

**Agency of Natural Resources  
LANDS AND FACILITIES TRUST FUND**

***Annual Report***

March, 2003

## **Introduction**

The enabling legislation for the Lands and Facilities Trust Fund (Act 61, § 2807) requires submittal of an annual report on the trust fund to the legislature. This 2003 Annual Report to the Legislature on the Lands and Facilities Trust Fund represents the second such report. As required by statute, this year's annual report documents the current balance in the fund and identifies revenue sources deposited in the fund. The report also describes work that has been or will be accomplished in support of the trust fund and reiterates the goals and priorities identified for the trust fund in last year's report. The report builds on the 2002 annual report, which in addition to outlining goals and priorities and describing fund balances, also documented the need for addressing stewardship priorities; described the Agency's process for considering and criteria for prioritizing eligible stewardship activities; and outlined a strategy for marketing and capitalizing the trust fund.

## **Background**

In response to an urgent and growing need to provide an enhanced level of stewardship to state lands and facilities held by the Agency of Natural Resources, the Legislature created the *Lands and Facilities Trust Fund* in 2001. This legislation established an income-producing fund in the state treasury, managed by the state treasurer, for funding eligible activities that further the management of Agency lands, facilities, and recreational assets and which are not covered in operating budgets. Eligible activities include repair and maintenance of state parks; contract surveys and mapping; maintenance of state land boundaries, roads, trails and facilities; contract inventories of state land natural resources; repair; replacement and maintenance of conservation camps; and timber management activities conducted in accord with USDA silvicultural guidelines. Land acquisition is *not* an eligible activity.

As established, the trust fund is set up to accept funding from a variety of public and private sources including donations, grants, special use permit fees, federal funds so designated for uses compatible with the intent of the fund, timber sale receipts from state forest land, and such sums as may be appropriated by the Legislature. During the first three years of the trust fund's existence, up to 5% of the principal may be made available for eligible activities. After three years, the amount of trust fund monies available shall be equal to 5% of the moving average of the fund's market value over the prior 12 quarters. Annual expenditures from the trust fund are limited to projects that are approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, subject to the approval of the General Assembly.

## **Trust Fund Goals and Priorities**

As stated in the 2002 annual report, the Agency's overall goal for the trust fund is to build the fund to a sufficient level so that it can contribute in a meaningful and substantial way to the Agency's annual costs of providing responsible stewardship to the lands, facilities and

recreational assets under its management and control. While it may well take decades for the trust fund to become fully capitalized, the Agency believes that by leveraging trust fund monies with available grants for eligible stewardship activities, there should be sufficient funding available as early as next year to begin funding priority stewardship activities. (The Agency, however, is not proposing to fund any stewardship activities with trust fund monies in FY'03 or FY'04).

The Agency's short-term priorities for using trust fund monies will be for needed repairs and maintenance of existing facilities and infrastructure. For the next several years, project proposals will be limited to needed upgrades or improvements to the Agency's existing facilities at Vermont State Parks and Conservation Camps. Until the trust fund is sufficiently capitalized so that it can finance a broader array of eligible stewardship activities in a meaningful way, such a focus is both warranted and appropriate.

Over the long-term, the Agency's priority in allocating trust fund monies will be to fund a mix of both high priority lands management activities (including, but not limited to sustainable forest management activities) and needed repair and maintenance of facilities and infrastructure. The overall objective is to fund the Agency's highest priority stewardship needs while working to maintain an equitable split of funding between the departments that over the long-term, is generally reflective of the department's relative proportion of lands and facilities it manages. Given that timber sales on state forests represent the primary revenue source for the trust fund generating an average of \$300,000 - \$400,000 per year, it will be important to reinvest a portion of its annual trust fund allotment to sustainable forest management activities on state lands. Again, trust fund monies will *not* be used to acquire land or for stewardship projects that are otherwise covered within department operating budgets.

The enabling legislation for the trust fund requires that project priorities include consideration of at least the following: cost; availability of funds; condition of the resource, facility, or infrastructure; level of use; level of public need; the stated intent of the donor (if donated property is involved); and the ability to enhance or protect a public investment or resource. The Agency has established a project review process that reflects these considerations, allows for a thorough and efficient analysis of project proposals, and ensures that only those projects that reflect the Agency's highest priority stewardship needs are forwarded for approval. General funding considerations for all stewardship proposals along with specific review criteria for construction projects were provided in the 2002 annual report.

### **Fund Sources and Balances**

At the end of FY'02 (June 30, 2002), the balance in the Lands and Facilities Trust Fund was \$279,528.40. For the period July 1, 2002 through December 31, 2002, the trust fund accumulated a total of \$208,929.90 in additional funding. Total fund sources and amounts as of 12/31/02 are summarized below:

• Timber Sale Receipts on State Forests:	\$474,265.57
• Permit Fees on State Forests:	13,079.73
• Donations:	<u>1,113.00</u>
<b>Total (as of 12/31/02)</b>	<b>\$488,458.30</b>

**Fund Expenditures**

Given the limited amount of funding currently available in the trust fund, the Agency does not propose to spend any funds from this source on stewardship projects in FY'03 or FY'04. Depending on the Trust Fund's balance, the Agency expects to propose expenditures from the Fund as early as FY'05.

**Trust Fund Marketing Strategy**

Over the past year, the departments of Fish and Wildlife and Forests, Parks and Recreation worked together to develop an "Outreach and Marketing Plan" for the Lands and Facilities Trust Fund. The need for a marketing plan was identified in the Agency's 2002 annual report on the trust fund. The overall goal of the trust fund marketing effort is to enhance the level of stewardship and care of state lands and facilities through increasing public awareness of the trust fund and the Agency's many stewardship needs. The outreach and marketing plan outlines a promotional approach for the trust fund and identifies specific tasks to ensure successful, sustained marketing of the fund is achieved. A copy of this plan is attached to this annual report.

# Vermont's Land & Facilities Trust Fund

## Agency of Natural Resources

### Outreach and Marketing One-Year Plan November, 2002

#### **Background:**

The Lands and Facilities Trust Fund was created by the legislature in 2001 (Act 61, § 2807). This legislation created an income-producing fund in the state treasury for funding needed stewardship activities on agency lands, its facilities, and recreational assets not covered in operating budgets. Eligible activities include repair and maintenance of state parks and conservation camps; property survey and mapping; maintenance of state lands boundaries; resource inventories; and sustainable timber management activities. As established, the Trust Fund is set up to accept funding from a variety of public and private sources including donations, grants, special use permit fees, federal funds, timber sales receipts from state forest land, and such funds as may be appropriated by the legislature. Trust fund balance as of the fall of 2002 was approximately \$400,000.

To date, outreach and marketing efforts have been largely piecemeal. Over the past year, a brochure on the trust fund (*Protecting Vermont's Natural Resources*) was produced and was distributed at FPR and FW offices and public kiosks. The brochure was directed primarily towards private donors. A copy of the brochure, accompanied by a memo from ANR Secretary Scott Johnstone, was also sent to all ANR employees. A web page was developed within FPR's State Lands web site ([www.state.vt.us/anr/fpr/lands/lftf/index.htm](http://www.state.vt.us/anr/fpr/lands/lftf/index.htm)) and linked to various state web sites. ANR attorney Ginny McGrath effectively attracted media coverage in 2002 for the fund when she hiked portions of Vermont's long trail and distributed brochures to interested people.

#### **Purpose:**

The overall goal of the trust fund marketing effort is to enhance the level of stewardship and care of state lands and facilities through increasing public awareness of the trust fund and the agency's many stewardship needs. The intent of this planning document is to outline a promotional approach for the fund and to assign responsibilities for implementation to ensure successful, sustained marketing of the fund is achieved.

#### **Plan Objectives:**

- Among targeted audiences, increase basic knowledge of the fund's existence.
- Among targeted audiences, communicate how supporters may donate to the fund.
- Implement promotional strategies designed to persuade targeted audiences to support the fund.

## **Key Audiences:**

1. State of Vermont employees
2. Fish and Wildlife Department Conservation Camp attendees and families (past and future)
3. Fishing and hunting license holders
4. State Park users
5. Commercial and non-profit users of state lands
6. Vermont conservation organizations
7. News media (as means of reaching the general public)

*Note: Staffing and budget support for this effort is limited. Therefore, while there are other groups that could be potentially marketed to, the aim of this one-year plan is to focus mainly on these select audiences. Future plans may specifically address a broader range of audiences.*

## **Strategies and Tactics**

The plan below outlines four specific strategies to implement within a 12-month period—a direct mail campaign; brochure placement campaign, media relations campaign, and web page campaign. See the timeline at the back of the plan for implementation dates and assignment of responsible department.

### ***Direct Mail Campaign***

Tactic:

1. Identify and compile separate mailing lists of reserved state park camping guests, conservation camp attendees, state lands licensees, and Vermont conservation organizations.
2. Contact Department of Personnel to make arrangements for promotional information to be included in bi-weekly pay stub envelopes.
3. Develop five joint letters from Fish and Wildlife Commissioner and Forest, Parks and Recreation Commissioner inviting the separate targeted audiences to read the fund brochure and donate and/or to distribute the brochure to clients (state employees, reserved state park campers, Conservation Camp attendees, state lands licensees, conservation organizations).
4. Direct mail letter and brochure using developed mailing lists. (Distribute brochure and related trust fund information to state employees through inserting material within bi-weekly pay stub envelopes).

**Goal:** Completion of this task within the one-year time frame.

## ***Brochure Placement Campaign***

### Tactic One:

1. Identify and develop a list of locations where state park camp users could potentially be exposed to a supply of *Protecting Vermont's Natural Resources* brochure. (i.e. state park camp offices, AAA customer service offices, RV dealerships, etc.)

**Goal:** List to geographically encompass entire state of Vermont.

2. Contact responsible parties from the developed list to arrange for brochures to be displayed and distributed on a regular basis.

