



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

MAJOR ACQUISITION OF 442 HECTARES PERPETUALLY PROTECTED BY APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR IN EASTMAN

Eastman, Quebec (May 28, 2021) – Appalachian Corridor is proud to announce the completion of one of the largest conservation projects on privately held land in Québec in recent years, namely the acquisition of two adjacent lots totaling 442 hectares of natural areas in the Municipality of Eastman.

“The property came up for sale and we had to act quickly to protect it,” explains Mélanie Lelièvre, executive director for Appalachian Corridor. “The strategic location of the lots, their tremendous ecological value, and the many species at risk which are present, all motivated our team to achieve this unique project of incredible scale for our organization. The response from our financial partners was exceptional and we are very grateful for their participation.”

With this acquisition, Appalachian Corridor reaches 15 000 hectares of perpetually private land on its territory of action achieved since its founding in 2002, all thanks to the contributions of many financial and conservation partners.

HONOURING A FAMILY’S ATTACHMENT TO THE LAND DATING BACK TO MORE THAN 60 YEARS

The newly acquired territory now perpetually protected will carry the name « Khartoum-Simard » in recognition of its proximity to the Khartoum stream and the chemin Khartoum that run along the land and in honor of the Simard family who enjoyed and cared for the land since the early 1960’s.

Louis-Charles Simard and Marguerite Simard acquired one of the lots in 1962. When Mr. Simard passed away a few years later, Mrs. Simard kept the land to continue forest exploitation activities. Before passing away in 2004, Mrs. Simard bequeathed 397 hectares to her twelve children who continued the forest’s management until its recent sale.

“The protection of this territory by Appalachian Corridor was an appealing avenue which aligned with our aspirations for the land,” explains Charles Simard, one of the nine heirs representing the family and the donor-seller of the adjacent 45 hectares which he purchased in the 1990’s. “Our family commonly agreed that we should remain true to the land on the basis of our personal convictions and in a way, to continue the vision of our parents and the predecessors who came before us.”

A CONSERVATION PROJECT BENEFICIAL FOR THE PROTECTION OF SPECIES AT RISK

The acquired land features a rich biodiversity with forested areas, as well as aquatic environments and wetlands, and represents an essential link for the preservation of the ecological connectivity between the Mount Orford National Park and the Monteregian Hills located to the west.

The property is located at the head of the Missisquoi River watershed which is one of the most important watersheds of the region. This watershed represents an essential habitat for the most significant population of Wood turtles on our territory, a species designated vulnerable in Quebec and threatened in Canada.

“The naturel banks along the streams and the wetlands found on the Khartoum-Simard property are crucial elements for maintaining the water quality of the watershed, and also provide ecological services to the local populations downstream,” explains Clément Robidoux, biologist and conservation director at Appalachian Corridor. “These waters are important habitats for various salamanders such as the Northern dusky salamander and the Spring salamander, two species at risk.”

With respect to plant species, the land contains more than thirty forest-based communities including the wild leek, designated vulnerable in Quebec, and the Northern maidenhair fern, also designated vulnerable in Quebec due to harvesting.

In addition to confirming the presence of a variety of mammals on the land, Appalachian Corridor experts also observed many threatened bat species found in Quebec such as the silver-haired bat and the hoary bat.

Some sixty avian fauna species were identified on the property, including two species with a federally recognized precarious status, namely the Eastern Wood-Pewee and the Barn Swallow.

CONCRETE INVESTMENTS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE COMMUNITY

Global project costs reached just over \$2.8M, including land acquisition and all related professional and technical services, and the establishment of a management fund for the perpetual stewardship of the property.

This project was made possible in part thanks to a generous donation from the Simard family and important financial contributions from the Government of Quebec through the *Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels (PPMN)* and the Government of Canada, through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP), funded by the Canada Nature Fund.

Appalachian Corridor also wishes to thank the following financial partners for the completion of the project: the Municipality of Eastman, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, donors to Appalachian Corridor's major campaign, the Fondation de la Faune du Québec, the Weston Family Foundation and the Caisse de dépôt et de placement du Québec.

QUOTES

"I would like to congratulate the Appalachian Corridor for its conservation efforts in the municipality of Eastman, protecting an important habitat for species at risk, such as the wood turtle. I am proud that the Government of Canada is supporting this project through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program of the Nature Conservancy of Canada to protect these lands in Brome-Missisquoi. By partnering with organizations like Appalachian Corridor, we are making progress towards our goal of conserving one quarter of Canada's land and ocean by 2025."

- *Lyne Bessette, Member of Parliament for Brome-Missisquoi*

"This achievement in Eastman demonstrates well the multiplying effect of the *Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels* managed by Nature Conservancy Canada. The Government of Quebec is proud to have contributed at the height of more than 53 million dollars and to witness other partners, such as Appalachian Corridor, in turn contribute to the conservation of Quebec's biodiversity. Congratulations to the Simard family for its important contribution to the consolidation of Quebec's network of protected natural areas. Quebec will be tied to the international objectives which will soon be fixed as part of the Convention on Biological diversity. We will have to count on acquisitions like this one, on private land, in southern Quebec, to reach them."

