

# Roy Marsh Wildlife Management Area

Last edited: 9/30/22



## General Description

Roy Marsh Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is located in the town of South Hero, on the island of South Hero in Lake Champlain. It consists of 19 acres of old Rutland Railway railroad bed and 35 acres of emergent marsh wetlands. Access to the WMA is from the railroad bed. Parking is available from an unimproved parking area on Station Road. The land is owned by the State of Vermont and managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

## History

South Hero was part of an original town charter granted to 365 "heroes" of the American Revolution. Ethan and Ira Allen were two of these; many others were members of the Green Mountain Boys. In 1783 Colonel Ebenezer Allen, a cousin to Ethan and Ira, was the first settler. Most of the land was eventually cleared for agricultural purposes.

The Rutland Railway Island Hopper excursion rail line ran from Burlington to Alburg between the years 1901–1960. The line is notable because the Railway built a causeway across the mouth of Mallett's Bay in Lake Champlain, and a bridge across one end of "The Gut" between South and North Hero. The causeway is now a popular place for anglers, walkers and bicyclists. In 1965 some of the Railway property on South Hero Island was acquired by the Vermont Forests, Parks and Recreation Department. In 1966 there was an executive order transferring this portion of the railroad bed to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. The acquisition was made with Department funds generated from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses.

## Habitat Features

The WMA is primarily a 35-acre lake level emergent marsh and a 19-acre railroad bed. It passes through a silver-maple floodplain forest. The surrounding marsh (most of which is privately owned) contains cattail marsh, deep bulrush marsh and sedge meadows. It provides excellent cover and habitat for waterfowl and aquatic wildlife. Lake cress is one unusual plant that is found in the marsh.

## Common Fish and Wildlife

**Mammals** White-tailed deer travel along the railroad bed. Gray squirrels, beavers, minks, muskrats and raccoons may be found in the upland and adjacent marsh. Small mammals such as long-tailed weasels, water shrews, and star-nosed moles are cryptic residents of the area.

**Birds** Mallards, black ducks, wood ducks and osprey frequent the marsh, along with marsh birds such as soras, pied-billed grebes and bitterns. Edge-dwelling songbirds such as common yellowthroats, yellow warblers and Baltimore orioles make their homes along the edge between woods and marsh. Ruffed grouse, American woodcock and wild turkey might be seen along the railroad bed.

**Reptiles and Amphibians** Some amphibians that may be found on the WMA are newts, wood and northern leopard frogs, and spring peepers. Reptiles that may occur are brown and garter snakes. There is a greater variety of herptiles out in the marsh.

**Fish** There are no fishable waters on this WMA, although South Hero Marsh is an important spawning area for many species of warmwater fish. These include northern pike, brown bullhead, yellow perch and black crappie.



