

The Vermont State Wildlife Action Plan

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The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

The mission of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department is the conservation of our fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the people of Vermont



Wildlife Action Plan

A blueprint for wildlife and habitat conservation

A guide for all to use, not only state agencies

Focuses on species most in need

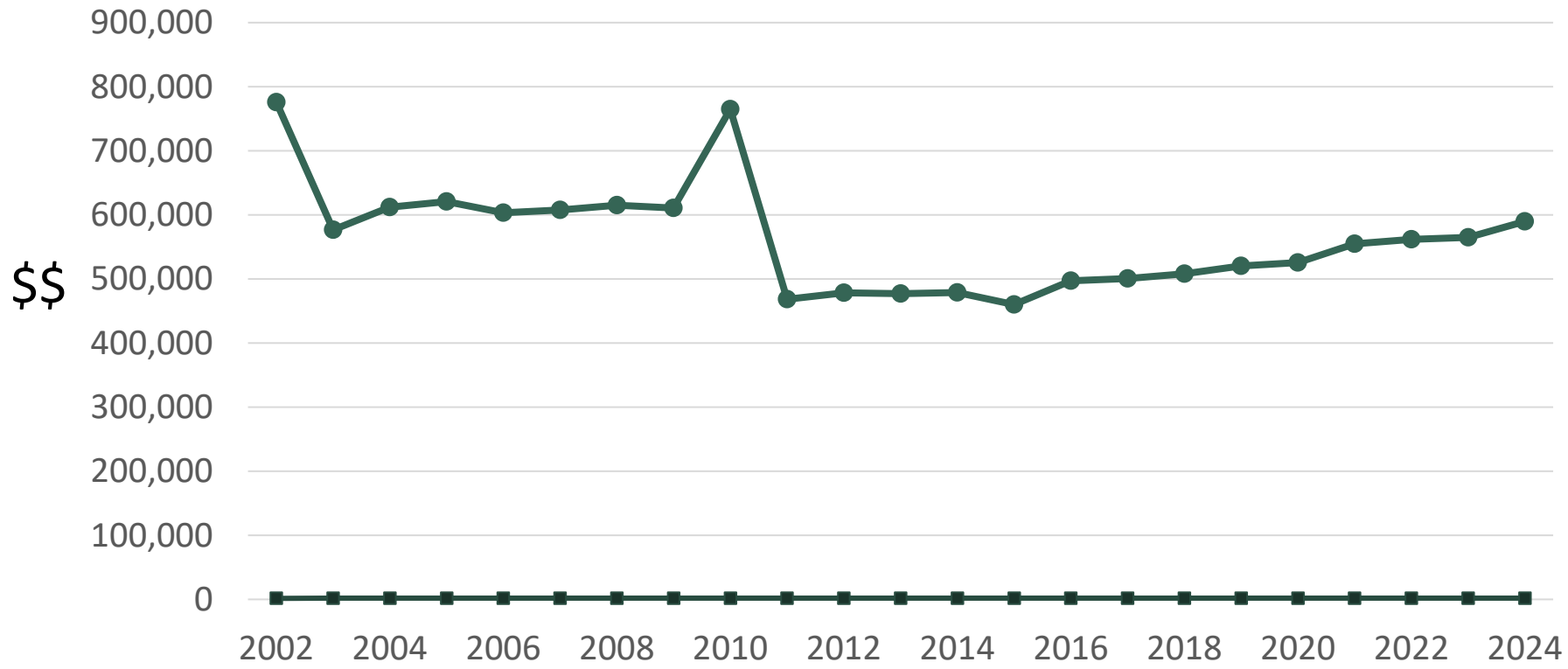




Wildlife Action Plan

- Required for states to receive federal State Wildlife Grants to keep wildlife from becoming endangered, and to recover those that are.
- Must be updated every 10 years
- 57 states/territories have Action Plans

