**Towns:** Royalston, Templeton, Winchendon  
**Acreage:** about 4,500  
**Wildlife Management Zone:** 5

**Description of property:**  
Birch Hill WMA is made up of several parcels totaling over 4,500 acres and is adjacent to other large areas of conserved land. The property contains mixed hardwood and conifer forests, open fields, old apple orchards, shrublands, and several wetland complexes. Extensive sand and gravel deposits left by glaciers give rise to a globally rare type of habitat known as barrens. The Priest Brook Barrens contain dense lowbush blueberry, pitch pine, scrub oak, and native grasses that support an abundance of rare and common wildlife. MassWildlife is working at this WMA to restore and maintain barrens along with a mosaic of forested habitat types, so visitors may see operations like mowing, prescribed fire, and tree thinning taking place periodically. Take time to explore these carefully restored areas and the native wildlife they support. Several maintenance roads and unmarked trails wind through the WMA and can be used for walking, hiking, birding, cross-country skiing, and hunting access.

**Location/Access/Parking:**  
Access to the property is gained from New Boston Road, Norcross Road, Winchendon Road, and Turnpike Road. Portions of this property are accessible seasonally and subject to weather conditions.

**Hunting Opportunities:**  
Hunters will find signs of white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, and black bears. Ruffed grouse, eastern cottontail rabbits, coyotes, and foxes can also be found here. Ducks and geese frequent the small ponds and marshes in the northern part of the WMA. Ring-necked pheasants are stocked throughout the fall season.

**Fishing Opportunities:**  
Priest Brook and Scott Brook provide fishing opportunities for stocked trout. There is car-top boat access to both waterbodies at road crossings. These two brooks flow into the Millers River, which is also stocked with trout.

**Wildlife Viewing and Other Features:**  
Visitors will find excellent bird watching, wildlife viewing, and nature study opportunities. Birch Hill WMA is home to fishers, foxes, beavers, moose, and great blue herons. Prairie warblers, eastern whip-poor-wills, ruffed grouse, and American woodcocks frequent dense regenerating young forests that grow after active habitat management. The barrens habitat in the Priest Brook Valley supports highly specialized species including many state-listed moths and butterflies, tiger beetles, and a variety of native bees.

**Special WMA Regulations:**  
During pheasant season, a blaze orange hat must be worn by all hunters except while night-hunting raccoons or opossums 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 raccoons or opossums between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m.