



## Nouvelle cement terminal nearly ready

Gilles Gagné

**NOUVELLE:** – The new cement transshipment terminal of the Gaspésie Railway Society in Nouvelle is almost ready to function. The tracks are installed but two important tasks remain to be done: the spreading of some ballast and levelling work to make the track bed as flat as possible.

That terminal becomes compulsory because of the traffic increase experienced by McInnis Cement and considering Transports Québec's inability to upgrade or replace the two railway bridges of Cascapedia-St-Jules over the last three years. Those bridges create a bottleneck due to their limited capacity to support a stream of heavily loaded cement cars.

"We are waiting on the contractor to come back and finish the job. The terminal



Photo: G. Gagné

*The Nouvelle transshipment terminal should be up and running before the end of June. The contractor is KLN.*

should be completed before the end of June. We are installing a second track for the loading of rocks and ballast, and also to park our machin-

ery. We will slowly move the operations currently located near the Nouvelle station to this spot," explains Luc Lévesque, director general of

the Gaspésie Railway Society.

The Gaspésie Railway Society is the operator of freight trains on the region's line. Quebec's Department of Transport has owned the Matapedia to Gaspé line since March 2015 but upon that acquisition put in a dormant state (the part east of Caplan).

Cement McInnis' transportation needs are increasing rapidly but Transport Quebec is slow in repairing the line east of Caplan and has yet to launch a call for tender process for the replacement of the two Cascapedia-St-Jules bridges. Current operating rules force the Gaspésie Railway Society to circulate on those two bridges while alternating a loaded cement car with an empty car.

That measure is necessary to reduce the concentration of weight on the bridges but it

requires lengthy shunting in New Richmond, where the cars are loaded, and in Nouvelle, where the empty cars are removed from the train. The problematic bridges are located between the two terminals.

The new Nouvelle terminal will allow the Gaspésie Railway Society to end that costly shunting and load 56 tonnes of cement in New Richmond, pass on the two bridges without empty cars, and complete the loads at the Nouvelle terminal with a load of 39 tonnes. The cost of the terminal is paid by Transport Quebec.

While the New Richmond transshipment terminal is equipped with a silo, the Nouvelle facility will operate with a pumping system.

The replacement of the two Cascapedia-St-Jules bridges will likely take two more years.