



The design and construction of the passerelle du Pont-Noir and path needed to link both sides of the river forming the Promenade du Lac-des-Nations were among the most important challenges to overcome. The construction of the footbridge was completed in the winter of 2003. The architectural objective was to design a structure that while being quite imposing structurally, should remain invisible ... Mission accomplished! The footbridge is a scale reproduction of the railway's black bridge located right behind it, which disappears in the landscape.



The work that was done includes the strategic "revegetation" of the bank as well as the establishment of compensatory measures for the natural habitat of fish in the Magog River. Interpretation panels will be installed in various locations to draw attention to these interventions. The first challenge was environmental: the impact on the stream had to be minimized during both the construction of the pillars and the installation of the structures. As for the passerelle du Pont-Noir the pile supported structure was favoured to other techniques while the construction was done using a barge.

Another important structural challenge was with the railway crossing on the east side of the black bridge. How to link the Promenade du Lac-des-Nations to the bike path that is just on the other side of the railway track in the champ des Buttes? It was impossible to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross the rails of a railroad yard since trains were too often stopped. It was too expensive and too imposing architecturally to build a bridge that would allow people to cross over the trains so the only possibility left was to cross under the black bridge... Mission accomplished once again! The pathway to access the west side of the city was built under the lake's water level. For this great realization, Groupe S.M. received the 2004 environmental award of the Grands Prix du Génie-Conseil.

These last two structures presented several environmental challenges and have been realized in conformity with the requirements of the ministère de l'Environnement du Québec, the Canadian Coast Guard and Fisheries and Oceans Canada who requested that a fish habitat compensating base be created upstream from the passerelle du Pont-Noir.