

**UPPER SACO VALLEY LAND TRUST  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Land Trust Receives First Land Donation**

The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust (USVLT) recently received its first land donation of the 9.5 acre Stearns property near Charles Pond in Fryeburg, Maine. Tom Earle, USVLT President, commenting on the organization's first land donation, noted "We are extremely grateful to the Stearns family for this generous gift to the Land Trust. We hope that this donation will be the seed for further land conservation along the Cold River, which is a vital tributary of the Saco River."

The Stearns property consists of state rare natural communities identified by the Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) as *Mixed Tall Sedge Fen* and *Silver Maple Floodplain Forest* with a population of the rare plant MacGregor's ryegrass. According to Don Cameron, Botanist/Ecologist for MNAP, the extensive and diverse wetlands and floodplain along this portion of the Cold River make this a very dynamic and rich habitat for wildlife and plants.

Founded in 2000, USVLT is a nonprofit organization that works in partnership with local landowners in the watershed of the upper Saco River in New Hampshire and Maine to permanently protect the lands and waters that define our community and enrich our quality of life. USVLT protects open space primarily through the use of conservation easements, which are non-development agreements granted in perpetuity by private landowners. In addition to the Stearns donation, the USVLT has acquired 27 conservation easements which permanently protect 3,853 acres from development. For more information, please call 603-356-9683 or visit our website [www.usvlt.org](http://www.usvlt.org).