

## STRAUSS MORRISEY EXPANSION FAQS

### What is the Strauss Morrisey Preserve Expansion Project?

The Strauss Morrisey Preserve Expansion Project is an initiative by Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy (NCLC) to acquire the 117-acre Glen Brook property. This purchase will expand the existing Strauss Morrisey Preserve into a 277-acre premier nature preserve. The project aims to enhance public access and provide lasting benefits to the Sherman community by ensuring the preservation of this natural treasure for generations to come.

### Who is Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy (NCLC)?

NCLC is the largest land trust in Connecticut. It has conserved over 13,300 acres, including 1,600 acres in Sherman. The organization is committed to protecting critical lands and waters, including 22 public hiking preserves, 49 working farms, and 45 miles of rivers and streams. Naromi Land Trust merged with NCLC in 2020.

### Where is the property?

The Glen Brook property has road frontage on Route 39 North. It was formally part of the Rhodes family farm. The Strauss Morrisey Preserve parking area is on Gaylord Road in Gaylordsville with additional (limited) access on Edmonds Road in Sherman. See the project expansion map below.

### Why is this land worth conserving?

The protection of the Glen Brook property offers several conservation benefits, including:

- **Expanded recreational opportunities:** The creation of a larger public nature preserve will provide improved public access and more space for activities such as hiking, running, birdwatching, snowshoeing, and more.
- **Critical wildlife habitat:** The property provides habitat for native and rare species, contributing to biodiversity.
- **Strategic location:** It is adjacent to existing protected lands, enhancing regional conservation efforts.
- **Climate resilience:** The land features natural characteristics that help mitigate climate change impacts.
- **Ecological diversity:** It includes wetland soils, essential for water filtration and wildlife habitats.
- **Agricultural significance:** The property contains prime and statewide-important farmland soils.

Preserving this land ensures these invaluable ecological, recreational, and agricultural resources are safeguarded for future generations.

**What is the project budget?**

NCLC has successfully secured \$1,336,500 in state and federal funding, which covers 90% of the purchase price. However, we still need to raise \$148,500 to complete the acquisition, along with an additional \$97,500 for transaction costs and necessary investments to open the property as a public preserve.

<b>Appraised Fair Market Value and Purchase Price</b>	<b>\$1,485,000</b>
CT OSWA Grant - Awarded	\$965,250
Highlands Conservation Act - Anticipated	\$371,250
<b>Total Government Funding</b>	<b>\$1,336,500</b>
<b>Fundraising Goal for Purchase</b>	<b>\$148,500</b>
<b>Other Estimated Project Expenses</b>	
Appraisal	\$7,500
Survey	\$25,000
Legal	\$5,000
Public Preserve Infrastructure (parking, trails, signage)	\$60,000
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$1,582,500</b>
<b>Fundraising Goal for Purchase and Other Project Expenses</b>	<b>\$246,000</b>

**Why is the Town of Sherman considering contributing?**

This project presents a unique opportunity to preserve Sherman’s rural and scenic character while enhancing the quality of life for residents and the broader community. Importantly, this initiative achieves these goals without imposing ongoing costs on the town’s budget. The proposed contribution is a one-time investment amounting to just 3% of the property’s purchase price, ensuring long-term benefits for a minimal cost.

**Where would the Town of Sherman contribution come from?**

The contribution would come from the town’s Land Acquisition Fund, which currently has a balance of \$60,499. This fund, originally established through fees in lieu of subdivision open space set-asides, has been inactive for some time, with no recent contributions or expenditures.

**Can that money be used for another purpose?**

No. The Land Acquisition Fund is restricted for the purchase of open space land to benefit the residents of Sherman.

**Do any town boards or commissions support this?**

The Board of Selectmen, the Conservation Commission, and the Land Acquisition Fund Advisory Board all support this. The Land Acquisition Fund Advisory Board is made up of representatives of the Board of Selectmen, Planning and Zoning, Inland Wetlands, Parks and Recreation, the land trust, and members at large.

**Has Sherman supported projects like this previously?**

Yes. For example, in 2008, the Town contributed \$350,000 to the purchase of the Towner Hill Preserve, or 27% of the purchase price.

**When is the vote?**

January 11, 2025, at 9 a.m. in Charter Hall.

**What is the resolution under consideration?**

To approve an expenditure of \$50,000 from the Land Acquisition Fund towards the purchase (in conjunction with the Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy) of the 117-acre Glen Brook parcel contiguous with the Strauss Preserve to be left in Open Space into perpetuity.

