



Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour

Dedicated to Kirtland's Warbler Conservation

AN INTERPRETIVE PROPOSAL

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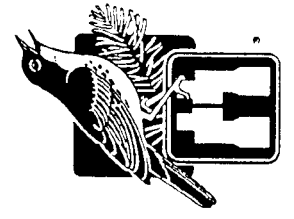


Prepared for: U.S. Forest Service
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Prepared by: D.J. Case & Associates
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Steven Barr, Illustrator

June 23, 1993



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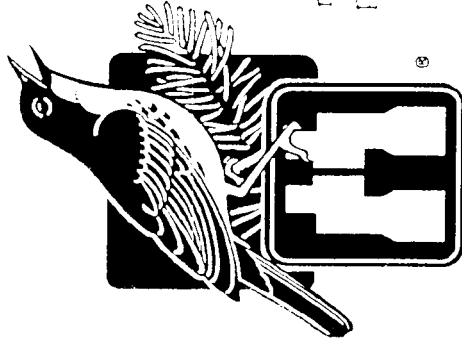


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INTRODUCTION



The status of the federally endangered Kirtland's warbler in the year 2010 will depend, to a large degree, on how well we communicate today with the myriad interests who affect its plight.

"Wildlife management is people management" is a common refrain among wildlife conservationists. Public knowledge, understanding and action play a particularly vital role in the recovery and conservation of the Kirtland's Warbler and the jack pine ecosystem on which it depends.

The entire population of Kirtland's warblers nests in an eight county area in the northern lower peninsula of Michigan and winters in the Bahama Islands. The warblers nest only in young jack pine forests on sandy soils. Maintaining these young forests requires an intensive, costly timber management program. Current public concerns surrounding Kirtland's Warbler management include:

- Opposition to large clearcuts.
- Opposition to timber harvest in general.
- Concern about fire and fire management.
- Economic impacts of Kirtland's warbler management on local economies.
- Funding for Kirtland's warbler management.
- Kirtland's warbler management impacts on other desired wildlife species.

In 1992, the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team conducted a comprehensive assessment of communications and education efforts needed to support Kirtland's Warbler conservation. From that assessment came 16 recommended actions for improving communications and education efforts. Many have already been implemented and the results have been encouraging. Action 9 was development of a Kirtland's Warbler Auto Tour.

A TEAM APPROACH

In September, 1992 an Interpretative Team with representatives from agencies, local homeowners, and industry (Appendix A) was formed to guide development of the auto tour. D.J. Case & Associates was hired under contract to develop the auto tour and this Interpretive Proposal.

A WILDLIFE VIEWING TOUR

The Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour will take visitors through a variety of habitats with a diversity of wildlife viewing opportunities—from beaver and trout to bald eagles and loons. However, the focus of the Tour will be on the jack pine ecosystem and the Kirtland's warbler. The interpretative information about other species and habitats, will relate to the jack pine ecosystem and Kirtland's Warbler management. This broader approach will minimize the time visitors spend in critical warbler habitat and will attract a broader range of people, helping market the Tour from a tourism standpoint.

This innovative Tour combines a diversity of interests—watchable wildlife, endangered species and neotropical migrant bird conservation, tourism, recreation, economic development, and transportation.



NEXT STEPS

This Interpretive Proposal summarizes the work of the Interpretive Team in developing the Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour and provides both the vision and the details for making the Tour a reality. Following review of the Interpretive Proposal by the Kiriland's Warbler Recovery Team, the next steps in developing the Tour will include:

1. Reviewing the Interpretive Proposal with key internal and external audiences—county and state road departments to name just a few.
2. Developing detailed plans for facility and interpretive enhancements at each site.
3. Developing budgets and seeking funding.
4. Putting the Tour “on the ground.”
5. Promoting public use of the Tour.

The Interpretive Team will continue to guide these steps. The east loop of tour is tentatively schedule to open in 1994, with the west loop scheduled for 1996.

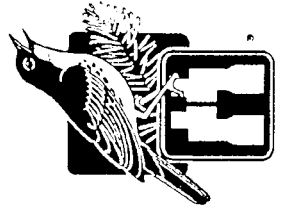
TOUR GOALS

1. Communicate important messages about Kirtland's warbler conservation to key groups of the public.
2. Create an additional economic asset dependent on Kirtland's warbler conservation.
3. Provide recreational opportunities for people who enjoy viewing wildlife.

AUDIENCES

The Tour has been designed with two diverse audiences in mind:

1. Tourists (campers, visitors, wildlife enthusiasts).
2. Residents/homeowners in Kirtland's warbler management areas.



GUIDELINES

The following guidelines have been and will continue to be used to guide development of the Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour:

1. Use a team approach. Work closely with the Recovery Team and use the expertise of all agencies, organizations, businesses and individuals involved in Kirtland's warbler management.
2. Design the tour in modular format so that sites can be added or enhanced as time and funding are available.
3. Keep in mind the temporal nature of the interpretation—sites/interpretive materials will have to be moved periodically as the habitat changes.
4. Make the sites “stand alone.” Enhancements (interpretive panels, etc.) should stand alone because they will be spread out and may not be visited sequentially.
5. Provide variety in access, activities, and interpretive materials.

-
6. Develop the tour brochure so that interpretation can occur as people are travelling. But, where acceptable, encourage people to get out, look, walk, and experience the land.
 7. Capture the “specialness” of the Kirtland’s warbler and its ecosystem and communicate with enthusiasm!
 8. Be sure the biological needs of the Kirtland’s warbler as identified in the Recovery Plan are the basis for tour design and communications.
 9. Emphasize the importance of the entire ecosystem, not just the Kirtland’s warbler.
 10. Emphasize the multiple benefits of the jack pine ecosystem.



