



Photo credit Maple Street Media

A moose stops in the middle of Route 100, right by the “Welcome to Waterbury” sign. It takes a long look at you, then slowly continues into the woods. “Wow.”

If you’ve spent much time traveling between Waterbury and Stowe, a wildlife sighting like this one might be a familiar experience. This is not a coincidence.

The “Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor” crosses Route 100 on the Waterbury-Stowe town line and is the only viable connection between the Green Mountains and Worcester Range. It is one of the five most important wildlife crossings in the state and a critical part of an international network of connected forest habitats in the northeast.

Yet, the future of the corridor is far from secure. The threat of habitat loss and fragmentation loom large—especially as development pressure is on the rise.

Since 2010, a group of local, statewide, and international conservation organizations have been coordinating with each other and local landowners and communities to find a solution.

The Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor Partnership includes Stowe Land Trust, Vermont’s Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Nature Conservancy, Vermont Land Trust, Stowe and Waterbury’s Conservation Commissions, the Waterbury Lands Initiative, and more. These groups are working

together to use a number of key strategies for keeping the wildlife corridor open and safe, including cooperating with local families to permanently protect the highest priority parts of the corridor.

Thanks to commitment of a few visionary landowners and supporters who already stepped up to conserve more than 500 acres, the amount of permanently protected habitat in the Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor has tripled since 2018.

Now, nearly 20% of the 4,600 acres of the priority area within the corridor are permanently protected. But this is not nearly enough.

To keep the corridor open and safe for wildlife on the move in the face of a changing climate and loss of habitat, more conservation work is needed. Before it is too late.

Fortunately, this winter, with your support, Stowe Land Trust and our partners can conserve the next piece of the puzzle: 83 acres of key forest habitat in the heart of the corridor. The land is close to the key Route 100 road crossing and near five other conserved parcels.

With your help, we can purchase this next piece of the Shutesville conservation puzzle and build momentum for the next phase of conservation work in the corridor.

If we are successful, the forest will be owned and cared for by Stowe Land Trust. It will also be protected by a permanent conservation easement that ensures the land will remain open to the public for dispersed recreation and that it is well-managed with sustainable forestry, wildlife, and climate resilience in mind.



The Threat

This 83-acre parcel in the heart of the corridor has been on the market for over a year; it is at high risk for being sold and developed. But by conserving the land now, we can make sure another part of the corridor is protected forever.

How You Can Help

Stowe Land Trust has applied for **\$256,000 in state funding from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board** to help purchase the property and the sellers are making a \$25,000 donation in value to the conservation effort. **But we must also secure at least an additional \$453,158 in local support** to cover acquisition, project, and stewardship endowment costs by December 31, 2023. **Your support will make a difference.** This rare opportunity will help future generations of wildlife thrive, invest in regional ecological health and protect part of what makes this place special. Please join us.

For more information, please contact:

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