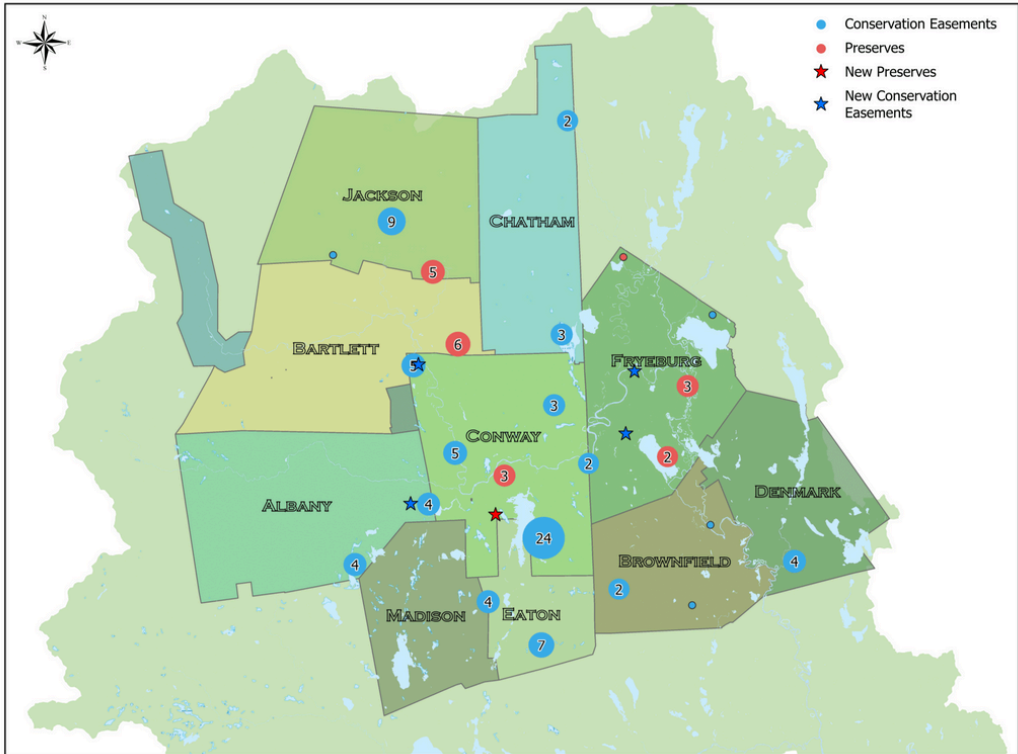




IMPACT REPORT 2024



TOGETHER, WE'VE MADE 25 YEARS OF CONSERVATION POSSIBLE—AND WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED

This coming September marks a special milestone: **25 years since a few passionate, forward-thinking neighbors laid the foundation for what would become the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust.** With your support, that vision has grown into something truly powerful.

In our early days, we were known simply as the Mount Washington Valley Land Trust. A name change followed soon after, reflecting a broader landscape—and a broader dream. But no matter what we've been called, **we've always been rooted in the same place: this community.**

Thanks to you, our first quarter-century is filled with achievement. **Together, we've completed 86 land conservation projects**—a remarkable testament to what's possible when a community rallies around shared values. Nearly a quarter of these lands are now preserved forever as community forests and nature preserves, cared for directly by your land trust.

Every forest, every field, every wetland we protect carries a story. Many of these lands still bear the marks of heavy logging, years of ecological strain, and increased development. But that's where you come in. **Because of your commitment, healing is possible.**



Photo by Lindsay Kafka

Together, we're bringing back health and resilience through long-term stewardship and thoughtful restoration. Some places are now safe havens for wildlife. Others welcome the public with trails and quiet spaces to explore. All of them are protected because you care.

This year, as we celebrate the past 25 years, we're also looking forward—with energy and excitement. **A new wave of landowners is stepping up. Our dedicated team is ready to meet the moment. And with your help, we are poised to complete more projects than ever before.**

We're also strengthening the foundation that makes this work last: investing in stewardship, building sustainable systems, and nurturing a culture of collaboration and care.

