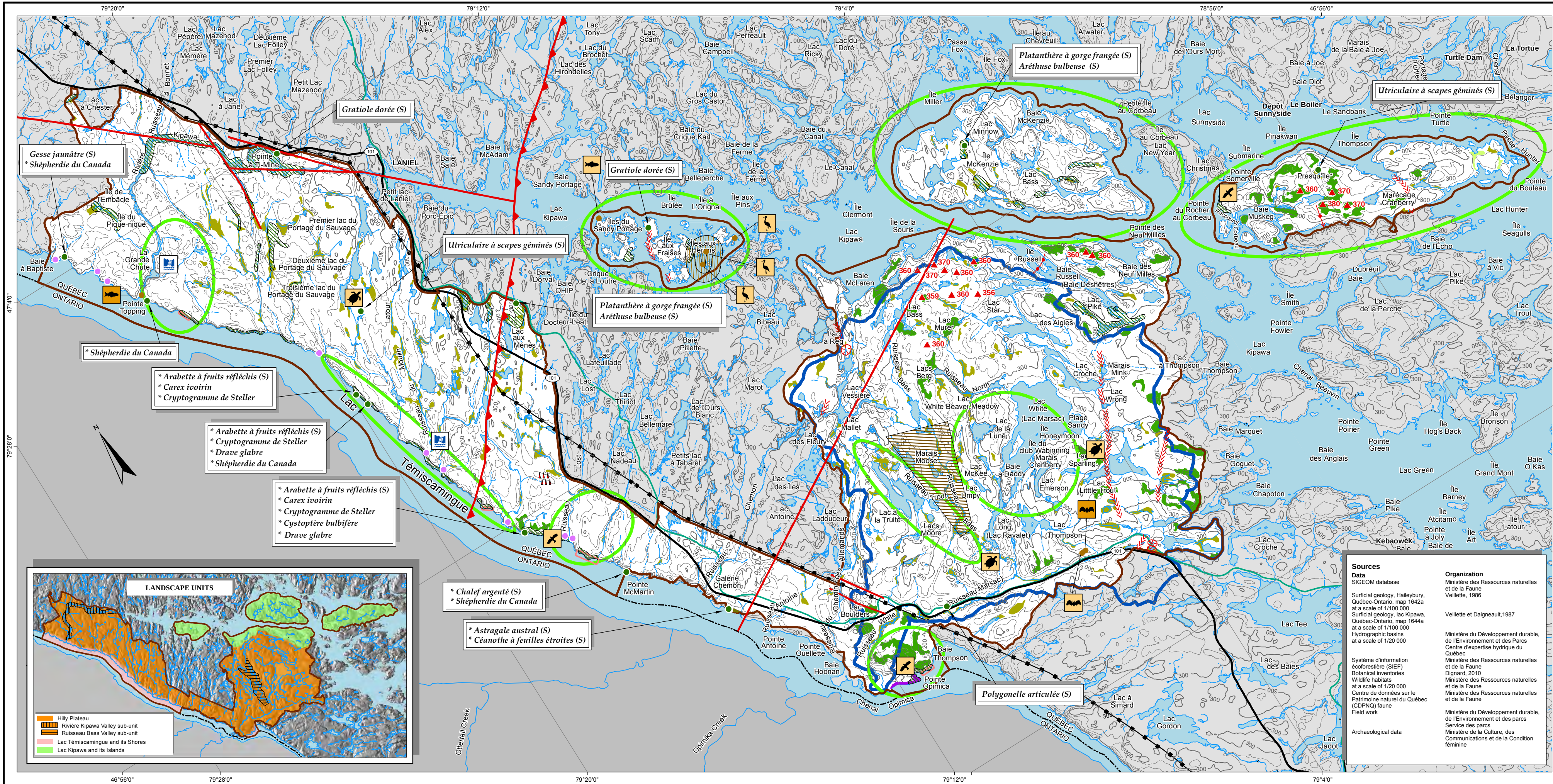
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- Service des parcs
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Développement durable,
Environnement
et Parcs

Québec



Sources	Organization
Data SIGEOM database Surficial geology, Haileybury, Québec-Ontario, map 1642a at a scale of 1/100 000 Surficial geology, lac Kipawa, Québec-Ontario, map 1644a at a scale of 1/100 000 Hydrographic basins at a scale of 1/20 000	Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune Veillette, 1986
Systeme d'information écosystémique (SIEF) Botanical inventories Wildlife habitats at a scale of 1/20 000 Centre de données sur le Patrimoine naturel du Québec (CDPNQ) faune Field work	Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs Centre d'expertise hydrique du Québec Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des parcs Service des parcs Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine
Archaeological data	

The drainage network is influenced by the rock structure and the relief. Watercourses are found along northwest–southeast and northeast–southwest fractures, forming a trellis-like pattern. Water bodies also follow this logic, as evidenced by the triangular shape of Lac White (Lac Marsac), which follows the form of surrounding geological formations. The Ruisseau White drainage basin, a sub-basin of Rivière des Outaouais, is found in this landscape unit. Covering 113.6 km², 98 % of this major watershed is within the study area.

Four species of plant likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable were found in this landscape unit, including the white fringed orchid and swamp-pink – two types of orchid observed in the ombrotrophic bogs¹⁰ in the Lac aux Ménés sector, a habitat that is uncommon in the study area.

Finally, southeast of Lac White, a few sand beaches – including one about 150-m long and 10-m wide – offer conditions suitable for swimming and other water-borne activities. Two Hilly Plateau sub-units have also been identified, the Rivière Kipawa Valley and the Ruisseau Bass Valley.

Rivière Kipawa Valley

This 7-km² sub-unit consists of the bed and banks of Rivière Kipawa. Running nearly 16 km between lakes Kipawa and Témiscamingue, the river is characterized by many rapids and a total drop of 90 m. The riverbed follows a network of faults and its course is marked by multiple right angles, a good reflection of how the natural region's rivers adapted to its geologic structures. Grande Chute, with its 19-m drop, is a clear attraction in this sub-unit.

Rivière Kipawa has a varied landscape. In places, the river narrows and its rocky banks are populated by white cedar, white pine and red pine. Elsewhere, it widens, its waters become calm and its sandy banks are colonized by aspen. In these locations, aquatic grass beds dominated by river bulrush and common spike-rush can be found. Golden hedge-hyssop, a species that is likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable, was observed. Aside from an old rest area in Laniel, a private property near

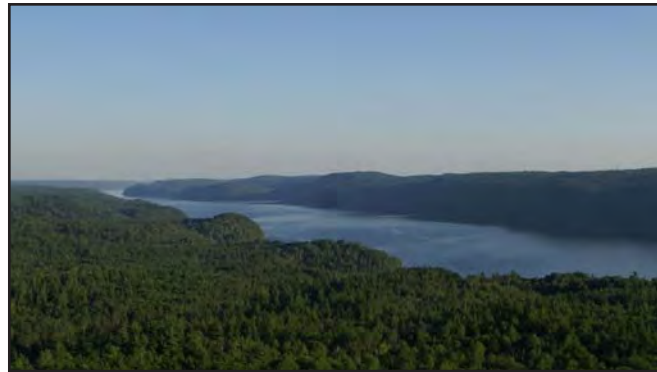


Photo: Isabelle Tessier

Pointe à Ti-Mine and a small hut, the riverbanks have retained their natural appearance.

It should be noted that the river's flow is controlled by the Laniel dam and fluctuates with the seasons. It can even vary from one month to the next, depending on weather conditions.

Ruisseau Bass Valley

This 7-km² sub-unit is a wide, shallow depression characterized by glaciofluvial deposits¹¹ in the form of an outwash plain. These layers of sand and gravel are crossed by Ruisseau Bass, a meandering watercourse that slowly winds through a bog dominated by carex and a few shrubs (sweet gale, speckled alder). Its valley is framed by a black spruce forest.

The area offers many characteristics that make it favourable to the establishment of diverse animal life. Its many inter-connected small watercourses, lakes and wetlands provide good habitat for waterfowl – notably ducks – to raise their young. In addition, two turtle nesting sites were observed in this zone. Indeed, the Ruisseau Bass Valley is likely home to the wood turtle, a designated vulnerable species in Québec.

2.3.2 LAC TÉMISCAMINGUE AND ITS SHORES

Consisting of Lac Témiscamingue and its shores, this 25-km² landscape unit owes its unique landscape to the geological origins of Lac Témiscamingue. Today, the lake occupies a depression that was created when movement along two fault lines resulted in a staircase-shaped

¹⁰ Type of bog that receives all of its water from precipitation.

¹¹ Sediment deposited by glacial meltwater.



Photo: Isabelle Tessier



Photo: Alain Thibault

collapse of the basement rock. As a result, Lac Témiscamingue is a wide valley hemmed in by steep cliffs nearly 70 metres high. In addition to offering visitors at water level an impressive landscape, the cliffs also offer excellent viewpoints of Lac Témiscamingue and surroundings. However, it is by boat that visitors can truly experience and admire the immensity of this major lake.

This unit features rugged terrain due to the steep slopes at the lake's edge. These slopes are also responsible for the formation of waterfalls, such the one on Ruisseau du Moulin Latour, which drops 40 m before emptying into Lac Témiscamingue. In the future park, this site would be developed as a stop on a hiking trail or canoe route.