Vermont's State Wildlife Grant Apportionments 2002-2024



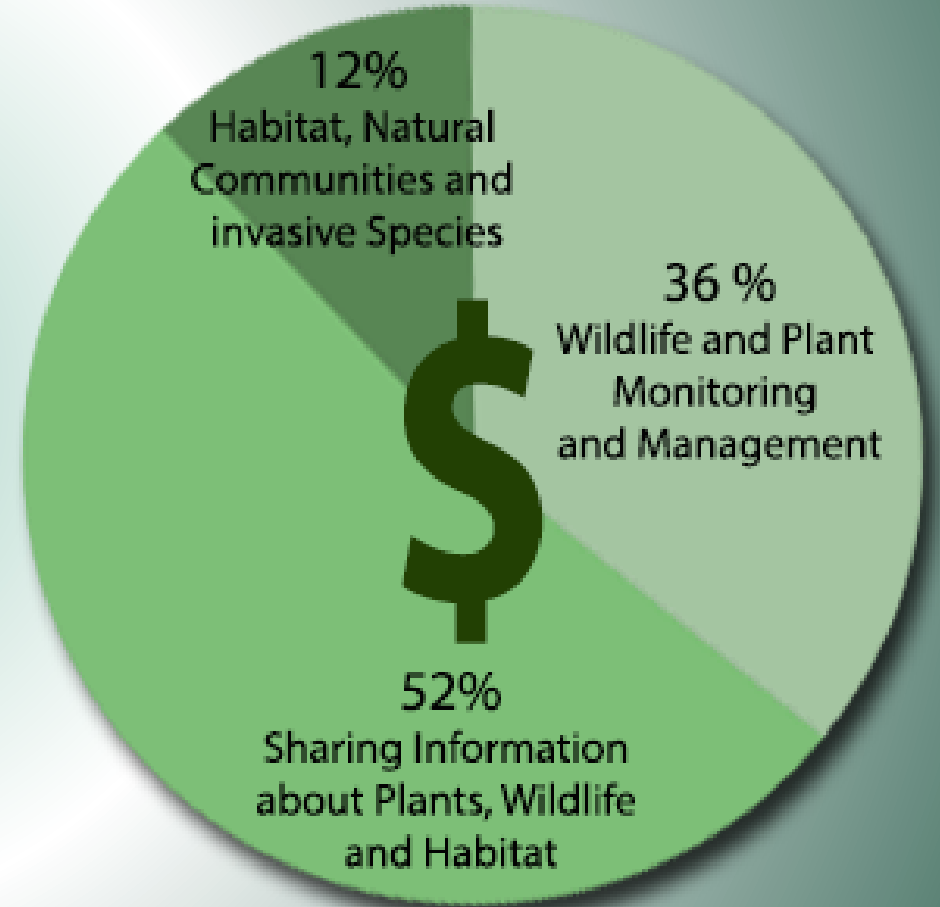
VT F&W
provides 35%
match



- Volunteer hours
- Partner in-kind
- Nongame Fund

Administered through USFWS, Office of Conservation Investment

Vermont's Nongame Wildlife Fund



8 Elements Required in a Wildlife Action Plan

1. **Species.** Identify the distribution and abundance of Species of Greatest Conservation Need – SGCN.
2. **Habitats.** Describe the location and condition of key habitats.
3. **Threats.** Describe key threats/ research needs for SGCN and habitats.



8 Elements Required in a Wildlife Action Plan

4. **Actions.** Describe priority conservation strategies for SGCN/habitats.
5. **Monitoring.** Describe monitoring plans for SGCN, habitats and actions.
6. **Adaptive.** Process to review the plan every 10 years.



8 Elements Required in a Wildlife Action Plan

7. **Engage Partners:** Coordinate w/ other wildlife and land management plans.
8. **Engage the Public:** Provide a public involvement process.



Wildlife Action Plans

How are species doing?

What are the problems?

What can be done?

It's a team effort.



