



THE PARC NATIONAL DES ÎLES-DE-BOUCHERVILLE EXPANSION PROJECT

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Introduction

The Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (MELCCFP) is responsible for planning and developing Québec's network of national parks, as well as overseeing their operation. Québec's network of national parks includes 28 territories, in addition to the Parc marin du Saguenay-Saint-Laurent, jointly managed with the Government of Canada.

Created in 1984, Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville is a protected area of 8.14 km² located in the Longueuil agglomeration, mainly in the Boucherville area. It is composed of five islands, crisscrossed by channels, and the mosaic of terrestrial, aquatic, and semi-aquatic environments makes the national park a place of great biodiversity. According to the most recent wildlife inventory, 420 plant species, 51 fish species, 7 amphibian species, 6 reptile species, 170 bird species, and 26 mammal species have been identified in the national park.

The mission of Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville is to protect a representative sample of the natural region of the Basses-terres du Saint-Laurent while making it accessible to current and future generations for educational and low impact recreational purposes.

The national park offers several recreational and educational activities such as hiking, cycling, and water trails, as well as 75 camping sites, including 25 ready-to-camp sites and 15 recreational vehicle (RV) sites. Cherished by city dwellers, the national park is an exceptional haven of nature and biodiversity and a rare, protected ecosystem in the heart of the fleuve Saint-Laurent. The conservation challenge of the Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville is all the more meaningful considering that over 415,000 visitors use the national park every year (average over the last six years).



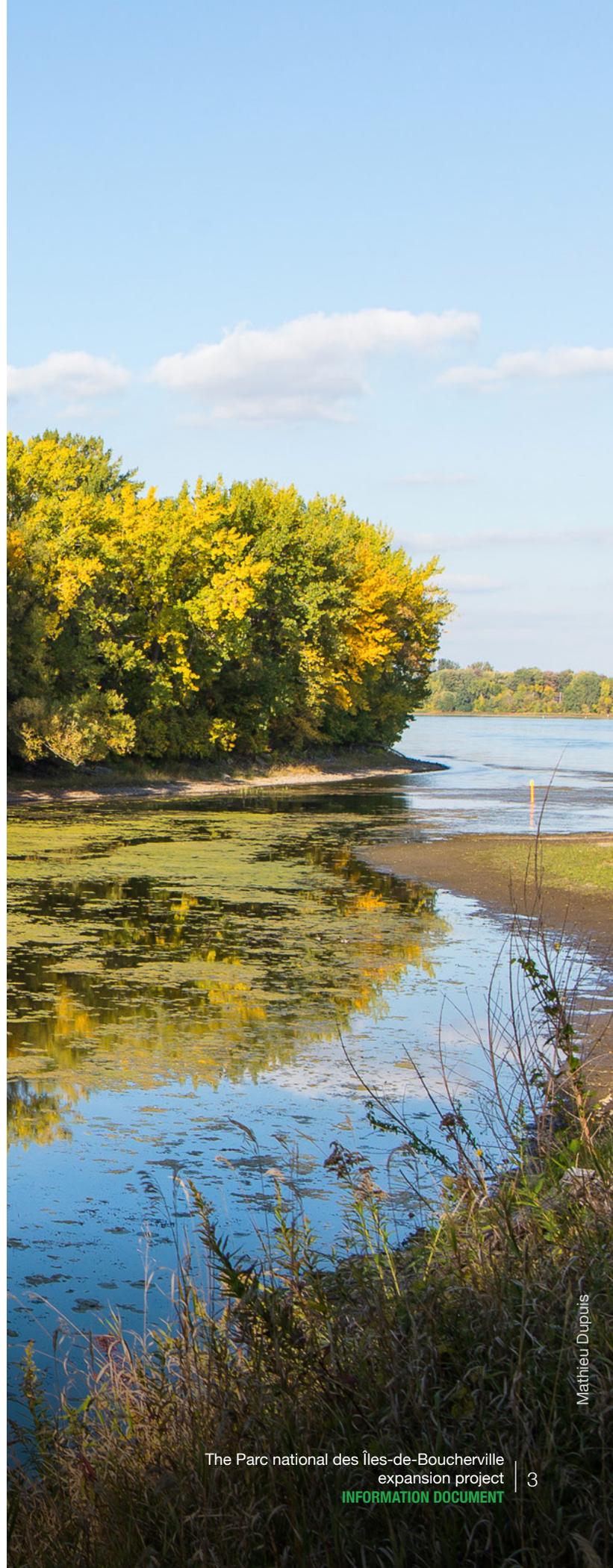
Project

The purpose of the Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville expansion project is to include an adjacent plot acquired by the Gouvernement in 2011. The 0.2 km² piece of land is located on Île Charron, east of the national park's entrance.

