

Vermont Sporting Journal

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Sam Wilcox's Turkey

We return a portion of pre-tax profits as follows:

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Vermont Fish & Wildlife Warden Service Responds to Brighton Snowmobile Crash

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE
Press Release



On Sunday, February 20, at approximately 4:32 p.m. the Vermont Warden Service was called to assist with a snowmobile crash on Island Pond, in Brighton.

The Warden Service responded to the scene along with Brighton Fire Department and Morgan Rescue.

An investigation determined that Donald Gatz, 52, from Long Island, New York was operating a snowmobile at a high rate of speed on Island Pond when he struck a frozen embankment on the ice that was approximately 3 feet high. Investigation revealed that Mr. Gatz was not operating at an appropriate speed to reasonably avoid the embankment.

Mr. Gatz and the snowmobile were subsequently sent airborne before crashing onto the ice approximately 80 yards northwest of the embankment. Mr. Gatz was thrown off the snowmobile while airborne.

Mr. Gatz was transported from the scene by Morgan Rescue to North Country Hospital in Newport for further treatment and evaluation before being transported to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, in Lebanon, New Hampshire. He suffered severe but non-life-threatening injuries.

The snowmobile sustained heavy front end and rear end damage. The snowmobile was towed off the pond. No other people were injured in the incident.

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Andrew Glynn of VA Wins Vermont's Lifetime Hunting and Fishing License Lottery

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Andrew Glynn of Falls Church, Virginia is the lucky winner of the 2021 Vermont Lifetime Hunting and Fishing License Lottery.

"I had a great experience hunting in Vermont years ago, but it's a long trip from my home in Virginia," said Mr. Glynn. "This now gives me a reason to make an annual trip and spend more time in Vermont. This is such a great opportunity, and I'm very grateful."

Mr. Glynn will be entitled to hunt and fish in Vermont for free for the rest of his life. He was drawn as the winner from among 20,382 lottery tickets purchased in 2021. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department holds the drawing annually.

"The Lifetime License Lottery gives anyone, resident or nonresident, an opportunity to win a Vermont hunting and fishing license that is valid for the recipient's lifetime," said Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Christopher Herrick. "Even if you don't win the license, by applying,

you know you have contributed to fish and wildlife conservation in Vermont."

This year's sales of the \$2.00 tickets brought net sales of \$40,586.50 to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. These state dollars can be leveraged with federal funds to produce more than \$162,000 to support the department's mission to conserve fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats.

"These funds help us to manage the state's sportfish and game animals, protect threatened and endangered species and conserve important habitat for wildlife," said Herrick.

A person can enter Vermont's License of a Lifetime Lottery by adding the \$2.00 entry fee when they buy their license on the Fish and Wildlife Department website at vtfishandwildlife.com. They can also enter by applying at statewide wherever Vermont hunting, fishing and trapping licenses are sold, or with a [printable application](#) available on the department website. There is no limit on the number of times a person may enter during the year.

Two Minors Rescued after ATV Goes Through Lake Memphremagog Ice

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

On Friday, February 18, at approximately 10:59 a.m., the Vermont Warden Service, along with Newport Fire Department and Newport Police Department, responded to a report of an ATV operated by two minors going through the ice of Lake Memphremagog, near Horseneck Island.

Upon arrival to the scene, Newport Fire Department was able to successfully retrieve the two minors from the ice using the department's tracked side-by-side. They were brought back to shore and treated and evaluated for early signs of hypothermia.

The minors were transported to North Country Hospital in Newport and released later that day.

Investigation revealed the two minors were operating their ATV west on the ice of Lake Memphremagog. They encountered a pressure crack in the ice and broke through, fully submerging their ATV in approximately five to six feet of standing water on top of the ice.

The two minors were able to call for help while standing on top of the four-wheeler. The ATV was later removed from the Ice.



A Reminder from F&W to Remove Ice Shanties

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Vermont state law requires that ice fishing shanties be removed from the ice before the ice weakens, according to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

The shanty must be removed before the ice becomes unsafe or loses its ability to support the shanty out of the water, or before the last Sunday in March -- the 27th this year -- whichever comes first. All contents, debris, wood, and supports must also be removed so they do not become a hazard to navigation in the spring.

The fine for leaving your ice fishing shanty on the ice can be \$1,000, and shanties may not be left at state fishing access areas.

VTF&W photo by Lt. Sean Fowler

Ice shanties in Vermont must be removed before the ice becomes unsafe or loses its ability to support the shanty out of the water, or before the last Sunday in March – whichever comes first.



Public Hearings on Deer and Moose

March 21, 23, 24, 29

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department and the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board will hold public hearings on deer and moose management for 2022 on March 21, 23, 24, and 29.

The hearings will include results of Vermont's 2021 deer seasons and prospects for deer hunting next fall as well as an opportunity for people to provide their observations and opinions about the current status of the deer herd.

The Fish and Wildlife Department's [2022 Moose Harvest Recommendation](#) can be seen by going to the "[Public Hearings Schedule](#)" on Vermont Fish and Wildlife's [home page](#).

The hearings will also include a review of the proposed 2022 moose hunting seasons and an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the number of moose permits recommended for 2022.

The three in-person hearings will begin at 6:30 p.m. at these locations:

March 21 – Spaulding High School, 155 Ayers St, Barre, VT 05641

March 23 – Kehoe Conservation Camp, 636 Point of Pines Rd, Castleton, VT 05735

March 24 -- Lake Region High School, 317 Lake Region Rd, Orleans, VT 05860

The hearing on March 29 will be online. To access the meeting, click this direct link: [follow this hyperlink to access the Microsoft Teams meeting](#).

The link can also be accessed, on the day of hearing, through the Upcoming Events calendar on the department's Homepage ([vtfishandwildlife.com](#)). People using the mobile version (smart phone) will need to scroll to the bottom of the page to locate the calendar.

Or call in (audio only)

[+1 802-828-7667,904108179#](tel:+18028287667904108179) United States, Montpelier

Phone Conference ID: 904 108 179#

For more information and to join the online hearing, go to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife website [www.vtfishandwildlife.com](#) and click on the "[Public Hearings Schedule](#)" on the home page.

In addition to the public hearings, anyone can leave a comment on the proposals with a telephone message by calling 802-828-7498 or by emailing ANR.FWPublicComment@vermont.gov. Comments on moose must be received by March 31 and for deer by May 14.

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, experience level, sex, or gender identity. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities are available on request at no cost to the student. Please include a description of the accommodation you will need. Individuals making such requests must include their contact information. Requests should be made as early as possible. For example, an interpreter must be requested at least two weeks in advance. Please contact: Nick.Fortin@vermont.gov, 802-793-8777 (voice), 1-800-253-0191 (TTY).

Bald Eagle Removed from State Endangered and Threatened Species List, 5 Other Species & 3 Critical Habitats Added

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Seven species and three critical habitats received updated conservation designations on Vermont's Endangered and Threatened Species List, including the highly anticipated de-listing of the bald eagle after over a decade of restoration efforts.

"The bald eagle's de-listing is a milestone for Vermont," said Wildlife Division Director Mark Scott. "This reflects more than a decade of dedicated work by Vermont Fish & Wildlife and partners. It shows that Vermonters have the capacity to restore and protect the species and habitats that we cherish."

