



Most of the programs described in this report are funded through the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program. This program initiated in 1937 as the Federal Aid In Wildlife Act and created a system where by taxes are paid on firearms, ammunition and archery equipement by the public who hunts. Today this excise tax generates over a hundred million dollars each year that are dedicated to state wildlife restoration and management projects across the United States. The State of Vermont use these monies for acquiring land, and for restoring and managing wildlife. These excise tax dollars, coupled with state hunting license fees have been the predominate source of money funding the successful restoration and management of Vermont's wildlife resources.

2008 Vermont Black Bear Harvest Report

Contents

Season Overview	1
Analysis of Harvest	1
Wildlife Management Units	1
Harvest by Sex and Month of Harvest	2
Harvest by Hunting Opportunities	2
Hunting Bears with Dogs	3
2008 Vermont Black Bear Harvest by Town of Kill4-	9



The MISSION of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department is the conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont.

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

Agency of Natural Resources

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2008 Black Bear Report

Season Overview

The Vermont bear season spans from its September 1 opening until the "first Wednesday of deer season." Because of the variable end date, the season length can range between 75 and 81 days. In 2008 the season ended on November 19 for a total of 80 days.

A total of 488 bears were harvested in Vermont during the 2008 hunting season. This is 63 more bears harvested than in 2007 (425) and 38 more than the most recent 5-year average (450). The increase is likely due to the longer season and abundant fall food distribution that increased the odds of hunters seeing bears in the woods late into the fall. A compilation of the harvest by sex of the bear and town of kill is reported in Table 6.

Analysis of Harvest

Wildlife Management Units

The area of a black bear's home range encompasses thousands of acres. Even females, who's home range is less than that of a male's, cover thousands of acres in the course of the year. However, they show a strong fidelity to their home range as it provides the best area to teach cubs how to be adult bears. For this reason, the harvest density of females indicates where the best habitat is likely to be located and how it is linked to other important bear habitat in the state. Figure 1 (right) depicts the cumulative female harvest, by town, for the last five years. By linking several towns together patterns of bear density begin to emerge. It indicates some of the best habitat to be in the Green Mountain and Northeast Kingdom regions of the state. Relatively large areas of forestland, with few roads and people, are features these two areas have in common.

When the bear harvest is examined by wildlife management unit (WMU), it further illustrates that harvest is not uniform across the state and resembles Figure 1 for the same reasons (Table 1). For example, WMU F1 is characterized by Addison County farmland along Lake Champlain. This is not very good bear habitat because there are very few large blocks of forestland. Although there is food available bears do not feel comfortable traveling in open cover to obtain it. Consequently few bears live there and, in 2008, no bears were harvested there. Conversely, WMU N has a lot of undeveloped forestland with few significant highways. The combination of food and protective cover makes this one of the better areas of bear habitat in the state. Correspondingly the density of bears is higher there as is the bear harvest (35, or 1.17 bears/square mile in 2008). The harvest density is reported in units of 10 square miles (6400 acres) to make the magnitude of the harvest easier to discern from one WMU to another.

