

FOREST MANAGEMENT FOR WILDLIFE MAKING GOOD CHOICES

**Don Bonnette, MDNR –
Wildlife Division**



- ❖ **Many forest owners/managers want (or are mandated) to manage forests with some wildlife habitat objective in mind**
- ❖ **The dilemma becomes what, when, where, how and why**
- ❖ **Information on forest management for wildlife is plentiful and widely available from federal, state, university, consultants, on-line etc.**
- ❖ **What is going to work best for your forest???**



Ask yourself some Questions:

❖ What is the habitat goal?

- Deer, grouse, migratory passerines etc. – must know habitat requirements for a given spp.
- Habitat: place to live; home – food, water, cover, space
- Must be realistic and achievable

❖ What forest types are present?

- Aspen, northern hardwoods, jack pine; multiple types
- Are those types capable of meeting the goal?
- If one or more habitat elements are lacking they must travel to find it

❖ What's the plan to achieve the goal?

- Harvest, plant, do nothing



Other Points to Consider

- ❖ There is a Push for every Pull – whatever habitat changes are made will benefit some species and will be detrimental to others
- ❖ Structural diversity leads to biodiversity
- ❖ Habitat is not stable – it changes with time
- ❖ How does the land in question fit in with the surrounding landscape



Some Examples



Animals Animals



White-Tailed Deer Habitat Requirements



60 Acres in NW Sanilac County



North



Habitat goal:



Improve habitat for deer

Forest Cover Types:

Aspen poles/small logs (A6): 25.4 acres

Lowland aspen saplings (P3): 13.5 acres

Upland brush (U0 - hawthorn, dogwood): 18 acres

Lowland brush (L0 - alder/willow): 3.2 acres



The Plan: harvest aspen on ~40 yr rotation



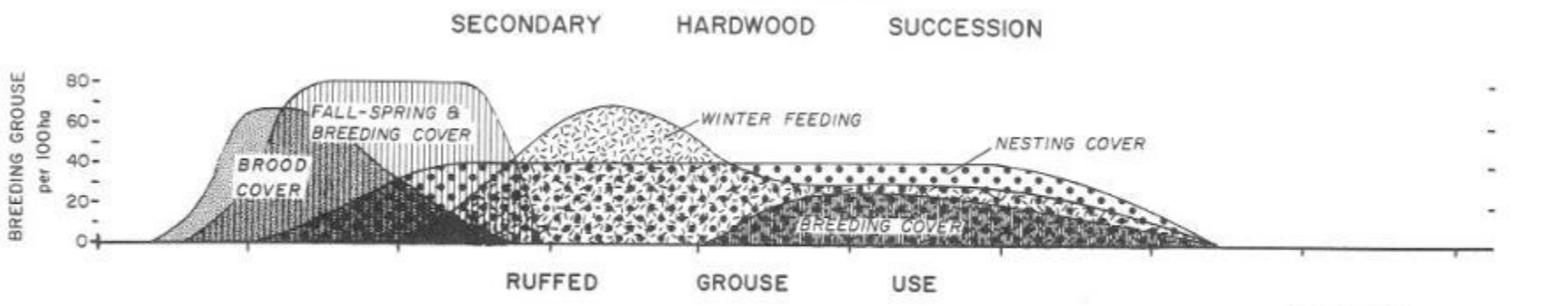
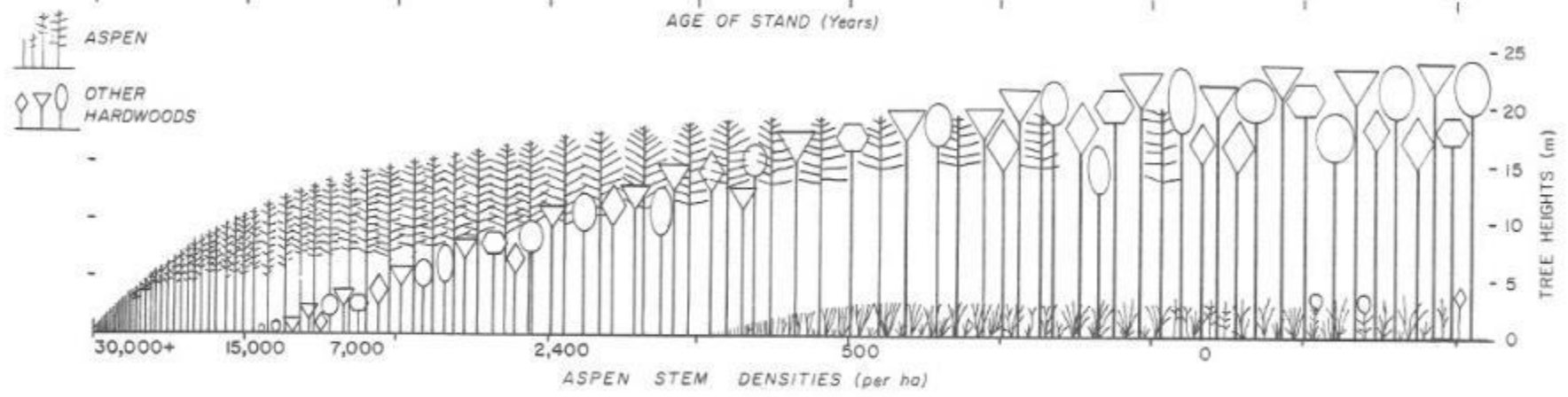
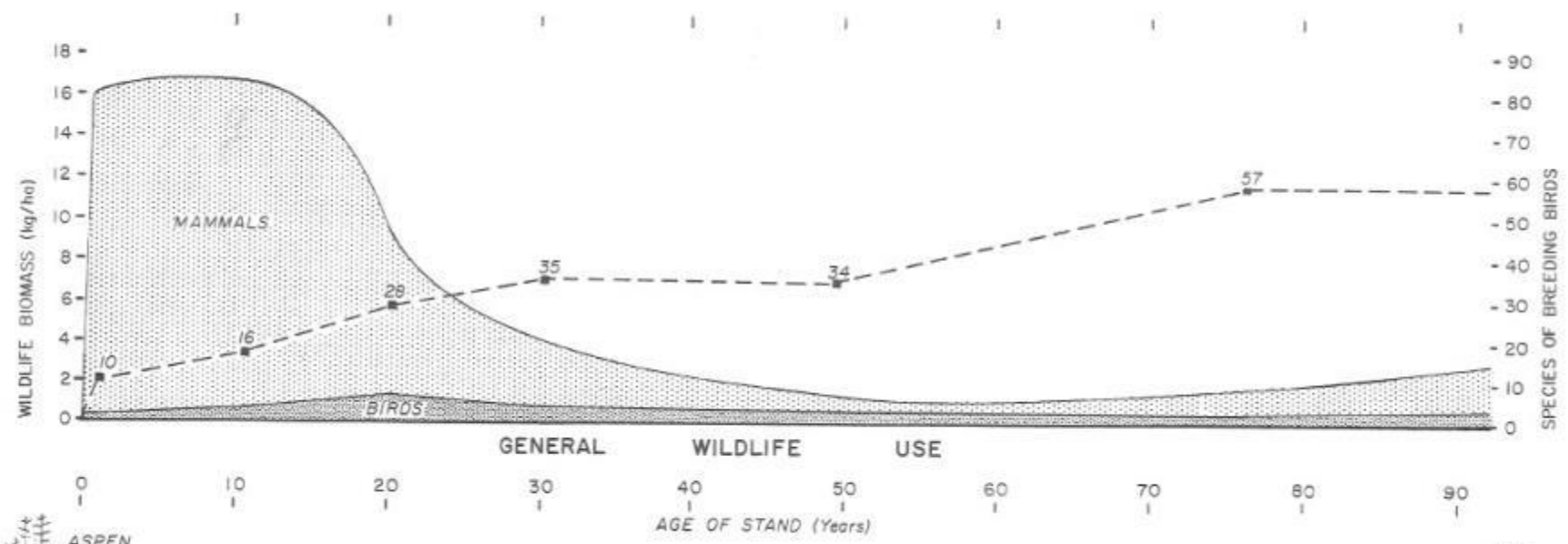
brush
in openings

