



**Department of
Environmental
Conservation**

Fish and Wildlife Program Highlights – Spring 2019

Budget and Staffing



Staffing:

Division of Fish and Wildlife

- 333 permanent positions (299 in fall 2018)
 - 43 converted seasonal Fish and Wildlife Technicians
- Approval to move forward with 16 permanent positions

Staffing:

Waivers from Hiring Freeze

Secretary 2 – Albany, Division Director Office

Fish and Wildlife Technician 2 – Cape Vincent, Lake Ontario

Biologist 1 (Aquatic) – R1

Biologist 1 (Wildlife) – R2

Environmental Program Specialist 1 (NR) – R2, Fisheries

Biologist 2 (Wildlife) – R3, Regional Wildlife Manager



Staffing:

Waivers from Hiring Freeze

Fish and Wildlife Technician 2 – R4, Wildlife

Biologist 1 (Ecology) – R4

Biologist 1 (Aquatic) – R5, Lake Champlain

Fish and Wildlife Technician 2 – R6, Wildlife

Biologist 2 (Ecology) – R9, Regional Habitat Manager



Staffing:

Waivers from Hiring Freeze

Fish Culturist 2 – Salmon River Hatchery

Fish Culturist 1 – Chateauguay Hatchery

Fish Culturist 1 – Chateauguay Hatchery

Fish Culturist 1 – Salmon River Hatchery

Fish Culturist 1 – Rome Hatchery



Budget: Flat for 2019-20

Division of Fish and Wildlife (projected)

- General Fund: \$ 304,100 (OPS) \$4,281,555 (NPS)
- Conservation Fund: \$1,703,700 (OPS) \$2,991,745 (NPS)
- Federal Aid
 - Wildlife Restoration: \$22.6 M
 - Sport Fish Restoration: \$4.5 M (freshwater)
 - State Wildlife Grants: \$2.2 M



Habitat and Access Stamp



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Promoting Habitat / Access Stamp Sales:

- Goal – 25,000 2018 H / A Stamps (Barred Owl)
- “Stickers” – agents, State Fair
- Pins – State Fair
- Agent Incentives (recognition)
- Banner-ups – State Fair, top retailers
- Posters – (image of “stickers”)
- Social Media
- Change Call-out Box in DECALS



BE A HABITAT HERO

2018 Habitat & Access Stamp



Whether you are an angler or hunter, birder or photographer, purchasing a \$5 Habitat & Access Stamp is the perfect way to preserve New York's wildlife heritage and increase public access for fish- and wildlife-related recreation.

For more information, talk to your NYSDEC license-issuing agent, or visit our website at www.dec.ny.gov



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BE A HABITAT HERO 2018 Habitat & Access Stamp

With the purchase of a \$5 Habitat & Access Stamp, you can help fund projects aimed at protecting and improving fish and wildlife habitat, and improving public access for fish and wildlife-related recreation.

New York's habitat serves a vital role in maintaining healthy and sustainable fish and wildlife resources for all to enjoy! Whether you are an angler, hunter, birder, photographer, or any type of outdoor enthusiast, purchasing a Habitat & Access Stamp is the perfect way to help conserve New York's remarkable wildlife heritage and habitat.

Some of the projects completed by Department of Environmental Conservation and partners with Habitat & Access Stamp funds include:

- Improving angler access and parking areas on Otego Creek (Town of Oneonta), Snyders Lake (Town of North Greenbush) and Fishkill Creek (Town of Beekman).
- Improving grassland habitat at Upper Lisie Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and several other WMAs in Schuyler and Seneca counties.
- Constructing an accessible fishing site with parking area on Kayaderosseras Creek (Town of Milton).
- Improving accessible access at Eighteen Mile Creek (Town of Evans).
- Constructing a parking area and accessible fishing platform on Salmon River (Franklin County).
- Improving stream habitat on Batten Kill (Washington County) and Wiscoy Creek (Wyoming County).
- Building a new fishing platform on Buttonwood Creek (Town of Greece).



HuntFishNY

E-License & Game Harvest Reporting App

DEC's official mobile app, New York Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife by Pocket Ranger, has an exciting new feature.

With the integration of a new e-license and game harvest-reporting tool, called HuntFishNY, hunters, trappers and anglers now have a quick, user-friendly way to:



- Gain instant, mobile access to an electronic version of your fishing, hunting and trapping licenses and privileges, even when you don't have cell reception.
- Report deer, bear or turkey harvests on your smartphone immediately while afield.
- Use smart-filtering technology for easy access to town, county and Wildlife Management Unit information.
- Have quick and easy access to season dates and maps, regulations guides and important DEC contact information.

The NY Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife Mobile App and the HuntFishNY e-license harvest-reporting tool can be downloaded from either the Apple App or Google Play store. See the DEC website at www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/96470.html for more information.

NOTE: You will need a DEC Automated Licensing System (DECALS) user name and password to securely access your license documents through the HuntFishNY e-license and harvest-reporting mobile app. If you have not yet created an online user name and password, please visit DECALS through the link on our website at: www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6101.html

Questions? Call our sporting license hotline at

866-472-4332



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Habitat Stamp Holiday Promotion

Buy a Stamp; Get a Collectible Owl Pin!*



From December 1 through December 14, if you purchase a \$5 Habitat & Access Stamp, NYSDEC will send you a collectible 2018-19 Habitat Patron pin featuring a barred owl. Revenue from the sale of Habitat & Access Stamps supports DEC's efforts to improve fish and wildlife habitat and increase access for outdoor recreation. You can buy Habitat & Access Stamps [online](#), by phone at 1-866-933-2257 (Mon - Fri 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM), or at any [License Issuing Agent](#).

Also, during this promotional period, if you purchase 7 stamps in one transaction (\$35 donation), you will receive our entire collector series of 7 pins which includes the barred owl, beaver, white-tailed deer, wild turkey, wood duck, bluebird and woodcock pins, plus an extra 2018-19 barred owl pin... 8 pins in all!