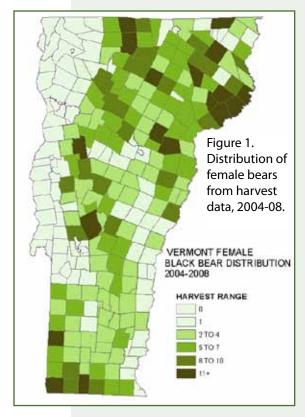


Table	1 200	Q Roar h	arvoct	by say	and WMU.
WMU	Males				Bears/10 Mi ²
		Females	Unk.	Total	
Α	0	0	0	0	0
В	5	4	1	10	0.195
С	31	14	0	45	1.272
D1	30	23	0	53	1.409
D2	24	14	2	40	0.714
E	31	20	1	52	0.863
F1	0	0	0	0	0
F2	3	2	0	5	0.226
G	6	5	0	11	0.303
H1	23	12	1	36	0.913
H2	11	7	0	18	0.993
- 1	20	10	3	33	0.831
J1	7	7	0	14	0.285
J2	21	13	1	35	0.736
K1	0	0	0	0	0
K2	4	0	0	4	0.139
L	7	3	0	10	0.284
M1	5	6	0	11	0.46
M2	4	0	0	4	0.189
N	19	15	1	35	1.171
01	8	6	0	14	0.732
02	5	3	0	8	0.304
Р	27	11	0	38	0.82
Q	5	7	0	12	0.439
Total	296	182	10	488	0.62

			th and Day
Day	September	October	November
1	21	0	5
2	2	4	4
3	3	3	2
4	6	13	1
5	3	8	2
6	4	5	1
7	5	5	4
8	1	3	7
9	3	3	10
10	4	4	1
11	2	12	1
12	3	12	3
14	1	7	0
15	1	5	54
16	1	1	32
17	5	7	24
18	2	15	10
19	1	4	8
20	8	14	X
21	7	2	X
22	7	4	X
23	5	4	X
24	4	9	Х
25	5	12	X
26	0	4	X
27	10	3	X
28	4	2	X
29	3	3	Χ
30	3	11	X
31	Χ	4	Χ
Total	130	189	169

Harvest by Sex and Month of Harvest

During the 2008 season 296 (60.4%) male bears and 182 (37.3%) females were harvested. Ten (2.3%) bears of an unidentified sex made up the balance. The sex ratio differential in the harvest can be explained by the fact that males have a greater home range. They are more likely to encounter a hunter in their search for food and cover.

The greatest number of bears (189) was harvested during October. However, the greatest concentration of the harvest occurred during November when the harvest per day averaged 9.2 bears (Table 2).

Table 2. 200	Table 2. 2008 Bear Harvest by Month and Sex											
Month	September	October	November	Total	Percent							
Males	93	110	93	296	60.4							
Females	36	74	72	182	37.3							
Unk.	1	5	4	10	2.3							
Total	130	189	169	488	100							
Percent/month	26.7%	38.7%	34.6%	100%								
Harvest/day	4.3	6.1	9.2	6.1								

Table 3 illustrates the variation in harvest by day of the month. The greatest harvest concentrations occurred on opening day (September 1) and the first three days of deer season (November 15-17). These are days where the greatest numbers of hunters are afield. Although not consistent throughout the season, **Weekends**, especially Saturdays, appear to be important days for hunters to have an opportunity to go bear hunting. Figure 2 illustrates the same relationship data between hunting pressure and day of the month during bear season.

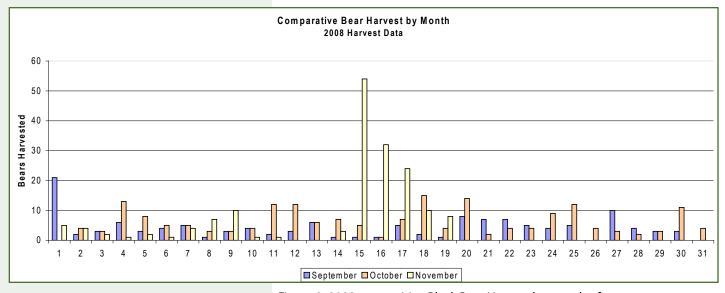


Figure 2. 2008 comparitive Black Bear Harvest by month of season.

Harvest by Hunting Opportunity

In 2008 bear hunters accounted for the majority (58%) of the bear harvest. Because bear season overlaps several other hunting seasons in time and place, it is not uncommon for bears to be harvested by hunters while in pursuit of other game. Deer hunting was the second most common activity (34%) a hunter was engaged in when they harvested a bear. Bird hunters accounted for 2 percent of the harvest and 6 percent of the harvest occurred while hunting a species other than deer or birds (Table 4).

