

Request for Proposals:

HOUSATONIC RIVER NATURAL RESOURCES RESTORATION PROJECT
CONNECTICUT SUBCOUNCIL REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Part A: RESPONDER AND PROJECT SUMMARY FORM

RECEIVED
JAN 17 2007
INLAND FISHERIES

Please read "RFP: Overview of Selection Process" before completing this form.

Part A must be completed using Submittal Form A.

Responses may be entered electronically using the Microsoft Word version of Part A of this form available on the Housatonic River Basin Natural Resource Restoration Project in Connecticut website (www.housatonicrestoration.org), saved and printed. Alternatively, the responder may print the form and complete it with black ink.

An Adobe Acrobat version of the entire form (Part A and Part B) is also available on the Housatonic River Basin Natural Resource Restoration Project in Connecticut website

Project Name Provide a brief working name.

Wimisink Preserve Restoration and Access

Responder – if there is more than one party involved in the project, please provide the information for the primary or lead party.

Hunter Brawley

Name

Land Manager

Title

PO Box 265

Address

Address

Sherman

CT

06784

City

State

Zip

860-354-0260

Phone

naromi@sbcglobal.net

Email

Type of Entity

Check the box that best describes the primary respondent.

Private individual

Non-profit organization

Municipal government

State government

County government

Federal government

Tribal government

Corporation or Business

Academic Institution

Other (explain)

Project Implementation

Does the responder plan to be the Project Sponsor and respond to the Request for Supplemental Information (RSI) pending approval of this Proposal?

Yes No

If yes, please list any other project participants. _____

If the responder does **NOT** plan to be the Project Sponsor and does **NOT** intend to respond to the Request for Supplemental Information (RSI), is the responder interested in being a project participant and assisting a different Project Sponsor on this project?

Yes No

Request for Proposals:

Restoration Priority Funding Category See Sec. 3 of "RFP: Overview of Selection Process" for category descriptions.

Primary Restoration Category. Check the restoration category that is the primary goal of the project.

Check one box.

- Aquatic Natural Resources Restoration/Enhancement
 Riparian & Floodplain Natural Resources Restoration/Enhancement
 Restoration/Enhancement of Recreational Uses of Natural Resources

Secondary Categories. Check all relevant boxes.

- Aquatic Natural Resources Restoration/Enhancement
 Riparian & Floodplain Natural Resources Restoration/Enhancement
 Restoration/Enhancement of Recreational Uses of Natural Resources

List Specific Injured Natural Resources and/or Impaired Natural Resource Services to Benefit from Project

This project will enhance habitat for sensitive wildlife and bird species that also inhabit the Housatonic River and provide a unique recreational opportunity within hiking distance of the Housatonic mainstem.

Project Location (if known) See directions and "RFP: Overview of Selection Process" for additional materials to provide (maps, aerial photographs)

Municipality/ies:

Sherman, CT

Longitude for approximate center of project area: 73° 30' 5" N

Latitude for approximate center of project area: 41° 38' 10" W

Project Budget Estimate (if known)

Total Project Cost Estimate: \$ 75,000

Housatonic River NRD Fund Estimate: \$ 50,000

1. Project Narrative

Introduction

Naromi Land Trust (NLT) is a 501(c)3 organization that owns approximately 1000 acres of open space in Sherman, Connecticut. The mission of the organization is to serve the people of Sherman by fostering preservation of its natural resources, protecting open spaces, farmlands, ridges and scenic vistas and maintaining its preserves as wildlife habitat. Public hiking trails have been established on several of our preserves with the long-term objective of developing a town-wide trail system to be used for passive recreation and education. In the early 1990's NLT was the first land trust in all of the fourteen Appalachian Trail states to connect a local trail to the Appalachian Trail (AT), and NLT worked cooperatively with the Appalachian Mountain Club and the National Park Service to fund and build the AT's Ned Anderson Memorial Bridge over the Ten Mile River just before its confluence with the Housatonic River.

In 2005 NLT began a large-scale wetland restoration at its Wimisink Preserve in northern Sherman after receiving a \$16,000 NRCS Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) Grant. The 55-acre Wimisink Swamp, which is within the Housatonic River watershed and is less than 1500 meters from the Housatonic River mainstem, is a complex of beaver-enhanced wet meadows and open water habitat that supports a suite of sensitive wetland plants and wildlife. The Wimisink Brook that flows through the swamp discharges into the Housatonic River in the Gaylordsville section of New Milford. During the 7-year WHIP contract the NRCS is providing partial funding to restore habitat by eradicating invasive non-native woody vegetation and infestations of *Phragmites australis* and purple loosestrife. One of the restoration partners in this project included a local Boy Scout troop which cultivated and released *Galerucella* beetles as a biological control for purple loosestrife. In the spring of 2007 a licensed herbicide applicator will treat several stands of *Phragmites* within the preserve.

