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Charlotte Resident

CHARLOTTE LAND TRUST



Report to Our Neighbors

JANUARY 2010 TO MARCH 2011

Helping to Protect and Preserve the Rural, Agricultural Landscape of Charlotte



Aerial view looking south at the Nordic Holstein Farm on Hinesburg Road permanently conserved April, 2011



INTRODUCTION FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

It is a pleasure to present the Annual Report of the Charlotte Land Trust to the community every year. We send the report to every household, as we believe that permanently conserving special local landscapes has an impact on all of the town's residents even if they are not aware of every property that has been conserved.

It is rewarding to have our land trust's activities and actions recognized by others: we have been called one of the most effective land trusts in the state. We strive to stay abreast of national and state policies affecting conservation by attending Vermont and national conferences for land conservation. In addition we work with all the town committees whose tasks are related to conservation and we hosted a group meeting last year so that we could all better understand each other's mission and activities. Lastly, through a variety of news articles, public meetings, brochures and a detailed web site, we continually aim to educate the Charlotte community to understand how land conservation works

Over the years, CLT has been directly involved in the conservation of over 1,200 acres in Charlotte. We are very proud of this. Many of these projects were done in concert with other organizations. We've found that partnering has worked well to achieve some stunning results. We are gratified to have such broad-based financial support from members of our community whose contributions enable us to do our work.

We thank you for your support and hope you will contact us with any thoughts or questions.

Frances Foster CLT President



Snowshoe hikers gather on Raven Ridge last winter.

2010 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: CONSERVATION AND OUTREACH

The closing for the Raven Ridge conservation project took place shortly after our annual report was released last year. This project, covering 365 acres in Charlotte, Monkton and Hinesburg, was spearheaded by the Vermont Land Trust and Nature Conservancy, with local coordination and funding support by CLT. This has proven to be an exciting and popular project, with great interest in the public access to the site's wonderful views and natural features. This winter CLT sponsored a naturalist-led snowshoe hike that was quite successful.

During the past year CLT has assisted the Vermont Land Trust with conservation of 236 acres of the former Bean farm on both sides of the Charlotte-Hinesburg Road. The farm is now owned by the Hinsdale family. This farm is highly scenic, has important natural areas, including clayplain forests, and includes extensive agricultural soils. The farm is a key piece in one of Charlotte's most prominent agricultural areas. A public trail easement, assignable to the Town, is also a part of the project. CLT made application to the Town's Conservation Fund and received a grant of \$125,000 toward the project's cost. We eagerly anticipate the closing of this project in April.

Partnership with statewide conservation organizations, such as the Vermont Land Trust and Nature Conservancy, enable CLT to leverage our time and efforts into far larger projects than we could handle as a small unstaffed organization. These partnerships are equally valuable to the larger organizations, providing local perspectives, contacts, support and funding. CLT is also a funder for these larger projects, which is possible through the generosity of our local donors. CLT's funding is not only important in a project's total budget, but also as a local match required by many of the major funding sources.

Although our partnerships are a major part of our work, CLT continually engages in discussions with numerous local landowners about conservation of smaller parcels. These locally-focused projects are important and we welcome the opportunity to discuss plans and potential options for conservation of land with a variety of site features. If you have been thinking about conservation and would like to learn more, please give us a call. There are now enhanced tax benefits for the donation of easements, making this an ideal time to consider conservation. Whether or not a project eventually materializes, we are happy to talk with you.

CLT considers outreach and education to ean important part of our work. In addition to articles about conservation in the Charlotte News and a new brochure on the conservation process, we also worked with local groups on conservation-related issues. CLT was very involved this past year with the Selectboard to craft revisions to the Conservation Fund guidelines. One of the most significant changes was to more fully involve the Recreation Committee, Conservation Commission and Trails

Committee in reviewing applica-

tions to the Conservation Fund.

We also sponsored a workshop on conservation appraisals for these groups and the general public, which was very well attended. This complex topic has been one of great interest during Conservation Fund application reviews.

Our website, new last year, has been quite successful and was refined and expanded this past year. It is a great tool for disseminating information about past and upcoming projects and events. We encourage you to check it out at www.charlottelandtrust.org and let us know any suggestions for other information that would be helpful.

ORGANIZATION

uring the past year CLT continued to work on strengthening our organization. Working from the assessment report we received in 2009, this past year we began to create and implement several governance policies, including a board code of conduct and updated conflict of interest policy. Records keeping policies, project checklists, easement templates and similar items are being reviewed and discussed and will eventually be adopted by the board. Our assessment report and our governance policy changes are based on national standards from the Land Trust Alliance. As a small, unstaffed land trust we understand the importance of maintaining strong organizational standards, both for the integrity of our work and for the sustainability of the land trust.

This past year saw the resignation of Tim Sampson from the CLT board. Tim oversaw our stewardship program and did an admirable job of yearly reviews of conservation easement properties and the associated record keeping. Tim's efforts and his knowledgeable advice on land trust business are much appreciated.

Special Tax Incentives for Conserving Your Land in 2011

If you are considering a conservation teasement donation, now may be the time to act. Landowners who donate a qualified conservation easement in 2011 will be able to:

 Increase their charitable deduction from 30% to 50% of their adjusted gross income in the year of their gift; qualified farmers may deduct up to 100%; and
 Carry over any unused deduction for up to 15 years, instead of 5 years.

Please contact us to learn more!

2010 INCOME AND EXPENSES

INCOME

Contributions:		
Unrestricted Donations		\$34,663
Restricted Donation		10,000
Memorial Gifts		7,300
Interest and Dividends		1,632
Annual Town Contribution		6,100
Total income		\$59,695
EXPENSES		
Raven Ridge		\$40,000
Nordic Holstein Farm		1,000
Burleigh Farm and Forest		2,300
Other Conservation Projects		8,146
Outreach		2,125
Program subtotal	90%	53,571
Fundraising	1%	774
Administration	9%	5,136
Total expenses	100%	\$59,481
Assets 1/1/2010		\$226,447
Assets 12/31/2010		\$226,661



Bill Fraser Harris pauses next to the "oven" on Raven Ridge.

337	2
	To la

Town of Charlotte Conserved Land, March 2011

Easements with the Vermont Land Trust, Charlotte Land Trust, Lake Champlain Land Trust and the Nature Conservance

Source: Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

YES! I will help preserve the natural and rural beauty of Charlotte by making a tax-deductible contribution to the Charlotte Land Trust at the following level:

☐ Benefactor \$2,500	☐ Friend \$100
☐ Supporter \$1,000	☐ Contributor \$50
☐ Sustaining \$500	☐ Other \$

Please provide the following information and mail, along with your check, to Charlotte Land Trust, P.O. Box 43, Charlotte, VT 05445.

Name

Street Address

City/State/Zin

Phone

-mail

□ Please contact me to discuss: conservation of my land, donating development rights, or other planned giving opportunities.

□ I would like my gift to remain anonymous.