



EMAIL

Quebec City, April 14, 2020

Mister Jeff Parkes  
President of the water level committee and Newton Bay representative  
ASSOCIATION DU BASSIN VERSANT POISSON BLANC (ABVPB)  
512, chemin du Grand Poisson Blanc  
Lac Ste-Marie (Québec) J0X 1Z0

**Subject: Poisson Blanc reservoir management  
Association du bassin versant Poisson Blanc (ABVPB)**

Dear Sir,

We read your letter dated March 6, 2020, as well as the memorandum and discussion document regarding your concerns in relation to the Poisson Blanc reservoir water level management. As you know, the Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques [*Ministry of the Environment and of the Fight against Climate Changes*] (MELCC) is responsible for the reservoir's water management and owns the storage structures located on its edge.

According to our exchanges' history, we previously sent information about our management parameters to Mr. Pierre Charlebois from the Association du bassin versant Poisson Blanc. Remember that the Poisson Blanc's reservoir management is a compromise aiming at meeting various needs that can diverge at times. As a result, the reservoir's management parameters were established several years ago by consulting the sector to reach a fair compromise. Actually, the initial 1999 management plan was adjusted with agreements that took place after several years of work under the auspices of what was to become the Comité du bassin versant de la rivière du Lièvre [*Lièvre River Watershed Committee*] (COBALI). Management decisions that can lead to Poisson Blanc reservoir water level variations are carried out according to the management plan established with different stakeholders.

According to the Poisson Blanc reservoir's management plan, the management parameters during the summer are the following:

- When the water level ceases to rise, the maximum operating level was initially 201.9 m. Following COBALI works, it was agreed that the maximum level would be 201.5 m when it would be possible without causing flooding downstream;

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- Initially established from July 1st to August 31st, but now applicable until the Labour Day weekend Monday, the summer level must be kept between 201.20 m and 200.00 m to favour tourism activities.
- To strengthen the tourism season, a new parameter was introduced in 2004 which stipulates that the minimum level between Labour Day and September 30th is 199.00 m.

Your first wish is to maintain a minimum water level in the reservoir of 201.0 m between May 24th and October 15th. Remember that Poisson Blanc reservoir's management is done to meet various objectives. It is important to mention too that the Poisson Blanc reservoir's was originally created for the purpose of creating a water reserve for generating hydroelectricity at the plants built downstream at the same time. Tourism needs appeared subsequently. As previously mentioned, the minimum level until the beginning of September is 200.0 m. On one hand, maintaining the reservoir's level at 201.1 m until mid-October would not allow us to meet hydroelectric producer needs downstream. On the other hand, hydroelectric producers significantly reduce their production during the summer to respect the minimum limit set at 200.00 m. On the other hand, maintaining a minimum level of 201.0 m until October 15th does not leave enough room to safely manage water level increase in the fall.

Your second concern involves gradually lowering the water level in September down to a minimum of 199 m. As previously mentioned, this additional storage space is crucial for the water level increase in the fall.

Finally, your third wish is a request that the MELCC plans on preparing weekly forecasts of the reservoir's water levels and to make this information available. The Direction adjointe de l'hydrométrie et des prévisions hydrologiques [*Assistant Directorate of hydrometry and hydrological forecasts*] (DAHPH) of the MELCC already uses hydrological forecast computer systems with the goal of increasing the quantity and the quality of information available to make better decisions about the Poisson Blanc reservoir's management. As such, the MELCC produces every morning for this reservoir a forecast for a fairly short period (1 to 6 days) based on Environment Canada's weather forecast. Results from the hydrological forecasts for the reservoir cannot be viewed on the MELCC's website at this time. In cooperation with the DAHPH, we will assess the possibility of making this information available on our website.

Rest assured that our team has the expertise and knowledge to ensure the safe and fair management of the Poisson Blanc reservoir water levels.

Finally, please remember that each body of water has its hydrological features, its operation limits, its agreements with various users, its own management rules and its challenges. We are available for a meeting to discuss it further with you.

Regards,

The Operations Manager,

*[Signature]*

CB/MF/sl

Charles Bélanger

cc Mr. Martin Ferland, Eng., MBA, Operations Directorate