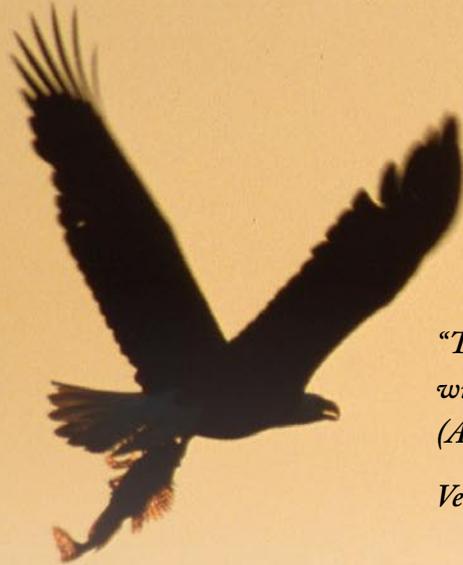


VERMONT'S  
WILDLIFE  
AT THE  
CROSSROADS



Funding and the Future  
of Fish and Wildlife  
in the Green Mountain State

THE VERMONT WILDLIFE PARTNERSHIP IS A COALITION  
OF ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESSES, AND INDIVIDUALS  
WORKING TOGETHER TO ENSURE THE FUTURE  
OF VERMONT'S FISH AND WILDLIFE LEGACY.



*"There are some who can live without  
wild things, and some who cannot."  
(Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac)*

*Vermonters are people who cannot.*

This report is available on-line at [www.vermontwildlifepartnership.org](http://www.vermontwildlifepartnership.org)

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Charles H. Willey



Tom Jones



Charles H. Willey

## CREDITS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Life in Vermont is intimately tied to the land—woods, waters, fields and mountains—and to the fish and wildlife that inhabit the places we call home. For hunters, anglers, hikers, paddlers, backyard birdwatchers and all other Vermonters, our natural resources are priceless. Moreover, wildlife-related recreation adds nearly \$400 million to the state's economy each year.

Responsibility for taking care of our fish and wildlife rests in the hands of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, a small team of hard-working professionals dedicated to the conservation of Vermont's cherished fish and wildlife and their habitats and to providing a wide range of public recreation, protection and education services.

Like most states in the nation, we face a growing threat. The traditional sources of funding for fish and wildlife conservation are providing less and less revenue. Underfunded state fish and wildlife agencies, including Vermont's, are being forced to cut programs, and the challenges they face are becoming more numerous and more complex.

Meanwhile, millions of dollars in available federal funds—often paying \$3 for every \$1 the state contributes—go unclaimed each year.

In the past two decades, Vermont has studied the problem twice. Both studies concluded that the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department needs an additional source of reliable, long-term funding and that we must, like a handful of states before us, significantly broaden the funding base. A solution recommended by the most recent study—dedicating 1/8 of a cent of the state Sales Tax to fish and wildlife—is supported by 4 out of 5 Vermonters, with similar support from hunters and non-hunters.

If an investment of this magnitude is not made, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department will become less and less able to provide the experiences and services we expect. Fish and wildlife populations and habitats will suffer, as will our economy.

Vermonters' quality of life is at stake—ours, our children's and our grandchildren's.



Charles H. Willey

## FISH AND WILDLIFE: AT THE HEART OF VERMONT LIFE

**M**any Vermonters remain connected to the traditions of hunting, fishing and trapping. In a recent survey conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 18% of Vermont respondents said they hunted or fished in 2006. In the same survey, 55% of surveyed Vermonters said they actively observed wildlife, one of the three highest participation rates in the nation.<sup>1</sup>

Regardless of our particular pastimes, Vermont's fish, wildlife and natural places benefit everyone. Clean air and clean water are priceless. And the health of wildlife often serves as an early indicator of disease and pollution that could affect us all.