That conservation capacity will be essential moving forward.

Along with de-listings for the bald eagle and short-styled snakeroot, a flowering plant of dry woodland habitats, Thursday's update to the State Endangered and Threatened Species List included a range of new listings.

Two invertebrate species, the American bumblebee and a species of freshwater mussel known as the brook floater, and two plant species, Houghton's sedge and rue anemone, have been listed as endangered. State endangered species are considered at immediate risk of becoming locally extinct in Vermont.

One bird species, the Eastern meadowlark, received a new designation as threatened. State threatened species are considered at risk of becoming endangered without timely conservation action.

Three important landscapes also received new designations as critical habitats that are essential for the survival of threatened or endangered species in Vermont. The newly listed sites support species including the common tern and Eastern spiny softshell turtle, as well as little brown, Northern long-eared, and tricolored bats.

"These new listings reflect the stressors affecting Vermont's plant, fish, and wildlife species," said Wildlife Diversity Program Manager Dr. Rosalind Renfrew. "In the face of climate change and habitat loss, our mission is to conserve these species and others to the very best of our ability on behalf of all Vermonters, who demonstrate time and again that they care about the survival of wildlife populations."

The new listings are a vital step towards enabling the department to carry out that mission. They trigger additions to existing species and habitat management plans, development of recovery metrics, initiation of population monitoring, and strengthening or establishing critical partnerships.

"We dedicate incredible resources through population monitoring, habitat conservation and improvement, and education and outreach to preventing species from reaching these thresholds in the first place," says Scott. "But, when necessary, we also draw on our successful track record leading endangered species recovery efforts including restoring Vermont's populations of common loon, osprey, peregrine falcon, and now the bald eagle. We will bring that same dedication to each of these new listings."

VTF&W Photo by John Hall
A nesting pair of bald eagles in
Barnet, Vermont





Vermont Trout Unlimited Celebrates 10th Anniversary of Fly Fishing Summer Camp for Teens

Vermont Trout Unlimited announces the tenth anniversary of their fly fishing camp for Vermont teens ages 13 to 16. Teens interested in either learning the art of fly-fishing or improving their basic skill level along side some of Vermont’s most accomplished fly anglers, are invited to apply. The 2022 camp is scheduled for Sunday June 19th through Thursday June 23rd at Jackson’s Lodge in Canaan, Vermont.

Chris Herrick, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife Commissioner, supports TU’s educational efforts. “TU’s Fly Fishing Camp for Teens is an incredible program dedicated to educating our next generation of fly fishermen and women to help ensure that our precious coldwater fisheries here in Vermont will be taken care of well into the future.”

Participants in the 5 day/4 night comprehensive program will learn and practice casting, basic fly tying, knot craft, insect identification and imitation (entomology), fish identification and behavior (ichthyology) safe wading techniques, angling ethics and coldwater conservation.

Campers will hone their skills on local lakes, ponds and streams, including the Connecticut River.

Our host, Jackson’s Lodge, (www.JacksonsLodgeVT.net) is located in Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom on Wallace Pond and is a short five-minute drive from the Connecticut River.

Prospective campers are encouraged to apply no later than April 15, 2022 to secure a spot for this year’s program. The cost for the 5-day camp is \$450. Scholarships may be available on an “as-needed” basis.

Trout Unlimited is a non-profit organization that has dedicated over 50 years to the conservation, protection and restoration of North America’s cold-water fisheries and watersheds.

For complete information about the TU Fly Fishing Camp, an application form, and many videos of the camp, go to www.vermonttroutcamp.com or e-mail Kurt Budliger, camp director, at vermonttroutcamp@gmail.com.



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First Buck

by Brian Pellegrini

Growing up, I always loved being in the outdoors. I loved everything about it; the fresh air, the sun, playing in the dirt, swimming, and 4-wheeling. I did a lot of 4-wheeling with my dad. He'd get home from work and I'd beg him to go for a ride. He owned a lot of land in Orange, Vermont where we had a small hunting camp. I liked to go up there and hangout, but I was never allowed to go with him during hunting season because I didn't hunt. I liked to target shoot and shoot skeet, but was not a fan of having to wake up early and sit in a tree stand or bling for hours and not seen any wildlife, so I didn't even bother to get my hunting license.

When I was 19, I'd had enough of being excluded from deer camp, so I broke down and got my hunting license. My dad was ecstatic, but I was just doing it to hangout with the friends that he went to camp with. By this time, my dad had sold his land with the stipulation that he could use the land and camp for 5 more years. I was sad when he sold it, but part of it was to help pay for my college, so I couldn't be too upset. The memories I have there will last forever.

But what I'm getting at is that I was finally able to go to deer camp with the boys! Me and Dad, RJ Caldwell and his stepson, Terrick, and Dick and Bryant Cleveland; fathers and sons. It was paradise in the fact that we were all close, loved venison, and having a good time. But I still had a minimal desire to hunt. I would go out opening morning for a few hours to be able to say I hunted but spent a lot of that time on my cell phone texting or

on Facebook. Then I'd head back to camp and relax until everyone but me wanted to go out for the evening hunt. So, I'd go out and "hunt" for the last 2-3 hours of daylight. I did that for the last few years we were able to use the camp.

Once we were out of that camp, my dad bought another, smaller piece of land in Orange. It was on the ever-popular Notch Trail that ran from Washington to Orange. It was known for mud trucks, wild parties, and 4-wheeling. My dad quickly put a camper on our piece of land with a two-story addition. He made this one far nicer than the other camps he had built. It quickly became our new paradise. But it didn't change how I felt about hunting. After 6 or 7 years of "hunting" I had never seen a deer in the woods, which only magnified how I felt about hunting. I still loved the outdoor activities, and hanging out with the boys, but not hunting. There were a few mornings that I didn't even hunt because Bryant had moved out of state and just came to hang out at camp, so I just spent time playing cards and goofing around with him. I think it bummed my dad out a bit, but hunting wasn't very fun for me.

I've since moved to Virginia and didn't go to deer camp for the first time since I was 19. It was weird not to hang with dad and the guys, but I knew I'd get to do some "hunting" with dad when he came down for Thanksgiving. It would be spent at my uncle Johnny's

home in Cumberland. He calls it "Valhalla." I'm not sure why, but it is fitting for his log cabin that's tucked away with food plots and deer stands in every corner of his 80-acre property. We each had gotten 3-day licenses for the week, and I was actually eager to see a deer while hunting. Uncle Johnny had shot some monster bucks on his land and said there were a bunch that he had caught on camera.

On Wednesday morning, my cousin Todd and I got up and dressed to hunt. I was put in a raised blind at the top of the corner of a field with a food plot. I got settled, and took out my phone to "hunt," periodically looking up to look for what I knew would never come. But, within 30 minutes, I had seen my first ever deer while hunting. Out came what looked to me was a good-sized doe. She walked the edge of the tree line to my right and back into the woods. "Wow, that was cool!" I thought to myself. "This is

WRITERS WANTED



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what it's like to have animals in the woods." Another 15 minutes went by, and still not legal shoot time, but I heard a rustling in the woods, and it was getting louder. Out walks a buck right in front of me, about 60 yards away. It walked out from the trees quickly and right across my line of vision but didn't stick around long enough so I could take a shot at it. I had seen more deer while hunting in Virginia than 7-8 years in Vermont. Now I think its time to get serious. I put my phone away and just listened. Unfortunately, the rest of the day, no deer came back out. But I finally had a cool story to tell my dad and uncle.