*Quantities are limited; order today! Pins will be mailed in time for Christmas. If you have questions or would like to make a special pin request, call our DEC License Sales hotline at 866-472-4332, M-F, 8AM-4PM, by December 14.



Promoting Habitat / Access Stamp Sales:

To date 2018 H/A Stamp Sales = **13,724**

All-time high sales = **9,961** (in 2007)



Promoting Habitat / Access Stamp Sales:

Recognition to License-Issuing Agents

- certificate
- coffee mug
- note out to all LIAs re: top sellers



Promoting Habitat / Access Stamp Sales:

Top Sellers:

Town of New Lebanon (266)

Oak Orchard Tackle and Lodge, Inc. (216)

Town of Hamburg (179)

Town of Pleasant Valley (169)

Town of Owego (165)



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Promoting Habitat / Access Stamp Sales:

Highest Percentage compared to all sales:

Accurate Sports (22.9%)

Town of Shelter Island (20.2%)

Town of Florence (18.9%)

Chester Public Library (17.7%)

Town of Wright (17.5%)



Promoting Habitat / Access Stamp Sales:

Most Improved 2018 vs 2017:

Town of New Lebanon

2017 - 2

2018 - 266



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Young Forest Initiative Update



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Young Forest Initiative - **Progress**

42 Approved Habitat Management Plans

9 additional Habitat Management Plans pending approval

15 additional Habitat Management Plans in draft

30 Public meetings held (37 WMAs)



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Young Forest Initiative - Progress

Inventories Completed (acres):

Region 3	(3,186)	(24%)
Region 4	(10,818)	(60%)
Region 5	(5,269)	(90%)
Region 6	(43,628)	(100%)
Region 7	(50,717)	(97%)
Region 8	(31,771)	(67%)
Region 9	(7,040)	(45%)
Total	(152,429)	(78%)



Seed tree cut – Indian River WMA – R6

Young Forest Initiative - **Progress**

Inventories completed on 72 (79%) of WMAs

Inventories underway 9 additional WMAs (37,321 acres)

Approved prescriptions 50

Projects currently under contract – 24 (930 acres)



Young Forest Initiative - **Progress**

Projects completed – 28 (653 acres)

Young forest created – 580 acres

Other forest habitat improvement – 360 acres



Young Forest Initiative - Progress



Noncommercial aspen clear cutting (30 ac) and apple release (~15 ac) on Tioughnioga WMA, Region 7, completed early December 2018.

Access and Public Use Plans - WMAs



Access and Public Use Plan - WMAs

Completed for each Wildlife Management Area

Developing Template

- Inventory (existing features)
- Management Challenges
- Management Strategies

Habitat Management to Enhance Access

Physical Features (parking areas, roads, bridges, trails, blinds, observation towers, launches, etc.)

- Maps



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Furbearer Management in New York