Vermont's Wildlife Action Plans

2005 First plan

Major undertaking, broad engagement

2015 Revision

Climate change

Vermont Conservation Design

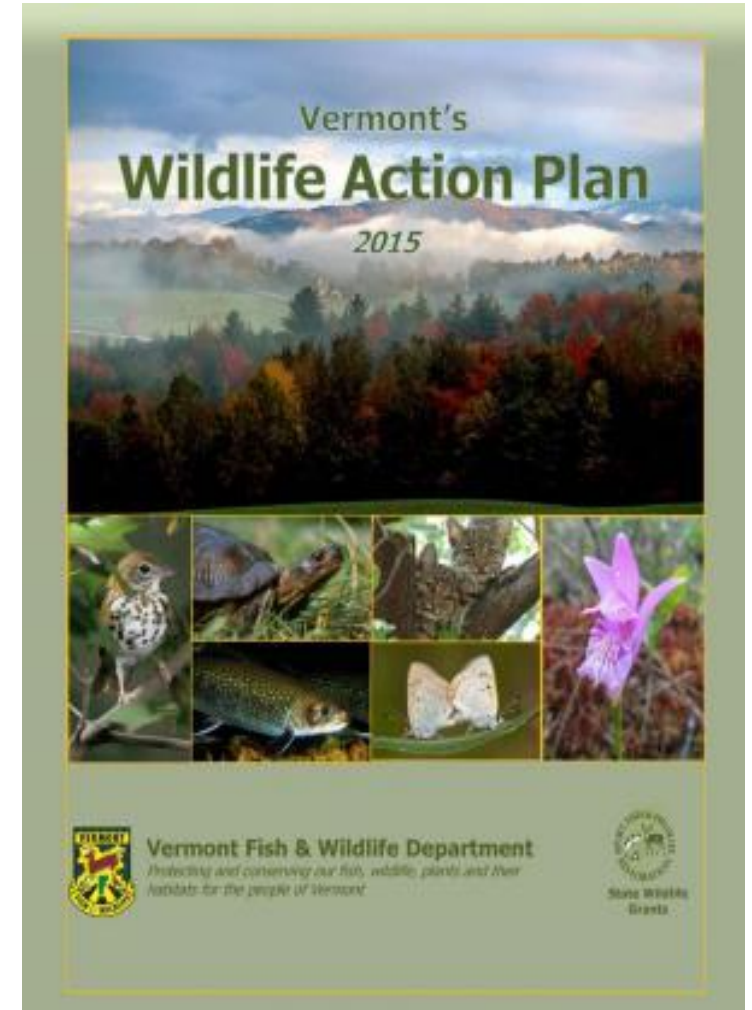
Plant SGCN

2025 Revision

Integrating Vermont Conservation Design

Adding Bryophytes and Fungi SGCN

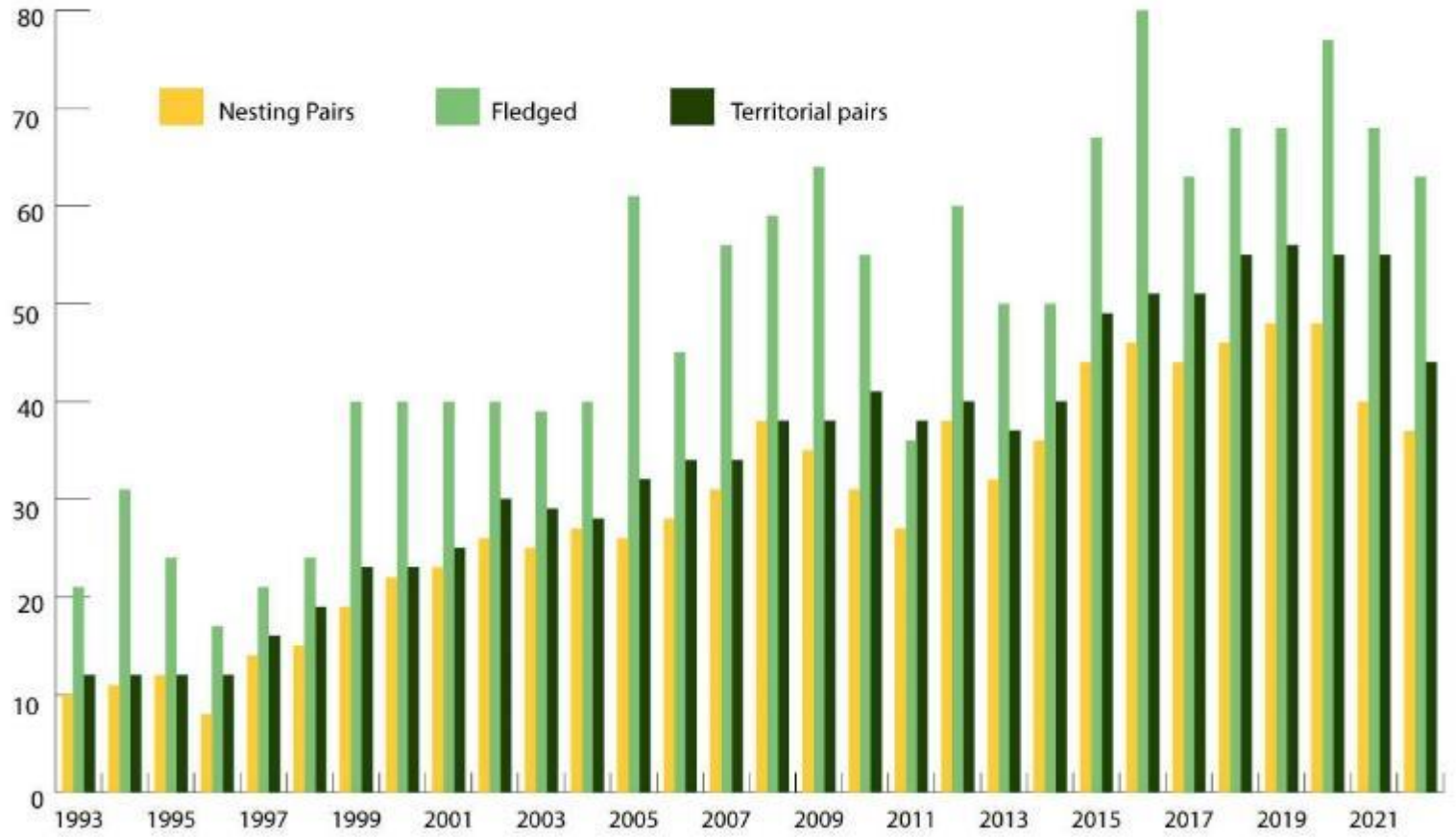
More user-friendly and accessible







Vermont Peregrine Falcon Nesting Results 1993 – 2022





Partial Cliff Closure

March 15 – August 1

Please help protect this sensitive Peregrine Falcon nesting area.

Areas closed:

Areas open:



- Be aware of nesting falcons and retreat at any sign of disturbance, such as falcons calling or diving.
- Disturbing falcons violates federal law and is subject to fines.

Audubon Vermont 802-434-3068

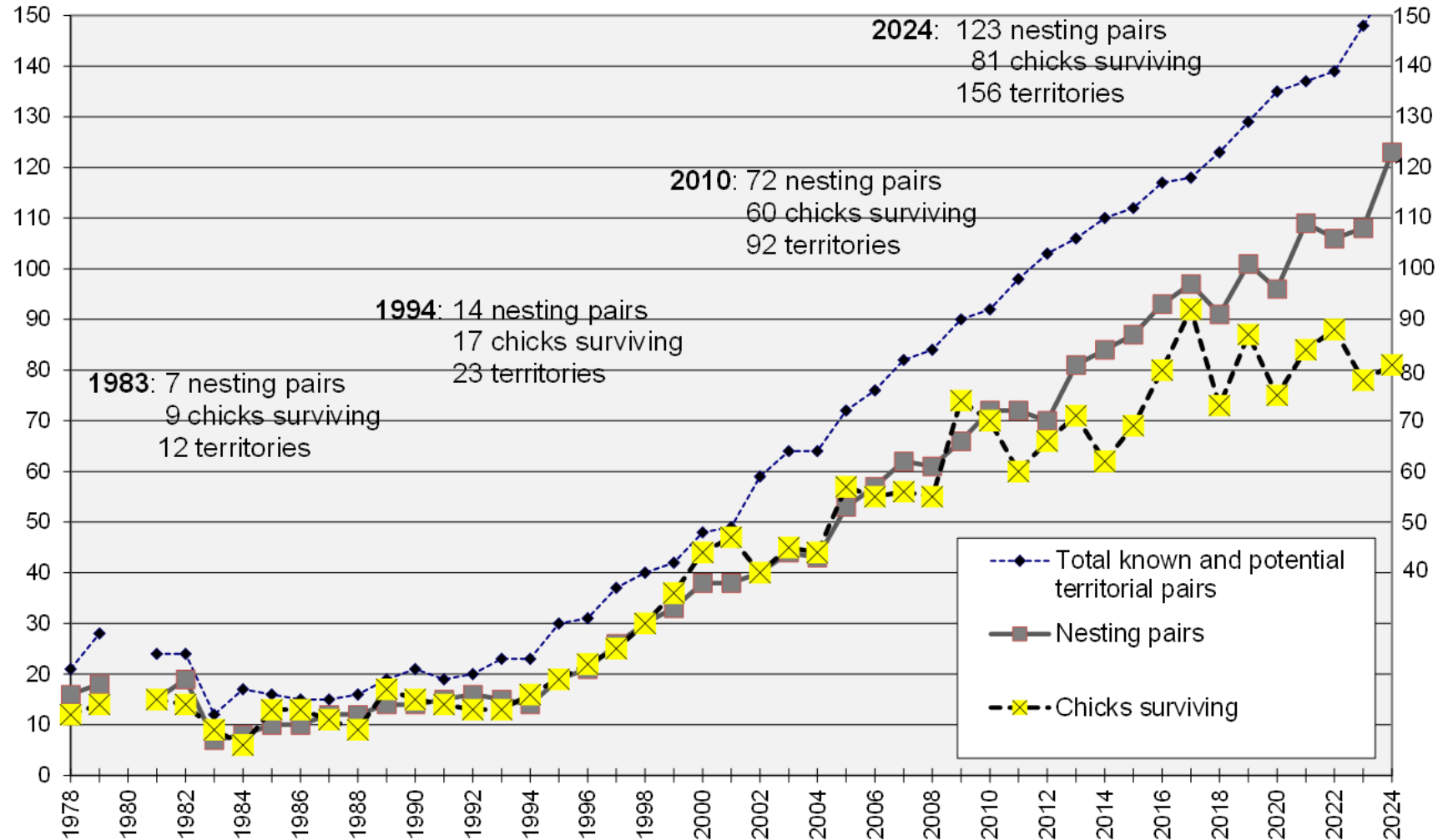
Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department 802-828-1000