In this landscape unit, visitors will be able to appreciate a number of geological and geomorphological phenomena. They will first notice the typically Grenvillian rocks, heavily folded like the natural region itself, that form the cliffs overlooking Lac Témiscamingue and reveal the intense pressure and heat they were once subjected to. In places, the shores of Lac Témiscamingue are shaped by lacustrine deposits, left behind on the bed of glacial Lake Barlow as the glacier melted. These deposits are clay varves, recognizable for their alternating layers of clay, silt and sand. They are particularly sensitive to erosion, which is why the areas where they are found will not be developed.

The cliffs of Lac Témiscamingue are a preferred nesting habitat for peregrine falcons. The cliffs are important to the species not only because nesting pairs faithfully return to the same nest site over many years, but also

because young falcons tend to return upon reaching sexual maturity. Consequently, protecting the cliffs from various forms of damage and disturbance is a major conservation objective connected with the park project.

Lac Témiscamingue is a widening of Rivière des Outaouais. In contrast with the clear water of the other lakes in the study area, its water is cloudy and loaded with sediment, a reminder of its headwaters in the Abitibi clay plain. It is home to the largest fish community in the study area – a total of 28 species – a little more than half of the species present in Abitibi-Témiscamingue. Lake sturgeon, a species that is likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable, is found in Lac Témiscamingue. A yellow walleye spawning ground is located at the mouth of Rivière Kipawa.

With regards to vegetation, stands of red and white pine tower majestically on the clifftops around the lake. Four plant species likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable colonize the shores of Lac Témiscamingue, including the Indian milkvetch and the Holboell's rockcress. Finding these species is of particular interest since all known references to their presence in Québec refer to very small and highly discontinuous populations. One of the two is already protected in a white pine-aspen stand that has been designated as an exceptional forest ecosystem. Calcareous species can be found along the lake shore. It is important to note that species such as these with a preference for limestone substrate are very rare in the area and are of particular floristic, geological and geohistorical interest. Similarly, the escarpments and block-scare slopes around the lake are of floristic interest.

Finally, it is important to remember the historical importance of Lac Témiscamingue (Rivière des Outaouais) as a navigable waterway. It has been used traditionally by aboriginal populations, the first explorers and, later, by colonists coming to settle the area. It can therefore be speculated that the shores of this large lake have high potential for archaeological discoveries, although some areas have been altered by erosion. To date, 9 archaeological sites are found along the shorelines in this landscape unit.

Lac Témiscamingue has good potential for short and long kayak and canoe excursions. The lake's shoreline offers a relatively wild landscape, aside from the private residences and chalets grouped between Pointe Opémican and Pointe McMartin.

2.3.3 LAC KIPAWA AND ITS ISLANDS

This landscape unit of 76 km² corresponds to Lac Kipawa and its shores. It also includes the Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau peninsula, Île McKenzie and Île aux Fraises sectors. Lac Kipawa is actually a reservoir, created in 1911 with the construction of Laniel and Kipawa Dams. Its landscape is completely different from that of Lac Témiscamingue. Lac Kipawa is characterized by very jagged shores and a large number of bays and islands, giving it a maze-like quality.

Vegetation in this landscape unit includes forest stands that are underrepresented in the study area, including sugar maple and black ash stands. It also has areas with a high concentration of mature forest, like Île McKenzie, which was never intensively logged. In addition, 4 plant species likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable were identified in this landscape unit: golden hedgehyssop, white fringed orchid, swamp-pink and hidden-fruited bladderwort; 2 of these species are orchids that were observed in an ombrotrophic sphagnum and heath bog on Île McKenzie, a habitat that is uncommon in the study area.

The shores of Lac Kipawa are characterized by the numerous escarpments, found primarily in the Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau peninsula and Île aux Fraises sectors. Not only are the escarpments interesting for their vegetation, they also provide a favourable nesting habitat for peregrine falcons. Indeed, a nesting site was found at Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau. In addition, a legally-protected heronry is found on the Îles aux Hérons. According to the most recent inventory data, this group of islands still had four active nests in 2007.

Known as one of Québec's ten most beautiful lakes, Lac Kipawa enjoys a reputation that extends well beyond the Québec border, particularly among recreational anglers. Given its unique shape and beauty, it has strong potential for canoe or kayak routes combined with wilderness camping on the islands.



Photo: Raymonde Pomerleau



Photo: Isabelle Tessier

3 Proposed Park Boundaries



Photo : Isabelle Tessier

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Multiple criteria were taken into consideration in selecting the proposed boundary for Parc national d'Opémican. The criteria included whether the diversity of landscapes and elements of interest represent the Southern Laurentians natural region, the presence of natural elements of interest, the visual protection of landscapes, the establishment of clear landmarks to simplify park management and protection and its land use. Almost the entire area within the proposed boundary for Parc national d'Opémican is public land that belongs to the Gouvernement du Québec and is currently managed by the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune (MRNF).

3.1 PERIMETER

The proposed territory for Parc national d'Opémican covers an area of 293.2 km² (Map 4). It is divided into six distinct sectors: Rivière Kipawa and Lac Témiscamingue Cliffs, Pointe Opémican, Lac White, Île aux Fraises, Île McKenzie, and the Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau peninsula. It should be noted that Route 101, the multi-use trail (former railway) and their rights-of-way are completely excluded from the proposed park boundaries.

The proposed boundaries will make it possible to protect 23.1 km of Lac Témiscamingue shoreline and 176.3 km of Lac Kipawa shoreline. The bands of water of the two lakes cover a total of 29 km².

*Rivière Kipawa and**Lac Témiscamingue Cliffs Sector*

The Rivière Kipawa and Lac Témiscamingue Cliffs sector is 103.8 km² in area. It begins at Laniel, approximately 200 m downstream of the dam on the left banks of Rivière Kipawa. The proposed boundary at this location follows the river bank to the power transmission line, then crosses to the right bank, and follows the power transmission line and Route 101 (without including their rights-of-way). In the Pointe à Ti-Mine area, the boundary includes a private lot that was once a rest area and excludes a residential lot next to Rivière Kipawa.

East of Lac à Chester, the proposed boundary follows a private lot and runs alongside Chemin de la Grande Chute (without including it), then follows the right bank of Rivière Kipawa toward Lac Témiscamingue, excluding the private property at Pointe Topping. The aquatic portion of the river is therefore entirely included within the proposed boundaries for the park. However, at its mouth, it excludes an area used for commercial fishing¹² in winter.

The limits of the planned park continue into Lac Témiscamingue to include a band of water approximately 200-m wide between Rivière Kipawa and the Pointe McMartin area, where the boundary returns to land and continues to Route 101. Consequently, the area between Route 101 and Lac Témiscamingue selected by Hydro-Québec for the Tabaret hydroelectric project is within the proposed limits for Parc national d'Opémican. Finally, to the north, the boundary successively follows Route 101 and the multi-use trail to the village of Laniel, where it returns to the left bank of Rivière Kipawa.

This sector protects a portion of the Lac Témiscamingue shoreline where some remarkable cliffs rise from the lake's waters. It includes all of Rivière Kipawa, including the exceptional Grande Chute. In addition to protecting a peregrine falcon nesting site, it provides habitat for 11 plant species of interest and 6 archaeological sites.

Lac White Sector

The largest sector of the park, with an area of 124.8 km², incorporates 92 % of the Ruisseau White drainage basin. To the south, the proposed park's boundary runs along the multi-use trail and the edge of the drainage basin. To the southeast, it follows a logging road (itself excluded from the park) to Pointe des Neuf Milles. In this area, a private property at Baie des Neuf Milles is excluded. Chemin Lafrenière is therefore partially included in the proposed territory of the planned park. Near Pointe des Neuf Milles, the boundary extends into Lac Kipawa to include a band of water approximately 150-m wide. It then returns towards land at the centre of the bay to the northeast of Baie McLaren, then follows a logging road (excluded from the park). From there, it continues to the power transmission line, following stream banks and lake shores. Note that Île du club Wabinning, on Lac White, is also excluded from the proposed territory.

This sector is intended to protect the Ruisseau White drainage basin. It is worth noting that the wide Ruisseau Bass valley and its varied flora and fauna would be entirely within park limits.

Pointe Opémican Sector

The Pointe Opémican sector covers an area of 6.1 km² and is divided by Chemin Cedar Pine into two parts. This road, used by many vacationers, is excluded from the proposed boundary for the planned park. West of Cedar Pine, the boundary follows the edge of the Ruisseau White drainage basin to the Chemin CLT. The part of the Chemin CLT west of Chemin Cedar Pine is excluded from the proposed park territory. East of Cedar Pine, the boundary extends into Lac Témiscamingue to the Québec-Ontario border to include a band of water approximately 300-m wide. In Baie Thompson, it returns to land and continues to the power transmission line, which is excluded. The park boundary also excludes the road to Baie Thompson (relais Temkin). West of Chemin Opimica, the proposed territory for the planned park excludes a 1.7-ha sugar maple bush, which is under lease. The Pointe Opémican sector includes the Poste de relais pour le flottage du bois d'Opémican, which is an official historic site.

¹² This burbo fishery only lasts about two weeks a year.

This sector will make it possible to protect a peregrine falcon nesting site, a vulnerable species, a sugar maple-dominated forest stand and the Opémican historic site.

Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau Peninsula Sector

This 22.6-km² sector designates the land from Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau to Passe Hunter, on Lac Kipawa. To the south, its boundary follows stream banks and lake shores and includes a band of water approximately 200-m wide from the shore. Including this sector in the park would notably make it possible to protect a plant species likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable as well as a peregrine falcon nesting site. It also features a high concentration of mature forests of climax species¹³ (over 80 years old) as well as black ash populations that do not exist elsewhere in the proposed park.