- *Benoit Charette, Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change and Minister Responsible for the Laval Region*

"This conservation project, located in the beautiful district of Orford which I have the honour to represent, makes me proud. I have always made it a priority that projects, independent of their nature, respect the environment and that as much of the territory be protected. I salute the efforts deployed by Appalachian Corridor, the Simard family and all other partners, which illustrates the great richness of our region in terms of ecological diversity."

- *Gilles Bélanger, Député d'Orford*

"The Municipality of Eastman, on behalf of its citizens, thanks Appalachian Corridor for their leadership in the acquisition of this property of 442 hectares on our territory. This acquisition and the commitment of our municipality, demonstrate clearly a common vision to protect green spaces for future generations. Each gain for the protection of the environment gets us closer to the objective of improving the conciliation between nature, human activity and economic vitality. We are very proud to have contributed financially to the realization of this major acquisition, here on our territory."

- *Yvon Laramée, Mayor of Eastman*

“The acquisition of the Khartoum-Simard property represents a historical milestone in the history of Appalachian Corridor, as much for the size of the protected land as for its ecological value. It is with tremendous pride that we announce one of the most important conservation projects on privately held land which, over the years, will offer great stewardship opportunities. This was made possible thanks to the participation and commitment of many partners, funders and generous donors. More than ever, nature needs you!”

- Marie-José Auclair, *President of Appalachian Corridor’s board of directors*

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The lots now perpetually protected are located in the municipality of Eastman, to the west of the Mount Orford National Park.
- This new perpetually protected area has a size of 442 hectares, comprised of two adjacent lots of 397 and 45 hectares respectively.
- Appalachian Corridor acquired the assets from Les Boisés Kartoum inc. and Charles Simard.
- The area will be protected in perpetuity and stewardship options will be assessed as part of a master plan to be elaborated in the future.
- Among the vulnerable species that will benefit from the protection of this territory are : the northern dusky salamander, the spring salamander, the four-toed salamander, the ringneck snake, the wild leek, several species of bats, as well as bird species such as the Eastern Wood-Pewee and the Barn Swallow.
- Mr. Charles Simard made a donation for part of the value of his lot as part of the Government of Canada’s Ecological Gifts Program.
- The project’s funding partners are: Government of Quebec through the *Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels (PPMN)* and the Government of Canada, through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP), funded by the Canada Nature Fund, the Louis-Charles et Marguerite Simard family, Charles Simard, the Municipality of Eastman, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, donors to Appalachian Corridor’s major campaign, the Fondation de la Faune du Québec, the Weston Family Foundation and the Caisse de dépôt et de placement du Québec.

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ABOUT

Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels (PPMN) du Gouvernement du Québec

The Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels (PPMN – Partnership for Natural Areas) is a three-year, \$13-million grant to NCC by the ministère de l’Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques. By investing in the establishment of financial partnerships with provincial conservation organizations, the program supports initiatives to protect ecologically significant natural areas. The partnership aims to develop and consolidate Quebec’s network of privately protected areas. [Informations](#)

Government of Canada’s Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP)

The Government of Canada’s Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP) is a unique public-private partnership to support new protected and conserved areas by securing private lands and private interests in lands. The program is managed by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). Federal funds invested in the program are matched with contributions raised by NCC and its partners, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the country’s land trust community. [Informations](#)

Protéger les habitats fauniques program by the Fondation de la faune du Québec

The Protéger les habitats fauniques program by the Fondation de la faune du Québec aims to support high value habitat protection initiatives through the settlement of legal conservation agreements with private landowners. fondationdelafaune.qc.ca

Le programme de don écologique

Le Programme des dons écologiques offre aux Canadiennes et aux Canadiens possédant des terres écosensibles la possibilité de protéger la nature et de transmettre un héritage aux générations futures. En vertu de la *Loi de l’impôt sur le revenu* du Canada et la *Loi sur les impôts* du Québec, il procure d’importants avantages fiscaux aux propriétaires qui font don d’une terre ou d’un intérêt foncier partiel à un organisme bénéficiaire admissible, ci-après appelé le « bénéficiaire ». Le bénéficiaire veille à ce que la biodiversité et le patrimoine naturel de la terre soient conservés à perpétuité. canada.ca

Appalachian Corridor

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 15 062 hectares on their territory of action. corridorappalachien.ca

[Click here](#) to learn more about the Simard family's journey.

[Click here](#) to watch a video about the property (in French).

CONTACTS

Marie-Hélène Thibeault

Communications Coordinator

Appalachian Corridor

marie-helene.thibeault@corridorappalachien.ca

579-488-6670

Claude Potvin

Director of communications

Minister of the Environment and the Fight Against Climate Change and Minister Responsible for the Laval Region

418-928-9921