



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

## ONE STEP CLOSER TO PROTECTING MILLINGTON BOG - A SIGNIFICANT WETLAND IN AUSTIN

**Austin, Quebec (March 13, 2023)** - Appalachian Corridor and Conservation des vallons de la Serpentine (CVS) are proud to announce the protection in perpetuity of 34 hectares (84 acres) of exceptionally rich natural environment located in the Millington Bog in the municipality of Austin.

### A WETLAND OF GREAT IMPORTANCE

Occupying 264 hectares (652 acres), Millington Bog stands out for the large area it occupies in a region where peatlands are uncommon. It is home to species that are rare in southern Quebec, including the dragon's-mouth - the municipality's floral emblem - a native flower of the orchid family. It also provides habitat for the monarch butterfly, the Pickerel Frog, the Northern Dusky Salamander, the Northern maidenhair fern and many other species.

In addition to being very rich in biodiversity, bogs have filtration and water retention capabilities that are essential to the preservation of water quality. Millington Bog is no exception. It purifies the waters of the Powell Creek watershed and, by extension, Lake Memphremagog.

*"Wetlands are particularly important because they act like sponges by absorbing water from precipitation, and thus help prevent flooding and drought,"* explains Clément Robidoux, Director of Conservation at Appalachian Corridor. *"In addition, they filter runoff water and capture any pollutants it may contain. They are also essential habitats for several species. In a context of climate change, the protection of rich environments like Millington Bog is a priority."*

### MILLINGTON BOG: AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THE AREA'S CONSERVATION STRATEGY

The acquisition of this property is part of the Municipality of Austin's ongoing commitment to consolidate protected areas in the sector. It adds to the protection of more than 95 hectares (235 acres) of this large wetland complex, carried out by Appalachian Corridor and CVS in 2012, funded in part by the Quebec government's Program Partenaires pour la nature.

*"This acquisition in the Millington Bog adds to the 95 hectares (235 acres) already protected on the Bog's territory and was made possible thanks to the very professional work of Appalachian Corridor, whom we thank greatly. We hope that it will inspire other landowners to take action to preserve the ecosystems that surround us,"* said Giuseppe (Joe) Marino, President of CVS.



At the regional level, the acquisition is part of a conservation strategy to preserve the rare core habitats of over 10,000 hectares in southern Quebec which are slightly fragmented or aren't at all. It represents a direct contribution to the preservation of a core habitat of more than 1,100 hectares in the municipality of Austin.

#### **MUNICIPALITIES COMMITTED TO NATURE**

*"Municipalities are increasingly recognizing the many services provided by natural environments, including air and water quality, the attractiveness of living environments, adaptability to extreme weather events, economic benefits, as well as the population's physical and mental health. Hence the growing desire of municipalities in the region to take this into account in the management of their territory," says Lisette Maillé, Mayor of the Municipality of Austin. "In Austin, respect for the environment has been an integral part of our orientations for several years. We have revised our urban plan and adapted our regulations to better take into account sensitive and ecological environments, particularly wildlife corridors. So when an opportunity like this presents itself, we are happy to seize it by contributing financially."*

*"We have been working to protect Millington Bog for years. As of 2012, we were protecting nearly 100 hectares there with CVS. There is still a lot to do to ensure complete protection, but this acquisition is another step forward," says Mélanie Lelièvre, Executive Director of Appalachian Corridor. "The contribution of municipalities in the efforts to conserve and take into account natural environments is essential. The municipality of Austin has been resolutely committed to this for several years. Its environmental leadership should be considered as an example to follow."*

In addition to the municipality of Austin, CVS and Appalachian Corridor would like to acknowledge the financial contribution of the federal and provincial governments. This conservation project was made possible by funding from the Government of Canada through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program (NHCP) of the Nature Trust of Canada. It was also carried out under the Nature Conservancy of Canada's (NCC) Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels, for which NCC received more than \$53 million in financial assistance over four years from the Government of Quebec.

*"Through programs like the Natural Heritage Conservation Program, the Government of Canada is making progress toward its goal of conserving a quarter of land and water in Canada by 2025, working toward 30 percent of each by 2030. By working with partners like the Appalachian Corridor and Conservation des vallons de la Serpentine, we are helping to protect the natural environment in Quebec and across the country. Protecting wetlands such as the Millington bog plays a vital role in both contributing to the conservation of biodiversity, and to the fight against climate change. Only by working together and engaging in a whole-of-society approach can we hope to tackle these crises."*

**– The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change**



*"It is always inspiring to see municipalities getting involved and collaborating with conservation organizations to ensure the sustainability of the natural environments of interest on their territory. This rich wetland certainly falls into that category. Acquisitions such as this one, in addition to being beneficial for the citizens and the species found there, contribute to increasing the representativeness of the network of protected areas in southern Quebec. Congratulations to all those involved in this important project! "*

**- Benoit Charette, Minister of the Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs and Minister responsible for the Laurentian region.**

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## ABOUT

The **Projet de partenariat pour les milieux naturels (PPMN)** is a four-year grant of more than \$53 million from the Government of Quebec to the Nature Conservancy of Canada. 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 Québec's network of protected areas located on private land.

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](http://natureconservancy.ca)

The **Government of Canada's Natural Heritage Conservation Program (HNCP)** is a unique partnership that supports the creation and recognition of new conservation and protected areas through the acquisition of private lands and rights. To date, the Government of Canada has invested more than \$440 million in the program, leveraged by more than \$870 million raised by the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the conservation community across the country, resulting in the protection and conservation of more than 700,000 hectares (1,729,738 acres) of ecologically sensitive land.

**Conservation des vallons de la Serpentine (CVS)** was born in 2006 from shared values and a collective desire to protect an area rich in natural environments and species. Today, more than 75 members support the cause and allow CVS to make its way. This commitment is unique and translates into recreational and educational activities, open to the public, on the richness of our forests as well as an annual celebration; a must, which allows to bring together these people who are sensitive to environmental issues. CVS protects some 438.38 hectares of land, of which more than 200 hectares are owned by CVS. The other



portion is made up of conservation easements granted by private landowners. All of these lands are protected in perpetuity. [conservationserpentine.org](http://conservationserpentine.org)

**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 affiliate members of Appalachian Corridor. 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 16,200 hectares of land forever protected – equivalent to more than the surface area of the city of Granby. [www.appalachiancorridor.ca](http://www.appalachiancorridor.ca)

#### CONTACTS

Mélanie Lelièvre  
Executive Director  
Appalachian Corridor  
[melanie.lelievre@corridorappalachien.ca](mailto:melanie.lelievre@corridorappalachien.ca)  
Cell : 819-919-0122

Gilles Gagnon  
Communications Manager  
Conservation des vallons de la Serpentine  
[gigagnon@sympatico.ca](mailto:gigagnon@sympatico.ca)