

LET'S PROTECT THE FUTURE TOGETHER!

12 840 hectares protected in perpetuity

2016-2017
ACTIVITY REPORT



NETWORK OF AFFILIATE MEMBERS



A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



It was another busy year! In 2016-2017, we added 248 hectares to our territory, for a total area of 12 840 hectares protected in perpetuity. Let us stress that our efforts increasingly target the maintenance of connectivity between these protected zones. This network of interconnected areas reaffirms once more the crucial role we play in the adaptation to climate

change, conservation being one of the most important steps we can take to deal with it.

However, we can't do this work alone. As nature does, we work in symbiosis, and these results are made possible thanks to the collaboration of many local associations, our 17 affiliate members, our long-time partner, Nature Conservancy Canada, and people who are committed to the protection of natural areas.

What is more, Appalachian Corridor is broadening its field of action and is getting more involved with local stakeholders, like towns and RCMs, in order to plan the conservation of natural habitats on their territories, or through our bigger road ecology project.

Thanks to the generosity and commitment of businesses and foundations, but also to the many individuals who chose to make a difference, we celebrated the ambitious goal of \$1M reached for our major financing campaign. Now that the situation is particularly critical in matters related to the environment and biodiversity, our needs keep growing. We are fully aware that these gifts are a privilege. The funds collected are used to reinforce our transborder conservation strategy and to increase Appalachian Corridor's awareness activities.

Enjoy your reading!

Marie-José Auclair, President of the Board of Directors

A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



It's already time to take stock. If we had to remember only one thing from 2016-2017, it would be that it was marked by the willingness to take risks. To take risks means to become exposed to criticism, to failure, to instability. But it also reflects daring, courage and growth. Drawing on its 15 years of experience, Appalachian Corridor took the liberty of getting off the beaten path on many fronts.

I am thinking, in particular, of the mobilizing role we played within the SOS Mount Hereford Coalition, our intervention as facilitators of the provincial action regarding the thorny issue of municipal taxation of protected areas on private land, and the acquisition by Appalachian Corridor of the Bois du lac à la Truite, in Orford. Each one of these interventions is wholly relevant to our history and our mission, but we had to step out of our comfort zone and question our approach. Our organization is growing and evolving; that is gratifying and bodes very well for the future.

Our numerous interventions earned us increased media coverage from national newspapers, the RDI network, and even Infoman's camera! More citizens are now aware of Appalachian Corridor and the conservation efforts it undertakes in our region.

Once more, I must thank the Board of Directors who dared accept that its Executive Director take a sabbatical! But I must first of all congratulate the whole team, particularly Martine Ruel, who stepped in as Executive Director, for the excellent work performed throughout the year. Because we could rely on such a stable and solid team, I was able to take back the controls without encountering turbulence. Thank you!

There is no doubt the year was rich in projects of all kinds. Thanks to the partners who supported and followed us in our adventures, and to the dedicated team who were willing to see and do things differently.

Enjoy your reading!

Mélanie Lelièvre, Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Marie-José Auclair, President
Pierre Lizotte, Vice-President
Luc Dumouchel, Treasurer
Louise Gratton, Secretary

Jacques Marcoux, Board Member
Yves Bolduc, Board Member
Françoise Bricault, Delegate for Eastern
Affiliate Members
Marie-Claire Planet, Delegate for Western
Affiliate Members

Photo credits: Appalachian Corridor except otherwise specified

PROTECTING AND ENHANCING NATURAL HABITATS IN SOUTHERN QUÉBEC

At Appalachian Corridor, we support owners who want to preserve biodiversity on their land. We help a network of local conservation groups by sharing our expertise in science, management, and implementation of conservation programmes.

» In 2016-2017, Appalachian Corridor got actively involved in the conclusion of **9 notarized contracts** and added **248 hectares** of protected areas to its territory of action, which now includes a total of **12 840 ha of protected areas on private land**.

- A **nature reserve** in the Mont Brome sector - 69 ha;
- Conclusion of **7 land donations** with our Affiliate Members: 3 projects with Conservation des vallons de la Serpentine (CVS) - 75 ha, Mount Echo Conservation Association (MECA) - 9 ha, and the Massawippi Conservation Trust (MCT) - 14 ha;
- An **acquisition** completed with Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC) - 63 ha;
- The acquisition of Boisé du Lac à la Truite - 18 ha.

