



PRESS RELEASE

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APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR AND ITS AFFILIATE MEMBERS PROTECT ANOTHER 150 HECTARES

Eastman, February 10, 2026 — Five new protected areas, totalling almost 150 hectares, were recently added to Estrie's natural environment conservation network thanks to the concerted effort of Appalachian Corridor and its affiliate members, the commitment made by private landowners and the support of financial partners. These projects, carried out during the last few weeks of 2025, represent major advances for ecological connectivity, the protection of species in precarious situations and the long-term preservation of natural environments of exceptional value.

AN 86.5-HECTARE EASEMENT FOR THE MASSAWIPPI CONSERVATION TRUST IN COATICOOK

The 86.5-hectare conservation easement that Yvonne Bouchard donated to the Massawippi Conservation Trust is one of the largest recent additions to the region's network of protected areas. The vast piece of land is home to a dozen species in precarious situations, making it a site of major interest for biodiversity. Motivated by the desire to conserve the ecological integrity of her land, Ms. Bouchard took the necessary steps to ensure that it would be conserved in perpetuity. The value of the donation associated with this project is estimated at \$275,000. This project is in addition to the one announced in December, concerning the donation of the Tomifobia Nature Trail between Ayer's Cliff and Stanstead to the Massawippi Conservation Trust.

TERRE-DES-GÉNÉRATIONS PROTECTED AREA AT OWL'S HEAD

Laurence Côté-Leduc, Luka Martineau McEniry and Marie-Claude Leduc donated land valued at \$140,000 to protect nature. Combined with funding from financial backers, this new area extends the protection on the southeastern slope of Mont Owl's Head, a natural emblem of great significance to the region. This approximately 18-hectare property is adjacent to an existing protected area and is at the intersection of a natural corridor and Mont Owl's Head's core habitats. Working with the Ruiter Valley Land Trust (RVLT), Appalachian Corridor is proud to contribute to the protection of this forest ecosystem, which is home to 15 species in precarious situations, including the silver-haired bat, the hoary bat and the little brown Myotis, as well as the wood thrush, the easter wood-peewee and the northern dusky salamander.

A NEW PROTECTED AREA IN MANSONVILLE

The RVLT created a conservation easement to protect 21.4 hectares in the heart of the Ruiter Valley, on land adjacent to properties already held by the Trust. This land borders Ruiter Creek and is located near the Green Mountains Nature Reserve (GMNR). The site is known for its wide variety of habitats, including wetlands, forests and open areas. It is home to 11 species in precarious situations, including the monarch and three bat species, which are especially dependent on the meadow dominated by common milkweed. The value of the donation associated with this project is \$160,000.

A 11.9-HECTARE PROTECTED AREA IN AUSTIN

Thanks to André Cadotte's desire to protect part of his property in perpetuity, Conservation des vallons de la Serpentine (CVS) is adding 11.9 hectares to its network of protected areas, in the form of a conservation easement. This is in addition to three other areas already protected by CVS in the Millington peat bog area. It will make it possible to conserve natural environments of undeniable ecological value, thus helping to maintain the integrity of the Appalachian ecological network. The value of the donation associated with this project is \$290,000.



FAVREAU II PROTECTED AREA

In keeping with his commitment to nature conservation, Mr. Favreau donated the full title to a 2.75-hectare plot of land to CVS. This is his second ecological gift of another portion of his property. With these two conservation projects combined, Mr. Favreau is now protecting 11.88 hectares of natural environments in perpetuity, helping strengthen the local ecological network. The value of the donation associated with this project is estimated at \$200,000.

These five projects show the value of Quebec's voluntary conservation model, based on collaboration between landowners, conservation organizations, funding partners and municipalities. Appalachian Corridor and its affiliate members would like to express their deepest gratitude to the donating landowners, whose voluntary commitment and generosity make these major conservation advances possible. By choosing to have their land protected in perpetuity, they are taking meaningful action to support biodiversity, ecological connectivity and the preservation of a natural heritage of significant value for future generations. Their contribution shows exemplary civic leadership. In total, almost 150 additional hectares of natural environments of interest are now protected in perpetuity, making the regional ecosystems more resilient and protecting species in precarious situations.

