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Membership Matters!

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Help Protect our future landscape... TODAY

Please note: All JULT memberships now run on a calendar year from January 1st to December 31st.

Please sign me up for:

- Conservator** Membership \$500
 - Steward** Membership \$100
 - Sponsor** Membership \$50
 - Family** Membership \$35
 - Individual** Membership \$25
 - Student/Senior** Membership \$10
 - Lifetime** Membership \$1,000
- (Beat inflation and avoid renewal notices!)*

Please contact me regarding:

- Conservation options for my land
- Making a gift of stock
- Other planned giving opportunities
- Volunteer opportunities:
 - ___ Fundraising/Events
 - ___ Office/Administration
 - ___ Trails/Land Stewardship

Other Considerations:

- My employer's matching gift is enclosed.
- Please **do not** send me a "Thank-you" gift.
- I wish to remain anonymous.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Please make **checks** payable to **JULT** and mail to the address below. Or you may **pay by credit card** via our website: www.jult.org. All contributions are tax-deductible.

P.O. Box 80 • Jericho, VT 05465-0080 • 802-899-2693 • julandtrust@gmail.com • www.jult.org
www.facebook.com/Jericho-Underhill-Land-Trust



LAND TRUST NEWS

Preserving Open Lands In Our Towns

Summer Newsletter 2020



Tomasi Meadow

THE TOMASI MEADOW, A WONDERFUL FUTURE

The Jericho Underhill Land Trust is extremely pleased to report that all the funding necessary for the purchase and permanent conservation of the Tomasi Meadow has been raised. This was a true collaboration starting with the Tomasi family and their desire to see this exceptional vista and productive hayfield protected. To that end, they generously supported the land purchase by donating \$45,000 in reduced value. Further financial help came from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) with a grant award of \$155,000. This enormous boost, the largest sum that is offered for a community project, enabled the Jericho Underhill Land Trust and the Vermont Land Trust to focus on raising \$56,000 locally and asking Underhill residents to approve \$20,000 at Town Meeting. A total sum of \$231,000 was required. The fact that the Tomasi Meadow is a cherished landscape was demonstrated by an outpouring of donations and an overwhelming vote in favor of the Town contribution and ownership. Without this outstanding response, the purchase and conservation of the Tomasi Meadow would not take place. Next steps include the drafting of the conservation easement which will protect public access and the meadow's important natural resources in perpetuity. On August 30th, 2020, the Town of Underhill will receive the Tomasi Meadow with the Vermont Land Trust and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board jointly "holding" the conservation easement. This ensures that the restrictions put in place will be upheld over time. The Tomasi Meadow will join Casey's Hill in Town ownership and permanent protection. Land conservation is always a cause for celebration...for the landowner, the community and for future generations! Thank you all for your extraordinary support!



We're on the web: www.jult.org

Remember to "Like" us on



Seasonal Progression

How fortunate we are to have a quiet and natural escape from the world of this pandemic. While we are all doing our best to “social distance” and stay safe, we can meander paths, stroll fields and observe the slightest variations in our seasons. We notice the profusion of summer wildflowers such as Black-eyed Susans, wild phlox, and daisies, slowly relinquishing their hold to the Fall Goldenrod and bright purple asters. Birds also become quieter as the breeding season is over and some have already left for their global migration. The lush greens of an almost tropical summer become muted and give way to the exploding autumn colors that transform our rural landscape. Each season is celebrated completely for itself but the expectation of the next period delights us as well. This natural rhythm from summer into fall is reassuring. The ritual of seasonal transition is comforting... especially now. Some things have not changed, and we have the opportunity to experience this first hand. How fortunate we are.

YOU ARE INVITED!

This event is on our calendar but subject to COVID-19 guidelines. Please check our website at www.jult.org and Facebook page for any updates. September 19th, 2020 10 a.m. to 12-noon • Mills Riverside Park - Who better to help us explore the diverse habitats and autumn wildflowers of the park than Liz Thompson? She is the Director of Conservation Science for the Vermont Land Trust and co-author of *Wetland, Woodland, Wild-land: A Guide to the Natural Communities of Vermont*. Liz also helped start Vermont's Natural Heritage program that protects fragile natural areas. In addition, Liz also teaches field botany and plant ecology at the University of Vermont. Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about the natural world around us.



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Thanks to members like you, JULT has conserved well over 2000 acres within our community. These properties encompass rare wildlife habitat and ancient cairns (The Wolfrun Natural Area), a traditional sliding hill (Casey's Hill), farmland and forest (Kikas Valley Farm), a community park with multiple wildlife habitats (Mills Riverside Park), and acres of privately owned land, which includes the Barber Farm. Soon, we look forward to adding the Tomasi Meadow to our list of achievements. JULT is an all-volunteer, membership based non-profit with your membership contribution having a direct impact on our work. We thank you for every donation and ask that you continue your support.

At the heart of land conservation is the Conservation Easement. Here is an explanation about what a conservation easement is which is taken from our Spring JULT newsletter in 2011. Several land conservation projects have taken place since then.

How Do Land Trusts Conserve Land?

The mission of a land trust is to permanently conserve important land. This is accomplished by working with landowners and the broader community. The most traditional tool for conserving land is called a “conservation easement”. The conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust that permanently limits uses of the land, primarily development, in order to protect the property's special conservation values. These restrictions remain with the land and apply to all subsequent landowners. This is why land trusts describe property as permanently conserved. The land trust that “holds” the easement is responsible for ensuring year after year that the restrictions within the conservation easement are being followed. The Jericho Underhill Land Trust often partners with the Vermont Land Trust so that the larger organization holds the easement.

The language of a conservation easement is carefully crafted between the landowner and the land trust to make sure it reflects the landowner's wishes and protects the property's most important conservation values. An easement on property containing rare wildlife habitat might prohibit any development (Wolfrun Natural Area) while an easement on a farm (the Barber Farm) might allow continued farming and the addition of agricultural structures. An easement may apply to all or a portion of the property, and need not require public access.

A landowner may sell a conservation easement, but easements are often donated to a land trust. The value of a conservation easement is determined by a qualified appraiser who establishes the highest selling price for the land, usually through



development, and what the land would be worth without that right. The difference between the two numbers is the value of the conservation easement. If the donation benefits the public by permanently protecting important conservation resources, and meets other federal tax code requirements, it can qualify as a tax-deductible charitable donation. The conservation easement is an established tool for permanent land protection. Sometimes there is a lot of confusion about the term “conserved” as it is used broadly. For example, real estate advertisements may proclaim that a house sits by “conserved” land or include “preserve” or “conservation” in a development's name. There is the general perception that public lands owned by the town, the university, and the federal government are conserved just because they are undeveloped and allow public access. These properties would include Mobbs Farm, the University of Vermont Research Forest, and the Range). In fact many parcels that are assumed to be “conserved”, even if they are described as “open space” on town planning charts...are not at all. Some may believe that zoning regulations are sufficient to restrict development. This is not the case. Residents of Jericho and Underhill can be assured that all the work that JULT does results in permanent land conservation and we look forward to many more opportunities.