



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

## **MOUNT FOSTER PROTECTED IN PERPETUITY: A MAJOR DONATION COMPLETES THE CIRCLE**

**Octobre 2, 2024**, Eastman. Appalachian Corridor is proud to announce the completion of one of the largest conservation projects in its history. The protection in perpetuity of most of Mount Foster has recently been enhanced by a major ecological gift, worth almost \$1 million.

This addition brings the mountain's area protected in perpetuity to 221 hectares (546 acres), and will enhance the 215 hectares (531 acres) protected in 2019. Thank you to the promoters who have agreed to the conservation project.

### **A MAJOR TURNAROUND**

The original development called for some 70 new homes to be built across the entire property, which would have irreversibly altered this ecologically rich environment. Congratulations to Mr. Lussier and Mr. Burel, who gave their consent to this conservation project, as well as to this important ecological gift, made under Environment and Climate Change Canada's Ecological Gifts Program.

Real estate development on Mount Foster had aroused the opposition of citizens and of Appalachian Corridor, given the high ecological value of the targeted environments and the large number of planned residences. Protecting the mountain has generated real commitment from the surrounding communities. In fact, nearly 250 donators contributed to the acquisition of the property. The municipalities of West Bolton and Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton were also involved throughout the process, in addition to numerous funders.

### **AN ECOLOGICAL GESTURE WITH ECONOMIC BENEFITS**

As part of their donation, the promoters were able to benefit from the Ecological Gifts Program. This program can offer considerable tax advantages to eligible property owners who choose to invest in the protection of biodiversity.

Donators are entitled to a tax credit based on the fair market value of the land donated. This credit can be used over a ten-year period following the donation.



## **AFTER CONSERVATION, PROPERTY STEWARDSHIP**

Communities now have access to a site of high ecological value via 4.5 km of trails, developed with the greatest respect for the area, as well as access to the Mount Foster Tower and Les sentiers de l'Estrie network. Like all protected areas, this site is patrolled regularly to ensure that its ecological integrity is maintained.

Appalachian Corridor's management of the Mount Foster protected area and its installations is made possible in large part by the Accelerating Conservation in Southern Quebec (ACSQ) project, a co-financing agreement between Quebec's government and Nature Conservancy of Canada that benefits Quebec's conservation organizations. Quebec's government has invested \$144 million over five years, dedicated to the protection and conservation of natural environments of ecological interest on private land.

## **A SITE OF INESTIMABLE VALUE**

Situated in the heart of Mount Foster's forest massif, its strategic location in the Northern Green Mountains chain adds greatly to the property's ecological value. This protected area is an important component in safeguarding high-quality, unfragmented natural habitats for large-range mammals, as well as numerous species of meso and micromammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles.

These include the Spring Salamander, designated as vulnerable under the *Loi sur les espèces menacées ou vulnérables* (LEMV) and threatened under the Species at Risk Act (SARA), and the Northern Dusky Salamander, a species likely to be designated as threatened or vulnerable under LEMV. The presence of other species at risk was also confirmed, including the Pickerel Frog (likely to be designated threatened or vulnerable in Quebec), the Canada Warbler (threatened under SARA), the Wood Thrush (threatened under SARA) and the Eastern Wood-Pewee (special concern under SARA).

In total, 53 bird species have been recorded. Many of the area's large home-range species require large areas of unfragmented forest to maintain viable populations. Moose, bobcat, black bear and fisher are just a few examples.

## **QUOTES**

"I would like to welcome the announcement of the protection of an important part of Mount Foster and thank the donators for their ecological gift, as well as the conservation organizations and partners who made this announcement possible. Protecting and restoring our natural environments contributes to the enhancement of protected areas, particularly on private land, in order to achieve our conservation objectives of 30% coverage of our territory by 2030."



Benoit Charette, Minister of the Environment, Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks and Minister responsible for the Laurentides region.

