

**THE MAD RIVER WATERSHED
CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP
2010 Annual Report**

The Mad River Conservation Partnership brings together the vision and expertise of the **Vermont Land Trust**, **Friends of the Mad River**, and the **Mad River Valley Planning District** to conserve land important to the Mad River Valley's landscape and community.

2011 will mark the 10th year of the Conservation Partnership, which was established in 2001 to coordinate and strengthen efforts to protect the Valley's working farms and forests, wildlife habitat, ecological resources and recreational lands. More than 44 conservation projects have been completed in this region, resulting in the conservation of 9,550 acres, approximately 18% of the Valley's open, productive land, and roughly 9% of the Valley's forestland.

In June 2010, the Vermont Land Trust completed the conservation of the 40 acre Santa Davida farm, a diversified organic vegetable and berry farm operated by David Hartshorn. The purchase of a conservation easement on the farm facilitated the transfer of this land to David and will ensure that the farm remains available and affordable for agricultural uses for generations to come.

The Hartshorn conservation project was made possible with funding from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, the Waitsfield Restroom, Recreation and Conservation Fund, private donations, and a generous donation from Paul and Marie Hartshorn.

In the past ten years, the Conservation Partnership has assisted Valley municipalities with the acquisition and conservation of land that is important to the public. In 2010, Vermont Land Trust has worked with Moretown to conserve 35 acres of forestland co-owned by the town and School Board. This land adjoins 81 acres of public land conserved by the town and school board in 2008.

A focus of the Conservation Partnership's work continues to be with families and individuals in the Mad River Valley. These landowners who operate the farms and steward forests, rivers and streams, trails and wildlife habitat have the greatest capacity to shape the future of our community and landscape.

Landowners who donate conservation easements to the Vermont Land Trust on qualifying parcels of land may be eligible for enhanced federal income tax benefits in 2011. Please contact Liza Walker at 496-3690 or stop by Conservation Partnership's office in the General Wait House to learn how to conserve the land you care about and protect the places that are vital to the health and future of our community.



Vermont Yak Company yaks grazing on the conserved Hartshorn farm.

(Photo: VLT)

Respectfully submitted by:

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