

VERMONT'S FISH AND WILDLIFE IN PERIL

For over 20 years, Vermont has been forced to cut vital wildlife programs. Today, the state cannot afford to:

- ❖ Adequately care for over 118,000 acres of Wildlife Management Areas
- ❖ Monitor and protect deer winter range, critical to over 100 wildlife species
- ❖ Restore fish habitat and upgrade century-old hatchery facilities
- ❖ Hire enough game wardens—there are now fewer in the field than in 1971, putting the public and wildlife at risk
- ❖ Create incentives that encourage private landowners to allow public access for hunting and fishing
- ❖ Meet the demand for conservation education programs
- ❖ Implement its Wildlife Action Plan to conserve species before they become rare or endangered

The challenge

Traditional sources of funding for fish and wildlife conservation are providing less and less revenue. In 1990, license sales accounted for 64% of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department budget. In 2006, they accounted for just 37%.

The solution

Dedicating “1/8 of 1¢” of the state Sales Tax (1/8 of a penny from every \$1 sale) would provide the Department with \$6 to 7 million annually. This money would leverage millions more in Federal funds each year.

Do you know when Vermont could last afford a complete deer-yard study?



The Vermont Wildlife Partnership
PO Box 471
Stowe, Vermont 05672

THE VERMONT WILDLIFE PARTNERSHIP

*A diverse coalition of hunting, fishing,
and conservation organizations,
businesses, and individuals*



*Working together to ensure the future of
Vermont's fish and wildlife legacy*



John J. Mosesso/NBII

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why should Vermont spend more money on fish and wildlife conservation programs?

This is a critical investment in Vermont's environment, quality of life, and financial future. Wildlife-watching, hunting, and fishing add almost \$400 million per year to the state economy.

Why can't the VT Fish and Wildlife Department provide its services without new funding?

The Department is being asked to do more and more with less and less. Its work—including public education and environmental assessments—benefits everyone and cannot be done without a broader funding base.

What other sources of funding are there for fish and wildlife programs?

When hunters and anglers buy equipment, the Federal government collects Excise Taxes. These taxes—plus other wildlife funds—are available to states that provide matching funds. They pay as much as \$3 for every \$1 the state contributes.

Is Vermont getting its share of these Excise Taxes?

No. Every year Vermont lacks the matching funds needed to claim Federal dollars. Vermont left \$2.9 million on the table in FY06 and \$1.6 million in FY07. The "1/8 of 1¢" solution will fix this.

1/8 of 1¢ – Vermont's Wildlife is Worth It

Do other states have this problem too?

Yes. States all over the nation are facing this challenge. A handful of states have already found solutions and the most successful have been tied to state Sales Taxes.

Where did the "1/8 of 1¢" proposal come from?

In 1976, Missouri voters established a "1/8 of 1¢" conservation Sales Tax. In 1996, Arkansas voters did the same. In 2007, a task force appointed by Governor Douglas concluded that Vermont needed a similar fix.

Why not just raise license fees?

Increases in hunting and fishing license fees only provide a temporary boost. Raising them too high can backfire, making participation rates and license sales drop even further.

What do Vermonters think about this proposal?

Vermonters overwhelmingly support increased, broad-based funding for the VT Fish and Wildlife Department. Professional surveys have shown that 4 out of 5 support the "1/8 of 1¢" solution.



Wayne Laroche

Will this raise the Vermont Sales Tax?

No. The proposal in Vermont is to redirect a small fraction of the existing tax, not to add a new tax.

Will the VT Fish and Wildlife Department pay less attention to hunting and angling?

No. Hunting and fishing will remain central to the Department's work. The Vermont Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs—representing over 14,000 Vermont hunters and anglers—is a leader of this effort.

How can I learn more?

Visit www.vermontwildlifepartnership.org. Read VWP's report, *Vermont's Wildlife at the Crossroads*.

What can I do to help?

VWP invites individuals, organizations and businesses to join. For more information, please contact:

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Vermont's deer yards haven't been inventoried since 1987.