

Five vernal pools provide critical habitat for reptiles and amphibians, such as wood frogs and spotted salamanders. An established trail network crisscrosses the rolling terrain, much of which used to be pastureland.

## MEET THE LANDOWNER

Lynda approaches the management of her forest with one primary desire: to restore old growth characteristics.

Lynda's late husband Lawrence purchased the land in 1945, and Lynda joined him on the property in the 1970s. They decided to conserve the land with the Vermont Land Trust in 2007. Their dedication to restoring the property and its diverse ecosystem was a motivating factor in conserving the land. Like many of Vermont's forests, the land was largely cleared in the mid-1800s to be used as pasture for sheep and cattle. The heavy deforestation resulted in sand blown pockets (sandy areas with little to no organic matter.) Lynda's goals are to restore the land to how it may have looked before being used for agriculture. She gets hope from the sight of beech, oak, and tamarack trees returning to the forest, a sign of a more diverse and healthy forest.



One of the five vernal pools on Lynda's property.

## AT A GLANCE

**PROPERTY / PROJECT ACREAGE**  
340.6 acres (159 managed in project)

**LOCATION**  
Fairfax, VT

**FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**  
Expanded gap shelterwood (155 acres)  
Patch cut (4 acres)  
Mast tree release (4 acres)

**PARTNERS**  
North Woods Forestry  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

## 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](http://wowvt.org).

## HOW HAS THIS LAND BEEN MANAGED?

Lynda has worked with Charlie Hancock of North Woods Forestry to create a forest management plan that reflects her goals and meets the requirements of the Use Value Appraisal Program. She's also meeting the requirements of the Natural Resources Conservation Service Conservation Activity Plan. Following those recommendations, she's completed several recent projects including an expanding-gap shelterwood, two patch cuts, and invasive plant management. Expanding-gap shelterwood is a gradual removal of mature but low-quality trees to create gaps. These gaps let in sunshine, allowing smaller, healthy, diverse trees to grow.

**Patch cuts are larger tree clearings that allow small brush and trees to grow in the years after the harvest.** This creates habitat that is critical for the chestnut-sided warbler, veery, and woodcock. Lynda completed two two-acre patch cuts. In the same area, she completed a mast tree release of 20 red oak and black cherry trees. Mast trees are trees that produce food for wildlife. By harvesting trees around the mast trees, they are free to grow and produce more food and encourage wildlife populations.

## WHAT COMES NEXT?

Lynda is already starting to see her goals come to fruition. The steps that she and Larry have taken are slowly restoring old growth characteristics, like large downed logs and multiple ages of trees. She knows that this is a slow process, and that the work they are doing now will impact the land for longer than her lifetime. She's hopeful that additional funding opportunities will allow her to continue tackling management projects in the future. Lynda is reassured by the conservation easement that protects the land and all she has invested in it from development allows future generations to manage the woodlands and enjoy the property's beauty.

## PROJECT COSTS

ACTIVITY	ACRES	COSTS OR REVENUE
Expanding gap shelterwood	155	\$17,500 in harvest revenue
Patch cuts	4	~ \$3,400 in costs



Shortly after the completion of a patch cut in one of the pine plantations.



Growth in the pine plantation patch cut, around ten years later.

## PROJECT PARTNERS

### North Woods Forestry

Lynda works with Charlie Hancock from North Woods Forestry to create and implement her forest management plan.

### Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Lynda has received funding from NRCS for the development of her management plan and for restoration projects on the land.