



# Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department 2014 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 89 Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and numerous riverfront parcels totaling more than 133,000 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 2014.

## Protect and Conserve...

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

- **32** acres received invasive plant control measures
- **3.5** miles of boundary lines were surveyed
- **30.7** miles of boundary lines were maintained
- **0.4** mile of fence was installed
- **7** gates were installed or repaired
- **3** archaeology investigations were conducted

## our Fish, Wildlife, Plants...

- **18** inventories of wildlife, fish, plants, and natural communities were conducted on WMAs by Vermont Agency of Natural Resources staff in 2014.

## and their Habitats...

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

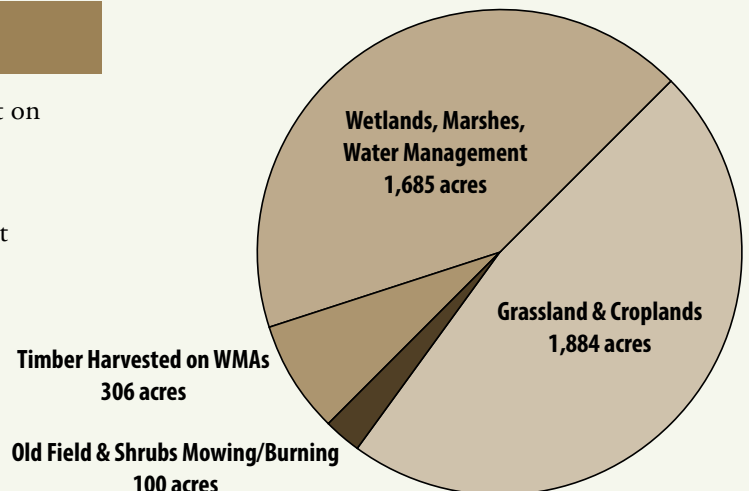
- **33** dams were maintained to manage **1,674** wetland acres
- **4** flow devices were installed to retain beaver wetland habitat
- **643** nesting boxes for ducks were maintained
- **1,598** trees were planted to restore river bank habitat
- **136** wild fruit and nut trees were maintained
- **4** ditch plugs were installed to restore **11** acres of wetlands
- **3** new water control structures were installed



Photo courtesy of Doug Gimler

Snowy owls were a common sight at Dead Creek WMA in 2014.

## 3,975 Acres of Habitat Managed in 2014





## ...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

- 6 new kiosks were installed
- 38 information kiosks were maintained
- 15 entrance signs were installed

### FACILITIES

- 3 buildings were maintained
- 21 parking areas were maintained
- 2 new parking areas were installed

Other program activities benefiting all Vermonters include:

### WEB-BASED MAP TOOL

- A web-based map tool is now available, providing better, more up-to-date information on WMAs around Vermont. This tool is available on the department's website at: <https://anrweb.vt.gov/FWD/FWD/WmaLocator.aspx>



### PLANNING

- 4 management plans were completed
- 24 press releases and articles were published
- 6 public meetings were conducted

### ACCESS

- 2 trail miles were maintained
- 15 bridges/culverts were installed
- 42 miles of roads were maintained
- 3 WMAs hosted field study courses for educators, college and high school students



### LAND ACQUISITION

- The department added 467 acres to six Wildlife Management Areas and purchased a 275-acre conservation easement in Dummerston in 2014. Nine parcels, ranging from about 5 to 2500 acres, are currently in various stages of department acquisition. The department anticipates purchasing most of these properties in 2015.

### Wildlife Habitat Timber Harvests on Department Lands FY10-14

	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	5 YEAR TOTALS
Fee acres harvested	565	404	244	296	156	1,665
Board Feet (MBF)	782	739	380	574	322	2,797
Cords	1,939	3,215	1,722	2,488	1,632	10,996
Non-fee acres harvested	500	700	200	350	150	1,900
# Active Timber Harvests	8	14	9	10	3	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, the Vermont Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, and Vermont Forests, Parks, and Recreation Department provided financial assistance for habitat management on WMAs in 2014.