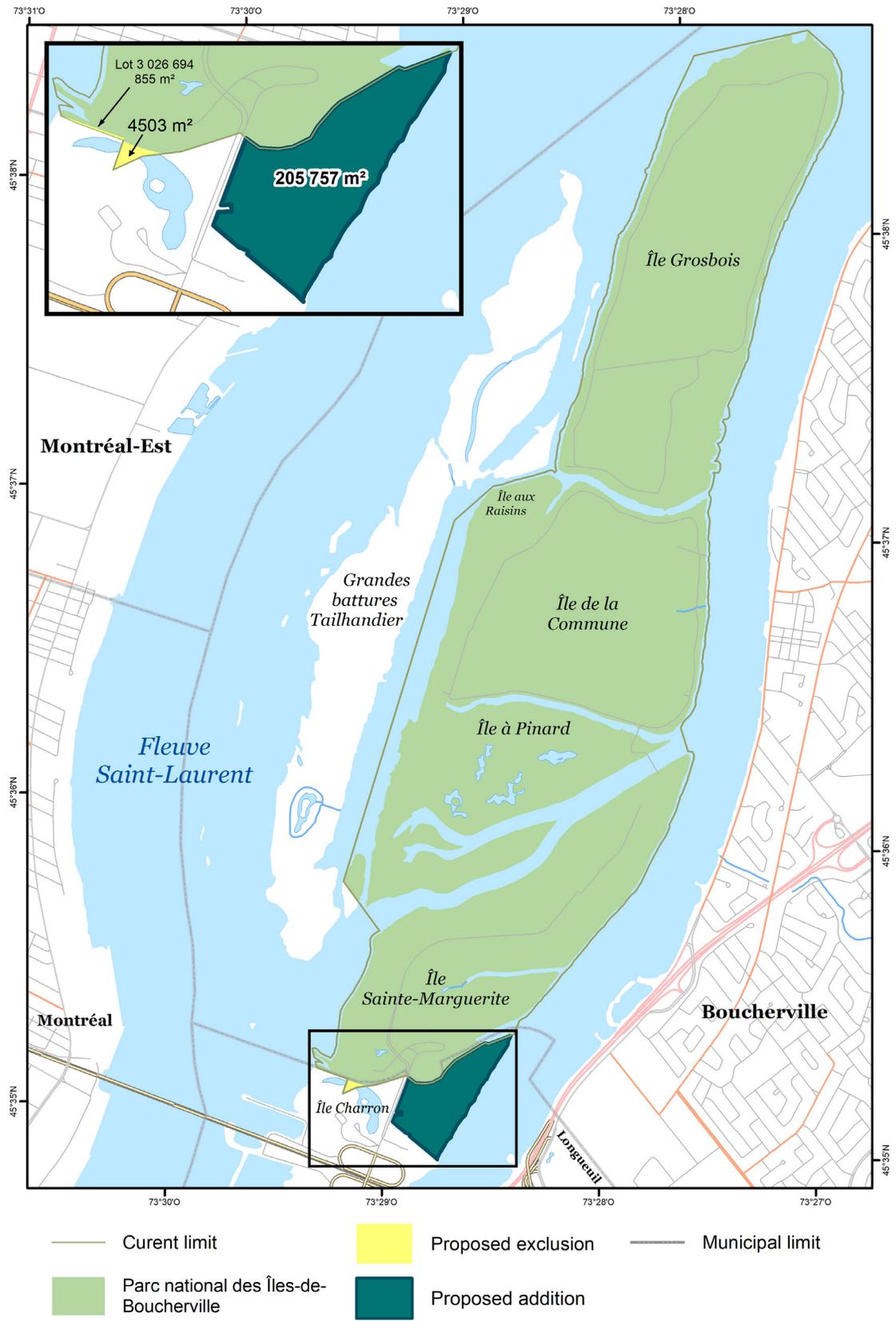
In 2011, following a citizen movement for conservation, the Gouvernement du Québec acquired a piece of land on Île Charron that was targeted for a residential development project. This land is mostly covered with mature forest and has great ornithological potential. In addition, the Dekay's Brownsnake, a designated threatened species, is also present, which further justifies the conservation of this piece of land. The purpose of the expansion project would be to integrate this area into the national park's existing boundaries and to enhance it to preserve the wooded area while making it accessible to visitors.

