



COMMUNIQUÉ

For immediate release

Mount Foster Project:

An agreement has been reached between the land developers and Appalachian Corridor

Eastman, Tuesday, September 4, 2018 - Appalachian Corridor announces that an agreement has been reached with the land developers of the Mount Foster real estate project in Bolton-Ouest. For Appalachian Corridor, the agreement meets the requests made by the organization and the population: to ensure connectivity with adjacent large forest blocks, to gain the largest conservation area possible, to offer public access to the summit while allowing real estate development, with as little ecological impact as possible. With this agreement, the project will secure 211 hectares of land in perpetuity, meaning more than three-quarters of the project area. "We consider the agreement to be the best compromise possible in order to protect most of the area's elements of ecological interests. It is important to remember that the project was already underway before our intervention: rock had already been blasted, roads and residences had been built. The latest development plan would prevent greater ecological consequences since conservation areas would be protected in perpetuity. It is now up to the community of Bolton-Ouest to decide whether or not the agreement is right for them" said Mélanie Lelièvre, Executive Director at Appalachian Corridor. "Obviously, from an ecological perspective, the best option would have been not to have real estate development project in this area ... but that is not possible and unfortunately we cannot go back in time" she clarified nonetheless.

The possible resolution of a long-standing conflict

The saga surrounding Mount Foster development has been going on for nearly a decade. Initially, the project (owned by another group of developers) implied the construction of nearly 70 houses, which was a source of discontent for the citizens and Appalachian Corridor, considering the great ecological wealth of the area. In 2017, Bolton-Ouest said it was willing to reconsider the project providing that Appalachian Corridor and the land developers came to an agreement. With the latest accord, a maximum 25 houses could be built on the Bolton-Ouest territory (including the ones already built). The land located in Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton, which is more than 120 ha, would be protected in its entirety. Through this agreement, Appalachian Corridor is now endorsing the project. The conservation and development project is however subject to a regulatory amendment in Bolton-Ouest.

An agreement for the benefit of the community

While securing a vast conservation area, the proposed plan provides public access to a whole section of the mountain, including the Scouts Tower (Tour des scouts). Both municipalities of Bolton-Ouest and Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton will participate in the enhancement of the protected area. Ultimately, everyone will benefit greatly from what has been achieved through the negotiation.

Public information session

For more information, a public information session will take place on Saturday, September 8 at 10:00 AM at Bolton-Ouest Town Hall, 9 Town Hall Street. Appalachian Corridor representatives will be there to present the proposed plan and answer questions.

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About

Appalachian Corridor is a non-profit conservation organization created in 2002, with a mission to protect natural habitats and biodiversity in the Appalachians of southern Quebec. By implementing its transborder conservation strategy, Appalachian Corridor provides local communities with the means to maintain and restore a living environment that respects the ecology of the region, in a perspective of sustainable development.

www.appalachiancorridor.ca

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