



LET'S PROTECT THE FUTURE

STRATEGIC PLAN
2015-2020



APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR

Appalachian Corridor is a non-profit organization with a mission to protect natural areas in the Appalachians of southern Quebec. Since its inception in 2002, Appalachian Corridor galvanized a wide range of partners, including a network of 16 local organizations, which have become Affiliates, and Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC). Through the implementation of its cross-border conservation strategy, Appalachian Corridor provides local communities with means to maintain and restore a way of life respectful of the region's ecology, in harmony with sustainable development principles. Appalachian Corridor stands out in Quebec not only for its innovative and scientific approach at the landscape level, but also for the results of its partnership work in terms of protected natural areas.

APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR IN BRIEF

- » 12,500 hectares of protected areas on private land (more than 90 properties);
- » Key partner of Nature Conservancy Canada in the Green Mountains;
- » Development and management of the Réserve naturelle des Montagnes-Vertes;
- » 8-10 employees working on a dozen conservation projects each year;
- » A dozen ecological surveys or conservation plans completed each year;
- » Collaboration with stakeholders from various sectors to promote conciliation between natural environment and regional planning;
- » Public education and awareness on the area's ecology;
- » And many more projects...



A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



Since 2002, we have been protecting natural areas of the Appalachians in response to growing pressure exerted on a territory that is increasingly coveted for residential and recreational development. Ecosystem fragmentation threatens several plant and animal populations. Nevertheless, hundreds of living species find refuge in our region. Allowing these initial settlers to thrive away from our roads, our homes and our

businesses requires willpower and determination.

The area protected in perpetuity has now reached 12,500 hectares on private land, and we want to see it reach more than 14,500 ha over the next five years. These achievements are testament to the work of the wonderful Appalachian Corridor team, the network of Affiliate Members, our longstanding partner, Nature Conservancy Canada (CNC), as well as municipalities. Above all, they fall under the generosity of many landowners motivated by the desire to protect nature and leave a living legacy to future generations. When reading the objectives of the

2015-2020 Strategic Plan, you will notice that they meet our mission aiming to conserve natural habitats and maintain their connectivity while protecting ecological corridors. They are also in line to reconcile the protection of ecosystems with different land uses taking into account the needs of the communities. Our efforts focus on protecting sensitive habitats and vulnerable species as well as people's quality of life.

This activity period also marks the beginning of a major Appalachian Corridor fundraising campaign under the banner "Let's Protect the Future," which will cover a period of five years. To continue our mission, we must indeed look to individuals, businesses, interest groups and the general public and ask them to join us to protect a critical ecological link, a natural area which we all hold dear.

Enjoy your reading,

Marie-José Auclair, President of the Board of Directors

A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I am once again very proud of all the work done by the Appalachian Corridor team. Our efforts remain focused on the creation of protected areas and the maintenance of connectivity between them, in particular, through land purchase, donations, and conservation servitudes or by obtaining Nature Reserve status. However, the pressure on natural habitats intensifies and ecosystem fragmentation threatens the survival of several populations of animal and

plant species. More than ever, concerted efforts with all our partners - Affiliate Members, Nature Conservancy Canada, municipalities, Regional County Municipalities (RCM) and other organizations - are essential to preserve the natural environment of the southern Quebec

Appalachians. We extend our sincere thanks to our partners without whom the Appalachian Corridor project would not be possible.

With the production of the Strategic Plan, it's time to take stock and, more importantly, to implement strategies that will guide our actions over the next five years. In fact, all the upstream work of this Strategic Plan (meetings, consultations, brainstorming) proved extremely motivating. On one hand, it allowed us to measure progress made since the last Strategic Plan (2009-2014) and, on the other hand, it sparked a process of stimulating and fruitful reflection that will take us to 2020. We certainly have a great game plan, and we have a great team to implement it.

So let's get on with the job!

Mélanie Lelièvre, Executive Director

A BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR ORGANIZATION

In 2001, three nature lovers - ecologist Louise Gratton, conservation biologist Francine Hone and project manager Terri Monahan - set up an ambitious conservation project designed to protect the natural corridor of the Appalachians. What was then called the Appalachian Corridor Project had been launched to respond to growing pressure exerted on the territory. The implementation of a global conservation strategy was deemed necessary to minimize human impact and to preserve forested areas large enough to maintain biodiversity.

