

MAD RIVER WATERSHED CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP 2008 Report

The Mad River Watershed Conservation Partnership is a coalition of the Mad River Valley Planning District, Vermont Land Trust and the Friends of the Mad River. The mission of the Conservation Partnership is to identify critical conservation resources and assist willing landowners, organizations and communities in protecting and strengthening the Mad River Valley's watershed, ecological health, rural character, recreational opportunity and community vitality.

In 2008, the Conservation Partnership focused on the following projects:

Moretown Forestland Protected:

In April 2008, the Vermont Land Trust received a conservation easement on 81 acres of forestland located east of the elementary school and owned by the Town of Moretown and the Moretown School District. Identified as an important deer wintering area, the land is used by children for educational programs and features public recreational trails for hiking, biking and skiing.

Gateways to the Mad River Valley - A Two Farm Campaign:

The Conservation Partnership is currently working to conserve and renew two highly scenic Valley farms: the 20.2 acre Kingsbury Farm on the Warren/Waitsfield line near the green bridge and the 102 acre Bruce Farm on Route 100B in Moretown, .5 miles from Route 2. The conservation of these farms by the Vermont Land Trust will help protect the scenic, agricultural, and ecological values of the land and increase locally-grown food.

The Kingsbury Farm:

Following the Vermont Land Trust's purchase of the Kingsbury Farm in November 2007, the Conservation Partnership worked with a local advisory committee to solicit ideas for future uses of the farm and identify prospective buyers. In June 2008, the Vermont Foodbank was selected to be the next owner of the farm. The sale and transfer of the farm is projected for March 2009, pending final fundraising. The Vermont Land Trust is currently looking for donors to complete this unique project: the first Foodbank-owned farm in Vermont. The public will be welcome to volunteer on the farm to help the Foodbank fight hunger and enjoy an extension of the Mad River Path along the river.

Grants from the Warren Conservation Reserve Fund and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board provided early funding. We thank the Kingsbury family for helping transform their family farm into such a valuable community resource.

The Bruce Farm- Moretown:

The Conservation Partnership is also working to conserve and renew the 102 acre Bruce Farm located on Route 100B in Moretown. This historic farm includes significant frontage along the Mad River, prime agricultural soils and forestland. Purchase by new farmers who plan to establish a farmstand featuring produce, poultry, eggs, and grass-fed beef is slated for March 2009 pending successful local fundraising.

Please join the Mad River Watershed Conservation Partnership in the “Two Farm Campaign” to establish new sources of locally-grown food in the Mad River Valley. Visit the Vermont Land Trust at www.vlt.org to learn more or contact Liza Walker at 496-3690. Contributions can be sent to VLT, 8 Bailey Avenue, Montpelier, VT 05602. Please note that your gift is for the Mad River Fund. Gifts are tax deductible. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted by:

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Jared Cadwell, Chair, Mad River Valley Planning District Steering Committee
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Kingsbury Farm

Photo courtesy of Liza Walker