

Fairlee Marsh Wildlife Management Area

General Description

Fairlee Marsh Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is located in the east-central Vermont town of Fairlee. The WMA is 60 acres in size (33 acres of wetland and 27 acres of upland) located where the outlet of Lake Morey empties into the Connecticut River. It is bounded by the Connecticut River on the south, the Boston and Maine Railroad on the west, and agricultural fields on the north and east sides. It is owned by the State of Vermont and is managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

Access is by boat from the Connecticut River, where an undeveloped campsite is located at the river's edge. The campsite is maintained as a stop along a designated canoe trail.

History

Situated on the Connecticut River, Fairlee had very productive soil that was prized by early settlers. The Connecticut River was an important travel way for Native American people and many encampments were present all along the river.

The land for Fairlee Marsh WMA was purchased in 1992 from The Nature Conservancy with Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's Waterfowl Fund, which derives interest from a principal produced by the sale of Vermont waterfowl stamps and prints.

Habitat Features

The marsh located on the WMA has a permanent water regime because it is directly connected to the Connecticut River and fed by the Lake Morey outlet brook. Water depths vary from 6-8 feet in the channel to several inches at the margins, with the majority of the wetland in the 12-24 inch depth range. This creates a diversity of plant and animal habitat. Principal emergent aquatic vegetation

includes cattail, bulrush, sedge, iris and pickerelweed. Shoreline areas consist of alder, sedges and nettle. Tree species include aspen and birch; elm and oak occupy the higher ground adjacent to the north and south extremities.

The area is particularly attractive to waterfowl because of its situation along the Connecticut River migration corridor and proximity to agricultural land. Alder cover and moist loam soils along the wetland border offer excellent habitat for woodcock. Excellent habitat exists for furbearers and the wetland provides a good fishery in both open water and ice fishing seasons.

Common Fish and Wildlife

Mammals Game animals include white-tailed deer, beaver, muskrat, otter, mink and raccoon. Expect to find many smaller non-game species as well.

Birds Expect to find woodcock, black ducks, mallards, wood ducks, blue-winged teal, Canada geese, great blue herons and ospreys. Occasional sightings of bald eagle have occurred. Wood duck nesting boxes, maintained by the Department, are frequently utilized by wood ducks and hooded mergansers. Songbirds associated with freshwater marshes, lakes, ponds and rivers can be found here, such as swallows, kingfishers and cedar waxwings.

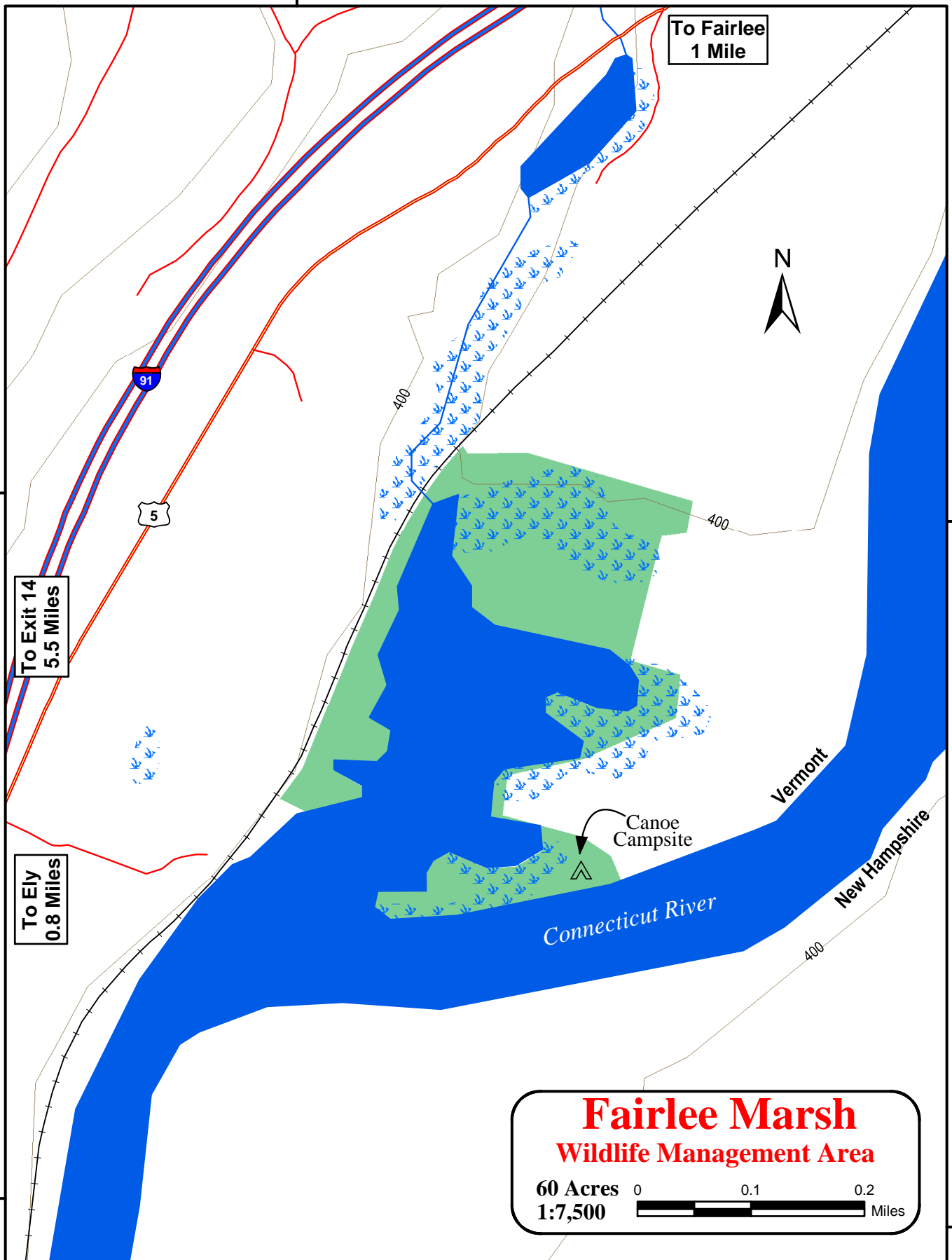
Reptiles and Amphibians Eastern newts, gray treefrogs, and spring peepers are known to occur on the WMA, as well as painted and snapping turtles. Snake species include ring-necked, smooth green, red-bellied and garter snakes. Other species of reptiles and amphibians might also be found.

Fish Fairlee Marsh provides fishing during the open water and ice seasons for bass, yellow perch, chain pickerel, northern pike, bluegill and brown bullhead.



Fairlee Marsh offers excellent opportunities to watch and hunt waterfowl. USFWS photo.

Fairlee Marsh WMA is open to regulated hunting, trapping, fishing, hiking and wildlife viewing.



To Fairlee
1 Mile



91

5

To Exit 14
5.5 Miles

To Ely
0.8 Miles

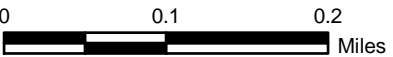
Canoe
Campsite

Connecticut River

Vermont

New Hampshire

Fairlee Marsh
Wildlife Management Area
60 Acres
1:7,500



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