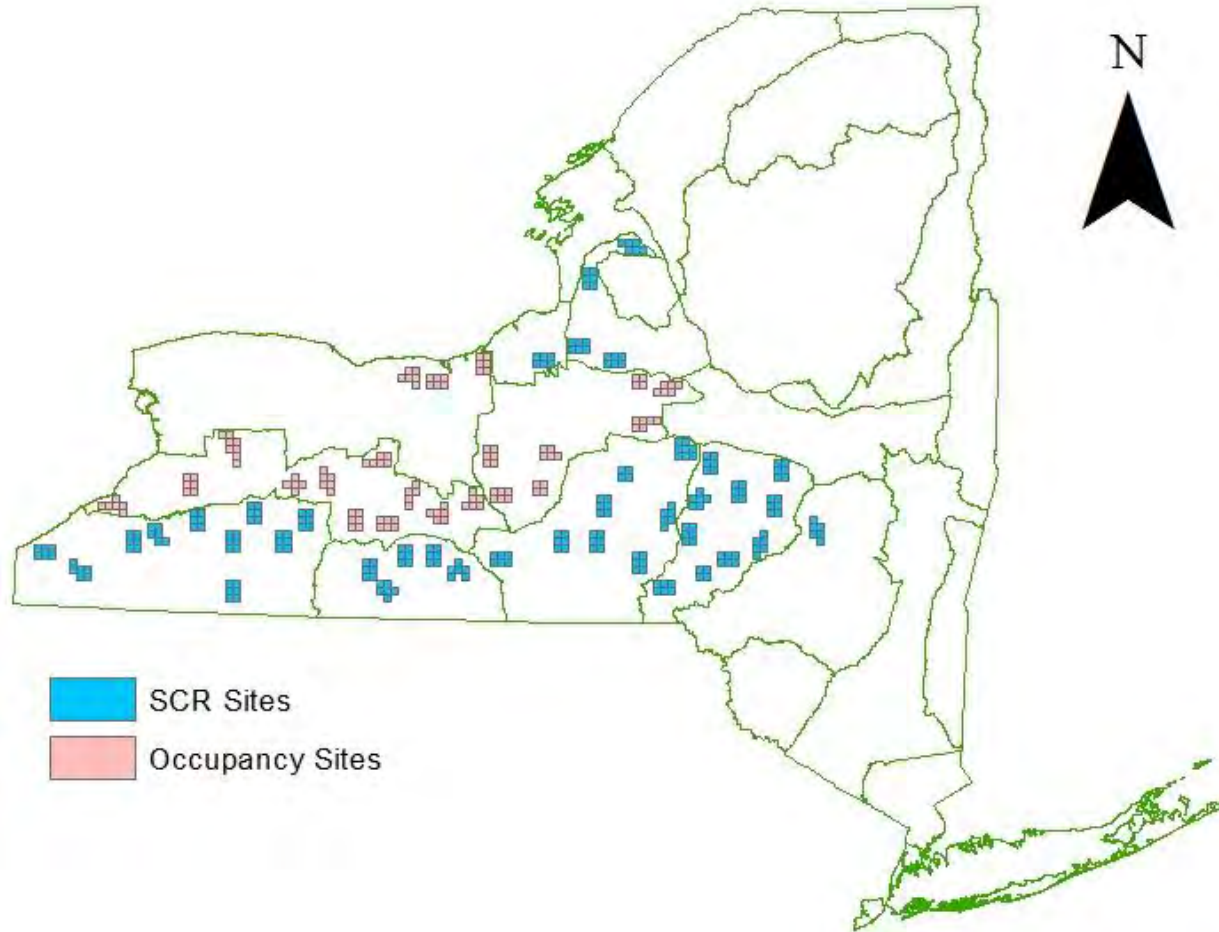
Fisher and Otter Update

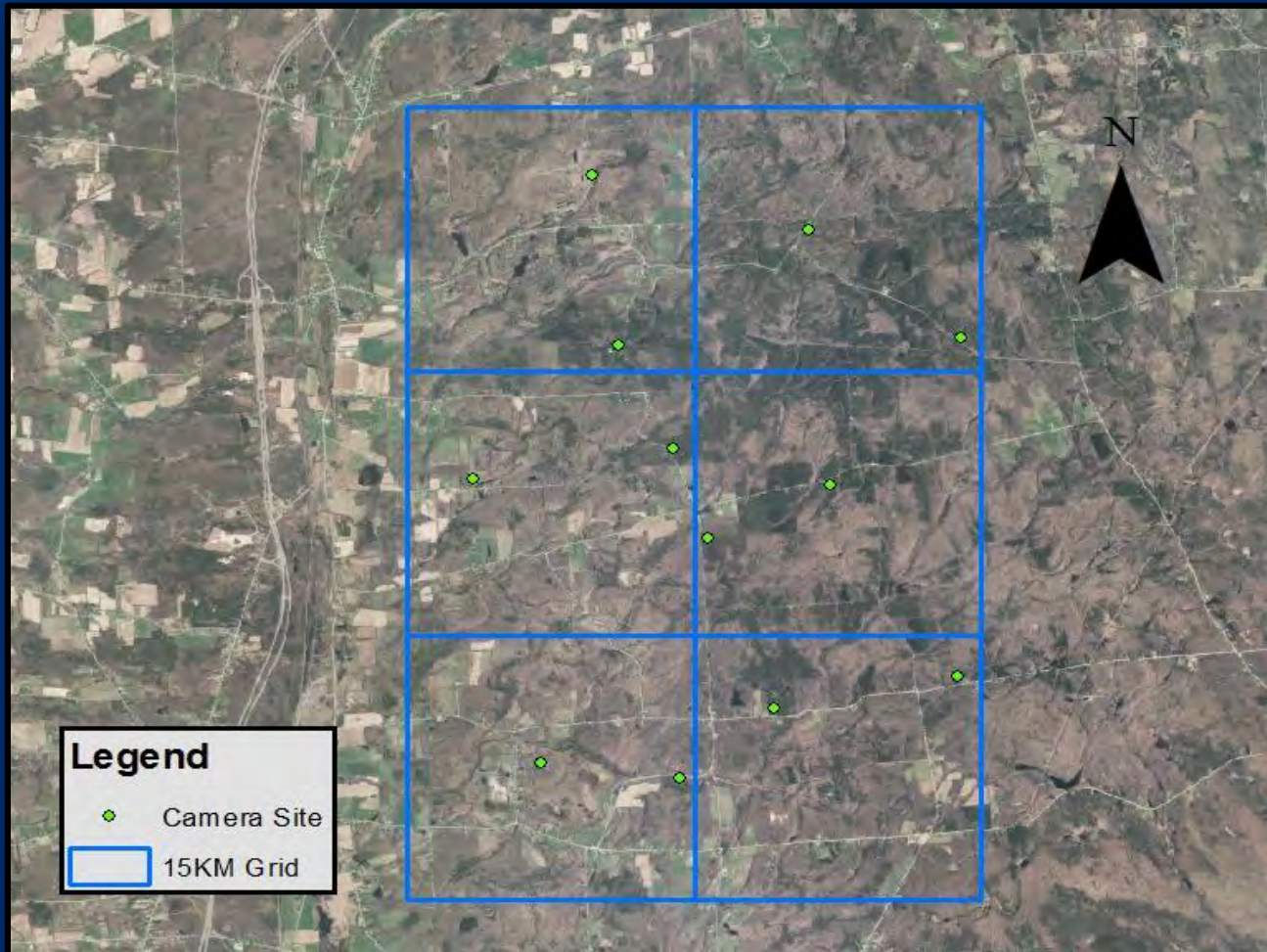
Presented by: Tim Pyszczyński
Wildlife Biologist
Region 6

Fisher Occupancy and Abundance

- Regions 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9 in conjunction with Cornell University 2019- 2021
- 119 occupancy sites / 442 SCR sites.
- SCR = Hair snares, which will be used to develop an abundance estimate.
- Hare surveys – 90 total sites *
 - 4-14
 - 7-27
 - 8-29
 - 9-19

Spatial Capture Recapture (SCR)





Results to Date

Region 4

128 sites, to date 69 detections 72%

Region 6

58 sites, to date 36 detections 62%

Region 7

135 sites, to date 89 detections 72%

Region 8

124 sites, to date 48 detections 54%

Region 9

140 sites

Fisher Demographic

- Regions 5 and 6 in conjunction with SUNY ESF / 2019- 2022
- 8 total fisher were caught – 4 females 4 males.
 - Goal is 10 females a year per region.
 - Females GPS / Males VHF
- Tracking and observing kits at den trees via trail cameras
- For next year:
 - Reassess trapping efforts
 - PHD student will be on board





**About 90 traps
between regions**

**Baited - with beaver,
moose, and muskrat.**

**Lured - with skunk
essence, GUSTO, and
fisher gland lure.**



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Permits and Carcass Collection

