



**PRESS RELEASE
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Attention publicity directors

May 6 2021

Mount Owl's Head: An environmental rampage to service four lots

Magog – An access road for four residential lots is under construction on the east flank of Mount Owl's Head in slopes greater than 45 degrees. For almost one kilometre, within 100 metres of Lake Memphremagog, dynamiting of rocky outcrops, excessive backfilling and deforestation have created a permanent scar in an area nevertheless designated as 'a natural landscape of superior interest' in the Memphremagog MRC's Management and Development Plan.

Due to the steep slopes and the fragility of the soil, the construction of this road on the flank of the mountain and the eventual construction of residences near the lake risk creating significant erosion affecting the quality of the lake's water, already under stress. The increase in sediments could negatively affect fish populations, one of the main attractions of this sport fishing lake.

Memphremagog conservation Inc. (MCI) is deeply concerned by this situation. *'The east flank of Mount Owl's Head overlooks Lake Memphremagog. For over 10 years now, we have expressed our concerns about urban and residential development on steep slopes within the Lake Memphremagog watershed. Need we remember, once again, that the lake is a drinking water reservoir for more than 50% of Eastern Townships residents?'*, notes Robert Benoit, MCI's President.

Marie-José Auclair, biologist and long-term resident on the shores of Lake Memphremagog in the municipality of Potton, does not hide her dismay and that of her neighbours faced with such environmental destruction. *'The forests on the flanks of Mount Owl's Head contribute greatly to the beauty of the natural landscapes of Lake Memphremagog. It is an intact area, of ancient forests and many mountain streams, and containing fragile species which have, up to now, been protected by the inaccessibility of the site.'*

Though we understand the importance of the activities of the Owl's Head tourist area for the maintenance of the economic vitality of the region, such invasive construction in a relatively intact forest ecosystem shows just how willing we are to sacrifice the common good to service a few residences and satisfy financial interests.

We condemn the fact that the authorities judged it acceptable to build a road in this sector of Mount Owl's Head.

We have our doubts regarding the ability of the bylaws in place to protect our environment and demand that these bylaws be revised to better control the construction of private roads on steep slopes.

We demand that no more road construction or residential construction permits be issued on the east flank of Mount Owl's Head.

Signatories:

Robert Benoît,
Volunteer president of MCI

Marie-José Auclair,
Biologist and resident of the
municipality of Potton

Louise Gratton,
Consultant in ecology
and conservation

Photos of the site taken over the past few days:







For digital media, here is a link to download a video taken by drone on May 1st, 2021:

<https://youtu.be/qnTjSqStxe4>

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Source :

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