



SACO VALLEY LAND TRUST

**PRESERVING LAND IN THE LOWER
SACO RIVER VALLEY SINCE 1988**

SPRING 2009

SACOVALLEYLANDTRUST.ORG

This issue of the SVLT Newsletter provides some valuable information about our Biddeford holdings and how you may use them. Although we are not a “trails” organization most of these properties have old woods roads or, at the least, flagged boundaries that can be the start of a “woods ramble”. These small gems contain a range of typical Southern Maine habitat: forested wetlands, shady brooks, mixed hardwood upland, vernal pools, cool pine woods. Bring your compass or GPS, a map from our website, and expectations of an unstructured exploration of “Wild York County”.

AG SHOW RAMBLING

As usual, in January I ventured to Augusta a few weeks back for the Maine Agricultural Trade Show. In addition to kicking the manure spreader tires and ogling the iron displayed on the civic center display floor, I attended a number of programs and discussions centered around food/fiber production.

There's lately a growing interest in “farm-land preservation,” if not “farmer preservation.” Several sessions dealt with evolving experiments in “land tenure” arrangements. The days when a farmer might purchase a farm at “market prices” and pay off the mortgage from farm proceeds are famously over.

The self-described “landless farmer” who led one discussion, confessed that there wasn't a single agricultural crop that could pay for the 45 acre spread he'd been looking at.

There were a few borderline farmer-geezers like me there who either inherited our homesteads or bought them cheap in the 50-bucks-an-acre back-to-the-land period of the 60s and early 70s. But even our precarious operations were based on old equipment, sweat equity, and an acceptance of relative poverty.

For the young and aspiring farmers-to-be

most of the options discussed revolved around some kind of tenant-farmer/ share-cropper / end-less apprentice model, or a purchase of farmland where a land trust held the development rights, thus lowering the speculative value of the farm as potential house sites.

The SVLT, thanks mainly to the generosity and foresight of our late benefactor Mary Merrill, currently holds several such easements on Saco farmland parcels. The terms allow sound management practices, and will hopefully serve to keep such land within the economic reach of future farmers.

With milk currently bringing \$11 while costing over \$20 to produce, and most ag products caught in the same cost/price squeeze, it's not immediately clear that even these “creative” land tenure arrangements are the final solution.

Still, the SVLT board, which includes several farmers, believes we must do what we can to help hold land available for food/fiber production --- just in case we ever come to our societal senses.

Richard Rhames, 2/05/09

SVLT HOLDINGS: BIDDEFORD

LEARN ABOUT OUR EASEMENTS AND PROPERTIES



1. PATOINE DONATION- This parcel is located off Wadlin Rd., being open space in a subdivision and comprising 44.1 acres. It contains wooded upland and several brooks. Significantly, these brooks flow into Meadow Brook which forms part of the back boundary of the property and then into Swan Pond Brook, Biddeford's largest waterway. Highly rated by Maine IF&W for fisheries and riparian habitat, Swan Pond Brook empties into the Saco River just above the water company intake, making the Meadow Brook watershed significant for protecting water quality. Larry Patoiné is also preparing to donate a conservation easement on a small field which adjoins this piece.

2. WOODMAN DONATION- Located within the 1500 acre undeveloped block between Andrews Road and Rte. 111 that is home to the cottontail rabbit and several uncommon plant communities, is a recent donation by the Woodman family of ten acres.

3. TAYLOR ESTATES- This parcel was donated to SVLT as part of a subdivision set-aside and is located on Autumn Lane, off Mountain Rd. There are 28 acres in two pieces of woods and marsh, and it fronts the Maine Turnpike on the back side. No formal parking and no trails.

4. CHAPPELL EASEMENT- This parcel is privately owned; SVLT was given a conservation easement by Arlene Chappell. Located near 10 West Loop Rd., the piece has 4.4 acres of woods, a farm field, and a pond. Please do not use during the growing season.

5. TEABERRY LANE- This parcel was donated to SVLT as part of a subdivision open space and is located off of Proctor Rd. There are 4 +/- acres of ledge outcrop and marsh, extending toward the Great Cranberry Marsh. No trails.