Île McKenzie Sector

The Île McKenzie sector covers an area of 27.4 km². It includes the entire island as well as a band of water approximately 200-m wide. Île McKenzie is the largest island in RCM of Témiscamingue. Its inclusion in the park would protect a number of ombrotrophic bogs, two plant species likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable and mature forests that have never been commercially logged.

Île aux Fraises Sector

This 8.5-km² sector encompasses the Îles du Sandy Portage, Île aux Fraises and Îles aux Hérons, as well as a band of water of about 200-m wide. Including this sector in the proposed park would make it possible to protect many plant habitats of interest, 1 plant species likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable and 1 heronry. The park proposal excludes 2 private properties on Île aux Fraises.

3.2 CURRENT LAND USE

Private land

Two private properties are located inside the proposed limits of Parc national d'Opémican (Map 5). The first, on

Rivière Kipawa at Pointe à Ti-Mine is 0.45 ha (4,520 m²). It is a former rest area that belongs to the Laniel municipal committee. The other private property is the historic site at Pointe Opémican. It covers 10.12 ha (0.1 km²) and belongs to the Corporation Opémican de Témiscaming, a nonprofit organization.

Land use rights

A number of specific land use rights exist within the proposed park territory. There are 36 leases for the construction of a rough forest shelter that are used primarily by hunters. If the national park project receives favourable support, its proposed limits could nonetheless be modified in accordance with opinions expressed by the population at the public hearing. Therefore, the exact number of rough shelter leases within the park will only be known once the park's boundaries have been finalized and decreed. At that time, discussions will be initiated with each of the leaseholders to make the following proposals:

- 1- Acquisition by the MDDEP by mutual agreement. If the leaseholder wishes to sell their shelter, an appraiser will appraise the camp and an offer will be made to the leaseholder.
- 2- Enclave (exclude from the park) of the building and the land under lease when the park is created. Note that leaseholders who opt for this will be able to access their camps without charge at any time, even if they must pass through the park to do so. After the park is created, acquisition by mutual agreement will remain possible for any leaseholder who decides to sell their camp.
- 3- Acquisition by the MDDEP by mutual agreement and relocation, if possible and desired by the leaseholder. Work is underway with the MRNF to identify new potential sectors to offer to leaseholders.

In addition, there are 3 personal-use vacation leases and 1 non-exclusive outfitting lease (satellite camp). These leaseholders will be offered two options:

¹³ Community of plants that has reached a steady state in its evolution.

- 1- Acquisition by the MDDEP by mutual agreement. If the leaseholder wishes to sell their chalet or facilities, an appraiser will appraise the camp and an offer will be made to the leaseholder.
- 2- Enclave (exclude from the park) of the building and the land under lease when the park is created. Note that leaseholders who opt for this will continue to have access without charge at any time, even if they must pass through the park to do so. After the park is created, acquisition by the MDDEP by mutual agreement will remain possible for any leaseholder who end up deciding to sell their camp.

The Temiscaming Fish and Game Club (or White Lake club) holds 9 personal-use vacation leases, 8 of which are for buildings on Île du club Wabinning, on Lac White, and 1 for a building on Lac Long (Lac Ravalet). We propose to exclude the island where the chalets are located as well as the other leased area on Lac Long.

Between Lacs Moore and Route 101, a community lease for a former fire tower is included in the proposed boundaries. We plan to exclude from the park a property near Pointe Antoine, north of Chemin Cedar Pine. It will be under lease to the company Communication Témiscamingue for the purposes of erecting a communications tower¹⁴.

Within the proposed limits of the planned park, just north of Pointe Opémican, there is also 1 sugar maple bush operating under a management permit for acericultural purposes. We propose to exclude this sugar bush from the park.

Finally, 12 exclusive traplines are located in whole or in part within the proposed park. Of that number, 7 are currently in use. If the national park project receives favourable support, its proposed limits could nonetheless be modified in accordance with opinions expressed by the population at the public hearing. Therefore, the exact number of traplines within the park will only be known once the park's boundaries have been finalized and decreed. We are considering moving or reviewing

the trapline limits to exclude them from the park, taking whenever possible the needs of the trappers into consideration.

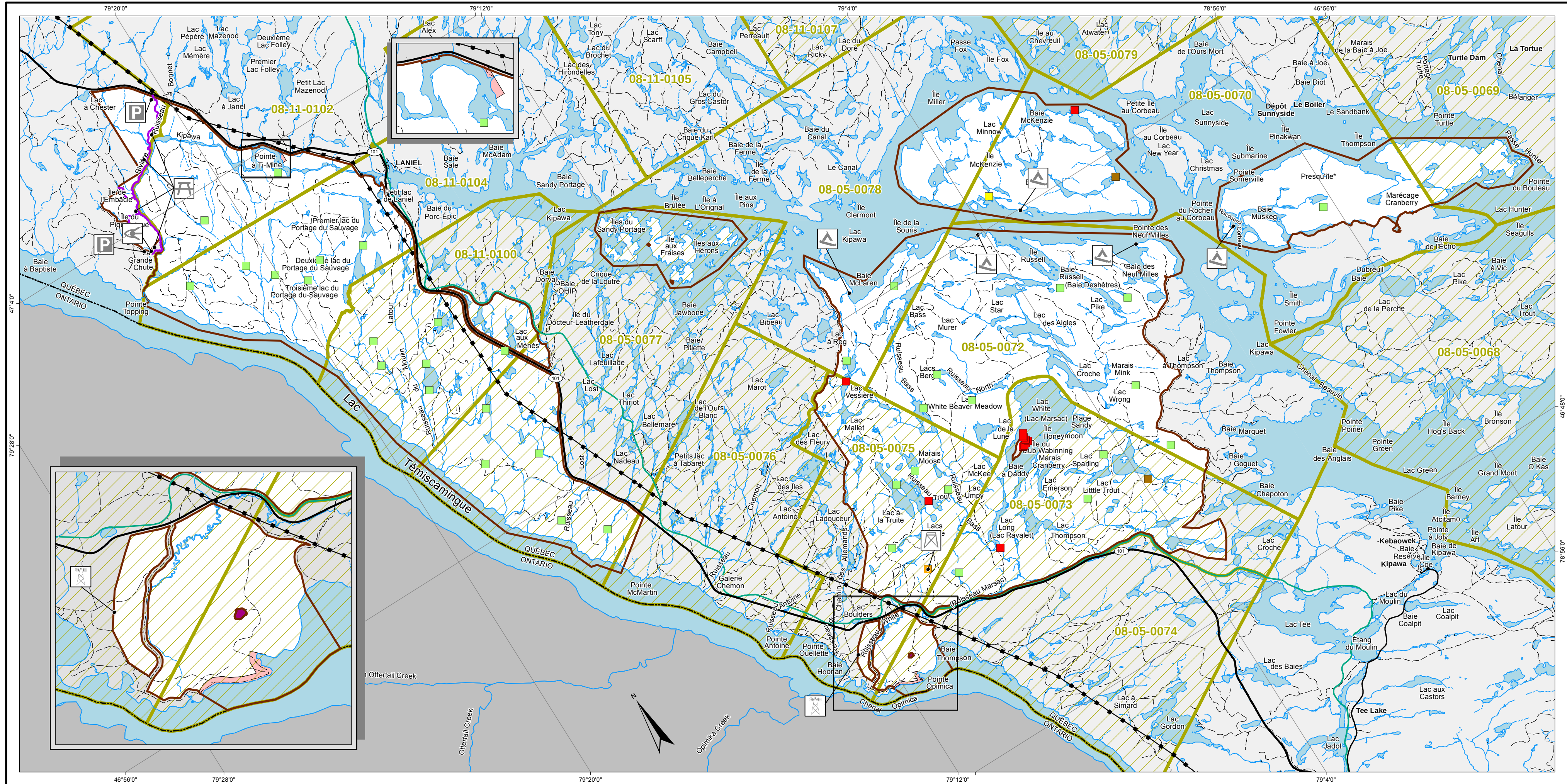
Roads and trails

Three hiking trails are found north of Rivière Kipawa. They are managed by the Laniel municipal committee with the authorization of the MRNF. The Sentier de la Grande Chute trail runs along the north shore of Rivière Kipawa for 7 km. Over its first 2 km starting from Route 101, interpretive panels explain the area's plants and forest. A parking lot has been provided at each trailhead as well as 4 picnic areas along the trail. It should be noted that the Grande Chute lookout, the parking lot at the south end of the Grande Chute vehicular road and a portion of the trail (about 1 km) were not included in the proposed park limits as they are on private land. An agreement between the Laniel municipal committee and the owner of this property allows the public to access the trail. The use of these trails as part of the national park is discussed in Section 5.4, Proposed Development Concept.

Other land uses

Five campsites are found inside the proposed limits for Parc national d'Opémican. They are located on the shores of Lac Kipawa and were built by the Algonquin Canoe Company. These sites could be included in the park's campsite network and used by its future visitors.

¹⁴ This 18.28-m tower is being built to offer high-speed Internet service to local residents and businesses.