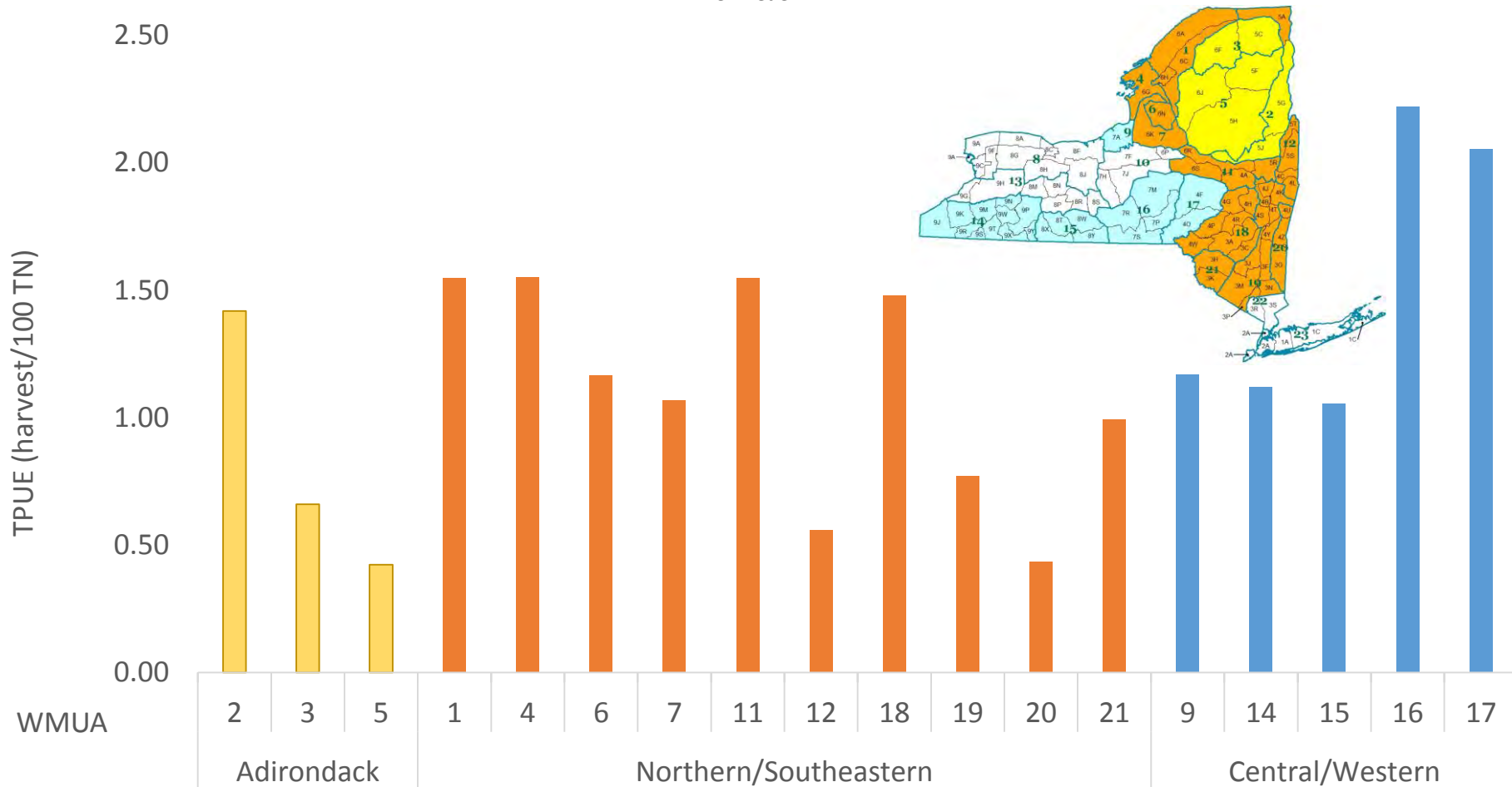
- Livers – 498
- Reproductive Tracks - 338
- Stomachs - 495
- Teeth – 1,797
- Logs



