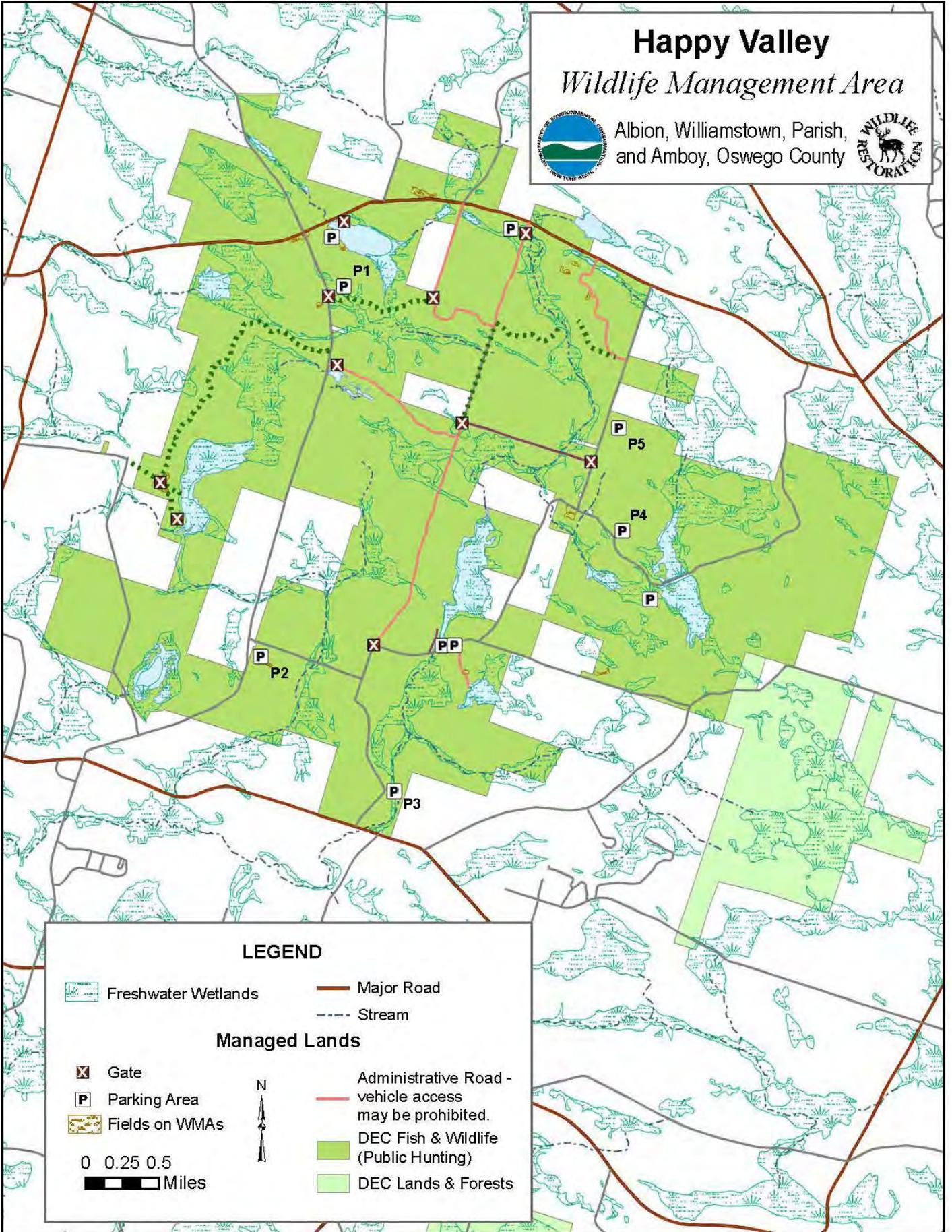


Happy Valley Wildlife Management Area



Albion, Williamstown, Parish,
and Amboy, Oswego County



LEGEND

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Freshwater Wetlands | Major Road |
| | Stream |
| Managed Lands | |
| Gate | Administrative Road - vehicle access may be prohibited. |
| Parking Area | DEC Fish & Wildlife (Public Hunting) |
| Fields on WMAs | DEC Lands & Forests |
| 0 0.25 0.5 Miles | |

Happy Valley Wildlife Management Area, totaling some 8,898 acres, is located in eastern Oswego County with its northern boundary transected by U.S. Route 104 and its southern boundary by Oswego County Route 26. These Routes are easily accessible off Exit 34 of Interstate 81 and hence east on Route 104 to Happy Valley. The 7 ½ minute topographic maps covering the area are Dugway and Williamstown.

Happy Valley Wildlife Management Area has generally flat terrain ranging in elevation mostly between 600 to 700 feet above mean sea level. The soils are generally stony fine field loam or sandy knolls. Due to the area's close proximity to Lake Ontario, snow fall averages about 125 inches annually.

Reforestation and former farming activity have changed the original forest in much of the area. Fields in all stages of succession exist along with northern hardwoods such as sugar maple, beech, yellow birch and softwoods such as hemlock, white pine and spruce.

Wildlife associated with uplands and water are common and include deer, hare, squirrel, beaver, muskrat, raccoon, mink, weasel, fisher and porcupine to name only a few of the mammals. A large variety of songbirds as well as grouse, woodcock, turkey and waterfowl are also on the area.

In the middle 1800s the land that is now called the Happy Valley Wildlife Management Area was cleared and intensively farmed. During the depression in the 1930s the Federal Resettlement Administration bought up farms that were no longer able to support farming

activities. These acquisitions became the initial acreage for Happy Valley Wildlife Management Area as the Federal government developed the area for upland game in a manner similar to that of the old state game refuges.

In the late 1930s Works Project Administration and Civilian Conservation Corps crews carried out a great deal of the original plantings of the existing conifer plantations and also constructed three deep water impound dam structures on the area (Mosher, Whitney and Long Ponds). In 1946, this Resettlement Area was turned over to the Conservation Department on a 99 year lease program. In 1961, the Federal Government cancelled the lease, giving the Conservation Department full responsibility for the area. An intensive program of woodland management was initiated in the 1940s with release and selective cutting operations in the hardwood areas. In the 1950s, emphasis on waterfowl marsh development brought about the construction of seven waterfowl marshes in the area. Several potholes were also built a few years later to provide additional nesting habitat for waterfowl.

Current objectives for the area are to provide habitat for a variety of wildlife species and to permit wildlife related recreational uses compatible with wildlife. Management techniques to provide the food, cover and shelter requirements for various wildlife species are carried out with monies derived mainly from hunting license fees and federal taxes on sporting arms and ammunition. These techniques involve old field maintenance, mowing, prescribed burning, green strips, tree/shrub release, slash openings, and water level manipulations to name a few. Timber

stand improvements and harvest and conifer plantation thinning are carried out to improve the forestry resource and the wildlife values. Happy Valley has been the field laboratory for research studies in the past and currently is the site for a long term grouse habitat improvement study.

A good system of town roads and some maintenance roads provide access for big game, small game, and waterfowl hunting and fishing activities during good weather months. These activities are controlled by statewide regulations. Hiking, birding and cross country skiing are favorite activities also. A limited number of permits are issued on a first come first served basis for primitive type camping (no water, sanitation, or garbage facilities). A Wildlife Management Area camping permit application can be obtained by contacting the Region 7 Office (see contact information listed below).

Since Happy Valley is a Wildlife Management Area, activities not compatible with the Area are prohibited. Prohibited activities include (but are not limited to) swimming, overnight storage of personal property, and any use of motorized vehicles (including cars, travel trailers/RVs, snowmobiles, ATVs, etc.) on terrain other than a maintained public road.

For more information call or write to:

Wildlife Manager
NYSDEC Bureau of Wildlife
1285 Fisher Avenue
Cortland, NY 13045
607-753-3095 ext. 247

Happy Valley Wildlife Management Area



New York State Department of
Environmental Conservation