

# Densmore Hill Wildlife Management Area

## General Description

Densmore Hill Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is a 252-acre parcel owned by the State of Vermont and managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. It is bordered by Morley Road on the west and by Cady Brook on the southwest in the town of Hartland.

Parking along Folding Hill Road and Morley Road. Please be careful if you park along Morley Road. Try to get completely off the road surface.

## History

During the mid-1800's, the land comprising Densmore Hill WMA was owned by Isaac Cobb and Alvin Dutton. Sullivan Cady purchased 140 acres from Alvin Dutton in 1845. In 1878, Cady's sons became owners of the land, and then went on to buy the Cobb parcel as well as the adjoining Kendall Farm. The Cady's homestead was located just south of the beaver flowage. They were subsistence farmers who cleared much of the land in order to pasture sheep. Stone walls criss-crossing the WMA are evidence of this past land use. Attempts to maintain the open fields were abandoned in the late 1940's. Since then, most of the WMA has reverted to forest.

The farm was sold to the McEwen family in 1940. Three McEwen heirs eventually sold the property to Elizabeth and William Peabody, and in 1976, The Nature Conservancy acquired 252 acres from the Peabodys. The parcel was then deeded to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department by The Nature Conservancy in April, 1977 and became the Densmore Hill Wildlife Management Area.

The old road adjacent to Cady Brook, once called the Old County Road, was the direct stage route from Windsor to Woodstock.



Wild turkeys had disappeared completely from the Vermont landscape, but have been very successfully reintroduced.

John Hall, VFWD photo.

## Habitat Features

Ranging in elevation from 1,249 feet to 1,548 feet, the parcel's terrain is rugged, sloping steeply up to the north and east from Cady Brook to a ridgeline that runs northwest to southeast. The land slopes more gently from the top of the ridge down to a hollow containing two drainages. From there it climbs steeply again to the highest elevation on Scott Hill.



Turkeys can now be hunted in two regulated seasons.

Sandy Macy photo.

Densmore Hill WMA is almost completely forested. It is mostly a young northern hardwood community made up of sugar maple, paper birch and beech, with white pine and hemlock scattered throughout. An old apple orchard has been released to provide beneficial habitat for wildlife.

In the recent past, a variety of wildlife management techniques, including patch cuts, have been carried out to provide habitat for ruffed grouse. Den trees,

snags, and dead and downed material are maintained as important habitat features.

Cady Brook flows along the western and southern boundaries of the WMA, and a beaver pond can be found at the southwestern corner.

Significant natural communities occurring on Densmore Hill WMA include a dry oak-hickory-hophornbeam forest and two seeps.

## Common Fish and Wildlife

**Mammals** Snowshoe hare and beaver live out their entire lives on portions of the WMA. Fisher, fox, otter, coyote and deer also use the property. Because of their wide ranging habits, however, they are not confined there.

**Birds** Densmore Hill WMA is home to a wide variety of birds. Ruffed grouse, turkey and woodcock are present. Herons and mallard ducks frequent the beaver flowage. Typical northern hardwood species of songbirds such as ovenbirds, black and white warblers, vireos, pheobes, chickadees, nuthatches, and downy and hairy woodpeckers can be seen and heard. Red-winged blackbirds and Baltimore orioles nest near the beaver flowage.

**Reptiles and Amphibians** Painted, wood and snapping turtles may be found, as well as green and wood frogs and spring peepers. Red spotted (newts), northern two-lined, spotted and red-backed salamanders are also likely inhabitants.