Map 5
CURRENT LAND USE

Proposed boundary

ROADS AND TRAILS

- Road
- Trail
- Multi-use trail

PUBLIC LAND USE RIGHTS

- For a rough shelter
- For vacation purposes
- For outfitting purposes
- For community purposes
- Sugar bush management permits for acericultural purposes

TRAPPING AREAS

- Trapping camp
- Vacant registered trapping area
- Occupied registered trapping area

INFRASTRUCTURES

- Lookout point
- Picnic area
- Parking
- Former forest fire lookout tower
- Communication tower (future site)
- Campsites built by the Algonquin Canoe Company

LAND TENURE

- Private land

* Unofficial toponym

Metadata

Geodetic reference system: NAD 83 compatible with the world WGS 84 system

Map projection: Modified transverse Mercator (MTM), zone 10

Scale: 1/95 000

Sources

Data: Base de données topographiques du Québec (BDTQ) à l'échelle de 1:20 000

Public land use rights, roads, trails: Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune

Lookout point, parking, picnic area, roads, trails: MDOEP, Service des parcs, Field work

Land tenure: Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune, RCM of Témiscamingue

Trapping areas: Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune

Realization

Direction du patrimoine écologique et des parcs
Service des parcs
Division de la géomatique et de l'infographie
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Parc national d'Opémican project

La Sarre, Taschereau, Amos, Rouyn-Noranda, Parc national d'Aigrette, Malarie, Val-d'Or, New Liskeard, Ville-Marie, Parc national d'Opémican project, Réserve faunique La Verendrye, Témiscamingue, Lacbe-sur-Quévillon

Développement durable, Environnement et Parcs
Québec

4⁴ Proposed Zoning



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Photo: Isabelle Tessier

Park zoning plans are legal documents that establish guidelines for the levels of protection and planned development in the various sectors of the park. The zoning plan becomes an integral part of the Parks Regulation.

Zoning in Québec national parks is broken into five categories: maximum preservation zone, preservation zone, ambience zone, intensive recreation zone¹⁵ and service zone. Each is assigned a specific level of protection

and use. Factors such as the fragility, rarity, exceptional character and representativeness of a park's features are used to delimit maximum preservation zones and preservation zones. Service zones are allocated to visitor reception and information or management and are selected for their higher carrying capacities. Finally, ambience zones are allocated to the discovery or exploration of the environment. Three zone categories are proposed for Parc national d'Opémican (Map 6).

¹⁵ While the recreation park category – to which this zoning was exclusive – was abolished in 2001, existing intensive recreation zones in national parks have been grandfathered; however no new intensive recreation zones will be created.

4.1 PRESERVATION ZONES

A total of 34.1 km², or more than 10 % of the area of the planned park, would be dedicated to preservation. They will be open to visitors, but their only infrastructure will be walking trails. Occasional wilderness camp sites, huts and lookouts could be built. To protect the natural environment, visitors will be asked to remain on the trails as they visit these zones.

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The Parks Regulation permits the picking of edible vegetable products (including berries and mushrooms), except for commercial purposes or in a preservation zone or maximum preservation zone. Fishing is also prohibited in preservation zones.

The planned park includes six preservation zones. The first preservation zone runs along Lac Témiscamingue. This strip about 1.5 km wide includes cliffs that serve as nesting sites for the peregrine falcon, a species that is sensitive to disturbance. It also includes sites that are home to or provide habitat for protected plants, as well as 6 archaeological sites.

The Lac aux Ménéés sector, between Route 101 and the multi-use trail, is designated a preservation zone. It includes ombrotrophic bogs, a habitat that is rare in the study area, and plants likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable.

West of Lac White, the Ruisseau Bass valley is also a designated preservation zone. This part of the park helps protect a wetland habitat that serves as a nesting and feeding ground for aquatic birds and turtles.

Part of the Pointe Opémican sector is designated as a preservation zone. It includes a cliff where peregrine falcons nest and a forest dominated by the sugar maple and yellow birch, two species that are under-represented in the planned park.

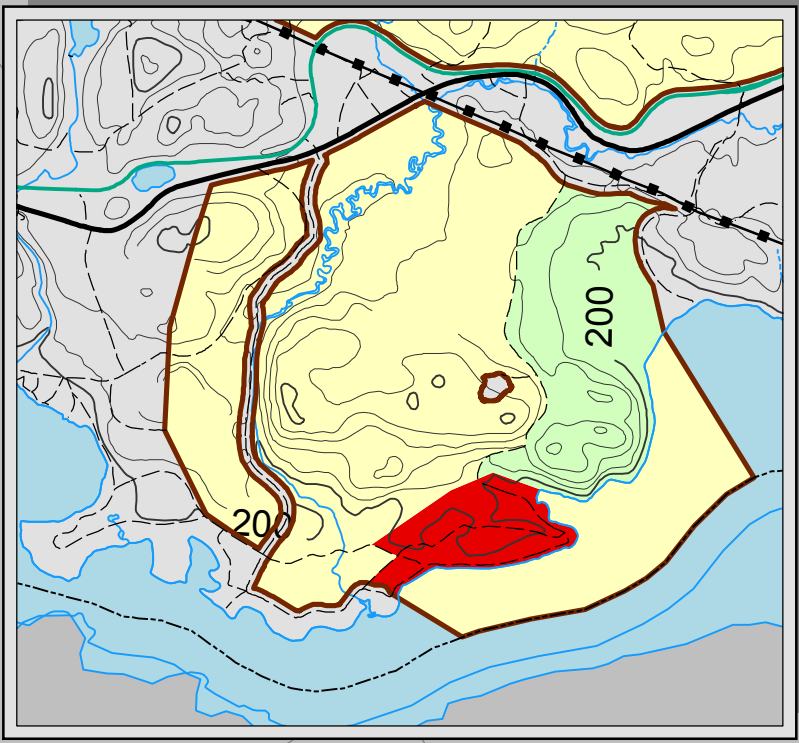
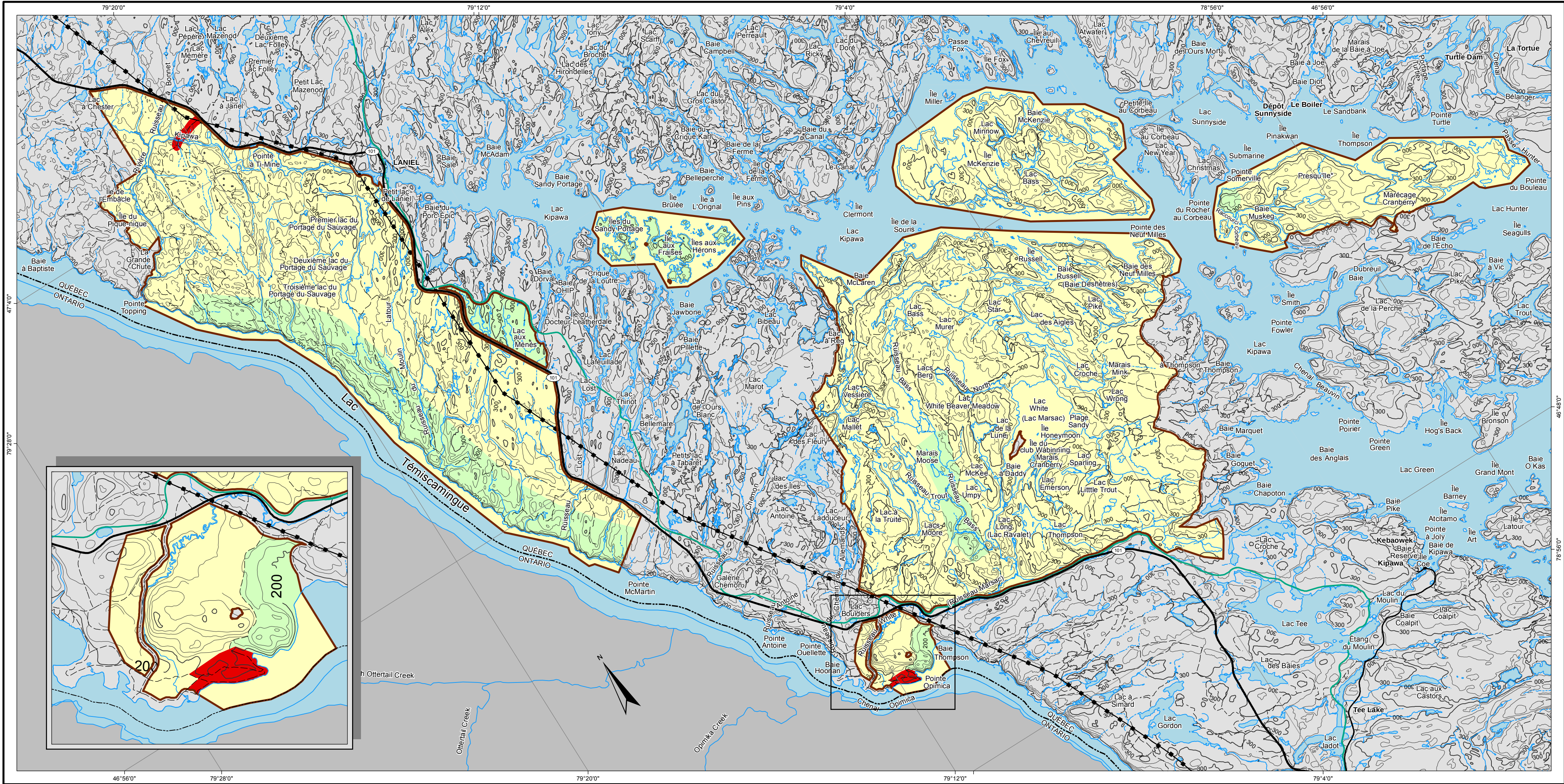
On Lac Kipawa, the entire Île aux Fraises sector is a designated preservation zone. This designation aims to protect these fragile small island ecosystems, the heronry as a whole and the rocky escarpments with their plant life of interest. Finally, at Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau, a small preservation zone will protect a peregrine falcon nesting site.