Vermonters understand this. They place a high value on the state's fish and wildlife. In a 2000 survey by Responsive Management, a nationally renowned polling firm, 97% of surveyed Vermont residents stated that the protection of fish and wildlife resources is important to them, as is the opportunity to participate in wildlife-related recreation.<sup>2</sup>

As Aldo Leopold put it at the beginning of *A Sand County Almanac*, "There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot."<sup>3</sup> Vermonters are people who cannot.

» **97% of surveyed Vermont residents stated that the protection of fish and wildlife resources is important to them.**



Charles H. Willey

# STRETCHED TO THE LIMIT

## Declines in Traditional Funding

*“[Wildlife agencies] are trying to take care of all wildlife and all habitats on a shoestring budget.”<sup>4</sup>*

– Rachel Brittin, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

**T**he Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, like most state fish and wildlife agencies, has historically been funded almost exclusively by hunting and fishing license sales and funds from federal excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment, established by the Pittman-Robertson Act of 1937, the Dingell-Johnson Act of 1950 and the Wallop-Breaux Amendment of 1984.

Nationally, sporting license revenues have been declining since the 1950s. Vermont’s peaks came later, with over 140,000 hunting licenses sold in 1974. In 2005

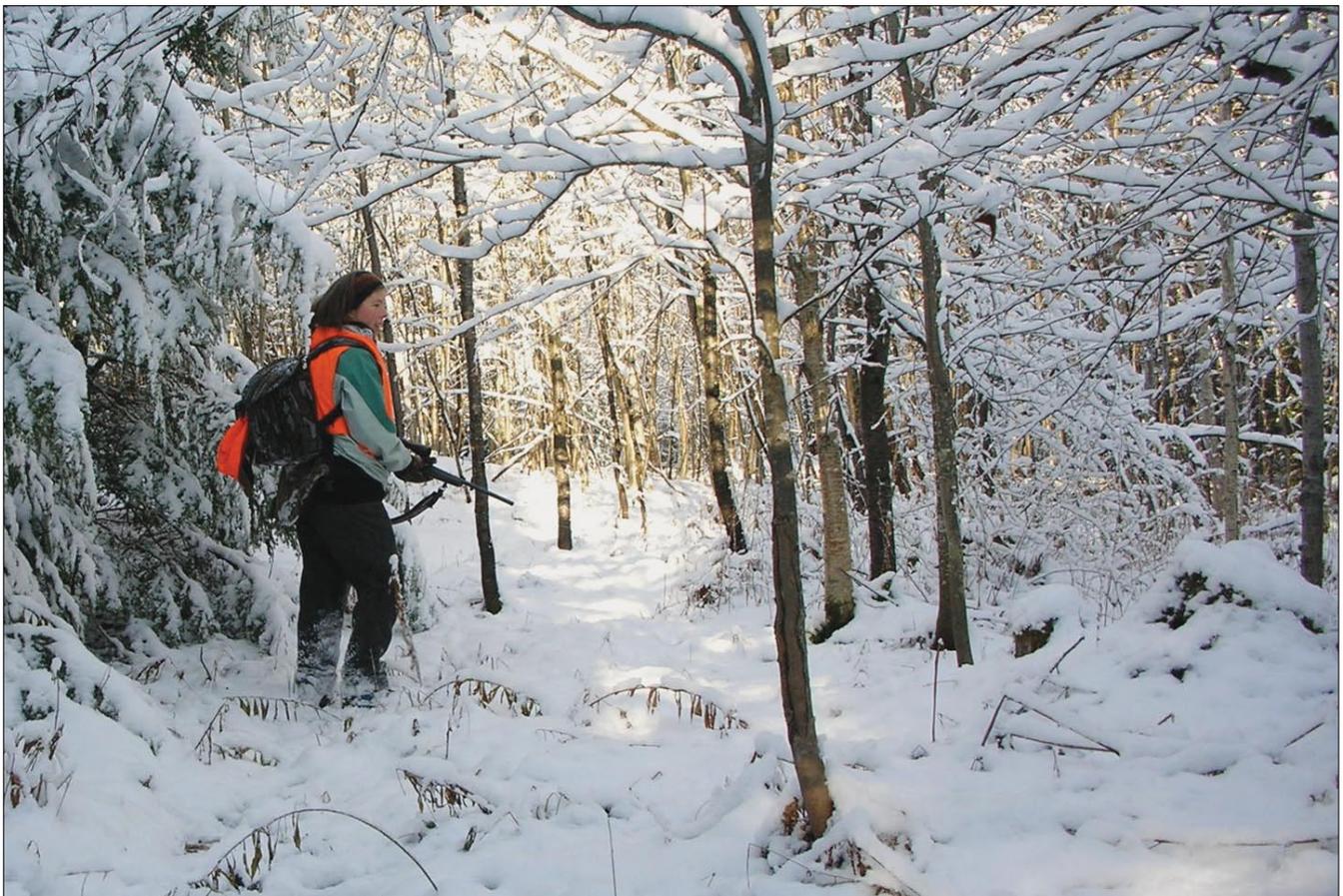
and 2006, hunting licenses numbered just over 80,000. Similarly, in the past 20 years Vermont’s total fishing license sales have declined from 161,000 to 122,000.<sup>5</sup>

