



The Littlejohn Wildlife Management Area (WMA) totals some 7,918 acres and is located in Oswego and Jefferson Counties, approximately 45 miles north of Syracuse and 25 miles south of Watertown. The easiest access to Littlejohn is from Exit 38 off Interstate 81 via County Route 15 east to County Route 17. Town roads and State truck trails provide access from Route 17. However, the eight miles of State truck trail provides only limited access within the area. The 7 1/2 minute topographic maps covering the area are Boylston Center and Worth Center.

Littlejohn lies on the northwest slope of the Tug Hill Plateau. Most of the area lies between 1,400 and 1,500 feet above sea level. The result is a gently rolling topography transected by many long, narrow serpentine swampy areas and numerous small depressions. The soils are generally acid in nature being derived from shale and sandstone. Precipitation ranges between 45 and 55 inches per year with an average annual snowfall above 170 inches. Drifts as deep as 15 feet are common occurrences and snow lies five to six feet deep in the woods during an average winter.

Historically, native stands of hemlock and spruce covered most of the drier areas. Logging and farming activities have changed the vegetation to species such as sugar maple, beech, black cherry, red maple, yellow birch, and hemlock in descending order of occurrence. About 60 percent of the management area is in mature forest, with less than two hundred acres in openings such as open water or grassy or brushy fields.

This generally unbroken forest canopy provides habitat for a variety of wildlife species. Examples of bird species are ruffed grouse, wood duck, goshawk, pileated woodpecker, barred owl, great-crested flycatcher, black-capped chickadee, red-eyed vireo and chestnut-sided warbler. Mammal species include beaver, porcupine, raccoons, varying hare, weasels, coyote and white tailed deer. Brook trout occur in many of the area streams.

The Littlejohn area was settled in the early 1800s and by 1850 general farming with heavy emphasis on dairying had been established. Agricultural activities peaked by 1910 after which it declined. In 1928, some 4,250 acres belonging to the Cleveland Estate became the Littlejohn Game Refuge and Demonstration Forest. Acquisition of abandoned land adjacent to the Area by the Federal Resettlement Administrator became part of Littlejohn when it was later transferred to the State.

Truck trails were constructed; winter shelter (conifer plantations) and fall feeding grounds (conifers and shrubs) were established for grouse; and slashings (clearcuts) were carried out primarily through public work projects such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). From World War II through the mid-1960s, maintenance of roads, boundaries, bridge repair, etc. were the basic activities.

Since the mid-1960s, increasing emphasis has been placed on providing habitat for a variety of wildlife species found in forested and/or wet areas. Management practices to provide for wildlife requirements are carried out with funds from hunting license fees and federal taxes on

sporting arms and ammunition channeled through the Conservation Fund.

Management techniques at Littlejohn include mowing and slash openings or clearcuts, to name a few. Additional creation, improvement, and maintenance of wildlife habitat and timber stands is carried out through wood product sales for firewood, pulp, logs, etc. Thus, both wildlife values and the forestry resource are enhanced.

The system of town and state roads and hiking trails provides for a variety of activities compatible with the area. Hunting, trapping and fishing are permitted in accordance with statewide regulations. 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 Littlejohn 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

## Little John Wildlife Management Area



**New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation**