

## Winter Fun

It takes a village to raise a child and it often takes a community to permanently conserve land. Casey's Hill, famed sledding hill for generations and a scenic gateway to Mt. Mansfield, is a prime example. It took the enthusiastic collaboration of the landowner, two land trusts, the Town of Underhill, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and hundreds of private donations to make conservation happen. Thanks to this outpouring of support at a critical time, Casey's Hill will always be available for the simple pleasures of winter fun and provide an outstanding scenic view. Although the effort to permanently conserve



Phyl Newbeck

*Sledding on Casey's Hill.*

land requires the dedicated effort of JULT along with a conservation-minded community, the end result

can be quite simple...the delighted squeal of a youngster sliding down a hillside of snow.

## Kikas Valley Farm in Winter

The long and orderly strawberry rows lie quietly under a coat of mulch hay and snow. Acres of harvested fields wait patiently for spring. Canada geese and deer have scrubbed this land of fallen corn well before the first snow. Winter is a good time for the soil to rest and wait. Only the occasional cross country skier or snowshoer slices a crisp, white trail across this frigid landscape.

But while the farm land sleeps, winter is the best time for forest work. The frozen ground provides an excellent surface for trees to be

felled and carefully removed. This year an over mature stand of white pines will be selectively cut. Wildlife will benefit by several "patch cut" openings that create berry browse in the warmer months. With the tree canopy opened, fruit and nut producing trees such as black cherry and the American beech will receive more light, a critical ingredient for their health. Many wildlife species such as Black bear, deer, and turkey will enjoy the increased bounty of food.

Spring brings the renewal of agrarian activity, first with the composting of

soil, then the tilling, and then the planting of new crops. A new season has begun. Delicate strawberry flowers poke through their protective cover. The forest is quiet; a herd of deer survey the emerging green.

### *Kikas Valley Farm... where is it?*

Take Skunk Hollow Road in Jericho, Vermont. Turn onto Tyler Place. Park at small area on left with the Kikas Valley Farm sign.

# JULT Applauds Renewal of Conservation Tax Incentive

Congress recently renewed a tax incentive for private landowners who protect their land with a voluntary conservation easement agreement. The incentive, which had expired at the end of 2009, helped JULT work with willing landowners in our community to conserve hundreds of acres of meadow and forested areas between 2006 and 2009.

Conservation-minded landowners now have until December 31, 2011 to take advantage of a significant tax deduction for donating a

voluntary conservation agreement to permanently protect important natural or historic resources on their land. When landowners donate a conservation easement, they maintain ownership and management of their land and can sell or pass the land on to their heirs, while foregoing future development rights.

The enhanced incentive applies to a landowner's federal income tax. It:

- Raises the deduction a donor can take for donating a voluntary conservation

agreement from 30% of their income in any year to 50%;

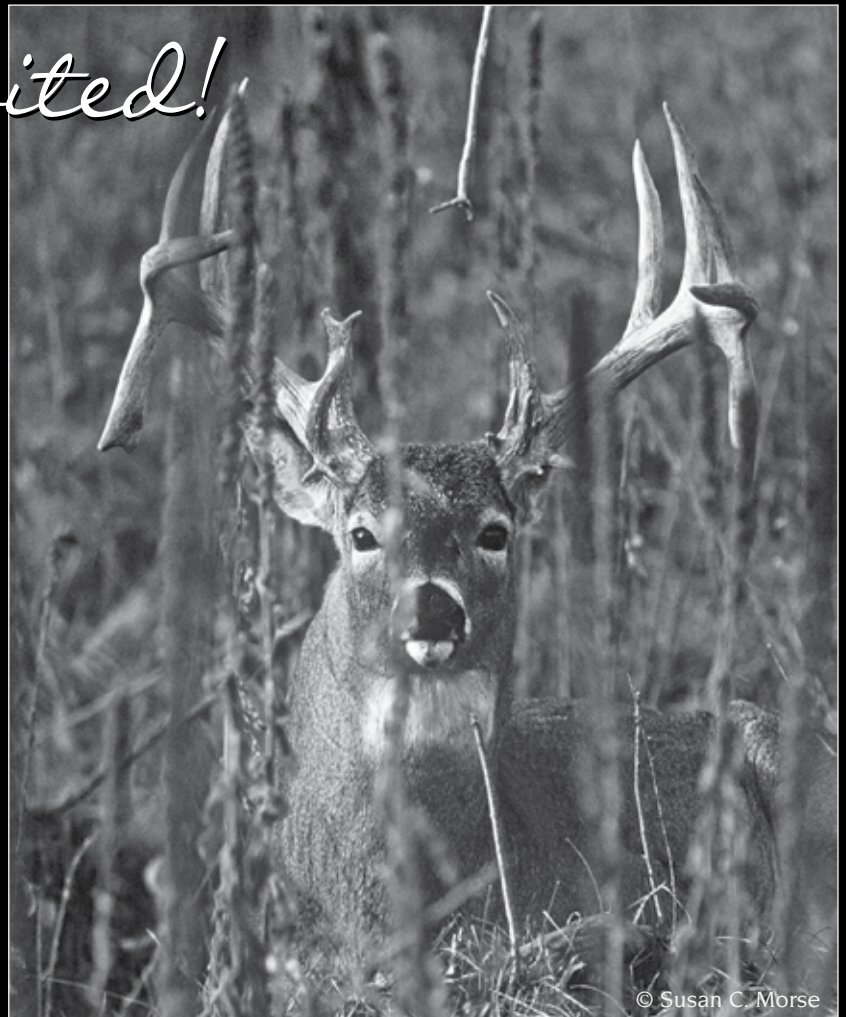
- Allows farmers and ranchers to deduct up to 100% of their income; and
- Increases the number of years over which a donor can take deductions from 6 to 16 years.

