

**PRESS RELEASE****For immediate release**

## **Desjardins supports the Niagara Escarpment Forest Carbon Project**

**Toronto, December 21, 2018** - A year ago, Desjardins announced measures to become proactive in the fight against climate change. The initiatives centred on reducing its carbon footprint, investing in renewable energy projects, applying ESG criteria to promote environmentally and community-friendly financing, and giving added support to members and clients who are also adopting greener practices.

"Over the years, Desjardins Group has been taking the necessary actions to promote a greener economy and contribute to the socioeconomic development of communities. As a financial cooperative, we can lead by example and encourage the transition to a greener economy," mentioned Josée Préseault, Market Development Manager at Voyageurs Credit Union.

In an effort to reduce its carbon footprint, Desjardins began purchasing carbon credits through Canadian retailer Carbonzero, to offset the greenhouse gas emissions from some of its larger events. To offset its carbon footprint of 12,458 metric tonnes in Ontario, Desjardins is supporting the Niagara Escarpment Forest Carbon Project (NEFCP) that is managed by Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC), which protects 166 nature reserves. "This project promotes and maintains the function and diversity of ecosystems along Ontario's Niagara Escarpment, which stretches from Niagara Falls towards Tobermory, and extends along Manitoulin Island," explains Bob Barnett, Executive Director at Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy. "This partnership with Desjardins is very valuable to us," adds Mr. Barnett.

"Carbonzero is proud to support Desjardins on their journey towards carbon neutrality, and through our partnership with EBC the Niagara Escarpment Forest Carbon Project fulfills our commitment to always provide the highest quality carbon offsets to our clients. Our mission has been to focus our portfolio on Canadian-based projects that support local communities and ones that are sourced through the most stringent of auditing practices and standards," said Dan Fraleigh, COO of Carbonzero.



**Photo (from the left):** Miriam Henriques, Chair of the Board at EBC, Joseph Stasko, General Account Manager at the Desjardins Business Centre, Josée Préseault, Market Development Manager at Voyageurs Credit Union, Maryem Chajar, Financial Advisor at Voyageurs Credit Union, Michael Manirakiza, Wealth Management Account Manager at Desjardins Signature Services, Bob Barnett, Executive Director at EBC, David Deschênes, Desjardins Signature Service Manager, Dan Fraleigh, COO of Carbonzero.

**About Desjardins Group**

Desjardins Group is the leading cooperative financial group in Canada and the sixth largest cooperative financial group in the world. It has been rated one of the Best Employers in Canada by Aon Hewitt. To meet the diverse needs of its members and clients, Desjardins offers a full range of products and services to individuals and businesses through its extensive distribution network, online platforms and subsidiaries across Canada. Counted among the World's Strongest Banks according to The Banker magazine, Desjardins has one of the highest capital ratios and credit ratings in the industry.

**About Carbonzero**

Celebrating our 12th year, Carbonzero was founded in 2006 and has rapidly risen to become a leader in the design and implementation of carbon reduction strategies and solutions. A top performer in the 2009 David Suzuki Foundation and Pembina Institute report on Carbon Offsetting, Carbonzero has led the way in setting the industry standard for measurable and verified emissions reduction offsets in Canada. Please visit [www.carbonzero.ca](http://www.carbonzero.ca) for more information.

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