

This example can be used as a starting point to create a policy or other document for your own land trust, but should be altered as necessary to reflect your organization's unique circumstances using guidance found in the *Land Trust Standards and Practices Guidebook* text and corresponding Standards and Practices Curriculum.

**Please Note:** If you are using this material for accreditation purposes, see also [the Land Trust Accreditation Commission website](#) for additional information. To search for policies from accredited land trusts, insert <<accredited>> along with the search term (e.g., conflict interest policy accredited).

## Vermont Land Trust Mission & Outcomes Statements

### **Mission:**

The mission of the Vermont Land Trust is to conserve land for the future of Vermont.

### **Outcomes:**

The principal objective of VLT is to conserve lands that support, enhance, or contribute to the vitality of the communities and economy of Vermont.

- Communities as defined here include people, wildlife, buildings and land.
- Economy as defined here means local, land-based enterprises, especially agriculture and forestry.
- Their vitality derives from diversity, innovation, equity, opportunity and mutually beneficial relationships.

VLT seeks to support settlement patterns:

- That give residents a sense of place, heritage and continuity.
- Where villages and community centers strive to retain the open space that surround and define them.
- Within which people derive a physical and spiritual connection to the natural world.

VLT seeks to support enterprises which:

- Promote thrifty, responsible long-term productive use of land.
- Advance value-added products from our local farm and forest resources.
- Foster connections and communication between producers and consumers.

The following principals influence VLT's farmland conservation choices:

- VLT's primary focus is on the conservation of owner-operated family farms on which there is an active, working relationship between the owners, animals, crops and land, and which contribute to a community's sense of place and continuity. VLT will also promote continued owner-operator status when conserved farms are transferred.

- Size alone should not limit the conservation candidacy of any farm, either in parcel size or the scale of the current or planned farm enterprise. Nor should the type of agricultural product limit that candidacy.
- VLT will proactively prospect for small and moderate sized viable farm operations, farms that have close connections with communities and consumers, and farms that help diversify Vermont's agricultural economy. VLT will incubate new tools to better serve the goal of land conservation in this farm sector.
- High quality soil is one asset among many that support long term farm viability. Other factors include farm location, farm infrastructure and farm management. VLT will seek to conserve farms with productive agricultural soils sufficient in size and configuration to support viable agricultural enterprises of various types and scales. VLT will also seek to conserve farms in locations and with management and infrastructure conducive to economic viability.

VLT will give priority to projects that benefit the communities and economy of Vermont. However, this statement shall not limit the prerogative of VLT's President to accept donations of conservation easements on lands with significant resource values. Further, VLT's president will have the prerogative to spend up to 20% of the organization's resources to:

- Undertake projects that benefit wildlife habitat or public health, maintain scenic quality, and/or provide recreational opportunities, even when such values are not directly and substantially connected to economy or community
- Participate in conservation initiatives when the organization is uniquely equipped or prepared to act in service of statewide public objectives.

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<sup>o</sup> This material is designed to provide accurate, authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is provided with the understanding that the Land Trust Alliance is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional counsel. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of competent professionals should be sought.