Table 4	Table 4. 2008 Bear harvest by month by species hunted.										
Month	September	October	November	Total	Percent						
Bear	126	108	50	284	58						
Birds	3	4	4	11	2						
Deer	0	54	110	164	34						
Other	1	23	5	29	6						
Total	130	189	169	488	100						

Bear hunters appear to have been selective towards male bears during the 2008 season. The number of males taken by bear hunters was nearly twice (1.9:1) the number of females harvested. Bird hunters appear to have been even more selective (4:1). Deer hunters harvested males and females at a 1.2:1 ratio and hunters hunting 'other' species harvested bears at a 1.3:1 ratio (Table 5).

Table 5. 20	Table 5. 2008 bear harvest by sex by species hunted.									
	Males Females Unkown Total									
Bear	184	96	4	284						
Birds	8	2	1	11						
Deer	88	72	4	164						
Other	16	12	1	29						
Total	296	182	10	488						





Hunting Bears with Dogs

Hunters utilizing hounds to hunt bears harvested 47 bears (9.6%). The majority of the harvest with hounds occurred in September (60%). Houndsmen appear to have even more selective towards males (2.4:1) than the general bear hunter or of all those hunting without hounds (1.5:1) (Table 6).

Table 6. Comparisons of the use of bear hounds by month of harvest and sex.

Hourids	by illoller	or mar v	cot and oc	Λ.
	September	October	November	Total
With Hounds	28	16	3	47
Without Hounds	102	173	166	441
	Males	Females	Unknown	Total
With Hounds	31	13	3	47
Without Hounds	265	169	7	441

COUNTY	TOWN OF KILL	MALES	FEMALES	UNKOWN	TOTAL BEARS	FEMALE HARVEST/Mi ²	BEAR , HARVEST/Mi ²
ADDISON	ADDISON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	BRIDPORT	0	0	0	0	0	0
	BRISTOL	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	CORNWALL	0	0	0	0	0	0
	FERRISBURG	0	0	0	0	0	0
	GOSHEN	0	1	1	2	0.05	0.09
	GRANVILLE	2	1	0	3	0.02	0.06
	HANCOCK	2	0	0	2	0	0.06
	LEICESTER	0	0	0	0	0	0
	LINCOLN	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.05
	MIDDLEBURY	1	0	0	1	0	0.05
	MONKTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	NEW HAVEN	1	0	0	1	0	0.04
	ORWELL	0	0	0	0	0	0
	PANTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	RIPTON	2	0	1	3	0	0.06
	SALISBURY	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SHOREHAM	0	0	0	0	0	0
	STARKSBORO	0	1	0	1	0.03	0.03
	VERGENNES	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WALTHAM	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WEYBRIDGE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WHITING	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	10	5	2	17	0.01	0.03
ENNINGTON	ARLINGTON	4	5	1	10	0.13	0.26
	BENNINGTON	0	1	0	1	0.03	0.03
	DORSET	5	2	0	7	0.05	0.16
	GLASTENBURY	0	0	0	0	0	0
	LANDGROVE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	MANCHESTER	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.05
	PERU	0	0	0	0	0	0
	POWNAL	6	3	0	9	0.07	0.2
	READSBORO	3	2	0	5	0.06	0.16
	RUPERT	1	1	0	2	0.02	0.05
	SANDGATE	4	1	0	5	0.03	0.13
	SEARSBURG	0	1	0	1	0.05	0.05
	SHAFTSBURY	1	3	0	4	0.08	0.1
	STAMFORD	6	2	0	8	0.05	0.2
	SUNDERLAND	1	0	0	1	0	0.02
	WINHALL	1	0	0	1	0	0.02
	WOODFORD	3	0	0	3	0	0.07
	TOTAL	36	22	1	59	0.04	0.09
CALEDONIA	BARNET	1	2	0	3	0.06	0.09
	BURKE	2	2	0	4	0.08	0.16
	DANVILLE	2	1	0	3	0.02	0.06
	GROTON	0	3	0	3	0.1	0.1

Table 6. 2008 Vermont Black Bear Harvest by Town of Kill.

