

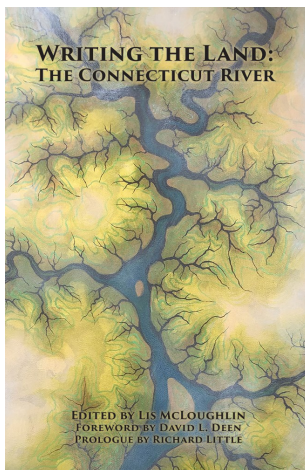


U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge Refuge Happenings

March 2024: The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge presently includes twenty-three different divisions and units, located in the four primary Connecticut River watershed states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. The Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge is located in ten locations on the mainland and near shore islands along the northern shore of the Long Island Sound in Connecticut.

Writing the Land- The Connecticut River



“Writing the Land: The Connecticut River,” is a book of poems and other writings that connect the reader with the history and the natural wonders of the Connecticut River watershed. This book is a collaboration between conservation partners and poets who have an interest in raising awareness about the importance of conservation in the watershed. Proceeds from this book will be used by partners to support conservation efforts. Partners include Silvio O. Conte NFWR Friends Groups, Northwoods Stewardship Center, Connecticut River Conservancy, Park Watershed and many others. You can find more information about this book and other Writing the Lands Anthologies at:
<https://www.nature-culture.net/writing-the-land-the-connecticut-river>

For more information contact: Rachel_Cliche@fws.gov

Photo Credit: Connecticut River Cover Page

32nd Annual Federal Junior Duck Stamp Program in Vermont



The 32nd annual Federal Junior Duck Stamp Program art contest was held at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science on Thursday, March 28th. Ezra Goss won Best of Show for his acrylic painting of a red-breasted merganser. Later this year, Ezra’s artwork will compete nationally against the Best of Shows from every state in the Nation. Good luck Ezra!

For more information contact: Steve_Agius@fws.gov

Photo credit:: USFWS



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

Refuge Happenings

March 2024

Northern Forest Habitat Restoration Funds

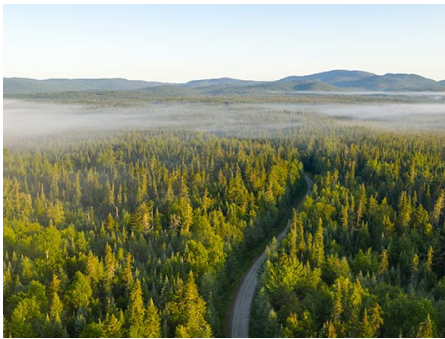


Photo Credit: Caleb Kenna

The Conte Refuge has been awarded over \$1.3 million dollars to restore and improve aquatic and terrestrial habitats in Vermont and New Hampshire. The projects are funded as part of a \$10 million allocation through the Inflation Reduction Act — the largest climate investment in history — for resiliency and restoration in the northern forest. The northern forest projects represent a unique opportunity to address important ecosystem restoration needs and are designed to reduce the impacts of climate change to an ecosystem which is home to essential wetland and floodplain habitats, and to people who live there.

For more information contact: Steve_Agius@fws.gov

Bird Ecology Presentation



Photo Credit: Paul Cyr

Conte Refuge staff provided a presentation to the first-grade class at Miller's Run School about bird ecology. The students learned how birds forage and survive in winter conditions.

For more information contact: Steve_Agius@fws.gov



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March 2024

Establishment of the Ompompanoosuc Division - Vermont



Photo Credit: USFWS

In March, the Conte Refuge established the Ompompanoosuc Division in East central Vermont. The 800+ acre property is dominated by hardwood forests that are diverse and beneficial to wildlife that require large contiguous forest tracts such as forest interior dwelling bird species. The property provides important stopover habitat for migrating landbirds as well as breeding habitat. Bald eagles and osprey take advantage of the open water on Lake Fairlee which the property abuts. The forested areas provide breeding habitat for species of conservation concern such as the wood thrush, blackburnian warbler, Canada warbler, chestnut-sided warbler, and American woodcock. There is breeding and foraging habitat for American black duck, wood duck, and other waterfowl species within and around the wetlands and open water habitats.

For more information contact: Andrew_French@fws.gov

Frontier Regional High School Students Explore Conservation the Field



Photo Credit: USFWS

Visitor Services Intern Ashley Castillo recently attended a mock Career Fair at Frontier Regional High School with Emily Biggs from the Kestrel Land Trust where they shared insights on how land trusts collaborates with the Service to conserve land. In addition, they answered questions from students about jobs in conservation and what students should do to prepare for careers in conservation.

For more information contact: Ashley_Castillo@fws.gov



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March 2024

Naturalist, Bill Randolph's Bird Walk Series at Fort River



Bill Randolph, an avid bird enthusiast, leads an engaging bird walk on Thursday mornings at the Fort River Division, offering participants an insightful journey into the world of avian wonders. During the walk, Bill shares his extensive knowledge about birds, highlighting their significance in the ecosystem and addressing any questions the group may have. Bill's passion for birds is contagious, and his enthusiasm ignites a sense of wonders and appreciation among the participants.

For more information contact: Ashley_Castillo@fws.gov

Photo Credit: USFWS Library

Falkner Island Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA)



Photo credit: USFWS

The GAOA Maintenance Team worked at Falkner Island from March 12th to the 21st to replace the roof and siding on the boat house. The island is in Long Island Sound, requiring a 3.5-mile boat ride to reach the island. The weather made access difficult. Crews were land-locked on the first day and for most of second week. Mother Nature didn't want to cooperate, but the crew did manage to complete a lot of the work. The roof and siding were stripped and disposed of and all the punky wood was removed and repaired. A new roof and trim boards were installed and the siding was being replaced when the weather shut down the work. The crew will return later this spring to complete the work.

For more information contact: Richard_Potvin@fws.gov

Shop Roof Replaced at the Salt Meadow Unit



Photo Credit: USFWS Library

Exciting News! The roof was replaced on the shop building at the Salt Meadow Unit in March. Darren Stover and the Maintenance Action Team (MAT) did a great job! All the old roof materials were stripped and disposed of, then came the tricky work – installing the new metal roof. The most important step in the installation of a metal roof is to make sure the first panel on each side is aligned correctly since all the other panels follow the first one. The panels were all installed perfectly. A big thank you to the MAT Team for doing a great job!

For more information contact: Richard_Potvin@fws.gov