

## Lisée visits the Gaspé and promises to challenge the Liberals

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**GASPÉ:** – The leader of the Parti Québécois Jean-François Lisée promises to challenge the Liberals at the National Assembly in order to “put the spotlight on government inaction,” regarding the Gaspé Peninsula.

However, Mr. Lisée didn’t give many details about his own commitments if he’s elected Premier of Quebec in October 2018.

The leader of the opposition was on the Gaspé Peninsula on March 18, 19 and 20. He stopped in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, Amqui, Gaspé and Percé, where he visited the wharf.

“I ask Justin Trudeau and Philippe Couillard to quickly resolve the question of the Percé wharf,” Mr. Lisée said. The two governments must find a solution for at least the part of the wharf to be used this summer and “for the whole wharf to be repaired in 2018,” he added.

The Percé wharf was damaged by the December 30 storm. It was already in poor condition before the storm and can’t be used this coming summer without repairs.

The *Société des établissements de plein air du Québec* (SÉPAQ) should acquire the wharf once rebuilt by the federal government, believes Mr. Lisée. “There’s no point in giving a small municipality the responsibility for an infrastructure which is so important for the region and for the whole of Quebec.”

SÉPAQ manages Bonaventure Island and Percé Rock provincial park and most of the boat traffic from the Percé wharf goes to those attractions.

The SPEC asked Mr. Lisée if he will recommend for the SÉPAQ to acquire the wharf if he’s elected premier in October 2018. “We’ll see what the state of the situation in 2018 (...) It’s the optimal solution. If another solution is found, we won’t be dogmatic.”

The leader of the opposition also criticized the poor condition of the Gaspesian railway, which prevents the LM Wind Power plant from loading its blades on the train from Gaspé.

“The freight train has to be able to go to Gaspé as soon as possible. Its absence is going to lead to major traffic problems during the tourist season. When the plant reaches its



Photo: G. Gélinas

*Leader of the Parti Québécois Jean-François Lisée was on the Gaspé on March 18, 19 and 20.*

cruising speed, it’s going to create traffic jams.” The blades manufactured in Gaspé are transported by truck to New Richmond, where they are loaded on train cars.

Mr. Lisée hopes that the railway repairs will have made progress by October 2018. “If nothing or not much is done, we’ll establish an accelerated timetable for (the repairs) to be done and we’ll prepare a program for the return of the passenger train,” said the leader of the opposition. However, he didn’t give details about deadlines or amounts.

The Liberal government “abandoned the wind energy sector,” even though its costs have lowered and are “perfectly competitive,” with the cost of hydroelectricity, stated Mr. Lisée.

Gaspesians can “rely on us” (the Parti Québécois) for future wind energy development, said Mr. Lisée. Québec will order windfarms when the province needs electricity.

However, the leader of the opposition doesn’t say when a call for tenders could be launched. “I cannot tell you that now because the Liberals have slowed down the Québec energy transition (...). We’re going to accelerate the energy transition and promote wind energy for exports and in the new energy production, there

will be wind energy.”

The opinion of Mr. Lisée has changed slightly since he came to the Gaspé Peninsula as a candidate for the Parti Québécois leadership in July. At that time he said that he wouldn’t order new windfarms, but would “accompany our businesses on external markets.”

Jean-François Lisée promised to hold an “interpellation” (long intervention) about the Gaspé Peninsula on April 7 at the National Assembly, in the presence of the minister responsible for the region, Sébastien Proulx. An interpellation means that “we force a minister to listen to our questions for three hours. Sébastien Proulx will be held hostage by spokespersons of the Gaspé,” Mr. Lisée explained.

Members of the National Assembly for Gaspé Gaétan Lelièvre and for Bonaventure Sylvain Roy might question the ministers, as well as other representatives of the region.