

Wild Branch Wildlife Management Area

General Description

Wild Branch Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is located in the north central Vermont town of Eden along the Craftsbury town line. The WMA is 410 acres in size and is owned by the State of Vermont and managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

Access to the WMA can be gained from the southeast via Route 14 and the Wild Branch Road in Craftsbury, then onto Collinsville Road to the road that leads to the Eden Mountain Ski Lodge. This road (a.k.a. Albany Road) continues northward bisecting the western portion of the WMA, and eventually enters the Village of Albany. The WMA can be accessed from the northeast via Route 14 in Albany Village. The western portion of the WMA can be accessed from a developed parking lot on Albany Road where a large maintained field is located. A second trail accesses the eastern end of the WMA beginning in the southeast corner of the field. This trail is gated.

History

The settlement of Eden began when the town was granted to several of the Green Mountain Boys. It was a reward for their services during the Revolutionary War and also during the struggle that led to Vermont's independent Republic. However, most of them sold the land right away and never settled in the area. Eden and the area around the WMA have always been known as a rough, forested place with a small population. This is still true today. Atlas Timberland Partnership lands, which are open to public hunting, fishing and trapping, border the WMA to the west.

The WMA was purchased from the town of Eden by the State of Vermont in 1967 using Fish & Wildlife Department funds, which are generated from the sale of Vermont hunting and fishing licenses.

Habitat Features

The WMA lies on the divide between the Wild Branch of the Lamoille River watershed and the Seaver Branch of the Black River watershed. It also lies on the southeastern flank of the Lowell Mountain Range, having an aspect that is generally southeasterly. Elevations range from 2,185 feet in the northwest corner to 1,496 feet in the southeast corner. It is mostly forested with red and sugar maple, yellow and white birch and beech, as well as areas of softwoods containing hemlock, red spruce and balsam fir. There are approximately eight acres of field, east and west of the developed parking lot, maintained by the Department by brush hogging. There are apple trees in the fields that are maintained by release cuttings.



Brush hogging at Wild Branch WMA maintains field habitat used by many wildlife species.

Cedric Alexander, VFWD photo.

The Wild Branch parallels the Albany Road to the east, and a tributary of the Wild Branch flows through the western portion to the WMA, where a beaver-influenced wetland can be found. Another large (50-acre) wetland exists in the northeast portion of the WMA that is a State-significant natural community classified as a calcareous red maple-tamarack swamp-hemlock swamp. There are two beech stands, one in each extremity of the WMA, that are known to be critical fall feeding areas for black bear.

Common Fish and Wildlife

Mammals Game animals include white-tailed deer, moose, black bear, coyote, bobcat and snowshoe hare. Many wetland mammals, such as beaver, otter, mink, and raccoon can be found. Expect to find many smaller non-game species as well.

Birds Ruffed grouse and woodcock can be found on the WMA, as well as a variety of other deciduous and coniferous forest-associated songbirds. Wood duck nesting boxes (in the wetland west of the parking lot) are maintained by the Department and are frequently utilized by wood ducks and hooded mergansers.

