

**PRESS RELEASE**  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2023  
[info@ecoecho.ca](mailto:info@ecoecho.ca)



## **MRC DES COLLINES-DE-L'OUTAOUAIS ANNOUNCEMENT**

***Mapping the Community Forest of the MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais:  
Innovative science and art project to reveal the state of regional forests after 300  
years of transformation.***

**Chelsea, QC - To celebrate *National Forest Week***, we are proud to announce a joint scientific research and community art initiative led by the Outaouais Environmental Campus (Eco Echo) in Wakefield, Quebec. Beginning in October, *Mapping the Community Forest* will examine the state of the forest throughout the six municipalities of the MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais.

*"Eco Echo is honoured to partner with the MRC and the Municipality of La Pêche to discover more about the history of the forests that enrich our lives. The research will deepen our appreciation of this resource and support efforts to improve the health and sustainability of these precious natural spaces. In keeping with our mission, the community is welcomed into the creative process to strengthen connections and share perspectives with one another."* **Eric Corneau, President, Eco Echo**

This \$50,000 project is made possible with support from the Government of Quebec and the MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais through the Entente de développement culturel de la MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais and the Programme d'aménagement durable des forêts. Generous funding from the Green Fund of the Municipality of La Pêche, the Caisse Desjardins de Hull-Aylmer, and individual donors is greatly appreciated.

*"With over 500 volunteers and participants in its programs and workshops, Eco Echo is a pillar in our region for sustainable land management. The MRC des Collines is proud to support this initiative, combining scientific research of our forests with a community art project in which citizens throughout our six municipalities will participate!"*  
**Marc Carrière, Prefect of the MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais**

Christian Messier, professor at UQO and UQAM, and scientific director of the Institut des sciences de la forêt tempérée (ISFORT), and Chantale Doucet, social scientist with Projets Territoires, are part of a team experts examining natural and human changes and impacts on the forest that have occurred over the past three hundred years.

*"Our preliminary research provides a picture of the state of the health and evolution of forest cover in the MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais. We're at a critical point in evolution, and climate change is making the health of the forest more vulnerable to wildfire, invasive species, disease and damage from extreme weather events. This knowledge gives citizens the opportunity to decide how they want to value this collective heritage for future generations."* **Christian Messier, Research Team Leader**

During October and November, artist cj fleury will lead twelve creative workshops in locations throughout all six municipalities of the MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais. Everyone is invited to create inspiring images that reflect their perspective on our community forests. The artwork and research will be featured in a travelling exhibition throughout the MRC starting in April 2024.

*"I'm honored to lead the creative vision of this innovative and inclusive project, and support a broader interest in understanding forest data, maps, and history. These "hands-on" workshops are designed for success, offering a range of tips and tools to guide the larger artistic process. Bring an open mind and curiosity about collective artmaking to an interactive studio-session that invites all of us to stand in awe of our community forest."*  
**cj fleury, multi-media artist and cultural researcher**

**Eco Echo is a non-profit organization** in Wakefield, Quebec, which has offered inspiring environmental education programs since 2008 to foster an appreciation of the natural world. It recently completed a series of MRC-funded forestry education workshops in Cantley, La Pêche, Pontiac and Chelsea, encouraging citizens to apply best practices to the sustainable management of their properties. For more information: [www.ecoecho.ca](http://www.ecoecho.ca).

#### **INFORMATION:**

Shelley Crabtree, General Manager  
Outaouais Environmental Campus  
cell: 819-923-9069  
[info@ecoecho.ca](mailto:info@ecoecho.ca)

**###**