

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

Understand the problem → Understand your town → Establish your options

### Town of Troutville

- 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.

## Troutville Town Description

**Population** 1,200

### **Land use context**

Troutville contains a small village surrounded by forest. Many recreational opportunities draw tourists and owners of second homes. Growth has historically been slow, but lower land costs in Troutville mean that growth from surrounding towns is spilling over. There is limited capacity in the village for housing due to topography, so growth is mostly in rural, forested areas. Nearly all land is in private ownership.

### **Existing regulations**

The town has had minimal zoning for a long time, but it has not been updated in over 15 years. There are no subdivision regulations.

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

Town administrator & part-time zoning administrator

Active Planning Commission

A majority of Selectboard members are interested in natural resources protection. There are a few active volunteers who volunteer for everything.

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

There is no specific budget for conservation or planning. The town has a good relationship with the Regional Planning Commission (RPC), which they rely on for technical assistance.

### **Political climate**

There are many established landowners who own large parcels. There is recognition of the value of recreational and scenic resources for the local economy. The town is experiencing uncertainty around its school budget.

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

- The strong working lands/forest products economy
- Maintaining healthy wildlife populations
- The community's rural lifestyle
- Recreational opportunities

### Feelings on Regulation

There is a general feeling that landowners should be able to make decisions about their own land.

### Existing Communication Networks

Communication is primarily neighbor to neighbor, but Front Porch Forum has gained some traction. The school and general store are centers of community. A snowmobile club with active membership maintains an extensive trail network

### 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