

Roy Mountain Wildlife Management Area

General Description

Roy Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is a 1,590-acre parcel of land owned by the State of Vermont and managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. The WMA is located within the towns of Barnet and Ryegate, and ranges from the top of Roy Mountain, west to Jewett Pond, and south to the shores of Upper and Lower Symes Ponds. Use the parking area on Roy Mountain Road for foot access. Lower Symes Pond boat access is off Hunt Mill Road in Ryegate.

History

The lands on and around Roy Mountain were in the Roy family since the late 1800's. In 1924 they were sold to the Roy Lumber Company, at which time a dam and sawmill were built on Jewett Brook. The sawmill was in operation until about 1940. Today, the dam still holds back the waters of Jewett Pond.

The present day landholdings of the WMA were acquired from 1966 through 1991 using several different funding mechanisms. The majority of the lands were purchased with U.S. Department of the Interior Land and Water Conservation Funds. Other funding sources included Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department and Pittman-Robertson funds. This program is funded by an 11% tax on rifles, shotguns, ammunition and archery equipment. In 1991, a 148-acre parcel surrounding Jewett Pond was purchased through a cooperative effort of local, state, federal and civic organizations. Among those who contributed include the town of Barnet, Friends of Jewett Pond, sportsmen, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and The Nature Conservancy. The Friends of Jewett Pond consisted of individuals, civic organizations, and concerned groups from around the area. Sportsmen dollars came from the Dingell-Johnson Sportfish Restoration Fund and from Vermont's Waterfowl Stamp Program. The Vermont Nature Conservancy contributed by making the initial purchase that took the property off the market long enough for sufficient funding to be raised by contributors.

Habitat Features

Elevations on the WMA range from 900 feet to 2,091 feet atop Roy Mountain. The terrain varies from flat cedar swamps to steep pine-hemlock slopes along the mountain. The property is mostly forested. Major tree species are red and sugar maple, yellow birch, beech, hemlock, red oak, red pine, white pine and white cedar. Several old fields with scattered apple trees, testaments of past farming, are located around the Dekoyer Place.

Wetland habitats throughout the WMA are diverse. The most notable of these are a cattail marsh, a large forested wetland along Jewett Brook, and shrub borders around the ponds scattered across the WMA. Two areas of ecological significance occur on the WMA. One is a 200-acre area on top of Roy Mountain that is dominated by red pine. This

old-growth stand is one of the few natural red pine stands in Vermont. The other is a wetland containing the largest known population of sheathed sedge in the State.

Common Fish and Wildlife

Mammals Roy Mountain WMA is an important deer wintering area. Approximately 1,000 acres of predominately softwood forest are utilized for shelter by wintering deer. The WMA also provides good non-winter habitat, as herbaceous openings, oak mast, apple trees and wetlands are interspersed within continuous forest cover.

Beavers inhabit many of the streams, and their handiwork is responsible for maintaining a diversity of wetland types. Mink, weasel and river otter also inhabit the flowages created by beaver. The wetland complexes of Jewett Pond and the two Symes Ponds provide the best opportunity to view moose in spring and summer months.

Signs of fox, coyote, fisher, bobcat and raccoon are common on the WMA. Roy Mountain WMA also provides good bear habitat with apple, berry, cherry and oak mast scattered across the WMA.

Birds There are suitable nesting sites at the ponds and beaver flowages throughout the WMA for species such as black, wood and mallard ducks, goldeneyes and hooded mergansers. Several wood duck nesting boxes on Jewett Pond, which are maintained by the Department, are frequently utilized by wood ducks and hooded mergansers.

Favorable ruffed grouse habitat is limited to the vicinity of remnant agricultural fields where aspen and alder occur adjacent to herbaceous openings. The Department has "released" many apple trees clustered around the old homesteads. Cutting allows sunlight to reach the trees, which makes them more productive.

The great variety of forest and wetland habitats provides good bird-watching opportunities. Herons, snipe and flycatchers are common in the wetlands. Neotropical migrants such as tanagers, thrushes and many warbler species summer in the woodlands.