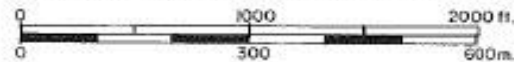
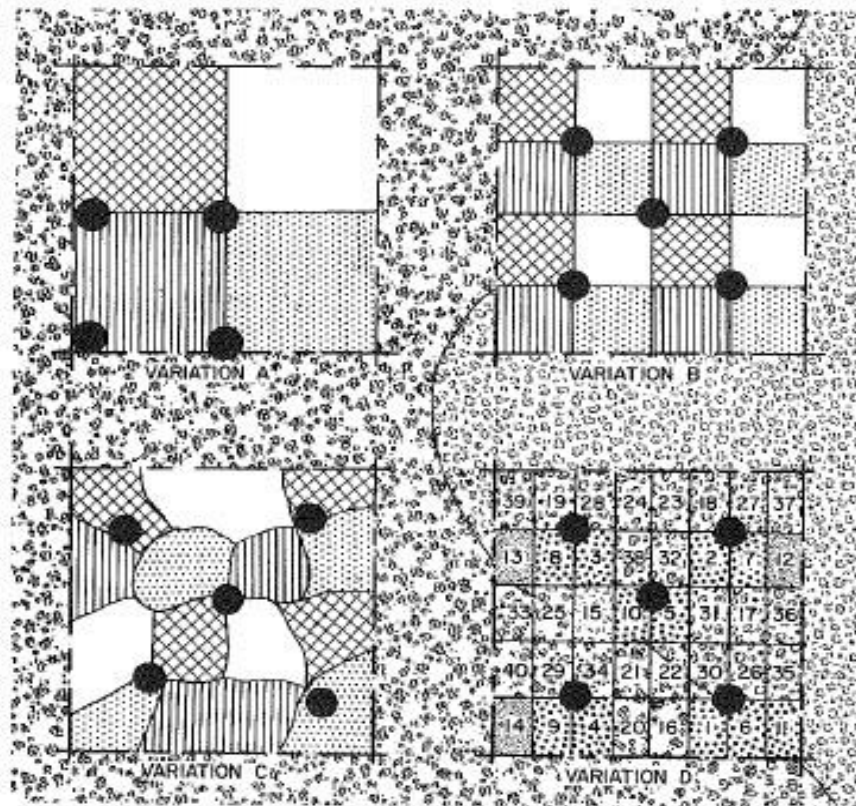


Ruffed Grouse Habitat Requirements

“At some time during their life cycle the aspens can provide the best quality cover and food for ruffed grouse at each stage of this bird’s annual life cycle. No other plant does this. (Gullion 1984, Managing Northern Forests for Wildlife)

- ❖ Winter – feed on male aspen flower buds
- ❖ Spring/Summer/Fall – aspen catkins, leaves; greens of strawberry, bunchberry, partridge berry etc.
- ❖ Need Aspen in 3 age classes within ~1/8 mile of each other
 1. Sapling stands 4-15 yrs. – brood cover
 2. Sapling/small pole 6-25 yrs. – fall/spring cover
 3. Older aspen >25 yrs. – food, winter cover, nesting





