

## Use of herbicides on railway tracks is being opposed

**NELSON SERGERIE**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - The use of herbicides to manage vegetation along the railway in the Gaspé Peninsula is once again in the news as the group Ensemble pour l'avenir durable du Grand Gaspé calls for the use of processes other than glyphosate.

The environmental group supports the position of the Liberal Member of Parliament for Fredericton, Janica Atwin, for the use of glyphosate to be abandoned.

Ms. Atwin is asking her government, which has authorized this product until 2031, to backtrack and, in this sense, supported by her colleagues, she has tabled a bill and a petition in the House of Commons.

The president and spokesperson of Ensemble pour l'avenir durable du Grand Gaspé, Lise Chartrand, is asking the Liberal Member of Parliament for the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Is-

lands, Diane Lebouthillier, to support the bill and also asks the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie to abandon this practice.

"We find that the moment is perfect to relaunch the file. There is spreading, whether there is a train or not. Before summer returns, we ask the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie to present us with other options for eliminating weeds harmful to the rails and we propose that this be planned in the budgets for next summer," mentions Ms. Chartrand, who makes suggestions.

"There is nothing more efficient than manual labor. There would be a platform that can do mechanical work. What we no longer want is the spreading of herbicide and glyphosate. It's over to use herbicides when you know the consequences on health and the environment," adds Ms. Chartrand.

The president of the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie, Éric Dubé, reminds



Photo: N. Sergerie

*The debate resumes on the weed control methods of the railway in the Gaspé Peninsula.*

us that this is a question of safety.

"We always tend to reduce our quantities. But why do we have to weed the railway line? It's a matter of security. We follow environmental rules. We receive our environmental authorizations to do so," said Mr. Dubé.

"This is a reality for railroads in North America. We have always said that we are on the lookout to find economically viable alternatives that will meet expectations," adds the president.

Last year, Together for the Sustainable Future of Greater Gaspé obtained the mandate to

represent the environmental component in the case of the return of the train, as requested by the Citizen Committee for the Development of Gaspé.

The group says that drinking water wells are found all along the railway line and many waterways end their course in Gaspé Bay.