

THE PROTECTION OF A VAST NATURAL CORRIDOR IS GAINING GROUND

Appalachian Corridor acquires **125 hectares** of high ecological value in the Mount Chagnon area so that protected lands on its territory of action now total 14,619 hectares (36,124 acres)

In February, Appalachian Corridor announced the acquisition and perpetual protection of 125 hectares (309 acres) of land in Bolton-Est on the territory of its local partner, Conservation des vallons de la Serpentine (CVS). The conservation of this property will allow to protect the habitat of many species at risk in Quebec and in Canada, in addition to consolidating the conservation of a large forest massif. This very ambitious project representing an investment of \$820,000, required three years of work and the participation of many investors at all levels of government, in addition to several local partners and private donors.

Direct impact on the protection of several species at risk

Ecological surveys conducted by Appalachian Corridor on the land confirmed the presence of several mammals including the Canadian beaver, white-tailed deer, coyote, American red squirrel, American black bear, American porcupine, and Eastern chipmunk. The property is also home to 44 bird species, 14 of which are considered a priority by Environment and Climate Change Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service. Among these, the Eastern wood-pewee is listed as a species of special concern in Canada due to its major population decline. Biologists also confirmed the presence of plant species of interest and a dozen species of amphibians, many of which are designated as threatened or vulnerable in Quebec or endangered in Canada.

Local, national and international collaborations

Appalachian Corridor worked closely with CVS to achieve the acquisition of the property and consolidate the network of protected areas growing on both organization's territories. Among other things, CVS initiated discussions with the land-owners and led, with great success, a local fundraising campaign that brought in the funds needed to close the transaction. Appalachian Corridor also relied on the support of the Government of Canada's Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP), the Government of Quebec through the Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels (PPMN), the Fondation de la faune du Québec, the municipality of Bolton-Est, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Echo Foundation.

The land is home to many rich habitats for various species including some at risk.



Banner photo:

The newly acquired property is located in a mountainous area on the northern slope of Mount Place and its perpetual protection will allow to consolidate a large forest massif in the region.

THE AMERICAN BLACK BEAR: SOON TO RISE!



Crédit: Dreamstime

Did you know?

- While there is no reliable estimate of the black bear's population in North America, studies approximate a total population of 600,000 individuals, with more than 380,000 in Canada.
- Black bears can cover significant distances. Biologists who captured and released bears more than 200 kilometres away from their territory were surprised to find the animals return to their starting point. The home range of females is generally more confined and occupies 10 to 40 square kilometres on average. That of male adults spans the home range of several females and often extends over more than 100 square kilometres

An active hibernation period for mama bear

For many mammals, the onset of spring means the end of hibernation, and as such, black bears will soon emerge from their lethargy. However, for females winter has not been a complete rest with the birth of cubs in January or February. Throughout the following months, mama bear has continued to care for her young, feeding them breast milk even while she is dozing, waking up periodically to care for them.

Honey crazy: myth or reality?

Is the black bear a fan of honey? Yes, but it prefers insects and covets larvae more than honey within hives. It is also less carnivorous than you think with 75% of its diet made up of plants. Animal carcasses, small mammals and fish complete its menu. In the fall, it takes advantage of the abundance of fruits, nuts, and beech nuts to build up its fat reserves. In short, the black bear is a gluttonous omnivore who eats just about anything!

Tips for a harmonious and safe cohabitation

Black bears mostly inhabit dense coniferous and hardwood forests. Usually, the animal fears and avoids humans. It sometimes approaches our homes to feed in garbage and bird feeders. To reduce the possibility of encounters, simply minimize odors associated with food and garbage, and store them out of reach. If you live out in the country, store your bird feeders as soon as the weather warms in late winter and early spring, since they may attract young bears looking for an easy buffet after their long hibernation. Black bear attacks are extremely rare. However, if you come across a bear, keep your distance. Back up calmly without running, keeping visual contact. Signal your presence by making noise or speaking in a calm voice, without being aggressive. Always give the animal a way out and the opportunity to flee.