None of this is possible without you. This land trust belongs to you—your values, your hopes, your love for the land and the people who live on it.

Thank you for the last 25 years. Let's celebrate together and imagine what we can do in the next 25.

Doug Burnell, Board President

The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust acknowledges that the portion of New Hampshire and Maine in which we operate is the unceded ancestral homeland of the Wabanaki (meaning "People of the Dawn"), including the Pequawket, Ossipee, and Abenaki. The sacred relationship of the Wabanaki to this land and these waters stretches beyond time immemorial, more than 12,000 years.

Learn more at usvlt.org/land-acknowledgment-statement

A FAMILY'S CONTINUED PROMISE TO THE FUTURE



BUN LUCY FIELD

North Conway, New Hampshire

Just off West Side Road in North Conway, 38.5 acres of farmland and forest now carry a lasting legacy: the **Bun Lucy Field**, permanently conserved in honor of Herbert Hoover "Bun" Lucy (1928–2022). A respected local figure, Bun devoted over 50 years to conservation, community service, and sustainable land use. This land now reflects his lifelong commitment to protecting the place he called home.

More than a beautiful open field, Bun Lucy Field plays a vital role in our region's future. With only **5%** of New England's land dedicated to agriculture, conserving farmland like this is not just important—it's **essential**. This property includes 20 acres of active pasture and cultivation, prime soils for food production, mature maple forest used for sugaring, and over 3,000 feet of wetland habitat along the Saco River.

It's also part of a high-priority groundwater recharge area, helping to protect drinking water for the North Conway Water Precinct.

The Lucy family's commitment to conservation is deep-rooted. In 2016, they protected 45 acres at the historic Lucy Family Farm. Today, descendants continue that legacy, working with the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust to conserve additional family farmland along Lucy Brook.



"Both of my parents (Chet and Lydia) felt strongly about protecting the original character of the landscape," says Nat Lucy. "Uncle Bun's field is a keystone parcel for wildlife, water quality, and scenery. **With so much development pressure in the Valley, Marianne and I feel it is crucial to preserve what we can.**"

By protecting this land with a conservation agreement (technically referred to as a conservation easement), Nat and Marianne Lucy have given a gift to our community as a whole. As with all of our conservation agreements, they still own the land, pay property taxes, and can sell, bequeath or transfer it to new owners in the future. The conservation agreement ensures that the land will **remain free from haphazard development, forever.**

This conservation success was made possible with support from the NH DES Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund Program, and the vision and commitment of a family who understands that what we choose to protect today shapes the valley we'll share tomorrow.





A FOREST FOR EVERYONE

TIN MOUNTAIN ARBORETUM & SANCTUARY Albany, New Hampshire

At the **68-acre Tin Mountain Lori Jean Kinsey Arboretum & Sanctuary**, every trail tells a story—of nature, of people, and of a shared commitment to conservation. Bordering the White Mountain National Forest and the Rockwell Sanctuary, this land plays a vital role in a larger wildlife corridor that supports white-tailed deer, porcupines, ermine, brook trout, scarlet tanagers, barred owls, and countless other species. It's a thriving community, home to wildlife that make our region so special. It is now protected forever.



With extraordinary foresight, **Tin Mountain Conservation Center chose to conserve this beloved land in partnership with the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust.** For one nonprofit to entrust another with a permanent long-term commitment for its land is rare and inspiring. It speaks volumes about Tin Mountain's vision: to ensure that this sanctuary remains open, wild, and welcoming for generations to come.

But what makes the Arboretum especially remarkable is **how accessible it is—for everyone.** While many trails in the National Forest are beautiful, they can be rugged and challenging. Tin Mountain's **1.2-mile Accessible Nature Trail** was designed with inclusivity at its heart.

