

# Wimisink Preserve Restoration and Access

Final Report to the  
Housatonic River Natural Resources Damage (NRD)  
Grant Program

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In 2005 Naromi Land Trust (NLT) began a large-scale restoration project 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 less than 1500 meters from the Housatonic River mainstem, is a complex of 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 provided partial funding to restore wildlife habitat by eradicating invasive non-native woody vegetation and infestations of *Phragmites australis* and purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). In 2010 Naromi was awarded a \$124,000 Housatonic River Natural Resources Damage (NRD) grant to construct a new accessible wetland boardwalk and parking area at the Wimisink Preserve. Construction of the boardwalk and parking area began in the January of 2013 and the project was completed in April. As part of this project NLT also developed a management plan for the preserve (See Attachment).

The project had a budget of \$124,800 and took over six years to complete from the time the original application was submitted to the NRD Grant Committee. Naromi Land Trust employed the following contractors during this project:

- Hunter Brawley, Brawley Consulting Group (Project Manager)
- Chris Allan, Land Tech Consultants (Wetland delineation)
- Arthur H. Howland & Associates (Project engineer, site design and mapping)
- Peter Jensen & Associates, (Boardwalk construction)
- Beatty Construction (Parking area construction)
- Spring Lake Design (Wetland plantings)

The primary obstacle to the project, aside from negative feedback from some of the preserve's neighbors, was obtaining the necessary permits to construct the structure in a wetland. The Town of Sherman had no previous experience with this type of structure and therefore attempted to regulate the proposed boardwalk as if it were a deck or other residential structure. In order to complete the project NLT had to:

- Complete NRD Contract Agreement with Fish & Wildlife Service (August 2010).
- Obtain a Wetlands Permit and attend a Public Hearing (May 2011).
- Request an Amendment to the Town Zoning Regulations (which would allow the Planning & Zoning Commission to permit construction of the boardwalk under a *Special Permit* or exempt the activity).
- Apply for a *Special Permit* and attend a P&Z Public Hearing (October 2011).
- Apply for an Amendment to the Zoning Permit to eliminate the condition for railings along entire length of boardwalk.
- Obtain a CT DOT curb-cut /site lines permit for parking area.
- Obtain a Building Permit for boardwalk (March 2013).

The boardwalk was built by respected trail builder Peter Jensen of Washington, VT. He began work in March 2013 and completed to boardwalk by the middle of April. The construction utilized both steel helical anchors and native locust decking from a mill in Pennsylvania (See Attachment 3 - Photographs). The parking area was constructed by local contractor Tim Beatty. In April of 2013 NLT had a "ribbon-cutting" ceremony to celebrate the opening of the boardwalk that was attended by over 75 people including several of Sherman's Selectmen and two State Representatives. NLT has highlighted the project in numerous of its press releases and electronic e-news, which has over 700 regular recipients. <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs175/1102179965024/archive/1112884616083.html>.

The new accessible boardwalk and parking area provides unprecedented access to the Wimisink Preserve for passive recreation and education. Throughout the year NLT will lead bird watching tours and other programs for the community at the preserve. The Boardwalk falls within a matrix of established hiking trails within the Housatonic River watershed that includes the Appalachian Trail and NLT's well-traveled Herrick Trail. This new accessible boardwalk will also provide recreational access to a large wetland within the watershed for people with disabilities and to parents with young children.



**Attachment 1 – Project Budget**

<b>Engineering / Permitting</b>	<b>Contractor/supplier</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Site engineering & map	Howland & Associates	3/16/11	\$3,597.25
Site engineering & map	Howland & Associates	4/6/11	\$3,035.00
Site engineering & map	Howland & Associates	5/5/11	\$802.50
Address DOT requests on map	Howland & Associates	6/1/11	\$490.00
P&Z meeting	Howland & Associates	11/30/11	\$845.95
Revise site plan	Howland & Associates	3/12/13	\$75.00
Attend Commission meetings	Peter Jensen	7/6/11	\$2,478.77
Wetland delineation	Chris Allan	9/5/11	\$650.00
<b>Permit fees</b>			
Wetlands App	Town of Sherman	5/11/11	\$310.00
P&Z app	Town of Sherman	5/23/11	\$200.00
Special Permit Application	Town of Sherman	9/30/11	\$330.00
Filing fee special permit	Town of Sherman	9/4/12	\$53.00
Zoning permit	Town of Sherman	10/12/12	\$230.00
File Special Permit modification	Town of Sherman	1/29/13	\$53.00
Building Permit (included in Jensen final invoice)			
<b>Boardwalk Construction</b>			
<i>Framing</i>			
PT lumber and hardware	Northwest Lumber	3/4/13	\$4,987.56
<i>Helical anchors</i>			
Helical anchors (Deposit)		2/11/13	\$5,000.00
Helical anchors - Balance		3/12/13	\$16,072.00
<i>Decking</i>			
locust decking (Deposit)	Suburban Mills	2/22/13	\$3,495.30
locust decking (Balance)	Suburban Mills	3/23/13	\$10,485.91

locust decking (shipping)	Suburban Mills	4/10/13	\$550.00
<i>Labor &amp; Materials</i>			
Project Depoit	Peter Jensen	3/18/13	\$20,000.00
Labor and materials (final invoice)	Peter Jensen	4/24/13	\$23,765.41
Lumber return	NW Lumber	6/3/13	-\$425.70

