UPPERSACO VALLEY LAND TRUST



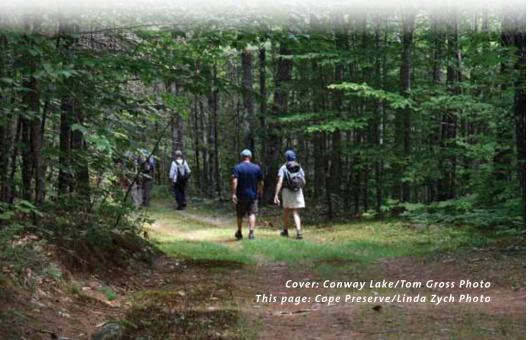


Preserving Land for Community Benefit

The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust is a nonprofit organization working with local landowners to permanently protect the lands and waters that define our communities and enrich our quality of life.

USVLT serves northern Carroll and western Oxford counties, including the communities of Bartlett, Jackson, Hart's Location, Conway, Albany, Madison, Eaton, Chatham, Fryeburg, Brownfield, and Denmark.





A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Doug Burnell

It doesn't seem possible, yet here we are again reflecting on a busy year gone by and looking ahead with enthusiasm to more great conservation projects.

Several of the most cherished land attributes we seek to preserve were present on the properties protected by conservation easements in 2016. One such easement from 2014, on the historic Mount Surprise property in Bartlett, was generously upgraded into a donation of the fee title by the landowners. A sweeping White Mountain panorama, the Iron Mountain trailhead, and an old hardscrabble Jackson farmstead were all preserved through the Hayes Farm project. The last phase was completed in the conservation of the Lucy Farm, one of Conway's earliest single-family farms in an iconic setting on the banks of the fertile Saco River floodplain and beneath the towering granite face of Cathedral Ledge. And 110 acres of forested Fryeburg hillside within the large, unfragmented habitat block of our Kezar Pond focus area was protected through the Hastings Smart's Hill Conservation Easement.

Looking ahead, much time has already been spent by both staff and board working behind the scenes on the Pine Hill Community Forest Project. In partnership with Tin Mountain Conservation Center, we will be protecting two significant parcels: the 90-plus-acre Bald Hill Road Tract in Albany, which will be added to TMCC's Rockwell Sanctuary, and the 340-acre Pine Hill Tract surrounding Kennett High School in Conway. The

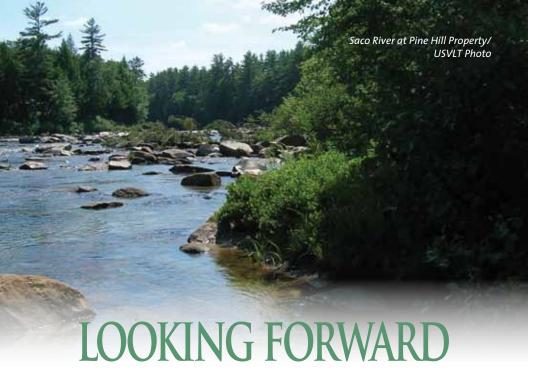
project's benefits, as detailed herein, are impressive, not least of which is ample opportunity for additional public access.

We thank you for your continued support of our work, both looking back and moving forward . . .

Dayemell

Doug Burnell





Upper Saco Valley Land Trust is proud to announce its newest land protection initiative: the Pine Hill Community Forest Project. In partnership with Tin Mountain Conservation Center, USVLT plans to purchase the 436-acre Pine Hill parcel in Conway and the 93-acre Bald Hill Road parcel in Albany, permanently protecting the land from development. USVLT will own the Pine Hill parcel "in fee," while Tin Mountain will own the Bald Hill parcel, subject to a conservation easement held by USVLT.

The land has been professionally managed over the years for sustainable commercial forest products, a practice USVLT intends to continue. We also want to include community input in planning for the future of the land, and have scheduled a professionally facilitated Community Forum for April 13th (more information is available on our website).

Highlights of the Pine Hill Community Forest project include protection of:

- 125 acres of wetlands;
- 3+ acres of Appalachian Oak-Mountain Laurel Forest, a rare habitat;
- 6,430 feet of the Conway Recreation Path with deeded public access;
- 3,300 feet of frontage on the Saco River;
- 2,600 feet of scenic, undeveloped frontage on Routes 16 and 302, as well as 2,000 feet of scenic, undeveloped road frontage on Bald Hill Road.

Outdoor, experiential education is a uniting theme between the two parcels. The Pine Hill land is already utilized by Kennett High School students for recreation and as outdoor classroom space, and the Bald Hill parcel will be an asset both to the students of TMCC and the neighboring White Mountain Waldorf School.

