

LAND DONOR PROFILE

Nitoslawski-Romer Family



KEY FACTS

- Ecological donation of 13.7 hectares
- Land located near Bolton-Est, Quebec
- Donors: Jolanta (Jola), Anna, Marie-Gabrielle (Marielle), Stefan and Marek
- Property transferred to Conservation des vallons de la Serpentine (CVS) for long-term conservation and protection efforts

Photo (left to right); the Nitoslawski-Romer family: Klara, Clément, Marielle, Thérèse, and Marek with Françoise Bricault from CVS at a ceremony to recognize the family's ecological gift.

Interview with Marek Nitoslawski

TELL US THE HISTORY OF YOUR LAND

My parents, Mieczyslaw Nitoslawski and Thérèse Romer, arrived in Canada in 1950. Originally from Poland, they had lived through the war and their dream was to enjoy the great wild and open spaces of their new country. My father was a big ski enthusiast so in 1968, 18 years after their arrival in Canada, they bought this land of some 45 hectares so that we could spend the winters there. Initially, the land consisted of a 250-acre lot that was shared with family friends also from Poland.

Our father came to settle here full time in 1992. Over time, he sold a portion of the initial 45 hectares. When he died in 2012, the property, which now represented around 25 hectares, was bequeathed to my brother, my sisters and me: Jolanta (Jola), Anna, Marie-Gabrielle (Marielle), Stefan and me.

In the years following my father's death, two of my sisters took advantage of the family residence and it was only recently that we collectively decided to subdivide the land to donate almost two thirds for perpetual conservation purposes.

DESCRIBE THE PROPERTY AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE AREA

I was 14 when I started coming here every winter. I have many memories of playing in the woods, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing, planting trees, and picking mushrooms there. My sisters, brother and I have lots of magical memories of this great playground!



Marsh frog

WHAT ARE THE SPECIAL FEATURES OF THIS LAND AND WHAT DEFINES ITS ECOLOGICAL VALUE?

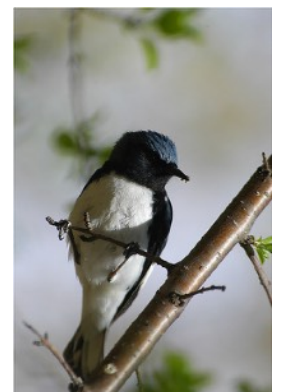
The part of the land that we are giving is magnificent! It is swampy in places and there are streams running through the property including a section that leads to the Serpentine Valley. The wooded slope that goes down to the Serpentine is my favorite spot!



Wood turtle (Marc Lepage)

The ecological assessment has taught us a lot about the species that inhabit it. We were surprised to learn that there were even species at risk, like the wood turtle and the marsh frog, as well as other amphibians and reptiles.

Appalachian Corridor biologists also found a high level of avian diversity with 32 recorded bird species, including nine that are considered a priority by the Canadian Wildlife Service, namely the white-throated sparrow, tree swallow, tree warbler, collar, black-throated warbler, blue warbler, crowned warbler, Canada warbler, black-and-white warbler, and blue-capped vireo.



Blue warbler

That said, all of these fascinating discoveries did not have an impact on our decision to go ahead with the conservation project, because our idea was already made up! However, this knowledge has enabled us to realize the importance of the gesture of conservation in a concrete way for nature. It's truly gratifying to know that all of these ecosystems will be protected forever.



Mélanie Frenette from Appalachian Corridor (1st on the left) with the Nitoslowski-Romer sisters and Françoise Bricault from CVS (2nd from the right) at the notary for the signing of official documents.

HOW DID THE IDEA OF PROTECTING THIS LAND IN PERPETUITY ARISE?

Our father was friends with members of the CVS board and they had been having conversations about this project probably starting 15 years ago. When my father passed away, my sisters, my brother and I agreed that it would be a great project to carry out in honor of our parents, especially considering that this portion of land is very rich in ecological terms.

TELL US ABOUT THE PROCESS TO ACHIEVE THE PERPETUAL PROTECTION OF THE LAND?

It took a few years to complete all the steps required to make the ecological gift a reality! Throughout our process, we were supported by CVS volunteers and Appalachian Corridor professionals.

CVS initiated the discussions and has been present throughout the process, will now use its resources to ensure protection in perpetuity. Appalachian Corridor's conservation advisers carried out the most technical steps with biologist, assessor, surveyor, municipality and notary. All in all, we were very well supported at each stage of the project!

One of the questions we had to address early on was whether we gave all the land or part of it and what would be the conditions of our donation. After reflection, we concluded that the best option was the ecological gift of part of the land. We agreed to give up our right of way, allowing CVS access to manage and monitor the protected area.

WAS IT CHALLENGING TO LET GO OF YOUR PROPERTY?

My whole family was aligned with a common ecological vision of the land and the conservation project. We consider ourselves privileged to be able to make this gesture and to participate in a local and regional movement which is much larger. In the long term, I think we'll have more conversations as a family about more such projects. Who knows, maybe we will want to continue down this path of conservation since our collective experience has been so positive.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE FINAL RESULT?

My dad would be very happy; I know my mom is, and our whole family is too! It is very gratifying to contribute to a collective movement and to participate in the creation of an ecological corridor protected in perpetuity that will allow the fauna and flora to flourish for generations to come. The process leads me to reflect on my property in Potton. Although it is very small, I might eventually explore how to dedicate certain portions to protection in perpetuity and encourage others to do the same!

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR OTHER OWNERS CONSIDERING A SIMILAR PROJECT?

I invite everyone to reflect the extent at which certain natural environments are fragile and deserve to be protected. In Canada, we are fortunate to have great outdoors, but despite everything, land is a finite resource, and everything must be done to protect it so that future generations can benefit from it.

Contact us to discuss your conservation project!

466 rue Principale, Eastman (QC) J0E 1P0

info@corridorappalachien.ca / corridorappalachien.ca