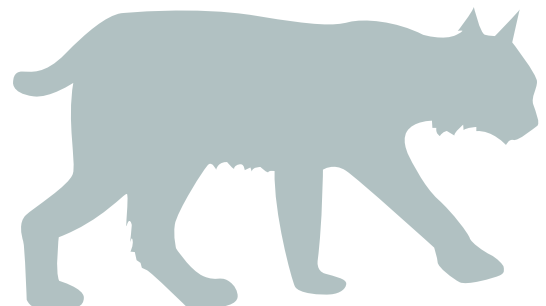


The founding members of Appalachian Corridor

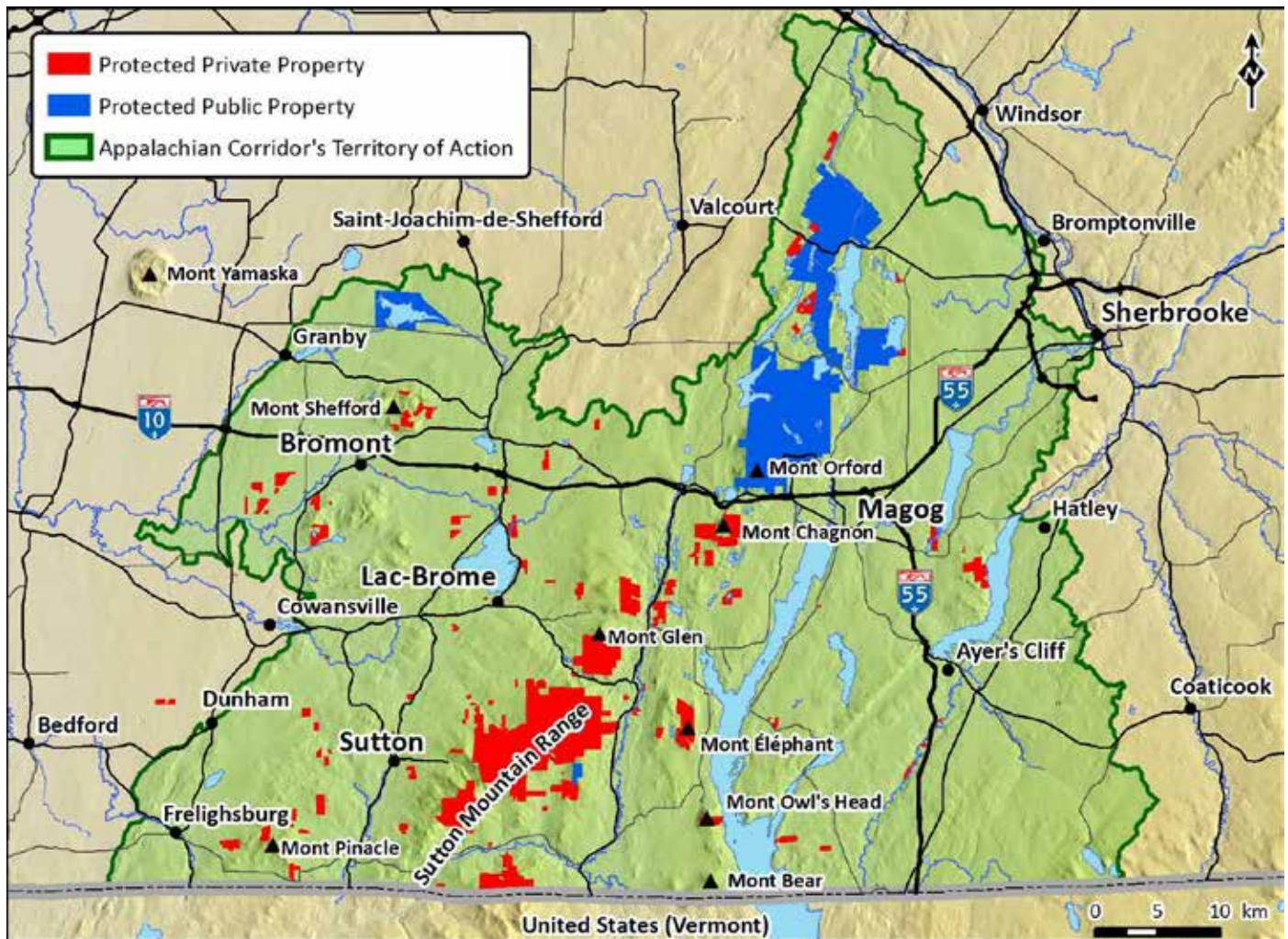
This strategy comprised three components:

- » An innovative scientific basis;
- » A voluntary landowner's involvement;
- » The collaboration of local, national and American conservation organizations.

First sponsored by the Ruiter Valley Land Trust, Appalachian Corridor was created in 2002 and obtained its charitable organization status in December 2003. With offices now located in Eastman, a multidisciplinary team of professionals provides partner organizations and landowners with a range of services related to the implementation of conservation actions on its territory of action.



