



A PROPERTY OWNER'S QUICK GUIDE TO

PROTECTING THE SHUTESVILLE HILL WILDLIFE CORRIDOR

I live in the corridor. What can I do to help?

Recognizing that you live or own property in a special place that is critical for the survival and movement of Vermont's wildlife — from black bear to moose to bobcat — is a great start. From there, you should know that there are many ways you can support the basic needs of wildlife traveling through the Shutesville Hill Wildlife



Corridor. Whether you're looking for small, every day changes to make in your routine or interested in larger projects that build or protect wildlife habitat over the long term, the actions you take in your backyard or woodlot make a difference for wildlife living in or passing through the corridor.

What do wildlife corridors need to function?

- **High-quality habitat** including food, water, and cover for safety
- **A variety of habitats** including forest, wetlands, and well-vegetated, free-flowing streams
- **Well-connected habitats** between roads, houses and other human development
- **Limited disturbance from human activities** such as outdoor lighting, noise, and pets
- **Safe road crossings** with natural cover on both sides and few barriers to movement such as guardrails



HOW TO HELP KEEP THE WILDLIFE CORRIDOR OPEN & SAFE



MAINTAIN FOREST COVER. If you own forest or woodland, consider how your land fits into the surrounding landscape and how you can help maintain forested connections on your property and with your neighbors'. Ask your **consulting or county foresters** about how to best enhance forest cover on your property. Contact **Stowe Land Trust or Vermont Land Trust** to learn about conservation options for protecting your forestland into the future. Enroll in Vermont's **Current Use Program** (Use Value Appraisal) to reduce land holding costs and the potential need to subdivide or develop.

KEEP HEDGEROWS. If you own open land, maintain or widen hedgerows between fields or lawns. Wildlife will travel along and through these narrow pathways.

LIMIT FENCING AND USE WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY FENCE DESIGNS. Remove unnecessary fencing and enclosures when possible; these structures can trap and injure wildlife. When fencing is necessary, use wildlife-friendly fencing designs and materials that are **easy to see, provide plenty of room for animals to pass over and under, and use smooth wire or wood**—rather than barbed wire—on the top and bottom fence lines.

PROMOTE NATIVE PLANTS. **Landscape with plants native to Vermont** whenever possible. Consider removing and replacing **non-native, invasive plants** like Japanese barberry and burning bush if they are in your gardens. If invasive species have spread on your land, take steps early to **control and remove** them. If using pesticides on your land, use sparingly and hire a certified professional to apply them.

REDUCE HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICTS. Control domestic **pets**, remove your **bird feeders** over the summer, and secure all **trash and compost**. Doing so protects wildlife, pets and belongings.

MINIMIZE OUTDOOR NIGHT LIGHTING AND EXCESSIVE NOISE. Some animals avoid or become disoriented in lighted areas. Keep lights **targeted on the ground** or building rather than broadly pointing up, use **low wattages**, and consider installing **motion-sensor lights** that turn on only when you need them.



MANAGE WOODLANDS WITH WILDLIFE IN MIND. Tell your **county or consulting forester** that you want to manage your woods to support wildlife and the corridor. They can give you specific advice on how to do so while also meeting other objectives that you may have for your land such as access to trails, firewood harvesting and more. In general, leave some **fallen and standing dead trees**, as well as branches and brush piles, encourage the growth of both **big, old trees** and **small, young trees**, and maintain a **diversity of native tree species**.

LET VEGETATION GROW ALONG WATERWAYS. Many wildlife prefer to travel through the forest along rivers and streams. Avoid mowing right up to the bank, and maintain an **undisturbed band of vegetation** along rivers, streams, and ponds—wider is better. Never drain wetlands.

GET TO KNOW YOUR LAND. Get outside and **explore** the features on your land. Consider installing a **wildlife camera** to catch a glimpse of the animals crossing your property. Explore **online and digital resources** like Google Earth and iNaturalist.org to learn more.

DRIVE SAFELY. Drive at or below the speed limit, especially at night, and be aware of your surroundings.



For more information www.stayingconnectedinitiative.org/shutesville

Questions? Contact **Stowe Land Trust** at info@stowelandtrust.org or 802.253.7221 or the **Waterbury Conservation Commission** at waterburycvct@gmail.com