



## Featured Species Habitat Management Guidance for Marten

**Latin Name:** *Martes americana*

**Scope:** Statewide

**Rationale** - *why we value the species and the problem for the species:*

The American marten is a valued furbearer in Michigan. In 2012, 2180 furtakers obtained harvest tags to trap marten (Frawley 2013). There is an open trapping season in the Upper Peninsula (UP) and furtakers look forward to a time when the season will be open in the northern Lower Peninsula (NLP). Low abundance of martens keeps trapping closed in the NLP and limits harvests in the UP.

**Habitat Need** - *the cause & effect relationship between habitat and species and its primary limiting habitat need:*

Although marten were generally considered to be reliant upon and most successful in continuous mature coniferous forests, vertical and horizontal structure are now thought to be more important components than age or species composition (Chapin et al. 1997; Poole et al. 2004; Hearn et al. 2010). Mature conifer tends to provide the structure sought by marten. Marten are rarely found outside the forest canopy and avoid stands with less than 30% canopy cover (Spencer et al. 1983; Allen 1982). Species depends upon live-tree dens, snags, and coarse woody debris (downed logs & logging slash) for resting and denning sites (Raphael and Jones 1997). Dead and declining trees play an important role in marten reproduction and in the habitat requirements of their prey. The role of coarse woody debris in almost all aspects of marten ecology warrants special consideration of this element in management practices (Watt et. al. 1996). Coarse woody debris serve as principle cover for denning, shelter and most importantly foraging. This vital forest component serves as habitat for about 400 known insects which are used as food sources by many of the vertebrate prey species marten rely on to survive (Bottorff 2009). Marten need corridors between populations in order to maintain population vigor (Thomasma 1995, Wisconsin DNR 2006; Bickers 2007).

**Habitat Objectives** - *the treatment or management to address the primary limiting habitat need:*

- 1) Large cull-tree retention.
- 2) Where coarse woody debris is lacking, increase both standing dead and down dead wood:
  - a. Leave 8 large diameter trees, snags, or logs per acre (Raphael and Jones, 1997);
  - b. Write harvest specifications to leave slash at the stump or to minimize the removal of slash;
  - c. Limit or prohibit firewood permits at priority sites.
- 3) Encourage the development and maintenance of corridors between large forested tracts.
- 4) Where possible, increase the within-stand component of mesic conifers in mixed stands and expand mesic conifer forest types.

**Priority Geographic Areas** – *the specific geographic areas where we should focus management for the species:*

The 22 Regional State Forest Management Plan Management Areas (8 WUP, 6 EUP, and 8 NLP) and 1 WLD Project Area (Lake LaVasseur Flooding SWMA) which identify marten as a featured species.

**Priority Landscapes** – *the landscape, setting, or cover-type where we should focus management within the areas above:*

Selective cuts of hardwood and conifer in un-even aged management

**Population Goal** - *the goal for the species, its habitat, or a stakeholder's actions:*

Increase the population of marten across the UP and NLP.

**Evaluation Method** - *the monitoring method to measure progress towards the goal above:*

Annual review of marten harvest data (registration data & trapper effort). This evaluation is only applicable to regions where there is an open marten trapping season, currently restricted to the UP.

**Incidental Species** – *other species which may benefit from management for this species:*

Blackburnian warbler; gray jay; and pileated woodpecker.

**References** - citation for documents referenced in this guidance:

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