



FIDUCIE FONCIÈRE DU
MONT PINACLE

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

**THE GIFT OF NATURE:
THE CASTONGUAY-ROBITAILLE FAMILY PERPETUALLY PROTECTS
13,75 HECTARES IN ABERCORN**

Abercorn, QC (December 15, 2021) – Yolande Castonguay and Robert Robitaille got a head start on the holidays by making a generous gift to nature and the community with a donation of a 13.75-hectare (33.98 acres) conservation easement in Abercorn.

"We are both proud and happy to see this project come to fruition," said Castonguay and Robitaille. "This conservation agreement project has been close to our hearts for several years and will contribute to the protection of several species of plants, insects and animals, some of which are at risk," they add.

A PROJECT BENEFICIAL TO BIODIVERSITY

The conservation easement on the Castonguay-Robitaille family's land is located eight kilometres south of the village of Sutton and covers nearly 14 hectares (34 acres) of forest habitat, riparian areas of the Sutton River and large wetlands. The land, now dedicated to conservation in perpetuity, is home to a rich biodiversity and represents a suitable environment for the Sutton River wood turtle, a species that is designated as vulnerable in Quebec.

"We know that this population has suffered a great decline largely due to the increase in human activity in the region," explains Clément Robidoux, director - conservation for Appalachian Corridor. "We are grateful for the gesture made by the family to contribute, among other things, to the maintenance of natural environments to help this population recover," he adds.

MAINTAINING OWNERSHIP ALL THE WHILE CARRYING OUT A CONSERVATION PROJECT

As part of their conservation easement project, the Castonguay-Robitaille family chose to retain ownership of their entire property but agreed to forego certain activities for the portion now dedicated to conservation. Several discussions with the family led to the development of a project tailored to their needs and objectives.

"This project was born out of discussions with friends who gave us an example," says the retired couple who has always cherished nature. "They introduced us to conservation organizations so that we could do the same and we are very happy with the result."

THE FIDUCIE FONCIÈRE DU MONT PINACLE : A KEY LOCAL PARTNER

To carry out the project, Appalachian Corridor worked with its local affiliate, the Fiducie foncière du mont Pinnacle (FFMP). Among other things, the FFMP assists landowners in the surrounding local municipalities with their conservation projects.

Both organisations supported the family's approach. While Appalachian Corridor carried out the technical and financial work upstream, the FFMP will take on the responsibility for and the monitoring of the easement in perpetuity.

"This donation represents the eleventh conservation easement on our territory and now brings to 377 hectares (931 acres) the area protected in perpetuity by our organization," said Danielle Dansereau, President of the FFMP Board of Directors and a founding member of the conservation group in 1991.



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"I am pleased that our organization is able to receive this donation of a remarkable wetland, located east of our territory of action, on the ecological corridor linking the Mount Pinnacle to the Sutton Mountains," she adds. "This is one more small step in the perpetuation of our region's natural heritage. We are confident that Yolande and Robert's generous gesture will inspire others and spread the word about this concrete way to play a role in maintaining biodiversity."

AN ECOLOGICAL GESTURE WITH ECONOMIC BENEFITS

As part of this project, the Castonguay-Robitaille family benefited from the [Ecological Gifts Program](#). This program can offer considerable tax advantages to eligible owners who choose to invest in the protection of biodiversity.

Donors receive a tax credit based on the fair market value of the easement. This credit can be used over the ten years following the donation.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT COVERING ALL PROJECT COSTS

Appalachian Corridor and its affiliated partners make every effort to ensure that landowners do not incur any costs in this type of project.

For the Castonguay-Robitaille project, Appalachian Corridor and the FFMP would like to give special thanks to the following funders who covered all professional expenses related to the realization of the conservation project: The Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs du Québec (MFFP) under the 2013-2020 Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP), the Government of Canada (Environment and Climate Change Canada) via the Canada Nature Fund: Community Designated Priority Sites (CDPS) for Species at Risk, and the Echo Foundation.

SMALL STEPS TO REGIONAL CONSERVATION GAINS

Since its founding in 2002, Appalachian Corridor, its 17 affiliate members, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and a host of other partners have contributed to the protection of 15,277 hectares (37 750 acres) of natural environments on private land in the Northern Green Mountains.

"Each hectare protected is a gain for the health of our ecosystems, increases our ability to adapt to climate change and contributes to the well-being of present and future communities," explains Mélanie Lelièvre, Executive Director of Appalachian Corridor. "However, there is still a lot to do."

"Our entire team and the region's conservation stakeholders are working tirelessly to achieve an ambitious target of protecting at least 500 hectares per year on private land," she adds. "This project is a concrete example that fits in with the orientations and recommendations of the White Paper *A Plan for Southern Quebec* that has just been published. Landowners who choose to participate in this movement by donating an easement or land in fee simple, as well as municipalities who commit to protecting natural areas, hold a significant portion of the potential gains. Our heartfelt thanks to the Castonguay-Robitaille family for this exceptional holiday gift!"

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ABOUT

Community-Nominated Priority Places projects

The \$15.6 million Community Endangered Species Priority Sites program of the Canada Nature Fund, which runs until March 31, 2023, is designed to support coordinated, focused action by multiple partners to protect and recover species at risk. <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/news/2019/09/community-nominated-priority-places-projects.html>



Fiducie foncière du mont Pinnacle

The Fiducie foncière du mont Pinnacle is a registered charity dedicated to nature conservation in the Mount Pinnacle area of Frelighsburg. It does this by acquiring land and negotiating conservation agreements. It periodically offers educational activities to school groups and the general public. <http://www.montpinacle.ca>

Appalachian Corridor

Appalachian Corridor is a non-profit conservation organization created in 2002, whose mission is to protect the natural habitats of the Appalachian region of southern Quebec. Through the implementation of its transboundary 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 sustainable development perspective. 17 local organisations are affiliated members of Appalachian Corridor. The extent of the areas protected by Appalachian Corridor and its partners in the region is now 15 276.73 hectares. www.corridorappalachien.ca.

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