Fisher/Marten Specific Trapping Efforts 2017

12

2017 Trapping log Summary : Deanna
Kreinherder



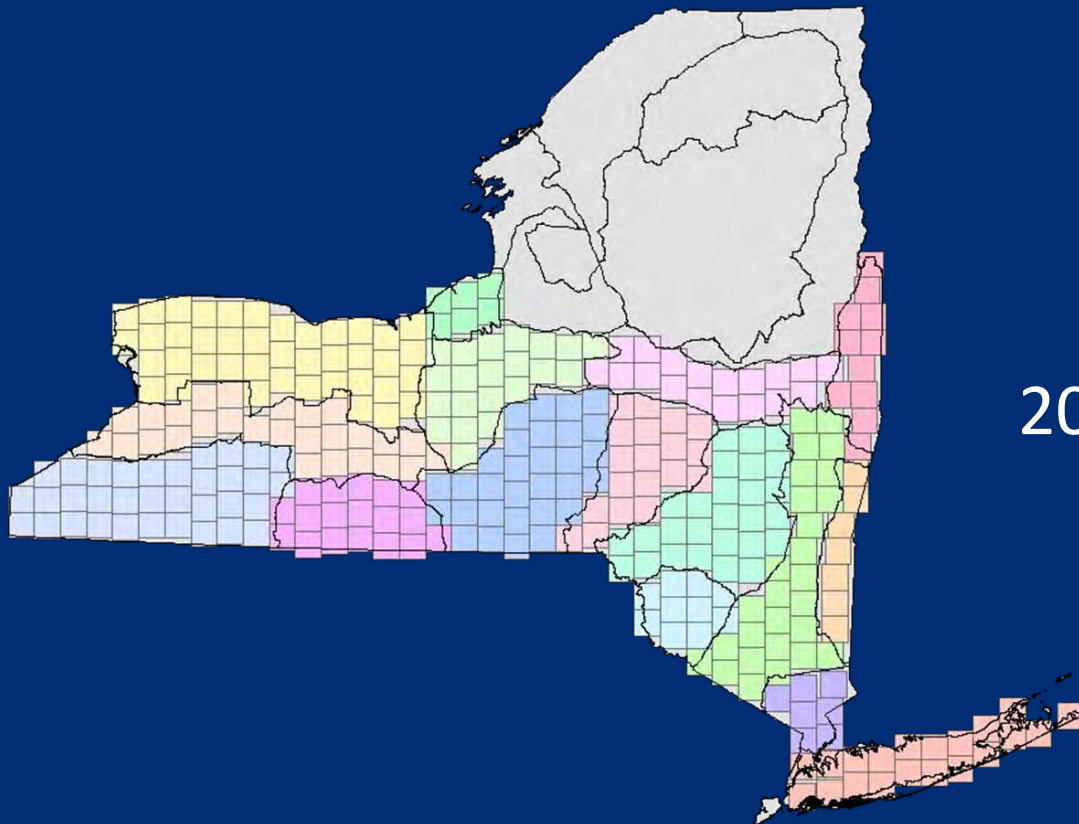
Otter Update



Maps Provided by Jacqui Friar/ SUNY ESF



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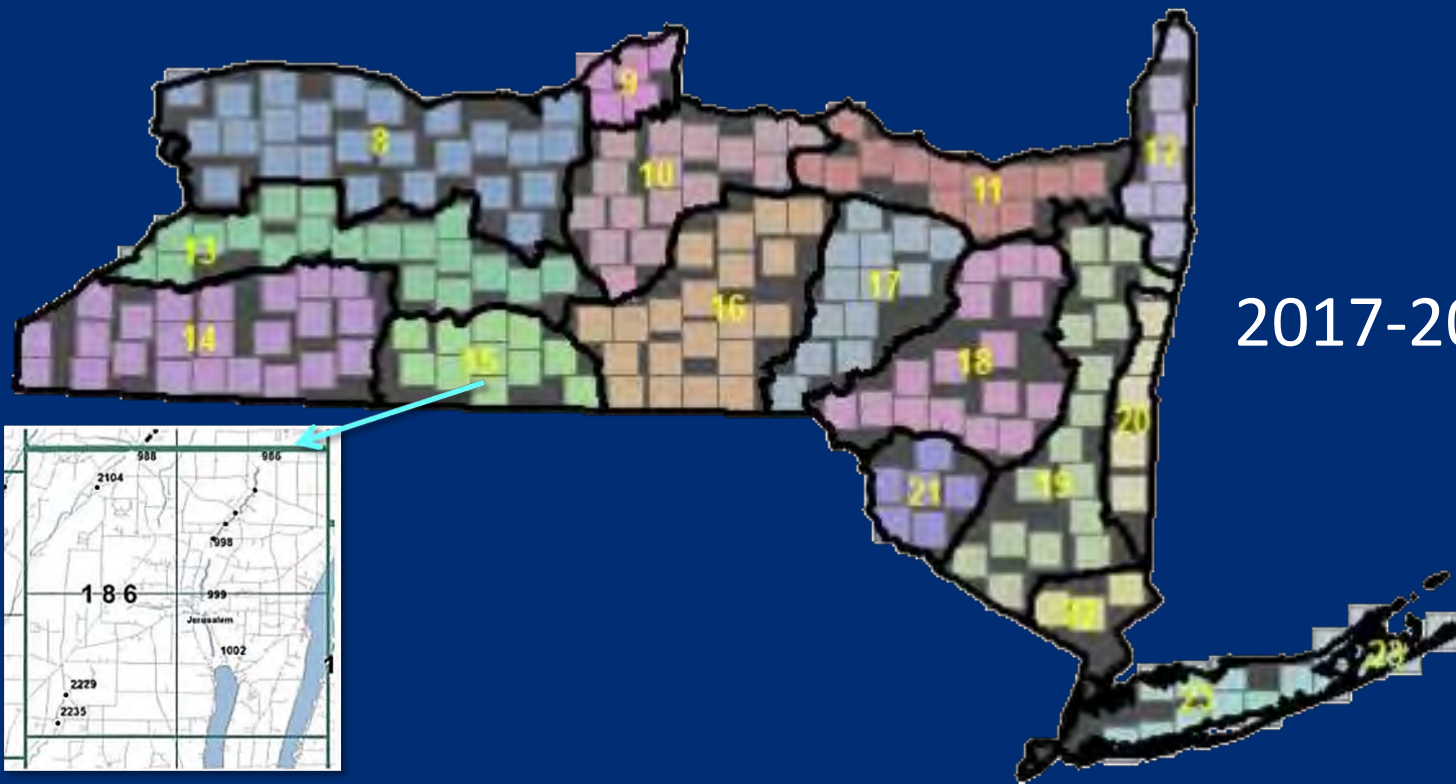


2016-2017 Surveys

400 m shoreline (to increase detection probability)

4-8 survey sites/block (1 visit each)