TOUR DESIGN

The Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour will have six major components:

1. A series of wildlife viewing sites along a designated route.
2. Signing.
3. Interpretive information.
4. Visitor facilities.
5. A tour booklet.
6. Promotion of the tour.
7. Evaluation.

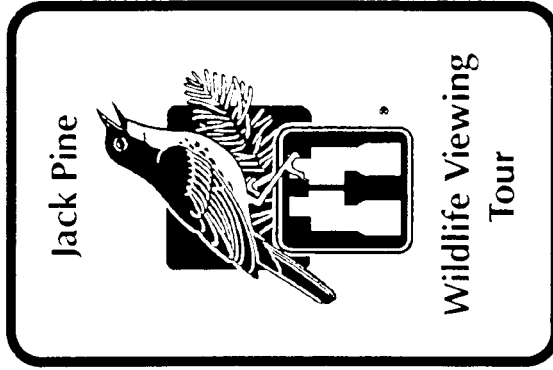
VIEWING SITES AND ROUTE

Two loops have been identified for the tour route (see map on following pages). The Interpretive Team determined that developing and implementing one loop of the tour at a time would be the most efficient use of funding and time.

The East Loop will have 11 wildlife viewing sites and two short side-trips. The side-trips offer visitors a chance to visit interesting areas, but are not on the main tour route. The West Loop tentatively has nine viewing sites and one side-trip.

Following the maps are detailed descriptions of each site on the East Loop including:

- Location.
- Purpose for including the site in the tour.
- Interpretive objectives—what we want people to know, feel, and do after they have visited this site.
- A summary of existing site conditions.
- Site enhancement needs for both facilities and interpretation.
- Tentative completion dates.



SIGNING

"Trail-blazing" signs would be erected along the route. Signs with the logo and site name would also be erected at each site so visitors know they have arrived at a site.

The Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour logo has been designed as an identifying symbol for the tour and will be used in a variety of ways including signing. The logo incorporates three important elements:

- Kirtland's warbler—the focus of the tour.
- Jack pine—symbolic of the ecosystem of which the warbler is a part.
- Watchable wildlife logo—this "binoculars logo" has been developed and accepted as the national symbol depicting wildlife viewing sites.

INTERPRETIVE INFORMATION

Interpretive information and experiences will be provided in a variety of ways on the tour—signing, site specific brochures, and the tour booklet. Interpretive information currently exists at only a few of the sites identified on the tour route. Detailed interpretive objectives and materials for each site are included following the maps in this proposal.

Overall, the interpretive information will be designed so that concepts and "connections" made at one site will be reinforced at other sites. However, it is important that sites stand alone since visitors may visit only a few sites on the route and not necessarily in sequential order.



VISITOR FACILITIES

An important component of a quality visitor experience is proper facilities (i.e. restrooms, parking). Visitor facilities such as viewing platforms and railings are also needed to control use of the site to protect natural and cultural resources. A number of the sites have existing visitor facilities, while others have none. Facilities such as restrooms, picnic areas, and food outlets will also be provided by private interests along the route. These will be indicated in the tour booklet.

TOUR BOOKLET

As a part of the tour, a booklet will be developed to:

- Guide visitors along the route.
- Provide additional information.
- Provide interpretive information.

Guide

The booklet will provide detailed road maps visitors can use to navigate along the route. The maps will be developed in such a way that visitors can start on the tour at any point along the route. The booklet will lie flat and have “mini-maps” for each segment of the tour route.

Information

Information such as the location of restrooms, restaurants, campgrounds, and motels will be identified.

Interpretation

The most important benefit of the booklet from a conservation standpoint will be interpretation. Together, the tour, site interpretation materials, and booklet will provide a unique opportunity to interpret ecological concepts that are often difficult to do in a short time at a single site. The booklet will help reinforce and enhance messages communicated at the sites. In addition, things visitors will see between sites as they travel along the route will be interpreted. The booklet will be written in a lively, fun manner and organized in a way that it will be interesting reading even if the reader does not go on the tour.