In 2016, USVLT worked to safeguard some of our communities' best known historic farms, sensitive habitat areas, and working forests; more than 11,000 acres, across 59 projects, have now been conserved over the course of the organization's 16-year history. The Land Trust's Board of Directors wishes to express its deep gratitude to all of the families that have made these recent projects possible.

2016 LAND ACQUISITIONS

MOUNT SURPRISE

In late April, the Land Trust became the proud owner of a piece of local history: Mount Surprise. In 2014, USVLT had purchased a conservation easement on the 40-acre parcel that includes the summit of Mount Surprise. The easement, which guarantees public access to the summit, was acquired from the extended Briggs family. They always wanted Mount Surprise to be available for all to enjoy, just as it had been at the turn of the last century when carriage roads led from area hotels to the summit. Then, in 2016, the family graciously donated the "fee interest" (that is, the land itself) to the Land Trust. As the new property owners, USVLT will continue to work on signage, trail upkeep, and the reestablishment of historic views across the Valley to Cathedral and White Horse Ledges.



—continued next page

HAYES FARM

In mid-May, the Land Trust completed a high-priority project in Jackson. Hayes Farm is an historic and idyllic 80-acre hillside farm at the top of Iron Mountain Road, with sweeping views of the Presidentials and the Carter Range. The property remains much as it was when it was settled by the Hayes family in the early 1800s, including its original farmhouse and barn. The panoramic vista is familiar to anyone who has hiked the Iron Mountain Trail, as the trailhead and parking area are located onsite. Thanks to the generosity of the easement donors, Robin Willits and Barbara Hayden Fitts, the public will have guaranteed legal access to the trail, now and into the future. This assurance also opens the door for future grants for trail upkeep and maintenance.





LUCY FAMILY FARM

The closing on Hayes Farm coincided with the completion of the Lucy Family Farm Project along the Saco River in Conway. This multi-year project protects 45 acres of high-quality farmland soils, as well as gorgeous views of the original John and Polly Lucy Homestead and Cathedral Ledge from West Side Road. The easement provides connectivity to other large blocks of undeveloped land, including other farmlands previously conserved by the Lucy family, Echo Lake State Park, and the White Mountain National Forest. In addition to the Lucy family, project partners included the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), the Gibson/Woodbury Charitable Foundation, Kendal C. & Anna Ham Charitable Foundation and the Conway Conservation Commission.

HASTINGS SMART'S HILL

The Land Trust closed out 2016 with the Hastings Smart's Hill Project, completed in December. Located adjacent to Kezar Pond in Fryeburg, the conservation easement permanently protects 110 acres of working forest land on Smart's Hill. The property lies within a 7,000-plus-acre block of unbroken habitat identified by Maine's Natural Areas Program; such blocks typically support wideranging animals such as moose, black bear, fisher, bobcat, lynx, and otter. The property also lies within USVLT's Kezar Pond-Mount Tom Focus Area, identified in 2012 for its rare plants, animals, and exceptional habitat lands, which include abundant and productive warm-water fisheries. The easement, generously donated by Deb & Greg Hastings, will help protect these natural resources, as well as the water quality of Kezar Pond and the Saco River.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

William Abbott

The projects completed in 2016 are emblematic of our best work: guaranteeing public access to beloved trails; conserving lands with deep farmland soils and even deeper community roots; preserving lands that showcase iconic White Mountain scenery.

The public benefit provided by these projects is remarkable, and helps cement the fact that we are invested in and vested with the communities we serve. For the last several years, President Doug Burnell has attended a "Community of Practice" gathering for conservation practitioners in Maine, where the focus is how to best give back to the communities that support our work. We give back through our land protection work, but also in myriad other



ways: by hosting workshops designed to increase wholesaling business for local farmers, or meeting with fellow Saco River stakeholders in Biddeford to discuss water quality issues that impact us all, or collaborating with the Forest Service on long-term planning for our area's much-loved trailheads.

In 2016, our dedicated members who support this community-oriented work stepped up to a significant challenge; we received more than \$40,000 for the "membership match" grant – which, matched one-for-one by a family foundation, has provided a strong financial base for upcoming projects. We're proud of our work, as well as of our members who make it all possible, and we wish to express our utmost thanks.

