



WILDLIFE LANDS ACQUISITION IN FY20

Land acquisition staff from the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and MassWildlife collaborated on 38 projects in FY 20 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020) protecting a total of 2,200 acres of critical habitat, forests, grasslands, water frontage and inland water access points. This brings the total amount of land under the care and control of the agency to 223,528 acres. The land acquisition team focuses on properties which provide or improve public access for fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing and other nature-based recreation. Equally important considerations include wildlife biodiversity, wildlife corridors, flood water absorption, and climate change resiliency. In many situations, MassWildlife works with conservation partners to permanently protect habitat for wildlife to thrive and people to enjoy. Land protection pays many dividends relating to recreation, economics, aesthetics,

ecology, and climate. Land protection and its management benefits both wildlife and Massachusetts citizens and visitors now and into the future. Plan your next exploration of MassWildlife lands by visiting the online interactive Wildlands Viewer map at mass.gov/dfw/wildlife-lands.

The Southeast District land team protected 184 acres of valuable wildlife habitat. The major protection effort was on a 175-acre parcel added to the Rocky Gutter WMA in Middleborough. With unmarked woods roads and cranberry bogs in active production, the new addition creates a scenic user-friendly access into the southeast part of Rocky Gutter WMA. Primarily forested, with a powerline easement cutting across it, the property contains the only water bodies in the 3,000-acre Rocky Gutter WMA. Held by one family for generations, they

wanted to ensure permanent protection and public access for hunting and other forms of wildlife-based recreation.

The Northeast District protected 753 acres for wildlife and wildlife related recreation. This year marked the completion of the District's federal North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) match requirements with two conservation partners: Essex County Greenbelt Association (ECGA) and The Trustees of Reservations (Trustees). In Newbury, ECGA gifted a conservation restriction (CR) on approximately 375 acres of ECGA salt marsh to be known as Great Salt Marsh WCE and the Trustees gifted a CR of roughly 200 acres of their Old Town Hill property and is part of the William Forward WCE.

Central District land acquisition staff conserved 110 acres of land. A critical 55.5-acre acquisition of an in-holding in the Moose Hill WMA in Paxton was made possible by partnering with the Greater Worcester Land Trust (GWLT). The GWLT purchased the land, conveyed the fee to MassWildlife and then purchased a permanent trail easement to the parcel's existing foot paths connecting to the Mid-State Trail in the Moose Hill WMA. This acquisition fills a "doughnut hole" in the WMA, enhances recreation access and prevents development and the discharge setbacks that would have impacted the WMA's huntable area.

Seven projects were completed in the Connecticut Valley District protecting 261 acres. A 55-acre parcel added acreage to the Green River WMA in Colrain. The parcel is on the west side of the Green River abutting the Vermont border. Over 1,000 feet of relatively unspoiled shoreline on the Green River protects this designated Coldwater Fisheries Resource (CFR) and supports numerous rare aquatic species. An existing pullout on the Green River Road enhances fishing and hunting opportunities and ensures continued trout stocking access by MassWildlife. The new property also protects 3,000 feet of the Borden Brook, another CFR and important tributary to the Green River.

The Western District completed 10 land projects protecting approximately 892 acres of land and adding to nine WMAs. A critical connection between the Eugene Moran, Chalet WMAs and Peru/Windsor Brook WCE was secured with the purchase of a 176-acre parcel in Windsor. The property, now part of the Chalet WMA, features a variety of habitat types including a prime example of a red spruce swamp and 15 acres of field. Young forest restoration efforts already in progress will further enhance hunting and wildlife watching opportunities.

	WESTERN	VALLEY	CENTRAL	NORTHEAST	SOUTHEAST	TOTAL
WMA	49,760.68	20,832.99	40,664.27	15,141.04	44,861.48	171,260.47
WCE	15,638.11	8,465.51	8,725.50	2,839.73	11,433.64	47,102.49
Access	35.82	554.41	692.55	235.12	59.91	1,577.81
Sanctuary	427.50		367.91	552.48	78.50	1,426.39
WCR	69.40	2.39	746.41	127.00	37.90	983.10
Installation	2.35	579.22		106.42	114.36	802.35
Other				371.70	5.94	377.64
TOTAL	65,933.86	30,434.52	51,196.64	19,373.49	56,591.73	223,528.29

WMA (Wildlife Management Area) – Land owned outright by DFG/MassWildlife. Open to the public for hunting, fishing, trapping and other passive recreation. Subject to Wildlife Management Area Regulations

WCE (Wildlife Conservation Easement) – DFG/MassWildlife owns development and recreation rights. Open to the public for hunting, fishing, trapping and other passive recreation.

Access Areas – Property providing public recreation access to water bodies or adjacent conservation lands owned by a third party. (Does not include Office of Fishing and Boating Access boat launches, ramps or fishing piers)

Wildlife Sanctuary – Wildlife properties donated to MassWildlife and governed by statute and regulation, fishing, hunting, and trapping are prohibited; other public recreation access is permitted.

WCR (Wildlife Conservation Restriction) – DFG or MassWildlife owns development rights, but public access is not allowed. These lands buffer wildlife habitat by preventing unwanted development.