Promotion

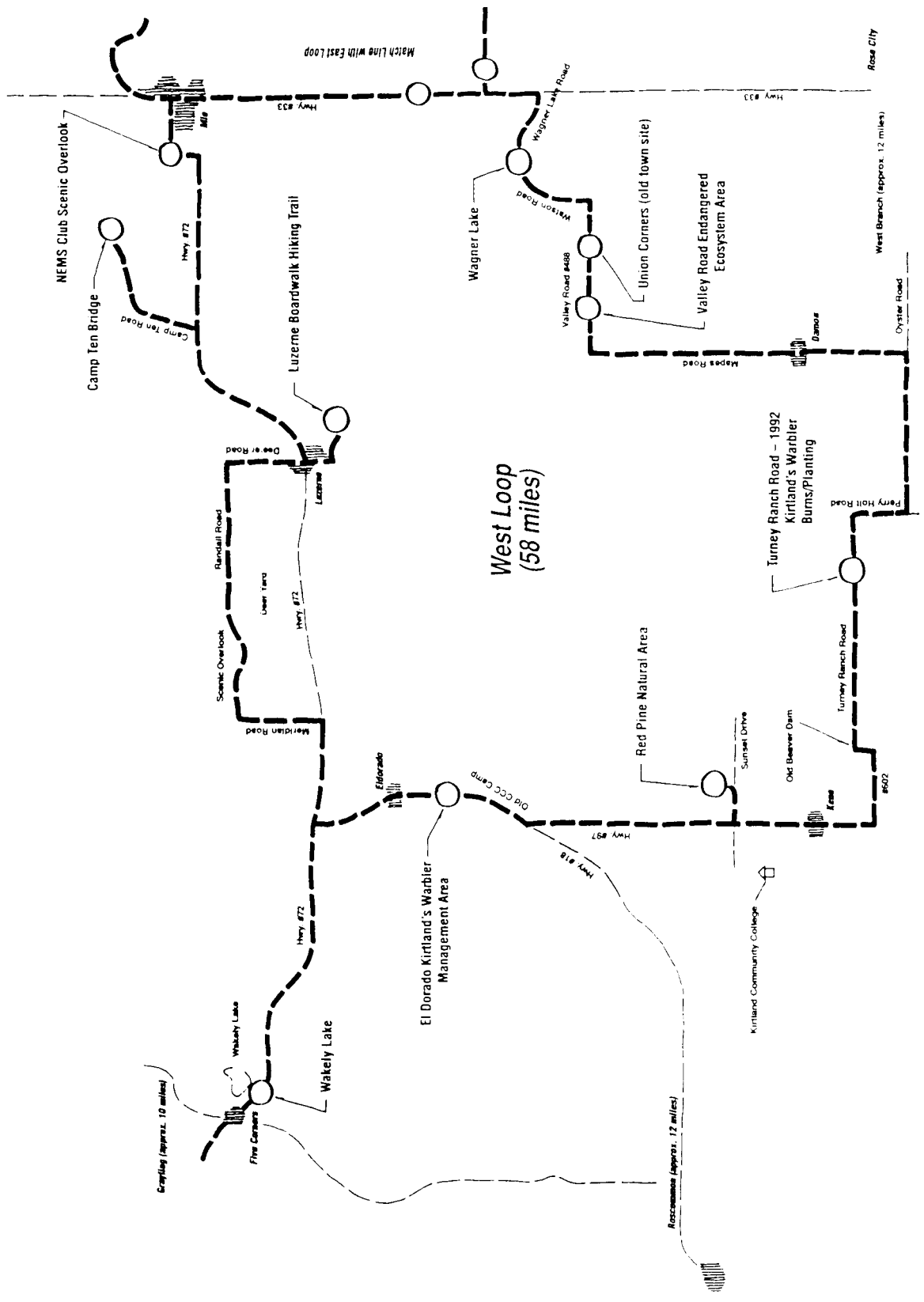
Promoting the tour will be an important part of its success—how many and what kinds of visitors use the tour will depend on the promotion efforts. A promotion program will be developed as the tour nears completion. Promotion efforts should be closely coordinated with other communications and education efforts related to the Kirtland's warbler, especially the guided warbler tours provided by the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation of all aspects of this tour is critical, especially in the early phases. Information will be gathered on the amount of use, what types of people are or are not using the tour, when they are using it, what visitors like and don't like about the tour, and what types of things they are learning. This information will be used to improve the tour and to help develop the West Loop.



TOUR ROUTE - WEST LOOP



SITE 1 – MACK LAKE BURN (TEMPORARY SITE)

A CRITICAL HOME FOR THE ENDANGERED KIRTLAND'S WARBLER

PURPOSE

This site would serve as the first stop on the Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour—for both the east and west loops. A temporary site should be established on Curtisville Road (604) until a permanent anchor site can be developed on Highway 33.

LOCATION

On south side of and adjacent to Curtisville Road (604), just east of Michigan 33. The exact site and associated improvements should be near the burn, but not be in Kirtland's warbler habitat.

PURPOSE

Attract visitors to and orient them on the Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour.

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Know

- The Mack Lake burn is part of the unique jack pine ecosystem.
- Jack Pine ecosystem is home to the endangered Kirtland's warbler.
- The Mack Lake burn is a critical area of habitat for the Kirtland's warbler.

Feel

- The jack pine ecosystem and Kirtland's Warbler are special.

Do

- Continue on the tour.
- Stay out of protected Kirtland's warbler habitat.

EXISTING SITE

None.

SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Facilities

- Temporary pull-off and parking area to accommodate 6 vehicles and one motorhome/camper trailer.
- Fence or railing to restrict foot travel.
- Benches.
- Trash cans.

Interpretative

- Four interpretative panels mounted at waist level.

COMPLETION

- June 1994.

SITE 1 – MACK LAKE BURN (PERMANENT ANCHOR SITE)

A CRITICAL HOME FOR THE ENDANGERED KIRTLAND'S WARBLER

LOCATION

On west side of and adjacent to Michigan Highway 55 just north of Curtisville Road (604) in an unoccupied area of the Mack Lake Burn.

PURPOSE AND INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Same as for temporary site. However, as the Mack Lake burns matures, the nature of the interpretation will need to change.

EXISTING SITE

None.

SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Facilities

- Hard surface pull-off and parking area to accommodate 12 cars and 3 motorhomes/camper trailers.
- Foot trails leading to facilities.
- Fence or railing to restrict foot travel.
- Restrooms.
- Drinking fountain.
- Benches.
- Trash cans.

Interpretative

- Kiosk for tour orientation.
- Four interpretative panels for site interpretation.

COMPLETION

September 1995.



SITE 2 – SNAGS

THERE'S LIFE IN DEAD TREES

PURPOSE

Give visitors a chance to see and learn about “dead trees” and their role in the ecosystem.