Thanksgiving morning was unsuccessful, as well. I didn't see any deer, but I watched squirrels come alive with the sun. They were using the blind as their jungle gym. No luck seeing a deer, but nature is cool to watch, and I enjoyed it.

The time spent not hunting was spent telling family stories and memories. Uncle Johnny would often say how he would enjoy if Todd or I shot a deer. He would say, "This would be the crowning jewel of the weekend for one of you to get one. This is what I built this place for."

The last morning of my license, I had a funny feeling. I woke up and felt unusually rested for the amount of turkey dinner and dessert I had gorged myself on. The coffee tasted extra perfect and most everyone was already awake. It was about 5:45 when I got to my stand. I got settled but didn't take my phone out of my pocket. I chambered my gun and sat it next to me. At about 6:30, I got bored and pulled my phone out. Time to look at


Facebook. In the middle of scrolling, probably 6:55, I heard more rustling in the woods, similar to Wednesday morning. Out walks a buck! A good sized, what looks to be a tall 6 pointer walking from the bottom of the food plot right toward the front of my blind. I sat up in my chair to grab my gun and it makes this *BANG* noise. I'm not sure how, but the buck kept getting closer. Its at about 65 yards. For whatever reason, I text my father the word, "Buck." It's now 7:00 on the dot. I point my gun out the window of the blind, and my hear starts pounding. My hands start to shake. By this time, he was at about 40-45 yards. I take a few deep breaths and put the scope on the buck. He's moving at a steady pace so I can't keep the crosshairs where I want them. So I lead them, and let him walk into them.

BANG The deer drops straight to the ground, kicks for about 15-20 seconds and stops moving. I've done it. I've killed my first buck while hunting. I walk out of the blind and stand in awe of what I just did; heart still pounding, hands still shaking. I took a few seconds look at my phone. Dad

texted me; "Big?" and "far away?" I replied, "Down!" he asked, "Got him??" I typed, "Dropped him."

I finally calmed down a little bit and walked over to my deer. Not a 6 pointer, but 7 points on this guy. A tall rack, with 2 small brow tines on each side, a fork on the right, and 3 points on the left and probably 140 pounds. I immediately grabbed the antlers. There's something majestic about being the first and only person to be so close and touch the antlers of a deer you've harvested. I took my phone out to take a picture. Todd had messaged me, "Tell me that was you!!" "Yessir!!! I dropped him!!" I snapped a few pictures and sent them to him.

A few minutes had passed, but my dad and uncle weren't here, yet. I'd figured they would have sped out, so I called and told them to hurry. I could tell my dad was already in awe. When Dad and uncle Johnny finally came down from the house on the Mule, I could see smiles from the top of the field. They got to me and were ecstatic; bear hugs all around and lots of pictures.




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Something interesting that my uncle had said that day really resonated with me. "Once the deer is down, all it is, is just a memory and experience." Its true. I spent those hours in a stand, waiting and watching for a deer. He came into sight and within seconds, my hunt was over. The adrenaline and emotion of that day will forever be one of the greatest experiences I've ever had.

When I visited my uncle with my parents for Christmas, I had made his "Wall." This wall included pictures of animals shot on his land by friends and loved ones. It meant a lot at how proud he and my father were for this accomplishment. My uncle built this house on this land with the pure intention of having family there and

being able to share his passion with them. He also told me that he and his friends have this \$5 bet every year that whoever gets the biggest buck wins a rotating plaque and the \$5. He was determined to hunt hard



for the next few days so he wouldn't have to give up the plaque or \$5. On February 7, I received a message on Facebook that I had been victorious! Turns out that hunting can be an adventure, and profitable!

Governor Appoints Two New F&WL Board Members

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Governor Phil Scott has appointed Jamie Dragon of Stowe and David Deen of Westminster to the Fish & Wildlife Board, the citizen panel charged with evaluating scientific and legal recommendations from Fish & Wildlife Department experts to set hunting, fishing and trapping regulations.

"Wildlife management is a necessity in our ever-growing community," says Jamie Dragon, the new board member for Lamoille County. "There needs to be a balance to enhance, manage and maintain wildlife in this state that we all love so much."

Born and raised in Vermont, Dragon is an adult-onset hunter, a pageant winner who has represented Vermont

in the Miss USA competition, and the founder of both a salon and a life and health coaching practice.

Joining Dragon, former state senator and state representative David Deen is the new board member for Windham County.

"Vermont is a citizen state," says Deen. "Citizens serve as our elected officials from the schoolboard, to the selectboard, to the Legislature. It is the responsibility of the Fish & Wildlife Board to support and guide the experts at the department and see that they are responsive to the human impacts of their decisions."

Along with his 30-year tenure in state legislature, Deen has worked as an

Orvis certified flyfishing guide, and as a River Steward for the Connecticut River Watershed Council.

Fish & Wildlife Board members serve six-year terms, with one board member representing each of Vermont's 14 counties.

"Fish & Wildlife Board members perform an invaluable service vetting hunting, fishing and trapping regulations through the lenses of science and the department's mission," said Commissioner Christopher Herrick. "Their collective experience and dedication to stewarding Vermont's fish, wildlife, and habitats for all Vermonters are an incredible asset to conservation efforts in our state."

VTF&W Says Bears Becoming Active It's Time to Take Down Bird Feeders!

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department says warm spring weather and melting snows will cause bears to come out of their winter dens in search of food. The department recommends taking down bird feeders and keeping them stored until December, to avoid attracting bears.

“Although we typically recommend taking down bird feeders by April 1, we are asking Vermonters to take them down early this year,” said Jaclyn Comeau, the department’s bear biologist.

The department is already receiving bear reports as of March 7, and encourages Vermonters who experience a conflict with bears to submit a report through the Living with Black Bears web page. The warmer temperatures predicted now will stimulate more bears to emerge from their dens to seek any food sources they can smell.

“Preventing bears from having access to human-related foods, such as bird seed, is key to successful coexistence,” Comeau added.



VTF&W photo by John Hall

Bird feeders are just one of the things that can attract hungry bears. Other sources of food that bears find appealing are garbage, open dumpsters, backyard chickens, pet food, barbecue grills, campsites with accessible food, and food waste.

“Purposely feeding a bear is not just bad for the bear” said Comeau. “It is also dangerous for you, it causes problems for your neighbors, and it is illegal.”

The department offers the following tips to coexist with bears:

- Take down birdfeeders between late March and December.
- Store garbage in bear proof containers or structures—trash cans alone are not enough
- Follow the steps on our web page for composting in bear country
- Use electric fences to keep chickens and honeybees safe
- Request a bear-proof dumpster from your waste hauler
 - Feed your pets indoors
 - Never feed bears, deliberately or accidentally

And for Vermonters who wish to connect with and appreciate



VTF&W photo by Kris & Norm Senna

songbirds after taking down their birdfeeders this spring, the department will be partnering with Audubon Vermont to highlight alternatives like the Native Plants for Birds Program.

