

Crucial Quebec Forest Corridor Protected Foster-Gauvin Sector



Eastman, January 14th, 2015 – A missing piece of Quebec’s conservation puzzle has been acquired for permanent conservation. In a joint project between Appalachian Corridor and the Nature Conservancy of Canada, more than 850 acres (345 hectares) of strategic forest and wetlands have been purchased at Mount Foster, in the Eastern Townships.

The site, located in the communities of Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton and East Bolton, helps connect a large corridor of unspoiled forest that is over 11,860 acres (4,800 hectares) from Sutton Mountain Range to Mount Orford in the Green Mountains Natural Area. The Mount Foster site features hardwood forests, wetlands and numerous streams with clear and fresh water. These provide habitats to numerous birds such as the barred owl and wood thrush, vulnerable amphibians such as the pickerel frog and spring salamander along with large mammals such as the Black Bear and Moose. This corridor allows wildlife to flourish and it contributes to the unique character of the Eastern Townships’ landscapes that are the pride of its residents.

Quotes

“We’ve held this project close to our hearts” explained Melanie Lelièvre, Executive Director of Appalachian Corridor. “It is without doubt one of the most important gains in our conservation priorities in the area over the past few years. Its hyper-strategic location is at the heart of the Green Mountains. The protection of this land is a critical step towards the completion of a major corridor of protected areas going from the Sutton Mountain Range through to Mount Orford. We worked hard during three years to finance and develop these projects. We are really proud of our achievement.”

“A project of this magnitude, in this location, gives us the impetus to continue our efforts; for the health of our forests and our watercourses, to safeguard our wildlife populations and our landscapes and, especially, for the population to profit from the ecological benefits that these natural areas offer, forever” said Joël Bonin, Vice-President of the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

“This landmark project marks another achievement under the Government of Canada’s Natural Areas Conservation Program,” said Denis Lebel, Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and

Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, and Member of Parliament for Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean. Acquiring these properties will support protection of the species at risk that live there including the Monarch Butterfly, and the Northern Dusky Salamander. Conserving Canada’s natural heritage is central to our National Conservation Plan announced by the Prime Minister in May. Our National Conservation Plan demonstrates our Government’s commitment to contribute to Canada’s long-term prosperity by conserving and restoring our lands and waters, and connecting Canadian families to our natural spaces.”

“More than 90 percent of Canadians have said forests are important to them, and for good reason,” says Karen Clarke-Whistler, Chief Environment Officer, TD. “Forests form the backdrop of our communities, where we live, work and play - and they perform an essential role in cleaning the air and moderating temperatures. As our world becomes more urbanized it is essential to protect forests and the valuable habitats they represent. That’s why we made protecting critical forest habitat a key pillar of TD Forests.”

A First Protected Area for Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton with Benefits for All

“Protecting our environment has been a preoccupation for us in Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton for a long time” according to Michèle Turcotte, Mayor of Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton. “We cherish our still very natural environment and we understand more and more the long-term importance of keeping large zones of forests intact. With this in mind, we adopted innovative ways to limit the ecological imprint of residential development, but it is not enough. This conservation project consolidates our approach and will help maintain the naturalness of a strategic zone at the heart of the mountains of Saint-Étienne. I sincerely thank Appalachian Corridor, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the financial donors who contributed to the success of this project.”

By virtue of its location on Mount Foster and Mount Gauvin, the land partly zoned white is situated in a particularly attractive spot for development and construction. Conserving these lands with breathtaking views on the Green Mountains range and the Missisquoi North Valley, will help sustain the area from such activities.

Wildlife doesn’t recognize borders and the natural areas of our region are closely connected to a forest range that extends across to United States neighbours. It is our responsibility to ensure the maintenance of this natural connectivity, to allow wildlife to roam freely within the Appalachian Range, to eat and reproduce, find shelter and live in peace.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada and Appalachian Corridor wishes to acknowledge and thank the financial donors, without whom the protection of these properties would not have been possible: The National Conservation Plan of the Government of Canada, Sweet Water Trust, Open Space Institute, TD Bank Group through its TD Forests Program, North American Conservation Initiative (U.S. Fish and Wildlife), Echo Foundation, *Fondation de la faune du Québec*, *Fonds de développement régionale de la CRÉ de l’Estrie* and Eco-Action of Environment Canada.

Video: <https://vimeo.com/116361329>



This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



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The **Nature Conservancy of Canada** (NCC) is the nation's leading not-for-profit, private land conservation organization, working to protect our most important natural areas and the plants and animals they sustain. Since 1962 NCC and its partners have helped to protect more than 2.7 million acres (1,1 million hectares), coast to coast, including 93,900 acres (38,600 hectares) in Quebec. By investing in conservation we are ensuring that our natural world remains a home for wildlife, a haven for recreation and a vital resource that cleans the air we breathe and the water we drink. To learn more visit: www.natureconservancy.ca

Appalachian Corridor, founded in 2002, is a not-for-profit conservation organization working to protect natural areas and biodiversity in the Appalachians of southern Quebec (Eastern Townships). More than 11,500 ha are currently protected in perpetuity on private land throughout Appalachian Corridor's territory of action, owing to the collaboration of private landowners, local and national conservation groups as well as our Affiliate Members. Appalachian Corridor initiated this project, did the ecological inventories, negotiated with the landowners and contributed to the financing of the project. www.appalachiancorridor.ca

The **Natural Areas Conservation Program** (NACP) is a unique public-private partnership launched by the Government of Canada in 2007. Led and managed by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), the program supports the accelerated pace of conservation of ecologically important private lands across southern Canada. Between 2007 and 2014, \$245 million was invested in the NACP by the Government of Canada, with more than \$400 million in matching contributions raised by NCC and its partners to secure our natural heritage. An additional \$100 million was announced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in May 2014 under the National Conservation Plan for NCC to continue this program.

The **Open Space Institute** protects scenic, natural and historic landscapes to provide public enjoyment, conserve habitat and working lands and sustain communities. Founded in 1974 to protect significant landscapes in New York State, OSI has been a partner in the protection of nearly 2.2 million acres in North America. www.osiny.org

TD's five-year contribution is the largest corporate commitment to NCC in the conservation organization's more than 50-year history. With support from the TD Forests program, NCC will increase the amount of forested lands protected and cared for across Canada.

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