LOCATION

On north side of Curtisville Road (604), one mile east of eastern edge of Mack Lake burn. Turn-off is on east side of clearing and adjacent to a red pine plantation. Proposed site would be approximately 70 yards north of Curtisville Road at the head of a small valley.

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Know

- The dead standing trees were purposefully left here when the timber was harvested to provide habitat for wildlife.
- Many kinds of wildlife depend on dead and fallen trees.
- Bird boxes are erected to imitate natural cavities.

Feel

- They can conserve wildlife through their actions when managing a forest on their land or cutting firewood.

Do

- Leave dead, hollow and fallen trees when cutting firewood.
- Erect nest boxes where appropriate.

EXISTING SITE

- Dirt two-track leading to former “log landing”.

SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Facilities

- Improve access trail.
- Provide parking spaces and turnaround to accommodate 6 vehicles and one motorhome/camper trailer.
- Viewing platform with benches.
- Trash cans.

Interpretative

- Three interpretative panels.
- Two real or “synthetic” tree sections demonstrating what nesting cavities look like.
- Nest boxes erected in front of viewing platform.

COMPLETION DATE

Facilities and interpretive – September 1994.

Looking west, viewing platform would be on other side of van.



SITE 3 – RUFFED GROUSE WALK

MANAGING THE LAND FOR WILDLIFE AND FOREST PRODUCTS

PURPOSE

Provide visitors an opportunity to walk through aspen forests in different stages of maturity.

LOCATION

On northwest side of 604, just north of Curtisville Road and 604 junction.

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Know

- The forest changes over time (succession).
- Different types of wildlife inhabit the forest as it changes.
- Different types of forests have different wildlife (contrast with jack pine ecosystem).
- Forest management/timber harvesting imitates natural processes.

Feel

- Timber harvesting can be compatible with wildlife conservation.

Do

- Walk the trail.
- Support responsible forest management programs.

EXISTING SITE

- Grassy area for development as parking.
- Logging trails for conversion to hiking trail.

SITE ENHANCEMENT

NEEDS

Facilities

- Pull-off and parking spaces to accommodate 8 vehicles and two motorhomes/camper trailers.
- .25 to .5 mile hard surface, accessible hiking trail with benches.
- Restrooms.
- Trash cans.

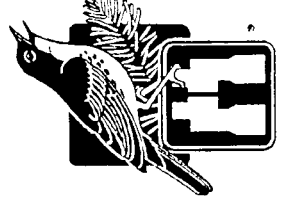
Interpretive

- One interpretive sign for orientation.
- 12 numbered interpretive “stations” along trail.
- 4-panel interpretive brochure.

COMPLETION DATE

Facilities and interpretive – September 1995.

Proposed entrance and parking area.



SIDE TRIP – AU SABLE SCENIC VISTA

AN EAGLE'S-EYE VIEW OF ALCONA DAM POND

PURPOSE

Provide visitors a scenic vista of Alcona Dam Pond and surrounding area. This site is currently being developed by the U.S. Forest Service in partnership with Alcona County unrelated to the Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour.

LOCATION

Four miles east of Curtisville and immediately south of the intersection of Au Sable Road and Bamfield Road (F30).

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Interpretive objectives and messages are being developed by the U.S. Forest Service to address a number of issues. The objectives listed below are considerations pertaining to the wildlife viewing tour.

Know

- Bald eagles nest on Alcona Dam Pond.
- Habitat requirements for bald eagles.
- Bald eagles share the fishery resource with humans.

Feel

- Fortunate the bald eagle has made a comeback.
- The health of bald eagles and humans are intertwined.

Do

- Support efforts to protect bald eagles and their habitats and maintain water quality.

EXISTING SITE

- Gravel road leading to area cleared of trees for site development.
- Adjacent to private canoe livery with restrooms and a concession stand.

SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

- Facilities** – conceptual site plans have already been developed and funded and will include:
- Parking area.
 - Short trail.
 - Restrooms.
 - Trash cans.
 - Entrance sign.

Interpretive

– in conjunction with signing being developed to interpret historic logging, Alcona Dam Pond, and the geology of the area.

- 2 interpretive panels relating to the bald eagle/fisheries resource.

COMPLETION DATE

Facilities and interpretive – September 1994.

SITE 4 – AU SABLE HIGH BANKS OVERLOOK

A RIBBON OF LIFE FOR WILDLIFE

PURPOSE

Give visitors a breathtaking view of the Au Sable River.

LOCATION

Entrance to overlook is off Au Sable Road, just north of the intersection of Au Sable Road and 604, and south of the intersection of Au Sable Road and Sunny Lake Road (FS 4119).

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Know

- A diversity of wildlife inhabit the river corridor—use examples such as the black bear, bank swallows (which nest here), and kingfisher.
- This was a former “lumber rolling” site.

Feel

- River/riparian areas are important and need to be protected.
- The Au Sable is a special river.

Do

- Support efforts to protect and manage watersheds, streams, rivers and other riparian areas.

EXISTING SITE

- Parking area for four to six cars located 500 feet off the road. Will not accommodate a motorhome or trailer/camper.
- Trash cans.
- Bulletin board.
- Physically-challenged accessible trail leading to overlook from parking lot. Gravel-type surface.
- Benches at overlook.

SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

- Facilities* – conceptual site plans are currently being developed and the following enhancements are being considered:
- Cable stairway down to the water’s edge.
 - Bank stabilization at overlook point.

- Improvement of trail.

