

CONSERVATION PROJECT SUCCESS STORIES

Goulet Farm Dead Creek WMA Addition

This VDFW project conserved an additional **176 acres to the Dead Creek WMA**. The Goulet Farm will restore diverse wetland ecosystems on previously farmed lands and enhance water quality in the Lake Champlain Basin. The Goulet Farm also provides essential habitat for wetland-dependent wildlife and state-threatened grassland bird species.

- Spanning nearly **3,000 acres** across Addison, Panton, and Bridport, Dead Creek WMA is renowned for its biodiversity, providing vital habitat for waterfowl, songbirds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, while offering public access opportunities.
- Dead Creek WMA supports a diverse range of wildlife and natural resources, including over **250 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians**. Its wetlands, grasslands, clayplain forests, and agricultural fields provide critical habitat for migratory waterfowl, such as snow geese, Canada geese, and various duck species, as well as state-threatened grassland birds, ospreys, great blue herons, and wading birds.
- Restoration efforts will be funded through annual EPA wetland restoration grants, and Ducks Unlimited (DU) funding, supporting Vermont's compliance with Lake Champlain's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements.
- The property features approximately **1.5 miles of unnamed tributaries** feeding into Dead Creek, identified by Vermont Conservation Design as highest priority surface waters and riparian connections critical for regional ecological health.
- The southern **90 acres will be restored to forested wetland types**, expanding the State Significant mesic clayplain forest natural community located in the southwest corner. Restoration on the northern 86 acres will focus on open wetland habitats featuring scrub/shrub vegetation and engineered depressions designed for waterfowl habitat.



Island Pond Island

In 2024 the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR), in partnership with the Vermont Land Trust (VLT), protected the **15-acre island in the center of Island Pond**, as well as a 3.8-acre shoreline parcel, as an addition to Brighton State Park. This conservation project protects a **locally significant scenic, recreational, and cultural resource**, as well as important habitat and water quality values.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

The addition of the Island Pond island to Brighton State Park **permanently protects the island**, which is beloved by the local community for its recreational opportunities and its scenic value as a core piece of the local landscape.

The protection of the 3.8-acre shoreline parcel protects 1,000 feet of Island Pond shoreline, providing an **opportunity for public access to Island Pond**, as well as important riparian and water quality benefits.

The island supports **important nesting habitat** for Bald Eagles and Common Loons, and a state-significant Red Pine Forest natural community

All of the shoreline on both properties is identified by Vermont Conservation Design as Highest Priority Surface Water Riparian Area, as well as Highest Priority areas for Riparian Connectivity.

As part of Brighton State Park, **both parcels are now open to the public** for recreational opportunities such as paddling, swimming, and wildlife viewing. A beach on the island's southwest corner offers easy access to the island for the public.

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and the Vermont Land Trust co-hold a conservation easement on the property.

