



CHARLOTTE LAND TRUST

CharlotteLandTrust.org

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TO OUR NEIGHBORS

2020 WAS A STRANGE YEAR for all of us, but it was also an exceptionally busy one for the Charlotte Land Trust (CLT). Inquiries about conserving land were numerous and several projects moved toward eventual conservation easements. Regular yearly stewardship reviews and the work we do to maintain a well-functioning organization continued. While we missed the opportunity to see many of you at the events we had planned, we have achieved a lot.

By the time this report reaches you, 71 acres of excellent farmland owned by John and Carol Snow will have been conserved and sold to a young couple to start their first farm. Other projects in the works will conserve forest and natural areas as well as additional farmland. Additionally, we have undertaken a study, in partnership with UVM's Center for Rural Studies, of Charlotte's farms and farmers, the trends affecting agriculture, and ways to strengthen this important sector. The Charlotte Farm Study will conclude this spring and we're looking forward to sharing the results with you.

All of us who volunteer on the Charlotte Land Trust board appreciate the strong and longstanding support for conservation in Charlotte. That support is reflected in the beautiful landscape of our town — numerous and varied farms, wildlife habitats, forests, and waterways that contribute to our healthy environment. Visit charlottelandtrust.org to learn more and to see how you can help support conservation in Charlotte.

— Katherine Lampton, President, Charlotte Land Trust

David Watts — 1945–2021



We remember with sadness our fellow board member, David Watts, who passed away unexpectedly in his sleep on January 16.

David was an extremely committed and engaged board member who helped us in so many ways by sharing his legal expertise, his penchant for the outdoors, and his cheerful demeanor. He and fellow board member, David Pill, annually conducted all of our stewardship visits to CLT-conserved properties. He was passionate about land conservation work. We will miss his thoughtful input at our board meetings, his wonderful laugh, and his wisdom.

