

Hudson/St. Lazare Gazette

Vaudreuil-Dorion / Pincourt

The First Quebec English Weekly on the Web

To view front page articles simply click on story or photo

CP intermodal site waterway usage questioned



By the time it flows through Vaudreuil-Dorion, Quinchien river is an open sewer.

LES CÈDRES Environmentalists have brought into question the use of the region's waterways to drain the proposed Canadian Pacific Intermodal Complex, claiming the railway project may impact the flow and quality of water in some of the region's main watercourses.

"Given that the Les Cèdres development doesn't exist in a vacuum, and that the streams are already overused, it's going to be a problem," Green Coalition transport critic Avrom Shtern said last week.

A project description submitted to the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) in January states that among the waterways affected are branches of the Hamelin and Wallo streams as well as the Quinchien River.

The report states that sections of the Wallo and Quinchein will be channelled, while sections of the Hamelin will be relocated for agricultural drainage purposes.

The Quinchein River runs through St. Lazare and Vaudreuil-Dorion before reaching Vaudreuil Bay, while the Hamelin flows into the St. Lawrence.

Given that the Quinchien is "already being used, not so politely, as a draining ditch [], one has to at least study how this will affect the flow," Shtern said.

Vaudreuil-Dorion mayor Guy Pilon said waterways are under jurisdiction of the MRC.

MRC technical services director Raymond Malo said the MRC has yet to receive applications from CP for authorization.

Malo said the MRC has well-defined parameters to ensure the proper flow of water, to prevent erosion and to insure adequate drainage for agricultural land on the territory.

Shtern was critical of the MRC mandate. "The MRC refers to drainage but does not talk much about conservation and re-naturalization," he said. "Ditches and sewers are more important to them."

A reply issued by CP spokesperson Michel Spénard states that "Canadian Pacific is aware of the concerns about how the run-off from the proposed Intermodal Complex will be handled."

CP has already heard from farmers near the proposed site, the Les Cèdres Environmental Committee, the municipality of Les Cèdres and the MRC of Vaudreuil-Soulanges, according to Spénard. Concerns and questions raised have been forwarded to the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA).

"These in particular will no doubt be the subject of further study, as soon as CP has received the Terms of Reference from the CTA."

The Terms of Reference are scheduled for reception for this summer. The terms have to meet guidelines set by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, according to Spénard.

"CP has publicly stated that it will repair or divert any of the existing drainage systems that are present on the adjoining agricultural properties and which are affected by the construction of the Complex.

"Additionally, the run-off from the site will be controlled first by retention ditches which surround the site and then by the controlled release of this water into the various ditches and the Quinchien and Wallo waterways, which now handle the run-off from the surrounding agricultural lands, the existing industrial property known as les Industries Soulanges as well as the Chemin St-Féréole and rue St-Dominique," the CP statement reads.

<http://pages.videotron.com/gazette/Othernews.html> last accessed Wednesday, September 03, 2008