"It's no exaggeration to say that this project is quite a twist of fate! A real estate development that had planned a large number of houses all over the mountain, but which has now been considerably reduced, and includes all of the most fragile environments in this protected area. Not only that, but the project ended with a major ecological gift from the developers! This outcome would never have been considered at the start of this adventure, which began in 2012. It just goes to show that you should never give up," says Mélanie Lelièvre, General Director of Appalachian Corridor.

### LINKS

- [Mont Foster Video](#)

- Mount Foster trails information: [Mount Foster Trails](#)

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The Mount Foster protected area comprises 215 hectares of natural environments in the heart of a forest massif in the Green Mountain range. A 6-hectare ecological gift from the developer has now been added to the protected area, for a total of 221 hectares (546 acres);

- After carrying out an ecological assessment of the natural environment of Mount Foster, Appalachian Corridor took care to include the area's most sensitive environments in the conservation project, and to design the hiking trails in such a way as to avoid these ecologically fragile and important environments;

- Communities now have access to a site of high ecological value via 4.5 km of trails, developed with the greatest respect for the site, as well as access to the Mount Foster Tower (also known as Tour des Scouts), and to Les sentiers de l'Estrée network;

- This conclusion consolidates a long-standing conservation project, initiated in 2012. The project is a fine example of how it is possible to minimize the impact of real estate developments while enabling the conservation of natural environments.

- For those who love the Mount Foster trails, it's possible to combine business with pleasure and become a patrol volunteer. For further information, please contact Vincent: [vincent.h.benoit@corridorappalachien.ca](mailto:vincent.h.benoit@corridorappalachien.ca).

### CONTACTS

Isabelle Stébenne, Director of Communications and Philanthropy

[Isabelle.stebenne@corridorappalachien.ca](mailto:Isabelle.stebenne@corridorappalachien.ca)

514 755-4928



Frédérique Vuillermoz, Communications Coordinator  
frederique.vuillermoz@corridorappalachien.ca  
450-543-4999

## ABOUT

The Accelerating Conservation in Southern Quebec (ACSQ) project is a co-financing agreement between the Quebec government and Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) that benefits Quebec conservation organizations. It aims to protect and conserve natural environments of ecological interest, notably through the acquisition of private land for protected and conserved areas, and the establishment of ecological corridors. The ACSQ will thus promote the development and sound management of the network of protected areas on private land, as well as public access to nature. The \$144 million over five years invested in the ACSQ by the Quebec government must be matched by NCC and its partners with other funds from non-governmental sources.

Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is the country's unifying force for nature conservation. Through the permanent conservation of vast territories, NCC provides solutions to the dual crisis of rapidly declining biodiversity and climate change. A trusted partner, NCC works alongside individuals, communities, businesses and governments to protect and care for our most important natural areas. Since 1962, NCC has mobilized Canadians to conserve and restore more than 15 million hectares. In Quebec, NCC regularly partners with Nature Conservancy of Quebec (CNQ), a non-profit organization separate from NCC, to protect Quebec's richest natural environments. Together, they have protected over 55,000 hectares of natural environments in the province. Visit [conservationdelanature.ca](http://conservationdelanature.ca)

The Ecological Gifts Program offers Canadians with ecologically sensitive land the opportunity to protect nature and leave a legacy for future generations. Under Canada's Income Tax Act and Quebec's Taxation Act, it provides significant tax benefits to landowners who donate land or a partial interest in land to an eligible recipient organization, hereinafter referred to as the "beneficiary". The Beneficiary ensures that the land's biodiversity and natural heritage are preserved in perpetuity. <https://www.canada.ca/fr/environnement-changement-climatique/services/financement-environnement/programme-dons-ecologiques/apercu.html>

Appalachian Corridor is a non-profit conservation organization that has been active since 2002 in Green Mountains, a segment of the Appalachian Mountains in southern Quebec. Its mission is to consolidate and leave in perpetuity a vast corridor of protected natural areas. In response to the twofold crisis of climate and biodiversity, Appalachian Corridor, with the support of its conservation partners, is deploying a conservation strategy that to date has protected over 17,800 hectares of high ecological value.

[corridorappalachien.ca](http://corridorappalachien.ca)