

Context

In 2020, the Ministry of Environment, Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks (“MELCCFP”) mandated the Regroupement des organismes de bassins versants du Québec (ROBVQ) to create a governance structure implementing **integrated water resource management** for the fluvial section of the Ottawa River in Quebec. The objective was to create an **inter-regional forum for discussion and consultation** on issues affecting the Ottawa River, in line with the 2018-2030 Quebec Water Strategy and in response to Orientation 7 of its action plan.

A **working group** composed of the ROBVQ, seven watershed organizations (“OBV”) in the territory and the Table de concertation régionale Haut-Saint-Laurent - Grand Montréal was set up. Following public consultations and a brief portrait of the territory, the working group determined the governance structure to be recommended, as well as the four priority issues to be addressed:

ALTERATION OF WATER QUALITY

FLOODS

DESTRUCTION OF WETLANDS

DESTRUCTION OF WILDLIFE AND
PLANT HABITATS

The project led to the creation of the **53rd integrated water management zone** in Quebec, and the initiation of an integrated water resources management plan (“PGI”) for this zone. The project resulted in the creation of a collegial governance structure, the **Table de concertation de la rivière des Outaouais (“TCO”)**, based on a consensus-building approach among water stakeholders in the area concerned, and tasked with ensuring integrated water management. The TCO develops and maintains strategic territorial planning for the new **zone de gestion intégrée de la rivière des Outaouais (ZGIRO)**.

QUEBEC WATER STRATEGY 2018-2030

Orientation 7. Ensure and strengthen integrated water resources management

Objective 7.2 Maintain and strengthen intergovernmental and international cooperation to promote Québec’s interests and foster integrated water management.

Measure 7.2.4 Cultivate strategic partnerships



Western chorus frog © Copyright free
Endangered species in Québec

Historic

- 2020** The ROBVQ has been mandated by the MELCC to create a governance structure to implement integrated water management on the Quebec portion of the Ottawa River.
- 2021** A working group draws up a summary portrait of the issues. Targeted consultations identify four priority issues. The governance structure is also determined.
- 2022** The TCO's constitution assembly is held on April 21, 2022.
- 2023** Development of a portrait and diagnosis of the Ottawa River integrated management area.
- 2024** Development of the strategic plan and action plan.

Quebec's integrated water resource management

Under the Water Act, adopted in 2009, the management of water resources and associated environments must be carried out in an integrated and concerted manner in designated hydrographic units [...] (RLRQ, C-6.2 art. 13). In Quebec, these include...

40

watershed
management zones

12

St. Lawrence
integrated
management zones

1

Ottawa River
integrated
management zone

Composition of the Roundtable

The composition of the Table is intended to be representative of the various uses of water resources on the territory, as well as the territorial diversity of each of the sectors in the integrated management zone. It is therefore composed of nineteen (19) seats belonging to the following sectors:



- Municipal sector (6)**
6 MRC including Gatineau
- Economic sector (6)**
Agriculture, industries and businesses, hydropower generation, tourism and yachting, maritime transport, floating seat
- Community sector (6)**
Culture and heritage, education and training, environment, outdoors, hunting and fishing, health, floating seat
- Indigenous communities' representative**



Vision

Put the Ottawa River back at the heart of the decisions and concerns of the various stakeholders who have an influence on improving its integrity.

Mission

Promote discussion and cooperation among local water stakeholders to achieve common objectives in relation to Ottawa River issues.

ZGIRO in figures...

- A territory of **1,845 km²**
- **38** municipalities, including 4 unorganized territories and one indigenous community
- **6** MRCs and **3** administrative regions
- An unceded Algonquin territory, inhabited by the **Temiscaming** Algonquin community and used by 4 other indigenous communities
- Over **600 km** of river, from the Première-Chute dam to the Carillon dam
- **10** major tributaries, including the Kipawa, Gatineau and Rouge rivers.
- **204 km²** of wetlands
- **103** species of wildlife and plants at risk, including the Blanding's turtle and the American eel
- **23** dams, **2** reservoirs and **7** hydroelectric power plants
- **19** wastewater treatment plants
- **24** drinking water treatment plants serving some **320,000** people



Blanding's turtle © Copyright free
Endangered species in Canada



Fish sampling © OBV-RPNS

Mandate

Coordinate the development of an integrated management plan ("PGI") and the implementation of the associated action plan.

