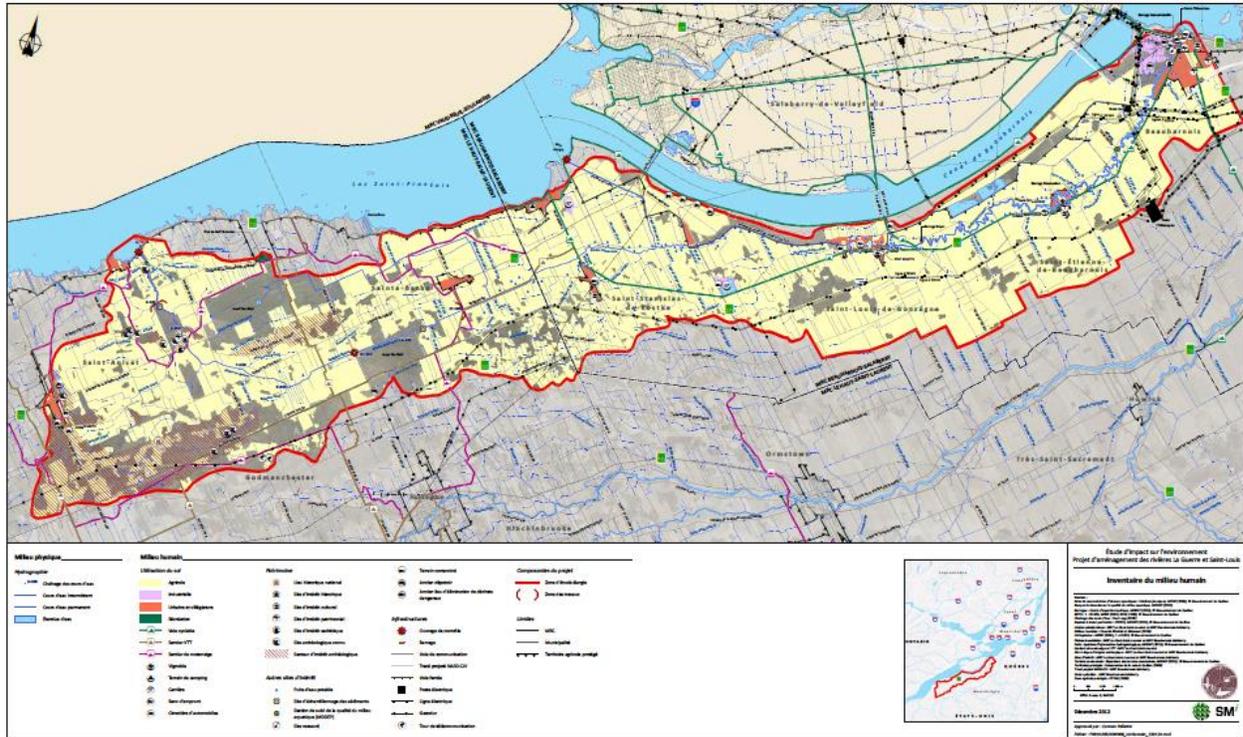


## DESCRIPTION

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The Rivière La Guerre flows into the St. Lawrence River at the height of the Lac Saint-François, in the municipality of Saint-Anicet. The watershed of the Rivière La Guerre covers a total area of 8,182 hectares, of which 5,344 are farmed (see map published in the impact assessment by the S.M. Group).



The Lac Saint-François has lost its natural character since the construction of retaining structures. The initial work for the regulation of the Lac Saint-François can be traced back to about 1845.

Then, the construction of the Beauharnois Canal in 1932 and the commissioning of the Beauharnois hydroelectric plant in 1932 regulated the lake level about 0.9 meters higher than the average level in the natural state.

Several lowlands along the shores of the Lac Saint-François were flooded or affected by a level of the water table so close to the surface that framing was impossible.



As a stopgap measure, the federal and provincial governments have undertaken in 1933 the diversion of the waters of the Rivière La Guerre to the Rivière Saint-Louis. A dam was then installed at the mouth of the Rivière La Guerre to prevent the waters of the Lac Saint-François from entering.



In 1974, the Department of Agriculture built a pumping station, the largest in Quebec, in order to discharge the water from the Rivière La Guerre into Lac Saint-François, which settled the problems of land flooding and water table being too high. However, pumping highlighted changes in the water level of Rivière La Guerre, affecting the establishment of riparian vegetation. In addition, the pumping has created a new problem of cohabitation: when the pumps were running, they were evacuating a turbid water in Lac Saint-François, whose plume was bothering the shoreline population.

The station has four pumps, with a capacity of 2 x 25,000 US gallons per minute and 2 x 50,000 US gallons per minute, working especially in the spring in order to speed up the drying of the soil and to allow agricultural activities. This pumping allowed the emergence of more than 4,600 hectares of cropland (including at least 3,200 hectares which were not farmable before the construction of the pumps). A portion of these lands is located below the current level of the Lac Saint-François.



The use of this pumping station is however problematic in summer. During storms or continuous rainfall, the raising level of the water upstream of the pumping station requires that pumps are activated. Normally, one pump is used and, in general, it is avoided to do so on weekends.



The waters of the Rivière La Guerre show a typical quality of agricultural streams: coloured, turbid and containing significant concentrations of phosphorous, nitrogen and suspended solids.



Today, the watersheds of the Rivière La Guerre and Rivière Saint-Louis drain vast agricultural lands through a complex network of canals dotted with structures of control connecting the two rivers as well as the Lac Saint-François (see the map at the top of this page).