

Gaspé MNA summarizes the fall session

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GASPÉ - Gaspé Member of Parliament, Stéphane Sainte-Croix, highlights the latest announcements from the Legault government regarding the rehabilitation of the rail to Gaspé as the main point, in his assessment of the fall legislative session at the National Assembly.

"There is a lot of good news for the entire MRC, but I will admit that I particularly like the development of the railway issue in the Gaspésie. We delivered. We remember the announcement by the Minister of Transport in June in Gaspé, and we see the progress of the work on the section, most recently on section three between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé. Very proud of the evolution of the file," says Stéphane Sainte-Croix.

On November 17, Premier François Legault launched the first in a series of calls for tenders for the rehabilitation of section three.

Section three between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé will need \$517.6 million by 2026, aiming to be ready in the fall of 2026 for entry into service in December 2026.

"There are monumental works. Can we move forward the deadline? Our objective is to deliver in 2026, and in all likelihood, and the information we receive, we will be there in 2026 to inaugurate the line from the very end," says Mr. Sainte-Croix, even though the calendar would fall at the electoral deadline of October

2026.

"It's not a film, but things being what they are, we will deliver as soon as possible and that has been the objective of the professionals since day one," declares the MNA.

On wind power, Mr. Sainte-Croix notes that the government and Hydro-Québec are working firmly to unblock the bottleneck in Rivière-du-Loup, which does not allow the energy produced by the establishment of new wind farms in the Gaspé Peninsula to be transported

"This file was addressed in a very specific manner to the entire government apparatus. This file is progressing through the authorities, and all stakeholders understand that for the contribution of wind energy to Gaspésie, the region is in an interesting position for the wind source and the industrial sector. For the future, it is planned by Michael Sabia's (president and CEO of Hydro-Québec) that there will be investments in transmission lines and the Gaspésie will position itself in these investments to develop wind potential," supports the MNA.

The Climate Change Project Office was announced in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts during the last session.

Colossal work must be done to protect the coastline, especially with the December storms which once again showed the region's vulnerability to coastal erosion.

"This is a big step in creating the office and the team still needs to be completed to analyze these projects. We are hopeful in the coming months



Photo: N. Sergerie

The railway played an important role in the fall session according to the Gaspé MNA.

to tackle complex issues in a structuring way," says Mr. Sainte-Croix.

The coastal erosion situations in Maria and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts are known.

Work was done this fall in Percé and a complete beach recharge will be done in 2024. The MNA also targets several other sectors.

"We have a worrisome issue in Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé where it affects a residential part and a major provider of jobs in the municipality, (and) the Anse-à-Val-leau sector affected by erosion. Honestly, there is work on the table and we will tackle it over the coming months," says the elected official.

The Member of Parliament and federal Minister of Fisheries, Diane Lebouthillier, spoke about the opening of the redfish fishery for 2024, a decision awaited by both fishermen and processing plants.

Once the information is

confirmed, Quebec will get to work.

"That means supporting our fishermen, supporting our processors at the equipment level to ensure adequate processing and marketing of the resource, which must be supported. I am well informed and my job will be to support innovative and structuring projects. Processors will be able to count on our help," says Mr. Sainte-Croix.

When the decision is announced, the elements will fall into place.

"We will have to get active on the roadmap. Our people will have to get their hands dirty. This is already the case in our discussions. Our leaders will work hard, and we will do everything to support them when the activities begin," he says.

The Blue Zone, which is considered a complex file still has not been announced, notes the MNA. "There are still a

few strings to tie. We should announce it in 2024," he adds.

Among the other elements that marked the MNA's parliamentary session is the creation of the DÉPART program, which replaces FAIR, a much-awaited gesture in the Gaspésie. The establishment of a Police techniques program at the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles, Gaspé campus, also played a significant role, along with the presence of several ministers and Premier François Legault.

"The ministerial presence in our region was very important this fall. We strive to ensure that ministers can be present throughout the riding, in each of our MRCs. In addition, we had the honour of receiving the Premier of Quebec, François Legault, to inaugurate the Maison des aînés (seniors) et alternatives de Rivière-au-Renard and launch the first calls for tenders for the work on the section of the railway to Gaspé, in addition to meeting our local elected officials. This representation work is essential to raise awareness of our specific issues," mentions Mr. Sainte-Croix.

The electoral map issue is a subject which has provoked strong reactions.

"The mobilization of the region was exemplary in making the commissioners understand that the proposed scenario was incompatible with the realities of the region," suggests the MNA, who hopes that the arguments presented will give all the necessary latitude to reconsider their initial proposal.