“Birds and native plants co-evolved over millions of years together,” said Gwendolyn Causer, Audubon Vermont’s communication coordinator and environmental educator.

“Native plants provide essential food resources for birds year-round and also host protein-rich native butterfly and moth caterpillars, the number one food for songbird nestlings. And best of all, they do not attract bears.”

To help better understand peoples’ interactions with bears and inform measures for coexistence with this species, the department asks Vermonters to submit reports of bears engaging in potentially dangerous behavior like targeting bird feeders or garbage bins, feeding on crops or livestock, or investigating campgrounds or residential areas, through our website’s Living with Black Bears tab.

Recovered Projectiles

by Ken Jones

Over the years deer hunting we see a lot of crazy things happen. That's to be expected when we're firing high powered rifles. The old saying "once you pull that trigger, you can't get it back" doesn't always ring true.

In my early days as what I would consider myself a Private in the army against wild stuff. I was posted up in one of my favorite ambush sights waiting on deer. I couldn't have been more than nineteen at the time and had only managed to take out a couple of enemy whitetails so far. This was during the thinning of the Vermont deer herd in the early eighties when antlerless permits were sold and filled during the regular rifle season.

A beautiful crisp November morning. The perfect conditions for taking a stand since there was no snow and the leaves were very crunchy. I set up watching a section of mountain that had provided me with my first couple of successful deer hunts.

Sometime around mid-morning three deer came boiling over the top of the mountain obviously retreating from some trouble they'd caused on the other side. My first deer rifle an old British Enfield military bolt action rifle chambered in .303 with a scope that had to be mounted left of center to accommodate shell casing extraction from the top, quickly came to my shoulder and I picked out what appeared to be a big doe and fired. All three deer retreated hastily back where they came from. Before I could begin to gather myself, they came boiling back in. Whatever trouble they started on the other side, they wanted no more if and were willing to run my gauntlet again.

Fearing I had missed with my first shot, I once again lined up on a deer and fired. Once again, they all rambled over the top only to immediately come boiling back!!! Once again, I lined up on a big doe and fired. This one felt good and sent the regiment back over the top for good.

Now, this is where this story gets interesting. I went to the area the enemy kept assembling in to look for signs of a hit. My first hint was a clump of brown deer hair. As I picked up this



clump of hair to look for blood, I felt something in it. Now, we've all heard about the magic bullet in the JFK assassination. I don't believe that bullet did everything they said it did but when I look back on what I found in this clump of deer hair it certainly makes ya scratch your head. Here was the 180 grain projectile, in nearly complete condition. Zero mushrooming had occurred, some lead was kind of missing and the copper jacket was torn and ragged at the tip of the bullet. The lances and grooves right there for a perfect ballistics test.

I searched around more for blood but

my inexperience at the time kept me from seeing the whole picture.

Being accompanied by my older brother and a couple buddies I set out bullet in hand to get help. Before I got to my brother, I ran into one of my buddies and showed him what I had and we went back to the crime scene to do some forensics.

The hillside I was hunting on was covered with beach trees and lots of quartz type boulders grey in color. Many the same size as say, a bedded deer. As I explained what happened and how the deer all retreated back up the mountain. My buddy asked for what seemed like the thirtieth time if I was sure they all went up. As my patience ran out and I looked at him to assure him they did not. Suddenly as I looked past him, there on the bank laying the whole time was my deer!!! It seemed when the magic bullet struck, the deer simply took one bound and bedded and must've died practically instantly. The bullet appeared to have hit the scapula directly but never penetrated. No exit wound was ever found. It seemed the deer died from bone splinters sent into his lungs from the hit!!! Yes I said he. It ended up being a spike buck with antlers about four inches long.

Since then in more recent years I've recovered Projectiles from a couple other deer. Mostly on the off side from the shot, just under the hide against the rib cage. Muzzleloader deer that I have checked the ribs on that off side and felt a little lump. A slice with a hunting knife and out pops a perfect mushroom. Not anything you'd wanna put in a salad mind you. Unless you want lead poisoning.

Fast forward to 2020 and the last weekend of muzzleloader in Vermont. Sitting in some favorite hardwoods where I had intel of a good buck. Around ten o'clock I started thinking about heading back to camp in an hour or so when I caught some movement in the hemlocks to my right. As I scanned intently something behind me in the leaves. I turned around to four deer trotting in. I looked for antlers hoping the buck I'd heard about was in this group but no dice. Having an antlerless tag in my pocket and the time running out on the season, I picked out the biggest doe and she came around and gave me a frontal shot. Not a shot I like taking unless it's close and since we were only about fifteen yards apart, I sent it. She did a little bulldozing and expired about forty yards out.

My buddy made his way over after hearing me shoot and the work began. I tagged her and dressed her out after a few pictures. We're standing there going over things and I looked at the gut pile and laying on top of



The author with his 2020 muzzleloader doe and the projectile found while field dressing the deer.

the paunch was a perfect little copper and lead mushroom!!! The frontal hit must've gotten the point of a shoulder or the breast bone and sent the mushroom down through her heart where it waited to be released from her body when I dressed her out.

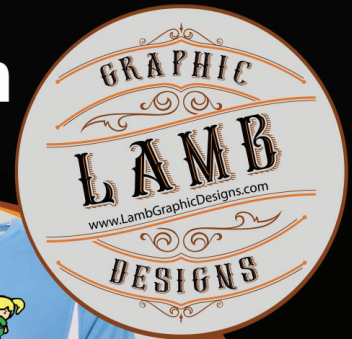
Physics is a crazy bunch of laws that in some instances, say a copper cov-

ered lead projectile moving around 2000 feet per second. Can sometimes not follow any laws at all. So check out your next enemy after the battle. You may have a neat little keepsake there. I've been carrying that last little mushroom around in my pocket for two years.

Until next time, be safe, have fun and shoot em up!!!!

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Legislative Update with Evan Hughes

The battles continue on in the Vermont legislature over legislature to dismantle gun rights, hunting and other outdoor sports.

Friday, March 11 is designated as Crossover Day in the legislature. Most bills have to be passed out of the committee of origin by the end of Friday, March 11 or it is unlikely the other body will take up the bill this year. Most bills that do not pass the legislature this year, will die with the final gavel for 2022.

The legislature has so far introduced 1,001 bills in the 2022-2022 Biennium. 716 House bills, 285 Senate bills.

Below are a few of the bills that are currently in very active play at this time.

S.30: The governor vetoed this gun control bill that is unnecessary because there are already existing laws that better serve the purpose of not having unwanted guns in hospitals, without placing a person who never intended to harm anyone at risk of needless arrest. S.30 is a solution in search of a problem.

Look for the gun control advocates to engage behind the scenes, maneuvering to keep S.30 intact.

There have been hearings on **three** bills in the Senate Natural Resources Committee - all are bad:

***S.129:** A bill to dismantle an effective F&W Board and replace it with a California-style anti-hunting and fishing regulation board. The F&W Board works with the VT F&W Dept. to enact/amend F&W regulations.

The bill as introduced: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/S-0129/S-0129%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

***S.201:** A bill to demonize trapping and start this state into banning trapping. The VT F&W Dept. supports trapping because it is a necessary tool to achieve the management of specific wildlife species.

