



PRESS RELEASE

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RIVIÈRE ROUGE LAND : THE MUNICIPALITY REITERATES ITS CALL TO RESUME DISCUSSIONS

Grenville-sur-la-Rouge, April 7th, 2019 - The Municipality of Grenville-sur-la-Rouge is still waiting for an urgent response from Quebec Premier, Mr. François Legault, in the matter of the conservation of the Hydro-Quebec lands.

The Municipality welcomes Hydro-Québec's new position which is committing to maintaining access to the Rouge River for the population and various rafting, canoeing and kayaking companies, as well as its commitment to register all accesses in the Land Registry. These activities are an essential economic engine for our region.

The municipality reiterates its commitment to preserving this natural environment of great value, and to ensuring the valorization of this exceptional site. It is an asset that must remain the property of the people. These values meet the CAQ's policies and objectives on public accessibility to the Québec territory as well as on the green economy currently under development.

At a public consultation meeting held Thursday, April 4th, Mr. Éric Moisan, Chief of milieu relations for the Laurentians, had committed on behalf of Hydro-Quebec that good faith negotiations would continue with the municipality. We are at a loss to explain Hydro-Québec's change of position as they are now refusing to meet with us to continue these discussions.

The municipality disposes of tools and levers allowing it to preserve the public character of these lands. The legislative framework regarding the disposition of such assets also ensures it must first be in favour of government Departments and municipalities, and we intend to use the necessary means to ensure this right is respected.

It should be noted that in February 2017, Hydro-Québec had submitted a proposal for a simple and realistic purchase offer that would have enabled the municipality to acquire

these lands. The additional conditions attached to the offer filed in August 2018 make it unacceptable and impossible to legally comply with.

"The access rights as proposed by Hydro-Québec are a good first step towards conservation; the next step would be for Hydro to return to the bargaining table so that we can come to a conclusion in accordance with legislation", says Mayor Tom Arnold.

The preservation of accesses for the public and recreational tourism activities is indeed a good first step towards ensuring the enhancement of this exceptional site. By stopping the sale process to private interests, and resuming discussions with the municipality, it will be possible to keep these lands in the public domain. Hydro-Québec will thus ensure this wealth remains in the hands of the entire population.

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Source : **Municipality of Grenville-sur-la-Rouge**
For information : M. Tom Arnold, Mayor

E-mail: tarnold@gslr.ca
Office: 819-242-8762
Cell: 613-677-1001