

**Upper Saco Valley Land Trust  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Land Trust Preserves West Side Road Farmland**

The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust has purchased a conservation easement on nearly 62 acres of scenic and agriculturally important farmlands owned by the Frank & Carol Kennett family on West Side Road in Conway, New Hampshire.

The Saco River floodplain, including the Kennett property, has some of New Hampshire's most productive agricultural soils. In addition to protecting significant farmland once integral to the historic Amos Merrill Farm, the Kennett property conservation easement will help protect the scenic values of the West Side Road as well as portions of Route 16.

The completed conservation easement ensures protection of the property's high value agricultural soils while, at the same time, allowing the Kennett's to continue to own and manage the land for traditional farmland uses. "Our family has very deep feelings about this neighborhood and we are really excited to be helping take a first step toward saving agricultural land here in the valley," said Bruce Kennett. "We hope others will draw inspiration from this effort and want to do the same," he added.

In May of 2005, the Land Trust qualified for a highly competitive grant from the USDA Farm and Ranchland Protection Program that was established to purchase conservation easements on lands with important agricultural soils. The Land Trust received \$126,000 from the USDA, a portion of which was applied to purchasing the Kennett conservation easement. Funds available through the USDA sponsored program must be matched by contributions from both the landowner and the Land Trust. The Land Trust hopes to apply the remainder of grant funds to the support of additional farmland protection projects as a part of its West Side Road Farmland Protection Campaign.

The Land Trust is extremely grateful to the Conway Conservation Commission, the Pequawket Foundation, and many individual contributors for their more than generous support of the Kennett Project.

The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust is a non-profit organization working in partnership with local New Hampshire and Maine landowners of the upper Saco River watershed region. Its mission is to advance the permanent protection of lands and waters that define and sustain our communities and enrich our quality of life. For more information call 356-9683 or visit *www.usvlt.org*.