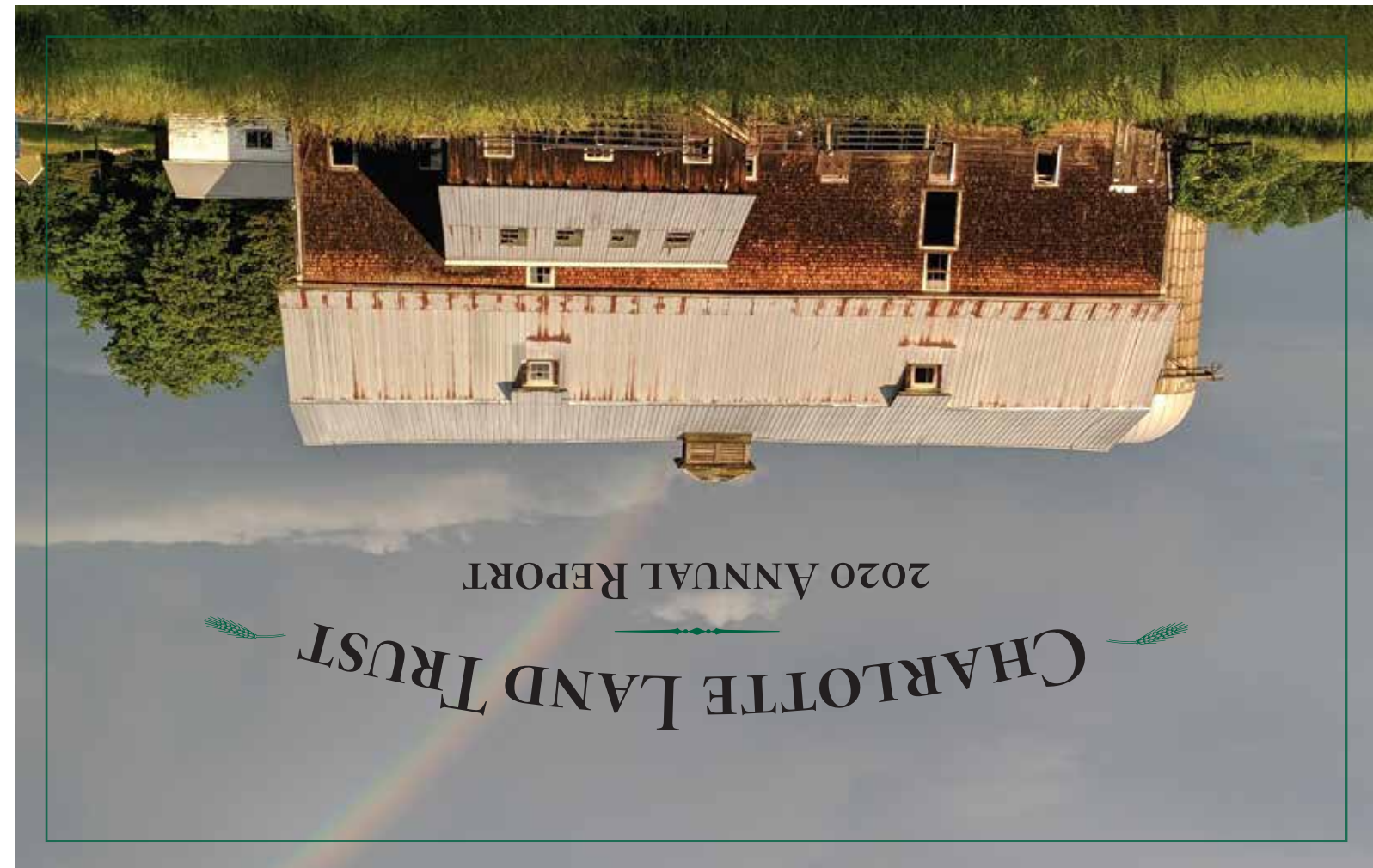


The mission of the Charlotte Land Trust is to conserve the natural and working lands of Charlotte for the benefit of present and future generations

On the cover: Grass Cattle Company barn on the Charlotte-Hinesburg Road

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CHARLOTTE'S CONSERVED LAND

This map shows the impact CLT and your donations have made to our local landscape. The six call-outs offer a sampling of the ways conservation benefits our community.



1 NORDIC FARM

Since its purchase in 2018, this former dairy farm has sprouted a grain malting operation, a shrimp farm, a bakery using estate-grown grain, and more. In 2020, the owners partnered with Vermont Land Trust and the Audubon Society to clear invasive buckthorn and honeysuckle from 20 acres of former pasture leaving islands of native dogwood, viburnum, and red cedars. These shrub species are the preferred habitat for warblers, towhees, and woodcocks to nest as they pass through Vermont annually. As development blankets the Champlain Valley, conserved land such as Nordic Farm is providing vital habitat for migrating species.