The MELCCFP is taking advantage of this expansion project and the changes to the boundaries of the national park to propose the removal of a 0.0045 km² plot of land, located on Île Charron and extending to the Longueuil wastewater treatment plant. It is also proposed to exclude a 0.00086 km² lot from the park boundaries. These changes are needed to rectify the current configuration coming from an earlier cadastral division.

At the end of the process, the surface area of the Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville would be 8.34 km², an increase of 0.2 km².



Map 1: Proposed modification of the boundaries of the Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville



Zoning modification

Zoning is an essential planning and management tool to ensure the conservation and accessibility mission of national parks. It consists of delimiting areas of a national park to modulate the degree of protection according to the natural, cultural, and landscape heritage. Zoning is one of the means of guiding interventions in an area for long-term preservation.

Type of zone	Definition	Examples of layouts and permitted activities
Extreme preservation	Zone dedicated exclusively to the protection of natural, cultural, and landscape heritage and which is only exceptionally accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific research
Preservation	Zone primarily dedicated to the protection of natural, cultural, and landscape heritage and accessible by means that have little impact on the environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiking and snowshoeing • Canoeing and kayaking • Lookout
Natural environment	Zone dedicated to the enhancement of natural, cultural, and landscape heritage, characterized by a layout that promotes accessibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path for vehicles or bicycles • Agriculture (Unique to the Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville)
Services	Zone primarily dedicated to reception, accommodation, or administration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service centre • Main parking lot • Campground
Intensive recreation	Area occupied by a golf course, such as the one in the Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville, or by an alpine ski centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alpine ski centre • Golf course

This tool is used by the national park’s operator, in this case the Société des établissements de plein air du Québec (Sépaq), which implements it in its management and development decisions. All development projects must comply with the established zoning plan. The expansion process of the Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville also provides an opportunity to update the current zoning to better reflect the protection and actual use of the land.

The proposed zoning changes take the following elements into account:

- the current use of the land compared to what was planned in the 1984 zoning plan and when the 1986 development concept of the master plan came into effect;
- the inclusion of the Île Charron plot of land that was acquired;

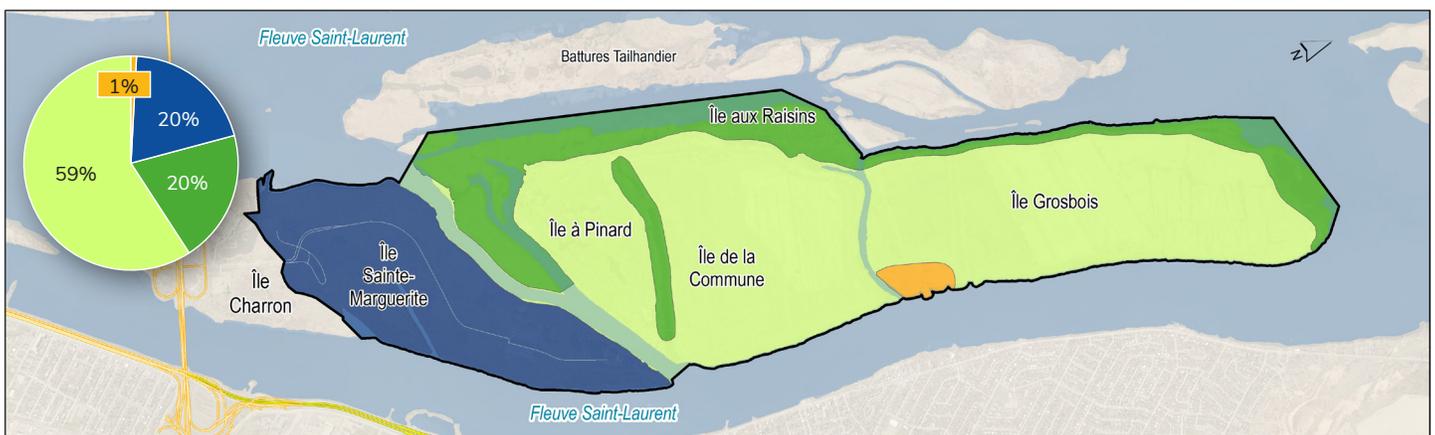
- the proposed new development concept;
- the gradual naturalization of formerly cultivated land.