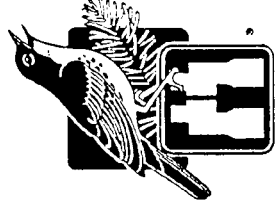
Interpretive – recommended as part of wildlife viewing tour. Should be as unobtrusive as possible to maximize enjoyment of the view:

- 5 interpretive panels off to the side of benches at overlook.
- 2 interpretive panels on landing at bottom of cable stairway, if it is constructed.

Completion Date

Interpretive – June 1994.

Facilities – September 1995.



SITE 5 – KIRTLAND'S WARBLER MANAGEMENT AREA

CREATING HABITAT FOR THE ENDANGERED KIRTLAND'S WARBLER

PURPOSE

Let visitors see managed Kirtland's warbler habitat.

LOCATION

Proposed site would be a former log landing on the east side of Au Sable Road about .25 miles south of the intersection of Au Sable Road and Aspen Valley Road (F32).

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Know

- Role of fire in the jack pine ecosystem (area across road has been recently burned and planted).
- How jack pine is harvested and planted to create Kirtland's warbler habitat and imitate natural processes.

Feel

- Forest fires under the right conditions are beneficial.
- It's important for conservation agencies and organizations to continue habitat management program.

Do

- Support efforts to manage Kirtland's warbler habitat.
- Stay out of protected Kirtland's warbler habitat.

EXISTING SITE

- Former log landing with separate "entrance and exit."
- Sand/grass parking area for eight to ten cars. Has space for motorhome or trailer camper.
- Across the road there is one of the new Kirtland's warbler interpretive signs.

SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Facilities

- Develop an aesthetically pleasing railing/fence to restrict use of area.
- Stabilize parking area if needed.
- Benches.
- Trash cans.

Interpretive

- Series of five interpretive panels situated so that areas on both sides of the road can be interpreted.

COMPLETION DATE

Facilities and interpretive – June 1994.

- Move existing sign across road to another site not on tour route.

Looking north toward "exit" portion of pull-off.



SITE 6 – HOIST LAKES HIKING TRAILS

20 MILES OF GROOMED HIKING TRAILS

PURPOSE

Provide visitors an opportunity to hike and view wildlife in a diverse mix of habitats.

LOCATION

Parking area and restrooms are located on east side of Aspen Valley Road (FS2) .25 miles north of the intersection of Aspen Valley Road and Au Sable Road.

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Know

- There are many opportunities for viewing and learning about wildlife if you get out, walk, listen, and watch.

Feel

- Hiking in a semi-remote area like this is an enjoyable, rewarding experience.

Do

- Support efforts to protect and manage natural areas.
- Walk in the woods whenever they can.

EXISTING SITE

- 20 plus miles of hiking trails in a variety of habitats including wetlands and aspen/moose forest. Designated quiet area.
- Restrooms at trail head. Not physically challenged accessible.
- Parking area for eight to ten cars and two motorhomes or camper trailers.
- Trail brochure is available at trailhead.



SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Facilities

- Upgrade restrooms to physically-challenged accessible.

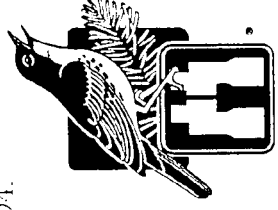
Interpretive

- Provide interpretive information in the tour booklet to encourage people to hike the trails and preview what they are likely to see.

- Consider upgrading the wildlife viewing information in the trail brochure when it is reprinted.

COMPLETION DATE

Facilities – September 1995.
Interpretive – June 1994.



SITE 7 – KIRTLAND'S WARBLER CLEARCUT

NEARLY READY FOR WARBLERS

Facing north with F32 in foreground.

PURPOSE

Provide visitors an opportunity to see Kirtland's warbler habitat up close.

- The large, temporarily bare clearcuts are worth the long-term results.

LOCATION

Pulloff located adjacent to and on north side of Russell Road (F32/600), 200 feet west of intersection between Russell Road and Au Sable Road.

Do

- Support efforts to manage Kirtland's warbler habitat.
- Stay out of protected Kirtland's warbler habitat.

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Know

- Kirtland's warbler nesting requirements – very picky.
- Why large clearcuts are necessary.
- Where Kirtland's warblers spend the winter.

Feel

- The Kirtland's warbler and jack pine ecosystem are worth all of this effort to maintain.

EXISTING SITE

- Gravel pulloff and parking area for three to five cars or one motorhome or camper trailer
- Large wood-routed interpretive sign.
- Site may need to be moved in two to three years as it becomes prime warbler habitat.



SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Facilities

- Railing to discourage use of planted area.

Interpretive

- Three interpretive panels.
- Move existing sign to recently cut area not located on tour route.

COMPLETION DATE

Facilities and interpretive – June 1994.

SITE 8 – O'BRIEN LAKE

POSTCARD PICTURE LAKE AND BALD EAGLE STOP

Accessible boardwalk to O'Brien Lake.

PURPOSE

Give visitors the opportunity to view wildlife along the shore of a scenic North Country lake.

LOCATION

2.9 miles east of town of McKinley on sand trail.

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Know

- The value of wetlands.
- How these habitats are different from Kirtland's warbler/jack pine habitats.
- How the wildlife here are different from in the Kirtland's warbler/jack pine habitats.

Feel

- Protecting and managing all types of ecosystems is important and worth our time and money.

Do

- Support efforts to protect wildlife habitat.

EXISTING SITE

- Physically-challenged accessible boardwalk down to fishing/wildlife viewing dock.
- Physically-challenged accessible restrooms.
- Parking for ten to twelve cars and two motorhomes or camper/trailers.