LEGEND

VARIATIONS A, B, C

- INITIAL CUTTING
- CUT 10 YEARS LATER
- CUT 20 YEARS LATER
- CUT 30 YEARS LATER

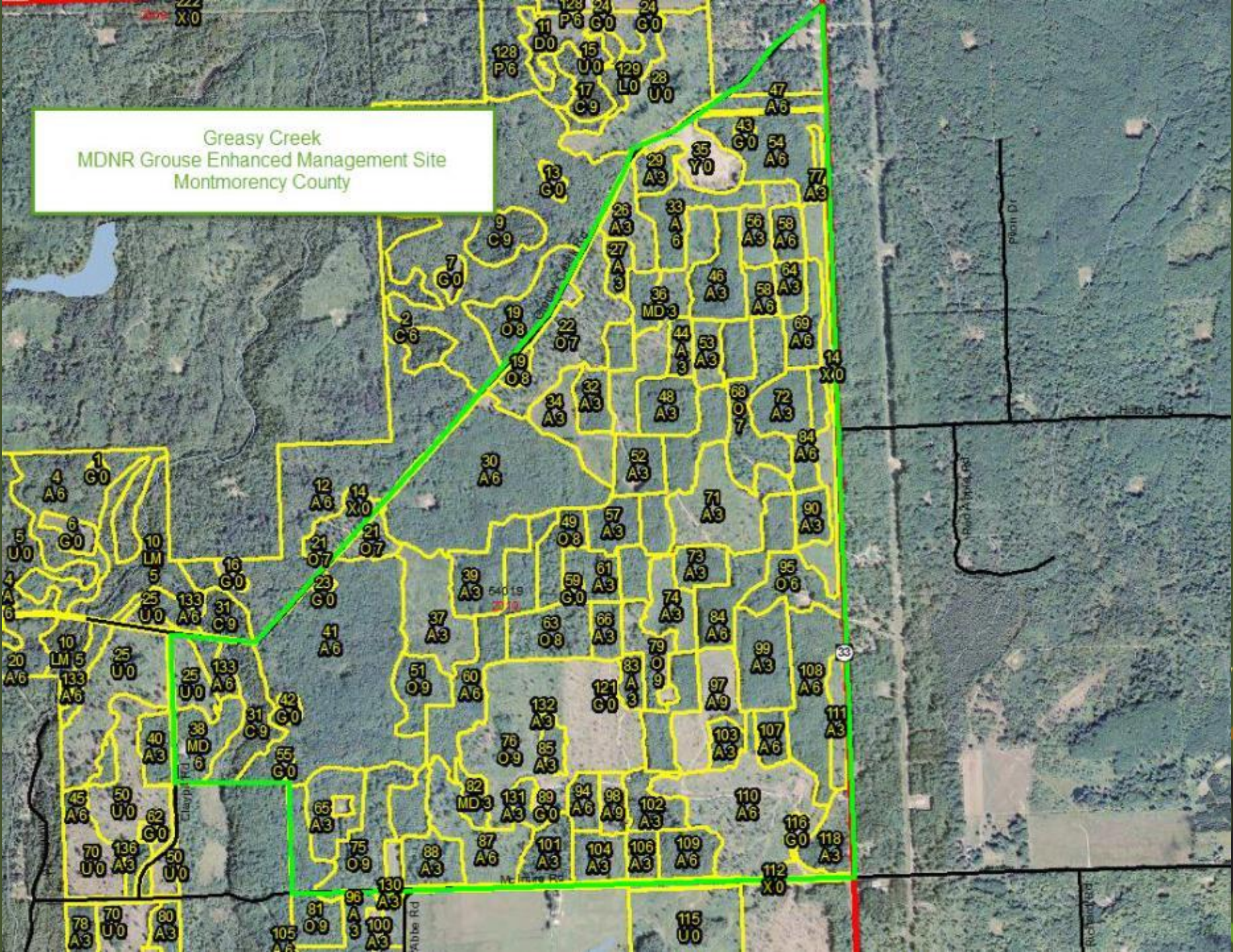
VARIATION D (after 15 years)

- RECENTLY CUT
- SUCKER REGENERATION
- SAPLING STAND
- ORIGINAL MATURE FOREST

● EXPECTED CENTER FOR RUFFED GROUSE BREEDING ACTIVITY FOLLOWING MANAGEMENT



Greasy Creek
MDNR Grouse Enhanced Management Site
Montmorency County





Legend

Highway



Greasy Creek GEMS Boundary



Aspen



Wetlands/Bogs



discounts at local businesses. Visit the [GEMS website](#) or see list at the GEMS.