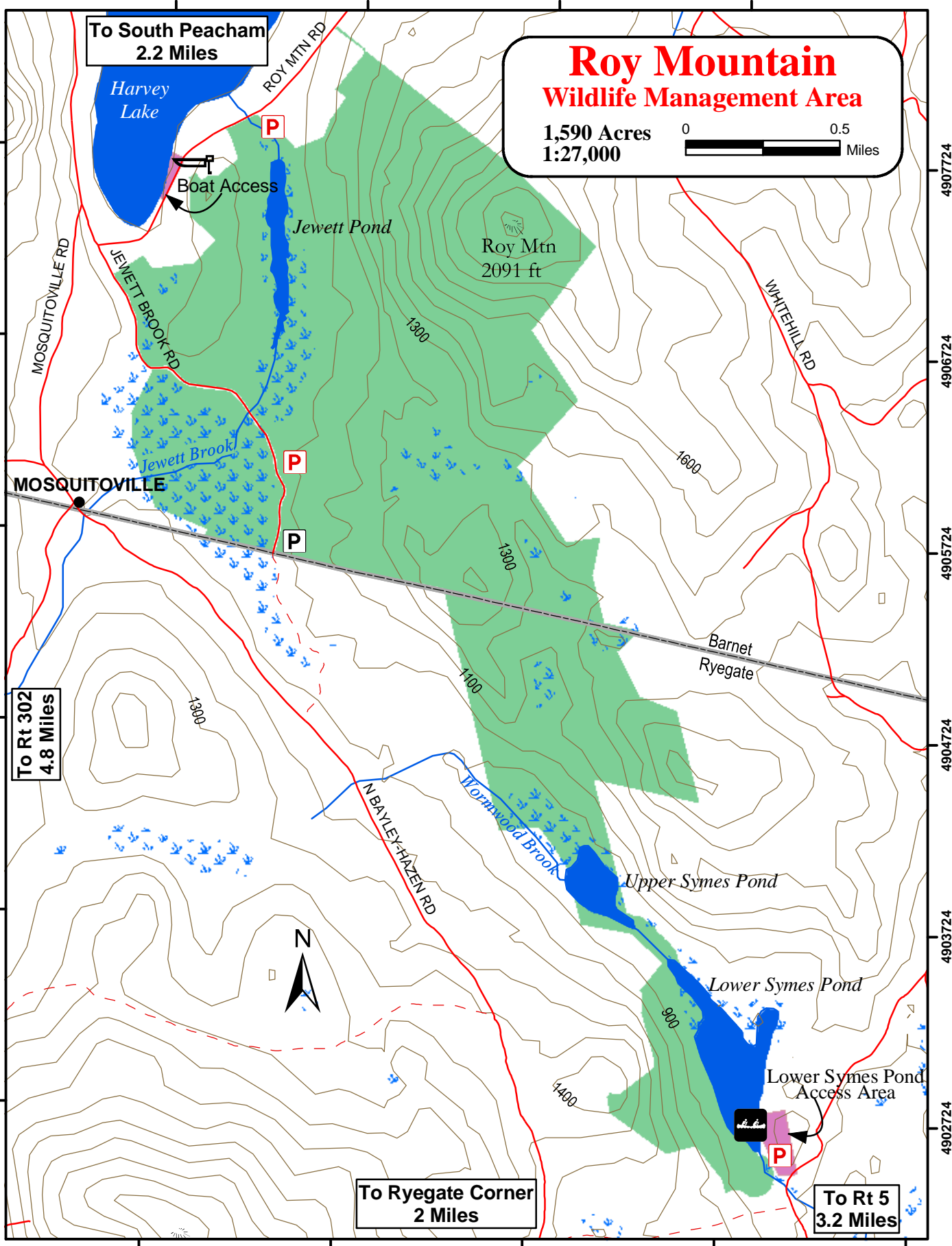
Reptiles and Amphibians Chorus frogs such as spring peepers can be heard in early spring singing from vernal pools in the forest. Woodland salamanders such as the red-backed salamander can easily be found hiding under damp logs and rocks during the summer months. Painted and snapping turtles may be found in the larger ponds and beaver flowages across the WMA.

Fish Brook trout may be found in some stretches of Jewett Brook and in some scattered, remote beaver ponds. Chain pickerel, bullhead and pumpkinseed inhabit the shallow waters of Jewett Pond and the two Symes Ponds.

An important fishery resource is the heavily-used smelt spawning area in Jewett Brook, located just upstream of Harvey's Lake.

Roy Mountain Wildlife Management Area

1,590 Acres
1:27,000



To Rt 302
4.8 Miles

To South Peacham
2.2 Miles

To Ryegate Corner
2 Miles

To Rt 5
3.2 Miles

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