The bill as introduced: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/S-0201/S-0201%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

***S.281:** A bill to ban hunting coyotes with dogs, which is a starting point to ban all hunting with hounds: Bear hounding and rabbit hunting. Then move on to further endless restrictions on coyote hunting. S.281 had another hearing before the Senate Natural Resources Committee just today. February 24.

The bill as introduced: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/S-0281/S-0281%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

In contrast is H.411, a bill that was pounded out over an extended period of time and in the form passed by the House is supported by Chris Herrick, the VT F&W Commissioner.

H.411: A bill that manages the disposal of wildlife remains, what is often called “wanton waste” After years of effort, H.411, a bill viable to the VT F&W Dept. and the VTFSC has passed out of the House Committee and the full House and moved over to Senate Natural Resources. H.411 as passed the House: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/H-0411/H-0411%20As%20Passed%20by%20the%20House%20Unofficial.pdf>

S.184: A bill to correct what the legislature did last year. The legislature amended the Justifiable Homicide statute to take away the statutory defense of justifiable homicide for a citizen acting to protect another person from violent attack, unless the victim(s) were specified relatives of the citizen rendering aid. The bill unanimously passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Senate is now sits the in House Judiciary Committee.

S.184 as passed the Senate:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/S-0184/S-0184%20As%20Passed%20by%20the%20Senate%20Unofficial.pdf>

S.155: A bill to reorganize Vermont's law enforcement. The Vermont Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs has opposed moving the VT F&W Game Wardens under the management of a new Dept. of Public Safety. The game wardens have unique skills and they are best managed in the F&W Dept.

S.155: [Draft 2.1,2-25-2022](#)

2022/WorkGroups/Senate Government Operations/Bills/S.155/Drafts, Amendments, and Legal Documents

S.155: [As Recommended by the Senate Government Operations Committee](#)

The nation still awaits the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) in a very important gun rights case. The court heard oral arguments on November

3, 2021. The case, New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen, challenges the draconian gun permitting laws of New York. As the title of the article in the link below states, at the oral arguments, the majority of the court expressed serious reservations about the constitutionality of the New York law.

<https://www.scotusblog.com/2021/11/majority-of-court-appears-dubious-of-new-york-gun-control-law-but-justices-mull-narrow-ruling/>

The Vermont Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs (VTF-SC) and the Vermont State Rifle & Pistol Association are parties to an Amicus brief in the NYSRPA v. Bruen case cited above. The NYSRPA and VTFSC are the NRA State Associations for their respective states.

The SCOTUS often publishes the opinions of the most controversial cases in June, just before they leave until their new sessions starts on the first Monday in October.



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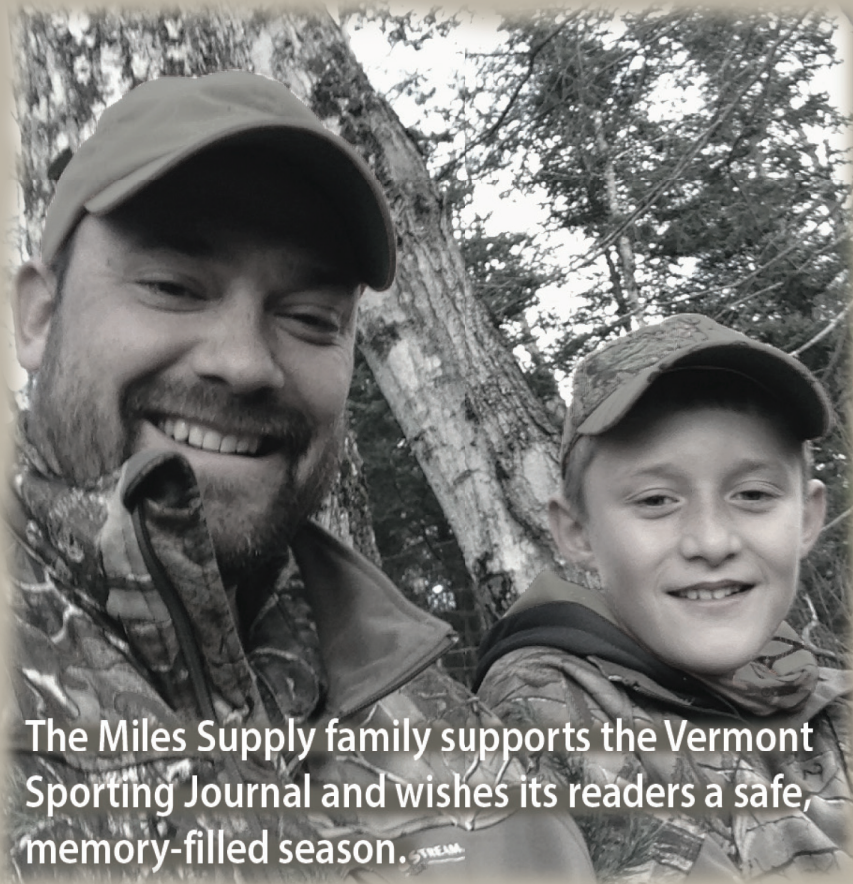
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Jeremy Schmid is Vermont's Warden of the Year

*VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE -
Press Release*



State Game Warden Jeremy Schmid of Cambridge is Vermont's Game Warden of the Year. A game warden since 2015, Schmid was nominated by his peers and received the award in recognition of his excellent service.

"I want to thank Jeremy for his outstanding performance in protecting Vermont's fish and wildlife resources and serving the people of Vermont," said Vermont Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Christopher Herrick. "Warden Schmid was chosen for his integrity, professionalism and high motivation in all of his work duties, and because he has earned respect from other wardens and the public."

"The annual Warden of the Year announcement is one that always fills me with great pride for our department," said Colonel Jason Batchelder, Vermont's chief game warden. "This year, through dedication and outstanding service to Vermont, Senior Warden Jeremy Schmid has risen to the top."

"Jeremy's warden work, caseload and time spent educating the public are second to none," added Batchelder. "Jeremy has the ability to sit in the weeds waiting for a poacher to return to a crime scene, to educate a person about a troublesome bear, and to bring a fair and amicable conclusion to a mistake made by an honest hunter -- all in the same day."

Jeremy Schmid's warden district includes the towns of Cambridge, Underhill, Essex, Jericho, Williston, Richmond, and Bolton.



Vermont State Game Warden Jeremy Schmid of Cambridge is the recipient of Vermont's Warden of the Year Award.

It's About That Time Again

by Brett Ladeau

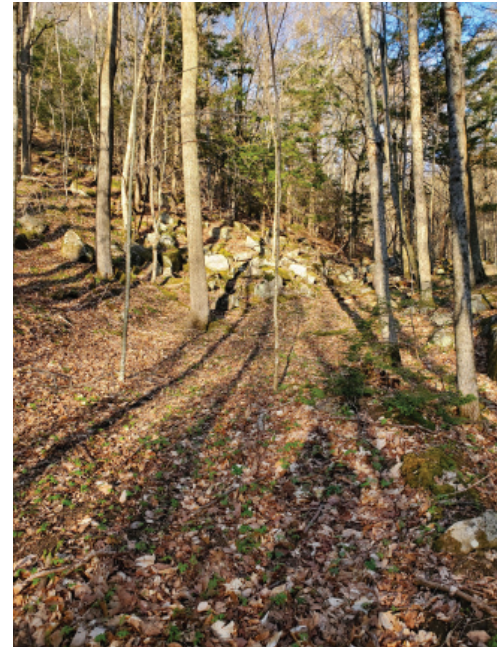


The wild turkey is never far from my mind, but this time of year sure gets me primed for spring. Started seeing pictures from youth turkey season in Florida this weekend (late February), and got me planning my scouting routine for the year. I have several states that I plan on hunting this spring, even with fuel prices

climbing, but I will focus on scouting closer to home.