We would also like to take a moment to pause and remember those members of our conservation community whom we lost this year. These champions of conservation include Howard Heummler, Michelle Broyer, Maxwell Foster, Jr., Jean Louise Briggs, Michael Cline, John Chandler, Harry Thorne, and others. We will honor their memories by continuing to steward the land we all love. There is much more good work to be done.

a BASSX

William B. Abbott

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William Abbott Executive Director

Linda Comeau Land Protection Specialist

> Susan Beane Development Associate

Jesse Wright Local Food Systems Advocate & Office Manager

SUMMER INTERN

Steven Caracciolo University of New Hampshire



LOOKING BACK

Publishing our Annual Report is a reflective process in which we get to re-examine the accomplishments of the previous year. We revisit the bright spots of community engagement and land exploration. From a long list of memorable moments, we highlight a few below as a "Year in Review."

-WINTER

Accreditation



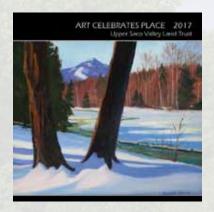
In February we joined 342 other land conservation organizations and became a nationally accredited land trust. Each accredited land trust meets extensive documentation requirements and undergoes a comprehensive review. The rigorous process has strengthened USVLT, and the accreditation seal demonstrates our commitment to professional excellence.

Exploring the Burnt Meadow Mountains Brownfield, ME

February's Easement Exploration was a snowshoe scramble up the southeastern flank of Burnt Meadow Mountain on our King – Hayes Easement. It was a gorgeous, but bitter cold winter day, and more than 25 members and new friends joined in the outdoor fun, culminating with a climb up the fire tower.



SPRING-



7th Art Celebrates Place Opening

Each year, USVLT invites a select group of artists onto our easements to get inspired "en plein aire." The theme for 2016's show was Conway's Green Hills: a tapestry of different conservation lands that serves as the backdrop to North Conway and Fryeburg. Our 7th opening was, once again, a true community celebration and a harbinger of spring. 2016 was also the inaugural year for the Art Celebrates Place calendar, a stunning tribute to the land and artists alike.

Membership Match Announced

USVLT was the recipient of a matching grant in 2016 which doubled many of our members' contributions throughout the year. Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous family foundation, our dedicated members were able to see the impact of their donations magnified. With successful summer and fall campaigns, we exceeded our ambitious 2016 fundraising goal.

Local Food Systems Advocate

In September 2016, USVLT hired Jesse Wright as the region's Local Food Systems Advocate. This grant-funded position is charged with examining the local food system here in Mount Washington Valley and western Maine. USVLT believes strongly that, in addition to conserving our area's rich agricultural lands, we also need to dedicate resources and time on farm viability in northern New England.



Great Maine Outdoor Weekend Fryeburg, ME

For this year's Fall Great Maine Outdoor Weekend, USVLT members and staff floated through spectacular scenery from Hemlock Bridge to Walker's Bridge, exploring Kezar Pond and the old course of the Saco as we went.



Stewardship Work Begins on Mt. Surprise Bartlett, NH

In 2016, USVLT became the owners "in fee" of the Mt. Surprise summit. A group of neighbors and volunteers came together armed with chainsaws and loppers. The first work day was held in October—many more to come!

Saco River Stakeholders Gathering University of New England Biddeford, ME

Right after Thanksgiving, a group of Board members, staff and volunteers travelled to the saltmarshes of Biddeford, Maine – the literal (or littoral) end of our watershed. There, they attended the kick-off meeting of the Saco Watershed Collaborative and met with other regional conservation partners. As outlined in USVLT's 2012 Natural Resource Inventory work, nearly all of our conservation focus areas include Saco River frontage or floodplain land.

DONORS & SUPPORTERS

(Donations received 11/1/15 - 12/31/16)

Landowner contributor = L Easement monitor = M Volunteer = V

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USVLT sincerely thanks all of its 2016 contributors. We couldn't do it without you!

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Landowner contributor = L Easement monitor = M Volunteer = V

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White Mountain Hotel

Winona Camps - Ordway Family Woodland Acres Campground

Wyonegonic Camps

Italics: One Percent for the Planet Partner

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For more information about Business Partners & program benefits, please see our website: usvlt.org.