A CONSERVATION STRATEGY BUILT ONE ACRE AT A TIME

The generosity of land donors is an essential asset

Donation by the Vézina-Rioux family in Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton: 17 ha (42 acres)



Danielle Vézina and Guy Rioux on the land they donated.

Last December, Danielle Vézina and Guy Rioux made a donation to Appalachian Corridor of their white zoned, 17-hectare land. The family acquired this mostly forested property in 2010 with the intent to exploit it for logging. However, over the course of the last years, their bond to the land deepened and they recognized the risk that this highly desirable location could one day attract real estate developments.

"The idea of protecting this land was inspired by the beauty of the site, our desire to protect the life that surrounds us, to create an area of respite for the local fauna and to let the flora run its course, without having to plant, use pesticides, or harvest," explains Ms. Vézina.

"The conservation process was very enriching," adds Mr. Rioux. *"We were concerned about seeing future real estate developments on the land and we are reassured that the scenery will now remain intact forever, in addition to the many benefits to biodiversity."*

The property comprises an interesting ecological biodiversity, being composed primarily of a maple forest along with small wetlands and streams. It is home to spring salamander, numerous bird species at risk and a forest flora typical of the region. It also features part of an overwintering area for moose.

This ecological donation is the first of its kind in this particular area. Let's hope it will inspire many more!

Donation by the Nitoslawski-Romer family in Bolton-Est: 14 ha (34.5 acres)



Members from the Nitoslawski-Romer family, Klara, Clément, Marielle, Thérèse and Marek, with Françoise Bricault from CVS as part of a ceremony to celebrate the family's ecological donation.

In October 2020, the Nitoslawski-Romer family enabled the perpetual protection of 14 hectares of natural habitats thanks to their land donation to our affiliate member, Conservation des vallons de la Serpentine (CVS).

"The donation of this land for perpetual conservation is a great gift to offer our family, the community, and future generations," expressed Mrs. Thérèse Romer, who acquired the property with her husband in the late 1960's for their family of five children.

Located in the heart of the Mont Chagnon massif, the land is strategic with its wetlands and waterbodies that are home to amphibians and reptiles including the wood turtle, which is listed as vulnerable in Quebec, as well as the pickerel frog which is likely to be designated as threatened or vulnerable.

"It took a few years to complete all the steps required to make the ecological gift a reality," explains Marek Nitoslawski. *"Our father started talking about conservation roughly fifteen years ago. When he passed away, my sisters, brother and I agreed that this would be a great project to pursue in honor of our parents, especially given that the land is ecologically rich. Throughout the entire process, we were supported by CVS volunteers and Appalachian Corridor professionals. I invite everyone to reflect on the fragility of natural habitats and how they deserve to be protected so that future generations may enjoy them."*

TAX BENEFITS OF LAND AND SERVITUDE DONATIONS

Did you know that land donations can be eligible for the Ecological Gifts Program? In addition to the ecological benefits generated by such donations, this program offers considerable tax advantages to landowners who chose to invest in biodiversity protection.



FREE VIDEOCONFERENCE: WHAT IS AN ECOLOGICAL GIFT?

Thursday, April 22, 2021 - 3 to 4 pm

You own land on Appalachian Corridor's territory of action? You are interested in learning more about ecological gifts and the tax benefits you could enjoy? You are curious whether there are prerequisites or fees to this program? What are the resources available to support your conservation project? What type of servitude would allow you to retain ownership of the land while still enjoying tax benefits?

Register today!

www.corridorappalachien.ca/conferences





SAVOUR NATURE'S BEAUTY YEAR-ROUND ON OUR TRAILS

In addition to conservation and protection action targeted to our region's natural areas, Appalachian Corridor also works hard to make nature accessible and maintain the trail network on Mount Singer as part of the Réserve naturelle des Montagnes-Vertes (Potton sector), as well as new trails on Mount Foster.