**When will the expanded preserve be open to the public?**

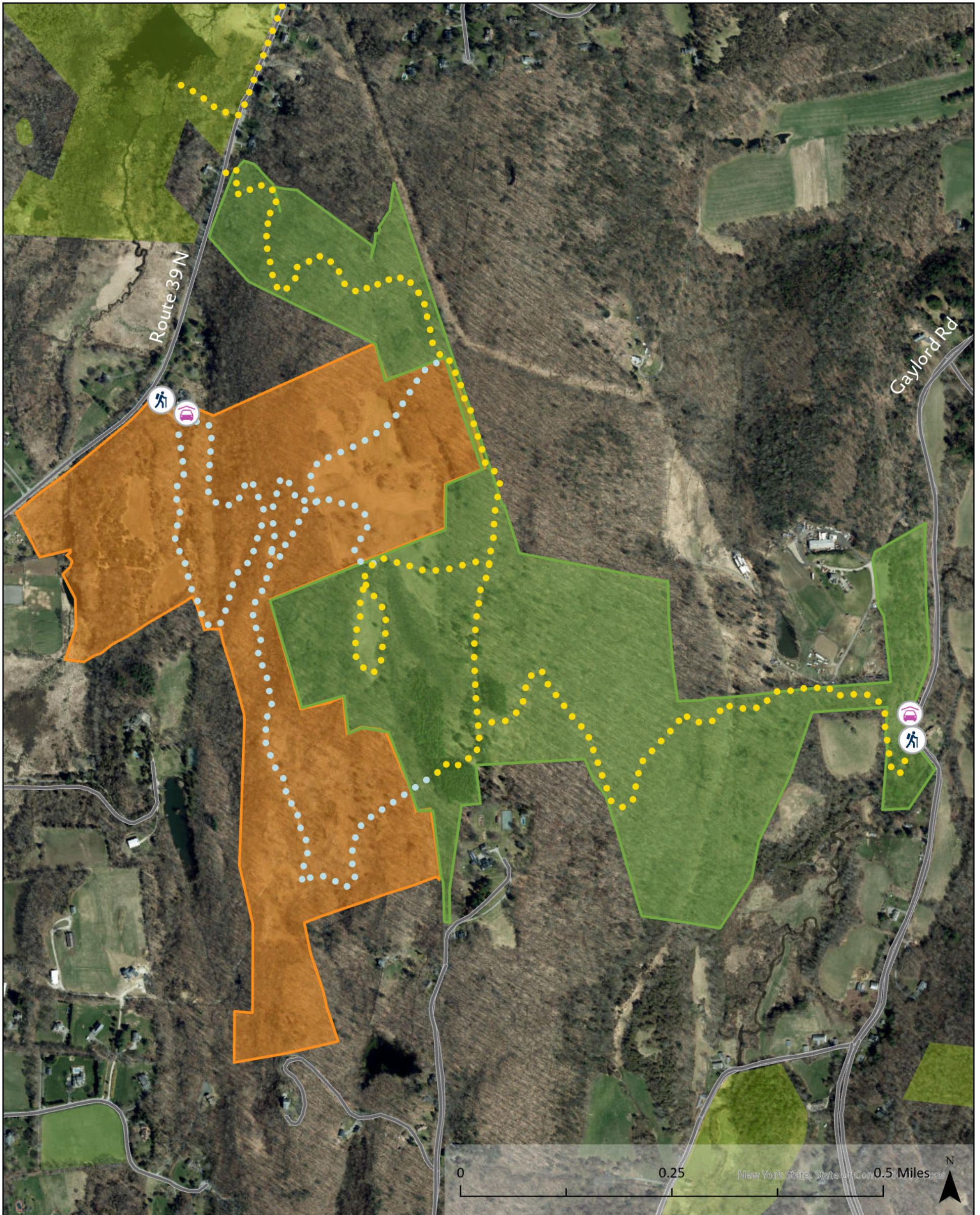
NCLC plans to finalize the purchase of the Glen Brook property in the spring of 2025, following the completion of fundraising efforts. The expanded preserve is expected to be open to the public in 2026. The Strauss Morrisey Preserve is already open to the public, and a trail map is available [here](#).

**What will the Town's continuing obligation be?**

The Town will have no continuing obligation. NCLC has the obligation to maintain public access at the Glen Brook property in perpetuity.

**I support this. Is it really important I attend the meeting?**

Yes! The Town's contribution will only be approved if residents attend the meeting and vote in favor of the resolution.



Legend

- Parking\*
- Signage\*
- Proposed Trail\*
- Existing NCLC Trails

- Strauss Morrisey Expansion
- Strauss Morrisey Preserve

- NCLC Conservation Easements
- NCLC Fee Land

Map by: Mary Walsh, November 21, 2024  
 Disclaimer: This map is for assessment and planning purposes only. It is not intended to be used for description, conveyance, authoritative definition of legal boundary, or property title. This is not a survey product. Users are encouraged to examine the documentation or metadata associated with the data on which this map is based for information related to its accuracy, currentness, and limitations.  
 Sources: NCLC land: Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy  
 Tax Parcels: Housatonic Valley Association  
 Roads: Connecticut Department of Transportation