Whether you walk, use a cane, push a stroller, or rely on a wheelchair, you can experience the serenity of the forest here. In winter, snowshoers and cross-country skiers are just as welcome. Interpretive signs along the trail name native plants and trees in English, Latin, and Abenaki, offering education and reflection with every step. And while the forest invites you to look up and around, **this Arboretum invites you to look closely—to see the trees, and to feel their story.**

Now permanently protected through its conservation agreement with USVLT, **the Tin Mountain Arboretum stands as a gift to the future—and an open invitation to you.** Come visit. Come wander. And know that this place will always be here, because people like you believe in the power of nature, community, and lasting care.





Photo by Josh Laskin

A PLACE WORTH PROTECTING—AND IMPROVING TOGETHER



What makes **Jockey Cap** so special? Ask around, and you'll hear all kinds of answers. Some will tell you it's the "best bang for your buck"—a short hike with stunning summit views. Climbers love its easy-to-access boulders and rock faces. Others are drawn to its fascinating geology or rich local history including "Molly Ockett's Cave," or the memorial to arctic explorer Admiral Robert Peary.

Many of us love the fun fact that it was home to Maine's first rope tow for skiing between 1936–38. And yet, when it comes down to it, many simply treasure the memories they've made there—sunset hikes, quiet mornings, shared moments on the trail.

Thanks to a partnership between the Town of Fryeburg and the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust (the former owning the land, the latter holding a conservation agreement), Jockey Cap is now **permanently protected**—a place where people today, and generations to come, can return again and again.

But protection is just the beginning.



Right now, **you can help care for this beloved landmark** by supporting much-needed trail improvements. Phase 3 of the Jockey Cap project is underway and includes:

- Building **timber steps and retaining structures** to reduce erosion on the Summit and Climber Access Trails
- Installing **interpretive signs** to share the land's stories
- Creating a **welcoming kiosk** to guide and inspire every visitor

USVLT is leading the work on these improvements to make Jockey Cap safer, more accessible, and even more meaningful—for hikers, climbers, families, and first-time visitors alike.

If you've ever stood at the summit and taken in the view... if you've scrambled over the boulders or wandered the woods with a friend... or if you simply believe in protecting and improving the places that make this valley so special—**this is your chance to give back.**

Your gift to the **USVLT Stewardship Fund** helps ensure that Jockey Cap continues to inspire, welcome, and endure.

THE QUIET POWER OF THE WOODS



FRYEBURG TOWN FOREST

Fryeburg, Maine

There's something deeply calming about a walk in the woods—the way the air cools, the light filters through the trees, and the noise of the world seems to fade.

Fryeburg Town Forest, with its gentle one-mile loop trail, offers just that kind of escape. It's a peaceful place to slow down, reflect, and reconnect with the natural world.



As you wander the trail, you'll pass old stone walls—reminders of the time when this land was cleared and farmed by hand, generation after generation. You'll also find a welcoming open-air pavilion, built for outdoor learning and community connection. Keep going, and you'll reach the banks of the Saco River, where a rare Silver Maple Floodplain Forest quietly thrives.



What we may forget is that this forest is also quietly, behind the scenes, doing some heavy lifting for the **health of our land, water, and climate**.

These woods are more than beautiful—they're **protective**. During heavy rains or snowmelt, they absorb and slow water, helping prevent damaging floods. They shelter wildlife, clean our air, and offer cool refuge on hot summer days.

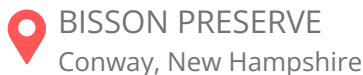
And equally important, **they're helping to slow down climate change, right where we live**. An acre of New England forest stores around 160 metric tons of carbon dioxide. That means Fryeburg Town Forest is quietly holding back nearly **10,000 metric tons** of excess CO₂—a powerful natural solution in the face of a global challenge.

By conserving this land, Fryeburg has done something powerful and forward-thinking: **protected a living system that gives back every day**. It's a gift to the community now—and to future generations.

Over the next twenty-five years we look forward to working with other towns. Imagine if every town had a forest like this. Imagine what we could accomplish, together.



A GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY



Thanks to two very special people, another 124 acres of beautiful woodlands have been conserved in Conway, New Hampshire.