In March I start looking for winter flocks and trying to see how many male birds are in the group. It's pretty early to making final plans for the spring but knowing there are birds in the area helps. I then look at maps, get landowner permission, and try to guess where the birds might disperse too once they start breaking up. In areas I know well I have a pretty good idea where they will be, but new areas I mark a few high points so I can go listen for birds once we are closer to the season.

Depending on the spring, I will start hiking in March or April looking for old and new scratching roosting areas. Listening more and walking less first thing in the morning. If I can hear turkeys gobble in an area I mark those



locations for additional scouting trips. I spend as much time in the woods or riding roads as I can from mid-March to the first of May. I like to mark as many areas as possible and gain as much access to land as I can, I feel the more areas I can hunt the better my options are. Knowing where turkeys are is half the battle. I could spend hours in the woods and be the best caller in the world but if there are no turkeys in the area it would be hard to call one in.



Once I mark all the areas I am interested in learning more about, I will hit the woods early in the mornings starting in early April. I will head to high spots to listen for gobbles, look for scratching, scat, feathers, dusting bowls, food source, and any other features that might help me if I ever get on a bird in the area. I also look for obstacles like fences, roads, stonewalls, streams, and other things that could hold a bird up. I try to mark the most likely ways around

those obstacles like a break in a stone wall, or a narrow crossing of a stream. They obviously cross these areas all the time, but you'd be amazed at how often a little trickle of water will hold them up from coming to your calls. If I can get to a spot where I think they will cross, I will have more confidence in my set up. Sometimes you just cannot get to those spots so you call from where you can and hope for the best. However, the better you know the land your hunting the more likely you will be in the right spot when you start calling to the bird.

Some knowledge will come from hunting the same properties for years, but you can also learn a lot on a quick walk of the land. The more time you spend scouting the better your odds will be of being in the right spot at the right time. As the season approaches, usually in mid-April, I increase my scouting and start to incorporate some evening scouting in as well. I like to either watch birds go to roost or listen in likely roosting areas to see if I can hear one gobble after fly-up. Since I do a lot of my local hunting on before work hunts knowing where turkeys like to roost gives me a good place to start.

I will use locator calls, like owl and crow calls, on my morning and evening scouting missions, and often

when I am in the woods scouting. I am not afraid to call to turkey before the season but to avoid it I will leave my turkey calls at home or in the truck. I know some feel turkey get call shy if people call to them before the season, but I have never had a problem with calling a bird in before the season and then calling it in again during the season. I use my time in the truck to practice calling as much as possible. You don't need to be a perfect caller to call a turkey in but the more realistic you can be I do feel it increases your chances for success. Listen to real turkey and try to mimic them with your calling instead of listening to another person's calling and trying to copy their style.

I also tend to do a lot of in-season scouting as behaviors and patterns change through the spring. I will do a lot of roosting in the evening, so I have a great starting spot the next day. I feel it increases my success rate and makes it easier to wake up at turkey hunting hours (3 am or earlier in the Northeast) if I know where a



turkey is. Turkey hunting addicts deprive themselves of sleep and avoid scheduling social outings during the season just to hear a bird gobble. Might sound crazy to some but the people in the know, know what I am talking about.

There is no turkey hunting secret that is 100 fool proof, but with a little knowledge of the land, good calling, and woodsman ship you will put the

odds in your favor. Also, don't forget to take a friend or two out with you. Turkey hunting is a great time to share your hunt with people and is a great introduction into hunting. Hopefully, some of these tips help you bag a bird or two this spring.



Trapline Talk

By Randy Barrows

Well, I have certainly learned a lesson. In the last article I wrote for this paper I commented on how mild the fall and early winter had been so far. Not much snow and warmer temperatures had made trapping kind of easy so far. I wished I had never said those words because shortly after Mother Nature did a 180 and let us have it.

The Abel family was sending me videos of their line on a regular basis and how I enjoyed watching them. They were all having a blast running a water line until the big freeze came. They kept right at it but you could tell the fun factor was less. Every set started with ten minutes of chopping through ice sometimes 3-4 inches thick. A whole lot of work for a maybe ten-dollar beaver. Good to see the youngsters persevere as this old goat would have hung the hatchet up a long time ago. In speaking with Carter Abel, he advised that checking the line every day certainly was a physical workout.

Carter's brother Brydon was right there in the mix. These kids are high energy and enjoy everything outdoors. The looks on their faces with their first catches are priceless. Knowing their catches will not put them into a higher tax bracket next year does not deter them. Dad Ryan is right out there with them video tapping their adventures.

I swell with joy when I see young kids get hooked on this sport. To me becoming a trapper makes you be a lot better outdoors man all the way around. These lads know so much

more about life in general than your multi-colored haired key board captians.

The sad part of all of this is it might go away. If you have not heard the annual Protect Our Wildlife freaks of nature have gotten folks in Montpelier to sponsor bills that would ban the use of leg hold traps in Vermont. Every spring in Vermont there are annual rituals we do. WE have Town Meeting Day; we post our roads to protect them and we hang sap buckets. Now add to the list the fight to be able to trap!!!!

It's the same old lingo every year. Not one piece of science-based data from the antis even though there are tons of data on the trappers side of the fence. This year they stooped to new low levels. Scheduled a public hearing as required by law, canceled it, then reopened it hours later with a twenty-five-speaker limit. The night of testimony 23 spoke in favor of the bill, 2 against. Now the members of the Natural Resource and energy committee are saying they have heard enough testimony and the opposition has spoken clearly. Do they actually think we are that stupid????????????????

This is about to get interesting. And one of the boards took it upon himself to re-write the whole bill in the eleventh hour and tried to get a vote on it. This is how our government oper-

ates. And how about wanton waste. If you hunt, fish, or trap you would be required to use every bit of the animal you harvest, and not leave it where you harvested it. 99 percent of sportsmen practice this on every hunt. I did not have a problem with this bill until they specifically added crow to it. Fines for violations start at \$1,000 for the first violation up to \$4,000 for subsequent violations. And a five-year revocation of your privilege to hunt or fish or trap in Vermont.

And the last bill is they want to change the composition of the fish and wildlife board. Currently the board has 14 members, one for each county consisting of one person who has high interest in everything outdoors. The antis want a 50-50 split, half outdoors folks and half hug your bunny folks. I see no meaningful purpose of changing this. I see every vote

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being 6-6 with nothing being accomplished. Sportsmen pay heavily to do what they enjoy thought taxes. Doubt if the antis do!!

