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P.O. Box 424, North Conway NH 03860 • (603) 356-9683 • usvlt@ncia.net

April 1, 2008

Paul Pinkham, Chair  
Conway Conservation Commission  
Town of Conway  
1634 East Main Street  
Center Conway NH 03813

Dear Mr. Pinkham,

Enclosed please find an application from the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust for a grant of \$15,000 from the Conway Conservation Commission in support of the West Side Road Farmland Protection Justin and Julie Hussey Project.

The Land Trust is extremely grateful to Justin and Julie Hussey for the opportunity to protect this historically significant community resource, which advances our mission to ensure that valuable agricultural lands are permanently protected for future generations.

The Board of Directors of the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust sincerely hopes that the Conway Conservation Commission will act favorably on this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas Earle".

Thomas Earle, President

**West Side Road Farmland Protection**  
**Justin and Julie Hussey Project**

**Proposal Summary**

The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust, in partnership with the federal Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP), proposes to purchase a conservation easement on 75 acres of the Justin and Julie Hussey property on West Side Road in Conway, N.H. The Land Trust has successfully negotiated a farmland protection easement with Justin and Julie Hussey, which will preserve these historically significant farmlands for the benefit of future generations. Without permanent protection, the Hussey property is likely to be converted to non-agricultural use by subdivision and development.

In May 2005, the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust received a \$126,000 matching grant from FRPP. The purpose of the FRPP is to provide funding for the purchase of easements on private lands with high agricultural value. According to Steve Hundley, former state administrator for FRPP, the farmland in the Saco River floodplain, which includes the Hussey and Kennett properties, has some of the best agricultural soils in New Hampshire.

The Land Trust applied \$69,000 of our FRPP grant to the purchase of the Kennett family conservation easement in September 2006. Building on its West Side Road Farmland Protection initiative, the Land Trust plans to use the balance of \$57,000 to purchase a conservation easement on the Justin and Julie Hussey property, most of which is adjacent to the Kennett family property.

The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust is extremely grateful to the Town of Conway and Conway Conservation Commission for its support of the West Side Road Farmland Protection Kennett Project and respectfully requests \$15,000 in support of the Justin and Julie Hussey Project, another important community initiative to permanently protect these endangered farmlands at the heart of the upper Saco River valley.

**Description of the Organization**

The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust (USVLT) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization founded as a grassroots initiative in the fall of 2000. USVLT works in partnership with local landowners in the watershed of the upper Saco River in New Hampshire and Maine to permanently protect the lands and waters that define our communities and enrich our quality of life. Motivated by the current development pressure in the Mount Washington Valley, the Land Trust was formed to preserve open space, including productive farmlands, for community benefit and to provide a balance to development.

The Land Trust protects open space primarily through the use of conservation easements, which are non-development agreements granted in perpetuity by private landowners to qualified organizations such as USVLT. Each conservation easement is unique, typically requiring months of negotiations between the landowner and USVLT to ensure that the conservation values of the property are protected. Because the terms of an easement must be upheld in perpetuity, USVLT documents the condition of the property when the conservation easement is recorded with an Easement Baseline Documentation Report and monitors the easement annually. If the terms of a conservation easement are violated, USVLT must be prepared to legally defend the easement.

To date, landowners have donated 26 conservation easements to the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust permanently protecting 3,778 acres from development. The organization plans to close on several easements in 2008 and landowners regularly approach the Land Trust with potential new projects. This very substantial activity level clearly demonstrates the need for local land protection in our community.

### **Project Narrative**

One of the biggest challenges our community faces is uncontrolled development, which threatens the rural character and natural setting of the upper Saco River valley. Without permanent protection, the Justin and Julie Hussey property is likely to be converted to non-agricultural use by subdivision and development as evidenced by the development of adjacent properties.

The Town of Conway Master Plan states: “existing farmlands and open spaces in Conway represent some of the key aesthetic elements of the community”. The Master Plan specifically identifies the farmlands on the West Side Road, including the Justin and Julie Hussey property, as important resources to protect from development. Located within the West Side Road Agricultural Historic District, historic land use patterns are still in effect on the property, with cultivated fields along the Saco River intervale. In addition to protecting prime agricultural lands, a conservation easement on the Justin and Julie Hussey property will protect the scenic values of the West Side Road, designated as a scenic road by the Town of Conway, as well as the water quality of the Saco River watershed.