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Pine Hill Community Forest

Anonymous family foundation Denis & Cathy Currier Earl & Theresa Sires

The Lucy Family Farm Project

Anonymous family foundation Conway Conservation Commission Gibson/Woodbury Charitable Foundation Kendal C. & Anna Ham Charitable Foundation New Hampshire Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) NRCS - Agricultural Conservation Easement Program The Lucy Family

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Anonymous family foundations (2)
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Newman's Own Foundation New Hampshire Charitable Foundation donor advised funds:

Anonymous family fund Governor Gallen Fund Jessie B. Cox Fund for Environment

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Marshall Family Fund Natural Resources Fund Stanton & Elisabeth Davis Fund

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Advancing Local Agriculture

Thomas W. Haas Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

Anonymous family foundation

Preserve & Trail Development

Margaret E. Burnham Charitable Trust Richard A. Ware Family Fund of the New Hampshire Char-

itable Foundation



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FINANCIAL REPORT

(Year Ended December 31, 2016 — Unaudited)

COMBINED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES							
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total				
OPERATING REVENUE:							
Membership Contributions	\$ 87,070	\$ -	\$ 87,070				
Grants and Donations	78,462	511,722	590,184				
Other	14,005	-	14,005				
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	539,327	(539,327)	-				
Total Operating Revenue	\$718,864	(27,605)	691,259				
OPERATING EXPENSES: Program Services: Land Protection & Easement Acquisit Land Stewardship	tion \$ 569, 901 47,716	\$ -	\$ 569, 901 47,716				
Total Program Services	617,617		617,617				
Management and General Fundraising	43,401 14,957	-	43,401 14,957				
Total Operating Expenses	675,975	-	675,975				
Change in Net Assets	\$ 42,889	\$ (27,605)	\$ 15, 284				

COMBINED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION						
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total		
ASSETS:						
Cash, Unrestricted	\$ 71,282	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 71,282		
Cash, Restricted	-	404,790	-	404,790		
Pledges Receivable		20,000		20,000		
Prepaid Expenses	1,700	-	-	1,700		
Beneficial Interest Held by Othe	ers -	-	176,703	176,703		
Property & Equipment, net	6,847	-	-	6,847		
Land & Conservation Easemer	nts -	-	1,170,859	1,170,859		
Total Assets	\$ 79,829	\$ 424,790	\$1,347,562	\$1,852,182		
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS:						
Acrued Expenses	\$ 9,566	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,566		
Net Assets	70,263	424,790	1,347,562	1,842,616		
Total Liabilities and Net Asset	\$ 79,829	\$ 424,790	\$1,347,562	\$1,852,182		

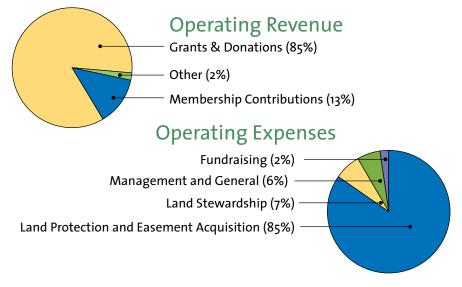
Unrestricted funds may be used for day to day operations. Temporarily restricted funds are grants and donations for a specific project or purpose to be used in the future. Permanently restricted assets include land, easements and stewardship endowment.



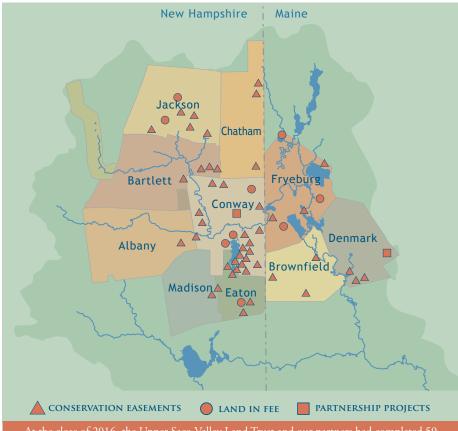
By any measure, the year ending December 31, 2016, was very successful. Highlights included:

- Celebrating the highest membership support in the organization's history, thanks in large part to an anonymous family foundation's matching grant, which encouraged new members to join and existing members to increase their donation level;
- Successfully completing several land protection projects, including securing long-term stewardship funding for these acquisitions;
- Increasing activities that encourage community involvement, such as our Easement Exploration Series, as well as the inaugural publication of the Art Celebrates Place calendar;
- Funding additional staff, which will foster long-term financial viability through increased focus on development and diversification of skillsets; and
- Significantly increasing cash reserves to allow the Land Trust to continue its mission even in the event of a downturn in the economy.

For the Land Trust to carry out its mission, the support of members and the local community is essential. Membership donations underwrite operating costs, and the organization's continuing ability to preserve land for community benefit is only possible with your support. Thank you.



CELEBRATING SPECIAL PLACES



At the close of 2016, the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust and our partners had completed 59 conservation projects, totaling over 11,000 acres throughout our 13 town service area. Please sec www.usvlt.org for more detailed location information about these easements and preserves.

Contribute to Place & Saco River Level Business Partners





















PO Box 424, North Conway NH 03860 (603) 356-9683 • info@usvlt.org • www.usvlt.org