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

Four of the five projects were made possible through financial support from the Government of Quebec under the *Accélérer la conservation dans le sud du Québec (ACSQ) program*. Three of the five projects also received financial support from Environment and Climate Change Canada through the Canada Nature Fund. Two projects received financial assistance from the ACSQ program through an agreement with Nature-Action Québec. In addition, three projects were financially supported by the Fondation de la faune du Québec. Two projects also benefited from contributions from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as support from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Municipality of Austin.

“The year 2025 ended on a very positive note for Appalachian Corridor and its affiliate members, with the completion of five projects to conserve natural environments strategically positioned in our area of operation. This is a significant contribution to the Northern Green Mountains ecological corridor.”

– Caroline Bisson, Co-Executive Director of Appalachian Corridor.

“This enhancement of the Estrie protected areas network reflects our vision for Quebec: a territory where nature is respected, valued, and accessible. Through these five voluntary conservation initiatives, we are protecting essential ecosystems while bringing citizens closer to nature. Protecting nature is a shared responsibility, and I sincerely thank all the private landowners who are helping to preserve one of our greatest collective treasures—our natural heritage.”

– Benoit Charette, the Minister of the Environment, the Fight against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks, and Minister Responsible for Infrastructure.

“This large-scale initiative is the result of a collective effort bringing together citizens, organizations, and communities and marks a major step forward in protecting the natural environments of the Eastern Townships. By preserving these habitats and strengthening ecological connectivity, it represents a concrete and sustainable investment that will leave future generations with a rich, diverse, and healthy natural environment.”

– The Honourable Nathalie Provost, Secretary of State (Nature).

“I thank the citizens involved and our partners for their generosity and commitment to maintaining biodiversity and community well-being. Canadians have a deep attachment to these natural environments, and it is together that we can protect them.”

– The Honourable Julie Dabrusin, Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature



ABOUT

Since 2002, **Appalachian Corridor** has been working to protect the Northern Green Mountains, part of the Appalachian Mountain chain that extends into southern Quebec. Its mission is to conserve adjacent tracts of land to create a vast, natural area that will be protected in perpetuity. In response to the dual crisis of climate change and biodiversity loss, Appalachian Corridor works with its conservation partners to implement a conservation strategy that, to date, has protected more of 20,000 hectares of ecologically valuable land. corridorappalachien.ca

The **Accélérer la conservation dans le sud du Québec** (ACSQ) project is a co-funding agreement between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), benefiting Quebec conservation organizations. The project aims to protect and conserve natural habitats of ecological interest, notably through the acquisition of private land, for protected and conserved areas and the establishment of ecological corridors. Through this, the ACSQ will promote the development and sound management of the network of protected areas on private land, as well as public access to nature. The funds invested by the Gouvernement du Québec over five years must be matched by NCC and its partners with other funds not provided by the Gouvernement du Québec.

The **Canada Nature Fund** supports the protection of Canada's biodiversity through the creation of protected and conserved areas and through initiatives that help to recover species at risk. The Fund is available to not-for-profit and Indigenous organizations, provinces and territories, and others. To learn more, visit: [Canada Nature Fund](http://canadanaturefund.ca) at Canada.ca.

The **Fondation de la faune du Québec** (Quebec wildlife foundation) is dedicated to conserving and managing wildlife and its habitats. With contributions from over a million Quebec hunters, anglers and trappers as well as thousands of donors and many private companies, the foundation has supported over 2,000 organizations across Quebec since 1987. The efforts of all these stakeholders and actors together have helped create a groundswell of support for wildlife protection. fondationdelafaune.qc.ca

Nature-Action Québec is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support individuals and organizations in adopting best environmental practices. For nearly 40 years, the organization has worked with municipalities, businesses, community organizations, and citizens to implement concrete projects that contribute to improving the environment, health, well-being, and quality of life of Quebec's population. As part of the *Accelerating Conservation in Southern Quebec* program, Nature-Action Québec manages the Défi funding provided by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC).

Canada's **Ecological Gifts Program** provides a way for Canadians with ecologically sensitive land to protect nature and leave a legacy for future generations. Made possible by the terms of the *Income Tax Act* of Canada and the Quebec *Taxation Act*, it offers significant tax benefits to landowners who donate land or a partial interest in land to a qualified recipient. Recipients ensure that the land's biodiversity and environmental heritage are conserved in perpetuity. <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-funding/ecological-gifts-program/overview.html>

The views expressed herein are solely those of Appalachian Corridor.

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