DNR  **GIS**



Woodland Birds



Habitat Requirements

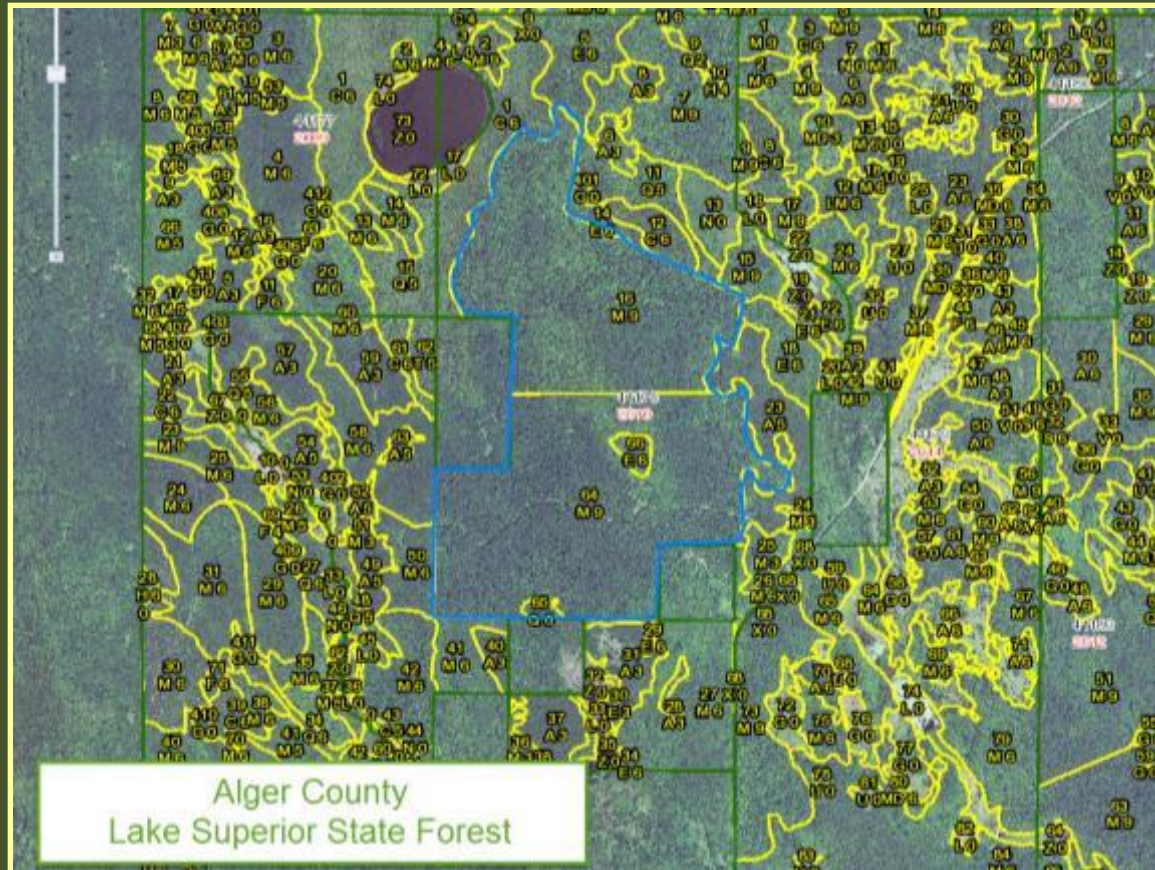
❖ In general prefer mature forests; can be lumped into 2 broad categories based on edge sensitivity:

1. Edge Sensitive: low tolerance for fragmentation; prefer forest interior >100 yards from edge; forested tracts 100's – 1000's acres; forest type influences spp.



2. Edge Tolerant: moderate to high edge tolerance; forested tracts 40-100's acres





Habitat Goal: maintain un-fragmented condition for edge sensitive woodland spp.



Options

- ❖ Do nothing – let nature take its course
- ❖ Harvest timber – use single tree selection
- ❖ Maintain understory – under planting, create canopy gaps
- ❖ Snags – leave alone or create via girdling

More Information


[DNR Home](#)
[Contact DNR](#)
[DNR Online Services](#)
[Key Topics](#)




Michigan Department of Natural Resources


- About the DNR
- Camping & Recreation
- Commissions, Boards and Committees
- Doing Business
- Education & Outreach
- Fishing
- Forestry
- Grants
- History
- Hunting & Trapping
- Law Enforcement
- Licenses, Applications & Permits
- Maps & Data
- Public Land Managed by the DNR
- Wildlife & Habitat
- Featured Species
- Wildlife Action Plan
- Michigan Bird Conservation Initiative
- Michigan Waterfowl Legacy

Managing Michigan's Wildlife: *A landowner's guide*





This partnership was formed between both private and public organizations in order to address private lands wildlife issues. Individuals share resources, information, and expertise. This landowner's guide has been a combined effort between these groups working towards one goal: Natural Resources Education. We hope this guide provides you the knowledge and the motivation to make positive changes for our environment.

Editors and Project Coordinators:




Mark Sargent
Michigan Department of Natural Resources






Kelly Siciliano Carter
Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Michigan State University





[DNR > WILDLIFE & HABITAT](#)

Wildlife & Habitat - Michigan.gov



[Wildlife Species](#)


[Plant Species](#)



[Tourism/Viewing](#)


[Wildlife Disease](#)


Support Michigan Wildlife!



Purchase a \$35 license plate, and \$25 will go to the Non-game Wildlife Fund!



NON-GAME DONATE WILDLIFE FUND



Purchase A Wildlife Patch

Wildlife Spotlight

- [Draft Drummond Island Resource Management Plan](#)
- [Discussion Points for Drummond Island Resource Mgt. Plan](#)

