



# Vermont Land Trust

CONSERVING LAND FOR THE FUTURE OF VERMONT

## WAYS OF GIVING

Year after year, the Vermont Land Trust works to conserve the lands that matter most to Vermont's heritage. Our successful efforts to help keep open lands open, and productive lands productive, create long-term benefits for all of Vermont. The choices you can make to support the Vermont Land Trust offer you the same chance to make a lasting, positive difference for this state we love.

Our work is made possible by the generosity of thousands of VLT members and supporters. You can choose to support the Vermont Land Trust in many different ways, on an annual and/or a long-term basis—including bequests, lifetime planned gifts, and gifts of cash, land, and securities. Along with greatly assisting the work of VLT, *the method of giving you choose may offer significant financial benefits to you and your family.*

Having worked with supporters to complete approximately 100 planned gifts over the past 29 years; the Vermont Land Trust has experience with all these tools. We can help you explore the options for making your gift simple and advantageous, both for your family and VLT. Working together, knowing the benefits of good planning and the tax advantages of the available choices, we can help you maximize the positive impacts of your gift.

Please talk with us. We also recommend that you discuss any planned gift with your attorney, accountant, and/or other financial advisors. Here is a brief introduction to the most common options for giving and the advantages they offer:

**Cash** is the simplest and most common way to support VLT's annual work or its capital needs. You may make a one-time contribution or make a pledge over two or three years. *Your gift will be tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.* If you have decided to make a cash gift, please send your check, payable to Vermont Land Trust, 8 Bailey Avenue, Montpelier, VT 05602. If you would like to pay your gift over a number of years, please let us know if you would appreciate reminders for your future gifts.

**Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and other publicly traded securities** are easily donated, and can often provide you with exceptional tax savings. When you donate appreciated securities to VLT, you will usually receive the benefit of a fair-market value income tax deduction, and *your gift will be exempt from capital gains tax.* Please check with your financial advisor before deciding on the best way to make a gift of this type and call Dawn Lee Minter at (802) 262-1214 for information that will make giving easy for you and your broker. *Note:* In order to realize potential tax benefits, you should donate securities directly to VLT, rather than selling them yourself and giving VLT the proceeds.

**Gifts of Land.** Although many charities hesitate to accept donated real estate, the Vermont Land Trust is delighted to accept gifts of land. If the property you give has conservation value, *you will receive a tax deduction for its unrestricted value.* This will maximize your charitable income tax deduction. In these cases, VLT will place a conservation easement on the land before it is sold, and then allocate the sale proceeds to benefit our work.

**Giving Land While Continuing to Live On It.** If you are a landowner, *you can donate your land and continue to live on it.* This is known as a gift of remainder interest, or a gift of land with a “reserved life estate.” After you die, full title of the property automatically transfers to VLT. In most cases, the Land Trust will sell the land after protecting it with a permanent conservation easement.

A remainder interest gift usually *entitles you to an income tax deduction* for the “present value” of VLT’s remainder interest. Also, the land is not subject to estate taxation. You continue to enjoy the property during your lifetime, and you have the satisfaction of knowing your land will pass to good hands in the future. To increase the income tax benefit, you should combine a donation of a conservation easement with a gift of remainder interest to VLT.

**Other personal property and tangible gifts.** These gifts can be a wonderful opportunity for both you and the Vermont Land Trust. Provided VLT used the item as part of its exempt purpose, *a donation of tangible personal property can usually be deducted at its full market value*, and may be exempt from capital gains tax. An appraisal may be necessary, so please discuss this with us.

**Life income gifts.** Many donors find that a “retained life income gift,” such as a charitable remainder trust or a charitable gift annuity, is the most appropriate way to support the work of an organization they care about. Such gifts can provide you and/or your beneficiary with income for life, while creating significant income tax and estate tax benefits *and* providing a major benefit to the Vermont Land Trust.

Similarly, creation of a charitable lead trust provides income for the Vermont Land Trust over a term of years, after which the assets in the trust pass (at a reduced estate tax cost) to individual beneficiaries of your choice. Charitable lead trusts are typically for individuals with large estates, and do not generate income for the donor.

*We can calculate the tax benefits and amount of income and you would receive* for a specific gift, or we can work with your advisor to discover the best way for your gift to benefit both VLT and your financial goals.

**Retirement Accounts.** Many people today discover that some of their greatest assets are in their retirement accounts. They also learn that passing these assets on to their heirs can burden the beneficiaries with significant income taxes and sometimes even estate taxes, which can consume as much as seventy-five percent of the retirement account. Naming VLT as the beneficiary of a portion of your retirement accounts can help you to make a significant future contribution, ensure that your beneficiaries receive the maximum value from the funds you pass on to them, *and* maintain your current financial security.

**New Benefit for IRA Gifts in 2006-7.** Under the 2006 Pension Protection Act, Congress has allowed donors who are 70.5 years of age or older to make gifts from IRA or Roth IRA accounts without having the distributions recognized as taxable income. The change is applicable only to distributions made in 2006 and 2007. Gifts are limited to \$100,000 per tax year, and must be made directly to the charity by the account administrator. For further information, contact VLT or your IRA administrator.

**Life Insurance.** You can name VLT as the beneficiary of your life insurance policy, and/or you can transfer ownership of the policy to the Vermont Land Trust during your lifetime. *These gifts avoid estate taxation* on the life insurance death benefit after your passing—and they may, in some cases, create a present income tax deduction as well.

**Bequests.** We ask you to consider the opportunity to make a lasting gift to conservation through a bequest in your will or living trust. Such gifts are fully deductible for estate tax purposes. You have the option to designate the use of funds from your bequest.

**The most important outcomes of planning your gift to the Vermont Land Trust are that**

- **you accomplish your goal of supporting an effective organization;**
- **you help us protect important conservation lands; and**
- **you find the most advantageous way to make your gift meaningful both to you and VLT.**

**To make sure all your goals are achieved, let us discuss your gift with you.** Please contact Annie Crawford, Membership and Outreach Coordinator, by phone: (802) 262-1241 or e-mail: [annie@vlt.org](mailto:annie@vlt.org)

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