The land that would be integrated into the Parc national must be assigned a zoning plan and the proposed zoning type is preservation. This proposal reflects on one hand, the elements of natural heritage to be protected and, on the other hand, the proposed developments.

This zoning proposal would significantly increase the level of protection for the national park while maintaining an attractive range of activities for visitors. The percentage of the park’s surface area in the preservation zone would increase from 20% to 44%.

Area	Current zoning		Proposed zoning	
	Surface area (km ²)	Proportion (%)	Surface area (km ²)	Proportion (%)
Extreme preservation	-	-	-	-
Preservation	1.6	20%	3.7	44%
Natural environment	4.8	59%	3.6	43%
Services	0.1	1%	0.4	5%
Intensive recreation	1.6	20%	0.6	8%
Total	8.1	100%	8.3	100%

Map 2: Current zoning and proposed zoning



Rehabilitation of the Île Charron and Canal Molson sectors

Environmental characterization studies carried out on the Île Charron lot and the adjacent area of the national park corresponding to the former Canal Molson have shown the presence of contaminated soil and left over materials (mainly wood, concrete, mortar, metal, glass, tires). This landfilling was done in the 1960s, mostly during the construction work of the Pont-Tunnel Louis-Hippolyte-La Fontaine. It covered part of the Canal Molson, a small section of Île Sainte-Marguerite, and the lot to be integrated into the national park, located on Île Charron.

