

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Vermont Wildlife Coalition Announces  
First Annual *Review of Legislative Action on Wildlife***

“The wildlife and its habitat cannot speak, so we must and we will.” — Theodore Roosevelt

Burlington, VT — The Vermont Wildlife Coalition (VWC) announces the publication of the first issue of the annual *Review of Legislative Action on Wildlife*. The Review identifies and reports on wildlife-related bills appearing before the Vermont legislature in the past year. It provides brief, understandable summaries of relevant bills, describes committee and legislative actions on those bills, denotes their final status at the end of session, and, where available, provides legislators’ voting record. The Review also includes summaries of specific petitions to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Board that relate to wildlife management. The Review’s purpose is to promote transparency in government, educate the Vermont public about pressing wildlife issues, and promote broad public participation in the effort to ensure protection of wildlife into the future. By making legislative action on wildlife readily available, the VWC also hopes to promote interaction between legislators and their constituents on wildlife-related issues.

Publication of the Review reflects the rapidly changing situation of wildlife in the 21st Century. Vermonters clearly place high value on wildlife; we are the #2 state when it comes to resident interest in wildlife. It’s also true that wild species are facing a number of major challenges in the years ahead. Many people are not aware of these issues, and if they are, they assume that the government will find solutions. Wildlife management is a political process with different viewpoints that must be acknowledged and reconciled. The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, in its 2016 “Blue Ribbon” report, stressed that an engaged public is necessary in order to support wildlife conservation with the funding and other resources that will be needed. Increased and broad public involvement is key to ensuring protection for Vermont’s wildlife.

Melissa Hoffman, on the steering committee of VWC states, “An educated, engaged public is going to be absolutely crucial to support wildlife in weathering the decades ahead. Political support must happen if we are to muster the research and conservation effort, habitat protection,

and continued appreciation of wildlife necessary to ensure protection for our diverse species. VWC is pleased to present the Review as one tool, unavailable up to now, that will contribute to those goals.”

The Vermont Wildlife Coalition is a statewide, grassroots, all-volunteer organization. Its mission is to ensure a vibrant and protected future for Vermont’s wildlife species through wildlife-centered public education and political action. Members include scientists, wildlife watchers, farmers, hikers, hunters, birders, anglers, etc. Recognizing the intrinsic value of wildlife, all share an interest in promoting humane, science-based wildlife regulations and conservation strategies, ethical hunting and use of diversified and public funding for wildlife programming.

A copy of the Review of Legislative Action on Wildlife is available at [www.vtwildlifecoalition.org](http://www.vtwildlifecoalition.org). The VWC invites interested Vermonters to contact them at [info@vtwildlifecoalition.org](mailto:info@vtwildlifecoalition.org) to get on the organization’s mailing list. Additional information about VWC is available through their website at [www.vtwildlifecoalition.org](http://www.vtwildlifecoalition.org) and on their Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/wildlifeadvocatesvt/>.

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