6. LAND STEWARDS DONATION- This parcel was passed on to us by the Arundel Land Stewards when they disbanded. It is located on West St. There are 60 acres of forested wetlands which comprise part of the headwaters of Little River. It is currently being surveyed; boundaries are flagged and people are welcome to wander around-no trails.

7. DAVIS FARM- This parcel is owned by the SVLT and is located off Oakridge Rd. There are 55 acres of fields and forested wetlands. Access is best from the adjoining Moreau Donation (#12). No formal trails.

8. OVERLOOK ESTATES- This parcel is owned by the SVLT through a donation by Tim Powers and is located at the end of Duffy's Way off Rte. 9 near the water tower. There are 17 acres of woods and granite outcrop. No formal trails. Access is off a private road, so please respect the privacy of landowners when visiting.

9. HUFF DONATION- Our latest donation, given to SVLT in 2008 by Kevin and Denise Huff, is a 30 acre parcel off Regina Drive near the Kennebunk line. An uncleared right of way between the stone wall and house at the cul de sac will lead you to a young maple/oak stand that transitions into a more mature softwood stand. Please be considerate of abutting landowners when using this ROW. The brook that snakes through the property presents some challenges to navigating this piece.



10. CHRETIEN DONATION- This parcel is owned by the SVLT, having been donated by James Chretien. It is located off of Guinea Rd. There are 3.5 acres of woods and is part of the Little River headwaters. It has limited access through a common right of way: a development road that is unfinished. There are no trails, but a ramble around the property will lead you to a young red maple forest with displays of heavy moose-feeding activity.

11. SEVIGNY DONATION- This parcel, given to SVLT by members of the Sevigny family, is located on Rte. 9 towards the Kennebunkport line and consists of granite outcrop and woods. Park on the old Rte 9 pull off (SVLT owns a small piece on that side of the road) and walk across the highway and look for our signs. There are no trails but the 6 acres have well-blazed boundaries.

12. MOREAU DONATION- Located at the end of Benson Rd., off West St., there are 8.7 acres with a (sometimes) beaver pond, brook and farm field/early successional forest in this piece. The parcel, given to the Trust by Ben Moreau, abuts the Davis Farm Donation (#7) in the back. There is no formal parking at the end of Benson Rd.. A small trail or wheel road shows the course of a discontinued town road running along the property's southeast sideline. Please do not block street traffic.

All of our properties, except easements, are open for walking, enjoying nature, hunting (with permission of the Trust) and fishing. Please respect the privacy of nearby abutters and park safely. Also, please help us by leaving the site better than you found it (trash in, trash out) and by dropping us a note if you observe anything that concerns you.

For more information go to our website: sacovalleylandtrust.org. There are links to Biddeford GIS maps of each parcel. You may also access maps through biddefordmaine.gov: Search for Saco Valley Land Trust or Saco Land Trust as owner. Seeing the maps at a larger size will help you to determine available access points and potential wet areas. Although most of the property boundaries have recently been flagged, not all are marked with our Land Trust sign. Improvements in our signage and markings is one of the Trust's goals. If you use any of these parcels regularly, you may be interested in aiding our project.

sacovalleylandtrust.org

We Need You!!!!

As we try to make our mission and our properties more well-known around southern Maine, we are always proud of those long-time members who have supported us financially for many years. These are the people who guarantee that the Board can do its job of protecting open spaces. And, of course, we are thrilled when 'new' members come on board, providing new energy and expanded support.!

Our quiet mode of operating does not diminish the very real goal we have of aiding concerned people in their quest to preserve special places, and of being available to accept conservation set-asides. Sometimes these pieces are small, remote, or ordinary-appearing. But imagine the significance they will hold to people 50 years from now in a far more densely populated York County-even more so as one donation quite often attracts another one nearby, building on the size and quality of the preserved habitat.

Some ways to help:

Consider helping as a property monitor

Volunteer for a boundary-marking day

Encourage friends to join

Share our website with your email list

Become a board member or volunteer your skills

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Here's a reminder that your annual membership is what we use for our day-to-day operations. We greatly appreciate your support each year!

Name _____

Address or email _____

Membership Level:

\$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$ _____ (any amount)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

sacovalleylandtrust.org



Saco Valley Land Trust
POB 1581
Saco, Me 04072