» **8 requests for recognition of a nature reserve** filed with the ministère du Développement durable de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, in the Eastman, East Bolton, Frelighsburg, Bonsecours, Granby, Shefford and Brome Lake sectors, for a total of **363,13 ha**;

- A land stewardship project with an owner whose land features habitats of very high quality for the Golden-winged Warbler;

» 5 voluntary conservation projects concluded for the protection of chimneys housing chimney swifts (in Granby, East Bolton and Potton).

» Phase 2 of the program to protect areas on the periphery of Parc national du Mont-Orford :

- Meeting with 57 owners during 3 public gatherings to promote awareness of the ecological value of their properties;
- Dozens of canvassing meetings with owners of land in the peripheral zone, many in natural corridors;
- 15 new voluntary statements of intent for the protection of natural environments;
- Development and delivery of 34 personalized guides for landowners.



The team at Appalachian Corridor and Françoise Bricault, from CVS, with owners and donors Anna Brzeski, and Onil and Georgette Faucher.

RÉSERVE NATURELLE MONTAGNES VERTES

- Management and monitoring of the 7000 ha territory situated within the Réserve naturelle des Montagnes-Vertes (RNMV); patrolling the trails and the protected territory.



Julie and Raphaël-Jonathan, Summer 2016 interns at the RNMV

- Développement d'un partenariat avec la Fiducie foncière de la vallée Ruiter pour leur programme Faune sans frontières. Inspiré du projet Keeping Track au Vermont, ce programme vise à former des bénévoles au recensement des espèces dans le but de valider des corridors de déplacement de la faune.

- Yearly follow-up of a research project conducted with Université de Sherbrooke: tools to diagnose and analyse the condition of trails in the Parc d'environnement naturel de Sutton (PENS);

- Annual follow-up of two projects undertaken with the Université du Québec à Montréal: a study of the distribution of forest species in view of climate change, and a study on the evolutionary ecology of the Eastern Chipmunk.

PROTECTION OF THE BOISÉ DU LAC À LA TRUITE

Appalachian Corridor is proud to have contributed to the protection in perpetuity of 18.6 hectares in Orford by purchasing land for the first time in nearly 15 years of existence. Its great ecological value, its importance for the preservation of water quality, and its proximity to the Parc national du Mont-Orford all guided our decision. But it is the exceptional involvement of a group of residents of the Lac à la Truite sector of Orford that played a critical role in the involvement of Appalachian Corridor.

Residents took matters in hand to preserve the water quality of their lake

In May 2015, the Association des riverains du Lac à la Truite contacted Appalachian Corridor to discuss a possible change affecting a neighbouring lot. They were worried about the situation and wanted to purchase the property to preserve it. Appalachian Corridor coached the group and provided technical expertise to accelerate the process, while the members, headed by Bertrand Larivée, raised a large part of the funds needed for the purchase. This was an unprecedented mobilizing effort. In the end, this endeavour has led to the conservation of 18.6 hectares of exceptionally rich natural habitats along the edges of Lac à la Truite. If ever a local group were formed in that sector of our territory, we would transfer the Boisé du Lac à la Truite to them.



Members of the Appalachian Corridor team with Bertrand and Lucie Larivée during a recognition event for donors



The Boisé du Lac à la Truite is protected in perpetuity



Marie-José Auclair speaks to the media to announce the protection of the Boisé du Lac à la Truite

ACQUIRING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE OF THE TERRITORY'S ECOLOGY

Acquiring knowledge is at the heart of the Appalachian Corridor initiative. An experienced team of biologists, along with bio-ecology technicians, complete ecological surveys and monitor species at risk. The GIS department supports this work and conducts analyses to target intervention priorities.

- » 13 ecological evaluations conducted on as many properties in order to guide the conservation actions with owners;
- » Follow-up of species at risk, in particular the Cougar, the Peregrine Falcon, Bicknell's Thrush, the Chimney Swift, and the Golden-winged Warbler (in partnership with the Club des ornithologues de Brome-Missisquoi), as well as the Four-toed Salamander, the Monarch butterfly and the Wood Turtle;
- » Recovery activities for species at risk;
- » Awareness and recovery activities for the Chimney Swift in Potton and Granby;
- » Involvement in groups implementing recovery activities for the Wood Turtle;
- » Several consultation mandates :
 - Involvement in groups implementing recovery activities;
 - Validation of trails located on 2 properties in the Lake Massawippi sector and the PENS networks of trails;
 - Identification and delineation of wetlands in the Tomifobia River sector;
 - Creation of 10 quadrats for the long time follow-up of exotic and invasive plant species, in cooperation with the Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques (MDDELCC);
 - Mapping of natural environments that are of interest for the Ogden municipality, on behalf of Memphrémagog Conservation Inc. (MCI) and East Bolton.