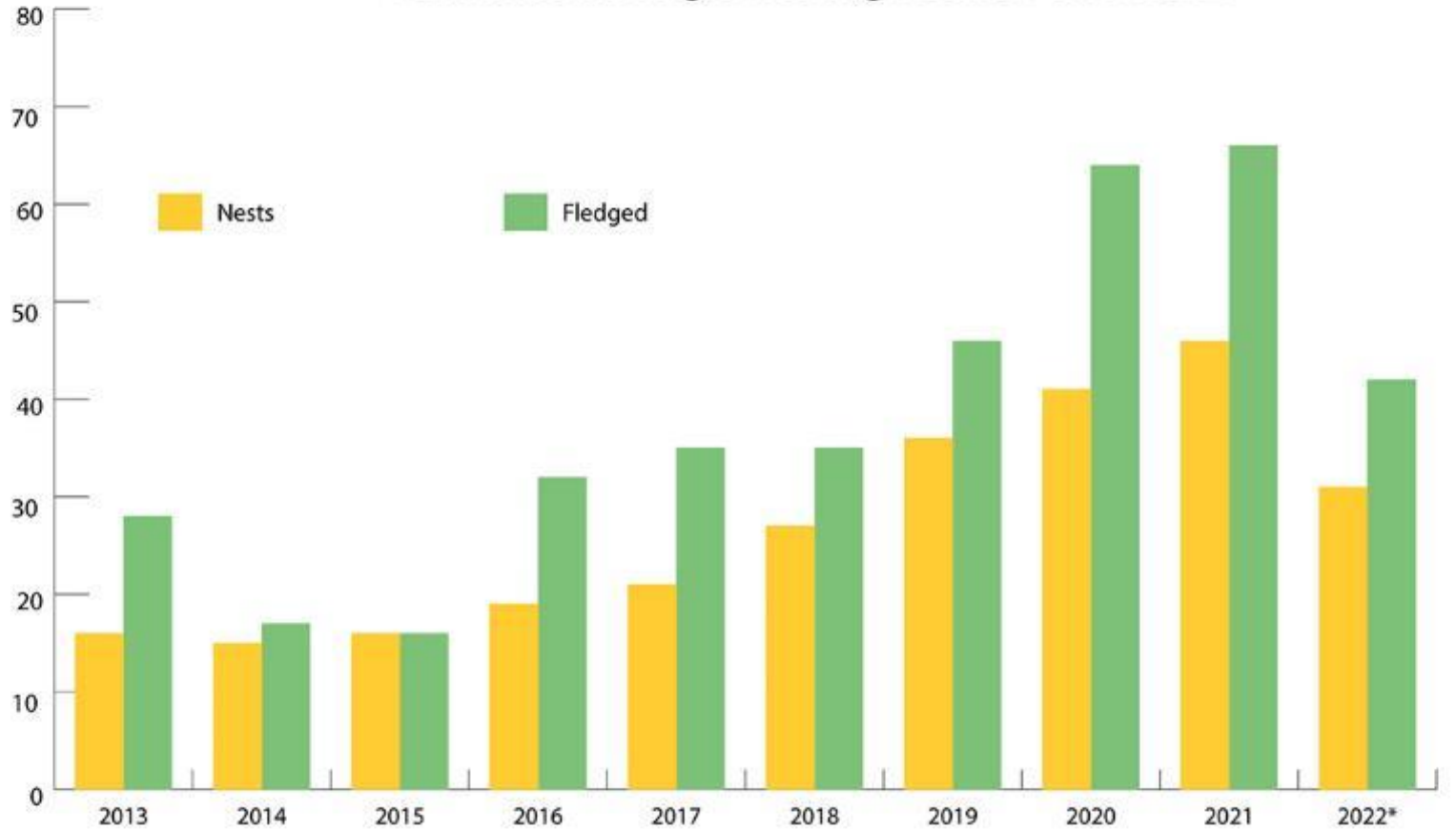
UNITING PEOPLE & SCIENCE FOR CONSERVATION