Every year we waste valuable resources revisiting these bills. The sad part is that if they make it out of committee, they all could be potentially passed. The part that bothers me the most is the folks who ultimately decide the outcomes of these bills do not hunt, trap or fish. They have no clue or any knowledge of any of these sports. I feel if they have never hunted, trapped or fished first hand that should not be allowed to speak to the topic. In simple English, shut the hell up!!!! If these pass, they will be back after something else next year. I would have my town reps on speed dial!!

Fur prices have ticked up a bit in the last couple of months. Beaver-30, rats-6, coyotes 40, fisher35, skunk 20, bobcat 100. These are the top prices of fur sold at the Catt. County Trappers sale on February 19. It should be noted that these prices were for the best of the fur.

Vermont's auction will be March 19, 2022 at the White River Valley Middle school in Bethel, Vermont. Doors open at 06:00. Hope to see you there.

Enjoy the rest of the trapping season and keep track of what is going on in Montpelier. I personally think it would really suck to wake up some morning and never be able to set a trap legally again!!

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Warden Service Responds to Peacham Snowmobile Crash



VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

On February 16, 2022, at approximately 12:45 pm Vermont game wardens were called to assist with a snowmobile crash in the town of Peacham.

Game wardens responded to the scene along with members of the Peacham and Marshfield Volunteer Fire Departments. A 29 year-old Milton VT resident had lost control of her snowmobile while negotiating a series of turns.

The snowmobile struck a large tree and the rider was ejected approximately 40 feet from the snowmobile and landed in the groomed trail.

The rider sustained serious but non-life-threatening injuries in the crash. She was transported by Calx Ambulance Service to Northeast

Vermont Regional Hospital in St. Johnsbury for further evaluation and treatment. No others were injured in the incident.

The snowmobile sustained heavy damage but was driven out of the woods by rescue personnel.

According to an investigation by Vermont game wardens, it appears the rider was not operating at an appropriate speed to reasonably negotiate the winding trail and crest of the hill.

Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife would like to remind snowmobile operators to stay to the righthand side of the trail and maintain appropriate speed in respect to the trail conditions to avoid potential hazards and collisions.

Moose Hunt Proposed to Improve Moose Health in NEK

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department has proposed issuing 100 moose hunting permits in Vermont's Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) E in the northeastern corner of the state in order to reduce the impact of winter ticks on the moose population. The proposal was accepted by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board at its February 16 meeting.

“Department staff, including moose project lead biologist Nick Fortin and biometrician Dr. Katherina Gieder,

“Moose density in WMU E is still more than one moose per square mile, significantly higher than any other part of the state,” said Nick Fortin, Vermont Fish and Wildlife’s moose project leader. “Moose densities greater than one per square mile support high numbers of winter ticks which negatively impact moose health and survival.”

The Fish and Wildlife Department partnered with University of Vermont researchers to conduct a study of moose health and survival in WMU E. The results of this study,



The high number of moose in the northeastern corner of Vermont has stimulated a dramatic increase in winter ticks, causing moose health to severely decline. As many as 90,000 winter ticks have been found on one moose. More than half of moose calves have died in recent winters due to blood loss caused by the winter ticks. VTF&W explains that reducing the number of hosts (moose) will reduce the number of parasitic ticks and improve moose health.

VTF&W photos by Jake DeBow, Josh Blouin

brought incredible scientific expertise to this recommendation,” said Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife Christopher Herrick. “The proposal our board vetted and approved was informed by years of field research and sophisticated statistical analyses that have been featured in peer reviewed publications alongside results from sister efforts in Maine and New Hampshire.”

The goal of the department’s 2022 moose harvest recommendation is to improve the health of moose in WMU-E by reducing the number of moose and thereby reducing the abundance and impact of winter ticks.

in which 126 moose (36 cows, 90 calves) were fitted with GPS tracking collars, clearly showed that chronic high winter tick loads have caused the health of moose in that part of the state to be very poor. Survival of adult moose remained relatively good, but birth rates were very low and less than half of the calves survived their first winter.

“Research has shown that lower moose densities in the rest of Vermont support relatively few winter ticks that do not impact moose populations,” said Fortin. “Reducing moose density decreases the number of available hosts

which in turn decreases the number of winter ticks on the landscape.”

The department would issue 60 either-sex moose hunting permits and 40 antlerless moose permits in WMU-E for the moose seasons this October. This is expected to result in a harvest of 51 to 65 moose, or about 5 percent of the moose population in WMU-E. The same number of permits were issued in 2021 when hunters took 62 moose.

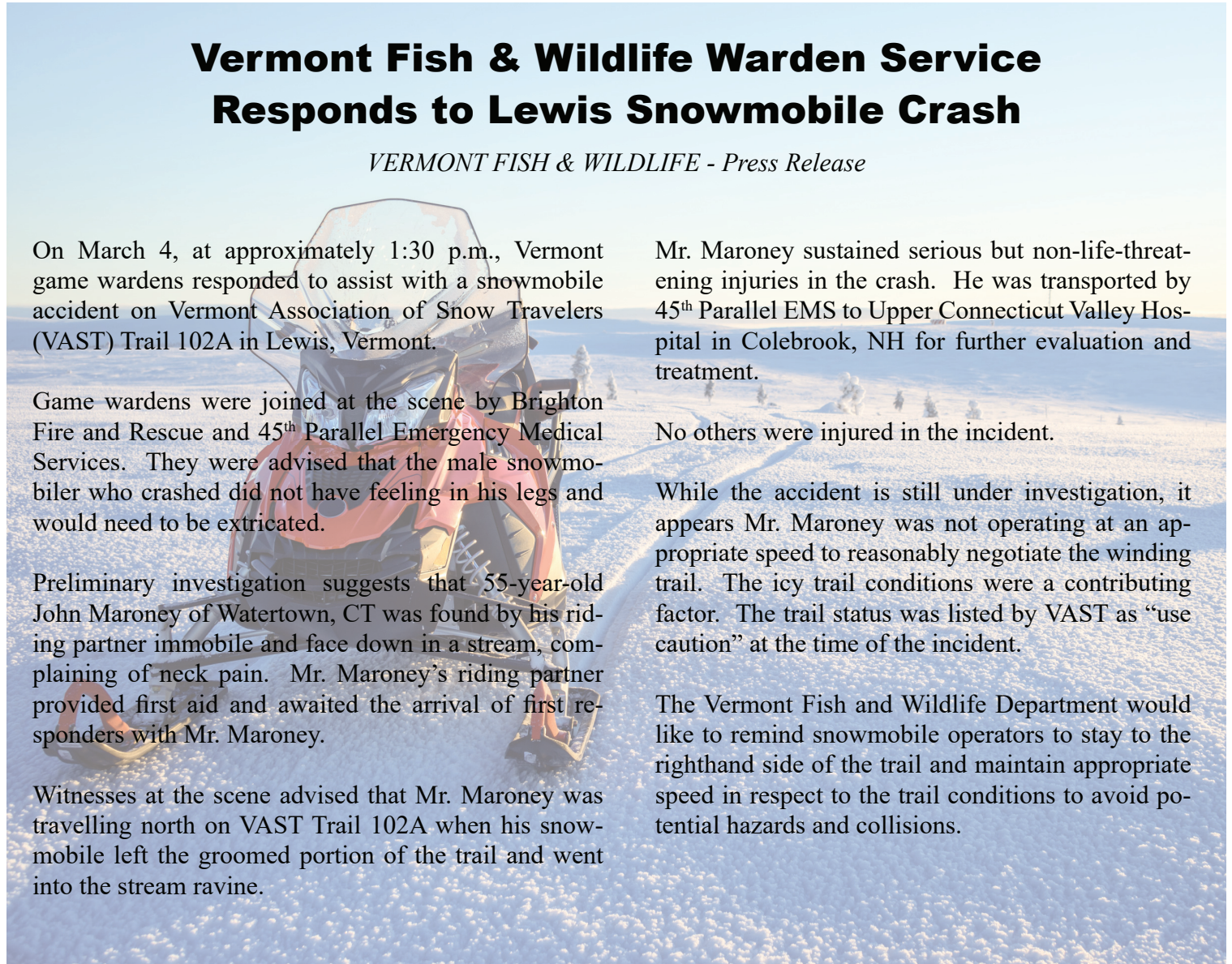
“This permit recommendation represents a continued attempt to address winter tick impacts on moose in WMU-E,” added Fortin. “Given the poor health of

