



The New Hampshire Coverts Project Volunteers Working for Wildlife

Our Mission:

To train volunteers to promote wildlife habitat conservation and forest stewardship

And through this volunteer outreach:

- To enhance, restore, and conserve habitat for the rich diversity of native wildlife in New Hampshire.
- To increase the amount of New Hampshire's public and private land managed with a stewardship ethic.

Coverts Staff:

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New Hampshire Coverts Project Annual Report Highlights: 2007

Prepared by Malin Ely Clyde, UNH Cooperative Extension



NH Coverts Project Program Accomplishments 2007

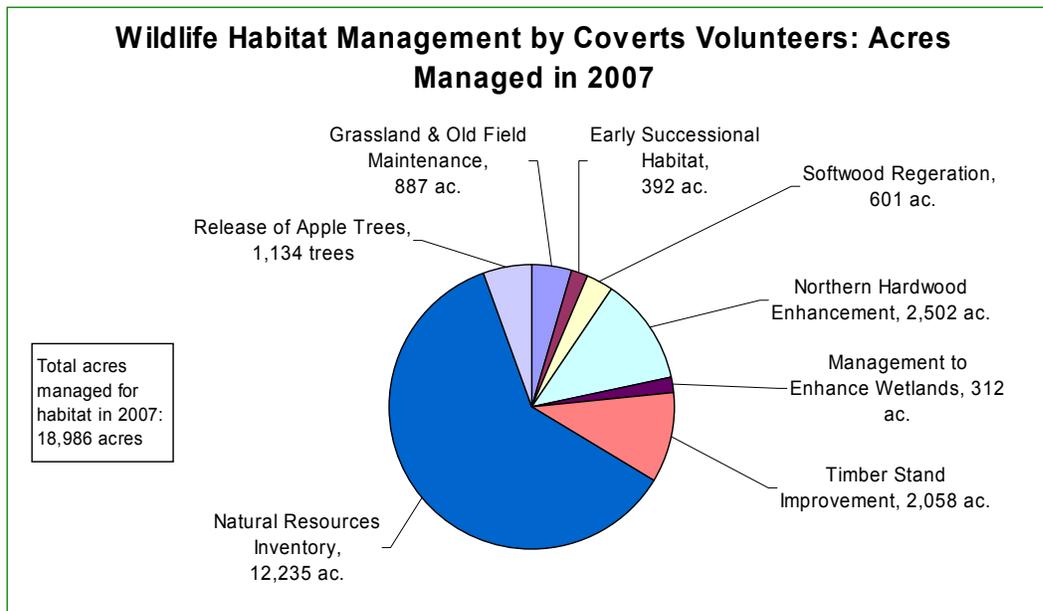
- Organized the 13th annual Coverts Training Workshop and trained 23 new Coverts Cooperators from 19 different communities.
- Organized or co-sponsored 10 continuing education programs designed for Coverts alumni.
- Promoted participation by Coverts Cooperators in over 65 natural resource-focused educational workshops.
- Worked with new partners to encourage new volunteer opportunities for Coverts Cooperators including those with Project Learning Tree, NH Audubon, NH State Parks, and NH Fish & Game.
- Instigated bi-weekly email update, consolidating announcements of workshop and volunteer opportunities (continued to mail to 20 volunteers w/o email).
- Continued to manage email discussion forum (“listserv”) for 189 participating Coverts Cooperators and natural resource professionals.
- Added many new features to Coverts webpage: **NHCoverts.org**, including adding Coverts reference notebook (provided at the annual workshop) to the website, with links to over 80% of the material.
- Published two editions of *Making Tracks* newsletter, with submissions by over 50 volunteers.
- Showcased traveling Coverts exhibit at five venues in 2007, using both staff and volunteer exhibitors.
- Helped form new group, “Natural Resource Volunteer Network” to enhance collaboration among other natural resource programs on volunteer training and service opportunities.
- Published article (in press) in “Northern Woodlands” focused on stewardship by a Coverts volunteer.
- Accessed network of Coverts landowners to promote the Northern Forest Woodcock Initiative to New Hampshire landowners. Funding was available for landowners to do habitat management that benefits woodcock. Over 90% of landowner interest in the program was from Coverts Cooperators.
- Working with Coverts volunteer, coordinated new neighborhood land management effort (3,000 acres with 20+ landowners) to experiment with ecosystem management to benefit wildlife (“Northwood Area Land Management Collaborative”).
- Attracted new financial support for NH Coverts from Quality Deer Management Association.
- Attended annual conference of “Alliance of Natural Resource Outreach & Service Programs,” an organization that brings together different kinds of programs that train adults to do outreach in natural resources fields (e.g. Master Naturalists, Watershed Stewards, etc.).

