

Appalaches–Maine Interconnection

General information | Spring 2018

Project description

Hydro-Québec TransÉnergie is planning to build a line to connect its electricity system with that of Maine. The project's overall aim is to increase the exchange capacity between Québec and New England. Commissioning is scheduled for 2022.

The project consists of building a transmission line extending approximately 100 km between Appalaches substation in Saint-Adrien-d'Irlande (near Thetford Mines in the Chaudière-Appalaches region) and a connection point on the Québec-Maine border.

The new 320-kV direct-current line will connect to the future New England Clean Energy Connect (NECEC) line, slated for construction in Maine.

In tandem with this project, a new AC-to-DC converter will be installed at Appalaches substation to supply the planned transmission line.

Study area

Hydro-Québec has defined a study area, which will be surveyed and analyzed to determine the best line route.

This area mainly encompasses two administrative regions: Chaudière-Appalaches and Estrie; as well as three regional county municipalities (MRCs): Appalaches, Beauce-Sartigan and Granit.

With a surface area of approximately 4,850 km², the study area is bordered to the north by Appalaches substation, to the west by Lac Mégantic, to the east by the Beauce region and to the south by the Canada-U.S. border. Parc national du Mont-Mégantic, which lies west of the study area, is excluded due to its environmental sensitivity.

The study area covers both private and public lands. Public lands include Parc national de Frontenac on both sides of Lac Saint-François, Zec Louise-Gosford to the south of Lac Mégantic, and major commercial sugar bush operations near Saint-Robert-Bellarmin. Lac Mégantic and the sugar bushes are located near the Canada-U.S. border.

Population density in the study area is relatively low. The main towns are Thetford Mines and Disraeli (northern section), Lac-Mégantic (southwest) and La Guadeloupe (east). The study area also features a number of resort areas associated with major lakes, including Lac Saint-François, Lac Mégantic, Lac Aylmer, Lac aux Aiglees, Lac Elgin and Lac Drolet. The Chaudière is the main river in the area's southeastern reaches. Forest cover, composed mainly of sugar bushes with excellent maple syrup production potential, accounts for nearly 75% of the land in the MRCs.

The study area is part of the Appalachian Plateau and has rugged topography. Peak elevation near the border varies from 400 m to over 900 m.