In 1990, license sales accounted for 64% of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department budget.<sup>6</sup> In FY06, license sales accounted for just 37% of the budget.<sup>7</sup>

Marketing efforts aimed at enhancing participation in hunting and fishing may slow or even halt the trend but are unlikely to bring back the license sales of yesteryear. And, with the traditional funding base shrinking so dramatically, periodic increases in license fees only provide a temporary fiscal boost. Experiments in other states have shown that raising them too high can backfire, making participation rates drop even further.



Clara Ferguson



Eric Nuse

## The Consequences of Under-funding

The ability of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department to protect the public's resources is now severely limited. For 20 years, the Department has been cutting vital programs and leaving positions vacant in an effort to reduce costs. The impacts of these cutbacks are wide ranging and put the future of our fish and wildlife legacy at risk.



Lawrence Pyne

### Conservation Programs in Jeopardy

#### Fisheries

Habitat restoration is needed and will require additional staff. Until habitat can be restored, hatcheries play a vital role in sustaining fish populations. But Vermont's hatcheries are up to 100 years old and in need of repair.

#### Warden Force

Vermont now has fewer Wardens than it did in 1971. The Fish and Wildlife Department cannot afford to fill vacant positions, putting the public and wildlife at risk and making it easier for poachers to act undeterred.

#### Outdoor Education

Over-tapped resources make it difficult to connect children with the natural world and teach them about responsible outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship.

#### Deer Winter Range

Here in the North Country where severe winters can decimate wildlife populations, deer and more than 100 other wildlife species flock to south-facing hemlock groves to survive cold snaps and deep snows. This critical "deer yard" habitat is being lost to poorly-planned development and has become vulnerable to a serious invasive pest, the hemlock woolly adelgid.

Vermont's deer yards are in desperate need of attention: they haven't been fully assessed in 20 years and management plans for deer and forest health are out-of-date.<sup>5</sup>

### Federal Funds Just Out of Reach

Every year, Vermont lacks the matching funds to claim much-needed Federal money. At the end of FY06, \$2.9 million in Federal funds were left on the table. At the end of FY07, \$1.6 million went unclaimed. Vermont cannot afford to continue missing out on this crucial source of funding, one that is projected to grow in coming years.<sup>5</sup>



Tom Decker



Sue Mathews/US Fish & Wildlife Service



Charles H. Wiley

## Economic Pitfalls Ahead

The consequences are both ecological and economic. With numerous fish and wildlife species in urgent need of conservation, continued under-funding of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department poses substantial risks for a key sector of Vermont's economy. Many Vermont businesses, catering to both tourists and residents, depend on fish and wildlife—and healthy habitat—to draw customers.

A 2006 survey by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conservatively estimates that wildlife-watching, hunting and fishing in Vermont add almost \$400 million to Vermont's economy each year. The survey notes that 150,000 people—residents and nonresidents—fished or hunted in Vermont and 468,000 participated in wildlife-watching in 2006 alone.<sup>1</sup>

» Based on national retail sales, if wildlife-related recreational activities were combined into a single corporation, it would have ranked 10<sup>th</sup> on the 1996 Fortune 500 list.<sup>8</sup>



Jay Clark/Frank Wilton League of America

## A Vision Unrealized

An under-funded and under-staffed Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department can only do so much. The current budget—including General Fund appropriations—merely keeps the Department on life support. It is *not* enough to implement a broader vision for the future of our natural resources, including:

- ◆ Expanding conservation education programs
- ◆ Enhancing habitat for grassland birds and other wildlife
- ◆ Improving stream habitat and restoring lost spawning grounds
- ◆ Effectively recovering rare and endangered species, including the sturgeon and bald eagle
- ◆ Investing in new technologies and skills
- ◆ Managing game populations and habitats more actively
- ◆ Developing exemplary land-use practices and greater wildlife diversity in the state's Wildlife Management Areas and sharing these tools with private landowners
- ◆ Creating incentives that encourage private landowners to allow public access
- ◆ Implementing Vermont's dynamic Wildlife Action Plan<sup>5</sup>

## Fisheries Projects

### Bio-security Evaluation of Hatcheries

Cost of assessing security needs and technology solutions to defend against encroaching fish diseases such as Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia and Whirling Disease: **\$400,000 one-time cost**

### Muskellunge Conservation

Cost of enhancing the muskie management program, aimed at conserving populations in the Missisquoi River and assessing fishery potentials in Lake Champlain: **\$120,000 per year**

### Fish Passages and Habitat Connectivity

Cost of expanding the culvert improvement program, helping private landowners reconnect fragmented habitat for brook trout as well as many other fish and amphibians currently trapped between malfunctioning culverts: **\$80,000 per year** (leveraging \$240,000 in federal funds)<sup>5</sup>

## Public Engagement and Land Stewardship

### Landowners Hold the Key

With 85% of Vermont lands in private hands, helping landowners steward their property is critical.

Cost of enhancing current efforts and providing interested landowners with the training, conservation assistance and equipment needed to restore and manage lands and waters for fish and wildlife: **\$500,000 per year** (leveraging \$1.5 million in federal funds)<sup>5</sup>

### Wildlife Management Areas

Vermont's WMAs—encompassing over 118,000 acres—are in dire need of improved operations, maintenance and habitat management. Of the 86 WMAs, 39 lack management plans.

Cost of upgrading to adequate WMA management: **\$240,000 per year<sup>5</sup>**

### Law Enforcement

Cost of restoring the warden force to provide adequate coverage and enforce laws that protect the wildlife and the people of Vermont: **\$500,000 per year<sup>5</sup>**



John J. Messo/NBII

## Traditional Services and New Roles

**F**or decades, the responsibilities of state fish and wildlife agencies centered on law enforcement, management of game species, biological research, management of state lands designated for wildlife habitat and public education.

In these areas alone, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department provides a wide array of public services for which there is an ever-increasing demand. In education, for example: as part of a nationwide effort to “leave no child inside” and increase young people’s interest in hunting, fishing and conservation, the Department offers Conservation Camps, Hunter Education, Project WILD, and Let’s Go Fishing programs. It also offers Women in the Outdoors, Becoming an Outdoor Family and training workshops for teachers.

But the Department’s charge is broader: “the conservation of fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont.” Over the years, its roles have become more numerous and more complex: helping local communities meet their development goals without harming sensitive habitat, conducting environmental assessments, protecting Vermont’s streams (and the

endangered species that live in them) from toxic chemicals, providing search-and-rescue services and more.

The traditional model of financing wildlife agencies with sporting revenues was developed long before the challenges of overdevelopment, habitat fragmentation and Act 250 hearings. Pittman-Robertson, Dingell-Johnson and Wallop-Breaux funds were never intended to address these issues. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department tackles these challenges for everyone’s benefit and we all need to contribute to the effort.

