



MassWildlife Lands User Guide

Bolton Flats Wildlife Management Area

Towns: Bolton, Harvard, Lancaster

Acreage: 978

Wildlife Management Zone: 9

Description of property:

As the name implies, Bolton Flats is primarily a flood plain for the Nashua, Still, and Dead Rivers. Beaver activity along the Still River has resulted in an extensive wetland complex to the north of Route 117 and to the west of Route 110. The floodplain forest along the Nashua River is extensive on the west side. Several hundred acres of Bolton Flats is leased to area farmers who grow hay, corn, and row crops with the resulting edge cover providing excellent wildlife habitat.

Location/Access/Parking:

There are a number of parking areas, the most popular being beyond the red barn off Route 110 and on the north and south sides of Route 117 just east of the Nashua River Bridge. Access to the Pine Hill section is via Pine Hill Road off Route 117. Additional access is located adjacent to the model airplane field which is across Route 110 from the former Lancaster School for Girls.

Habitat Management:

Sections of the WMA are mowed annually to provide wildlife habitat and Ring-necked Pheasant cover. Additional field areas are reclaimed as they become overgrown. The former sand and gravel operation at the Pine Hill section is being reclaimed as a shrubland with pitch pine being retained. It will be managed using a combination of mowing and prescribed fire.

Hunting Opportunities:

Bolton Flats is a major Ring-necked Pheasant stocked area with birds being released up to three times per week during the pheasant season. The rivers and beaver wetlands provide excellent waterfowl hunting for jump shooting or from a canoe. The agricultural fields attract Canada Geese, American Crow, and White-tailed Deer while the wide open Pine Hill section provides long-range shooting opportunities for Eastern Coyote and fox.

Fishing Opportunities:

The Nashua River provides warmwater fishing opportunities for panfish, Chain Pickerel, and Largemouth Bass. Canoe and car-top access is located immediately to the west of the bridge on the north side of Route 117. The Still River provides warmwater fishing opportunities as well as native Brook Trout and seasonal stocked trout fishing and may be accessed behind the red barn on Route 117. For more information on trout stocking, visit [Mass.gov/Trout](https://www.mass.gov/trout).

Wildlife Viewing and Other Features:

Bolton Flats is a very popular destination for birders during the spring migration and for fall hawk watching. The wetlands are attractive for water birds with reports of Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, and Glossy Ibis. The habitat work being done at the Pine Hill section attracts uncommon grassland birds. The river bottom habitat and surrounding uplands is floodplain forest and supports several rare species.

Special WMA Regulations:

During the Pheasant season, a blaze orange hat must be worn by all hunters except while night-hunting Raccoon or Opossum or while hunting waterfowl from within a blind or boat. No person shall hunt before sunrise or after sunset during the open season on Pheasant, except for the hunting of Raccoon or Opossum between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m.

Useful Links

[WMA Regulations](#)

[Habitat Program](#)

[Hunting & Fishing](#)

Fishing/Hunting Licenses

[Mass.gov/MassFishHunt](https://www.mass.gov/massfishhunt)

Learn more

[Mass.gov/MassWildlife](https://www.mass.gov/masswildlife)

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Get Your Orange On!

All outdoor users are encouraged to wear blaze orange during hunting seasons.

Your local

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