

Winter 2017

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Happy Holidays!



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Appalachian Corridor proud to have contributed to the protection of Mount Hereford



In our last edition, we announced our direct implication with the SOS Mont Hereford Coalition and the dangerous precedent Hydro-Québec would have created with the construction of an aerial interconnection line right through the heart of the Forêt Hereford protected area. Since then, Pierre Moreau, Quebec Minister of Natural Resources and Energy, has announced that the line will be buried. "SOS Hereford welcomes this happy ending and is proud to have made a significant contribution towards it. Throughout the year, we mobilized major resources and solicited support, multiplied consultations and discussions to reach a satisfying solution to preserve the integrity of Mount Hereford and its protected area. A year on, we can say: mission accomplished!" said Mélanie Lelièvre, Executive Director at Appalachian Corridor. The Mount Hereford Conservation Area was created through the largest private land legacy in Quebec history by the Tillotson family.

A spectacular turnaround

Until recently, Hydro-Québec totally rejected the idea of burying the export line for the Northern Pass project. Even the stakeholders directly involved had lost hope. It is with this background that the SOS Mont Hereford Coalition was born. The Coalition would like to thank the local elected representatives, all organizations who supported the cause, the 11,000 signatories of the petition as well as the singer-songwriter Richard Séguin. Without this support, it would have been impossible to fight and win this battle. The future of conservation on private land in Southern Quebec was really at stake.

Appalachian Corridor and NCC protect over 148 acres (60 hectares) in the Glen-Foster forest core

Over 148 additional acres (60 ha) are now protected in the Quebec Green Mountains, one of the last regions in the southern part of our province where extensive tracts of relatively untouched wilderness still remain. The property is located on the eastern slope of Mount Saint-Étienne in the municipality of Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton. "Appalachian Corridor is particularly proud to have collaborated with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) and many financial partners to preserve this property. Strategically adding to the network of protected areas ensures connectivity is safeguarded, seeing as it is essential for the survival of numerous species on our territory, including wide-ranging mammals such as Moose, Black Bear, Bobcat and Fisher", states Mélanie Lelièvre, Executive Director at Appalachian Corridor. The Honourable Denis Paradis, MP for Brome-Missisquoi, was delighted with the creation of this new protected area and stated: "On behalf of my colleague Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I congratulate Appalachian Corridor, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and their partners for the conservation of more than 60 additional hectares of forest in Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton. Climate change impacts on wild species and their habitats throughout Canada and around the world, and protected areas such as these are essential for conserving biodiversity. Through the Natural Areas Conservation Program, our government works closely with organizations to conserve and protect Canada's natural spaces." NCC and Appalachian Corridor thank all financial partners and donors involved in this project.



From left to right: Michèle Turcotte (Mayor of St-Étienne-de-Bolton), Mélanie Lelièvre (Exec. Dir. at Appalachian Corridor), Denis Paradis (MP for Brome-Missisquoi), Paul Archer (VP Regional Board –NCC Québec), Marie-José Auclair, (President of the Board at Appalachian Corridor) and Joël Bonin (Associate VP – NCC Québec)

A New Protected Area in Knowlton: The Paruline-à-Ailes-Dorées Nature Reserve

A 68.7 hectares (168 acres) Nature Reserve was created on the southern slopes of the Mount Brome massif, a highly sought-after area. “We initiated the conservation process several years ago and are glad that this territory, which adds to the existing network of protected areas on private land, is finally preserved. This Nature Reserve is home to numerous bird species including the Golden-winged Warbler. Moreover, the Monteregian Hills feature a significant and unique ecological wealth that this property preserves” stated Caroline Daguet, Biologist at Appalachian Corridor. The Mount Brome massif spreads over three municipalities (Bromont, Brigham and Knowlton) where the Reserve is located. The anonymous landowner wishes first and foremost to ensure the protection of this natural area in perpetuity. He made this donation “with a vision for the future. Because Man is a particularly invasive species. I want to pass the baton and make sure our great-great-great-great-grandchildren get a chance to enjoy nature when it’s their turn.”