*“It’s like on public highways, if everyone could use the roads but only the people who are driving red trucks paid for them. What is everyone else going to do if there are fewer red trucks on the road? The long-term business model sees us essentially closing up shop at some point in the future if we don’t find a solution.”<sup>9</sup>*

– Paul A. Peditto, Wildlife and Heritage Service Director, Maryland Department of Natural Resources



Wayne Laroche

## A New Era for Wildlife Conservation

In 2001, Congress established the State Wildlife Grants program, the non-game equivalent of Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson funding. The program recognizes that the vast majority of fish and wildlife are neither “game” nor “endangered” and have therefore received little funding or attention. Since rare and endangered species recovery is difficult and expensive, State Wildlife Grants funds are aimed at conserving fish and wildlife *before* they become endangered.

To qualify for State Wildlife Grants funding, every state was required to complete a “comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy” or Wildlife Action Plan. Vermont’s Wildlife Action Plan is an historic achievement. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, working together with scientists, sportsmen and women, conservationists and other community members, developed a proactive Wildlife Action Plan to conserve all of Vermont’s wildlife before they become rare and more costly to protect.

The Wildlife Action Plan represents an inclusive inventory of the state’s fish and wildlife resources, threats to those resources, and action steps needed to conserve them. It identifies 323 Species of Greatest Conservation Need, including game species such as ruffed grouse, muskellunge and black bear. And it provides voluntary, incentive-based solutions to crucial habitat needs.

Effectively implementing Vermont’s Wildlife Action Plan will require all available federal State Wildlife Grants money. To leverage that money, Vermont must have new dedicated matching funds in hand.



Charles H. Willey

*“The Wildlife Action Plan marks the start of a new era in wildlife conservation, one where we can keep common species common.”<sup>10</sup>*

– Governor James Douglas



John J. Morsoso/NBII

# MAKING THE INVESTMENT

## The 1990 Governor's Commission Report

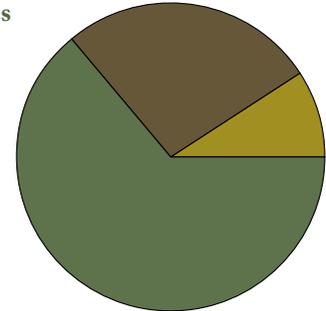
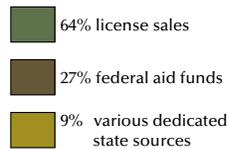
In 1989, Governor Kunin issued Executive Order 80, establishing the 16-member Governor's Commission on Fish and Wildlife Funding. The Order noted that:

- ♦ Public demand for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's services had increased dramatically
- ♦ The Department's roles and responsibilities were increasing and becoming more complex
- ♦ Traditional funding sources were proving insufficient to meet budgetary needs<sup>6</sup>

The Commission was charged with analyzing the options and developing "alternatives that will provide a dependable financial base for the department in the foreseeable future." The conclusions of the Commission's 1990 report were straightforward:

- ♦ In terms of funding, there was "an immediate need to broaden the base"
- ♦ License sales and federal aid—comprising 91% of the Department budget—would not support inflation, let alone additional growth<sup>6</sup>

### 1990 Department Revenues

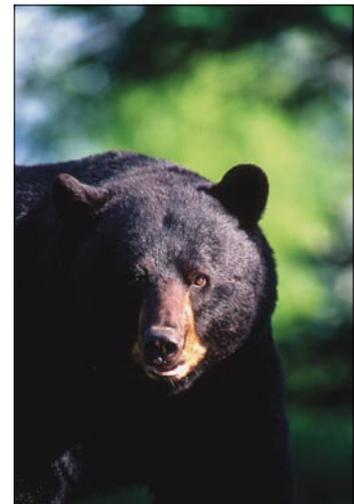


The Commission's recommendations included streamlining the Department to reduce costs, increasing existing fees and establishing new ones, reimbursing the Department for non-traditional environmental assessment and law enforcement work, dedicating a portion of the Property Transfer Tax to the Department and establishing new revenue sources such as a Fish and Wildlife lottery or an additional state Excise Tax on hunting and fishing equipment.<sup>6</sup>

## Sixteen Years of Growing Crisis

Between 1990 and 2006, various measures were taken. In 1993, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department began receiving money from boat registrations. In 1996, a tiny fraction of the Rooms and Meals Tax was allocated, then a portion of the Gas Tax in 1998. None turned the tide. Responsibilities and costs continued to mount, while license sales continued to fall. To make ends meet, the Department streamlined, left staff positions vacant, cut existing programs, and refrained from launching other much-needed efforts.