NH Coverts Project – Looking Ahead to 2008

- Addition to Coverts webpage of email updates (blog format) for easy access by Coverts volunteers
- Meeting of Coverts Advisory Committee (Feb. 2008).
- New continuing education workshops on stewardship of critical habitats, including: Grasslands, Vernal Pools, Marsh & Shrub Wetlands, and Floodplain Forests.
- Train new class of 25 volunteers at 2008 Coverts Workshop scheduled for Sept. 3-6 in Hancock, NH.
- Improve access to volunteer opportunities for Coverts through Natural Resource Volunteer Network.

Coverts Volunteer Service - 2007

- **240 active volunteers** are currently working in 120 different NH communities
- Coverts volunteers own or manage over 46,000 acres
- Almost 50% of Coverts volunteers serve on their town's Conservation Commission
- Coverts volunteers manage thousands of acres of land specifically for wildlife each year:



Coverts Volunteer Service Since 1999 - Cumulative Statistics -

- Since 1999, Coverts volunteers have contributed over **47,000 hours of service** on behalf of wildlife and stewardship to the State of New Hampshire. This service has an estimated **value of \$1 million** (rate adjusted by year; 2006 rate is \$18.77/hour according to www.independentsector.org).
- Since 1999, volunteers have managed thousands of acres of land specifically for wildlife habitat:
 - **7,219 acres of grasslands** & old fields have been kept open
 - **7,245 acres of early successional habitat** have been created or maintained
 - **6,503 acres managed to enhance softwood habitats** for snowshoe hare, deer, etc.
- Since 1999, Coverts volunteers have reached over **190,000 people** through their outreach efforts, eg: distributing handouts, hosting programs, talking to neighbors, staffing exhibits, writing news articles.
- Since 1999, Coverts volunteers have helped permanently conserve over **180,000 acres** of land in NH.

New Hampshire Coverts Cooperators In Their Own Words:

Worthwhile Workshop

“UNH Extension Coverts Program is the best use of taxpayer money that I have seen. High marks to [the staff] for developing an engaging, informative and motivating program for recruiting such a thoughtful and motivated group of participants and for lining up inspiring speakers, foresters, and landowners.”

- 2007 Coverts Workshop Participant



Children in Nature

“This year, I continued my participation in Fish & Game’s WOW program, teaching several classes to elementary school kids on topics of Habitats, Endangered Species, and Pond Ecology... I also helped [a local school] apply for a Wildlife Action Grant to make a pollinator garden... This fall I helped the school apply for a small Continuation Grant to improve the garden.”

- Coverts Volunteer

Stewardship Assistance

“I am still benefiting greatly from all the resources and connections made available through the Coverts Project. I might have accomplished only 1/10th of our land stewardship program as it stands today without the help and knowledge obtained through Coverts.”

-Coverts Volunteer



New Ideas for the Coverts Program

“You have been great in keeping us informed about the learning possibilities. But----- would it be possible to hold gatherings of Coverts folks in smaller areas, where we could share ideas and methods of applying what we have learned? Not to separate us, but if we had "chapters" (for lack of a better word), where we support each other. Learning is great, but it has to be applied and if methods have proven successful, let’s share. Some folks have special talents and that is a great focus that the rest of us could benefit from.”

- Coverts Volunteer