Karyl and Ed Bisson recently donated this special property, ensuring the protection of a diverse landscape, including hemlock, white pine, maple, and oak woodlands. Its wetlands play a vital role in safeguarding the water quality of Conway Lake and the Saco River watershed by filtering water and reducing erosion.

For generations, the Bisson family cherished this land, watching grandchildren climb rocks and race through the woods. Now, they have chosen to share its beauty with the broader community, ensuring future generations can create their own memories here. As Karyl and Ed like to say, "Giving back to our community is a fundamental value for us. The words of Winston Churchill ring true: **'We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.'**"



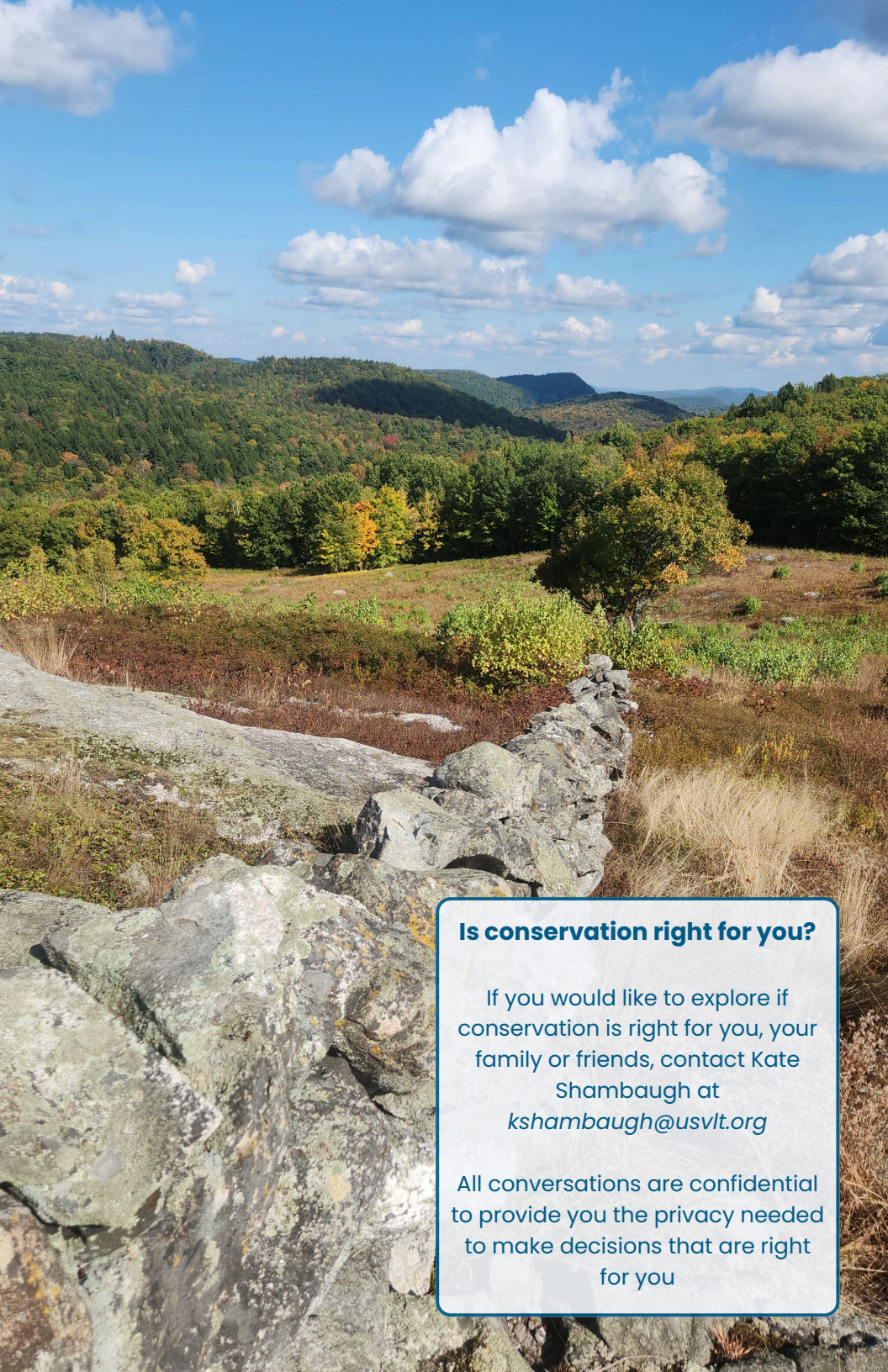
The Bissos have left a lasting legacy, creating a space where the community can connect with nature.