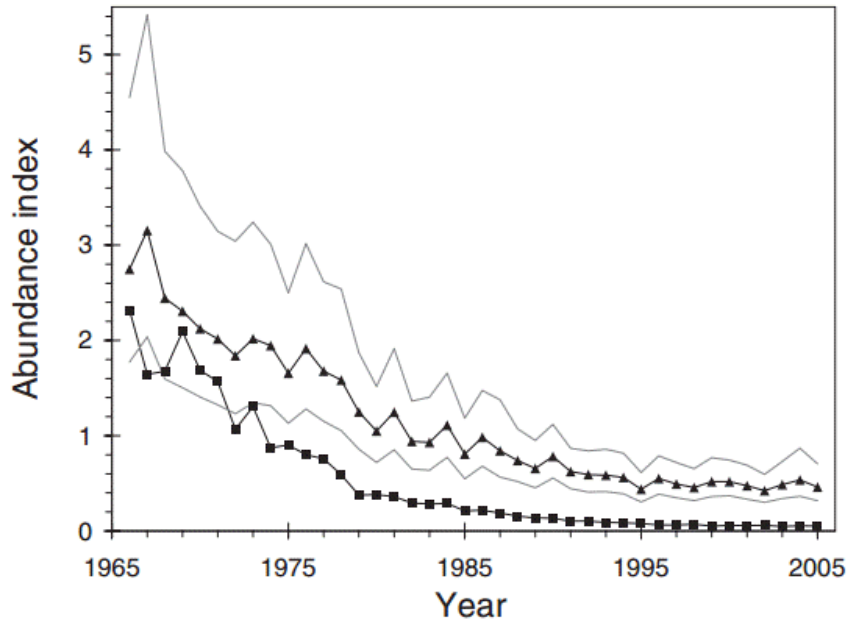




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Vermont Bald Eagle Nesting Results 2013-2022



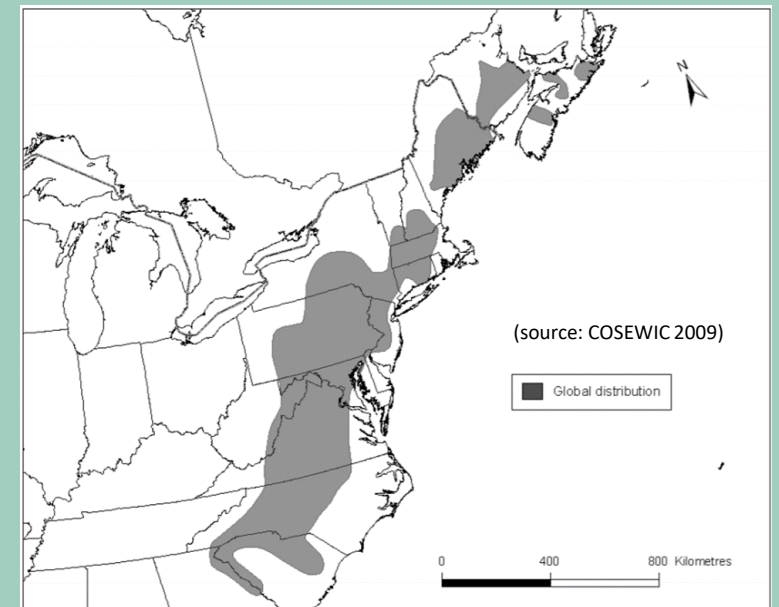
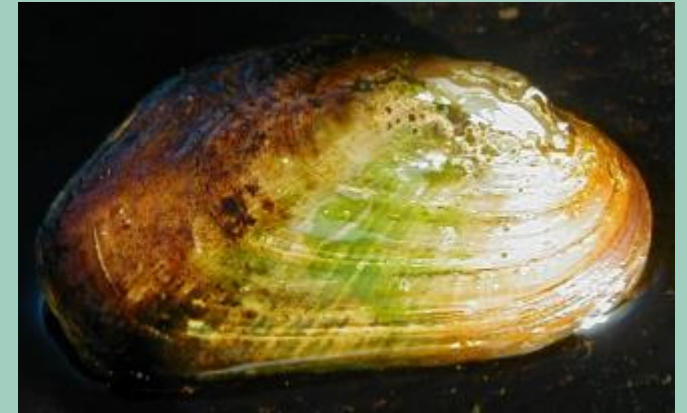


J Sutton

Brook Floater



- One of the most imperiled mussels in the Northeast
- Significant declines throughout range, and in at least 12 of 16 states & provinces
- Lost from half of its 150 sites
- In VT, confined to the West River
- 1990's – 2008: 85% decline



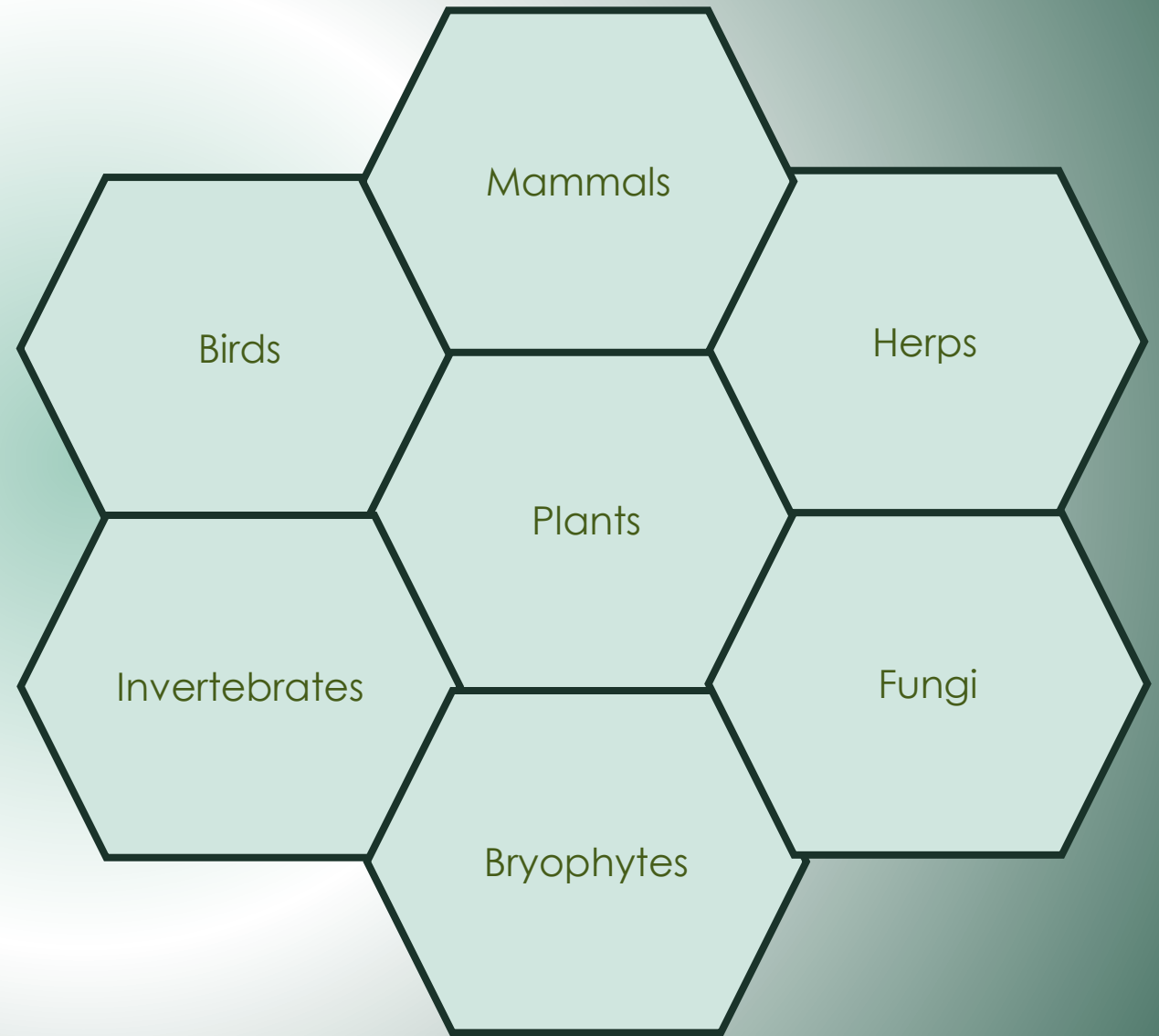






SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY GROUPS

- Advise Vermont's Endangered Species Committee for recommendations to Agency of Natural Resources and F&W
- Monitor status, threats, conservation needs of rare and listed species
 - Species listings, de-listings
 - Permitting
 - Develop species recovery plans



DETERMINING SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED

Population Status

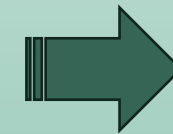
- State and Global Ranks of rare / very rare
- State or Federally Threatened, Endangered
- Vermont SGCN in 2015
- Regional SGCN, Regional Watchlist
- Population trends
- Unknown status?

Vulnerabilities

- Habitat Conversion/ Loss/ fragmentation
- Life-history traits that make it vulnerable
- Vulnerable to taking
- Vulnerable to deadly contact w/ humans
- Limited, localized at-risk populations
- Species significantly impacted by exotics

Additional factors

- Keystone species
- Responsibility species
- Relationship to core population
- Requires rare or specialized habitats
- Limited dispersal capability
- Expert opinion on team
- Management plan?



Combined opinion of the team:

Is the species secure? Low, medium, or high priority?