4.2 AMBIENCE ZONES

Nearly the entire park – an area of 258.3 km² (or 88 % of the park) – has received the ambience zone designation. The areas of the park that received this designation offer good potential for visitors to discover and explore the environment, good carrying capacity and opportunities for enjoying a wide range of cross-country recreational activities. This designation will protect the environment while allowing the construction of infrastructure to develop and help visitors discover the main characteristics of Parc national d'Opémican. In this way, visitors can leave the trail to access certain parts of the park.

4.3 SERVICE ZONES

Two service zones have been identified. The first is located in the Rivière Kipawa sector and the other at Pointe Opémican. With a total area of 0.8 km², these zones have good carrying capacity and are reserved for service and accommodation facilities to welcome visitors during their park stay.



- Map 6
PROPOSED ZONING
- Proposed boundary
 - Preservation (34.1 km² - 11.6%)
 - Ambience (258.31 km² - 88.1%)
 - Service (0.79 km² - 0.3%)

* Unofficial toponym

Metadata

Geodetic reference system: NAD 83 compatible with the world WGS 84 system

Map projection: Modified transverse Mercator (MTM), zone 10

Contour interval: 20 metres

0 1 2 4 6 km

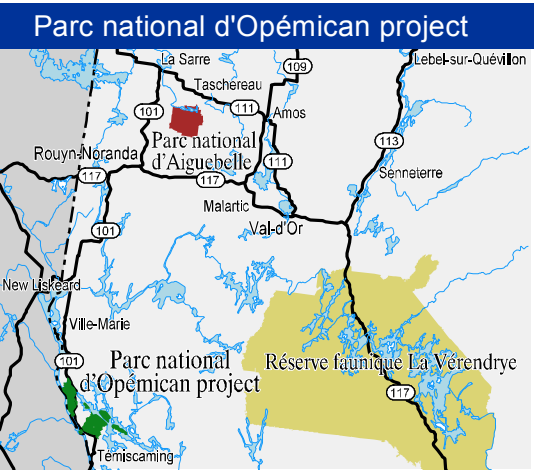
1/95 000

Sources

Data
Base de données topographiques du Québec (BDTQ) à l'échelle de 1:20 000

Organization
Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune

Realization
Direction du patrimoine écologique et des parcs
Service des parcs
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J Proposed Development Concept



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Photo : Maryse Cloutier

5.1 DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

In addition to meeting its conservation mission, the planned park will be developed and made accessible to the public for cross-country recreation and education. It will benefit both residents of neighbouring communities and visitors from outside the region. The development concept was drawn up to take into account attractions, constraints and visitor needs, and serves as a proposal for organizing the park territory that balances discovery with protecting fragile or rare features. Activities and services planned in the development concept should complement what is offered on the park's periphery, assuming that they are compatible with a national park's conservation vocation.

Some sectors in the study area present development constraints, particularly with regards to the rugged terrain, combined with thin surface deposits and poor drainage in certain locations. A number of biological concerns were also taken into consideration.

Technical Constraints

One technical constraint involves the slopes in the park. An average slope exceeding 15 % was considered to be a constraint to building major infrastructure, such as

roads. Similarly, shelters and campsites cannot be developed on sites where the slope exceeds 8 %. However, light infrastructure (hiking trails) could be developed on steeper slopes. Only very steep slopes must be avoided, due to the likelihood of rock slides or landslides in clay soil. The cliffs along the shore of Lac Témiscamingue and the banks of waterways – particularly those that drain into Lac Témiscamingue – are sites where development possibilities are limited and potentially dangerous. All the same, although access to certain sites might be difficult, steep slopes often provide excellent locations for lookouts.

The steep slopes and escarpments around Lac Témiscamingue are a major constraint for boats, since they limit the number of potential boat launches and shelter in a storm.

Till makes up the majority of surface deposits in the study area. This type of deposit generally offers good carrying capacity and drainage ranging from good to moderate. However, the till is quite thin in many locations, which could have a negative effect on the construction of complex facilities such as buildings and septic fields. Lacustrine deposits of clay facies (varve) also present development constraints since they are subject to erosion and require proper drainage. Finally, it should be noted that wetlands and riparian environments are particularly sensitive to vehicular traffic. Poorly-designed roads or water crossings can disturb these habitats.

Biological Constraints

From a wildlife perspective, cliffs are the preferred habitat of the peregrine falcon, which nest in them. Similarly, the rocky shores and sand slopes of Lac Témiscamingue are home to many calcicolous plants and other plants likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable. Since these sensitive or unusual features must be protected, development and activities will be limited – or even prohibited – in areas where these species are found.

An analysis of past and present land use in the Pointe Opémican sector reveals that the area has been used for a wide range of activities (industrial, domestic and recreational). For example, it was used to store and repair the boats that towed log booms on Lac Témiscamingue.

Still today, petroleum facilities (underground and above ground tanks) and hazardous material storage (oil, used batteries, etc.) can be found. A forge operated during the time of the shipyard and today a byproduct (slag) can be found on the Lac Témiscamingue shore. Also on the site is a garbage dump covered with cans, batteries and other metal waste. Since the Opémican site will be the heart of the future park, the area will have to be cleaned and decontaminated. Development in the sector could take place simultaneously with the various phases of environmental characterization and decontamination.

Discussion from a biological perspective is found in Section 6.2, which addresses conservation management policy.

Heritage and cultural constraints

The Opémican historic site is a source of undeniable richness for the Parc national d'Opémican project. As it is classified as an historic site by the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine (MCCCF), the entire site and buildings are protected under the Cultural Property Act¹⁶. Consequently, all construction, rehabilitation or development work require an approval from the minister responsible.

In addition, archaeological sites must be protected with special measures to ensure they are not disturbed during the development work. It is important to realize that any work that disturbs the soil could have an impact on the integrity of an archaeological site, which are frequently located at less than 10 cm below the surface. As a result, all facilities projects in the park will be subject to an archaeological potential analysis prior to the start of work.

5.2 PARK ACCESS

One of the ways to travel to RCM of Témiscamingue is provincial Route 117, which runs through the Laurentides region to Abitibi-Témiscamingue. Route 117 connects

¹⁶ The Cultural Heritage Act has been adopted and approved by the Assemblée nationale du Québec. It will come into force on October 19, 2012, replacing the Cultural Property Act.

to Route 101, a major axis that crosses all of Témiscamingue. To the south, Route 101 becomes Ontario Highway 63, which connects Témiscamingue to North Bay, Ontario. The various sectors of Parc national d'Opémican are accessible from Route 101, either via the main entrance of its northern section, which leads to Rivière Kipawa and Grande Chute sectors, or via the secondary entrances, which lead to the Portage du Sauvage and Cascades du Moulin Latour sectors (Map 7). The park's southern section is also accessible from Route 101, via the southern main entrance, which leads to Pointe Opémican, or secondary entrances to the Lac Long and Lac White sectors. Pointe Opémican will also be accessible by water.

5.2.1 PARK ROADS

Many logging roads crisscross the territory, with road surfaces that range from excellent to impassable. Of those, many will be closed to limit the number of roads as much as possible. Some sections that are in good condition will be restored and maintained to develop and ensure safe access to specific sectors of the park.

Chemin Cedar Pine will become a main access artery to the park and will be asphalted over 2 km from Route 101 to Chemin CLT. From Chemin Cedar Pine, the road to the Pointe Opémican visitor centre will use part of Chemin CLT.

Access to the Lac White sector will be by Chemin Lafrenière, 6 km of which will receive foundation improvements. To provide for access to the Lac Long sector, the road from Route 101 to Lac Long will become a secondary park road, 2 km of which will receive an upgrade.

To the north, the main entrance to the Rivière Kipawa and Grande Chute sectors will be built on the roadbed that currently meets Route 101 near kilometre 57. It will stretch approximately 5 km, and cross a bridge over the river before reaching the shore of Lac Témiscamingue. Lastly, again from Route 101, secondary roads are planned to serve the Portage du Sauvage (0.2 km) and Cascades du Moulin Latour (1.5 km) sectors.

5.2.2 BOATING FACILITIES

Lac Témiscamingue is very popular among boaters, and boats can already dock at Pointe Opémican. In order to maintain and improve this access, the wharfs, part of the Opémican historic site, will be restored.

5.3 WELCOME CENTRE AND RELATED SERVICES

The facilities needed to welcome visitors and operate Parc national d'Opémican will be developed mainly in the Pointe Opémican sector. The seven existing buildings associated with the Opémican historic site (the superintendent's house, Jodoin Inn, office building, mechanical workshop and smithy, carpentry workshop, boom shed and garage) offer many possibilities for housing the welcome centre, gift shop, outdoor equipment rentals, amphitheatre, administrative offices and workshop/warehouse. The goal is to restore – and above all, rehabilitate – the existing buildings by giving them new uses that meet the needs of the national park and its visitors while conserving their historic value. Most facilities in the park will be built in the first five years following its creation, which will enable it to welcome a large number of visitors.

5.4 ACTIVITIES

The proposed territory for Parc national d'Opémican offers great potential for visitors to explore. The park administrator will identify activities beyond those listed in this provisional master plan to complete the park's offering, which must comply with the Politique sur les parcs (parks policy).

