

## ELT 2 Activity 2: *Choosing the right tools for your community.*

Understand the problem → Understand your town → Establish your options

### Town of Riverton

- 1. Understand the problem:** You are concerned about future development around and in the forested wildlife corridor (brown) affecting wildlife movement and populations.

#### Wildlife Corridor



*On this map, your town is outlined in white. The brown shows the intact forest areas that create the wildlife corridor. The red dot is the village center. The yellow arrow points to the wildlife corridor.*

#### Regional View



*This map shows the zoomed-out landscape context of your town's wildlife corridor. The red arrow represents the path wildlife must take to move north and south.*

## 2. Understand your town: Read the following descriptions of your town.

### **Riverton Town Description**

**Population** 8,000

#### **Land use context**

Small village with intense commercial development and growth pressure. Recognized as a desirable bedroom community. Most remaining forest lands are in private ownership.

#### **Existing regulations**

Zoning & Subdivision

#### **Town staff and community capital**

Planning and zoning staff

Planning Commission

Active Conservation Commission

Development Review Board with staff support

Many active volunteers

Budget for conservation work (planning, projects, land conservation, etc.)

Town Conservation Fund that's added to annually with a moderate appropriation from the town budget.

Political climate

Growth-related concerns are ever present. Desire for more mid-priced housing. Good tax base. Concerns about traffic.

#### **Community Values (as identified at a recent community forum)**

- Preserving the town's scenic views and rural feel
- Maintaining air and water quality, especially on the town's major river system.
- Maintaining wildlife habitat and forest health
- Outdoor recreation.
- Supporting local businesses
- Supporting what's left of the working lands economy, which has suffered in recent years

#### **Feelings on Regulation**

There is a willingness to accept regulation, especially for aesthetics and preserving rural feel.

## Existing Communication Networks

There is a weekly local newspaper, and the local Front Porch Forum inspires lively discussion. Riverton has numerous active groups that connect over specific topics—book discussions, music, history, faith, mountain biking, bird watching, paddling, etc.

### 3. Establish your options: Select 3 tools you'd like to pursue to protect the wildlife corridor in your community. Choose from the tools listed in the table below.

As you make your selection, consider:

- Does the action/tool help the natural resource that you want to protect?
- Does it align with community values?
- Do you have the capacity needed to accomplish this task?
- Who else can help? Is there an opportunity to build on existing efforts?

Tools available	Details
<b>Zoning updates</b>	Update existing zoning with standards that development must meet to support natural resources, density-based approaches to protect open space, stream buffer requirements, etc.
<b>Subdivision regulations</b>	Subdivision regulations control the pattern of development by limiting road/driveway lengths, defining clearing areas around roads and buildings, or requiring open space to be preserved/connected.
<b>River corridor regulations</b>	These are primarily meant to protect property against flood damage, but they can be extended to protect the surrounding vegetated river corridor.
<b>Natural resources inventory</b>	Inventories can be used to build community understanding, understand resource vulnerability, and lay groundwork for zoning or use of other tools.
<b>Private land conservation</b>	Identify priority parcels for conservation, then work with landowners and a land trust or other entity to find methods to conserve them.

<b>Establish town forest</b>	Purchase land that can be enjoyed for recreation, used for education, and/or managed for timber, wildlife habitat, or water quality.
<b>Outreach to landowners</b>	Help landowners understand what resources are present on their parcels, options for management, and resources to help cover costs (UVA, etc.).
<b>Succession planning for landowners</b>	Provide educational opportunities to landowners about estate planning, including a range of options – conservation, subdivision, LLCs, etc.
<b>General Outreach &amp; Education</b>	A speaker series, a field trip or hike, a citizen science program, the publication of a newsletter, etc. <b>If you choose this, please specify the type of outreach you'll do and how it supports the other tools you pick!</b>

**4. Present:** Group Presents the three tools they selected to address the problem given their community characteristics