

Kesick Swamp Wildlife Management Area

General Description

Kesick Swamp Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is an 80-acre parcel of land owned by the State of Vermont and managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. The WMA is located in the town of Sunderland just off Route 7 between Exits 3 and 4. Access to the WMA is through a 25-foot long right-of-way at the end of Beaver Meadow Road, which is located off Sunderland Hill Road. A small parking lot will be installed there in the near future.

History

During colonial times, Kesick Swamp was designated the King's Parade Ground by the town of Sunderland. The townspeople felt that the King would never come to Sunderland, Vermont, and they didn't want waste good land for his parading ground.

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department purchased the land from the Hongs and the Schmalers in 1994, using State Waterfowl Stamp funds. Please be respectful and do not disturb the cabin located on the WMA. It has a life interest held by the previous landowner.

Habitat Features

Kesick Swamp WMA is an historic beaver pond meadow. The beaver dam gets washed out and is rebuilt periodically - a natural cycle. This cycle was demonstrated in 2002 when the dam was destroyed by a storm. The pond drained and became a meadow; and the beavers rebuilt the dam, which formed a pond again. Other wildlife benefits from either condition. Cole Brook and Beaver Meadow Brook are the water sources for the WMA. The wetland is a mix of cattails and scrub shrub emergent marsh with a fringe of alder, red maple and white pine. The wetland habitat edged by forest provides great habitat for a number of species. It is an excellent watchable-wildlife site, especially from a canoe or kayak.

Common Fish and Wildlife

Mammals Beavers are an active and integral part of Kesick Swamp WMA. They are responsible for maintaining the habitat for many other species including mink, otters, raccoons and muskrats. White-tailed deer can be found in the forested areas of the WMA. There have been numerous moose and black bear sightings on this WMA since it lays along a travel corridor.

Birds Kesick Swamp WMA provides suitable habitat for many nesting and migratory birds. Great blue herons have a small rookery here. These birds are quite sensitive to human disturbance near the colony site and are known to abandon nests when disturbed. Please keep a respectful distance. The most commonly seen species are wood ducks, mallards, black ducks, hooded mergansers, red-winged black birds, kingfishers, teal and Canada geese. Great egrets have also been spotted on the property. These large white birds stand about 35-40 inches tall and have a 55-inch wingspan. Woodcock and ruffed grouse can be found throughout the wooded areas of the WMA.

Reptiles and Amphibians Several species of salamanders can be found on the WMA including spotted, northern two-lined, northern dusky, spring and eastern red-backed salamanders. There are also eastern newts. In the spring and summer, the calls of American toads, gray treefrogs, spring peepers, green, pickerel and wood frogs can be heard in the swamp. Snapping, painted and wood turtles can be found in or around the marshland. Garter and milk snakes are more likely to be found in the forests around the swamp.

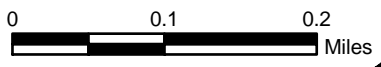
Fish Brook trout and several other species of fish can be found in the two brooks and the beaver pond.



A view of the beaver pond at Kesick Swamp WMA. Lawrence Pyne photo.

Kesick Swamp WMA is open to regulated hunting, trapping, fishing, hiking and wildlife viewing.

Kesick Swamp
Wildlife Management Area
80 Acres
1:8,000



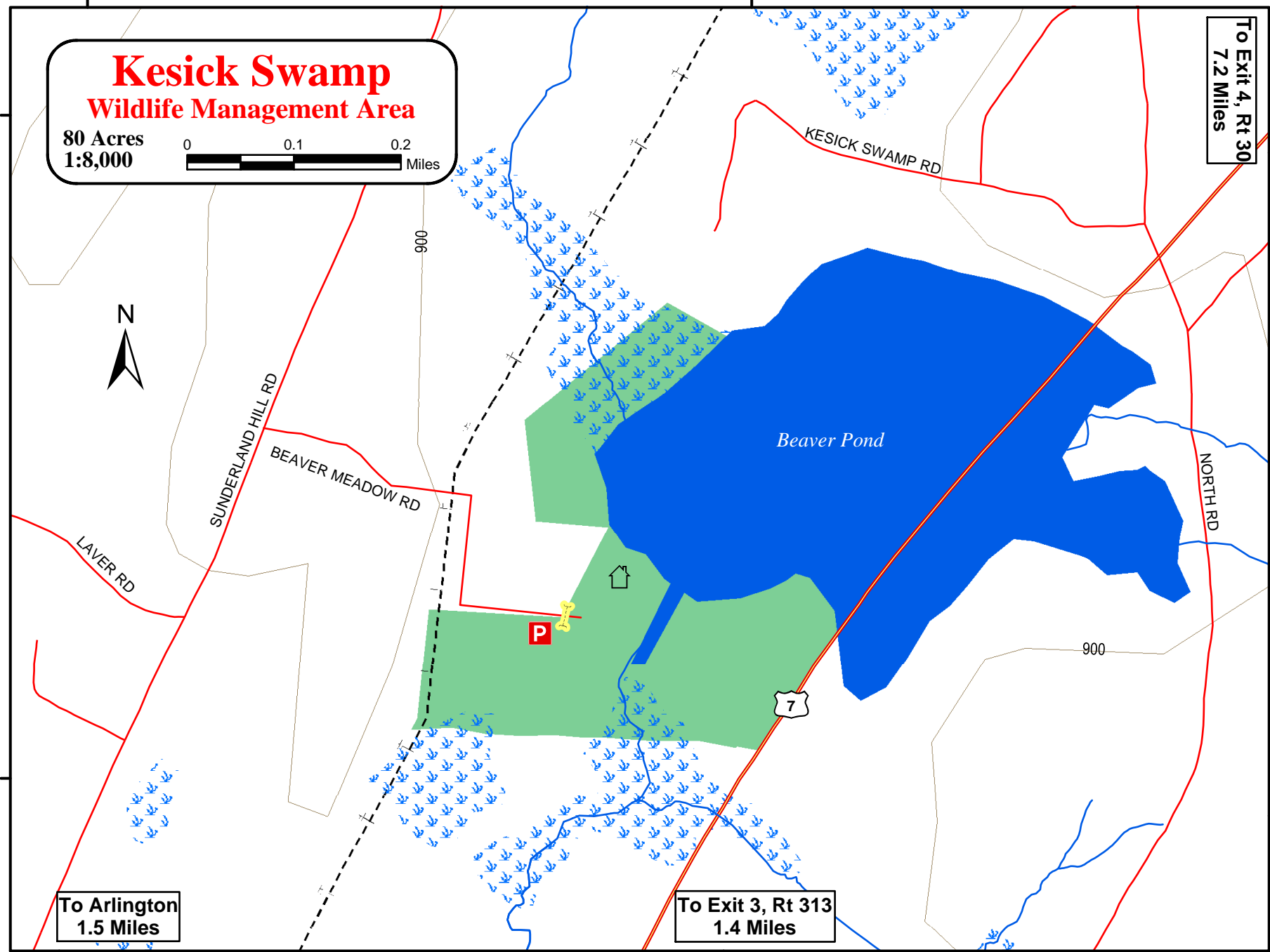
Miles



To Exit 4, Rt 30
7.2 Miles

To Arlington
1.5 Miles

To Exit 3, Rt 313
1.4 Miles



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