John Tétreault, church warden, and Caroline Daguet in front of St. George's Anglican Church in Granby, whose chimney houses a roost for Chimney Swifts.

Photo credit: Janick Marois, La Voix de l'Est



Clément Robidoux, Senior Biologist, straightens up a Cougar monitoring station

SUPPORTING LOCAL DRIVING FORCES ON CONSERVATION ISSUES

Appalachian Corridor continues to consolidate conservation activities within its territory of action by providing leadership along with technical, communication, scientific and financial support to 17 local organizations. We also work closely with our national partner Nature Conservancy Canada.

- » Help to create a new organization in the Lac à la Truite sector of Orford;
- » 10 planning sessions with 10 of our 17 Affiliate Members involved in conservation projects;
- » Attendance at 5 annual general meetings (AGMs) with our Affiliate Members;
- » Participation in or attendance at meetings and AGMs of other organizations (municipalities, networks of protected natural areas, Conserv'acteurs de la Fondation SÉTHY, etc.);
- » Continuation of the work of the regional and national committee addressing problems of municipal taxation of protected areas on private land. Meetings with municipal and provincial bodies, and media activities.
- » In Summer 2016, hiring of an intern to assist Affiliate Members with the follow-up of protected areas;
- » Visit of 27 protected properties on behalf of 8 of our Affiliate Members.



Cynthia Patry leading a nature rally in partnership with the PENS



Interpretation tour with Affiliate Members during the 2016 AGM



With the support of Appalachian Corridor, Guy Langevin, from the Ruiter Valley Land Trust, leads an awareness session for the youth attending Summer camp in Potton

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

One of our most important objectives is to encourage better consideration of biodiversity in land use planning. Among other things, we wish to promote the integration of the ecological network in regional land-use and development plans as well as in town plans.

- » Continuation of activities related to the *Cohabiter avec la nature* project (phase II):
 - Presentation of our guide and practices to 8 municipalities (Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton, East Bolton, West Bolton, Bromont, Saint-Denis-de-Brompton, Shefford, Eastman, Granby) and to the Brome-Missisquoi RCM.
 - Distribution of postcards during public events for citizens to send to their municipal representatives.
- » Continuation of the Corridor project, in cooperation with the University of Sherbrooke, Concordia University, the Ministère des Transports, de la Mobilité durable et de l'Électrification des transports. This project aims to ensure the sustainability of natural linkages between vast tracts of forest, the survival of wide-ranging species on both sides of Autoroute 10, and the reduction of wildlife mortality due to highway collisions.
 - Identification of priority areas for action;
 - Installation of 24 surveillance cameras on 6 highway infrastructures;
 - Collection of data and analysis of the photos taken;
- » Participation in the writing of interpretation panels on Austin's natural habitats for the Rotunda on route 112 (at the corner of North Road).



The *Cohabiter avec la nature* postcard has been handed to the elected officials of the municipalities located in our territory of action



A volunteer with Appalachian Corridor installs a camera on a highway infrastructure



The Rotunda on route 112, in Austin

SOS HEREFORD: UNITED TO PREVENT A DANGEROUS PRECEDENT

Appalachian Corridor joined Coalition SOS Mount Hereford along with Nature Québec, the Protected Natural Environments Network and the Estrie Regional Environmental Council to mobilize citizens and stop the passage of Hydro Québec' Northern Pass line in a protected area of Mount Hereford. The Coalition demands the circumvention of Mount Hereford and the burying of the line in order to conserve this protected area and its landscapes, and respect neighbouring communities.

The Hereford community forest was created thanks to a gift from the Tillotson family, the largest ecological donation in the history of Quebec. In addition to fragmenting the natural habitat and marring the landscape, the above-ground line favoured by Hydro-Québec would create a serious precedent and would discourage ecological donations on private land.