Winding trails weave through a regrowing birch forest, where echoes of past logging contrast with the renewal of life. Glacial boulders stand as silent witnesses to time, while seasonal vernal pools provide essential habitat for amphibians in the spring and fall, offering glimpses of nature's delicate cycles.

Beyond the land itself, the Bissos' generosity extends further. Understanding the importance of long-term stewardship, they also donated a tractor to assist with trail maintenance—not only for this preserve but for other lands entrusted to the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust.

Year after year, we are inspired by families like the Bissos—those who choose to give back to the land and our community, ensuring its beauty and benefits endure for **years to come.**





Is conservation right for you?

If you would like to explore if conservation is right for you, your family or friends, contact Kate Shambaugh at kshambaugh@usvlt.org

All conversations are confidential to provide you the privacy needed to make decisions that are right for you

FINANCIAL REPORT

(Year Ended December 31, 2024 — Unaudited)

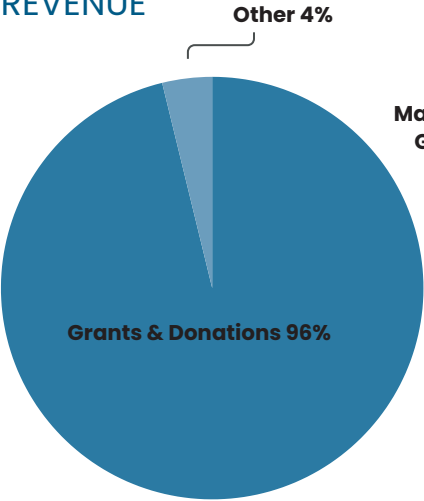
COMBINED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

REVENUE	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total	2023 Total
Grants, Donations and Investment Income	\$340,014	\$1,327,192	\$1,667,206	\$1,358,450
Other	\$66,022	-	\$66,022	\$58,646
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$439,422	(\$439,422)	-	
Total Operating Revenue	\$845,458	\$887,770	\$1,733,228	\$1,417,096

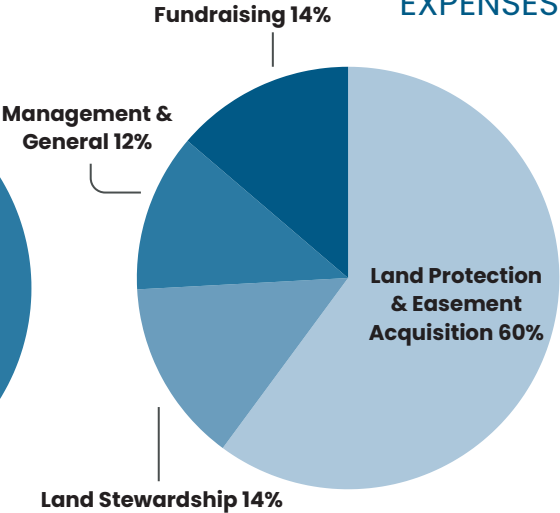
EXPENSES

Land Protection & Easement Acquisition	\$445,154	-	\$445,154	\$347,738
Land Stewardship	\$103,917	-	\$103,917	\$73,382
Total Program Services	\$549,070	-	\$549,070	\$421,120
Management & General	\$89,674	-	\$89,674	\$109,125
Fundraising	\$101,827	-	\$101,827	\$60,710
Total Operating Expenses	\$740,571	-	\$740,571	\$590,954
Change in Net Assets	\$104,887	\$887,770	\$992,657	\$826,142