Gold-winged Warbler
Credit: Bertrand Hamel

In 1999, a birdwatcher discovered the Golden-winged Warbler in this area. He shared his discovery with the landowner. Over the last few decades, the Golden-winged Warbler experienced a significant decline in Canada due to the destruction of its natural habitat. The species gave its name to the reserve because of the exceptional habitat it provides. The Golden-winged Warbler is an endangered species in Canada and is likely to be designated threatened or vulnerable in Quebec. The Reserve is also home to the Wood Thrush, Eastern Wood-Pewee and several species of interior forests birds. Finally, Northern Dusky Salamander, Four-toed Salamander and Pickerel Frog, all endangered species, also find refuge in the Nature Reserve.

ROAD ECOLOGY

A Conference Larger than Wildlife!

From October 23rd to 25th, 2017 Appalachian Corridor hosted a large event in Québec City: the Conference on Road Ecology and Climate Change Adaptation. Almost 220 participants registered and attended over forty presentations and a fieldtrip.



Visit of a wildlife passage

An incubator for an emerging science

The meeting provided an opportunity for significant dialogue on future applications of road ecology, particularly in Quebec. At the junction of conservation biology, civil engineering and land-use planning, road ecology studies interactions between roads and the ecosystems they interact with. It aims at mitigating the impacts on wildlife while ensuring the safety of road users. Road ecology evolved in leaps and bounds over the last few years but there is still much to be done. The Conference enabled participants to share multidisciplinary knowledge, establish a link between research and practice, and bring a new dynamism to this emerging discipline.

Committed partners, fruitful meetings

Over 50 different speakers addressed the audience via 42 presentations, some of them hailing from as far as France, Montana, New England, Ontario or Nova Scotia. To make this bilingual Conference possible, partners from many fields got involved and we are grateful to the following for their precious collaboration: Quebec’s Ministry of Transports, Mobilité durable et Électrification des transports (MTMDET), Quebec’s Ministry of Forêts, Faune et Parcs (MFFP), Quebec’s Ministry of Développement durable, Environnement et Lutte contre les changements climatiques (MDDELCC), Fondation de la faune du Québec, Quebec Center for Biodiversity Science (QCBS), Association des biologistes du Québec (ABQ), Ontario Road Ecology Group (OREG), Two Countries, One Forest (2C1Forest), ARC Solutions Inc., Nature Conservancy Canada, Heritage Canada (for simultaneous translation) and Nature Québec. We thank all participants and partners for making this event a huge success! For more information, visit: www.roadecologyconference.org



Almost 220 participants attended.

What to expect when you make an ecogift

By André Champoux, Conservation Advisor



I have been working with Appalachian Corridor for over three years now, helping landowners willing to make an ecogift. On our first meeting, I often tell them that the ecogift process though not complicated is somehow complex. I explain what they will need to do. I insist that there are several steps and that they need to be patient but that they are in good hands with Appalachian Corridor. Most of the time, people welcome me in their kitchen, offering tea and sometimes cookies. I bring a map of their property and a ecological map summary produced by our G.I.S. Technician. When they look at the map, they ask questions about plants and species at risk, etc. I don't have to insist very much before landowners start to reminisce about their youth or fleeting memories of the time they spent in the forest visible from their kitchen window. I sometimes feel nostalgia from the good old time myself when in the company of elders. I reiterate to landowners that their first motivation must be the protection of the land they cherish, theirs or their ancestors'. We generally discuss the issue until I feel they need to give it further thought. I prepare to take my leave and they thank me for my time. They will think about it, talk

to their children as the case may be and read the literature. I conclude in saying that there's no hurry, Appalachian Corridor will wait for them. As I leave, I often think: "I guess I just planted a seed". Conservation projects are usually completed a few years after this first meeting. This is an important decision that deserves this time for reflection. Would you like to find out more? Contact us at 450 297-1145, we will discuss it over a cup of tea!