the moose population in that area and a clearly identified cause, we need to take action to address this issue. Without intervention to reduce the moose population, high tick loads will continue to impact the health of moose in that region for many years.”

The [2022 Moose Season Recommendation](#) and information about the moose study are available on Vermont Fish and Wildlife’s website at www.vtfishandwildlife.com. Comments may be provided until March 31 by emailing ANR.FWPublicComment@vermont.gov or by calling and leaving a message on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife public comment voicemail at 802-828-7498.

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Warden Service Responds to Lewis Snowmobile Crash

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release



On March 4, at approximately 1:30 p.m., Vermont game wardens responded to assist with a snowmobile accident on Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) Trail 102A in Lewis, Vermont.

Game wardens were joined at the scene by Brighton Fire and Rescue and 45th Parallel Emergency Medical Services. They were advised that the male snowmobiler who crashed did not have feeling in his legs and would need to be extricated.

Preliminary investigation suggests that 55-year-old John Maroney of Watertown, CT was found by his riding partner immobile and face down in a stream, complaining of neck pain. Mr. Maroney’s riding partner provided first aid and awaited the arrival of first responders with Mr. Maroney.

Witnesses at the scene advised that Mr. Maroney was travelling north on VAST Trail 102A when his snowmobile left the groomed portion of the trail and went into the stream ravine.

Mr. Maroney sustained serious but non-life-threatening injuries in the crash. He was transported by 45th Parallel EMS to Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital in Colebrook, NH for further evaluation and treatment.

No others were injured in the incident.

While the accident is still under investigation, it appears Mr. Maroney was not operating at an appropriate speed to reasonably negotiate the winding trail. The icy trail conditions were a contributing factor. The trail status was listed by VAST as “use caution” at the time of the incident.

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department would like to remind snowmobile operators to stay to the righthand side of the trail and maintain appropriate speed in respect to the trail conditions to avoid potential hazards and collisions.

VT Fish & Wildlife Urges Us to Remember Nongame Wildlife Tax Checkoff

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Vermonters can express their passion for wildlife conservation by donating to the Nongame Wildlife Fund on their state income tax form this year, according to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. The fund helps protect some of Vermont's most threatened wildlife such as bald eagles, lake sturgeon, rare plants, and Indiana bats.

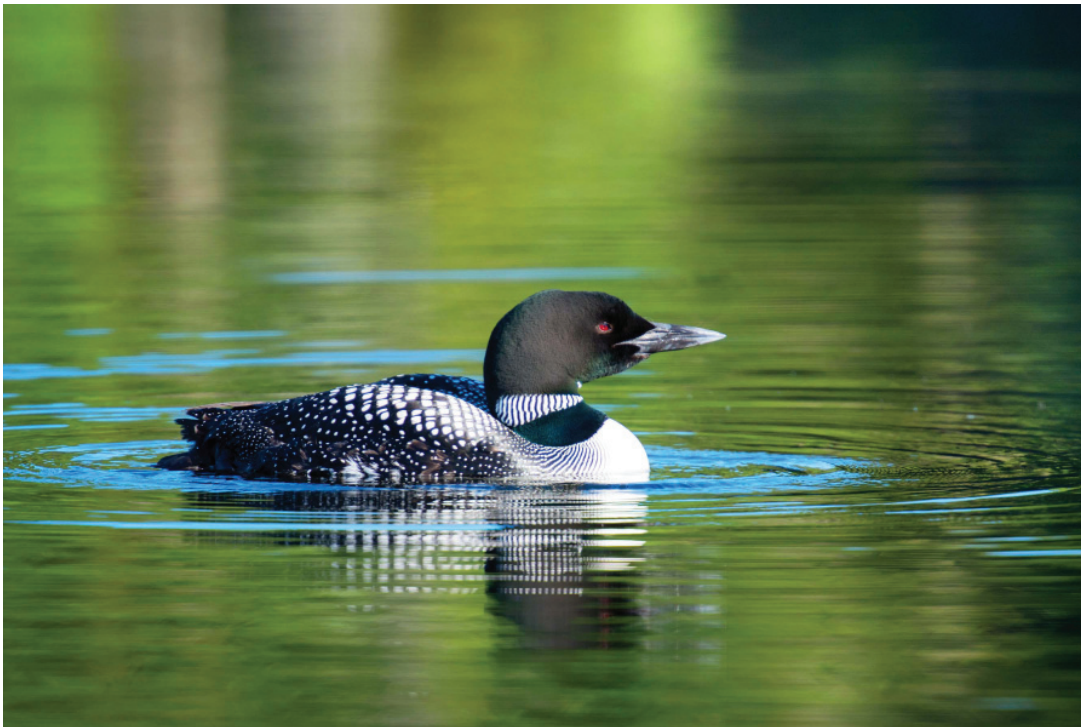
"Every dollar Vermonters donate to Nongame Wildlife Fund on their taxes is nearly tripled," says Rosalind Renfrew, Fish and Wildlife's Wildlife Diversity Program Manager. "Donations are leveraged by matching federal grants, meaning that a \$35 donation can help secure up to another \$65 in federal funds for wildlife conservation in Vermont. That's a fantastic deal for all of us who care about wildlife."

"The Nongame Checkoff donations, along with hunting, fishing and trapping license revenue, have helped recovery efforts for Vermont's peregrine falcons, loons, ospreys,

bald eagles, American martens, Indiana and northern long-eared bats, spiny softshell turtles, and other species," said Director of Wildlife Mark Scott. "The common loon, osprey and peregrine falcon are no longer endangered species in Vermont due to science-based management that continues to benefit those species

Vermont Fish and Wildlife biologists manage nongame wildlife projects that are diverse and include mammals, birds, turtles, fish, frogs, bees, freshwater mussels, and plants, as well as the habitats and natural communities they need.

"The Nongame Wildlife Fund has helped some of our greatest wildlife success stories in Vermont," said Scott. "Thanks to the generous donations of thousands of Vermonters, we are restoring many of the iconic species of the Green Mountain State."



The common loon is no longer an endangered species in Vermont thanks to recovery efforts supported by the Non-game Wildlife Fund.

*VTF&W photo by
Tom Rogers*