



CASE STUDY

JESSICA BOONE

HI VUE MAPLES

RICHFORD, VT

Tucked away in northern Vermont, the Hi Vue Maples property is a haven for wildlife. Snowshoe hares, foxes, coyotes, bobcats, bears, and lynx have been spotted roaming the land, which sits on a wildlife link between Vermont and the Sutton Mountains in Quebec.

MEET THE LANDOWNER

Jessica's family began producing maple syrup and related products in 1903, beginning operations under Hi Vue Maples during the Great Depression. Jessica is the first woman manager in four generations. The family land is adjacent to over 45,000 acres of unfragmented forest that spans Montgomery, Westfield, Richford, and Jay. Jessica and her family decided to conserve the property with the Vermont Land Trust in 2022 to keep the land unfragmented and free from development. Jessica is involved in Cold Hollow to Canada (CHC), a land stewardship and wildlife habitat conservation organization. Their Woodlots Program engages landowners from contiguous forested properties to focus their management strategies at the landscape level. She has enrolled their forest in the Cold Hollow Carbon Project, which aggregates 12 Vermont parcels to enroll in the voluntary forest carbon market to implement forest stewardship practices that maintain and increase carbon stocking and provide revenue from the sale of carbon offsets.



Jessica and her family conserved the Hi Vue Maples property with the Vermont Land Trust in 2022.

AT A GLANCE

PROPERTY / PROJECT ACREAGE

408 acres (7 managed in project)

LOCATION

Richford, VT

FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Patch Cut

PARTNERS

Audubon Vermont

Cold Hollow to Canada (CHC)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

WOMEN & OUR WOODS

Vermont's Women & Our Woods (WOW-VT)

is a collaborative women-centered community that shares information, resources, and support for people who care about and steward Vermont's forests. WOW-VT has developed a series of case studies to highlight a variety of management activities being conducted on women-owned or women-managed woodlands to highlight successes, share lessons learned, and identify resources available.

To learn more visit wowvt.org.

WOW-VT is led by steering committee members from VT Woodlands Association, VT Coverts, VT Land Trust, VT Department of Forests Parks and Recreation, VT Fish and Wildlife Department, and Audubon Vermont.

HOW HAS THIS LAND BEEN MANAGED?

Hi Vue Maples is designated as one of Audubon Vermont's Bird-Friendly Maple Producers. That means that they are committed to considering bird habitat in how they manage their sugarbush. Their efforts promote a diversity of native tree and plant species and multiple layers of forest vegetation to create welcoming habitats for Vermont's songbirds. With guidance from Audubon Vermont and funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and CHC, Jessica completed two patch cuts on the property. Until the late 1980s, the area had been pasture. Since then, trees had returned but were all the same height and over 20' tall. Ideal songbird habitat for nesting, foraging and cover involves a mosaic of multiple layers of vegetation.

Jessica and her team completed the first patch cut, in a 5-acre area, in the fall of 2020. She replanted the cut with fruit and nut-bearing trees like oak and dogwood, and shrubs including viburnum and elderberry. They completed a second patch cut in a 2-acre area in the winter of 2022 and left behind some black cherry, beech, maple, and apple trees. Jessica plans to plant oak trees. They selected species to leave or plant that will help provide food for songbirds and mammals.



A small stream trickles through boulders in one part of the forest.



Jessica stands near an old stone wall running across her property.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

Jessica encourages fellow women landowners to ask questions early and often. She says that has helped her build a trusted community network that she relies on as she continues to manage her land. With so many sugaring projects, the family is spread thin, so Jessica is responsible for most of the forest management. The resources she has tapped into have allowed her to do more and she's excited for new projects to come. She loves seeing evidence of wildlife throughout her land and it inspires her to continue her work to manage the beautiful forest.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Audubon Vermont

Audubon Vermont provided technical support and guidance in the development of management recommendations to enhance habitat for priority forest birds through their "Forestry for the Birds" and Bird-Friendly Maple programs.

Cold Hollow to Canada (CHC)

Jessica is a member of CHC's Woodlots Program, which provided partial funding for the patch cuts. CHC utilizes sustainable stewardship, forestland conservation, and community empowerment to further their vision of a more resilient and connected ecosystem.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Jessica also received some funding through NRCS for the patch cuts.