



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR SPREADS ITS WINGS WITH THE INTEGRATION OF BAT CONSERVATION OF THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS

Eastman, Quebec (December 14, 2020) – Appalachian Corridor is pleased to announce that the organization Bat Conservation of the Eastern Townships (BCET) will be integrated into its conservation programs moving forward.

BCET is a volunteer-run organization that was established in 2017 to protect bats in the Appalachian region of southern Quebec through awareness, education, and conservation activities.

"This is great news for bats and for biodiversity in general," says Robert Chartier, exiting President of BCET. "Our entire team of volunteers, which helped to operate BCET since its founding, has confidence that awareness for and conservation of these still unknown animals will go further and progress faster by being integrated to Appalachian Corridor," he adds.

In Quebec, there are [eight species of bats](#), namely the tri-coloured bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*), the big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), the northern long-eared myotis (*Myotis septentrionalis*), the eastern small-footed bat (*Myotis leibii*), the red bat (*Lasiurus borealis*), the silver-haired bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*), and the hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*). The tri-coloured bat and the eastern small-footed bat are on the list of species designated as threatened or vulnerable by the Quebec Act Respecting Threatened or Vulnerable Species. The little brown bat, the northern long-eared myotis, and the tri-coloured bat have also been assessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada and were added to the "Endangered Species" list compiled under Canada's Species at Risk Act.

Several factors have affected Quebec's bat populations. The main problems are illness, loss of habitat, the use of pesticides, and human disturbance.

Appalachian Corridor plans to continue BCET's mission by adding the *Bat Conservation Program* to its growing list of initiatives. This program will benefit from the expertise of Appalachian Corridor's biologists and will also benefit from new resources and strategic partnerships that will allow a wider reach of its activities.

"It's a natural fit with the direction of our organization and for our knowledge acquisition and conservation experts to be integrating BCET's mandate to our activities," tells Mélanie Lelièvre, Executive Director for Appalachian Corridor. "Bats play an important and regulating role in our ecosystem and we plan to take their safeguarding to heart through strategic conservation activities."

In addition to contributing to biodiversity, Quebec's bats help eliminate many pests that are harmful to agriculture and, consequently, reduce pesticide use. The consumption of insects by bats could save the North American agriculture industry 3.7 billion dollars per year.

"There is still a long way to go in terms of the acceptance of this little-known and yet important animal for the equilibrium of our ecosystem," explains Victor Grivegnée-Dumoulin, biologist and founder of BCET. "With the human, technical, and financial resources accessible at Appalachian Corridor, we'll be able to propel our efforts forward," adds the expert who will lead the bat conservation program as part of his full-time professional duties within Appalachian Corridor's knowledge acquisition team.

BCET would like to thank the volunteers and financial partners who supported the organization's establishment and activities over the past few years. Appalachian Corridor and BCET invite all bat supporters and friends to follow [Appalachian Corridor's Facebook page](#) to stay in touch with the new Bat Conservation program.

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Appalachian Corridor is a non-profit conservation organization founded in 2002 with a mission to protect natural areas in the Appalachian region of Southern Québec. Through the implementation of a cross-border conservation strategy, Appalachian Corridor works with local communities to maintain and restore a way of life that respects the ecology of the region from a perspective of sustainable development. To date, Appalachian Corridor and its 17 members have allowed the perpetual protection of 14,459 hectares on their territory of action. corridorappalachien.ca

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