**Parking Area**

Materials & Labor	Tim Beatty	1/7/13	\$9,722.00
Parking area paving (apron)	Tim Beatty	5/3/13	\$4,512.30
Locust posts for Signage	Mike VanValkenberg	8/29/13	\$25.00

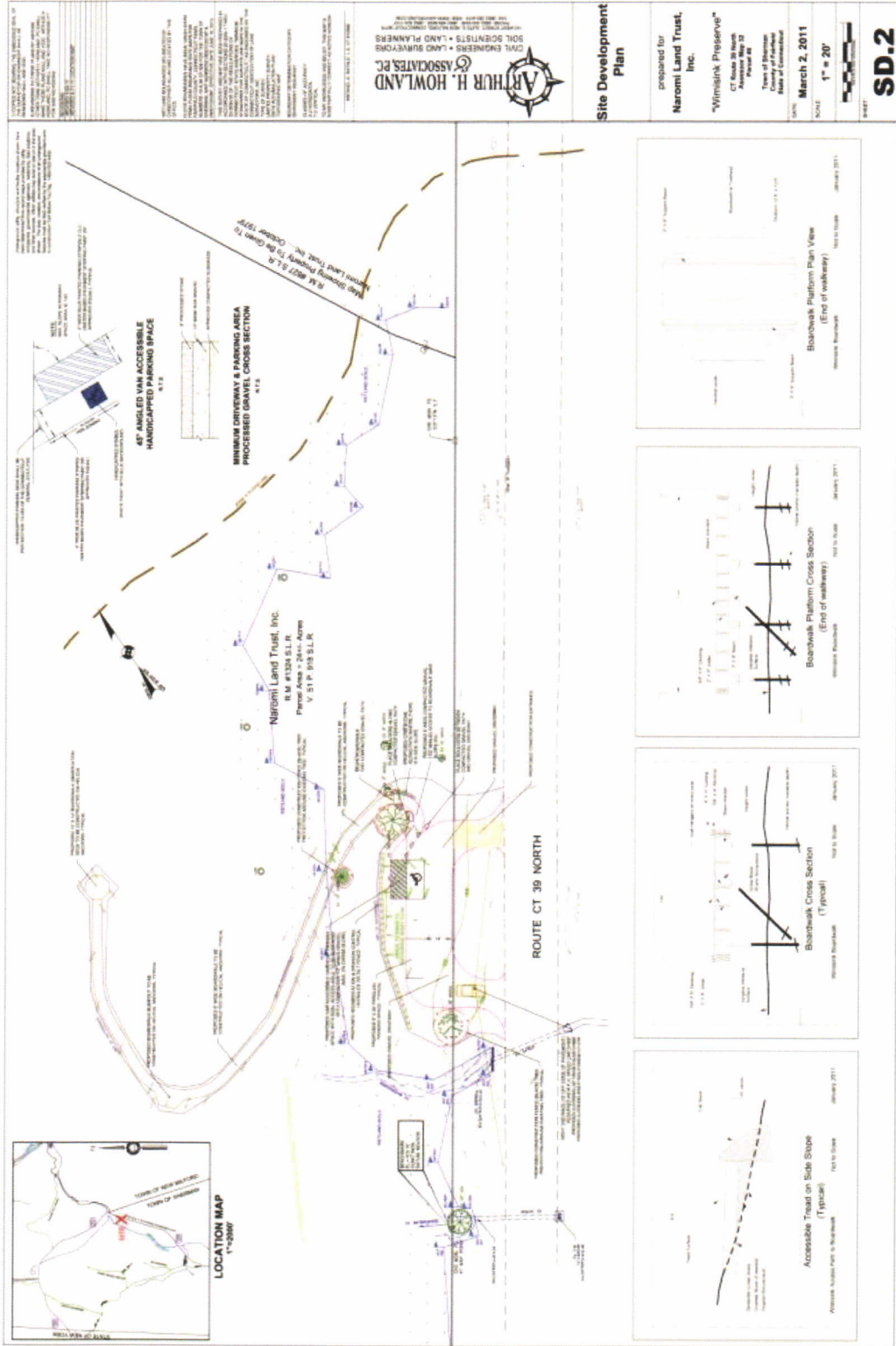
**Miscellaneous**

concrete culvert pipe (required by DOT)	Beatty Construction	3/29/13	\$850.00
Landscaping/plants	Spring Lake Design	6/10/13	\$2,804.75
Butterfly survey (for management plan)	Greg Hanisek	8/22/11	\$750.00
Display Signs (Handicapped parking)		4/19/13	\$46.70
Display Signs (Directional)		5/23/13	\$116.23
Paint for kiosk		5/20/13	\$28.75
Reimbursement consultant time (project management)		6/18/13	\$8,866.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$124,802.68</b>

**Reimbursements from USF&WS**

	5/25/11	\$7,282.25
	2/28/12	\$4,817.22
	5/16/13	\$1,390.00
	1/18/13	\$10,005.00
	3/6/13	\$13,535.86
	3/13/13	\$36,147.00
	4/1/13	\$7,360.91
	4/30/13	\$28,374.14
	6/18/13	\$15,887.62
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$124,800.00</b>

Attachment 2 – Site Plan



**Attachment 3 – Photographs**