TERRITORY OF ACTION AND PROTECTED AREAS



APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR IS IMPLEMENTING A CROSS-BORDER CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR THE PROTECTION OF A NATURAL CORRIDOR EXTENDING FROM CAMEL'S HUMP IN VERMONT TO THE NORTH OF MOUNT ORFORD IN QUEBEC. MORE SPECIFICALLY, THIS TERRITORY INCLUDES THE GREEN MOUNTAINS NATURAL REGION AND THE SOUTHWEST PORTION OF THE ESTRIE PLATEAUS AND HILLS NATURAL REGION.



PROTECTING NATURAL AREAS IN PERPETUITY

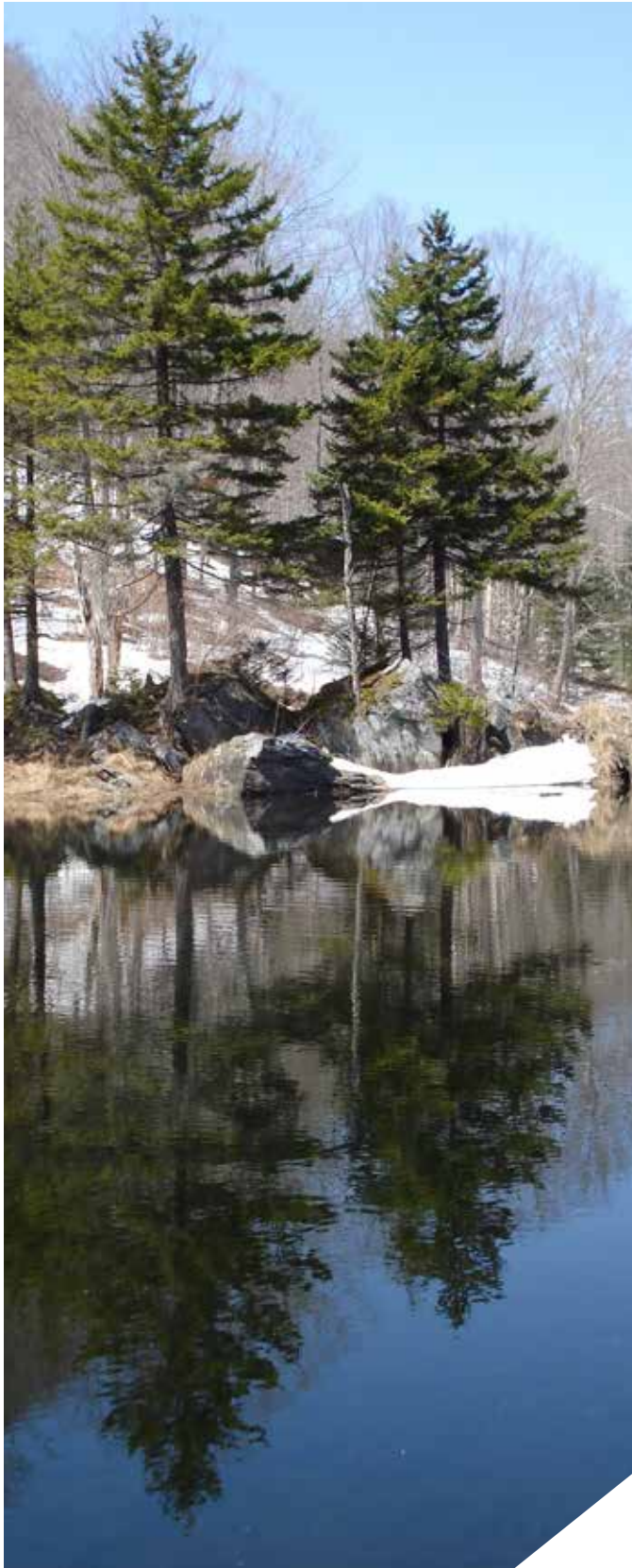
OUR OBJECTIVE: A 20% INCREASE IN PROTECTED AREAS ON PRIVATE LAND WITHIN THE ECOLOGICAL NETWORK (LARGE FOREST BLOCKS, NATURAL CORRIDORS, SENSITIVE AREAS AND BUFFER ZONES) IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE ECOSYSTEMS' RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

Our plan:

- » Continue to approach landowners targeted by our ecological network analysis and take specific conservation actions through the use of tools such as Nature Reserve status, servitude, donation and fee simple purchase.
- » Analyse new landowners' profiles and, based on their goals, adapt our approach and tools to encourage conservation actions.
- » Empower ourselves to protect in perpetuity otherwise orphan sites, i.e. in areas where no conservation group is active.
- » Sustain natural corridors between large priority forest blocks.
- » Act as a facilitator and cooperate in infrastructure development for wildlife crossings at strategic locations.
- » Support and empower our Affiliates in the management and monitoring of protected areas
- » Pursue and strengthen ties with New England partners to ensure the coherence of conservation actions performed on both sides of the border.