Winters 2016-17, 2017-18

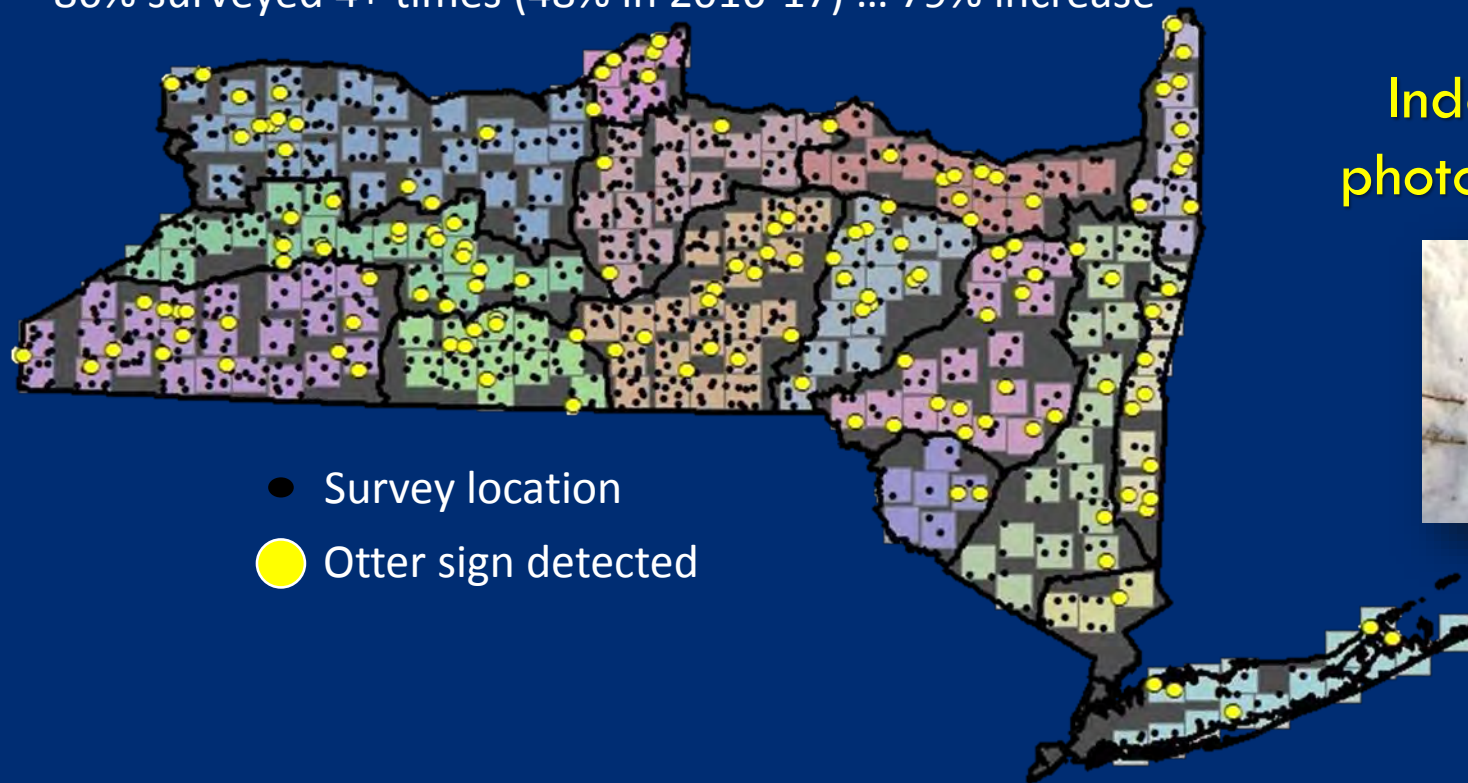


2017-2018 Surveys

2017-18 Survey Returns

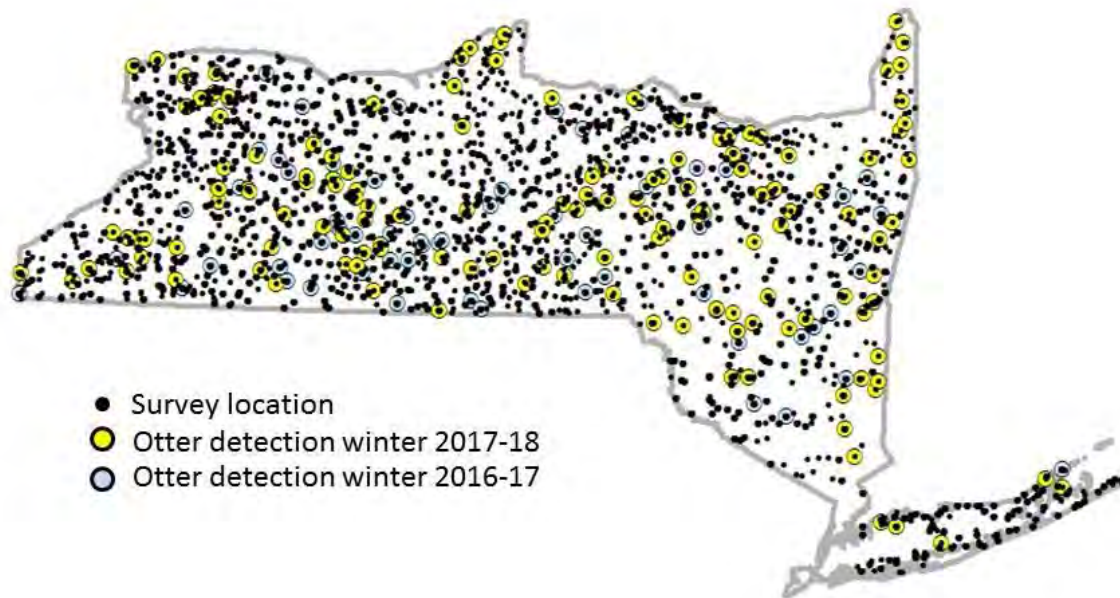
214 blocks surveyed (323 in 2016-17) ... 34% reduction

