



Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department 2016 Wildlife Management Areas Annual Report

The Mission of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department is to **Protect and Conserve** our **Fish, Wildlife, Plants** and their **Habitats** for the **People of Vermont**.

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department manages 90 Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and numerous riverfront parcels totaling more than 135,000 acres. Management of these areas emphasizes the conservation of fish, wildlife and their habitats, as well as public access for hunting, fishing, trapping and other wildlife-based activities. A recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service survey highlights that Vermont ranks second only to Alaska for public participation in fish and wildlife recreation. This report summarizes activities conducted to manage these lands in 2016 (FY16).

Protect and Conserve...

The following activities were conducted to protect and conserve these valuable properties:

- **62** acres received invasive plant control measures
- **0.8** miles of boundary lines were surveyed
- **51** miles of boundary lines were maintained
- **0.5** mile of fence was maintained
- **9** gates were installed or repaired
- **3** beaver wetland devices were installed/maintained

our Fish, Wildlife, Plants...

- **25** inventories of wildlife, fish, plants, and natural communities were conducted on WMAs by Vermont Agency of Natural Resources staff.

and their Habitats...

The following activities were conducted to enhance wildlife habitat on WMAs statewide:

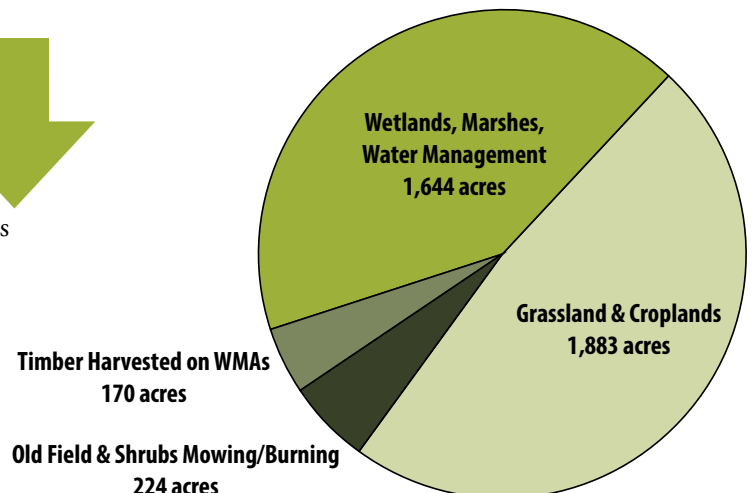
- **40** dams were maintained to manage **1,644** wetland acres
- **47** acres of wetlands were restored by plugging ditches
- **573** nesting boxes for ducks were maintained
- **2,467** trees were planted to restore river bank habitat
- **168** wild fruit and nut trees were maintained
- **17** acres of wild fruit and nut trees were maintained
- **45** acres of herbaceous forage were planted



Photo courtesy of Doug Gimler

The bobolink and other grassland bird species nest on WMAs where delayed haying maintains their critical habitat.

3,921 Acres of Habitat Managed





...for the People of Vermont.

Maintaining facilities and infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and signs is essential to achieve the habitat management and public use goals of each area. The following activities were conducted to improve Vermonters' experience when visiting the state's WMAs:

SIGNAGE

- **32** information kiosks were maintained
- **2** entrance signs were installed

FACILITIES

- **2** buildings were maintained
- **21** parking areas were maintained

PLANNING

- **15** press releases and articles were published
- **2** public planning meetings/events were conducted

ACCESS

- **1** trail mile was maintained
- **4** bridges/culverts were installed
- **1** mile of new access road was constructed
- **34** miles of roads were maintained
- **3** WMAs hosted field study courses for educators, college and high school students

Other program activities benefiting all Vermonters include:

HABITAT STAMP

- Your Vermont Habitat Stamp contributes directly to conserving and improving Vermont Wildlife Management Areas.



Everyone can donate! It's easy at our website:
www.vtfishandwildlife.com/get_involved/donate

LAND ACQUISITION

- The department added **685** acres to four Wildlife Management Areas in 2016. Ten parcels, ranging from 3 to 2,875 acres, are currently in various stages of acquisition. The department anticipates purchasing 7 to 10 of these properties in 2017.

Wildlife Habitat Timber Harvests on Department Lands Fiscal Year 2012-2016

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	5 YEAR TOTALS
Fee acres harvested	244	296	156	149	171	1,016
Board Feet (MBF)	380	574	322	274	571	2,121
Cords	1,722	2,488	1,632	1,109	2,304	9,255
Non-fee acres harvested	200	350	150	250	500	1,450
# Active Timber Harvests	9	10	3	3	4	N/A

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Most of the programs described in this report are funded through the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program. Excise taxes paid by hunters on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment, coupled with state hunting license fees, have helped the department acquire land, and restore and manage wildlife.

The Ruffed Grouse Society, Vermont Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, National Wild Turkey Federation, and Vermont Forests, Parks, and Recreation Department provided financial assistance for habitat management on WMAs in 2016.