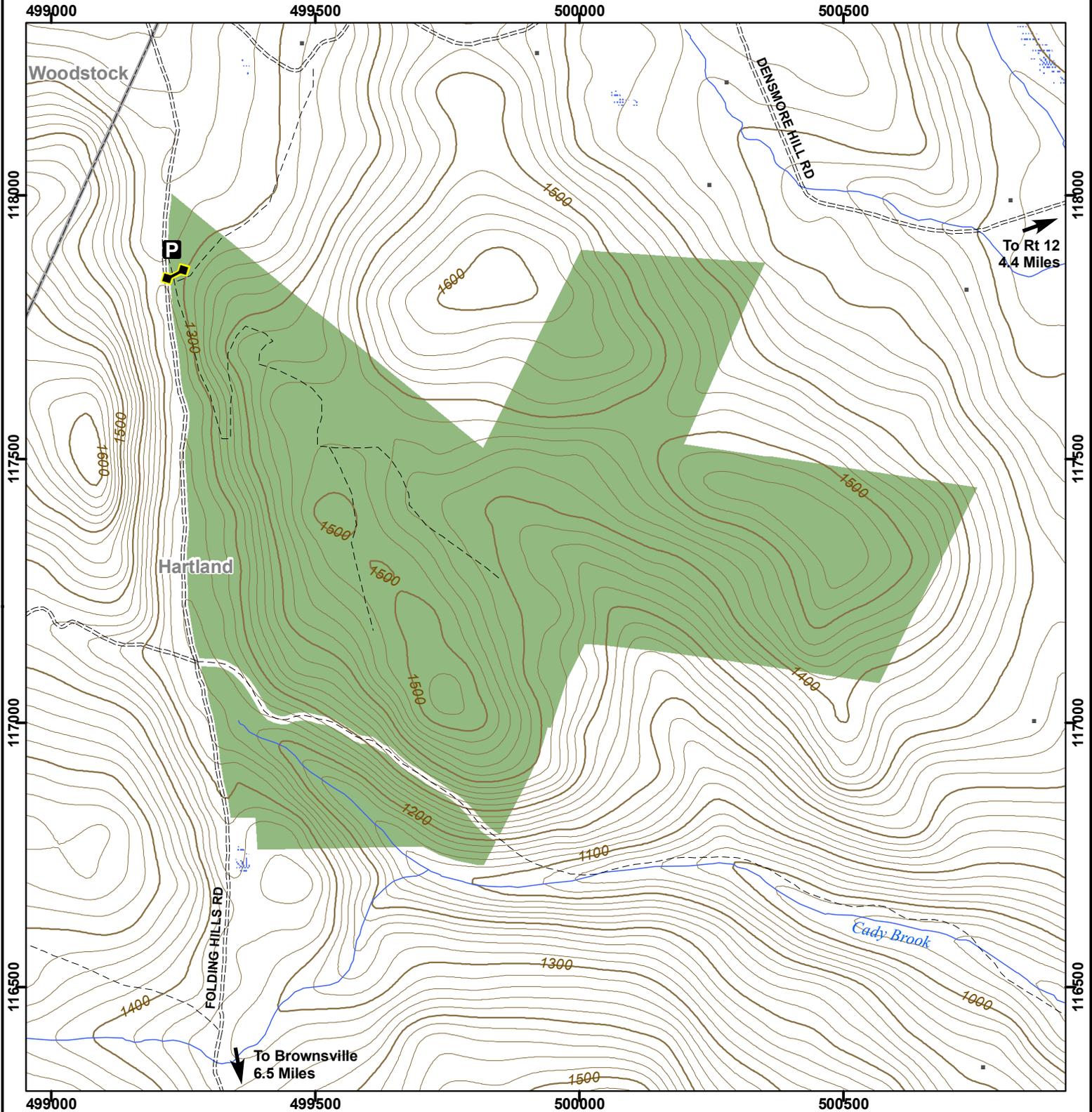
**Fish** Native brook trout and minnows inhabit Cady Brook and the beaver pond.

Densmore Hill WMA is open to regulated hunting, trapping, fishing, hiking and wildlife viewing.

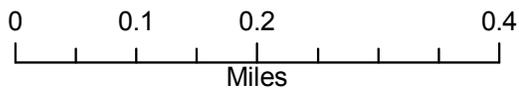


# Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

## Densmore Hill Wildlife Management Area



**Densmore Hill WMA: 252 acres**



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

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