Conservation easement agreements have become an important tool nationally for protecting our watersheds, farms and forests, increasing the pace of private land conservation by a third – to over a million acres a year. JULT joins America's 1,700 land trusts and their two million supporters in thanking Congress for making this important conservation tool available.

## You're Invited!

Please put the evening of **May 9, 2011** on your calendar for JULT's Annual Meeting at Underhill Town Hall and an exceptional presentation by renowned wildlife expert and tracker **Susan Morse** as our guest speaker. Her photography is breathtaking, her experience unparalleled. Learn fascinating information about the deer of North America including whitetail deer, mule deer, moose, elk and caribou. Travel with Susan Morse throughout the northeast, The Rocky Mountain west and arctic Canada as she films these magnificent animals. Our evening will begin with refreshments at 6:30 PM, followed by a short business meeting and Sue Morse's presentation. Bring your friends and neighbors, all are invited.

For more information, call JULT at 899-2693.



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# Strategic Conservation Plan

The Jericho Underhill Land Trust has a broad conservation mission which includes protecting our community's working landscape (farm and forest), scenic vistas and important wildlife habitats. Our land protection efforts over the past eleven years have been diverse, reflecting this expansive mission. Some examples include the popular Mills Riverside Park, the remote and rugged Wolfrun Natural Area, spectacular Casey's Hill, and productive Kikas Valley Farm and the Barber Farm.

Right now, JULT is preparing for the next ten years of land protection. We need to be positioned and ready for any conservation opportunity. JULT also needs to work proactively within our community to identify vulnerable wildlife habitats and corridors, important natural areas and working landscape. To this end, JULT board member Trevor Squirrell has created a sub-committee to develop a strategic conservation plan. Over the last several years the Jericho and Underhill Conservation Commissions

have been working with a wildlife consultant to inventory important natural areas. This data is significant and can help JULT prioritize our conservation efforts. As chair of the Underhill Conservation Commission and member of the planning commission, Trevor is uniquely suited to gather all new information about our towns' wildlife and natural areas. A strategic conservation plan will better prepare JULT to carry out our broad conservation mission well into the future.

# Did You Know?



JULT HAS CONSERVED OVER **1,500** ACRES SO FAR AND COUNTING.

JULT OWNS, MANAGES AND PAYS TAXES ON 683 ACRES OF LAND.  
ALL PROPERTIES HAVE **PUBLIC ACCESS**.

JULT **DEPENDS ON ITS MEMBERSHIP** FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT.  
WE RECEIVE NO OTHER FUNDING.

EXPECT A SPECTACULAR, IN DEPTH ARTICLE ABOUT THE **BARBER FARM** IN THE SUMMER 2011 ISSUE OF *VERMONT LIFE*.

JULT IS **ALWAYS INTERESTED** IN VOLUNTEER HELP. JUST CONTACT US OR FILL OUT THE BACK PANEL OF THIS NEWSLETTER AND RETURN.

JULT HAS A FACEBOOK PAGE AND WE ARE **UPDATING OUR WEBSITE**.



## Remember to "Like" JULT on Facebook!



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## Help protect our future landscape...**TODAY**



**Please note:** All JULT memberships now run from May 1 to May 1 of the following year.

### 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!)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Other considerations:

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

### Please contact me regarding:

- Conservation options for my land.
- Making a gift of stock
- Including JULT in my will
- Other planned giving opportunities

- Volunteer opportunities:
  - \_\_\_ Fundraising/Events
  - \_\_\_ Office/Administration
  - \_\_\_ Trails/Land Stewardship

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](http://www.jult.org). All contributions are tax-deductible.



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