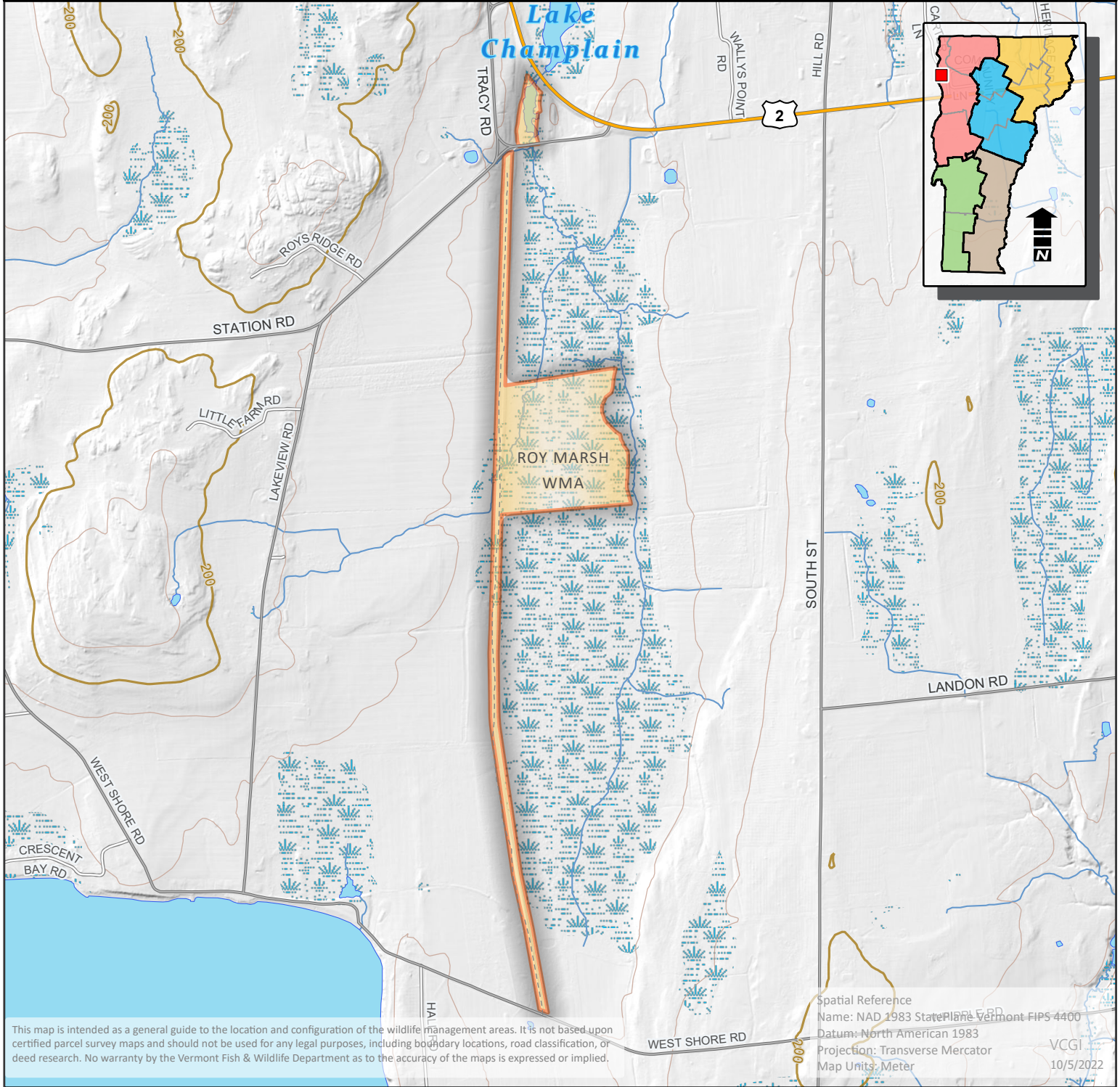
Osprey have made a remarkable population recovery in the Lake Champlain Basin. In 1990 they were extremely rare, but today they are very common.

Photo: Don Isabelle, VTFW.



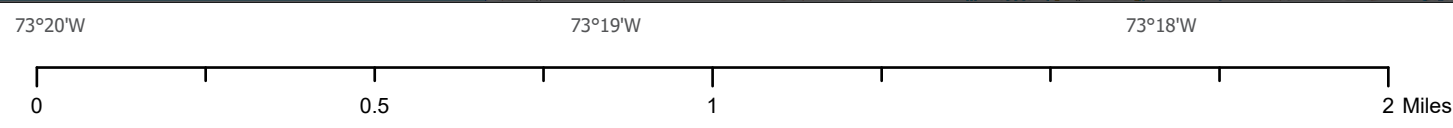
# Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

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This map is intended as a general guide to the location and configuration of the wildlife management areas. It is not based upon certified parcel survey maps and should not be used for any legal purposes, including boundary locations, road classification, or deed research. No warranty by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department as to the accuracy of the maps is expressed or implied.

Spatial Reference Name: NAD 1983 StatePlane Vermont FIPS 4400  
 Datum: North American 1983  
 Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Map Units: Meter  
 VCGI 10/5/2022



Roy Marsh WMA				Map Number: 55			
Parking	Shooting Range	Fishing Access	Trails	Refuge (no public access)	Federal Land		
Boat Ramp	Wildlife Viewing Area	Visitor Information	Town Boundary	Special hunting/trapping restrictions	State Land		
Cartop Access	Campground	Gate	Wildlife Management Area	Streambank Management Area	Town Land		
Park Office	Vista	Rail Lines	WMA Hunting Rights Only	Controlled Hunting Area			