Environmental and technical studies

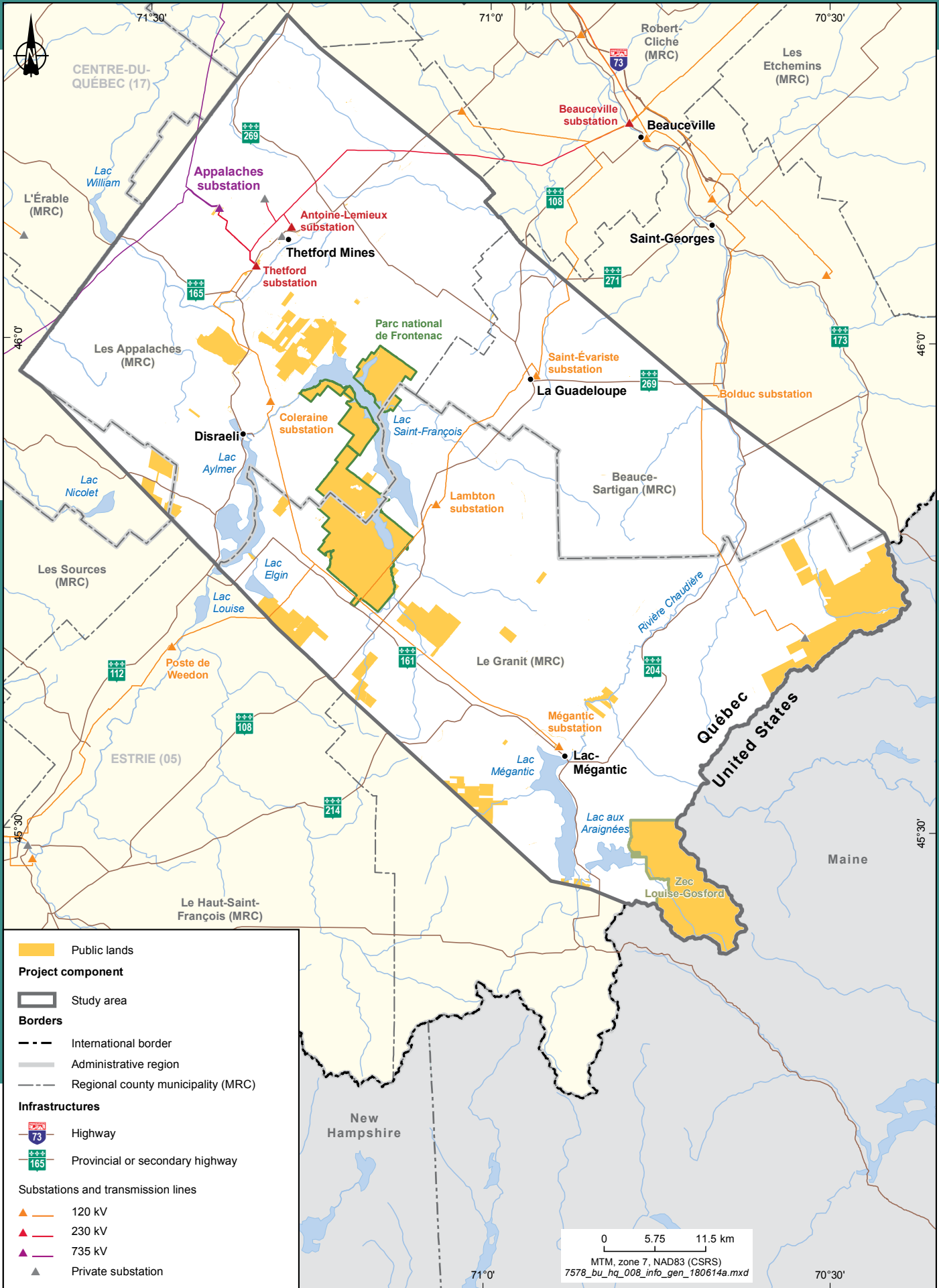
Over the coming months, Hydro-Québec will carry out environmental inventories and technical surveys to better understand the host environment, with a view to choosing the line route with the fewest social, environmental and technical impacts.

Following this, the project team will conduct comparative studies, which will eventually be submitted to the communities concerned.

Integrating social concerns into the environmental, technical and economic studies will let us determine the line route that has the least possible impact.

Based on existing knowledge and experience in power transmission line construction, determining a line route in the study area entails the following:

- **Assessing the interest in pairing the future line with the existing 120-kV line linking Appalaches substation and Mégantic substation**
- **Studying the possibility of developing a new transmission line corridor while taking into account sensitive environments (particularly inhabited areas, resort areas and sugar bushes) and land use projections**
- **Ensuring the lowest visual impact of the new line in the host environment by preserving the quality of the landscape, particularly in light of local land use and tourism development**
- **Carrying out the required technical studies for selecting towers, determining the line route and assessing the project's impacts**



Public participation

Throughout the duration of the studies, Hydro-Québec will implement a public participation process to establish and maintain a dialogue with the affected communities.

Hydro-Québec will begin by meeting with community organizations and groups to share information about the project and note initial concerns.

At each stage, the information gathered will be put into improving project design and execution. Hydro-Québec will take into account the expectations, concerns and opinions expressed by the public and key community stakeholders in order to best adapt the project to local realities.

Concrete support for community development

Hydro-Québec uses its projects as an opportunity to contribute to the development of communities affected by transmission facility construction.

Its Integrated Enhancement Program (IEP) helps fund initiatives aimed at improving community life.

Project schedule

Draft design studies	Spring 2018–summer 2019
Government approvals	Summer 2019–winter 2021
Construction	Spring 2021–fall 2022
Commissioning	Fall 2022

For more information

MRC des Appalaches/MRC de Beauce-Sartigan

COLETTE LETTRE-RACINE
Community Relations Advisor
Direction – Affaires régionales et collectivités
lettrecoline.colette@hydro.qc.ca

INFO-PROJECT LINE

1 855 845-7417

MRC du Granit

NADINE JEANNOTTE
Community Relations Advisor
Direction – Affaires régionales et collectivités
jeannotte.nadine@hydro.qc.ca

INFO-PROJECT LINE

1 877 653-1139

www.hydroquebec.com