



If you've ever driven from Weston to Rutland, you know this place. From an elevation of over 2,000 feet, Route 155 descends rapidly and steadily through two miles of thick forest. Suddenly it makes a wide right turn, and the land opens up on both sides. Rolling fields - some planted with corn, others with clover, others with hay - stretch out to meet the Green Mountains on the left, and on the right, a small dirt road (Maple Hill Road) leads to the village of Belmont.

It's a stunning view, and one that encompasses much of what we love about Vermont: rippling fields of corn and hay, green (or multi-colored) mountainsides, blue sky, peace and quiet. Adjacent to Green Mountain National Forest, this land is a gateway to some of southern Vermont's best hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling territory. This is also some of the richest crop land in Mount Holly.

**Dana Property Facts**  
Address: Route 155, Belmont (Mount Holly), VT



<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Land acquisition costs	\$144,000
Administrative costs	\$ 22,000
<b>Total project costs</b>	<b>\$166,000</b>

<b>INCOME</b>	
Conserved land sale (Seward purchase):	\$ 32,000
Foundation support:	\$ 67,000
MHCT local fundraising:	\$ 67,000

Total Dana acreage to be conserved:	77 acres
Total Freeman-Fiske acreage to be conserved:	40 acres
<b>TOTAL CONSERVED LAND:</b>	<b>117 acres</b>



**The Dana-Seward Farm Conservation Project**

**HELP SAVE THIS FARMLAND**

Ray and Claire Dana have owned this property since the early 1980s, when Ray inherited it and the farm that it was part of from his uncle, Orrin Priest. The fields have been farmed by Mick Seward of East Wallingford since the mid-1980s, although these days he shares the work with his son, Art, and nephew, Dave. Ray and Claire have decided to sell this land, and they'd like to sell it to the Seward family. But in order to preserve it as farmland, we need your help.

Mount Holly Conservation Trust  
PO Box 270  
Belmont, VT 05730

U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Permit No. 1  
Belmont, VT  
05730



## Help The MHCT Save This Land

The Mount Holly Conservation Trust (MHCT) is a group of Mount Holly residents concerned about the rapid pace of development in Mount Holly and the resulting loss of open spaces that have traditionally supported farming, outdoor activities, and a diverse wildlife population. MHCT has joined forces with the Vermont Land Trust in order to raise the money necessary to purchase the land and assure its permanent conservation. The Vermont Land Trust will put a permanent easement in place. This will make it possible for the Swards to buy the land at the agricultural price - and not at the dramatically higher price that this pristine piece of open land would command if it were sold for development.

This project is possible only because the Danas are committed to seeing the land permanently conserved for agricultural purposes, and because the Swards are willing to own, care for, and pay taxes on the property. The conservation of the Dana land is the first, but it will not be the last project of the Mount Holly Conservation Trust.

The Mount Holly Conservation Trust is seeking donations in order to conserve this land.



## Why Conserve this Land?

In addition to protecting one of Mt. Holly's most scenic landscapes from commercial development in perpetuity, a permanent conservation easement on this property would offer the townspeople of Mount Holly many other benefits.

- Conserving this property would help ensure that **one of the last family farms in the area continues operating.** There were 45 dairy farmers in Mount Holly in 1950; by 1985, that number had been reduced to 6. In a recent survey of town residents, family farming was identified as the preferred form of development for Mount Holly by an overwhelming majority of respondents.
- **The Swards do not intend to post the land** thus ensuring access to the adjacent streams and National Forest and ensuring the continued use of this property for fishing, hunting, hiking, and cross-country skiing. (A spur of the VAST Route 7 snowmobile trail runs along the southern property line.)
- As undeveloped farmland and woodland, **this property will continue to provide habitat and passage for wildlife** including deer, moose, bear, red fox, partridge, wild turkey, and owls.
- Conservation of this property would help to **protect against overdevelopment along Route 155** and adjacent to Green Mountain National Forest.
- Under a conservation easement, **the land remains in private hands** - and on the tax rolls of Mt. Holly -- and thus continues to contribute its fair share to the town's coffers.
- Lisa Freeman and John Fiske, owners of the property across Route 155 from the Dana land, have agreed to donate the development rights on approximately 40 acres of their land if a conservation easement is placed on the Dana property. **Thus the total amount of land to be conserved is over 100 acres.**

## The Vermont Land Trust

The Vermont Land Trust (VLT) is a statewide, nonprofit land conservation organization that, for over 25 years, has helped landowners and communities conserve working farms and lands important to local communities. This project is being undertaken under the auspices of their Community Projects program, which seeks to ensure that locally significant land retains its traditional character by protecting its scenic natural or historic qualities. Since its inception, VLT has helped to protect over 413,000 acres, including 600 operating farms, in Vermont.

The Vermont Land Trust is partnering with the Mount Holly Conservation Trust to raise the funds necessary to conserve this land. Because VLT is a 501(3)(c), contributions to the Vermont Land Trust are wholly tax deductible. VLT is also seeking foundation support on behalf of the Mount Holly Conservation Trust.

### MHCT STEERING COMMITTEE

Pete Doolittle	John Fiske
Lisa Freeman	Annette Lynch
Joan McCallum	Candace Neary
Jim Seward	Andy Tanger
Marcy Tanger	Dick Tilton

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes! I want to conserve the Dana-Seward farmland.**  
Enclosed is a check for

\_\_\_\_\_ \$500      \_\_\_\_\_ \$100

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50      \_\_\_\_\_ \$25      \_\_\_\_\_ other

**Yes! I am interested in other conservation projects in Mount Holly.**  
Please put me on your mailing list.

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to Vermont Land Trust and mail to MHCT, PO Box 270, Belmont, VT 05730. VLT is a 501(3)(c) tax exempt organization and all contributions are tax deductible.

For more information, please call (802) 259-3615.