5.4.1 HIKING AND SNOWSHOEING

A network of short and long hiking trails of varying degrees of difficulty (easy, medium and difficult) will be developed. It will leverage cliff-top viewpoints over Lac Témiscamingue and Rivière Kipawa and the special

atmosphere of old pine and maple stands. Hiking will also allow visitors to visit natural sites, including Rivière Kipawa and Grande Chute, the cliffs of Lac Témiscamingue and the Ruisseau du Moulin Latour falls. A good many of the trails will also be open to snowshoers.

The hiking trails will be located at Pointe Opémican, along Rivière Kipawa and along Lac Témiscamingue. At Pointe Opémican, a loop will provide access to a mature sugar maple bush – a type of forest stand that has little representation inside the proposed park boundaries – and another will lead to the top of a cliff for an impressive view of Lac Témiscamingue and the Opémican historic site. Another trail along Lac Témiscamingue will be developed to provide universal access to visitors with reduced mobility.

In the Rivière Kipawa sector, hikers can already enjoy the Grande Chute walking trail, which runs along the river's right bank. Although plans call for this trail to be replaced by a trail network on the other side of the river, it will remain open to hikers when the park opens while the new trails are under construction. The left bank of the river was chosen for its higher carrying capacity and the need for the trail network to be linked to the road that will be built south of Rivière Kipawa. A trail leading to Grande Chute will be built to make its unique view accessible. Depending on needs, it could be designed to be accessible to visitors with reduced mobility.

Hikers will be able to reach this trail from either end of the main road, where a parking lot will be built. In addition to providing permanent access to Grande Chute, it will also contribute to concentrating all infrastructures south of Rivière Kipawa.

The planned trail network along Lac Témiscamingue will be linked to the Grande Chute sector. These hiking trails will not only offer magnificent viewpoints to admire the beauty of Lac Témiscamingue, but will also give people the opportunity to visit the mature pine forests that colonize the clifftops. In this sector, long-distance hikers will be able to make their way to the Portage du Sauvage lakes and Ruisseau du Moulin Latour falls. Long-distance trails will be dotted with huts or lean-tos.

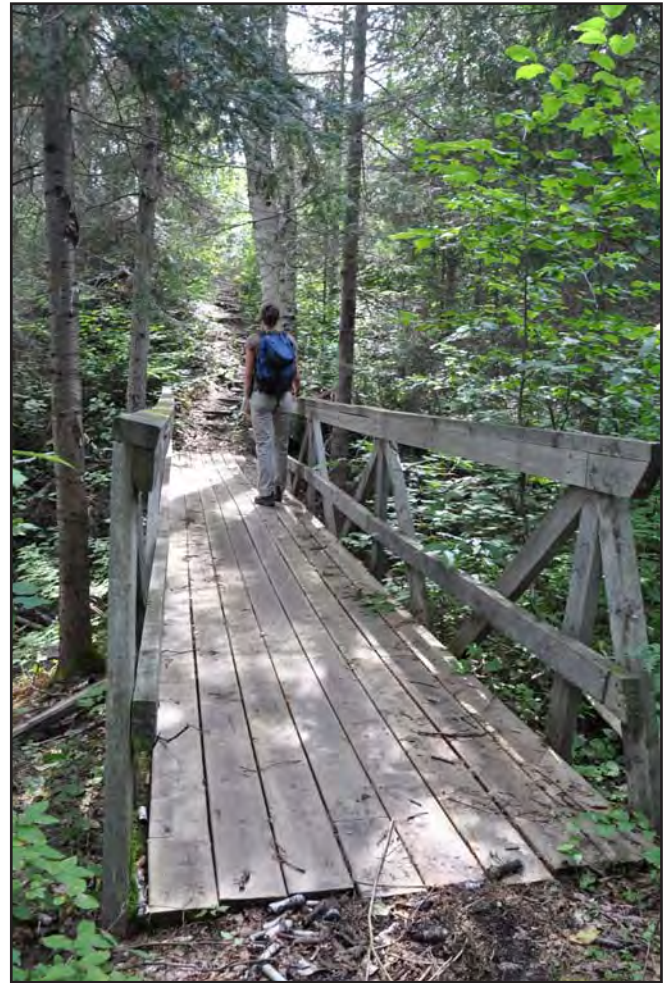


Photo : Isabelle Tessier

5.4.2 CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

Visitors will be able to cross-country ski in the park on marked trails. Like snowshoeing, off-trail cross-country skiing will also be permitted.

5.4.3 BICYCLING

A few stretches of paths will be designed for both pedestrians and cyclists. A total of 2 km of these shared-use paths will be located in the Pointe Opémican sector. They will link the various facilities on the site (campground, swimming area, historic buildings). It would also be possible to develop a mountain bike circuit using old logging roads between Rivière Kipawa and the Portage du Sauvage lakes. It could connect the various viewpoints available on the surrounding lakes and the cliffs of Lac Témiscamingue.

5.4.4 CANOEING AND KAYAKING

Water activities are important at Parc national d'Opémican. Many different activities are possible, and various canoe or kayak routes will be offered. The recommended daily distance for a route is 10 km for beginners, 15 km for intermediates and 20 km for experts. However, distance paddled can vary from one day to the next depending on weather and the challenges of the route.

Lac Témiscamingue

Lac Témiscamingue feels immense, a sense that is heightened by the high cliffs that surround it. Lake access will be provided at both ends of the proposed park, near the mouth of Rivière Kipawa and at Pointe Opémican. The distance from one to the other is approximately 30 km. A walking trail will be created to link the main road of the Grande Chute sector with the lake. This zigzagging path will descend from the top of the cliffs down to water level and provide lake access despite the steep slope.

Portage du Sauvage

The Portage du Sauvage sector is another beautiful part of the park that is accessible for short canoe excursions. Its elongated lakes, bordered with a forest dominated by black spruce, white cedar, white pine and jack pine, offer a unique landscape. The northeastern end of Deuxième lac du Portage du Sauvage is particularly enchanting, since it is accessed by a channel that wends its way through shore fen vegetation.

Premier lac du Portage du Sauvage and Deuxième lac du Portage du Sauvage are connected by a short (about 100 m) portage, while Deuxième lac du Portage du Sauvage and Troisième lac du Portage du Sauvage are connected by water. Premier lac du Portage du Sauvage will be accessible exclusively on foot.

This area is conducive to combining hiking and canoeing in a single outing. After a canoe crossing of the Portage du Sauvage lakes, visitors could hike the trail to the shore of Lac Témiscamingue.

Lac Kipawa

Lac Kipawa is accessible from the municipal rest area in Laniel's village centre and from the Kipawa municipal wharf. The many bays, islands and islets on Lac Kipawa offer a wide variety of landscapes. Its many attractions – both inside the park (Île aux Fraises, heronry) and outside (Baie du Canal) – can be discovered by canoe or kayak.

Lac White

Lac White is the largest inland lake in the area. With easy access and beautiful beaches, it is perfect for a canoe outing combined with wilderness camping on its shores. Starting from Baie Russell on Lac Kipawa, a number of lakes – Star, des Aigles, Croche, White and Long – are connected by small streams or are easily accessible by short portage trails. The area has good potential for developing a canoe camping route. The portage through the woods between Lac Long and Lac White will be repaired and maintained by park employees.

5.4.5 RIVER EXCURSIONS

Rivière Kipawa has good potential for river excursions in canoe, kayak or miniraft. Minirafts give even visitors without river experience the opportunity to paddle down the river and run some rapids. Those with more experience can use canoes or kayaks. Since its flow is controlled by a dam in Laniel, river conditions can vary. Nonetheless, the river presents a high degree of difficulty due to the presence of class II through V rapids, sills and waterfalls. These obstacles can be avoided by using the existing portages. Although these portages have been used innumerable times in the past, they will need to be rebuilt and clearly indicated along the river to ensure paddler safety.

It is easy to stop on the riverbank to analyze a rapid or to rest and explore the area. Aside from an old rest area in Laniel, a private property near Pointe à Ti-Mine and a small hut, the riverbanks have retained their natural appearance.

All trips down the river, irrespective of the type of watercraft, can start under the bridge that crosses the river just downstream from the Laniel dam. A river

access point will be built at this location. It will be accessible on foot via the footbridge over the dam. The route ends 8 km downstream, where a trail brings boaters back to the main road that runs alongside Rivière Kipawa. Another exit is planned halfway down the route at Pointe à Ti-Mine (former rest area).

5.4.6 SWIMMING

Natural beaches are found in several locations in the planned park. Although ideal for swimming, they will not be supervised by the park team.

5.4.7 SPORT FISHING

Fishing is compatible with Québec's national parks policy. The park administrator will set the rules for fishing in Parc national d'Opémican. Anyone wishing to fish on a body of water entirely within the limits of the park

will be required to purchase a fishing permit. However, recreational fishing will continue to be unrestricted on the parts of Lac Témiscamingue and Lac Kipawa that are in the park. Fishing in those areas will require neither a park permit nor a park fishing permit.

5.4.8 CLIMBING

A rockface with potential to be developed for rock climbing has been identified in the Pointe Opémican sector.

5.5 ACCOMMODATION

Parc national d'Opémican will contribute to the region's accommodations, complementing what is already in place in surrounding municipalities.