86% surveyed 4+ times (48% in 2016-17) ... 79% increase

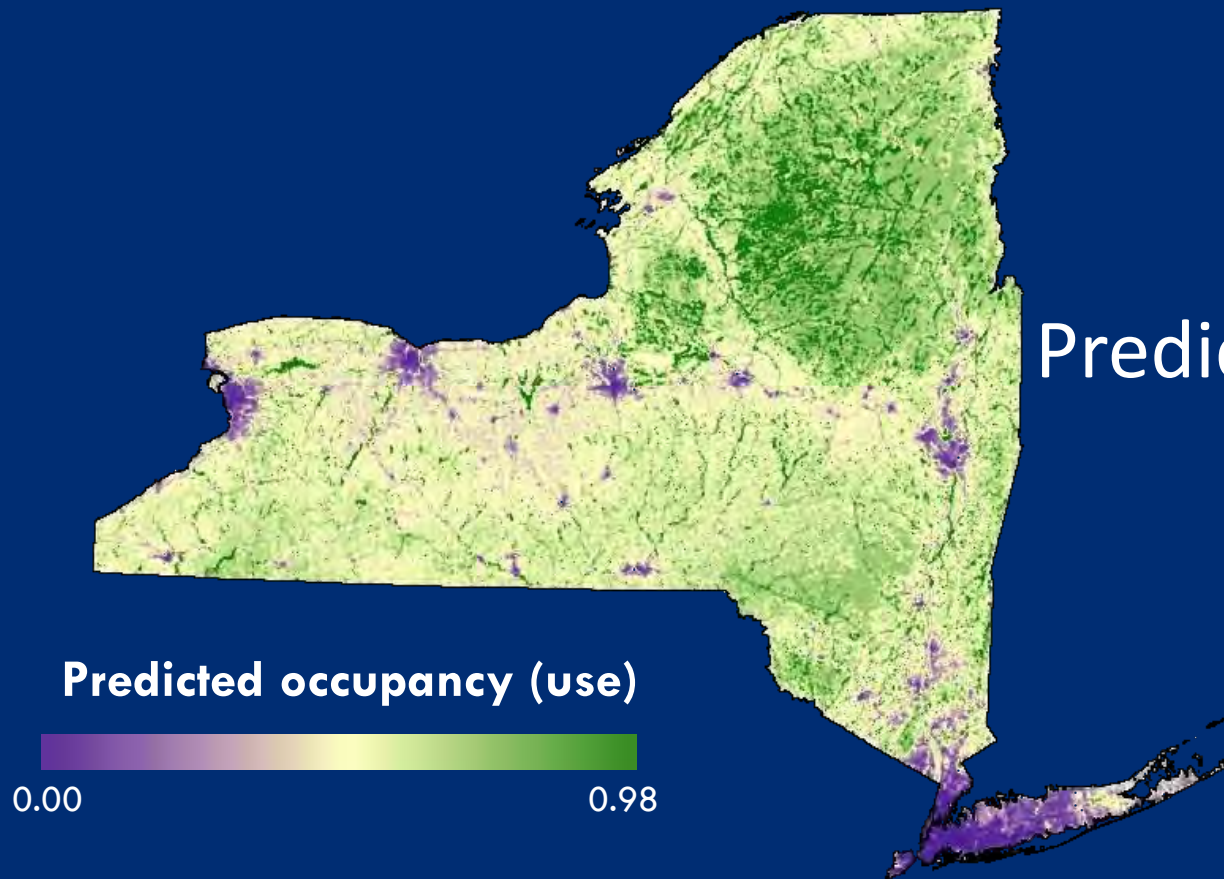


Independent
photo validation





Detections Combined (2017-18 & 2016 -17)



Predicted occupancy

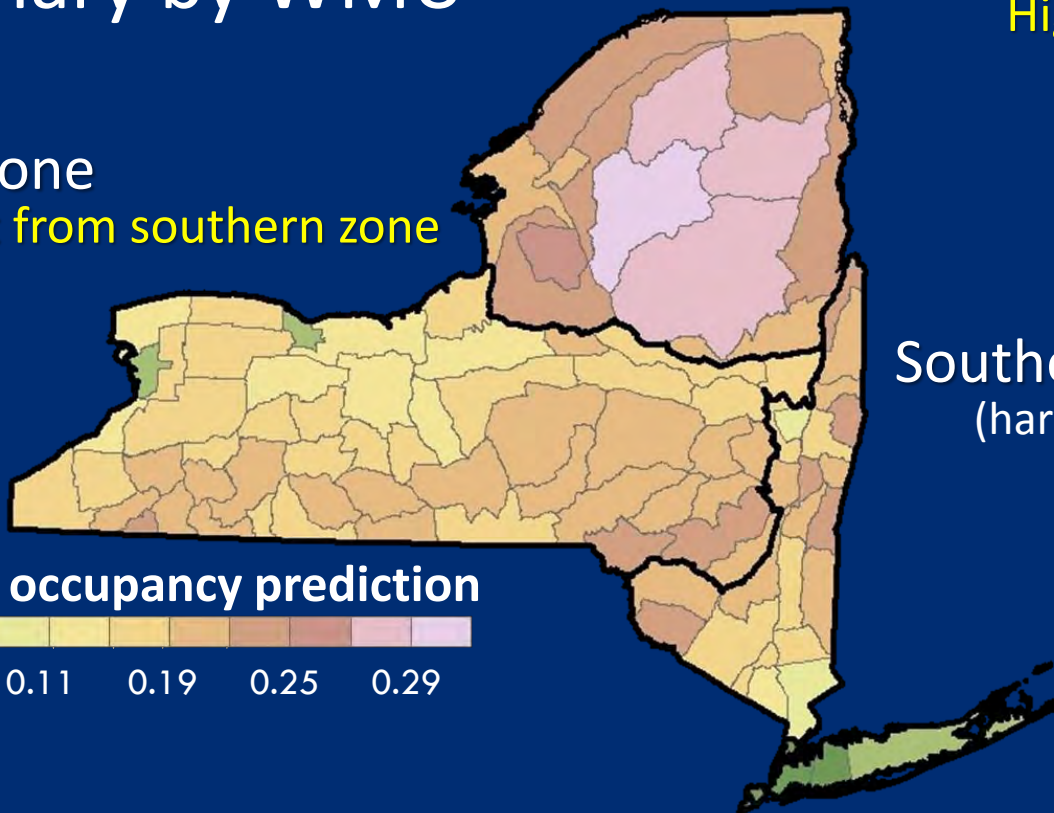
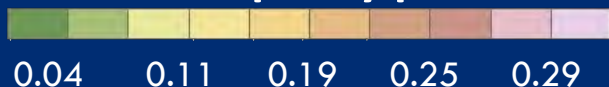
Summary by WMU

Recovery zone
Not different from southern zone

Northern zone
Higher than SZ
(harvested)

Southern zone
(harvested)

Mean occupancy prediction



Regions 1&2
Lower than SZ



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Otter Plan

- Drafts of Section 1 and 2 completed
- Draft of Section 3 in progress
- Further Monitoring



Thank You

- Tim Pyszczyński
- Wildlife Biologist
- 317 Washington St. Watertown, NY
- Timothy.pyszczyński@dec.ny.gov
- 315-785-2534

- **Connect with us:**

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Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/nysdec



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Managing public access to the WMA system