COUNTY	TOWN OF KILL	MALES	FEMALES	UNKOWN	TOTAL BEARS	FEMALE HARVEST/Mi ²	BEAR HARVEST/Mi ²
CALEDONIA (cont.)	HARDWICK	4	1	0	5	0.03	0.16
	KIRBY	0	1	0	1	0.05	0.05
	LYNDON	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	NEWARK	0	2	0	2	0.06	0.06
	PEACHAM	2	1	0	3	0.03	0.08
	RYEGATE	2	0	0	2	0	0.06
	SHEFFIELD	1	2	1	4	0.07	0.15
	ST JOHNSBURY	1	1	0	2	0.04	0.08
	STANNARD	0	1	0	1	0.1	0.1
	SUTTON	7	1	1	9	0.03	0.26
	WALDEN	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	WATERFORD	5	1	0	6	0.03	0.19
	WHEELOCK	4	0	0	4	0	0.13
	TOTAL	33	20	2	53	0.04	0.1
CHITTENDEN	BOLTON	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	BUELLS GORE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	BURLINGTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CHARLOTTE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	COLCHESTER	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ESSEX	0	0	0	0	0	0
	HINESBURG	0	0	0	0	0	0
	HUNTINGTON	2	1	0	3	0.04	0.11
	JERICHO	0	0	0	0	0	0
	MILTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	RICHMOND	1	0	0	1	0	0.04
	SHELBURNE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SOUTH BURLINGTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ST GEORGE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	UNDERHILL	3	1	0	4	0.02	0.09
	WESTFORD	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	WILLISTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WINOOSKI	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	8	2	0	10	0	0.02
ESSEX	AVERILL	2	1	0	3	0.03	0.08
	AVERYS GORE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	BLOOMFIELD	4	1	0	5	0.03	0.13
	BRIGHTON	3	2	0	5	0.04	0.1
	BRUNSWICK	1	1	0	2	0.04	0.08
	CANAAN	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	CONCORD	3	5	0	8	0.1	0.16
	EAST HAVEN	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	FERDINAND	1	0	0	1	0	0.02
	GRANBY	3	2	0	5	0.05	0.13
	GUILDHALL	4	2	0	6	0.06	0.18
	LEMINGTON	1	0	1	2	0	0.06
	LEWIS	1	0	0	1	0	0.03

Table 6. 2008 Vermont Black Bear Harvest by Town of Kill.

COUNTY	TOWN OF KILL	MALES	FEMALES	UNKOWN	TOTAL BEARS	FEMALE HARVEST/Mi ²	BEAR HARVEST/Mi ²
ESSEX (cont.)	LUNENBURG	3	2	0	5	0.04	0.11
	MAIDSTONE	2	0	0	2	0	0.07
	NORTON	0	1	0	1	0.03	0.03
	VICTORY	1	1	0	2	0.02	0.05
	WARNER'S GRANT	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WARRENS GORE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	31	20	1	52	0.04	0.09
FRANKLIN	BAKERSFIELD	3	0	0	3	0	0.09
	BERKSHIRE	2	1	0	3	0.03	0.1
	ENOSBURG	5	1	0	6	0.03	0.15
	FAIRFAX	0	0	0	0	0	0
	FAIRFIELD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	FLETCHER	0	0	0	0	0	0
	FRANKLIN	0	0	0	0	0	0
	GEORGIA	0	0	0	0	0	0
	HIGHGATE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	MONTGOMERY	5	5	0	10	0.1	0.2
	RICHFORD	5	1	1	7	0.03	0.18
	SHELDON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ST ALBANS	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SWANTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	20	8	1	29	0.02	0.06
GRAND ISLE	ALBURG	0	0	0	0	0	0
	GRAND ISLE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ISLE LA MOTTE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	NORTH HERO	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SOUTH HERO	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
LAMOILLE	BELVIDERE	6	0	0	6	0	0.19
	CAMBRIDGE	2	2	0	4	0.04	0.07
	EDEN	1	2	0	3	0.03	0.05
	ELMORE	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	HYDE PARK	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	JOHNSON	1	2	0	3	0.05	0.08
	MORRISTOWN	1	1	0	2	0.02	0.04
	STOWE	3	2	0	5	0.03	0.08
	WATERVILLE	1	0	0	1	0	0.06
	WOLCOTT	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.05
	TOTAL	7	10	0	28	0.02	0.07
ORANGE	BRADFORD	2	1	0	3	0.04	0.12
	BRAINTREE	1	2	0	3	0.06	0.09
	BROOKFIELD	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	CHELSEA	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CORINTH	2	0	1	3	0	0.07
	FAIRLEE	1	0	0	1	0	0.05
	NEWBURY	4	1	0	5	0.02	0.1

