



La rivière Gatineau est un enjeu électoral

The Gatineau River is an Election Issue

Facts

The MRC des Collines plans to build massive septic sludge lagoons on the river at Farrellton that will treat 6 times more waste than the combined facilities at:

- Bouchette
- Cantley
- Chelsea
- La Peche
- Maniwaki

These septic sludge lagoons are designed to drain 'treated effluent' into the river every day of their operation.

'Treated effluent' still contains toxins and pharmaceuticals that are largely unmonitored and whose cumulative impacts on the ecosystem and human health is unknown.

It will require thousands of extra truck trips on the already busy highway 105 to bring the sludge from approximately 46,000 people to Farrellton year round.

This plant, which will be paid for with taxpayers' money, is unnecessary because arrangements currently exist which adequately treat the region's septic sludge at no cost to the MRC.

It is possible that additional sludge from all municipalities in the MRC des Collines can be accommodated at the recently retro-fitted plant in the Pontiac. The Retro-fit has created excess capacity and uses Geo-tubes to improve the quality of the effluent.

People have a number of common reactions to our opposition to this proposed Septic Sludge Plant. We have provided responses to those reactions to clarify our position.

MASSIVE SEPTIC SLUDGE LAGOONS? **NO!** SAVEthegatineau.com

People Say:

1. It has to go somewhere.

Yes it does but this doesn't address the type of technology nor the disproportionately huge volumes of septic sludge trucked from 80 KM away nor the damage that will be done to the river.

2. You people haven't provided any alternatives.

Our tax money will be used for this project and our MRC specifically dictated septic sludge lagoons to the consulting engineers — they didn't even investigate alternative solutions — they do exist and that's their job.

3. The river will be cleaner.

There hasn't been any comprehensive baseline testing of the river quality beyond very basic e-coli testing, and it defies logic to think that trucking sludge from Buckingham and Quyon to Farrellton and releasing effluent into the Gatineau River will clean it up.

4. In the old days people didn't even have septic tanks, it went straight in the river so this is better.

In the old days the population density was much lower and people weren't ingesting pharmaceuticals on a wide scale, nor were they using anti-bacterial soaps and modern household cleaners and assorted chemical cleanses in their day to day life. Secondly, small numbers of people living along the river with outhouses is completely different than a single-point-of entry to the river for the effluent from 46,000 people every day, 8 months of the year.

5. Think of all the cows along the river and the runoff from them – this will be way better — the equivalent of about 7 cows a year. Or a teaspoon of sugar in a pool.

Believe it or not one of the councillors along the river made these claims to a constituent — it doesn't deserve a rebuttal.

6. They do this all the time in Quebec and the Minister of Environment always approves these types of installations.

Just because other rivers have been damaged and polluted doesn't mean it's a good idea -our river will never be as clean as it is now if they go ahead with the project and alternatives do exist. Indeed, the Minister of the Environment also usually approves a variety of proven technologies, most of them more efficient and requiring less trucking than this one.



7. You people are just selfish NIMBYs.

The river is part of the communal heritage of each and every citizen and taxpayer — just because many of the vocal people live near the river doesn't mean that they own the river— everyone owns the river .. if the MRC was planning on building a septic sludge lagoon system draining into the lake or stream near you, that would be wrong too. Over 2000 people have signed a petition asking for this project to be halted and that number is growing daily.

8. Were not there yet.

This is a phrase you'll hear often from our elected officials when you ask any of the following tough questions:

- 1) how much trucking will be involved with this project?
- 2) will the trucks be owned by the municipality or will they be private contractors?
- 3) how much insurance will you have to carry for this project and ongoing operations
- 4) what will become of the left over, dried 'cake'? will it be spread on farmers fields? will we have to pay to have it trucked and processed somewhere else/
- 5) will La Peche Municipality institute mandatory pumping every 2 years? Is there any proof that this is necessary?

9. Let us do our work.

This is a meaningless sentence. It implies that citizens are disturbing progress when in fact, being accountable, transparent and acting in our communal best interests is part of the oath of office taken by elected officials.

Sewage Treatment Facility in Chelsea:

The proposed sewage facility is oversized, far in excess of what might be needed.

There is no reason that the sewage treatment facility couldn't be on the developer's lands.

There is no reason why it couldn't be sized to the actual needs.

There is no reason why sewage cannot be treated directly at all new developments which is what we see at truly sustainable residential developments.

MASSIVE SEPTIC SLUDGE LAGOONS? **NO!** SAVE the Gatineau.com

Boues de fosses séptiques? **NON!** SAVE the Gatineau.com

Did you know the MRC des Collines plans a **large septic sludge plant** on the Gatineau river?

Did you know this plant may accept sludge from **46,000 people**?

Did you know that the proposed **septic sludge plant will pollute** the Gatineau particularly during peak recreational season when the water levels are at the annual low?

Did you know that this plant is **old technology** and better alternatives are available?

Did you know that a **solution for the entire Outaouais region** is more efficient than a **local MRC approach**?

WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS?

Elected officials must **include citizens** in the process,
act transparently, and ensure proper analysis to **spend taxes wisely**.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP KEEP OUR RIVER CLEAN?

1. **Call** your mayor. **Write** to your MNA. Make your voice heard.
2. **Attend** MRC meetings (third Thursday of each month) 7p.m. 216 ch. Old Chelsea.
3. **Join** Save the Gatineau (Tel: 819-593-0050)
4. **Sign** the petition <http://www.savethegatineau.com/petition>
5. **Join** Fondation Rivières (fr@fondationrivieres.org)

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