March 21, 2019
NYS Fish and Wildlife Management Board
White Eagle, NY

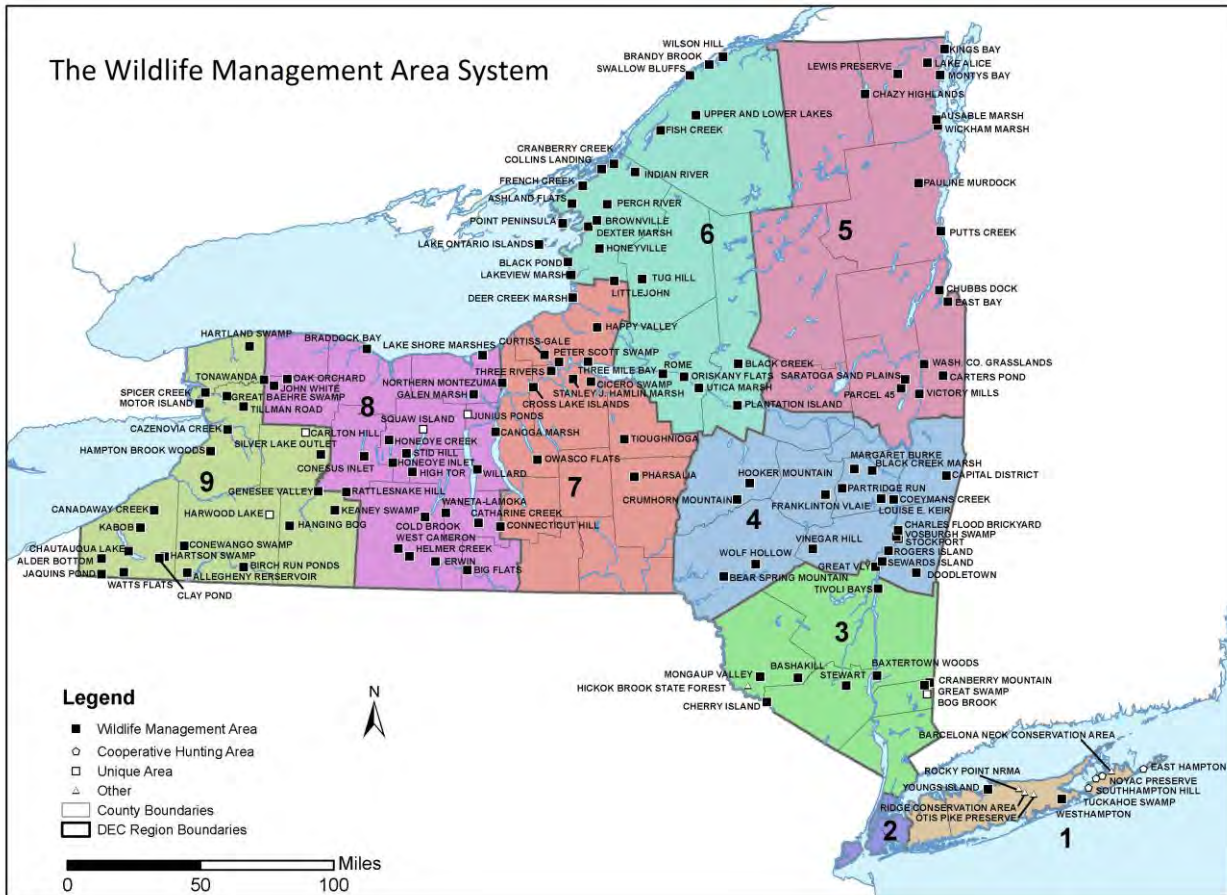
Marcelo J. del Puerto
Division of Fish and Wildlife

Our mission:

- ▶ Acquire and manage state land to benefit wildlife survival and reproduction.
- ▶ Provide for safe, convenient, and ecologically-sound access for wildlife-dependent recreation.



The Wildlife Management Area System



The WMA System:

- ▶ 125 Wildlife Management Areas
- ▶ 72 Coop Hunting, Multiple Use, Unique, State Forest and other areas
- ▶ 259,665 acres total and growing !

We provide a place to hunt, fish, look at birds, trap, and enjoy nature.



Providing public access



Improving access for persons with disabilities



Management Goals

PRIMARY GOALS:

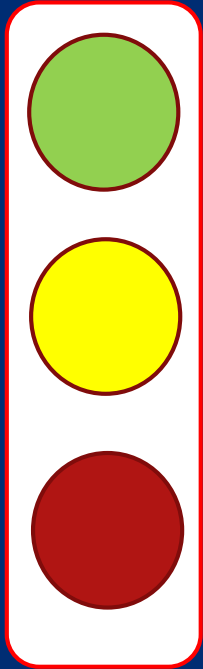
- GOAL 1—**Provide and enhance habitat for a diversity of wildlife** with an emphasis on game species and those species listed as Endangered, Threatened or Special Concern, or Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) in New York's State Wildlife Action Plan.
- GOAL 2—**Provide and enhance opportunities to participate in wildlife-dependent recreation** (e.g., hunting, trapping, fishing, wildlife observation and photography) that is compatible with the ecological integrity of the area.



SECONDARY GOALS:

- GOAL 3—Foster understanding and instill appreciation of the diversity and interconnectedness of wildlife and their habitats.
- GOAL 4—Allow for non-wildlife-dependent recreation (e.g., hiking, biking, horseback riding, skiing, snowmobiling, and dog walking and trials) provided the activity is compatible with the primary goals associated with wildlife-dependent recreation and wildlife habitat enhancement.

How we decide what is allowed



- A. Primary Activities:** Wildlife-dependent, compatible
Hunting, Trapping, Wildlife observation, wildlife and nature photography, Fishing.
- B. Secondary Activities:** May not be wildlife-dependent but generally compatible
Non-powered boating, Hiking, bicycling on WMA roads, specific trails, or boardwalks, Cross-country (Nordic) skiing or snowshoeing.
- C. Restricted activities:** Not wildlife related, can be incompatible: horseback-riding, off-road bicycling, camping, dog trials, target shooting, group events.

Management challenges in WMAs

- “Target” shooting
- Mountain (off-road) bicycling
- Dog trials
- Snowmobiles
- Horseback riding
- Partying, alcohol, drug use

Target shooting: the notorious mounds at Tonawanda WMA

