



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 Program Highlights - 2009

Prepared by Malin Ely Clyde, UNH Cooperative Extension

Program Accomplishments 2009

- Organized the 15th annual Coverts Training Workshop at new facility in Greenfield, NH. Trained 23 new Coverts Cooperators from 21 different communities.
- Expanded blog forum for Coverts Cooperators to include volunteer coordinators from other natural resource organizations. Posted 25 updates from January – December. Go to: www.NHCoverts.org
- Organized 2 field-based Coverts Alumni Gatherings (Danbury, Orford), hosted by Coverts Cooperators and attended by Coverts alumni.



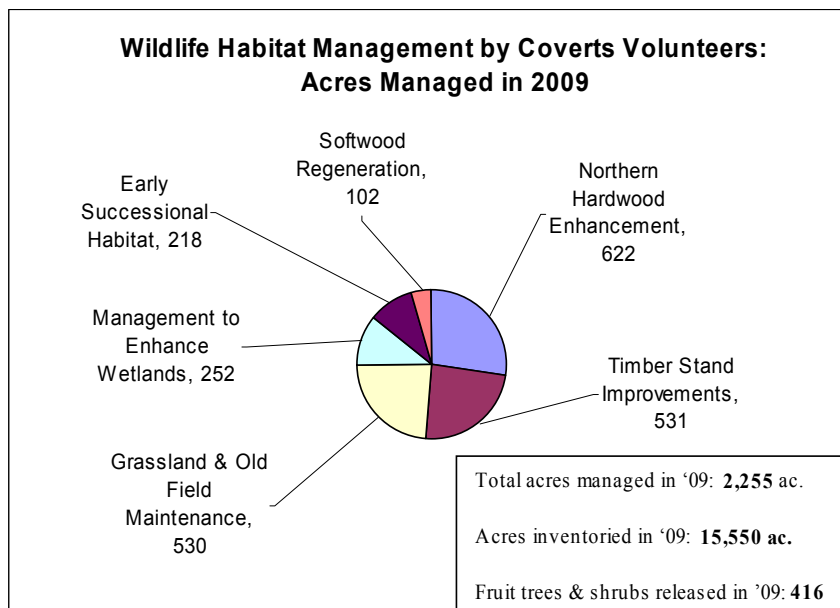
- Promoted Coverts participation in over 100 natural resource-focused educational workshops.
- Successfully sought funding (Wellborn Ecology Fund of the NH Charitable Foundation) for new pilot project for Coverts volunteers called “Speaking for Wildlife.” Trained 16 Coverts Cooperators to deliver wildlife presentations and field walks to Upper Valley Communities.
- Re-vamped and expanded UNHCE Coverts and Wildlife websites to include additional habitat information, training videos, and online version of the Coverts Resource Notebook.
- Published one edition of *Making Tracks* newsletter, with submissions by more than 20 volunteers.

Looking Ahead to 2010

- Develop new continuing education workshops on stewardship of critical habitats, including lowland spruce-fir forests, shrublands, Appalachian oak-pine forests, and others.
- Experiment with and evaluate “Speaking for Wildlife” project with eye towards expanding it beyond the Upper Valley to other regions of the state.
- Train 25 new volunteers at 2010 Coverts Workshop, scheduled for September in Greenfield, NH.
- Expand land stewardship information on UNHCE wildlife website to include content from new Habitat Stewardship Brochures (northern hardwood forests, headwater streams, hemlock-hardwood-pine forests, lakes & ponds)

Volunteer Service - 2009

- **282 active Coverts volunteers** are currently working in 134 different NH communities.
- In 2009, Coverts Cooperators contributed **9,000 volunteer hours** on behalf of forest stewardship or wildlife habitat issues in their communities, **valued at over \$180,000**.
- Coverts volunteers currently own or manage over 110,000 acres in NH.
- 40 % of Coverts volunteers serve on their town's Conservation Commission.
- Coverts volunteers manage thousands of acres of land specifically for wildlife each year (see chart).
- Coverts Cooperators **worked to conserve over 5,600 acres** in New Hampshire in 2009.
- Coverts volunteers **reached out to over 35,000 people** with a message of sound forest stewardship and wildlife conservation.



Coverts Volunteer Service Since 1999 - Cumulative Impacts -

- Since 1999 (the first year data is available), Coverts volunteers have contributed over **72,000 hours of service** on behalf of wildlife and stewardship to the State of New Hampshire. This service has an estimated **value of \$1.5 million** (rate adjusted by year, using www.independentsector.org).
- Since 1999, volunteers have managed thousands of acres of land specifically for wildlife habitat:
 - **8,500 acres of grasslands** & old fields have been kept open
 - **8,000 acres of early successional habitat** have been created or maintained
 - **7,200 acres managed to enhance softwood habitats** for snowshoe hare, deer, etc.
- Since 1999, Coverts volunteers have reached over **280,000 people** through their outreach efforts
- Since 1999, Coverts volunteers have worked to permanently conserve over **210,000 acres** of land.

New Hampshire Coverts Cooperators: In Their Own Words

Creating New Habitat

“We started a 3-acre patch clear cut in an area that [UNHCE biologists and foresters] walked and characterized as ‘stagnant pine.’ It’s within 50 yards of a local stream and a lake, so we’re hoping we can in time attract more grouse and woodcock. We wouldn’t have done this but for the Coverts program. Thank you for the education....and the gentle persuasion!”

- 2009 Coverts Workshop Participant



Conserving & Stewarding Town Lands

“This year I’m most proud of my work to acquire part interest in a 17-acre woodlot for [my] town. We also hired a forester to develop a management plan for the 225-acre Town Forest, built new trails, and signed a purchase and sales agreement for an additional 74 acres.”

- Coverts Volunteer

Cooperating Across Property Boundaries

“This year, I cooperated with my neighbor to create an educational trail, including signage and map, traversing our lands.”

- Coverts Volunteer



Doing Effective Outreach

“This year I was proud to move our Town Forest Stewardship Plan process forward. We surveyed stakeholders on objectives for the Town Forest and commissioned a volunteer to develop the plan. We also helped start an Eagle Scout candidate’s trail and bridge project on town-owned protected lands. The project is now complete!”

-Coverts Volunteer