In FY05, a shortfall could no longer be avoided and \$2 million in General Fund appropriations were required to keep the Department afloat. The same was true in FY06 and the Legislature recognized that the problem needed to be addressed.

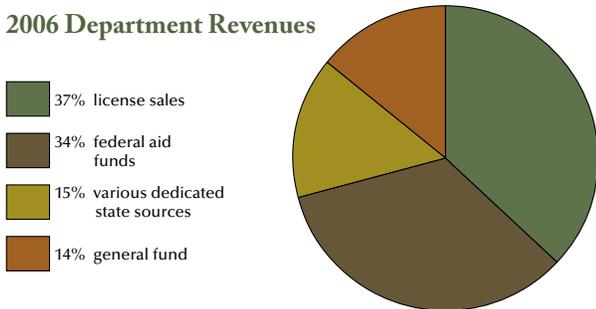


## The challenge

The 1990 and 2007 reports came to the same conclusion: the funding base for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department must be broadened. As recently as 1990, license sales accounted for 64% of the Department's budget. In FY06, they accounted for just 37%.<sup>6,7</sup>

## Taking a Second Look: The 2007 Task Force Report

### 2006 Department Revenues



In 2006, the Legislature established a Fish and Wildlife Department Funding Task Force “to develop recommendations for comprehensive, sustainable funding mechanisms...which complement existing funding sources.” The nine members of the Task Force, appointed by Governor Douglas, completed an extensive analysis of the options and submitted their report in February 2007. The message echoed the 1990 report. The funding base for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department must be broadened. The Task Force recommendations included:

- ◆ Dedicating 1/8 of a cent of the state Sales Tax to the Department
- ◆ Dedicating 1/8 of a cent of the state Rooms and Meals Tax to the Department
- ◆ Creating 5-year hunting, fishing and trapping licenses
- ◆ Creating a wildlife lottery ticket
- ◆ Dedicating General Fund money to offset law enforcement expenses
- ◆ Creating a non-motorized boat permit<sup>7</sup>

The Task Force’s first recommendation was the dedication of 1/8 of a cent of the state Sales Tax. On a \$1 sale generating 6 cents in tax, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department would receive 1/8 of a cent. This would provide an estimated \$6 to 7 million annually.

And, it would leverage millions more in federal money each year. The Legislature could stop appropriating \$2-plus million from the General Fund, as it has done each year since FY05.



Charles H. Willey



Charles H. Willey



Shawn Good

### The solution

The Task Force Report noted that, of all the recommendations, only 1/8 of a cent of the state Sales Tax would provide enough revenue “to meet the projected short term gap in funding...and allow for needed and overdue program growth.”<sup>7</sup>

## Big Dividends: Reinvesting in Wildlife Resources

**I**n strictly economic terms, why should Vermont dedicate 1/8 of a cent of the state Sales Tax to its Fish and Wildlife Department? For one thing, the immediate payoff would be huge: an additional \$2 to 3 million in federal funding. Available federal funding is likely to grow in coming years, with federal legislation providing money to mitigate the effects of climate change on wildlife. However, Vermont will only get its slice of the pie if dedicated state matching funds are available.