As a conservation organization, our role is to help create new protected areas and to enhance natural environments, not to police areas that have been acquired and, what's more, are protected in perpetuity. We cannot, however, let this situation create such a prejudice and destroy the credibility of conservation tools and of the work done by organizations creating protected areas on private land.

Over the last year, we have organized and participated in the following activities:

- » Filing and presentation of a brief to the Bureau des audiences publiques (BAPE) in October 2016;
- » Press conference in Montreal;
- » Information sessions in Sherbrooke and Coaticook;
- » Lunchtime conferences with panels of experts (online and in Montreal);
- » Considerable regional and national media coverage.



INFORMING AND EDUCATING ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATURAL HERITAGE

During meetings with its partners and the public, Appalachian Corridor informs and educates individuals, groups and organizations on the importance of protecting the natural environment. It raises awareness on issues and offers coping strategies to implement for the protection of biodiversity in the Appalachians of Southern Québec. Here are the information and education activities we conducted over the last year:

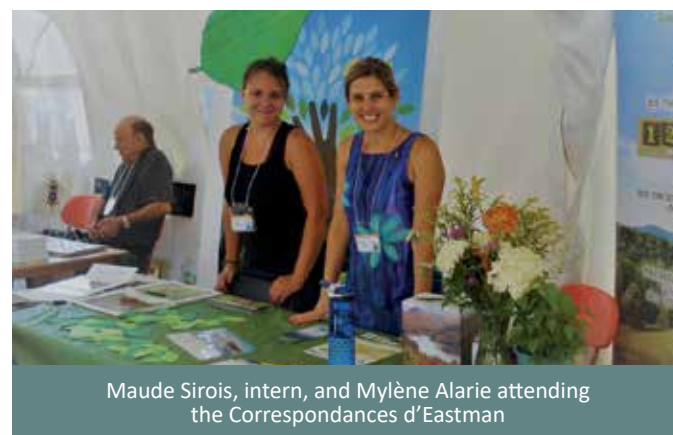
- » 30 various presentations during conferences or events;
- » 57 articles mentioning Appalachian Corridor in the national media (Le Devoir, Le Journal de Montréal, La Presse), as well as regional outlets (La Tribune, La Voix de l'Est, Le Reflet du lac), 12 press releases issued, 11 radio interventions, 9 television interviews, one of which on ICI Radio-Canada's Infoman program;
- » Publication of 6 articles from Appalachian Corridor in various specialized periodicals: Le Jaseur (Société ornithologique de l'Estrie's magazine); In Vivo (journal put out by the Association des biologistes du Québec); Le Progrès forestier (magazine from the Association forestière du Sud du Québec); Cold Hollow to Canada's bulletin, etc.;
- » 6 presentations and 9 instances of participation in exhibitions during seminars, forums and conferences related to our activities;
- » Vignettes on different species and weekly news published on our Facebook page: more than 900 subscribers;
- » Two editions of Appalachian Corridor's news bulletin, distributed on paper to 11 000 households and to 1000 people by email;
- » Complete redesign of our website: www.appalachiancorridor.ca



Françoise Bricault from CVS, Mélanie Lelièvre with Jean-René Dufort and Infoman's cameraman