Biologists from the Connecticut DEP and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have surveyed the Wimisink swamp and identified suitable habitat for the Federally Threatened and State Endangered bog turtle, which was historically recorded in the vicinity. Recent DEP wetland call-back surveys in the preserve identified wood duck, hooded merganser, green heron, great blue heron and belted kingfisher as well as the secretive wading birds Virginia rail, sora, and American bittern, which is an ***Endangered Species*** in Connecticut. Many of the wading birds and waterfowl recorded at the Wimisink have historically inhabited the Housatonic River corridor. In addition to the wildlife recorded, the Connecticut Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) has records of several State Listed plant species in and around the Wimisink swamp.

A small trail into the Wimisink Preserve currently provides access to a wooden observation stand that was built as an Eagle Scout project in the mid 1990's. Recent improvements to the preserve include a 50 ft. section of boardwalk along the trail to the observation stand, a new informational kiosk and a preserve sign, all funded by a \$10,000 Iroquois Gas Company Land Enhancement and Acquisition Fund (LEAF) Grant. The Wimisink wetland restoration was recently featured as a Living Lands case study by Defenders of Wildlife at the national Land Trust Alliance Rally (www.biodiversitypartners.org/Livinglands/casestudies.shtml). NLT has applied for funding

from Defenders of Wildlife to conduct a thorough floristic inventory of the Wimisink swamp in order to develop a long-term management plan for the preserve.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of this project is to enhance aquatic natural resources and restore recreational opportunities within the Housatonic River watershed at a site that is within hiking distance of the Housatonic River. These goals will be accomplished by continuing the wetland restoration and by building a handicapped accessible observation stand in the northern corner of the Wimisink swamp. A 900± ft. raised boardwalk will connect the new observation stand with the existing wooden observation stand. These enhancements will allow the public to observe the waterfowl and other wildlife that may have been injured or lost due to the release of hazardous materials in the Housatonic River. Information concerning the on-going wetland restoration, control of invasive plants, and descriptions of resident and migratory wildlife will be provided in the informational kiosk. The Wimisink Preserve is approximately 1250 meters from NLT's Herrick Trail which connects to the Appalachian Trail. From the confluence of these two trails it is a short hike along the AT to a trail head near the Housatonic River at Bulls Bridge. NLT's Herrick Trail also includes several overlooks with stunning views to the north of the Housatonic River valley.

Project Benefits

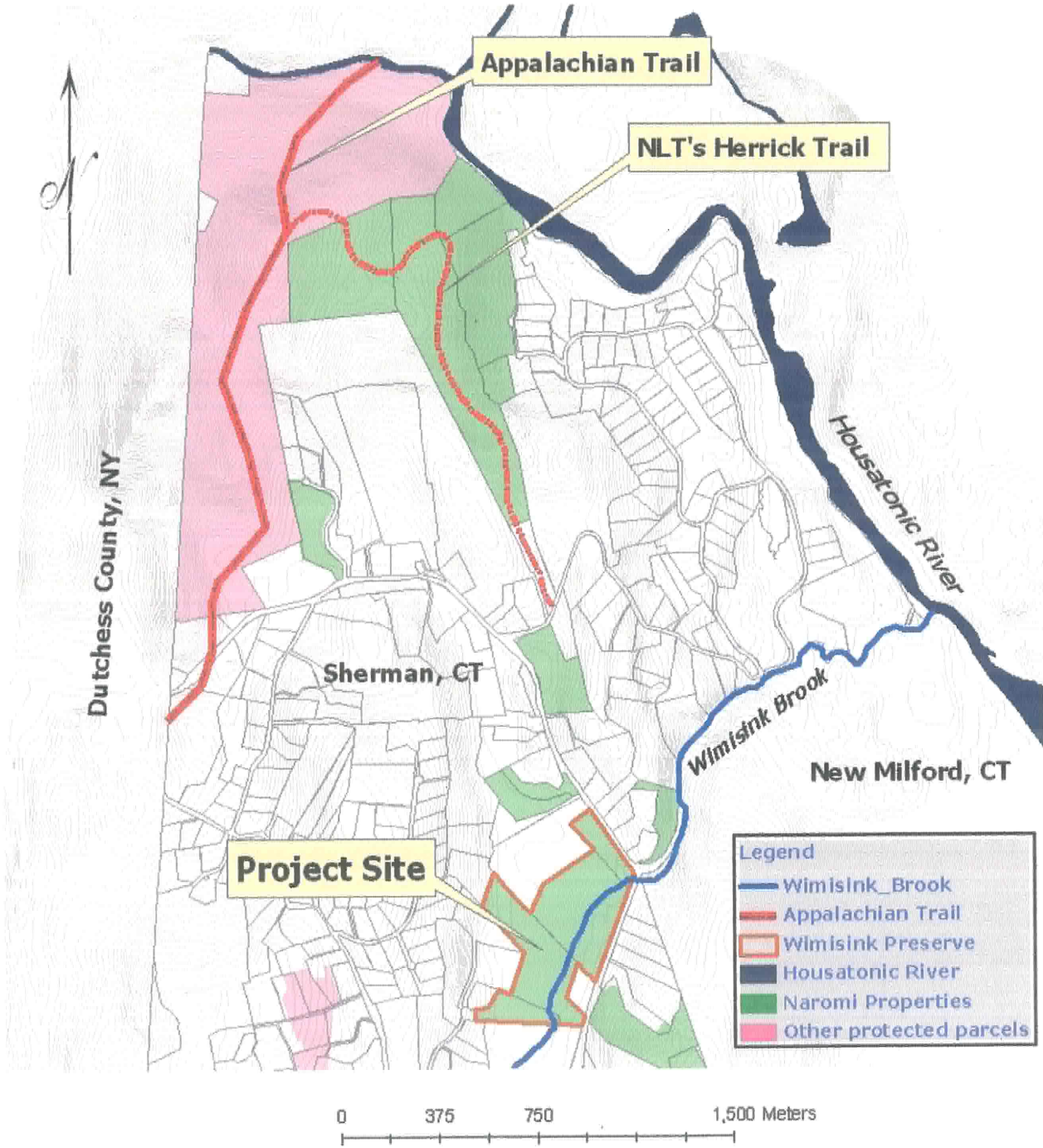
- *Restoration of aquatic resources damaged by the release of toxins* – The Wimisink Preserve Restoration project has been underway for almost two years, and already has the support of the local community. The swamp contains high-quality wetland habitat that is equivalent to habitats damaged along the Housatonic River corridor, and supports waterfowl and aquatic species that are State Listed in Connecticut.
- *Enhancement of recreational opportunities within the Housatonic River watershed* – The new handicapped accessible observation stand and boardwalk will provide a unique recreational opportunity along the Housatonic River in Connecticut. This project, which is an actual on-going physical restoration project with funding from several other sources, will also create an educational resource that can be used by environmental organizations, local schools, Appalachian Trail thru-hikers, birdwatchers, naturalists and the general public.
- *Public participation* – Volunteers have already made substantial contributions to the Wimisink project. A local Boy Scout Troup cultivated beetles for the biological control of purple loosestrife, and a local girl scout achieved her Gold Award by coordinating the design and construction on NLT's new informational kiosks. The Eagle Scouts have expressed an interest in assisting with the construction of the proposed observation stand and boardwalk along with other volunteers.