Ecological management good practice on private land

Are you a landowner who would like to keep their land sound and healthy? There are many ways to protect the natural areas of your property. You could choose to create a protected area through legal means, but there are other simple steps you can take to help maintain natural areas, such as:

- ✓ Preserve the natural character of your property.
- ✓ Plan your interventions and identify critical elements (species at risk, bird nests, wetlands, etc.) to take into consideration before working on your land.
- ✓ Make sure logging and other forest activities take place during winter on a frozen soil to prevent damage on sensitive forest soils and vegetation.
- ✓ Refrain from logging in steep slopes. Trees and their roots hold the soil and rocks and decrease the risk of landslide.
- ✓ Do not circulate in riparian areas along watercourses with heavy machinery.
- ✓ Cross streams with appropriate bridges or culverts and avoid fording (fording results in sedimentation that can damage stream salamander habitats).
- ✓ Limit the number and width of forest roads and trails across your property.
- ✓ Keep mature trees. They are excellent raptor nesting sites and abundant seed sources that ensure forest regeneration.
- ✓ Keep fruit and nut trees and shrubs (cherry, beech, walnut, mountain ash, viburnum, serviceberry, hazelnut, dogwood, elderberry, etc.): they are food sources for terrestrial wildlife and birds.
- ✓ Keep large dead trees. These snags are used as perches and shelters for birds.

FOCUS ON A SPECIES AT RISK: BATS

Let's Protect the Bats

In recent years, bat populations have declined significantly, mainly because of the white-nose syndrome: a fungus that attacks their snout and wakes them up during hibernation. Contrary to what we might think, having bats near our home can offer serious benefits. Bats play a very important role in the balance of ecosystems. As they are insectivorous, they are contributing to the fight against biting or stinging insects for instance. In their presence, the use of pesticides in agricultural fields can be reduced, adding beneficial impacts on the quality of soil and water. At Appalachian Corridor's Office, we even installed a shelter where bats can roost at night. To find out more : www.batwatch.ca



Little Brown Bat
Photo :Chesapeake Bay Program.

HONOURING AN AFFILIATE: RBL

Restoration of crucial habitats along Quilliams Brook



From left to right : Isabelle Martineau (Gestrie-Sol), Daniel Schiettekkattle (MAPAQ),
Hélène Drouin (Renaissance Brome Lake), Richard Burcombe (Mayor of Knowlton),
François Lavallée and Amélie Cantin (from Denis Paradis MOP's office),
Alex Martin (OBV Yamaska).

Appalachian Corridor would like to highlight the exceptional work of its Affiliate: Renaissance Brome Lake (RBL). Over the last three years, RBL implemented a project to restore habitats along the Quilliams Brook. More than 3,400 plants were added to the shoreline and an ecological bridge was constructed to avoid pollution by agricultural machinery crossing the watercourse. Moreover, inventories (birds, amphibians and fish) were carried out and the water quality was regularly analysed. Restauration of these habitats helps maintain water quality of the Quilliams Brook which supplies almost 50% of the water that flows into Brome Lake. These actions are especially crucial since agricultural areas are located just upstream.

RBL is an organization of citizens devoted to restoring and protecting the lake and its watershed. RBL has been in existence since February 2001 and its Board of Directors is comprised of 11 members. All stakeholders in the drainage basin collaborate to give the lake and its tributaries a water quality that all can enjoy during their

favourite activities without worrying about health issues. This inspiring project is an eloquent demonstration of the collaboration that can exist between the agricultural and local science community. We would like to congratulate RBL on the implementation of these sound environmental practices. To learn more: www.renaissancelbl.com



RÉSERVE NATURELLE MONTAGNES VERTES

Nice improvements on the Découvertes Trail

The dam of the Étang aux Castors has been solidified and a new 9-meter footbridge has been installed. The path between the two wetlands was dangerously eroded and threatened to be washed away should the dam broke. Thanks to these improvements, hikers can now safely admire this beautiful wetland. The work was done by our partners, les Sentiers de l'Etrie.

Thanks to our volunteers!

A cleaning and maintenance chore took place last June: thanks to the volunteers who rolled up their sleeves so that all can enjoy beautiful clean trails! The next chore will take place in the Spring. Would you like to participate? Please contact david.brisson@corridorappalachien.



WE WERE THERE

- September 9: Conservation Day, at Mont-Orford provincial Park
- October 1st: Écosphère environmental fair in Magog
- October 23-25 : Conference on Road Ecology and Climate Change Adaptation, Québec City
- November 15-17: Canada Land Summit, Victoria, British-Columbia

Appalachian Corridor is a non-profit organization with a mission to protect natural habitats and the biodiversity of the Appalachians of Southern Quebec, in collaboration with private landowners, local conservation groups as well as regional, national and international partners.

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Visit our website at appalachiancorridor.ca

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