

# Clay Brook Wetlands & Farmland



UVLT has negotiated a contract to purchase a conservation easement on 50 acres of farmland and wetland located on both sides of Route 10, north of the intersection with North Thetford Road, in Lyme, NH. This very scenic parcel also has outstanding ecological values.

## About Conservation Along Clay Brook:

The Connecticut River and its tributaries have been a focus of the Upper Valley Land Trust for many years. In the late 1990s, UVLT led a successful initiative to conserve land along Grant Brook and create a popular trail link from the Lyme Elementary School to the confluence at the River Road bridge. A few years later, we conserved 125 acres and over a mile of Clay Brook frontage north of Pushee Falls.

Our current project extends conservation upstream along Clay Brook and will add another half mile of conserved stream frontage linking to the Town-owned Chaffee Sanctuary.

Most of this property has been used as cropland; there are about 40 acres of farm soils ranked as “statewide important.” The balance of the property is wetland and wetland-associated uplands, ranked as the highest quality in their ecological region by the state Wildlife Action Plan. This initiative is supported by the Lyme Conservation Commission and also furthers state and federal conservation goals.

## About the Upper Valley Land Trust:

UVLT is a nonprofit conservation organization whose mission is to help individuals and communities protect treasured natural resources. Founded in 1985, UVLT focuses its mission in 45 Vermont and New Hampshire towns in the upper Connecticut River valley.

Working directly with landowners who voluntarily choose to conserve their land, UVLT has protected over 460 properties encompassing more than 45,000 acres. These include working farms, shoreline and wetlands, wildlife habitat, scenic areas, and recreational lands.

## Conservation Solutions for the Places You Love

- More than 1/2 mile of frontage on Clay Brook
- Protects riparian buffer connecting to Chaffee Sanctuary and over 125 acres conserved downstream
- 40 acres of productive agricultural soil
- A mile of scenic frontage on Route 10, Whipple Hill Road and North Thetford Road
- Protects land above aquifer resources
- Contains sites of historic mill and schoolhouse
- Supported by major grants from the US Department of Agriculture and the NH Department of Environmental Services
- Priority of Lyme Conservation Commission

All photos by Elizabeth Kilmarx

**Conservation Easements** are a powerful permanent legal agreement that specifies how a property can be used and developed no matter who owns the land in the future. The conserved land can remain in private ownership, used for farming and forestry or as open space and natural areas. UVLT is responsible for upholding the conservation easement terms forever and maintains an endowment fund to provide for inspection and enforcement.

Conservation easements may be sold or donated to a land trust; they can also be sold for less than their fair market value in a charitable transaction known as a “bargain sale.” The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and other public agencies provide grants to land trusts for the purchase of conservation easements and maintain appraisal standards for how fair market value is to be determined.

### About the Conservation Transaction:

The value of the conservation easement has been appraised at \$438,000. The owner has agreed to a “bargain sale” price of \$361,000 (a 17% discount). Grants to support the purchase of the conservation easement have been awarded by USDA and by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (Aquatic Resources Mitigation Program). The NH grant will fully cover the legal, endowment and management costs. Both agencies have conducted rigorous reviews of the conservation resources on the property and have approved the appraisal and other transaction documents.

The Lyme Conservation Commission has approved a \$15,000 expenditure from the town’s Conservation Fund.

The UVLT has undertaken a campaign to raise the remaining \$37,500 needed to complete the project before a federal deadline of March 31, 2015.



<b>Project Cost:</b>	
Purchase of	
Cons. Easement	\$361,000
Contract Services	15,250
Stewardship Endow.	10,000
Project Management	<u>13,750</u>
Total	\$400,000
<b>Funds Raised:</b>	
USDA grant	\$219,000
NH DES grant	39,000
Local gifts and grants	82,000
Lyme Conservation Fund	15,000
Lyme Foundation	<u>2,500</u>
Total	\$362,500
<b>Remaining to be raised:</b>	<b>\$37,500</b>



### YOU CAN HELP!

Make your gift payable to:  
 Upper Valley Land Trust  
 19 Buck Road  
 Hanover, NH 03755

or make a secure online contribution at:  
[www.UVLT.org](http://www.UVLT.org)