Advancing its mission to ensure that valuable farmland is permanently protected for future generations, the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust, in partnership with the federal Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP), proposes to purchase a conservation easement on 75 acres of the Justin and Julie Hussey property on West Side Road in Conway, N.H. The purpose of the FRPP is to provide funding for the purchase of conservation easements on private lands with high agricultural value. According to Steve Hundley, former state administrator of the FRPP, the Justin Hussey property has some of the best agricultural soils in New Hampshire.

The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust is extremely grateful to Justin and Julie Hussey for the opportunity to permanently protect this important community resource. By granting a conservation easement to the Land Trust, the Husseys are able to continue to own and farm the land, which has been in continuous agricultural use since the original land grant to Thomas Merrill in 1765, while realizing significant income to fund their current farming endeavors. With their undergraduate degrees in agriculture from the University of New Hampshire and their commitment to farming, Justin and Julie Hussey represent the future of farming in the Mount Washington Valley.



***Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), which grows in the fertile floodplain soils of the Hussey property***

In May 2005, the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust received a \$126,000 matching grant from the FRPP to purchase conservation easements on lands with important agricultural soils. The Land Trust applied \$69,000 of the FRPP grant to the purchase of the Kennett conservation easement in September 2006. Building on its West Side Road Farmland Protection initiative, the Land Trust plans to use the balance of \$57,000 to purchase a conservation easement on the Justin Hussey property, which is adjacent to the Kennett family property. In January 2008, Browning Valuation

Services determined the value of the conservation easement to be \$118,000. Justin and Julie Hussey have agreed to contribute \$31,500 as a reduction in sales price, which is the 25% maximum allowed under FRPP guidelines, as well as \$2,000 in appraisal costs. The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust must contribute \$31,500 plus land transaction and stewardship costs including: drafting and negotiating the terms of the conservation easement; an Easement Baseline Documentation Report; a survey of the property; legal costs; and stewardship of the conservation easement in perpetuity.

The Land Trust has set a fundraising goal of \$41,000 for the balance of the acquisition costs of the Justin and Julie Hussey conservation easement. In addition to the Conway Conservation Commission, we plan to request support from our contributing members and local foundations.

The Upper Saco Valley Land Trust is extremely grateful to the Town of Conway and Conway Conservation Commission for its support of the West Side Road Farmland Protection Kennett Project and respectfully requests \$15,000 in support of the Justin and Julie Hussey Project, another important community initiative to permanently protect these endangered farmlands at the heart of the upper Saco River valley.

**Upper Saco Valley Land Trust  
West Side Road Farmland Protection  
Hussey Project Budget**

<b>Income</b>	<b>FRPP</b>	<b>Hussey</b>	<b>CCC</b>	<b>HCF</b>	<b>DCF</b>	<b>USVLT</b>	<b>PF</b>	
Farm and Ranchland Protection Program	\$57,000							
Landowner Contribution		\$31,500						
Conway Conservation Commission			\$15,000					
Ham Charitable Foundation				\$10,000				
Davis Conservation Foundation					\$10,000			
USVLT Contribution						\$4,000		
Pequawket Foundation							\$2,000	
<b>Total income</b>	<b><u>\$129,500</u></b>	<b><u>\$57,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$31,500</u></b>	<b><u>\$15,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$4,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$2,000</u></b>
<b>Expenses</b>								
Appraised conservation easement value	\$118,000	\$57,000	\$29,500	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000		\$1,500
Appraisal	\$2,000		\$2,000					
Survey	\$2,000			\$2,000				
Stewardship	\$3,000			\$3,000				
Staff costs	\$2,500						\$2,000	\$500
Legal costs	\$1,000						\$1,000	
Fundraising	\$500						\$500	
Overhead	\$500						\$500	
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b><u>\$129,500</u></b>	<b><u>\$57,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$31,500</u></b>	<b><u>\$15,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$4,000</u></b>	<b><u>\$2,000</u></b>

**Budget notes:**

Browning Valuation Services determined the value of the Hussey conservation easement to be \$118,000 in January 2008.