SGCN by the Numbers

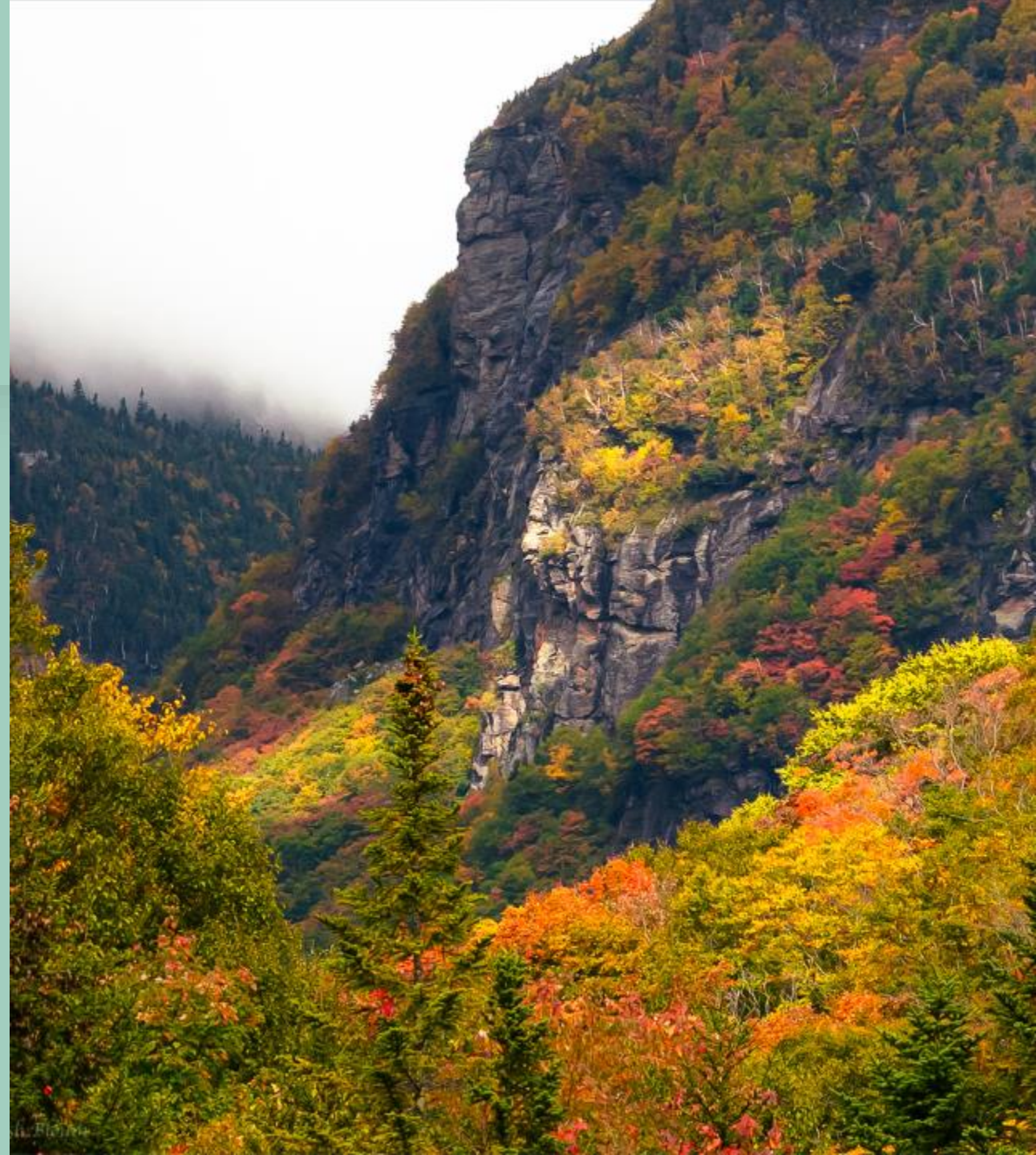
Recommended for 2025 Vermont Wildlife Action Plan



Taxon	Total Species	State Threatened or Endangered	Federal Threatened or Endangered	# SGCN	% of taxon that is SGCN
Amphibians & Reptiles	40	8	0	17	42
Birds	269	10	1	52	19
Fishes	94	6	1	39	42
Invertebrates	21,400	18	2	314	1
Mammals	61	8	3	31	51
Vascular Plants	1800	163	3	660	36
Totals	23,664	213	10	1,378	4

Engagement

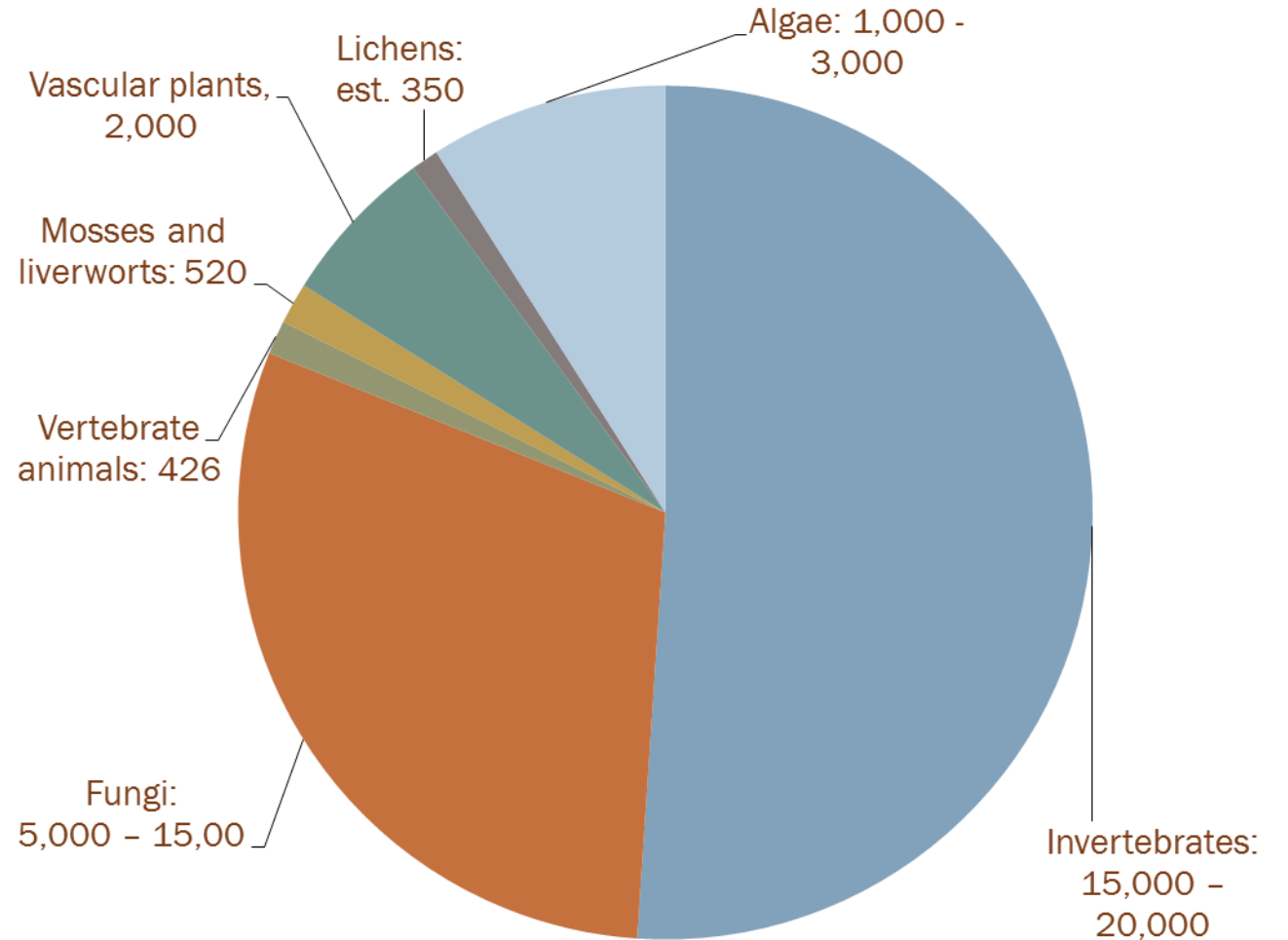
- Surveyed ~180 entities / organizations with potential interest and overlapping work:
 - How relevant is SWAP to your work, do you use it, how can it better serve you
- Meet with partners, implications for our work
- Public input



