



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

THE DONATION OF A 30-HECTARE CONSERVATION EASEMENT IN SHEFFORD ALLOWS GILLES DESJARDINS TO SLEEP IN PEACE

Shefford, QC (April 21, 2022) - More than 35 years after acquiring his woodlot on Lequin Road in the Township of Shefford, Gilles Desjardins is realizing a dream today. By donating a conservation easement on his property, he is protecting 30.19 hectares of natural habitat forever.

"As a native of the region, I have always been passionate about the forest," explains Mr. Desjardins. "For me, this land represents a haven of well-being. For all these years, I've been walking there to simply enjoy the sights, relax, and recharge my batteries," adds the septuagenarian.

A nature lover with no children to leave his property to, Mr. Desjardins began thinking about the future of his land 15 years ago. "Early on, I thought it would be great to keep the place intact and in its natural state forever. But there was no organization in the municipality to accompany me at that time."

Thanks to a collaboration between two conservation organizations in the region, Appalachian Corridor, founded in 2002, and Conservation Espace Nature Shefford (CENS), founded in 2010, Mr. Desjardins began his efforts three years ago. The conservation easement on his entire property was recently notarized, allowing him to remain the owner while contributing to the protection of natural environments in perpetuity.

"Now that all this nature is protected forever, I can sleep in peace," he concludes.

A FIRST FOR CENS

For CENS, which works to protect the landscape and biodiversity of the natural environment in the Township of Shefford, this is the first donation of a conservation easement on its territory of action. The group hopes that Mr. Desjardins' gesture will inspire others to follow suit in the area.

"Mr. Desjardins' generous donation of an easement is a concrete gesture to protect and conserve our environment," says Gérard Lavoie, President of CENS, the organization to which the easement was donated, and which will oversee its protection and management from now on. "Mr. Desjardins is a pioneer in Shefford, and we are grateful for his gesture and for the trust he has shown us."

A SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARDS THE PROTECTION OF A CORRIDOR BETWEEN MOUNTS BROME AND SHEFFORD

In addition to the local benefits, Mr. Desjardins' donation of a conservation easement represents a significant gain in fostering ecological connectivity on a regional scale.

"Mr. Desjardins' property is important in terms of connectivity on our territory because its protection contributes to the essential link between two Montérégiennes that are Mounts Brome and Mount Shefford," explains Mélanie Lelièvre, Executive Director of Appalachian Corridor, whose mission is to protect the natural environments of the Appalachian region of southern Quebec through the creation of a vast, permanent network of protected areas. "We are very grateful for Mr. Desjardins' inspiring gesture and the priceless ecological legacy he's leaving for nature and for present and future communities."



In addition to contributing to the protection of natural environments, the establishment of protected areas can, in some cases, promote the maintenance and recovery of populations of species at risk while preserving the region's landscapes and providing healthy environments for the community. Establishing protected areas is also a recognized strategy for reducing greenhouse gases and adapting to climate change.

A PROJECT AT NO COST TO THE DONOR AND RICH IN ECOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Appalachian Corridor and its affiliated partners make every effort to ensure that landowners do not have to pay any fees for the implementation of a conservation initiative targeting their land.

As part of this project, Appalachian Corridor and CENS would like to thank the following funders for their essential contributions: the Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, which granted financial assistance of more than \$53 million to the Nature Conservancy of Canada for its Natural Environment Partnership Project (NEPP), and the Canada Nature Fund's Priority Sites Designated by Communities for Species at Risk program.

In addition to enjoying coverage for all project costs and generating ecological benefits from his action, Mr. Desjardins also took advantage of the Government of Canada's Ecological Gifts Program, which offers significant tax benefits to property owners who choose to invest in the protection of biodiversity.

DONATING A CONSERVATION EASEMENT: REMAINING AN OWNER WHILE MAKING A COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

A conservation easement is a voluntary, legal agreement between a landowner and a conservation organization that restricts certain uses to protect its ecological features.

Unlike the sale or donation of property, a conservation easement allows the landowner to retain ownership while allowing uses that do not compromise the integrity of the ecosystems, such as hiking or firewood harvesting for personal use.

“Over the past 20 years, Appalachian Corridor and its 17 affiliated members have contributed to the realization of more than 100 conservation projects with landowners, either in full title or through donations of conservation easements,” explains Marie-José Auclair, president of the board of directors of Appalachian Corridor. “All these visionary gestures for nature represent gains of more than 15,500 hectares of natural environments protected in perpetuity between Granby and Sherbrooke, and from the American border to the north of Mont-Orford National Park. This is the equivalent of the area of the city of Granby that is now protected forever.”

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ABOUT

Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels (PPMN)

Le Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels (PPMN) is a four-year grant of over \$53 million from the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change to NCC. It provides support for voluntary conservation initiatives to ensure the protection of natural areas of interest by establishing financial partnerships with conservation organizations in the province. The PPMN thus aims to develop and consolidate the Quebec network of protected areas located on private land.



Canada's Nature Fund Community Designated Priority Sites for Species at Risk

The Nature Fund of Canada's Community Designated Priority Sites for Species at Risk initiative is a four-year, \$15.6 million funding initiative of Environment and Climate Change Canada. <https://www.canada.ca/fr/environnement-changement-climatique.html>

Nature Conservancy of Canada

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is the country's unifying force for nature. NCC seeks solutions to the twin crises of rapid biodiversity loss and climate change through large-scale, permanent land conservation. As a trusted partner, NCC works with people, communities, businesses, and government to protect and care for our most important natural areas. Since 1962, NCC has brought Canadians together to conserve and restore more than 15 million hectares, including nearly 50,000 hectares in Quebec. NCC is a registered charity. With nature, NCC builds a thriving world. To learn more, visit natureconservancy.ca

Conservation espace nature Shefford (CENS)

CENS aims to ensure the protection of the natural environment of the Township of Shefford. This mission translates into objectives including landscape protection, acquisition of land for protection purposes and the respectful development of pedestrian access to the mountain and parks. CENS was founded in 2010 and has been an affiliate member of Appalachian Corridor since 2010. For more information: www.censhefford.ca

Appalachian Corridor

Appalachian Corridor is a non-profit conservation organization celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2022. Its mission is to protect the natural environments of the Appalachian region of southern Quebec. Through the implementation of its conservation strategy, Appalachian Corridor provides local communities with the means to maintain and restore a living environment that respects the ecology of the region, from a sustainable development perspective. A total of 17 local organizations are affiliated members of Appalachian Corridor and together they contribute to accelerating and increasing the conservation projects carried out on the territory. Since the beginning of its activities, the extent of the areas protected by Appalachian Corridor and its partners totals more than 15,500 hectares of land protected forever - equivalent to the surface area of the city of Granby. www.corridorappalachien.ca

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