General Tasks

The tasks associated with this project will include:

- Continue habitat restoration at the Wimisink Preserve via control of invasive plants.
- Complete floristic inventory and develop management plan for the preserve.
- Obtain quotes for construction of new observation stand and boardwalk.
- Obtain all required town, state and/or federal wetland permits.

Project Location - Naromi Land Trust Wimisink Preserve Sherman, Connecticut



Naromi Land Trust, Inc.
PO Box 265, Sherman, CT 06784

This map contains no authoritative data
and is intended for planning purposes only

Criteria Statements

1. *Does the proposal contain the information identified by the CT SubCouncil as set out in the “Instructions for the Preparation and Submission of Restoration Project Proposals”?*

The submitted restoration project proposal does contain the information set out in the *Instructions for the Preparation and Submission of Restoration Project Proposals*. These include the completed Responder and Project Summary Form, a Project Narrative, Project Location Information and Criteria Statements. In addition, one original and six copies are being submitted as required.

2. *Does the Proposed Project restore, rehabilitate, replace, and/or acquire natural resources or natural resource services equivalent to those that were injured by the release of PCBs or other hazardous substances from the GE facility at Pittsfield, MA?*

The proposed restoration project will restore, rehabilitate and replace natural resources and natural resource services equivalent to those that were injured by the release of toxins from the GE facility. The on-going wetland restoration at the Wimisink is enhancing critical habitat for wetland-dependent birds, amphibians and reptiles. This includes waterfowl and wading birds that inhabit riparian and near-shore areas of the Housatonic River and many species considered to be “at-risk” and of Greatest Conservation Need (GCN) in Connecticut. This includes several plant and animals species listed as *Of Special Concern, Threatened, or Endangered* that have been identified on or near the project site. The new handicap accessible observation stand and boardwalk will enhance recreational and educational opportunities along the Housatonic River corridor at a project site that is within hiking distance from the Housatonic River with trail connections through a Naromi Land Trust preserve and the Appalachian Trail.

3. *Is the Proposed Project, or any portion of the Proposed Project, an action that is presently required under other federal, state, or local law, including, but not limited to, enforcement actions?*

The proposed project is not an action that is required under any other federal, state or local law including any enforcement action.

4. *Is the Proposed Project inconsistent with any federal, state, or local law or policy?*

The proposed project is not inconsistent with any federal, state, or local law or policy.

5. *Will the proposed project, or any portion of the proposed project, be inconsistent with any ongoing or anticipated remedial actions in the Housatonic River watershed?*

The proposed project will not be inconsistent with any ongoing or anticipated remedial actions in the Housatonic River watershed.