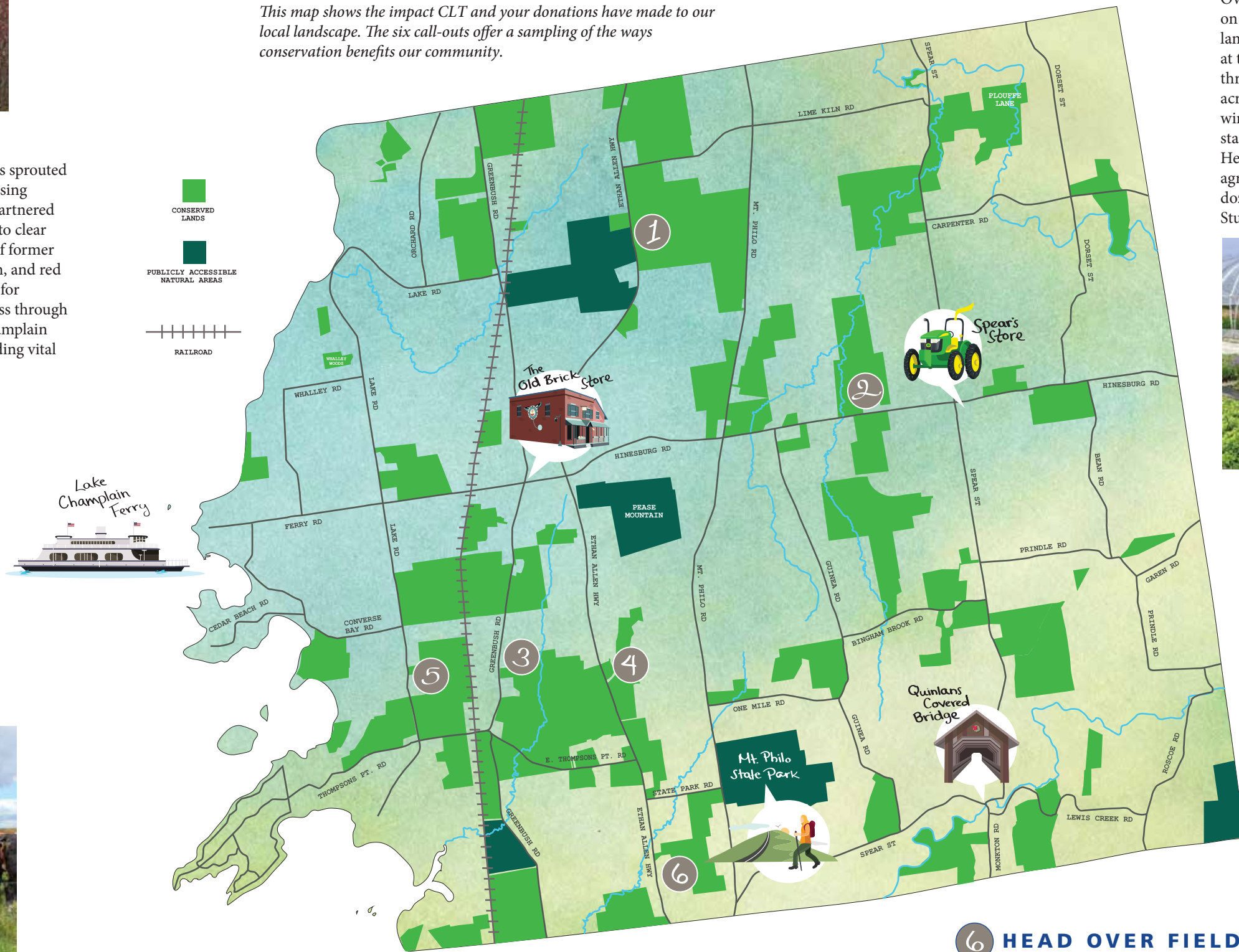
2 GRASS CATTLE COMPANY

The LaPlatte River tributary Mud Hollow Brook runs through this conserved 160-acre farm. Owner/operator Steve Schubart practices regenerative agriculture, using plants to grow soil, instead of soil to grow plants. Rotationally-grazed cattle harvest those plants, trample the grass, and inoculate the soil with nutrient rich manure. Schubart has already tested and detected an increase in organic matter in the ranch's soil. More organic matter bolsters the land's ability to absorb ground water to keep nutrients in place instead of in the brook and, eventually, Lake Champlain. Fences to keep the cattle out and a riparian buffer zone of thick native vegetation also help reduce runoff.



3 TOWN LINK TRAIL

Today, this recreation path runs from Mount Philo State Park to the Champlain Valley Co-housing on Greenbush Road. When complete, it will continue to the Town Beach via the West Village. Several sections are on conserved land and easements for the trail were part of the conservation process. This path is open to the public and provides an outstanding venue to get outside and walk, run, bird, bike, ski, and more.



4 UNITY FARM

Owner Cathy Wells grows organic greens and flowers on this farm which includes 54 acres of conserved land. You can look for her uber-flavorful salad blends at the Shelburne Supermarket or get her flowers through a weekly bouquet subscription. Beyond the acreage growing greens and flowers, Wells has created windrows to support overwintering pollinators and stands of milkweed for butterflies around the ponds. Her goal is to create a harmonious balance between agriculture and natural habitat. Unity Farm is one of dozens of farms participating in the Charlotte Farm Study that CLT is conducting this year.



5 NITTY GRITTY GRAIN COMPANY

Tom Kenyon is transitioning this organic farm, which uses roughly 190 conserved acres in Charlotte, to his son Dave — the 8th generation of this family to farm in Vermont. You'll find Nitty Gritty cornmeal and flour at area markets, as well as in breads from Backdoor Bread and Slowfire Bakery. To avoid synthetic herbicides and fertilizers, the Kenyons rotate crops, planting fields that have grown wheat or corn for several years with hay and legumes to fix nitrogen in the soil and suppress weeds. With help from a state grant, they recently purchased a tine tiller to help eliminate weeds, reduce tillage, and nutrient runoff in turn.

6 HEAD OVER FIELDS FARM

When John and Carol Snow decided to sell 71 acres of farmland, which sits directly in the Mount Philo viewshed, they knew they wanted it to remain in agriculture. But, the value of their land had risen to the point that it would be unaffordable for most farmers. That's where conservation came in. The Snows sold a conservation easement on their land to Vermont Land Trust with support from CLT. By doing so, the appraised value of the land was reduced, allowing Katie Rose Leonard and Bryan Seward to purchase it and start their first farm.



"We realize that what makes Charlotte so special for us is the conservation of land for open space, recreation, and the protection of farms that provide local food. For all that, we thank the visionary actions of the Charlotte Land Trust."

— Jim & Susan Hyde