



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF VERMONT

Dear Fellow Vermonters,

It is my pleasure to present to you this report: *Vermont's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy* (CWCS). It was prepared by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department in collaboration with representatives of more than 60 local, state and national partner organizations and agencies. The CWCS represents the beginning of a historic conservation effort -- never before has Vermont undertaken such a comprehensive review of its wildlife.

Wildlife is important to Vermont and Vermonters. Wildlife is integral to the functioning of the ecosystems upon which we all depend, and two-thirds of Vermonters take part in wildlife-associated recreation. These Vermonters, along with tourists coming to Vermont to enjoy our wildlife, add close to \$400 million to our economy annually.

We have a rich heritage of wildlife conservation going back more than 225 years to the appointment of our first game wardens in 1779. In 1864, George Perkins Marsh of Woodstock changed the way people around the world thought about land and land stewardship with his book *Man & Nature*. In the early 1900's, sportsmen played pivotal roles in the return of Vermont's wildlife icon the white-tailed deer, and later moose, beaver and salmon. And this year, all Vermonters can join me in celebrating the recovery of the common loon, peregrine falcon, and osprey to the point where they have been removed from the state's endangered species list.

The Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy marks the start of a new era in wildlife conservation, one where we can keep common species common. Furthermore, the CWCS complements my Clean & Clear Action Plan for Lake Champlain and the recently released Northern Forest Land Council 10th Anniversary Forum's Final Report: *Recommendations for the Conservation of the Northern Forest* to conserve the public and private forest lands and improve the economic viability of communities within our northern forests.

Together, these efforts support healthier wildlife populations and Vermont's reputation for a high quality of life and conservation of natural resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Douglas', written in a cursive style.

The Honorable James Douglas

