

Les Newell Wildlife Management Area

General Description

Les Newell Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is made up of more than 10 separate parcels varying in size and topography, and totaling 7,988 acres. The properties are spread out over four towns: Barnard, Bridgewater, Sherburne and Stockbridge. They are owned by the State of Vermont and managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. The timber rights on the WMA are owned by the A. Johnson Company. Much of the land surrounding Les Newell is owned by timber companies; therefore Les Newell is part of a large (50,000 acre), relatively undeveloped area. This area has been known historically as the Chateauguay. The region has been enjoyed for many years by snowmobilers, horseback riders, hunters, trappers, birdwatchers, and other people who take pleasure in recreating in remote forest settings.

The small village of Notown can be found in the southern portion of the main parcel. The WMA can be accessed by the Stony Brook Road or the Taggart Hill Road in the town of Stockbridge. In Barnard, Smith Hill Road bisects the WMA east of Delectable Mountain. The Appalachian Trail crosses the WMA near the southern border of the largest parcel.

History

In 1851 the region around the WMA was subjected to the "Bridgewater Gold Rush;" but historical records suggest that no one got rich. Up until recently, the area known as the Chateauguay was extremely remote and penetrated by only a few dirt roads and primitive logging roads. In the 1960's a landowner association was formed to protect the area against a dam proposed on the North Branch, a tributary of the Ottauquechee. The proposal failed. Although development has increased in the region in recent years, many residents of Barnard, Bridgewater, Sherburne and Stockbridge continue to work to protect the remote qualities of the area and conserve wildlife.

The WMA was purchased in 1958 with State funds generated from hunting license sales.

Habitat Features

Les Newell WMA is located in the Southern Green Mountains biophysical region of Vermont. Elevations reach heights of 2,625 feet on Sable Mountain in central Stockbridge, and just over 2,500 feet between Burbee Peak and Quimby Mountain on the Stockbridge-Sherburne border. The terrain is steep and rocky.

The WMA is completely forested with red and sugar maple, yellow birch, beech, balsam fir, hemlock and red spruce. The entire WMA is considered black bear production habitat.

Several of the parcels contain beaver-dominated wetlands, including Nyes Swamp in Barnard. An abundance of small streams flow through many of the parcels and vernal pools are scattered throughout.

Common Fish and Wildlife

Mammals Moose and white-tailed deer are present in good numbers on the WMA. This large tract of relatively undisturbed land also provides good black bear habitat. Bobcat denning sites exist within the boundaries of the WMA. Coyote, red fox and fisher are other mid-sized predators that occur. Beaver, mink and otter frequent the waterways.

Birds Ruffed grouse and turkey occur on the WMA and may be hunted in season. A variety of forest songbirds, woodpeckers and raptors occur in this large forest tract.

Reptiles and Amphibians Wood frogs, spring peepers, American toads, red-backed and northern two-lined salamanders and gartersnakes may be found in the area.

Fish There are wild brook and rainbow trout in the WMA's streams and beaver ponds.

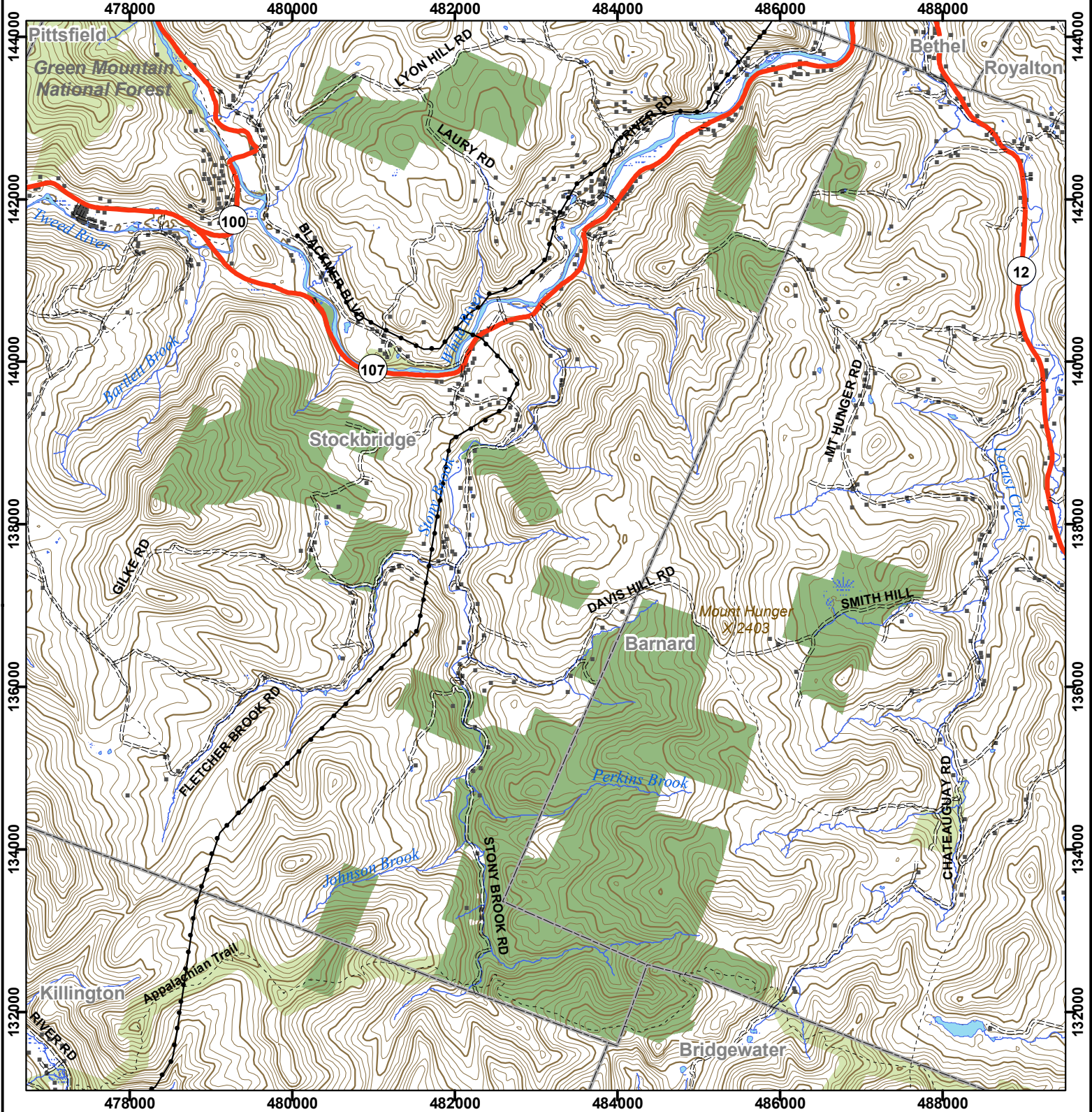


Ruffed grouse may be hunted in season at Les Newell WMA. John Adler photo.



Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

Les Newell Wildlife Management Area



Les Newell WMA: 7,988 acres



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

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