

All,

Attached is the management direction changes for KW and T&E that will be incorporated into Chapter 2 of the Forest Plan. I'm pleased with the results of the FLT meeting regarding KW management direction. They approved most of the wording we discussed and recommended. The changes they made to the recommended wording included:

On Page 2-14, Goal 1 and Objective 1 and 2 - changed ".....Management Area 4.4 and 4.2". to ".....Management Area 4.4 or 4.2".

On Page 2-33, Guideline 2 - changed "....Kirtland's warbler management area..." to "...areas managed for Kirtland's warbler...".

On Page 2-33, Guideline 2 - added "...unless such activity maintains or enhances Kirtland's warbler habitat on the forest, as determined in consultation with the FWS".

All other wording remained intact!



KW_Direction_6_22_05_FLT approved.doc t&e_Direction_6_22_05.doc

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BA - 10,000 ^{clarify} ac mine ^{specification} = total SP
closure

Approved Changes to Forest-wide and Management Area Direction
Kirtland's Warbler
June 22, 2005

Chapter 2 (Page 2-14)

Kirtland's Warbler (Endangered)

Goals:

1. Provide for Kirtland's warbler management within forest-wide vegetation goals.
2. Provide a minimum of 10,000 acres of jack pine in the appropriate size class, as determined in consultation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), striving to achieve desired Kirtland's warbler stocking levels on ELT 10/20 in Management Areas 4.4 or 4.2.

Objectives:

1. Regenerate an average of 670 acres of jack pine per year in Management Areas 4.4 or 4.2 on ELT 10/20 to provide Kirtland's warbler habitat.

Chapter 2 (Page 2-33)

Kirtland's Warbler (Endangered)

Guidelines:

1. For Kirtland's warbler management, strive to regenerate jack pine stands with the appropriate stem density and non-forested openings, as determined in consultation with the FWS.
2. Pre-commercial thinning or release of jack pine should not occur in areas managed for Kirtland's warbler prior to vegetation achieving the suitable size criterion or until vegetation exceeds the suitable size criterion for Kirtland's warbler breeding, unless such activity maintains or enhances Kirtland's warbler habitat on the forest, as determined in consultation with the FWS.
3. Occupied Kirtland's warbler habitat may be closed to public entry during the breeding and nesting seasons, except for approved tours.

Chapter 2 (Page 2-31)

Vegetation Management

Standards:

1. Vegetation will be managed within the ecological capabilities of the forest.

Guidelines:

1. The maximum size of temporary openings for sharp-tailed grouse and Kirtland's warbler management should not exceed 1,100 acres. In KW management areas the 1,100-acre temporary opening guideline may be exceeded by harvesting adjacent blocks after the appropriate stocking density (determined in consultation with the FWS) is achieved, and after the third-year stocking review.
2. Deeryards and adjacent uplands should be managed to provide winter thermal cover and browse.
3. Vegetation management activities should encourage intrastand diversity and mast producing species.

Chapter 3 (Pages 3-15 through 3-16)

Management Area 4.4

Suited Uses: To provide wildlife habitat for Kirtland's warbler and other upland species such as sharp-tailed grouse, sandhill crane, and black-backed woodpecker; and to provide conifer timber products to the regional economy; and to provide dispersed and developed recreation.

Landscape Description: Management Area 4.4 consists primarily of nearly level to gently sloping topography. Slope gradients in most areas are less than 5 percent. Glacial landforms include: outwash plains, outwash plains lowlands, pitted outwash plains, lake plains and minor areas of disintegration moraines. Soils are dominantly dry sands with low to moderate productivity. Due to the dry sandy soils and jack pine and red pine forest types, fire is the dominant disturbance regime. Wetlands occupy about 15 percent of the MA. Management Area 4.4 includes: the Whitefish Delta, Steuben Outwash, Indian River Upland, Mint Farm, Raco Sand Plains North and Raco Sand Plains South landtype associations.

Desired Conditions: Jack pine is most common tree species of this management area, although oak, aspen, paper birch, lowland hardwoods, red pine and white pine are also found. Blueberries may be found throughout the management area.

Habitat for Kirtland's warbler will be developed and maintained by incorporating large areas of densely stocked young jack pine across the landscape. Sharp-tailed grouse, upland sandpiper, northern harrier, sandhill crane, American kestrel, bluebird, and black-backed woodpecker habitat will be provided through large openings/ savanna complexes. Pockets of densely stocked aspen or jack pine will also be found throughout the complex. Mature trees will be left to provide snags and coarse woody debris or could be commercially harvested to maintain the desired stocking densities and opening characteristics of the complex. The large adjacent temporary openings from jack pine harvest will provide additional openland habitat. As these stands regenerate and mature, the jack pine will provide habitat for Kirtland's warbler and spruce grouse.

Chapter 3 (Pages 3-12)

Management Area 4.2

Suited Uses: To provide conifer timber products to the regional economy and to manage conifer for wildlife habitat for species such as red squirrel, American marten, Kirtland's warbler and pine warbler.

Landscape Description: Management Area 4.2 consists of predominantly of gently sloping to rolling topography. Slope gradients in most landtype associations (LTAs) are less than 15 percent, but range up to 50 percent on the steep faces of the sand dunes in the ridge/swale LTA. Landforms include: lake plains, outwash plain lowlands, pitted outwash plains, bedrock controlled ground moraines and dune capped lake plains. Soils are dominantly sands that range from wet to very dry. Wetlands occupy about 26 percent of the MA. Wetmore Outwash, Wetmore Outwash 2, Beaton Lake Outwash, Ridge/Swale Complex, Steuben Outwash/Moraine, Lake Superior Highlands, Strongs Outwash Hills and Carp/Ozark Creek Wetlands LTAs are common within the MA. The Watson till/wetland complex occupies a small part of the landtype association.

Desired Conditions: Red pine is the most common species in this management area, although jack pine, oak, aspen, white pine and northern hardwoods are also found. A mixture of conifers and hardwoods are evident along lakes and streams.

The area is managed for conifer production, which are favored by wildlife species such as red squirrel, Kirtland's warbler, American marten and pine warbler.

Federal Threatened and Endangered Species and Regional Forester Sensitive Species

Standards:

1. Signed federal recovery plans for threatened and endangered species will be implemented. Deviations specific to the Hiawatha National Forest may be allowed after consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
2. All known populations of threatened and endangered plant species and wildlife nest and denning sites will be protected.

Guidelines:

1. Conservation approaches for regional forester sensitive species should be implemented.
2. Non-native invasive plants within element occurrences of threatened and endangered and Regional Forester Sensitive Species should be eliminated or controlled.
3. Adverse impacts to known occurrences of Regional Forester Sensitive Species should be avoided, minimized or mitigated.
4. Prior to implementing management activities, surveys should be conducted for federally listed species and Regional Forester Sensitive Species where suitable habitat exists.
5. For all threatened and endangered species, special closure orders may be used to protect known nests and denning sites.
6. Deference should be afforded to implementing conservation measures for federal threatened and endangered species when and where they conflict with conservation measures for unlisted species.