

COMPARTMENT REVIEW RECORD OF CHANGES AND DECISIONS

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Gaylord Forest Management Unit

2018 Year-of-Entry (YOE)

Tuscarora Township Hall, Indian River

July 20, 2016



The following document details the changes and decisions made at the Compartment Review to the Inventory database, reports, and compartment maps presented at the Open House for the Gaylord Forest Management Unit. This document is the official record of changes and decisions. Proposals originally presented were approved unless noted below.

Attendees

Dan Heckman, FRD; Denise Kinsinger, FRD; Don Stacks, FRD; Shannon Harig, FRD; John Scheele, FRD; Kerry Fitzpatrick, WLD; Brian Mastenbrook, WLD; Jennifer Kleitch, WLD; Dana Pelton, FRD; Don Klingler, FRD; Mark Monroe, WLD; Joyce Angel, FRD; Tricia St. Pierre, FRD; Lucas Merrick, FRD; Zachary Crew, FRD; Tim Greco, FRD; Paige Perry, PRD; Steve Milford, FRD; Kerry Wieber, FRD; Hillary Wells, FRD; Luke Gilner, FRD; Jason Stephens, FRD; Brian Martell, FRD; Jake Figley, FRD.

Comments from Stakeholders

Theodore Nettis

Dear Ms. Angel,

While I am unable to attend the upcoming DNR Open House in Gaylord, as someone who spends almost every weekend in Gaylord from September 1st until Mid-March, I wanted to offer my opinion.

First, I continue to be a staunch supporter of the Michigan DNR's efforts in nearly every category, from licensure to wildlife management. Of particular interest to me is the management of habitat for grouse and woodcock. I strongly support any efforts on the part of the DNR to encourage young forest growth and assist Michigan's upland bird population (not to mention dozens of other non-game birds and animals).

I am also in support of any efforts to keep ORV's and snowmobiles on designated trails, keeping the off trail areas safe for me, my son, and my dog.

I would personally love to see more clear-cutting in the Gaylord area, and some of the existing Aspen stands are far too young and sparse to provide decent habitat for grouse and woodcock. From what I have seen, the few clearcuts in the area that are decent for grouse, are of insufficient acreage.

I realize how difficult it is to persuade people that cutting down mature trees can be a good thing, but please rest assured that those of us who spend a lot of time in the woods support these efforts and are in favor of even more activity.

I can be reached at the below numbers or this e-mail address for any further comments or questions. Thank you for your time.

Theo. Nittis

Theodore C. Nittis

Vice President & Risk Management Counsel

Oswald Companies

39572 Woodward Ave., Suite 201

Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304

Direct 248-433-7934

Office 248-433-1466

tnittis@oswaldcompanies.com

www.oswaldcompanies.com

Eric Ellis

July 20th, 2016

Joyce Angel, Unit Manager Gaylord Forest Management Unit
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Dear Ms. Angel:

I am writing to provide comments on the Gaylord FMU 2018 YOE compartment planning on behalf of the Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society (RGS and AWS) and our membership within Michigan and outside of the state who travel to this area to hunt.

Specific Compartment Comments

RGS and AWS strongly support the proposed activities that will maintain a diverse mix of forest age classes, forest types, and species through active forest management. We are particularly happy to see the following:

1. Management for oak regeneration including plantings and retention in aspen stands.
2. Monitoring for BBD resistant trees during harvests.
3. Specifically noting the retention and/or protection of soft mast species during harvests, e.g., Compartment 34, Stands 11, 31 and 57, and multiple stands in Compartment 145.
4. The removal of all Scotch pine regardless of size in Compartment 145, Stand 18 and Compartment 173, Stand 33.

5. Promoting pockets of aspen in larger northern hardwood stands such as Compartment 60, Stand 16.
6. Regeneration of an aging alder stand in Compartment 137, Stand 25.
7. Cutting the aging aspen in Compartment 114, Stands 31 and 32. While temporary visual impacts will be noticed this cutting is vital to the regeneration of aspen in the stands for the benefit of young forest wildlife. This is especially true of white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, migratory songbirds, and American woodcock who very likely use the adjacent golf course as a roosting field and spring display location. Female woodcock require suitable thick nesting cover very close to spring display sites and these cuttings next to the golf course will provide a perfect location. We offer to assist with providing information on young forest management to the adjacent landowners if needed.

Planting the edges of maintained or new wildlife openings, abandoned gas pads, or new cuttings with a mix of native mast species, especially in areas with a heavy aspen component adjacent or nearby. For example, Compartment 60 Stand 56, all proposed treatments in Compartment 121, Stand 24 in Compartment 124, and numerous stands in Compartment 18, 145, 155, 173, and 175. When areas like this are designated in the compartment review then our organization, or others, find it easier to identify them as potential work sites and can apply for grant funding to make these improvements in partnership with the local office (e.g. Wildlife Habitat Grant program).

8. Specifying the maintenance of course woody debris in harvests and following drumming log specs in many aspen harvests, (e.g., multiple stands in Compartment 155). Expanding these recommendations to all aspen harvests is strongly encouraged.
9. Retaining conifer and oak in aspen clearcuts to maintain structural diversity, species diversity, and cover for wildlife.
10. Protecting designated recreational trails from timber management practices and focusing retention trees in these areas while simultaneously blocking off illegal ORV trails causing damage (e.g., Compartment 145, Stand 54).
11. Prescribing large regeneration gaps in hardwood cuttings, e.g. Compartment 18, Stand 19 and Compartment 29, Stand 20.

