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STATEMENT
For immediate release

While being in favor for the exportation of electricity ...

SOS mont Hereford claims, in Massachusetts, that Hydro-Québec does not meet one of the conditions from his request for proposals for its Northern Pass project

Montreal, Quebec and Sherbrooke, Thursday, July 27th, 2017 - While Hydro-Québec is seeking a major electricity supply contract in New England, today, the SOS mont Hereford coalition has drawn the attention of the service offers evaluation committee in Massachusetts in order to raise their awareness on the sacking of the most important ecological legacy in Quebec's private land, which is about to happen with the projected passage of the Northern Pass power line from Quebec to New Hampshire. The Massachusetts call for proposals clearly indicates its concern regarding the respect of public and private lands protected areas, which Hydro-Québec is ignoring in its commitment to build its power lines across the Hereford mountain range.

Indeed, among the call for proposals's criteria are the environmental impacts on the environment in which the project will be implemented. More specifically, it is stated that the "environmental impacts sitings extend to which a project demonstrates that it avoids or mitigates, to the extent praticable, impacts to the natural resources, including but not limited to conservation lands and / or public or private conservation easements".

"We are not against the exportation of our electricity surplus, but it must be done in an exemplary way. We can not sell "clean" energy to the Americans while destroying everything in our path. The power lines will be buried in the United States on a distance of 100km, avoiding protected areas and preserving the landscapes. The same manner must be applied in Quebec as well." said Christian Simard, general manager of Nature Québec and one of the spokespersons of SOS mont Hereford.

Today, the coalition wrote to the Massachusetts evaluation team to ensure that the protected area criterion was met in the analysis of Northern Pass, an Eversource and Hydro-Québec project to transport energy produced by hydroelectricity from Quebec to Massachusetts and to other New England states via New Hampshire.

As part of the process for companies to submit clean energy proposals to Massachusetts, the SOS mont Hereford coalition - representing environmental and conservation groups in Quebec - wanted to voice its concern about this project which, both in Quebec and in the United States, must pass through highly sensitive areas for biodiversity and landscapes. Unlike New Hampshire, where the power line will be buried over a hundred kilometers in order to preserve the White Mountains, Hydro-Québec does not intend to do the same for

the Quebec portion of the line, which must then pass through the heart of Hereford Forest, a recognized protected area.

In its letter to the members of the project evaluation team, coalition members wrote: "... (...), we favour initiatives that increase supplies of renewable energy on the continent. Nevertheless, the Northern Pass project, in its current form, is designed to have a high voltage power line passing in the heart of a forest conservation easement named Hereford Forest, in southern Quebec. (...). This situation is very worrying for our coalition since it constitutes a threat on protected areas and conservation efforts on private land in southern Quebec. "

After recalling that the impact of projects on conservation lands, including easements (as in Hereford Forest), is clearly mentioned in the explicit criteria for the call for proposals, the coalition points out in its letter that, at their 40th conference in 2016, "the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Prime Ministers recognized the the need to establish a cross-borders and cross-landscapes collaboration to further advance conservation and ecological connectivity restoration efforts. ". The latter have even adopted a formal resolution on this matter.

"We felt it was important to raise awareness directly with the Massachusetts evaluation team because for us, there can not be renewable energy if it is not delivered in a sustainable way, respecting the natural environment and communities" said Christian Simard, general manager of Nature Québec and one of the spokespersons of the coalition.

The coalition ends its letter by expressing the following wish: "We very much hope that Hydro-Québec and its partner Eversource will be able to complete their project by bypassing the protected territory of Hereford Forest and burying the line outside it in order not to adversely affect the neighboring communities and the emblematic landscapes of this region. The current scenario does not allow for this option at this time, but we believe that the latter is still possible and desirable for all parties. "

Before sending this statement, the coalition has previously informed Hydro-Québec and government officials for them to understand the meaning of this approach.

Note that electricity companies interested in providing "clean energy" in Massachusetts had until today, July 27, to file their proposals, which will then be analyzed on merit. The decision is expected on January 25th, 2018.

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[See the letter sent to the service offers evaluation committee in Massachusetts](#)

The **SOS mont Hereford** coalition is a collaboration with Nature Québec, Appalachian Corridor, Conseil régional de l'environnement de l'Estrie and Réseau de milieux naturels protégés organisations. To date, SOS mont Hereford has received support from the Regroupement national des conseils régionaux de l'environnement du Québec (national group of environmental councils), Paysages estriens, Commission sur les Ressources naturelles et le territoire de l'Estrie, Tourisme Cantons-de-l'Est, SNAP Québec, author-

songwriter Richard Séguin, as well as more than 10,000 people online.

Coalition's web site : <http://soshereford.org/>

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