24,000 – 43,000 species in Vermont

How do we protect them all?

- 217 are threatened or endangered
- 1,378 are SGCN



Natural Communities

Interacting assemblages of organisms, their physical environment, and the natural processes that affect them

Alpine meadow



Dwarf Birch



Lake Sand Beach



Hairy-necked Tiger Beetle

Spiny Softshell Turtle



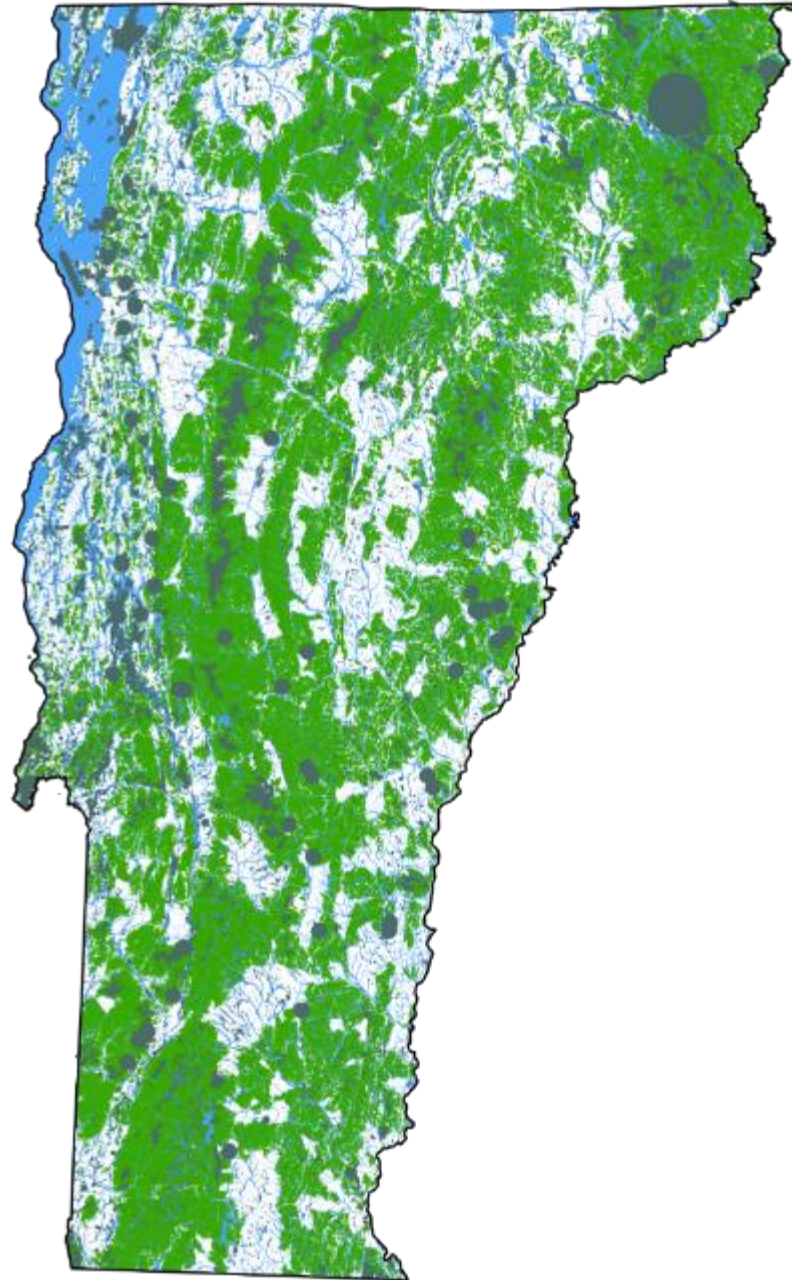


Black-back woodpecker

Vermont Conservation Design

An ecologically functional
landscape

- Intact
- Connected
- Diverse



Vermont's Wildlife **ACTION** Plan

...but with current funding, only 3-4% of the actions are implemented.



- Permanent funds
- 20 times current allotment
- \$1.3 billion across all states





Thank you



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