REVENUE



EXPENSES



COMBINED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

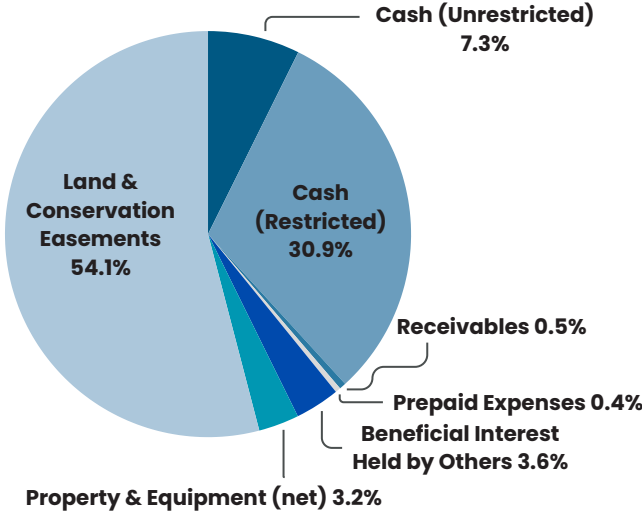
ASSETS

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total	2023 Total
Cash (Unrestricted)	\$630,151	-	-	\$630,151	\$560,950
Cash (Restricted)	-	\$3,119,117	-	\$3,119,117	\$2,361,336
Receivables	\$577	\$19,225	-	\$19,802	\$40,644
Prepaid Expenses	\$4,363	-	-	\$4,363	\$32,461
Beneficial Interest Held by Others	-	-	\$338,456	\$338,456	\$271,770
Non Current Assets	-	-	-	-	\$10,000
Property & Equipment (net)	\$261,608	-	-	\$261,608	\$246,711
Land & Conservation Easements	-	-	\$4,504,749	\$4,504,749	\$4,136,094
Total Assets	\$896,700	\$3,138,342	\$4,843,205	\$8,878,247	\$7,659,966

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Accrued Expenses	\$56,394	-	-	\$56,394	\$40,582
Total Liabilities	\$56,394	-	-	\$56,394	\$40,582
Net Assets	\$840,305	\$3,138,342	\$4,843,205	\$8,821,853	\$7,619,384
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$896,700	\$3,138,342	\$4,843,205	\$8,878,247	\$7,659,966

ASSETS



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. Non-current assets represent pledges that are receivable after one year.



A SNEAK PEEK AT 2025

To the surprise of many (but not to us because we knew you'd show up and make amazing things happen), 2024 turned out to be a great year and set the stage for an impactful 2025. With a fully staffed team, volunteers ready to help monitor and manage the properties, a list of new acquisition projects that you have shared with us, 2025 promises to be fruitful. As Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world." You are joining other "thoughtful, committed citizens" who are changing the Valley when you support USVLT:

Land Action Fund. There are a dozen new land projects in 2025, with another dozen active projects in the works. Conservation agreements in Fryeburg, Albany, Madison, Brownfield and Conway, will add over 1,400 acres. Another 925 acres are being acquired for preserves in Madison and Bartlett, including three that are being generously donated. While many of these projects remain anonymous until the landowners are ready to share, you will be excited by the natural significance of these sites.

Stewardship Fund. The work of conservation does not end with purchasing the property, but continues with the regular upkeep needed to preserve the land forever. Volunteers and staff annually monitor the 86 USVLT properties (with more coming) and periodically replace worn kiosks, improve trails, provide educational signage, and address the challenges of invasive plant species.



Mission Support. The work of preserving this land takes dedicated people and resources. There's a lot that goes into conserving land—from acquisition and stewardship, to education, to raising the funds to support all the work - you make it all possible. This year, recreation and education events in partnership with other organizations—such as Tin Mountain Conservation Center—will take place on USVLT lands. Stay tuned for these and community events, such as dine-to-donates and community forums.



As a community-supported conservation organization, USVLT owes its success to you—our donors, partners, landowners, and volunteers—who make it all possible.



What will be protected?