SITE ENHANCEMENT

NEEDS

Facilities

- None

Interpretative

- Six small interpretive panels – four along the boardwalk and two on the dock.

COMPLETION DATE

Interpretive – June 1994.



SIDE TRIP – WILD TURKEY VIEWING AREA

TO THE WILD TURKEY CAPITAL OF MICHIGAN

PURPOSE

Give visitors a chance to see an agricultural area in contrast to the other areas they have just visited.

LOCATION

This side trip would not be a "site." It would consist of a 9.5 mile loop north of the main tour route. From McKinley Road turn north on Weaver Road. Go four miles to Highway 72, then go west one mile to Fairview. In Fairview, turn south on Abbe Road (601) and go 4.5 miles back to McKinley Road, then continue west.

Feel

- Surprised at how some animals (wild turkey) can adapt to different environments/habitats while others (Kirtland's warbler) cannot.

Do

- Support wildlife conservation, especially efforts to protect and manage rare ecosystems.

EXISTING SITE

- None.

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Know

- Different habitats produce different types of wildlife—contrast with species in jack pine and wetlands.
- The wild turkey has adapted to agricultural areas of northern Michigan.



COMPLETION DATE

Facility and interpretive – June 1994.

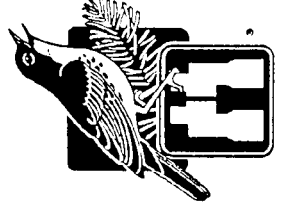
SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Facilities

- None.

Interpretive

- All information will be included in the tour booklet.



SITE 10 – PERRY CREEK

LOOKING OVER A TROUT STREAM

PURPOSE

Provide visitors an opportunity to take a close-up look at a trout stream.

LOCATION

Parking area is on the south side of McKinley Road (FS2,600), two miles west of the intersection of McKinley Road and Abbe Road (601), 100 feet after you pass over Perry Creek.

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

Know

- What some of the interesting wildlife that live in and along the stream are—brook trout, brown trout, mink, and insects.
- How these critters are intertwined (food chain and food web) with each other and the other animals, plants, soil and air along the stream.
- What happens upstream affects life at this spot.

Feel

- Streams are delicate “organisms” that are important to protect and manage.

Do

- Make safe activities on their land or even in their house or yard don’t damage our rivers and streams.

EXISTING SITE

- Site is at junction of Perry Creek and Au Sable River.
- Parking spaces for four cars. Not room to turnaround with motorhome or camper trailer. Wooden rail barriers around parking area.
- Bare dirt paths leading to Au Sable River and to Perry Creek.
- Bulletin board.

SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Facilities

- Wood chip or stone surface trails to both Perry Creek and the Au Sable River.
- Physically-challenged accessible viewing platform cantilevered over a portion of Perry Creek. As low to water as possible.
- Create a fish-viewing “hole” or other mechanism for viewing underwater life.

Interpretive

- Four small interpretive panels.

COMPLETION DATE

Facility and interpretive — May 1995.

SITE 11 – AU SABLE RIVER LOOP SCENIC OVERLOOK

OTTER, OSPREY AND OTHER WILDLIFE LIVING ON THE RIVER

PURPOSE

- Give visitors an opportunity to view wildlife from a scenic overlook

LOCATION

Entrance to overlook is on the south side of McKinley Road (FS 680), 100 feet west of the Perry Creek entrance of 2.4 miles east of the McKinley Road and Highway 72.35 intersection.

INTERPRETIVE OBJECTIVES

- *Know*
 - The Au Sable River is part of a “system” or watershed—relate back to other things visitors have seen along the tour route.
 - The Au Sable is important to wildlife—some wildlife visitors may see from here (ospreys, eagles, ducks, herons, loons), others that are there, but visitors are not likely to see from here (river otters, wood turtles, brook trout).



Feel

- A sense that the land, soil, water, and wildlife are connected ecosystems that humans have a profound responsibility to protect and manage.

Do

- Support efforts to protect ecosystems.
- Do what they can through various actions to protect ecosystems.

EXISTING SITE

- Separate entrance and exit.
- Parking area for eight to ten cars and two motorhomes or camper/trailers.
- Adjacent to a primitive camping area.
- Benches at overlook.

SITE ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

Facilities

- Another bench.

Interpretive

- Two interpretive panels each at both benches, constructed low to the ground so as not to obstruct the view.

COMPLETION DATE

Interpretive --
June 1994.



COST SUMMARY AND COMPLETION TIMETABLE

The costs and timetables summarized here are estimates only. They have been included here to assist in budgeting and planning. Also, no allowance has been made in these figures for in-kind contributions.

The estimated costs for interpretive panels are averages for high quality signs and include research and writing, design, fabrication, and sign frames and supports. Detailed cost estimates for the interpretive enhancements will be developed based on site plans and funding availability.

Costs for facility enhancements have not been included. These costs cannot be determined until more detailed site reviews have been conducted. For example, the cost of a parking area can vary greatly depending on the site, materials used, and federal construction standards. Until a detailed site assessment (soils, etc.) has been made, cost estimates may be too high or too low.