Table 6. 2008 Vermont Black Bear Harvest by Town of Kill.

COUNTY	TOWN OF KILL	MALES	FEMALES	UNKOWN	TOTAL BEARS	FEMALE HARVEST/Mi ²	BEAR HARVEST/Mi ²
ORANGE (cont.)	ORANGE	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	RANDOLPH	0	0	0	0	0	0
	STRAFFORD	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.05
	THETFORD	1	2	0	3	0.05	0.07
	TOPSHAM	0	1	0	1	0.02	0.02
	TUNBRIDGE	4	0	0	4	0	0.1
	VERSHIRE	1	4	0	5	0.12	0.15
	WASHINGTON	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	WEST FAIRLEE	1	1	0	2	0.05	0.1
	WILLIAMSTOWN	0	1	0	1	0.03	0.03
	TOTAL	21	15	1	37	0.03	0.06
ORLEANS	ALBANY	3	0	0	3	0	0.1
	BARTON	2	1	0	3	0.03	0.09
	BROWNINGTON	1	0	0	1	0	0.04
	CHARLESTON	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	COVENTRY	3	0	0	3	0	0.15
	CRAFTSBURY	2	3	0	5	0.09	0.15
	DERBY	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	GLOVER	2	2	0	4	0.06	0.12
	GREENSBORO	1	6	0	7	0.19	0.22
	HOLLAND	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	IRASBURG	6	2	0	8	0.07	0.27
	JAY	0	4	0	4	0.13	0.13
	LOWELL	3	4	0	7	0.08	0.14
	MORGAN	0	1	0	1	0.04	0.04
	NEWPORT	6	5	0	11	0.22	0.48
	TROY	2	1	0	3	0.03	0.1
	WESTFIELD	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	WESTMORE	0	1	0	1	0.03	0.03
	TOTAL	35	32	0	67	0.06	0.12
RUTLAND	BENSON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	BRANDON	3	0	0	3	0	0.09
	CASTLETON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CHITTENDEN	4	3	0	7	0.04	0.1
	CLARENDON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	DANBY	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	FAIR HAVEN	0	0	0	0	0	0
	HUBBARDTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	IRA	1	0	0	1	0	0.05
	KILLINGTON	0	1	0	1	0.02	0.02
	MENDON	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS	0	0	0	0	0	0
	MT HOLLY	1	0	0	1	0	0.02
	MT TABOR	4	0	0	4	0	0.1
	PAWLET	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	PITTSFIELD	2	0	0	2	0	0.1

Table 6. 2008 Vermont Black Bear Harvest by Town of Kill.