Mount Singer trails enjoy constant improvement

We value the hiking experiences you have on our trails. That's why you are likely to come across our trail management team during one of your expeditions this spring and summer while hiking on Mount Singer, Potton sector. By paying your access fee, you contribute directly to the quality and quantity of improvement projects we are able to implement on this magnificent network and its 21 kilometres of trails.

Discoveries to be made at Mount Foster this summer

A new trail network initiative is underway at Mount Foster with a new loop to be completed by the end of the summer 2021. This project will allow the public to enjoy this spectacular site, which includes the famous Scout's Tower at the summit. Interpretation signage will help hikers appreciate the importance of this territory and its ecology. And access to the Mount Foster trails will be free! Make sure to visit our website for the official opening of the trails.

LEAVE NO TRACE WHEN YOU ENJOY NATURE

By Marie-José Auclair, President of Appalachian Corridor's Board of Directors

Although hiking is a low-impact activity for the environment, our behaviours while enjoying the trails can sometimes be devastating and lead to permanent impacts on surrounding flora and fauna. Garbage, fires in forbidden areas, improvised bathrooms in the bushes, and loud hikers; all of these disturbances can unfortunately be damaging to natural habitats and spoil our intimate contact with nature.



View from the summit of Mount Chagnon.

The principles of the program Leave No Trace (www.leavenotrace.ca) offer an outdoor code of conduct adopted by more than 90 countries and suggest the adoption of key behaviours for the practice of our activities on foot, on bikes, on skis or in kayaks in order to leave natural habitats intact.

Appalachian Corridor encourages the adoption of the following seven principles from **Leave No Trace**:

- Plan ahead and prepare for the unexpected in order to have a safe and pleasant experience.
- To avoid damaging the vegetation and reduce erosion, travel only on established and durable surfaces, and camp on designated sites.
- Dispose of waste properly and don't leave any items behind.
- Leave what you discover intact so that others may enjoy it too in its most natural state.
- Minimize campfire impacts and preferably use a lightweight stove as a heat source.
- Respect wildlife and avoid disturbing animals, especially during the delicate periods of mating, nesting, or raising young.
- Be considerate of other visitors by limiting excessive noises, let nature's sounds prevail so that all can enjoy their experience.

ROADKILL STUDY ON HIGHWAY 10

En route to solutions

This year again, Appalachian Corridor partnered with Professor Jochen Jaeger's team from Concordia University on the project "Highway 10 Connectivity". The team of students traveled Highway 10 between Bromont and Sherbrooke on hundreds of occasions to document precisely roadkill locations during the 2019 and 2020 summers. The study's goal was to improve our understanding of roadkill concentrations in order to make recommendations to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions.

While the analysis is still underway, we know first-hand that collisions are numerous. Unfortunately, the team collected almost 1,500 carcasses of 85 different species including coyote, Virginia opossum, river otter, bobcat, moose, American black bear, wood turtle, Barn Swallow, and Canadian warbler.

These data are precious and will be integrated into a global plan on which Appalachian Corridor is currently working, namely the Appalachian Corridor is currently working, namely the "Highway 10 master plan". This plan will locate a wide range of recommended wildlife passages in order to reduce the barrier effect of Highway 10 on our region's wildlife.

Appalachian Corridor thanks the Fondation de la faune du Québec and the ministère des Transports du Québec for their financial support as part of this research project focused on roadkill. We also wish to thank Dr. Jaeger's students for their excellent work!



Over the last two summers, almost **1,500** wildlife-vehicle collisions were recorded on Highway 10 between Bromont and Sherbrooke.



FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN FOR OUR NEW REFUGE: MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

We express our heartfelt thanks to all donors who contributed to our fundraising campaign aimed at the acquisition of our new refuge in Eastman! Thanks to you, we now have a workspace that is much more adapted to the needs of our growing and flourishing team!



The Appalachian Corridor team in front of its new office.