Mobilize water stakeholders

Exchange on new initiatives and issues concerning the Ottawa River

The Integrated Management Plan

The Integrated Management Plan (“PGI”) is a strategic territorial planning tool that brings together the elements needed to understand the issues related to the water resources of the Ottawa River. Produced in accordance with the water resources management reference framework,¹ the PGI guides local stakeholders in the actions to be taken to ensure the sustainable use of the region’s water resources.

The process led to a diagnosis of the ZGIRO territory, focusing on the four (4) priority issues identified during public consultations. Based on this diagnosis, eight (8) major orientations, twenty-one (21) objectives and over eighty (80) actions were identified!

1. Ministère de l’Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques (2022). *Cadre de référence de la gestion intégrée des ressources en eau*. 46 pages.



Priority issues & orientations



Alteration of water quality

Orientation 1.1 Reduce contaminant and sediment inputs to the Ottawa River at source

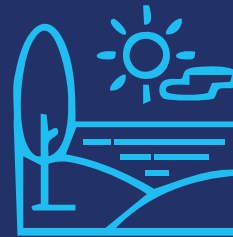
Orientation 1.2 Improve knowledge of Ottawa River water quality



Floods

Orientation 2.1 Reduce the impact of flooding on communities along the Ottawa River

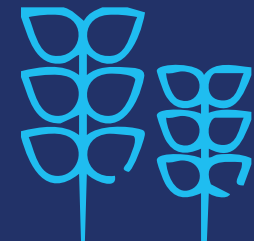
Orientation 2.2 Optimize communication between stakeholders during flood management on the Ottawa River



Destruction of wetlands

Orientation 3.1 Prevent the loss of wetlands along the Ottawa River

Orientation 3.2 Preserve and restore wetlands along the Ottawa River



Destruction of wildlife and plant habitats

Orientation 4.1 Maintain biodiversity and ecosystem integrity

Orientation 4.2 Limit the introduction, spread and invasion of exotic terrestrial and aquatic species

Harmonization

A consultation process with water stakeholders has enabled us to align the actions identified in the action plan with local priorities, as well as with the actions set out in various existing planning tools in the ZGIRO. Here are a few examples:

- Water Master Plans of watershed organizations
- Water Management Plan (Ville de Gatineau)
- MRCs agricultural zone development plans
- MRCs Regional wetlands and water bodies plans
- National Capital Commission Development Plan