And, as noted earlier, wildlife-watching, hunting and fishing add hundreds of millions of dollars to the Vermont economy each year. A report by the Izaak Walton League of America estimated that, in 1995, these three activities accounted for 5% of Vermont's GSP (gross state product) and brought \$23.9 million in state sales and income tax revenues.<sup>8</sup>

In 1995, of the estimated \$23.9 million in wildlife-related state tax revenue, only 0.5% was invested in the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.<sup>8</sup> At that point the Department still relied almost exclusively on license sales and federal excise taxes. Even in FY06, with the Department receiving appropriations from the General Fund and the Gas Tax, Vermont was still reinvesting only a small fraction of the revenues generated by fish and wildlife.

Fish and wildlife are a boon to the Vermont economy. Dedicating a fraction of the revenue generated by hunting, fishing and wildlife related activities to the protection and enhancement of our natural resources—clean air, clean water and healthy habitats—is a smart, and responsible, investment.

### Vermont Wildlife Partnership



“Working together to ensure the future of Vermont’s fish and wildlife legacy”



**Wildlife-watching, hunting, and fishing add hundreds of millions of dollars to the Vermont economy each year.**

## The Missouri-Arkansas Payoff

Referendum votes in 1976 and 1996 amended the Missouri and Arkansas Constitutions, increasing the state Sales Tax by 1/8 of a cent and dedicating those funds to conservation programs.

In 25 years, Missouri was able—for example—to:

- ◆ Establish 60 ongoing research studies of deer, bear, turkey, grouse, furbearers, waterfowl and songbirds
- ◆ Create access to 530 new lakes and 290 new sections of rivers and streams
- ◆ Acquire 22 conservation areas within 50 miles of the state's 7 major population centers
- ◆ Expand hunter education classes to 1,000 per year and construct conservation education centers near all major population centers
- ◆ Offer incentives to private landowners for improving stream habitats, and coordinate 35,000 stream-monitoring volunteers each year
- ◆ Initiate over 20 studies—up to 100 years in span—on forest management practices and their effects on plants and animals
- ◆ Provide free forest management education and technical assistance throughout the state<sup>11</sup>

Missouri also boasts the highest “hunter replacement ratio” in the country, putting it at the very top of a small handful of states where per capita participation is projected to rise based on current youth participation rates.<sup>12</sup>

In just 5 years, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission:

- ◆ Added 30 enforcement officers plus new programs including K-9 units, covert operations and a dive team
- ◆ Initiated new education programs and completed the first of 4 planned nature centers
- ◆ Renovated hatcheries and added fish and wildlife management staff
- ◆ Purchased over 20,000 acres of new public use land and improved existing areas<sup>13</sup>

*“We can drive down country roads and watch flocks of wild turkeys, or ease through forests and photograph elk and deer, or listen to the chorus of songbirds. One-eighth cent seems like a cheap price for those luxuries.”<sup>14</sup>*

– Editorial, *Harrison Daily Times*, Arkansas



Charles H. Willey

## A Popular Mandate: Vermonters Weigh In

Vermonters from across the political spectrum support increased and broad-based funding for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. Responsive Management conducted surveys on the topic in 1995, 2000 and 2007. In 1995, Vermonters were presented with 12 potential mechanisms for augmenting Department funding and all 12 were supported by a majority of respondents.<sup>15</sup>

In 2000, 81% supported the dedication of 1/8 of a cent of the state Sales Tax and 51% supported a 1/8 of a cent *increase* in the state Sales Tax. The response was similar in 2007 with 79% supporting a dedication and

» **The reallocation of 1/8 of a cent of the state Sales Tax is supported by 4 out of 5 Vermonters, with similar support from hunters and non-hunters.**<sup>16</sup>

57% supporting an increase. The 2007 survey also noted that there was no significant difference between hunters and non-hunters in their support for alternative funding mechanisms.

