



# Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department 2015 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 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 2015.

## Protect and Conserve...

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

- **60** acres received invasive plant control measures
- **0.8** miles of boundary lines were surveyed
- **2.2** miles of boundary lines were maintained
- **0.4** mile of fence was installed
- **4** gates were installed or repaired
- **2** beaver wetland devices were installed

## our Fish, Wildlife, Plants...

- **30** inventories of wildlife, fish, plants, and natural communities were conducted on WMAs by Vermont Agency of Natural Resources staff in 2015.

## and their Habitats...

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

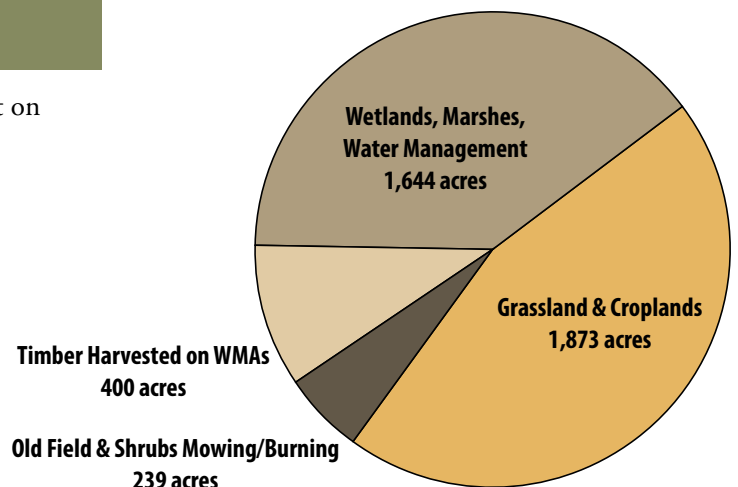
- **40** dams were maintained to manage **1,644** wetland acres
- **200** pine seedlings were planted for deer winter cover
- **602** nesting boxes for ducks were maintained
- **4,407** trees were planted to restore river bank habitat
- **310** wild fruit and nut trees were maintained
- **47** acres of wetlands were restored with ditch plugs
- **7** acres of herbaceous forage were planted for waterfowl



Photo courtesy of Paul Hamelin

Common and rare plants and animals live in wetlands, including those added to Turner Hill WMA and Lemon Fair WMA in 2015.

## 4,156 Acres of Habitat Managed in 2015





## ...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

- 2 new kiosks were installed
- 25 information kiosks were maintained
- 2 entrance signs were installed

### FACILITIES

- 3 buildings were maintained
- 12 parking areas were maintained
- 3 new parking areas were installed

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](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com)

### LAND ACQUISITION

- The department added 800 acres to three Wildlife Management Areas in 2015. Eleven parcels, ranging from about 3 to 2,875 acres, are currently in various stages of department acquisition. The department anticipates purchasing 7 to 10 of these properties in 2017.



### PLANNING

- 2 management plans were completed
- 16 press releases and articles were published
- 2 public meetings were conducted

### ACCESS

- 1 trail mile was maintained
- 3 bridges/culverts were installed
- 38 miles of roads were maintained
- 3 WMAs hosted field study courses for educators, college and high school students



Wildlife Habitat Timber Harvests on Department Lands FY11-15

	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	5 YEAR TOTALS
Fee acres harvested	404	244	296	156	149	1,249
Board Feet (MBF)	739	380	574	322	274	2,289
Cords	3,215	1,722	2,488	1,632	1,109	10,166
Non-fee acres harvested	700	200	350	150	250	1,650
# Active Timber Harvests	14	9	10	3	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, Vermont Forests, Parks, and Recreation Department, Vermont Legislature, and Vermont Housing & Conservation Board provided financial assistance for habitat management on WMAs in 2015.