Variegated Pond-lily © Copyright free

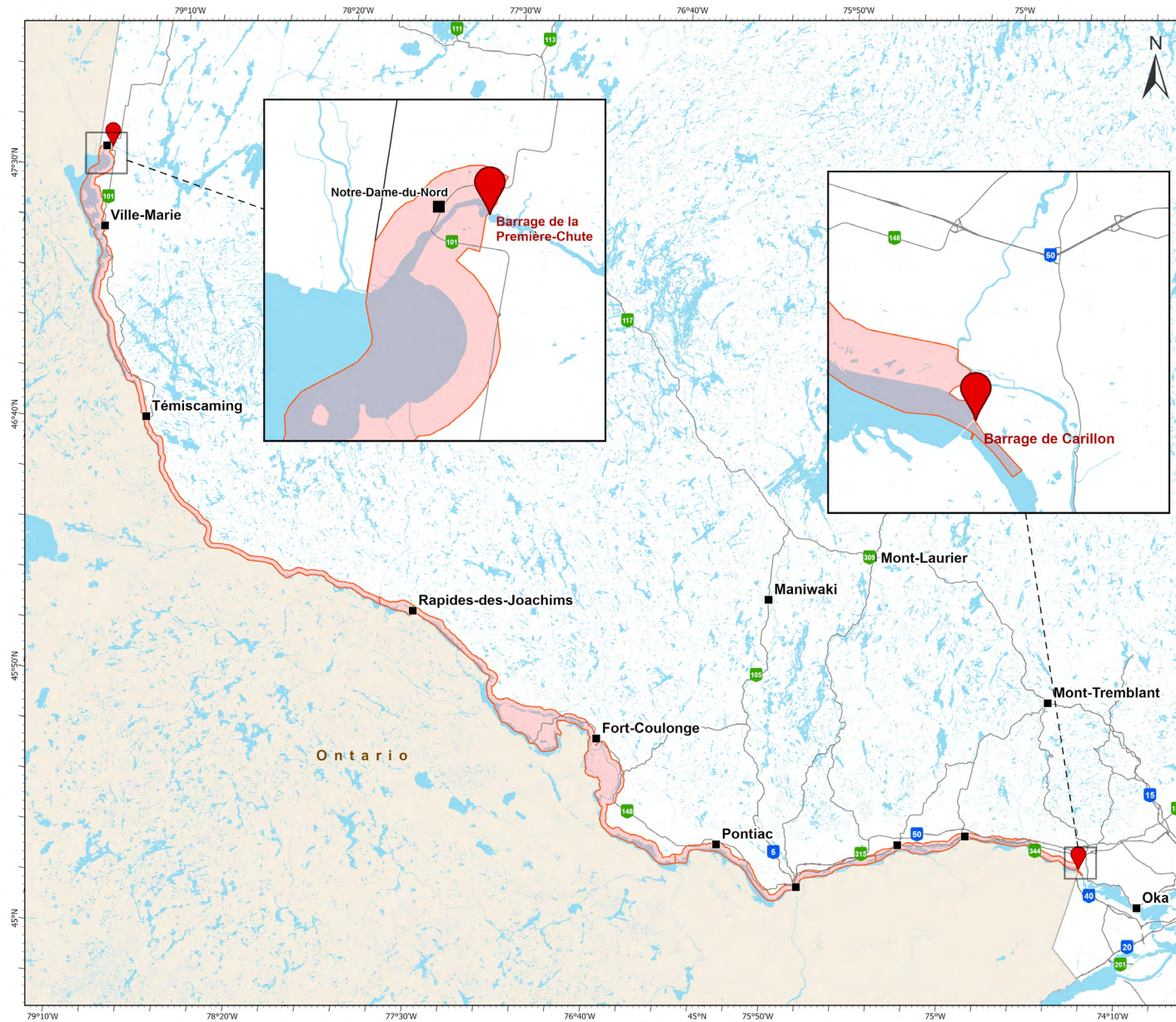


Red-throated loon © Copyright free

Seating at the Table*

- A term of office lasts two (2) years, except for the municipal sector.
- A representative may serve several consecutive terms.
- For the process of appointing municipal representatives, the term of office is based on the procedure established by each MRC.
- Any representative sitting on the TCO may withdraw at any time.
- Representatives from the economic and community sectors, whose terms have expired, are elected by the stakeholders in their respective sectors.
- Elections take place at the stakeholder assembly.
- The TCO meets approximately three (3) times a year.
- When a decision is required as a result of concerted efforts, it is made on the basis of a con-sensus between the representatives.

*Operating rules are available on request.



Légende

- Zone de gestion intégrée de la rivière des Outaouais
- Réseau hydrographique
- Barrages
- Municipalités
- Réseau routier

Zone de gestion intégrée de la rivière des Outaouais

TCO Réalisation 2023

Limites de la zone de gestion intégrée de la rivière des Outaouais

0 25 50 km
1:1 250 000
NAD 83 Québec Lambert

Références

Barrages : CEHQ, s. d.
Municipalités : Ressources naturelles Canada, 2022
Réseau hydrographique : MERN, 2019 ; MRNF, 2022
Réseau routier : MERN, 2022

January 2025 - English version

For more information on the integrated management plan, please consult <https://tcriviereoutaouais.ca/plan-de-gestion-integree/>

Reference to site :
Ottawa River Roundtable. (2025). *The Ottawa River Roundtable, what is it?* Fact Sheet. 8 pages.



Table de concertation de la rivière des Outaouais (TCO)
Telephone : 819 717-3171 extension 106
tco@tcriviereoutaouais.ca
<https://tcriviereoutaouais.ca/>

Stratégie québécoise
de l'eau
2018-2030