Photo : Isabelle Tessier

5.5.1 WILDERNESS CAMPING

Wilderness camping is generally associated with longer cross-country activities, such as hiking and canoe or kayak trips. The sites are basic and usually used for one or two consecutive nights. Few services are available – only dry toilets will be built.

Wilderness campsites are designed for lightweight equipment and will feature tent platforms in some locations. These platforms keep campers from dispersing and consequently reduce the environmental impact.

On Lac White, a wilderness campground will be created near one of the beaches. Other campsites could be developed along the canoe/kayak route.

On Lac Kipawa, canoe/kayak camping sites will be distributed between the Île aux Fraises, Île McKenzie and Pointe du Rocher au Corbeau peninsula sectors.

Finally, sites will be developed along the shores of Lac Témiscamingue to serve paddlers. Potential sites have been identified near Ruisseau Lost as well as Portage du Sauvage. At the latter location, the campground could also be used by hikers.

Additional wilderness campgrounds could be created, if required, as the hiking trail network is developed. Site locations will be determined as a function of biophysical conditions and spaced at one day's safe traveling distance from one another.

5.5.2 FULL SERVICE CAMPING

Full service camping supplies campers with water and electricity for increased comfort during extended stays in the park. The park's main campground will be built at Pointe Opémican, in the service zone. It will include washroom buildings with toilets, showers and sinks. Campsites will be accessible by car and recreational vehicle. Particular attention will be paid to maintaining a screen of vegetation between campsites to ensure privacy and retain as natural an environment as possible.

5.5.3 HUTS OR SHELTERS

Huts or lean-to shelters could be made available to hikers along the long distance hiking trails. Two potential sites have been identified, one near the Portage du Sauvage lakes and the other close to the falls on Ruisseau du Moulin Latour.

5.5.4 RESORTS

Depending upon the speed of park development, cabin accommodations could be created in the service zone at Pointe Opémican, while respecting the area's carrying capacity and policy guidelines for the historic site. Needs will be evaluated in partnership with the local population. In its initial development phase, there are no plans to build cabins in the national park. As needed, visitors can be directed to business in the region that offer cabin accommodation

6⁶ Management Policies



Photo: Maryse Cloutier

In Québec national parks, the primary objective is to preserve ecosystems in their natural states in order to benefit current and future generations, while promoting compatible recreational and educational activities. To reconcile these objectives of protection and development, guidelines were established for conservation, activity and service offerings and visitor education.

6.1 MANAGEMENT OF PARC NATIONAL D'OPÉMICAN

Once Parc national d'Opémican has been created, its operation will be entrusted to the Société des établissements de plein air du Québec (Sépaq). Some of Sépaq responsibilities will include creating park facilities, managing the conservation effort, administering its activities and services and promoting the park.

In addition to promoting partnerships with local business, Sépaq also facilitates regional dialogue about the national park through a roundtable ("table d'harmonisation")

approach. Sépaq establishes roundtables for all of the national parks it operates in southern Québec. They provide a discussion forum that helps regional players inside and outside the park to find common ground and to act in synergy. A roundtable is made up of representatives from various groups and industries affected by the park. If they wish, concerned aboriginal communities, municipalities, tourism operators, environmental protections and education groups, the scientific community, regional development organizations and volunteer organizations may attend.

6.2 CONSERVATION

According to Québec's parks policy, conservation in Québec national parks is based on three principles.

- ❖ First principle:
Conservation takes priority over development.
- ❖ Second principle:
Ecological integrity must be maintained or restored.
- ❖ Third principle:
The precautionary¹⁷ principle must be at the root of all decisions.

In the five years following the park's creation, the park team will produce a park conservation plan to orient ecosystem management and the protection of cultural and historic heritage across its territory. The plan will include a knowledge-gathering component that will reach out to various specialists for their expertise.

Water quality monitoring

Starting in 2007, episodic blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) blooms have been observed on Lac Témiscamingue, primarily around Duhamel-Ouest. Although these brief episodes are limited to the northern end of the lake, the park team will monitor water quality in Lac Témiscamingue and the beaches around the park to

protect public safety at all time. Generally speaking, the water quality of the lakes and rivers within Parc national d'Opémican will be a constant concern.

Rare plant monitoring

The shores of Lac Témiscamingue provide habitat for several populations of plants that are rare or likely to be designated endangered or vulnerable. The park team will ensure their protection by tightly controlling access to the sections of shore where they are located. In order to improve our knowledge of the park's territory, inventory work will initially be focused on sites with the highest potential for endangered or vulnerable and rare species, such as rocky escarpments, talus slopes, shores, bogs, and cedar groves. Nonvascular (bryophytes and lichens) and aquatic plants will also be inventoried at that time.

On a related note, within the park's boundaries, mechanical methods, and not herbicide, will have to be used to control vegetation under power transmission lines.

Wildlife population monitoring

As at all other parks in the parks network, the park team will be responsible for wildlife population monitoring in Parc national d'Opémican. Since very few wildlife studies of the area exist, improving our knowledge of the species and their use of their habitats is a priority to properly orient conservation activities. This will include fish population monitoring in the lakes where fishing takes place.

Peregrine falcon

The peregrine falcon is sensitive to disturbance, particularly during mating and laying season, but also until the chicks leave the nest. Nest height and position on the cliff are very important to consider when evaluating the impact of an activity. In most situations, the peregrine falcon tolerates human presence up to a certain distance under the nest. However, it becomes intolerant when the source of disturbance is at the same height or higher than the nest.

Recreational activities near known nesting sites will have to be carefully managed (see section 6.3 on management policies for activities and services). When it comes to water-based activities, it is difficult to know how a peregrine falcon will react to paddlers or pleasure craft.

¹⁷ The precautionary principle recognizes that in the absence of scientific certainty, measures should be taken when there is sufficient reason to believe that an activity or product is at risk of causing serious and irreversible harm to health or the environment.

A boat that passes at the foot of the cliff does not necessarily constitute a danger to the peregrine falcon, even if it temporarily disturbs the bird. However, it will be important to monitor whether boats frequently land at the foot of the cliff, particularly if the nest is visible from there. The closure of certain parts of hiking trails can be considered during nesting season.

Without completely prohibiting access to the cliffs, care must be taken. This includes maintaining a visual screen between nests and visitor infrastructure (trails, lookouts). As an example, on public land under forest management, an administrative agreement protects nesting sites by establishing a protection zone that prohibits forest management work within 250 m of each side of the nest for the entire height of the rock face and a zone that extends 50 m from the change of gradient, both at the top and bottom of the rock face. However, the zone's size can be larger or smaller based on the type of activity and local topography. The park team will ensure heightened monitoring of nesting sites to establish protection standards that are in keeping with each site's characteristics. Observing the birds' behaviour may help to estimate their tolerance threshold for visitors and the distance required to avoid all disturbance. In addition, it would be helpful in evaluating established restrictions to ensure the birds remain undisturbed.

Like in Québec's other national parks, any disturbance close to known nesting sites must be avoided between mid-March and the beginning of August. Furthermore, the park team should be associated with the five-year pan-Canadian monitoring program¹⁸ and conduct an annual follow-up across the park.

Turtles

The discovery of several nesting sites and the direct observation of individuals reinforce the necessity of improving our knowledge about the turtle species in the park. More exhaustive inventories will make it possible to confirm the presence of Blanding's turtle, a designated

endangered species in Québec that has been previously observed in the region. Furthermore, inventories along Ruisseau Bass will make it possible to better characterize this unique area and assess its potential as wood turtle habitat

Turtles are fairly loyal to their nesting sites. Monitoring their nests is a good way to monitor the status of the turtle population. One benefit would be to identify the species that use the sites and evaluate nesting success or hatching rate.

Monitoring of soil decontamination at Pointe Opémican

Once the clean-up and decontamination of the Pointe Opémican site is complete, monitoring will include twenty-year groundwater monitoring program.

Cultural and Historical Heritage

Since the end of the log drive, the Opémican site has not had a real vocation. Its new vocation as the primary area of development in Parc national d'Opémican will breathe new life into it, ensuring its preservation over the long term.

In developing Pointe Opémican, the future park administrator, in partnership with the MCCCCF, must consider the following guidelines¹⁹:

- ❖ Work plans and estimates for the historic site must be solidly documented. If work is entrusted to a contractor, the contract must include very explicit clauses regarding conservation.
- ❖ The park administrator will be responsible for the regular maintenance of the buildings, infrastructure and equipment to prevent or slow their deterioration.
- ❖ No characteristic feature that is intact or which can be repaired may be removed, replaced or substantially modified. No feature of the heritage site may be moved if its current location is one of its unique characteristics.

¹⁸ The main objective of the five-year pan-Canadian monitoring program is to inventory all known and potential peregrine falcon nesting sites in southern Québec to identify the presence of mating pairs. It also has the objective of accurately locating nests and determining the number of chicks.

¹⁹ The guidelines were published in *Étude patrimoniale du site historique du poste de relais pour le flottage du bois d'Opémican* réalisée par Aecom (2011) [study on the heritage of the Opémican historic site].

- ❖ All work at a heritage site must maintain its realism; given that it bears witness to a particular age and use, added features must not appear artificially old.
- ❖ New construction or additions must be physically and visually compatible with the heritage site.
- ❖ Each new feature must be distinguishable from older parts. Additions and new construction must be designed to be removed, if necessary, without impact to the integrity of the heritage parts.

