

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate publication

QUEBEC EXPORT OF ELECTRICITY TO THE UNITED STATES

The moment of truth for Pessamit and Wemotaci First Nations

QUEBEC CITY, August 5, 2020 – The Canadian Innu First Nation of Pessamit and the Atikamekw First Nation of Wemotaci (Province of Quebec) are joining forces to put an end to the stranglehold of the Quebec government and Hydro-Québec on their traditional territories. They mean to obtain compensation for production facilities, reservoirs and transmission lines set up without their consent by threatening to derail a project to run a high-voltage transmission line through Maine to Massachusetts.

Currently, 36% of the total hydroelectric power installed by Hydro-Québec comes from Innu, Atikamekw and Anishnabeg traditional

cannot be absorbed by internal consumption. From a business standpoint, then, it's no wonder that the crown corporation is looking to improve its performance by selling power in the northeastern US. In this context, the weakening of the profit objective imposed by the state-owned company in its five-year 2020 to 2024 plan (\$16.1 billion) could have the consequence of encouraging Quebec to review its position regarding First Nations.

The Route Through Maine

Hydro-Québec's intentions in the United States are far from being unanimously supported there. In 2018, when Hydro-Québec was awarded the contract to deliver 9.45 TWh of energy to Massachusetts via the *Northern Pass* transmission line that was to cross New Hampshire from North to South, the Innu First Nation of Pessamit closely coordinated its action with regulatory bodies and American opponents of this project. Pessamit then assumed a leading role with the American media and various non-Native and Native American political bodies. In July 2019, after having exhausted all its legal options, the promoter saw its project definitively rejected by the Supreme Court of New Hampshire. Pessamit was instrumental in the termination of *Northern Pass*. After this resounding and still very recent failure, Hydro-Qué