Interpretive Enhancements	Estimated Costs 1994	Estimated Costs 1995	Facility Enhancements	1994	1995
Tour Guide	\$ 5,000				
Slide Program	\$ 900				
Directional Signing	\$ 1,200				
1 Mack Lake Burn (temporary site)	\$ 8,000		pull-off/parking fence/railing benches	x	
1 Interpretive anchor site		\$12,000	pull-off/parking lot		x
2 Directional Signing		\$ 4,000	foot trails		x
3 Interpretive panels, Tree cavities, Nest boxes	\$ 6,000 \$ 500 \$ 150		fence/railing		x
4 Grizzly Walk		\$ 2,000	restrooms		x
5 High Banks		\$ 10,000	drinking fountain		x
6 Hoist Lakes			benches		x
7 KW Mgmt. Area	\$10,000		improve access, trail, parking/turnaround viewing platform	x	
8 Hoist Lakes			pull off/parking accessible hiking trail restrooms	x	
9 KW Clearcut	\$ 6,000		cable stairway bank stabilization improvement of trail		x
10 Beaver Pond	\$ 6,000		railing/fence stabilize parking area benches	x	
11 Loop Overlook	\$ 2,000		upgrade restrooms		x
TOTAL	\$63,750	\$24,800	railing/barrier	x	
			none		
			viewing platform		
			trails		x
			viewing platform		x
			benches		

APPENDIX A – INTERPRETIVE TEAM MEMBERS

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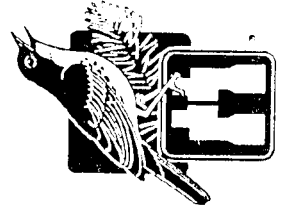
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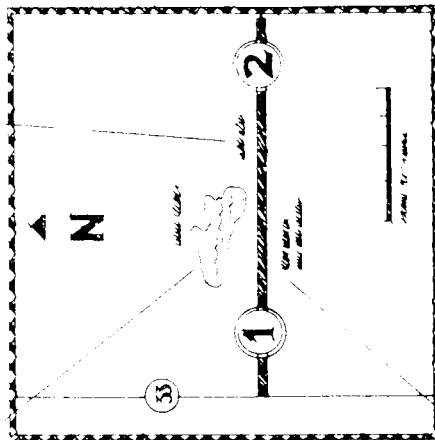
S I T E 2 T W O

SNAGS

THERE'S LIFE IN DEAD TREES

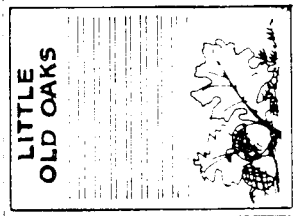
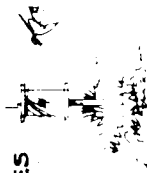
COWBIRDS

MACK LAKE



DO NOT DISTURB

BLUEBIRD BOXES



STATE OF MICHIGAN



JOHN ENGLER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ROLAND HARMES, Director

District 7 Headquarters
P.O. Box 939
Mio, Michigan 48647
December 13, 1993

NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION

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PAUL EISELE
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JORDAN B. TATTER

Mr. Peter Stangel
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Stangel,

I am writing in response to your request for more information on the "Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour" proposal submitted to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). It was encouraging to learn that the reviewers were highly supportive of the proposal. We believe the Auto Tour will improve public support and therefore, the success of the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery efforts.

An addendum to the original grant proposal is attached. This addendum is presented in response to the three issues raised by the Board of Directors as they appeared in your November 8, 1993 letter.

Thank you for suggesting that we contact Paul Kerlinger for assistance. His suggestions were very helpful and have been incorporated into the promotion and evaluation plan. We have also received assistance from Mark Duda of Responsive Management, Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Harrisburg, Virginia, and Dave Case of D. J. Case and Associates, Mishawaka, Indiana.

If you have any questions after reviewing the attached information, please contact me at 517-826-3211, or at the above address.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert E. Hess".

Robert E. Hess
District Wildlife Biologist

**ADDENDUM TO THE MICHIGAN "JACK PINE WILDLIFE VIEWING TOUR"
PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION**

This information is presented in response to the three issues raised by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Board of Directors upon review of the Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour proposal. The Board asked for clarification on how the wildlife viewing tour will be advertised and promoted, and how the use and effectiveness of the tour will be evaluated. The Board also advised that proposals are funded on a 2:1 ratio of private/NFWF funds, and asked for a revised budget.

An interpretive team made up of staff from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and corporate, business and civic representatives has been organized to plan, develop, maintain, promote and evaluate the Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour (Auto Tour).

Advertising and Promoting the Auto Tour

The interpretive team is in the process of developing a promotion plan. Key strategies include:

- 1. Utilizing a network of existing state and local business and tourist promotion organizations.**

A critical component of the success of the Auto Tour is getting local involvement and commitment, and providing economic benefits to local communities. Chambers of commerce, tourist councils, local motels, restaurants, retail outlets, and regional business organizations such as the M-72 Corridor Association and the Sunrise Side, Inc. (East Michigan Tourist Council), and the Michigan Department of Transportation Travel Information Centers, and the Michigan Department of Commerce, will be informed of the Auto Tour and recruited to help promote it. Many of these have already been contacted. Promotional materials, including a self-guiding brochure and a promotional video, are being developed for distribution by these and other cooperators.

The Holiday Inn in Grayling is an example of such a cooperator. With the assistance of the interpretive team, the Holiday Inn developed a Kirtland's warbler weekend package. Over 500 people stayed at the Holiday Inn in 1992 and participated in special Kirtland's warbler tours hosted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Similar opportunities exist in Mio, Roscommon, Fairview and other communities near the Auto Tour route. The route was laid out to pass by or through as many communities as possible to improve tourist traffic to local businesses.

2. The Michigan Watchable Wildlife Viewing Guide.

This statewide guide to wildlife viewing sites will be published in 1994 by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). The Auto Tour will be prominently featured in this guide.