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In addition, an archaeological potential analysis will be conducted at any planned development sites, in accordance with MCCCCF recommendations. At Pointe Opémican, since the archaeological potential is clear, archaeological digs will be conducted prior to construction and the worksite will be monitored by an archaeologist in case of fortuitous discoveries. The park administrator must ensure MCCCCF requirements are respected at all times if development work is required in an area with strong archaeological potential. Excavation work to enhance the presentation of certain sites must be approved by the MCCCCF, as required by the Cultural Property Act.

6.3 ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

The Politique sur les parcs [parks policy] provides guidelines for the selection, development and management of activities and services in Québec national parks. The priority for activities and services offered in Parc national d'Opémican is to work towards meeting the objectives set out by the national park mission statement – to offer a quality product that respects the natural environment. The activity and service offering is based on three principles.

- ❖ First principle:
Activities and services must cause minimum acceptable impact on the heritage.

- ❖ Second principle:
Activities and services must promote learning about heritage.
- ❖ Third principle:
Activities and services must promote accessibility.

The three principles cannot be considered in isolation from one another, however the first takes priority – conservation takes priority over use. Thus, an activity or service that is not aligned with the first principle is incompatible with the mission of Québec national parks and is generally prohibited, even if it respects the other two principles.

The following policies will guide the recreational activity program and planning of Parc national d'Opémican:

- ❖ Activities will take the fragility of the environment and the rarity or exceptional character of its constituent parts into consideration.
- ❖ Recreational activities and services will help fulfil the park's educational objectives to enhance visitor knowledge and understanding of the natural environment through close contact with nature.
- ❖ Activities and services available to the public will complement what is offered on the park's periphery.

Climbing

Before approving a rock face for climbing, the park administrator must ensure that its development and maintenance, as well as the climbing itself, will not have an impact on the natural environment. Frequently, rock faces, scree slopes and the feet of cliffs are home to unique communities of vegetation or sensitive species of wildlife.

If it is determined that rock climbing will have little impact on the natural environment, and if the rock face needs to be equipped with a belay or anchors (hangers), the park administrator must have it inspected by a person accredited by the Fédération québécoise de la montagne

et de l'escalade (FQME). They will ensure that climbing conditions, installations and rock face (anchor) maintenance meets FQME rules.

From the moment a climbing face becomes accessible to the public, the park administrator must have it inspected periodically by the FQME and receive the inspection report. The administrator must also install adequate signage to advise people of the risks associated with rock climbing, along with a list of emergency telephone numbers.

Water-based activities

Lac Témiscamingue and Lac Kipawa are large lakes that are particularly suitable for canoeing and kayaking – the best ways to explore the landscape. However, when conditions deteriorate, both lakes can be challenging for small watercraft. As a result, it is important to properly inform and equip visitors.

In bad weather on Lac Témiscamingue, the shores offer little shelter. The park administrator must clearly indicate potential shelter and ways off the lake in an emergency. In contrast, Lac Kipawa and its many bays provide shelter, but visitors can become disoriented in the maze of islands. Care will therefore be taken to produce maps and clearly indicate the visual landmarks.

Motorized boats will be permitted on water bodies that are not in preservation zones. If required, the park administrator could institute stricter rules (complete ban of motorized boats in certain sectors, speed limits, etc.).

As for paddling activities on Rivière Kipawa, it is important to remember that its flow is controlled by a dam. The park administrator must communicate with the management of the Laniel dam to coordinate activities on the river. Thanks to a gauging station on the river, it is possible to obtain real-time data on river conditions in order to keep visitors informed.

6.4 EDUCATION

Parks policy requires Québec's national parks to cover a wide range of subjects. Some themes are common to all of the parks, while others are specific to each park. Taken together, the themes help visitors discover the diversity and value of a protected area's natural and cultural heritage.

The Parc national d'Opémican education program must meet certain requirements:

- ❖ gear the approach to a varied audience;
- ❖ include a unit for visiting schools;
- ❖ offer themes focused on the park's unique characteristics, with ample attention to regional history;
- ❖ promote the decompartmentalization of the education program – that is, make education a shared responsibility of the entire park team, one that manifests itself in all park activities and services (talks, interpretive activities, visitor welcome, etc.).

Parc national d'Opémican will educate visitors on the main themes that emerged from the knowledge synthesis (landscape of hilly plateau, cliffs, shaped by the passage of glaciers, diversity of flora and fauna associated with the deciduous–boreal forest transition zone, peregrine falcon nest sites, etc.). Many other elements will enrich the cultural component of the education program. They include the archaeological sites, Algonquin culture, the historic importance of Lac Témiscamingue and Rivière des Outaouais as a navigable waterway traditionally used by aboriginal populations, then by the first explorers and, later, by colonists coming to settle the area.

Meanwhile, the Opémican historic site, with its history that stretches over a century, offers an incredibly rich source of themes for the park's education program. In addition to the buildings themselves, various other approaches can be used to teach visitors about the traditional knowledge and skills used by people in the area (stories and memoirs of workers, discussion of the physical remnants of their passage, etc.).

Conclusion

Covering 293 km², the area proposed for Parc national d'Opémican features the primary characteristics of the Southern Laurentians Natural Region: a relief of flat-topped hills, a landscape shaped by glaciation, fractured basement rock and a grid-like drainage network. Other characteristics unique to the area distinguish it from the other parks in Québec's national park network, like Opémican historic site, the Harricana moraine and the high abundance of pine stands on its territory. No other Québec national park protects an area with such significant white and red pine populations.

The creation of a national park in Témiscamingue would have a leveraging effect on tourism, expanding the range of activities offered and generating spinoffs for businesses offering related products and services. Consequently, once created, this national park will make it possible to protect a representative territory of the Southern Laurentians natural region while helping to develop tourism in the region.

This Provisional Master Plan constitutes the MDDEP's proposal for the creation of Parc national d'Opémican. It will be submitted to the public for consultation during a public hearing following which the Gouvernement du Québec will decide whether to proceed with the creation of Parc national d'Opémican.

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Photo : Maryse Cloutier

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Appendix I

CLASSIFICATION OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES OFFERED IN QUÉBEC NATIONAL PARKS ACCORDING TO THE ZONING

ACTIVITIES	ZONES				
	Service	Intensive Recreation*	Ambience	Preservation	Maximum Preservation
Activities generally permitted — main					
Picnic	•	•	•	(1)	
Hiking	•	•	•	(1)	
Cycling	•	•	•	(2)	
Snowshoeing	•	•	•	(1)	
Cross-country skiing	•	•	•	(1)	
Canoeing and kayaking	•	•	•	(3)	
Sailing	•	•	•	(3)	
Activities generally permitted — secondary					
Rock climbing	•	•	•	(2)	
Underground exploration	•	•	•	(2)	
Horseback riding	•	•	•		
All-terrain biking	•	•	•		
Dog sledding	•	•	•		
Swimming	•	•			
Diving	•	•	•		
Sport fishing	•	•	•		
Hang gliding and paragliding	•	•	•	(2)	
Activities exceptionally authorized					
Cross-country skiing, skating style	(4)	(4)	(4)		
In-line skating	(4)	(4)	(4)		
Golf	(4)	(4)			
Downhill skiing	(4)	(4)			

(1) Activities supported by modest facilities or that are subject to specific conditions such as time periods, supervision, light maintenance of cross-country ski trails, etc.

(2) Use of existing trails or forest roads to practice an activity or to access a site.

(3) Watercraft launching facilities and equipment required (ramp, road, parking area) prohibited.

(4) Activities maintained due to a *de facto* situation.

* Although the recreational park category was discontinued in 2001, intensive recreation zones are maintained on a *de facto* basis where they already exist in Québec national parks. However, no intensive recreation zones will be developed in the future.

Appendix II

CLASSIFICATION OF SERVICES OFFERED IN QUÉBEC NATIONAL PARKS ACCORDING TO THE ZONING

SERVICES	ZONES				
	Service	Intensive Recreation*	Ambience	Preservation	Maximum Preservation
Basic services					
Reception and information	•	•			
Education	•	•	•	•	(1)
Transportation	•	•	•	(2)	
Public safety	•	•	•	•	•
Public hygiene	•	•	•	•	
Complementary services					
Accommodations					
Rudimentary Hut, shelter, primitive campsite	•	•	•	(3)	
Large-scale Cabin	•	•	(4)		
Large-scale Serviced campsite	•	•			
Very large-scale Resort centre, tourist accommodations	(5)	(5)			
Food services	•	•			
Supply services	•	•	(6)		
Equipment rentals	•	•			
Games and facilities for families with children	•	•			
Souvenir sales	•	•			

(1) In very rare cases, scientific research or educational activities are authorized in certain maximum preservation zones.

(2) Light, non-motorized means of transportation such as bicycles or motorized mass transit may be exceptionally authorized in some preservation zones when passable roads already exist. However, individual access by car is prohibited.

(3) Extensive accommodations such as huts and primitive campsites integrated with long hiking trails are exceptionally authorized in certain preservation zones when distances so require.

(4) New cabins may be built near existing roads, following an analysis of the environmental impact and due consideration of other forms of accommodation. Concentration of these facilities should be avoided.

(5) Farms of accommodation maintained due to a *de facto* situation.

(6) Baggage transport and caches of food and gear at strategic locations on a long hiking route may be offered in ambience zones, in accordance with the appropriate regulations and conditions prescribed to minimize the environmental impact and preserve the quality of the visitor experience.

* Although the recreation park category was discontinued in 2001, intensive recreation zones are maintained, on a *de facto* basis, in Québec national parks. However, no other intensive recreation zones will be established.



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