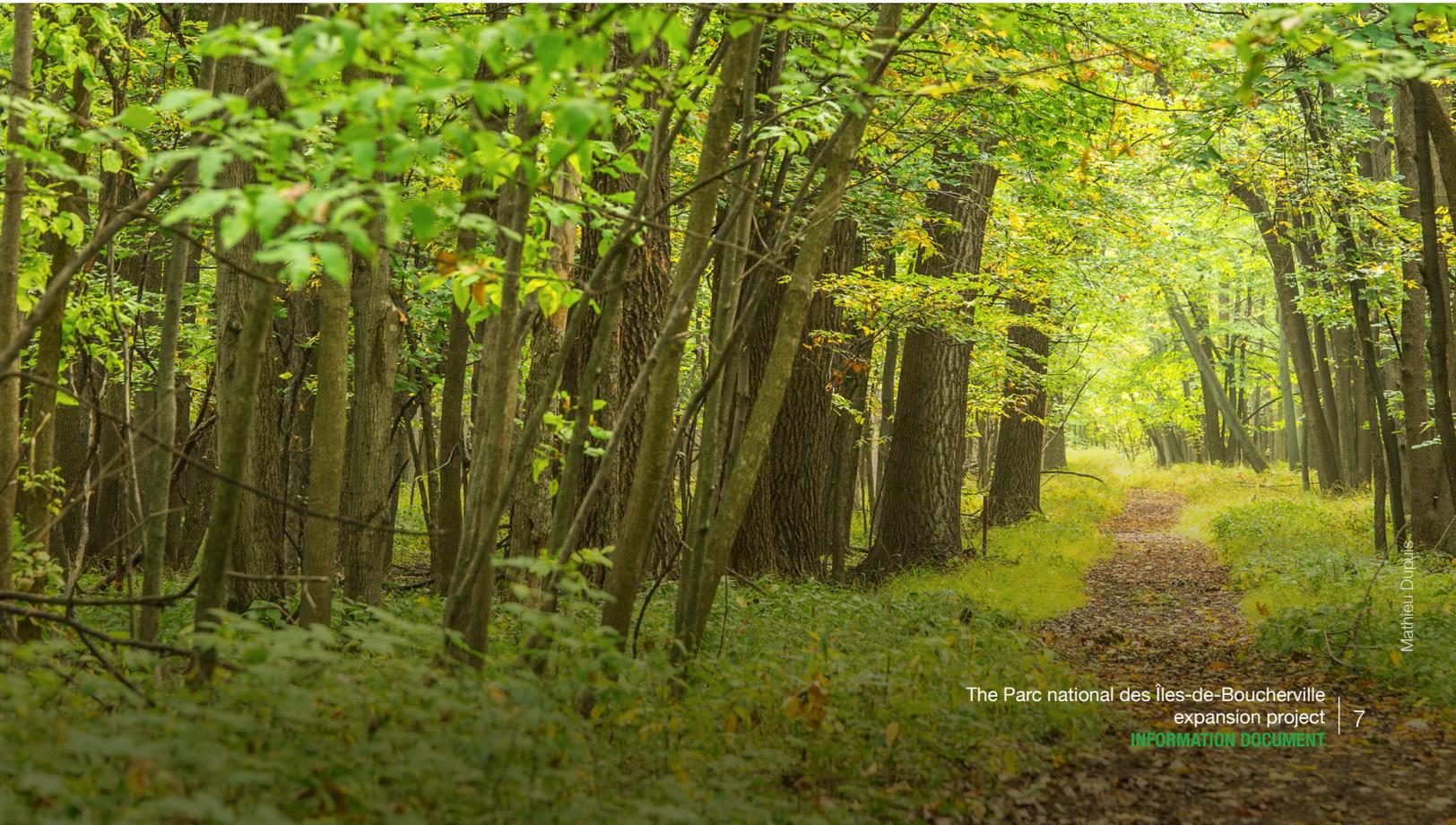
These contaminated lots are registered in the public register of contaminated sites under the financial responsibility of the Gouvernement du Québec. In addition, a rehabilitation process is ongoing in accordance with current environmental standards and with the Environment Quality Act (chapter Q-2) to ensure their safe use for park visitors. To date, several

rehabilitation scenarios have been proposed to the Ministère, and the one with the least impact on the natural environment has been selected.

A detailed rehabilitation plan will be prepared to outline all corrective measures to be implemented, and a public bid for the execution of rehabilitation work is expected to take place in 2026. The work would then be scheduled for 2026–2027. Once this has been completed, development work on the site would begin around 2027–2028.

Proposed development concept

After the rehabilitation process is complete, Sépaq will build a footpath and rest areas, for people to enjoy the beautiful landscape. The recreational vehicle campground in the Molson sector will also be rebuilt and will include a comfort station for campers and park visitors. It is important to note that both processes, the expansion, and the rehabilitation project, are being carried out simultaneously and independently.





Consultation Process

The consultation process is an integral part of the national park expansion process. It allows stakeholders to comment on proposed changes to the national park's boundaries and zoning at various points during the process, to promote social acceptability. Adjustments to the project may be made throughout the consultation process, to consider suggestions and issues raised.

This process includes:

- targeted consultations with local and regional stakeholders;
- specific consultations with the concerned Indigenous communities to ensure their interests and concerns are considered;
- a 60-day online public consultation following the publication of the notice of intent to expand a national park in the *Gazette officielle du Québec*.

A public hearing by the Bureau d'audience publique sur l'Environnement (BAPE) may be held if written objections are submitted to the MELCCFP during these 60 days.

Finally, a second 45-day online public consultation period is carried out when the proposed amendment to the park's Regulation is published in the *Gazette officielle du Québec*.

Want to learn more?

Visit the Gouvernement du Québec's website for information on the [Parc national des Îles-de-Boucherville](#) expansion project.

To submit your comments, please write to the email address: consultation-parcs@environnement.gouv.qc.ca.