



Featured Species Habitat Management Guidance for Wood Duck

Latin Name: *Aix sponsa*

Scope: Statewide

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

The wood duck (WD) is a valued game species. It is the second-most harvested duck in Michigan, representing 14-18% of those harvested each year. The WD is listed as a focal species in the Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Joint Venture (UMRGLJV, 2007b). Michigan is an important breeding area for WD within the JV region. Recent regional population estimates were 17% below goal (UMRGLJV, 2007b). It is thought that the amount of brood rearing wetlands limits WD numbers.

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

Wood ducks nest in tree cavities near rivers, streams, swamps, beaver ponds, and marshes. Wetlands used for brood rearing are variable, but typically have some overhead cover. It is assumed that the hardwood nest-cover component is adequate and the habitat deficit is wetland areas such as forested wetlands, shrub-scrub wetlands, and emergent marshes that maintain adequate water through the brood rearing period (UMRGLJV 2007). Hemi-marshes with nearby shrub-scrub or forest are important, where marshes are typically within 100 yards of woody cover. Nests require mature hardwood trees with 10 inch or larger diameter-at-breast-height. Optimal breeding habitat includes 1.25 acres or larger hemi-marsh and/or swamp (forested and shrub-scrub wetlands) located within 1100 yards of mature hardwood forest (UMRGLJV 2007b).

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

The UMRGLJV (2007b) habitat objectives for Michigan include: 1) maintain and protect 12,000 acres "forested wetlands"; 2) restore and enhance 6,000 acres of "forested wetlands"; 3) maintain and protect 72,000 acres of "marsh with associated shrub/forest"; 4) restore and enhance 14,000 acres of "marsh with associated shrub/forest"; 5) maintain and protect 288,000 acres of "shallow semi-permanent marsh/hemi-marsh"; and 6) restore and enhance 69,000 acres "shallow semi-permanent marsh/hemi-marsh".

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

The UMRGLJV (2007b) priority areas for maintenance/protection and restoration/enhancement; and the 16 Regional State Forest Management Plan Management Areas (5 WUP and 11 NLP); and 82 WLD Project Areas (7 UP, 39 NLP, 23 SELP, and 13 SWLP), which identify the wood duck as a featured species.

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

Forested, shrub-scrub, and emergent wetlands with hemi-marsh conditions and rivers associated with mature hardwood forest.

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

Increase WD populations in Michigan. The UMRGLJV regional breeding population goal is 734,760, of which Michigan has a portion.

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

1) Conduct aerial spring breeding surveys annually. 2) Utilize information from annual harvest surveys and leg-band recovery analysis. 3) Document habitat management accomplishments and report to UMRGLJV within 1-year of completion.

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

American marten; mallard; pileated wood pecker; and red-headed woodpecker.

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

- Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Joint Venture (UMRGLJV). 2007a. Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Joint Venture, 2007 Implementation Plan. U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA.
- Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Joint Venture (UMRGLJV). 2007b. Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Joint Venture, Waterfowl Habitat Conservation Strategy. U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA.