

## Vermont State Wildlife Grant Success Stories

In the five years since its inception, the State Wildlife Grant Program has played an important role in the conservation of Vermont's wildlife. The following are some projects funded through State Wildlife Grants:



Common Loon, Photo  
Courtesy of USFWS

### **Restoration: Working with Partners to Bring Back Wildlife and Natural Areas Bright Futures Ahead for the Osprey, Loon & Peregrine Falcon**

The osprey, common loon and peregrine falcon were recently removed from the states's endangered species list—the first ever in Vermont. Their recoveries came about because state and federal wildlife agencies, non-governmental organizations, electric utilities and private landowners collaborated to address the problems that had decimated the birds' populations: habitat loss, pollutants such as lead and mercury, and pesticides that weaken eggs. Careful monitoring funded by State Wildlife Grants is an essential element to complete recovery. Inspired by these recoveries and armed with State Wildlife Grant funds, communities will go on to proactively conserve other wildlife, to enhance our quality of life, and our economies for future generations.



Lake Sturgeon, Photo  
Courtesy of USFWS

### **Conservation: Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife Lake Champlain Lake Sturgeon Restoration Project**

Sturgeon numbers in Lake Champlain dropped dramatically in the first half of the 1900's due to commercial fishing and loss of spawning habitat. Lake sturgeon are now listed as an endangered species in Vermont. With funding from the State Wildlife Grants program, Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department biologists documented spawning activity, by collecting sturgeon eggs or larvae, in all four rivers that had been used as spawning sites in the past. Future efforts such as improving habitat by restoring a more natural flow regime in rivers during the spawning and incubation periods, removing obstructions to historic spawning sites, public education, and continued protection efforts should put Lake Champlain's lake sturgeon on the road to recovery.



Culvert, Photo Courtesy of  
USGS

### **Management: Proactive Measures that Benefit Wildlife and People Building Fish-Friendly Roads and Improving Wildlife Passage**

Fish and other aquatic wildlife require unfettered movement through streams and rivers to maintain healthy populations. Man-made obstacles such as poorly designed culverts get in their way. With funding from the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program (the precursor to State Wildlife Grants), and in partnership with the Vermont Agency of Transportation, the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department hosted an intensive training session with national expert Kozmo Bates where more than 60 road managers, regulators, fisheries biologists and others learned state-of-the-art fish-friendly road designs.

**Congress has appropriated \$3.7 million in State Wildlife Grants to Vermont since 2001. This has been matched with at least \$644 thousand state and partner dollars.**