

No comments from the public during consultation regarding railway work required after 2026

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GASPÉ: - There were no comments from the public, municipalities or Indigenous communities following the publication of a project notice submitted to the Ministry of the Environment by the Ministry of Transport on the interventions required by 2030 to secure six segments of the Gaspé Peninsula railway on Section 3 between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé.

In a letter from the Ministry of the Environment, Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks, to the General Directorate of Rail Transport, the ministry instructed the Ministry of Transport to continue its efforts to inform and consult with the public.

A vast \$872 million project aims to safely restore rail traffic in 2026 on the entire section between Matapedia and Gaspé. However, additional funds will have to be invested to ensure sustainability over 75 years for section three, the most sensitive to coastal erosion and submersion.

The document notes that coastal protection work will be



Photo: N. Sergerie

The Banc de Pabos, which was ravaged by a storm is part of the submitted plan.

carried out on approximately 11 linear kilometres, spread across six separate and non-contiguous sites of the railway right-of-way.

In these six sites, the cumulative intervention distance within the two-year flood recurrence limit is greater than 500 metres or approximately 3.2 linear kilometres, and due to the variants studied, it is estimated that a cumulative area equal to or greater than 5,000m² will possibly also be exceeded.

The sites targeted are in Pabos Mills West, over a length of 225 metres; Pabos Mills, over a length of 1,210 metres; Chandler, over a length of 1,190 metres; the Banc de Pabos, over a length of 1,340 metres, Barachois, over a distance of 5,700 metres; and Douglastown, over a length of 1,480 metres.

In the document filed, the Ministry of Transport specifies “that the project includes coastal hazard protection work. It is planned that this

work will be carried out following the rehabilitation of the Gaspésie railway between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé.

Several solutions are being analyzed to correct the six sites: moving the railway track outside the constraint zone associated with coastal hazards; local setback of the railway track; and raising the railway track. The solutions and variants will be analyzed based on four main aspects: the technical aspect, the transport and railway safety aspect, the environmental aspect, and the socio-economic aspect.

Considering that work is underway to put the railway back into service and that work to protect the railway infrastructure against climatic hazards will be carried out subsequently, the working methods will be adapted to avoid compromising, as far as possible, the maintenance of the railway service.

The ministry emphasizes that although some variants under study propose moving the current track, it will still be recommended, as part of the project, that the work be carried out within the current

right-of-way as much as possible.

This approach will reduce the potential impacts on the neighboring human and biophysical environments present in the sector.

One of the central principles that will be put forward as part of the design will be to minimize permanent and temporary encroachments in sensitive environments, including coastal water and wetlands as a priority.

According to the preliminary schedule submitted by the Ministry of Transport to the Ministry of the Environment, the environmental impact study and the preliminary draft would be filed in December. The admissibility notice is expected in March 2025 and a recommendation from the minister in September 2026.

In the meantime, the final preliminary project is to be submitted in December 2025, the preliminary and final plans and specifications in December 2026 and the construction between 2027 and 2030.

The preliminary estimate for the completion of the project isn't mentioned in the document.