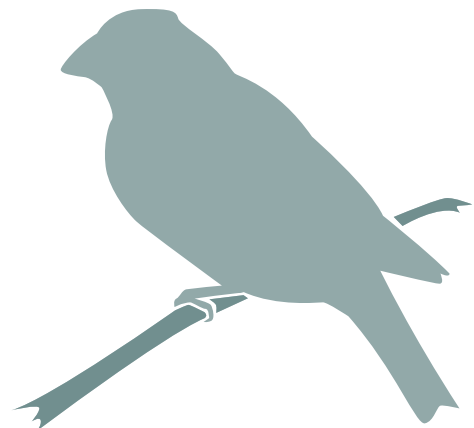
ACQUIRING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE OF THE TERRITORY'S ECOLOGY



OUR OBJECTIVE: TO IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PROTECTION, MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENT ENHANCEMENT OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

Our plan:

- » Continue fieldwork related to the validation of priority natural corridors.
- » Continue to monitor species at risk.
- » Continue and improve our methodology for ecological inventories of key properties and priority natural areas.
- » Target bottlenecks for connectivity of natural habitats, prioritize and implement actions for conservation in perpetuity on the entire network.
- » Ensure a better understanding of ecological goods and services and their integration in the conservation strategy.
- » Write a report of Appalachian Corridor's activities from its inception to assess the ecological services it provides.
- » Encourage citizens' and volunteers' contribution to data acquisition.



ENHANCING SELECTED PROTECTED AREAS



OUR OBJECTIVE: TO INCREASE LAND ACCESS FOR EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL PURPOSES TO BOOST THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY WITH OUR PROJECTS.

Our plan:

- » Be more active in environmental education by organizing awareness activities on selected protected properties.
- » Pursue management activities and improve visibility, access to and enhancement of the Réserve naturelle des Montagnes-Vertes (RNMV):
 - play our role as lead for 14 actions from the RNMV master plan;
 - increase the sense of community with the RNMV by implementing a citizen commitment program;
 - act in ways that bring together the various stakeholders involved with the RNMV on priority issues and thereby stimulate exchanges and commitment from the community.



SUPPORTING LOCAL DRIVING FORCES ON CONSERVATION ISSUES

OUR OBJECTIVE: TO STRENGTHEN THE SYNERGIES BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS IN ORDER TO OPTIMIZE THE ACTIONS FOR NATURAL HABITAT PROTECTION.

Our plan:

- » Update sectoral strategies for our Affiliates.
- » Contribute to the recruitment of new volunteers to facilitate succession to the Boards of Directors and to monitor protected areas.
- » Provide tools facilitating implementation of conservation projects and management of protected areas.
- » Support Affiliates so that they can influence their municipalities towards the protection of natural habitats on their territory.
- » Create a workgroup to draw recommendations and identify solutions regarding municipal taxation of protected properties.

INFORMING AND EDUCATING ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATURAL HERITAGE

OUR OBJECTIVE: TO EDUCATE LANDOWNERS, ORGANIZATIONS, GOVERNMENT BODIES AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC ON WAYS TO CONSERVE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT

Our plan:

- » Increase our presence on social networks and traditional media with regular and timely broadcasts of the organization and its Affiliates' successes.
- » Strengthen ties with the media at local, regional and national levels, to become a conservation benchmark.
- » Highlight the scientific approach of Appalachian Corridor through publications, popular science articles, lectures, interviews, etc.
- » Identify meaningful spokespersons to represent Appalachian Corridor with the public and be associated with them.
- » Aim for a more diverse audience (e.g. social clubs, chambers of commerce, businesses, estate agents, notaries, etc.) to raise awareness of the natural areas protection.

PROMOTING THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL AREAS AND INFLUENCING LAND-USE PLANNING

OUR OBJECTIVE: TO PROMOTE A BETTER CONSIDERATION OF BIODIVERSITY IN LAND-USE PLANNING

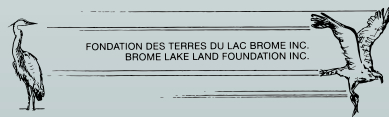


Our plan:

- » Promote the integration of the ecological network in Land-use and Development plans and in Town Plans.
- » Continue to promote conciliation between conservation and forestry to stimulate implementation on key properties in the territory of action.
- » Intensify our representations to the relevant authorities (Ecological Gifts Program, Quebec's Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, and funding organizations) so that the Forest Conservation Servitude and the Forest Nature Reserve are recognized and eligible for government funding.
- » Deploy a proactive vigilance network to be informed of current and future projects affecting priority natural areas, and to better forecast interventions with a potential impact on biodiversity.



A NETWORK OF PARTNERS AND AFFILIATE MEMBERS





Our warmest thanks to donors who contributed to the production of the Strategic Plan:



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