COUNTY	TOWN OF KILL	MALES	FEMALES	UNKOWN	TOTAL BEARS	FEMALE HARVEST/Mi ²	BEAR HARVEST/Mi ²
RUTLAND (cont.)	PITTSFORD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	POULTNEY	0	0	0	0	0	0
	PROCTOR	0	0	0	0	0	0
	RUTLAND	1	0	0	1	0	0.09
	SHREWSBURY	0	1	0	1	0.02	0.02
	SUDBURY	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TINMOUTH	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WALLINGFORD	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	WELLS	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WEST HAVEN	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WEST RUTLAND	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	20	6	0	26	0.01	0.03
WASHINGTON	BARRE	1	0	0	1	0	0.06
	BERLIN	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CABOT	0	1	0	1	0.03	0.03
	CALAIS	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	DUXBURY	0	1	0	1	0.02	0.02
	EAST MONTPELIER	2	1	0	3	0.04	0.11
	FAYSTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	MARSHFIELD	2	1	0	3	0.03	0.08
	MIDDLESEX	2	1	0	3	0.03	0.08
	MONTPELIER	0	1	0	1	0.4	0.4
	MORETOWN	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	NORTHFIELD	1	0	0	1	0	0.02
	PLAINFIELD	3	0	0	3	0	0.17
	ROXBURY	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WAITSFIELD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WARREN	2	2	0	4	0.05	0.1
	WATERBURY	2	1	0	3	0.02	0.07
	WOODBURY	2	1	0	3	0.03	0.09
	WORCESTER	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.05
	TOTAL	20	12	0	32	0.02	0.05
WINDHAM	ATHENS	0	1	0	1	0.09	0.09
	BRATTLEBORO	0	0	0	0	0	0
	BROOKLINE	0	0	0	0	0	0
	DOVER	2	0	0	2	0	0.06
	DUMMERSTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	GRAFTON	2	0	0	2	0	0.05
	GUILFORD	0	1	0	1	0.03	0.03
	HALIFAX	1	2	0	3	0.05	0.03
	JAMAICA	3	0	0	3	0.03	0.06
	LONDONDERRY	3	0	0	3	0	0.09
	MARLBORO		3	0	3	0.08	0.08
	NEWFANE	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	PUTNEY	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 6. 2008 Vermont Black Bear Harvest by Town of Kill.

COUNTY	TOWN OF KILL	MALES	FEMALES	UNKOWN	TOTAL BEARS	FEMALE HARVEST/Mi ²	BEAR HARVEST/Mi ²
WINDHAM (cont.)	SOMERSET	1	0	0	1	0	0.04
	STRATTON	3	2	0	5	0.04	0.11
	TOWNSHEND	1	2	0	3	0.05	0.07
	VERNON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WARDSBORO	1	1	0	2	0.04	0.07
	WESTMINSTER	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WHITINGHAM	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	WILMINGTON	3	1	0	4	0.03	0.1
	WINDHAM	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	22	14	0	36	0.02	0.05
WINDSOR	ANDOVER	0	2	0	2	0.07	0.07
	BALTIMORE	1	1	0	2	0.23	0.47
	BARNARD	2	0	0	2	0	0.05
	BETHEL	1	0	0	1	0	0.02
	BRIDGEWATER	0	2	0	2	0.04	0.04
	CAVENDISH	0	2	0	2	0.06	0.06
	CHESTER	3	0	0	3	0	0.06
	HARTFORD	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	HARTLAND	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	LUDLOW	0	2	0	2	0.07	0.07
	NORWICH	2	0	0	2	0	0.05
	PLYMOUTH	2	2	0	4	0.05	0.09
	POMFRET	0	0	0	0	0	0
	READING	1	0	1	2	0	0.05
	ROCHESTER	1	1	1	3	0.02	0.06
	ROYALTON	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SHARON	1	1	0	2	0.03	0.06
	SPRINGFIELD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	STOCKBRIDGE	2	2	0	4	0.05	0.09
	WEATHERSFIELD	2	0	0	2	0	0.06
	WEST WINDSOR	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WESTON	0	1	0	1	0.03	0.03
	WINDSOR	1	0	0	1	0	0.06
	WOODSTOCK	1	0	0	1	0	0.03
	TOTAL	22	16	2	40	0.02	0.05
	TOTAL STATE	296	182	10	488	0.02	0.06