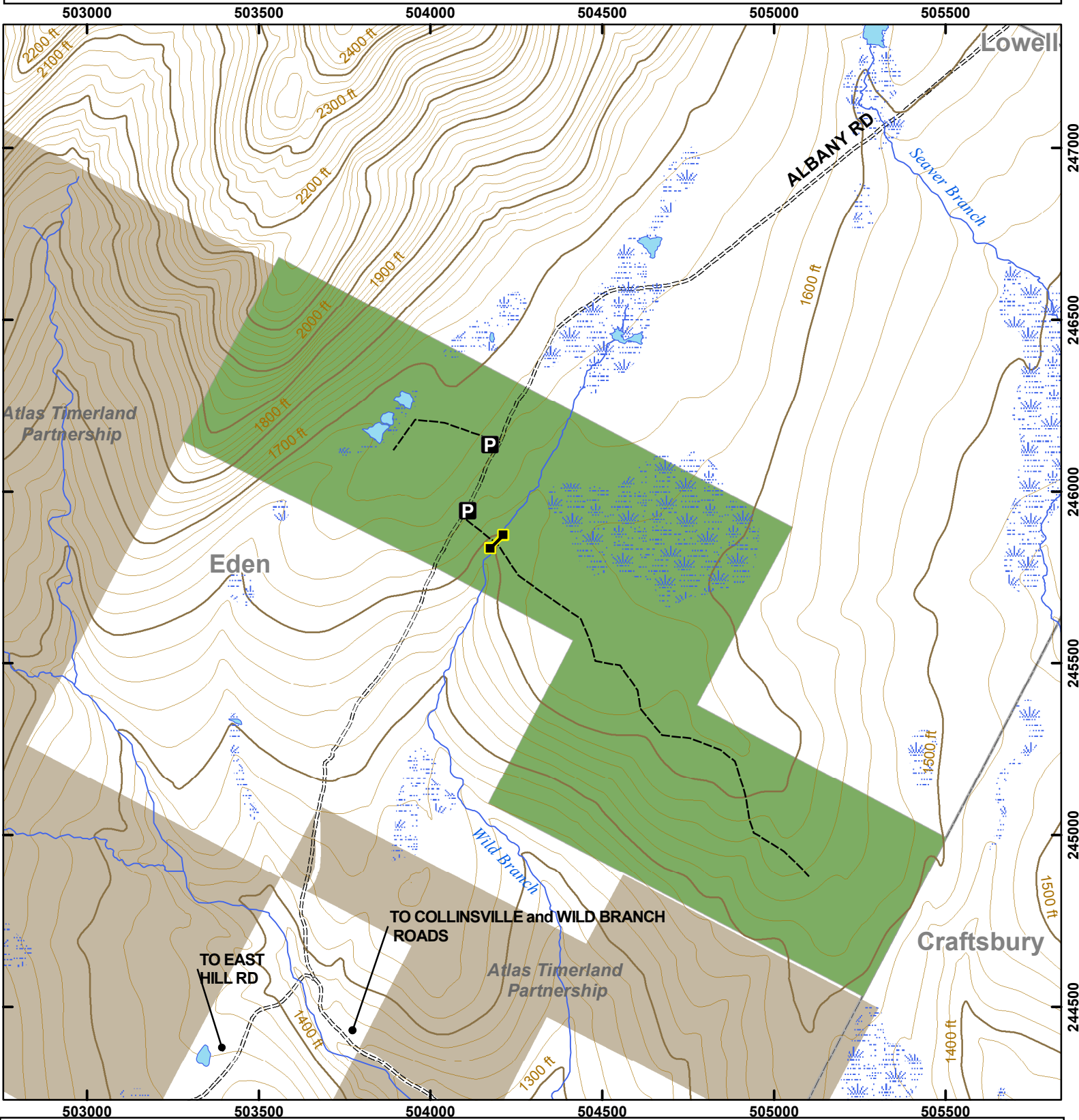
Reptiles and Amphibians Salamanders such as Jefferson's and associated hybrids, northern dusky, northern two-lined, spring, red-backed and eastern newt might be found on the WMA. American toad, spring peeper, green, mink and wood frogs are known to occur in the area. Wood turtles and garter snakes may also be seen.

Fish Native brook trout may be found in the Wild Branch.

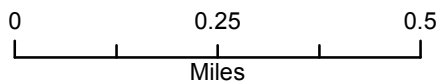


Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

Wild Branch Wildlife Management Area



Wild Branch WMA: 410 acres



- Wildlife Management Area
- Other Public Land
- Private w/Public Access
- Boat Ramp
- Gate
- Wildlife Viewing Areas
- Car-top Access
- P Parking
- Designated Camp Site During Big Game Seasons Only

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