**Goal:** 50% of all locations contacted will display brochures.

3. Develop and implement a systematic and timely way of supplying and resupplying outlets with brochures.

**Goal:** Identify an employee or vendor to commit to keeping this system operational.

### Tactic Two:

1. Identify and develop a list of state offices where employees and the public could potentially be exposed to a supply of *Protecting Vermont's Natural Resources* brochure.

**Goal:** List will cover all agencies and departments in state government.

2. Contact responsible parties from the developed list to arrange for brochures to be displayed and distributed on a regular basis.

**Goal:** 75% of all state offices contacted will display brochures.

3. Develop and implement a systematic and timely way of supplying and resupplying state offices with brochures.

**Goal:** Identify an employee or vendor to commit to keeping this system operational.

### Tactic Three:

1. Identify and develop a list of locations of authorized FW department license agent where brochures could be distributed to purchasers of new hunting and fishing licenses.

**Goal:** List will cover all authorized license agent locations.

2. Contact responsible parties for the license agents to arrange for brochures to be made available to all new purchasers of hunting and fishing licenses.

**Goal:** 50% of all license agents will make brochures available to license purchasers.

3. Develop and implement a systematic and timely way of supplying and resupplying license agents with brochures.

**Goal:** Identify an employee or vendor to commit to keeping this system operational.

*Note: Additional brochures may need to be printed in order to fully implement the above tactics. If necessary and as funding may allow, FPR will be responsible for reprinting brochures and will incorporate revisions as may be appropriate.*

### ***Media Relations Campaign***

Tactic:

1. Develop one-year storyboard of press release ideas. (i.e. stories may feature facilities that will benefit from fund or demonstrate how money has been used.)

**Goal:** Ten ideas.

2. Write and distribute to Vermont news media press releases from the developed story ideas.

**Goal:** One story written and released every four months.

3. Work with individual reporters to persuade papers to publish the press releases.

**Goal:** One major Vermont daily; placement among smaller papers and monthly publications occurs to ensure state is geographically reached by end of 12-months.

### ***Web Page Campaign***

Tactic:

1. Purchase a URL for the trust fund web site to allow for direct promotion of the site on the internet (i.e. Fish and Wildlife's URL is – [vtfishandwildlife.com](http://vtfishandwildlife.com)).

2. Update trust fund web site with new information on the fund money uses or other pertinent information.

**Goal:** Updates to occur on a quarterly basis.

3. Develop list of web sites that address targeted audiences that could be linked to the trust fund page. Provide prominent and clear linkages to the trust fund URL from the FW, FPR, and ANR web sites.

**Goal:** Links established from department and agency web sites and from at least five other web sites or 10% of targeted list.

4. As direct mail and media materials are developed, publicize new URL to alert audiences to web page location.

**Goal:** 100% of all developed materials will reference new URL.

**Evaluation of Plan:**

At the end of the 12-month plan, evaluators should examine results against the goals listed under each tactic.

An additional evaluation method is also suggested, if funding and staffing is available. At the point an individual makes a donation to the fund, a method should be developed that tracks where they received information from about the trust fund. This will help link the strategies and tactics to actual donations.

Once this basic 12-month plan is implemented, it is recommended that a new plan be drafted that specifically targets donation amounts. Proceeds collected in the 12-month period of this plan can act as a funding benchmark to market from. (i.e. If during the 12-months, \$5000 is collected from members of the targeted audiences, subsequent plans should use the \$5000 as a base donation amount to target from. Ongoing donation goals could be 5% higher than the preceding year.)

**VERMONT’S LANDS & FACILITIES TRUST FUND - TIMELINE FOR ONE-YEAR OUTREACH AND MARKETING PLAN**

FW – Fish & Wildlife / FPR – Forest, Parks & Recreation / T- Tactics

<b>Month</b>	<b>Direct Mail</b>	<b>Brochure Placement</b>	<b>Media Relations</b>	<b>Web Page</b>
<b>January</b>	<i>T-1: FW / FPR T-2: FPR</i>		<i>T-1: FPR / FW</i>	<i>T-1: FPR</i>
<b>February</b>				<i>T-3: FPR</i>
<b>March</b>	<i>T3: FW / FPR</i>			<i>T-4: FPR / FW</i>
<b>April</b>		<i>T1-1: FPR T2-1: FW / FPR T3-1: FW</i>		<i>T-2: FPR</i>
<b>May</b>	<i>T-4: Postage divided by mailing list</i>	<i>T1-2, T1-3: FPR T2-2, T2-3: FW / FPR T3-2, T3-3: FW</i>		
<b>June</b>			<i>T-2: FPR T-3: FPR</i>	<i>T-4: FPR</i>
<b>July</b>				<i>T-2: FPR</i>
<b>August</b>				
<b>September</b>			<i>T-2: FW T-3: FW</i>	<i>T-4: FW</i>
<b>October</b>				<i>T-2: FPR</i>
<b>November</b>				
<b>December</b>			<i>T-2: FPR T-3: FPR</i>	<i>T-4: FPR</i>