Wildlife
Habitat



Drinking
Water



Forests



A Unique
Landscape



Educational
Opportunities



Recreational
Opportunities

LINKED TOGETHER BY A CHAIN

Photo by Joe
Klementovich



CHAIN OF PONDS PROJECT

Madison, New Hampshire

A long time ago, a glacier carved its way through the Valley. In its wake, it left behind quite a sight: jagged cliffs, scattered boulders, long ridges of gravel known as eskers, and **over 300 acres** of surface and ground water linked to the Valley's water supply.

This magnificent 625-acre landscape is what's known as **Chain of Ponds**, and it plays a critical role in the lives of the local community.

For the wildlife? Chain of Ponds provides a habitat that they can call home. Multiple federal and state threatened species of plants, fish and birds coexist within this unique ecosystem. The abundance of forests, wetlands, streams and ponds provide the shelter and nutrients they need to not only live, but **thrive**. This remarkable conservation area connects with other conservation tracts—Madison Boulder State Park, Madison town forests, and Nature Conservancy land—creating a large wildlife corridor.

For the people? Chain of Ponds supplies clean drinking water to those living in Silver Lake, Madison, and Ossipee. With the plans for added and improved trails, the site is a beautiful area for hiking, biking, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, skiing, and snowshoeing.

Your gift to USVLT Chain of Ponds can help ensure that this integral landscape remains dedicated to **supporting natural and human communities alike**.

Support for the \$1.75M Chain of Ponds project has come from people like you, private foundations, the NH Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), NH Groundwater Drinking Water Fund, and the US Forest Service Community Forest Program (who identified it as one of the most important conservation projects in the country in 2024).

BUSINESS PARTNERS

A special THANK YOU to these business partners! Please support them, because when you do, you're also supporting conservation in the Valley!

CONTRIBUTE TO PLACE AND SACO RIVER LEVEL \$1,000+



SWIFT RIVER LEVEL \$500+

Minuteman Press
Country Consulting Group
Emerald Tree Experts
Flatbread Company
White Birch Books
White Mountain Puzzles
Dutch Bloemen Winkel
Jim Doucette Real Estate
Northway Bank
Eastern Slope Inn Resort

ELLIS RIVER LEVEL \$250+

Badger Peabody & Smith Realty
Cooper Cargill Chant
Drive Brand Studio
Edge of Maine Art & Framing
Jackson Art Studio
Ledge Brewing
Little Meadow for Mardi
Lucy Hardware
Spice & Grain
The Local Grocer
Wyonegonic Camps

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THANK YOU to all who support USVLT.

You protect the farms,
woods, water, and air in the
Valley. Volunteers and
supporters are the heart
and soul of USVLT.

visit
usvlt.org/2024-supporters
to see a full list.

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Conservation Director
Sam Hanson
*Development & Outreach
Coordinator*

*The Upper Saco Valley Land
Trust is an equal
opportunity employer*



WAYS TO GIVE

For 25 years you have preserved the forests, farms, and wetlands of the Upper Saco Valley. You can save the land in many ways such as:



**Individual
Gift**



**Monthly
Gift**



**Gifts of
IRA**



**Gifts of Real
Estate**



**Planned
Giving**



**Donate your
Vehicle**



**Gifts of
Stock**



**Donor Advised
Fund**



**Memorial
Gift**



Volunteer

“

We have supported USVLT and in particular the Chain of Ponds project in Madison because we believe the most important things we can leave our grandchildren and future generations are clean water, clean air and open space to enjoy the beauty and diversity of our mountains and all the earth.

–Tino and Betty Fernandes

Have you considered how you might leave a lasting impact for generations to come? Talk to us about how you can leave a legacy gift to ensure that kids and families can love the Valley as much as you do.

To learn more about your options, visit usvlt.org/ways-to-give



PO Box 2233
Conway, NH 03818

LET'S CONNECT!

Visit usvlt.org to learn more about our work and to find resources about land conservation in the Upper Saco Valley.

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The accreditation seal is awarded to land trusts meeting the highest national standards for excellence and conservation permanence.