THANKS TO ALL OUR FUNDING AND CONSERVATION PARTNERS

The Government of Canada through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program administered through the Canada Nature Fund, the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk, Community-nominated priority places (CNPP) for species at risk, and Canada Summer Jobs. The Government of Quebec through the Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels (PPMN) administered through the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the Plan d'action 2013-2020 sur les changements climatiques funded through the Fonds vert, the Programme d'aménagement durable des forêts (PADF), support measures from the ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP), the Programme de soutien à la mise à niveau et à l'amélioration des sentiers et des sites de pratique d'activités de plein air (PSSPA) and the Fonds d'appui au rayonnement des régions (FARR Estrie) and the Fondation de la faune du Québec. Thanks also to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Echo Foundation, Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, W. Garfield Weston Foundation, Bird Protection Quebec, Wildlife Acoustics, Rando Québec, EcoCanada, the Lake Champlain Basin Program as well as many private donors, municipalities and RCMs throughout our territory.

ABOUT APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR

Appalachian Corridor is a charitable organization working to protect natural areas and biodiversity in the Appalachians of southern Quebec, in collaboration with private landowners, local conservation groups and many regional, national and international partners.

- Founded in **2002**
- **14 619 hectares** of natural land protected to date on our territory of action thanks to our collaboration with the Nature Conservancy of Canada, our affiliate members, and other conservation partners
- **17 affiliate members**, namely local conservation organizations located throughout our territory of action
- **15 permanent employees**
- **Several seasonal employees**
- A **balanced budget of \$3M**, of which more than 80% are invested towards the establishment of a vast network of protected areas and ecological corridors in the Northern Green Mountains. Remaining sums are dedicated to supporting our efforts in research, education, raising awareness and mobilising conservation efforts.

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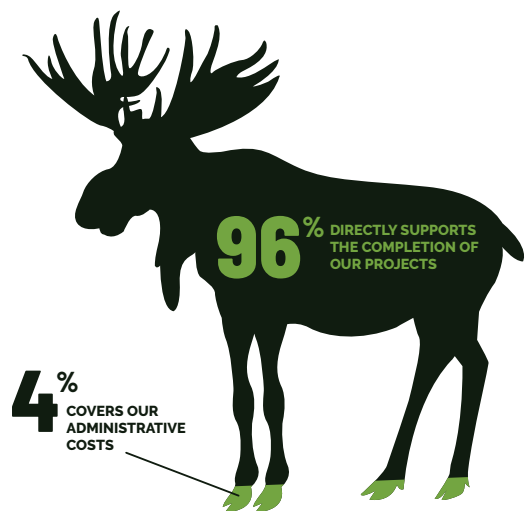
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LET'S CONTINUE OUR MISSION TOGETHER!

Contribute today to the protection of what is most precious: Our natural areas

When you support Appalachian Corridor, each dollar becomes an exceptional lever! In fact, each dollar you donate is multiplied by a factor of up to 50 thanks to matching funds from our institutional and government funding partners!

Take part in the advancement of our regional environmental conservation mission by making a donation on our website at corridorappalachien.ca right now or complete the form below and mail it back to our office. Thank you for your generosity!



Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Province _____ Postal Code _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

I want my name and the amount of my donation made public.

I want my name only made public.

I want to remain anonymous.

I make a single donation of:

- 50 \$
- 100 \$
- 250 \$
- 500 \$
- Autre/Other _____ \$

My pledge over 5 years:

- 250 \$ (50 \$ in 5 installments)
- 100 \$ (100 \$ in 5 installments)
- 250 \$ (200 \$ in 5 installments)
- 500 \$ (500 \$ in 5 installments)
- Other _____ \$
(_____ installments of _____ \$)

Payment by credit card

- Visa
- Mastercard
- American Express

Payment by cheque (enclosed)

Cardholder _____

Card number _____

Expiration Date _____

CSC (3 digits on the back of the card) _____

Signature _____