3. Birdwatching Magazines.

The editors of the "Birdwatcher's Digest", Marietta, Ohio, and "Birder's World", Holland, Michigan, have been contacted and expressed interest in publishing articles in their magazine to describe and promote the Auto Tour. "Birdwatcher's Digest" has a circulation of 100,000, "Birder's World", 70,000.

4. Kirtland's Warbler Tours.

The U.S. Forest Service at Mio and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Grayling host special Kirtland's warbler tours, daily, each May, June and July. Some 1600 people participated in 1992. Both agencies will promote the Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour through these warbler tours.

5. Kirtland's Warbler Festival.

This annual festival is being created by the Chamber of Commerce of Oscoda County and will be held in Mio for the first time in June 1994. Its creation is the direct result of efforts, including the Auto Tour, by the interpretive team to promote the Kirtland's warbler and to improve public attitudes regarding warbler management. The Auto Tour will be highlighted at this festival with special guided bus tours of the Tour route conducted by DNR and USFS staff and also promoted at an inter-agency display booth at the nine day festival.

6. Media Relations Program.

a. Kick off event. When the tour is officially opened in 1994 (east loop), and 1996 (west loop), a media event will be held and special tours conducted for news media, governmental leaders/dignitaries, corporate sponsors, and the public.

b. Special articles, press kits, black/white photos, and/or video footage will be made available and targeted to local, county, regional and statewide newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations. A list of news reporters who have reported on the Kirtland's warbler recovery efforts is available and will be utilized.

c. An article on the Auto Tour will appear in the "Michigan Natural Resources" magazine. This MDNR bi-monthly publication has a circulation of 125,000. The magazine is received by most outdoor writers in Michigan.

7. Signage

The Auto Tour will have logo signs or trail markers placed along the route. These signs include the wildlife viewing site binoculars symbol and will call attention to the route. Interpretive signage and kiosks at the pulloff sites along the route will help advertise the tour and present key conservation messages, as well as interpreting the individual sites.

8. Additional Products

a. **The 1994 MDNR Natural Heritage poster will feature the Jack Pine ecosystem and the Kirtland's Warbler.** 250,000 copies of this large 22" x 32" full color poster will be distributed to schools and the public. (A sample of the 1993 Natural Heritage poster is enclosed.) The narrative on the back of the 1994 poster will present the natural history of the jack pine ecosystem, the Kirtland's warbler and also the Auto Tour. A teaching guide is written to accompany this annual poster and is popular among Michigan educators. It too will discuss the Auto Tour in 1994.

b. **Area maps.** The County Road Commissions in the four counties along the tour route print county maps of their public road systems. The Auto Tour will be identified on these maps along with similar recreational trails such as snowmobile and cross country ski trails. The Huron National Forest maps, when updated, will include the Auto Tour since it falls largely within the boundary of the National Forest.

c. **Corporate Newsletters.** Corporate sponsors such as public utility companies (Michigan Consolidated Gas, Consumers Power) will be asked to promote the tour in their customer newsletters sent out as inserts in monthly utility bills. Consumers Power, for example, has 2.2 million customers receiving these monthly newsletters. These newsletters have been previously used by the MDNR to promote the Michigan Nongame Wildlife Fund and state income tax checkoff.

d. **Special placemats for restaurants with information and a map of the Auto tour route.** This has been suggested by local restaurants and will be explored further.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Auto Tour

The Auto Tour was designed with three goals in mind:

1. To communicate important messages about Kirtland's warbler conservation to key groups of the public.
2. To create an additional economic asset dependent on Kirtland's warbler conservation.
3. To provide recreational opportunities for people who enjoy viewing wildlife.

It is critical to the success of the Jack Pine Wildlife Viewing Tour that an ongoing evaluation be carried out to monitor the achievement of these goals. Although a monitoring and evaluation program was a key element of the original proposal sent to NFWF, it was not identified in the proposal budget. Based on the issues raised by the review by the NFWF Board of Directors, we have revised the budget to begin an immediate evaluation of the Auto Tour.

Information will be gathered on the amount of use, what types of people are or are not using the tour, when they are using it, what visitors like and don't like about the tour, and what visitors are learning and how their attitudes are being affected. And also if the Auto Tour is becoming, or being viewed as, an economic asset for local communities.

The evaluation will be coordinated by agency staff beginning in 1994 or 1995, once the Auto Tour is operational. Both in-house experts and outside firms will be utilized in the monitoring program. This will involve MDNR biometrics staff in the Wildlife Division who have extensive experience in surveying user groups and attitudes. Outside assistance will be obtained from firms or organizations such as Responsive Management, or from University of Michigan or Michigan State University experts, to help organize the monitoring program and develop questions and data collection techniques.

The Auto Tour proposal originated from a Communication Plan for the Kirtland's warbler developed by the an Information and Education (I&E) Committee appointed by the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team. The Recovery Team requested that the inter-agency I & E Committee also monitor the use of the Tour from a biological standpoint to confirm that there is no impact to Kirtland's warbler populations. This will be done by agency field and research biologists using data from research studies on nesting success and density and the annual singing male survey of all occupied habitat. Field staff will also monitor and prevent trespass into closed warbler breeding habitat.

This evaluation is critical not only for measuring the use and effectiveness of the Auto Tour, but also to evaluate, and plan for future watchable wildlife efforts in Michigan and across the country. It will allow improvements to be made in the tour, and help develop the west loop scheduled for completion in 1996.

