



Interim Forest Management Plan

Property Identifiers

Property Name and Designation (multiple small properties can be grouped): **Hay Creek-Hoffman Lake Wildlife Area**

County(ies): **Ashland and Iron**

Property Acreage: **13,737ac**

Forestry Property Code(s): **2621**

Master Plan Date: **1979**

Part 1: Property Assessment

General Property Description

The Hay Creek-Hoffman Lake Wildlife Area is located in southeast Ashland County and southwest Iron County, five miles northeast of the city of Park Falls. It lies within the North Central Forest Ecological Landscape and predominately in the Chequamegon washed till and outwash land type association. The dominant forest type is aspen-birch while northern hardwoods consisting of sugar maple, red maple and basswood make up the second largest type. The area also contains abundant forested and non-forested wetlands.

The wildlife area was created in the early 1940's. The state obtained lands located within the present boundary for the purpose of establishing special winter deer management areas. The property adjoins the 22,000+ acre Turtle Flambeau Scenic Waters Area to the east and the Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest to the South. The Flambeau River, an Outstanding Resource Water, lies in close proximity to the North and West of the property.

Site Specifics

- 1) Current forest types, size classes and successional stages (10,466 acres)
 - Aspen (41%) 4,334 acres
 - Age class 1-10 (19%)
 - Age class 11-20 (16%)
 - Age class 21-30 (23%)
 - Age class 31-40 (12%)
 - Age class 41-50 (22%)
 - Age class >50 (8%)



Interim Forest Management Plan

- Northern hardwoods (15%) 1,546 acres
 - White Cedar (11%) 1,170 acres
 - Black Spruce (11%) 1,128 acres
 - Swamp Conifer (6%) 617 acres
 - Swamp Hardwoods (5%) 478 acres
 - Other (11%) 1,193 acres
- 2) Non-Forest types (3,271 acres)
 - Lowland brush/alder (46%) 1,493 acres
 - Muskeg bog (30%) 989 acres
 - Lake/stream (11%) 350 acres
 - Lowland grass (4%) 144 acres
 - Emergent vegetation (4%) 134 acres
 - Other (6%) 161 acres
 - 3) State Natural Area designations- No areas designated.
 - 4) High Conservation Value Forests- The Element Occurrences for Northern Wet Forest and Northern Wet-Mesic Forest both qualify as HCVF. Northern Hardwood and Hemlock-Hardwood stands in older age classes could qualify as HCVF.
 - 5) Biotic inventory status- Not yet completed or scheduled.
 - 6) Deferral/consultation area designations. No D/C sites.
 - 7) Rare species- The bald eagle, northern wet-mesic forest and the northern wet forest are the only NHI hits. However a NHI screening will be conducted prior to all future management activities.
 - 8) Invasive species- Roadside spotted knapweed and a small patch of leafy spurge have been identified. These species are treated with herbicides annually.
 - 9) Soils-There are two primary soil associations present: the Iron River-Pence association and the organic soil association. Soils in the Iron River –Pence group occupy the rolling uplands and the slopes. These soils are well drained and well suited for forest cover.

Soils of the organic soil association are found in broad basins and are nearly level, poorly drained organic soils and poorly drained, fine sandy alluvial soils. These soils are formed from sedges, cattails and woody materials.

The minor soils in the association are either poorly drained mineral soils on floodplains or gently sloping, poorly drained ridges adjacent to floodplains.

Cultural and Recreational Considerations

- Cultural and archeological sites

There are no historical or archeological sites listed on the Archeological Sites Inventory.



Interim Forest Management Plan

Part 2: IFMP Components

Management Objectives

The primary goal is to manage Hay Creek Hoffman Lake for its optimum forest wildlife habitat. General management objectives are listed below.

Aspen- The primary objective is to regenerate this type using even-age management methods to the extent possible for the benefit of game and non-game wildlife. Age class diversity will be maintained and green tree retention practices will be observed as appropriate. Conversion of other types to aspen is desirable.

Northern Hardwoods- Stands will be regenerated utilizing uneven aged management techniques, however where an increase in the aspen component is desired, even aged management prescriptions may be used.

Swamp hardwoods- Stands will be regenerated using even-aged methods. Isolated stands may be passively managed. Regeneration is important as these stands are an important seed source for migrating birds and small mammals. These areas are also used heavily by black bears during spring.

Hemlock/cedar- Passive management will be practiced.

Lowland conifers- Stands will be maintained to provide winter thermal cover for wildlife as well as nesting and foraging sites for forest dwelling birds. Some areas will be harvested to promote regeneration while other, more inaccessible areas, will be managed passively.

Upland balsam fir/white Spruce- The primary objective is to regenerate this type using even-age management methods to the extent possible for the benefit of game and non-game wildlife. These areas are used as winter thermal cover and provide an important seed source for many birds and small mammals.

Property Prescriptions

The DNR Silvicultural Handbook and this IFMP will be the primary guiding documents resource managers will utilize to determine objectives and prescriptions for individual stands within the property. A wide host of additional resources including, but not limited to, the Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan, Wisconsin Best Management Practices for Water Quality, the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory, and the Historical and Archeological Inventory will be utilized on a regular basis to plan for the management of individual stands, as well as the property as a whole. The prescriptions listed below are guidance for future management, but will not preclude utilization of other appropriate commonly accepted forestry management prescriptions that will enhance the goals and objectives for this property.

Aspen

Aspen stands will primarily be harvested through even-aged coppice regeneration cuts. Larger stands will be divided to increase age class diversity and edge cover. Green tree retention will be practiced in these stands while also focusing on snag and den/cavity tree retention. Retention will be concentrated near and between ephemeral ponds. All



Interim Forest Management Plan

pine, hemlock, cedar and oak will be retained, and areas of advanced regeneration of these species will be protected. Routinely, all non-merchantable trees greater than 2" will be felled to encourage aspen regeneration.

Hemlock/cedar

Passive management will be practiced and hemlock will be favored as retention trees in mixed stands. Aesthetic value will be considered with a focus on old growth individuals.

Northern Hardwoods

Northern hardwood stands will generally be managed by uneven-aged selection (single tree or group selection) harvests to encourage long term multi-aged diversity. Gaps will be created to encourage age class diversity and edge cover. Promote oak, yellow birch and hemlock where opportunities exist. Snags, cavity trees, and other trees that have special value to wildlife will be retained.

Swamp Hardwoods Management of swamp hardwood stands will be implemented according to a variety of methods as described in the DNR Silvicultural Handbook, with the primary goal being to enhance wildlife habitat. Focus will be given to retaining den/cavity trees and other individual trees of high value to wildlife. Harvest will take place under frozen ground conditions only.

Tamarack/Black Spruce/Swamp conifer-balsam fir

Even-aged management techniques will be used to manage these stands under frozen ground conditions only. All pine, hemlock, cedar and oak will be retained. These stands are extremely valuable to the property due to increased diversity and cover for wildlife, and the wide range of understory shrubs and plants found here.

Upland balsam fir/white Spruce

Even-aged management techniques will be used to manage these stands. All pine, hemlock, cedar and oak will be retained.

Approvals:

Regional Ecologist Date

Forester Date

Property Manager Date

Area/Team Supervisor Date