Following are just a few of the comments the Fish and Wildlife Funding Task Force received while working on its 2007 report.<sup>2,16</sup>

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*“The Department provides essential, expert services to the state that far exceed the needs of game species, and its funding should not rely only on hunting fees.”*

- Robert A. Lloyd, Former President, Vermont Coverts

*“It is to the state’s benefit that its Department of Fish and Wildlife be adequately funded to properly manage its fish and wildlife resources.”*

- Put Blodgett, President, Vermont Woodlands Association

*“We strongly support a broad-based, stable, and significant source of long-term funding for the Department. Such an approach appropriately spreads the funding responsibility among all Vermonters.”*

- Mike Winslow, President, Otter Creek Audubon

*“With a new source of funding for the Department, the wildlife resources that all Vermonters rely on, including local communities, will be greatly benefited and will result in a healthy sustainable future for our great state.”<sup>7</sup>*

- Rick Irick, Vermont State Chairman, Ducks Unlimited



Charles H. Welley

## Leadership and Commitment

**W**ith such strong public support, Vermont is poised for change. Our small state has long been known for its innovation and foresight. We are also known for our commitment to our rural traditions and natural resources.

With two thorough studies of its own and many relevant surveys to point the way—plus a Wildlife Action Plan to ensure that funds are used appropriately—Vermont is positioned to demonstrate its vision and commitment by implementing a long-term funding solution to stabilize and enhance the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department and ensure the future of Vermont’s fish and wildlife legacy.

*“Vermont’s fish and wildlife legacy is a high priority, one that demands real funding... All Vermonters will benefit from a stable Department, properly funded and able to carry out its mission.”<sup>17</sup>*

– Roy Marble, President, Vermont Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs



**With strong public support, Vermont is poised for a change.**

Charles H. Warren/NBII

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Charles H. Willey

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Sterling College  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Trust for Public Land  
Trust for Wildlife  
University of Vermont  
UPS Store  
Vermont Alliance of Conservation Voters  
Vermont Bass Federation  
Vermont Bird Tours  
Vermont Center for Ecostudies  
Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife  
Vermont Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs  
Vermont Land Trust  
Vermont Natural Resources Council  
Vermont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas  
Vermont River Conservancy  
Vermont Trappers Association  
Vermont Trout Unlimited  
Vermont Woodlands Association  
Vermont WoodNet  
Wildlands Project  
Wildlife Management Institute

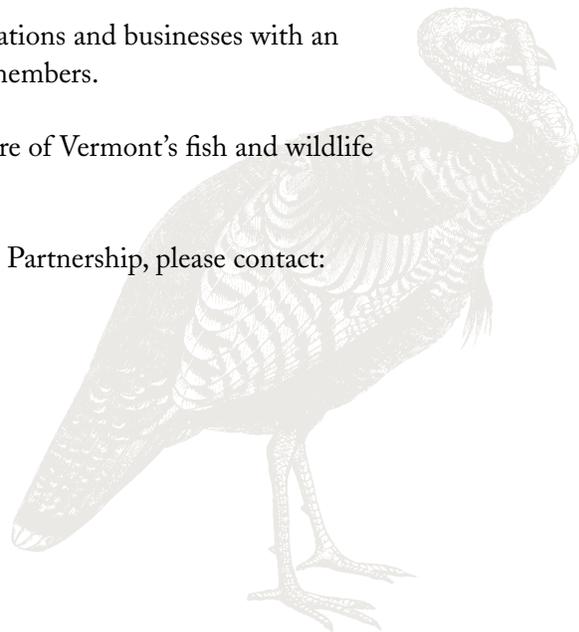
## MEMBERSHIP

The Vermont Wildlife Partnership invites organizations and businesses with an interest in Vermont's fish and wildlife to become members.

Individuals who would like to help ensure the future of Vermont's fish and wildlife legacy are encouraged to join us.

For more information about the Vermont Wildlife Partnership, please contact:

The Vermont Wildlife Partnership  
P.O. Box 471  
Stowe, Vermont 05672  
802.253.8227 (telephone)  
802.253.8996 (fax)  
[info@vermontwildlifepartnership.org](mailto:info@vermontwildlifepartnership.org)  
[www.vermontwildlifepartnership.org](http://www.vermontwildlifepartnership.org)



## THE VERMONT WILDLIFE PARTNERSHIP



*The Vermont Wildlife Partnership is a coalition of organizations, businesses, and individuals working together to ensure the future of Vermont's fish and wildlife legacy.*

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