We would also like to encourage the following management efforts in the area and where applicable during this management period:

1. The extension of aspen and hardwood cuts into wetter soils and cuttings in and near riparian areas. This management is very important for American woodcock, a popular game species that requires thick cover in areas with wet soils. Having cover across a gradient of soil types is vital to these birds, especially in years with excessive rain or drought conditions. In areas like Compartment 115, Stand 3, Compartment 6, Stand 11 and Compartment 175 Stand 20 would it be possible to take some of the cuttings closer to the wet soils where lowland shrubs or hardwoods can regenerate? Even small non-commercial cuttings where the trees are simply felled and left in place by loggers during adjacent commercial harvests would benefit woodcock while still maintaining the integrity of the water body nearby. Neither section of stream is indicated to be good trout habitat, perhaps they (and other areas) could be utilized to create exceptional woodcock habitat instead.

2. Where trees will be retained in aspen cuts, widely space individuals at a rate of 5- 15/acre to improve golden-winged warbler habitat. This songbird is a Candidate species for listing under the Endangered Species Act.
3. Adding additional aging alder sites for cutting in other compartments within 400m of suitable roosting fields for American woodcock would be very beneficial to upland hunters and bird watchers. We offer our habitat machine to carry out this work at a subsidized rate for the MDNR and would be very happy to work with the staff member in charge of this habitat project.
4. Identifying and noting non-commercial aspen stands of all sizes for future hand cutting to maintain this cover type and provide coarse woody debris and young forest habitat. This is especially important in still viable aspen stands reaching 70+ years in age. If mixed with hardwoods these areas could be designated for firewood collection after cutting. As noted above, if these sites are indicated in these plans then future fundraising or volunteer efforts can be planned to carry out the activities in coordination with the local office.
5. Consider adding specific notes for retention of soft mast producing shrubs and trees in all aspen harvests, as done in Compartment 29, Stands 31 + 36, especially if these trees are larger than the 2" cutting spec.
6. Contact private landowners adjacent to Stand 27 in Compartment 53 soon so access may be gained to have this stand as well as Stand 26 cut and the aging aspen component retained.
7. Delineate stands where invasive species control may be warranted, especially for pernicious species such as garlic mustard, Japanese knotweed, or glossy buckthorn.

RGS and AWS offer to support these management activities through volunteer efforts and, potentially, funding via our Drummer Fund or additional joint grant applications. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about applying to the Drummer Fund.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my comments.

Best Regards

Eric Ellis

Eastern Great Lakes Regional Wildlife Biologist and Grant Writer

Compartment specific changes made during the Compartment Review:

Compartment 6 (Stand Examiner – Hillary Wells)

- Stand 9 – Change MCCCT to Shore to Shore.

Compartment 8 (Stand Examiner – Luke Gilner)

- Stands 20 & 22 – Change proposed start date to 10/01/2016.

Compartment 29 (Stand Examiner – Zachary Crew)

- Add oak planting to all red pine replants.

Compartment 34 (Stand Examiner – Zachary Crew)

- Ensure all treatments that will have an impact on any recreation trails have protection specs.

Compartment 53 (Stand Examiner – Zachary Crew)

- Stands 13 & 44 – Drop site conditions.

Compartment 60 (Stand Examiner – Lucas Merrick)

- Stands 51 & 85 – Change proposed state date to 10/01/2016.

Compartment 114 (Stand Examiner – Don Stacks)

- Verify that recreation trail specs are in on-going salvage sales.
- Add stump spec for snowmobile trail.

Compartment 115 (Stand Examiner – Tricia St. Pierre)

- Stand 4 – Add final harvest aspen Management Objective.
- Stand 58 – Add a final harvest replant to red pine with oak. Add recreation trail spec.
- Stand 61 – Change proposed start date to 10/01/2016. Add oak planting. Change Management Objective from red pine to mixed conifer.
- Stand 63 – Reshape prep treatment to cover the small portion of Stand 64 along the Compartment boundary.
- Verify that trail protection specs are in the salvage sales.

Compartment 145 (Stand Examiner – Tricia St. Pierre)

- Stands 1 & 3 – Add recreation trail protection spec to the treatments.

Compartment 152 (Stand Examiner – Shannon Harig)

- Republish maps.
- Add snowmobile trail stump specs on treatments where snowmobile trail will be impacted.
- Stands 36, 44, 59, 73, 76, 78, 86 & 89 – Add opening maintenance treatments.
- Stand 58 – Drop the SCA recommendation.

Compartment 155 (Stand Examiner – Don Stacks)

- Stands 8 & 14 – Add final harvest treatment, with a hardwood Management Objective. Area to be treated will be approximately 60 acres in Stand 8 and 40 acres in Stand 14.
- Add recreational trail specs.
- Republish the map.

Compartment 173 (Stand Examiner – John Scheele)

- Stand 17 – Add oak planting as a next step.
- Stands 35 & 67 – Reduce to treated area to less than 20 acres by including long term retention in the site condition layer. This will be done to comply with the Conservation Easement on this parcel.

SCA Recommendations for All YOEs

All recommendations made by the Gaylord Forest Management Unit staff regarding the reclassification and removal of stands previously coded as “Potential Old Growth” (POG) under the Operations Inventory Protocol have been reviewed and approved as part of this compartment review. All of the stands previously coded as POG have either been recognized as already being classified as an SCA, ERA, or HCVA, or they were nominated to become an SCA, or the designation was removed because they do not fit any of the current criteria for being part of an SCA.