Martine Ruel speaks to the media during a press conference

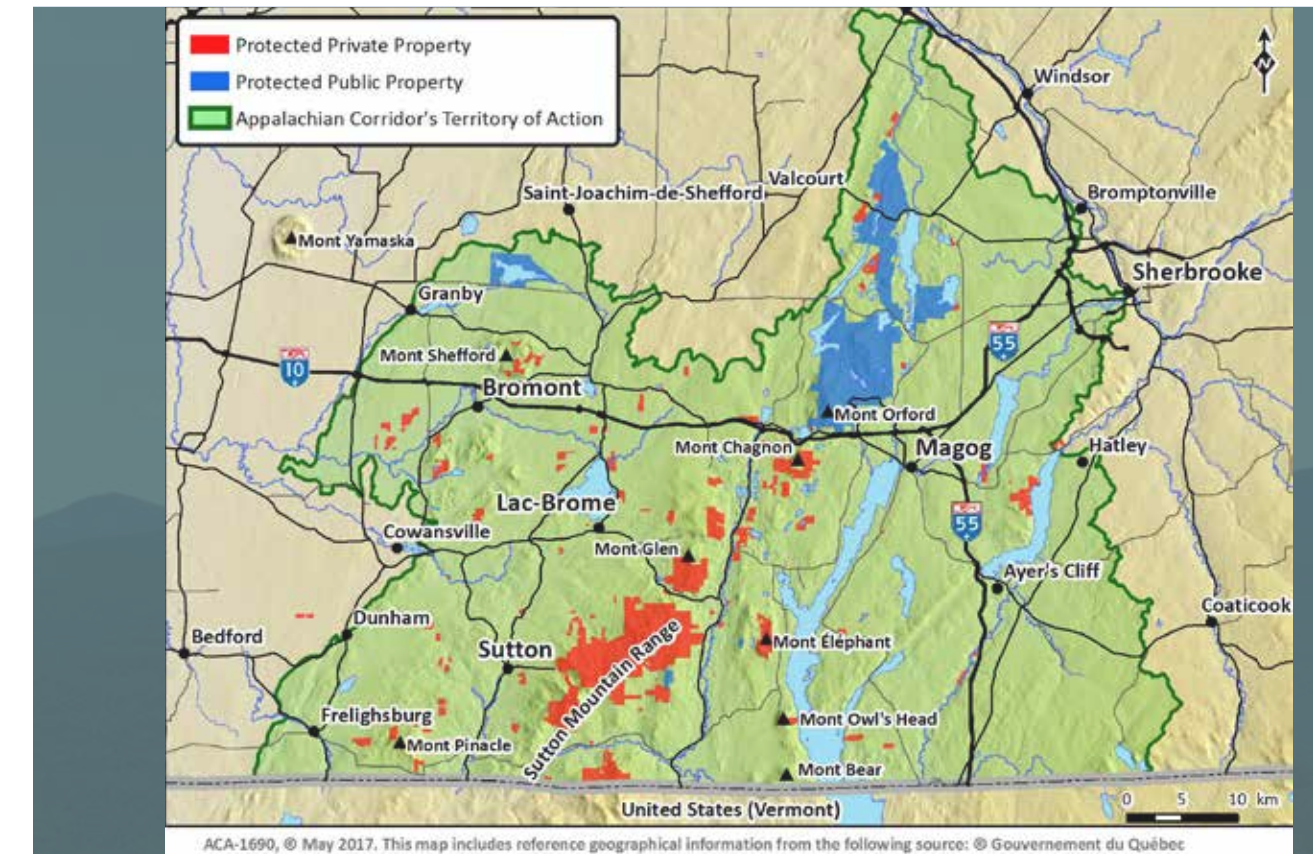


Maude Sirois, intern, and Mylène Alarie attending the Correspondances d'Eastman

MAJOR FUNDRAISING DRIVE

- » Recognition event for donors;
- » Press conference to announce the achievement of our \$1 M objective;
- » Mailing of a solicitation leaflet to 25 000 households on our territory of action;
- » Continued canvassing of business, groups and individuals;
- » Establishment of a committee to allocate funds, and beginning of the committee's work.

PROTECTED AREAS ON APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR TERRITORY



Protected areas
on private land
12 840 ha

Protected areas
on public land
11 795 ha

Total percentage of protected areas
on our territory of action
7,1 %

APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR'S TEAM



From left to right: Mélanie Lelièvre, Mylène Alarie, Cynthia Patry, David Brisson, Julie-Anne Bellefleur, Patrice Pineault, Martine Ruel, Caroline Daguet, Clément Robidoux and André Champoux.



WE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING DONORS:

Major Donations

Power Corporation du Canada

Important Donations

Agropur coopérative, Victor and Elisabeth Allistone, Michel Auclair, Banque nationale, BMO, Camso, Carbonleo, Jean-Marc Eustache, KDC Knowlton, Louise Penny, RBC and Robert Tessier.

Special Donations

Louise Gratton, Marie-José Auclair, Banque TD, Robert Blain, Pierre and Lucie Boivin, Benoît Chartier, René Cloutier, Pierre Fitzgibbon, Fondation Sibylla-Hesse, Gaz Métro, Christian Godin, Groupe Germain Hôtels, Louis-Thomas Labbé, Peter McAuslan and Ellen Bounsall, François R. Roy, Claude Séguin, Jean Simard and Andrée-Lise Méthot, TC Transcontinental

APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR

37 des Pins St. S.
Eastman Qc J0E 1P0

Tel: 450 297-1145
Fax: 450 297-1102

info@corridorappalachien.ca
appalachiancorridor.ca

