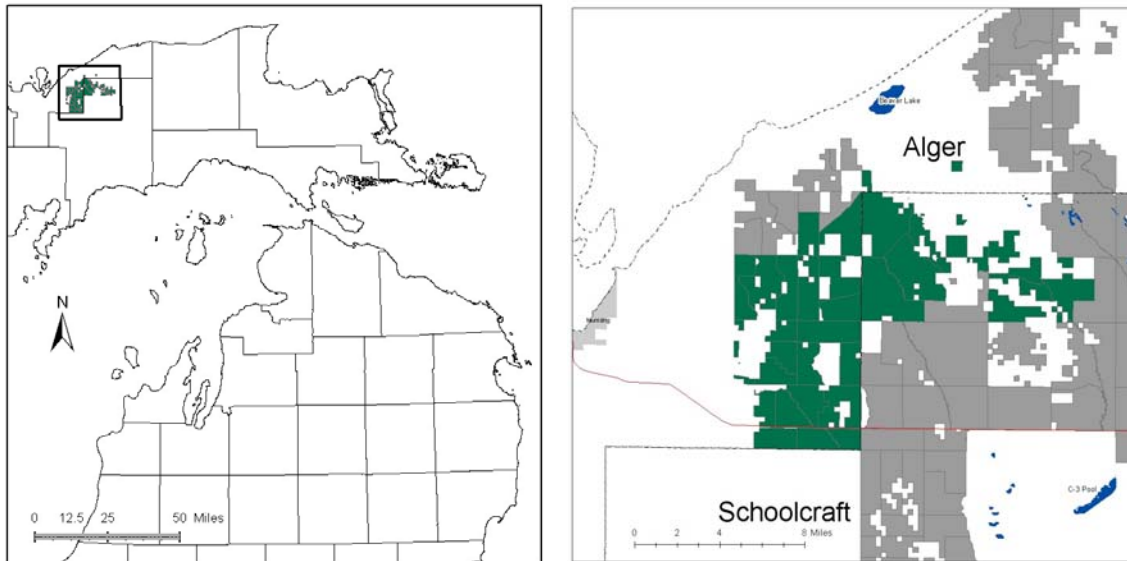


## Cusino Complex Management Area Summary



### Attributes

The Cusino Complex Management Area (MA) is located in the western part of the Eastern Upper Peninsula (EUP) in Alger and Schoolcraft counties. It includes approximately 50,534 acres of state-owned land. The attributes which were important in identifying this MA include:

- **Ecological Classification** - The majority of the MA falls within the Grand Marais Glaciofluvial – Moraine Complex sub-section of the EUP Ecoregion as classified by Cleland (2006). A portion of the MA is in the Seney Lake Plain sub-section.
- **Landforms** - The dominant landform consists of end moraines of medium textured till, glacial outwash sand, and peat and muck.
- **Cover Types** - This MA is intensively managed for upland hardwoods; which is one of the primary attributes. There are also large blocks of cedar and other lowland conifers.
- **Cultural** - The MA includes the former site of Cusino CCC camp. The Cusino Wildlife Research Station and Cusino Correctional Facility sit adjacent to the MA. The pens used during the moose translocation from Isle Royal are also in this MA. This MA has a long history of management for research in the Petrel and the Old Cusino deer yards. The former Old Cusino deer yard was at one time very large. The Petrel deer yard still holds significant numbers of deer in this deep snow area, and management to sustain wintering habitat within this yard continues. The foundation of a former one room schoolhouse is located on land owned and managed by Munising Public Schools near Melstrand. Remains of several old logging camps are also found in this MA.
- **Social / Economic** - The communities of Shingleton, Van Meer and Melstrand are within the MA. Recreation is a focus in this MA. The MA includes the following recreation facilities: snowmobile trails, Gemini Lake Pathway, and 5 State Forest Campgrounds (Cusino Lake, Canoe Lake, Ross Lake, North Gemini Lake, and South Gemini Lake). Deer and bear hunting, and fishing are popular here.

- Special Features - Trout streams that occur in this MA are: Prairie Creek, Stoney Creek, Metser Creek, Star Creek, Hickey Creek, Creighton Creek (headwaters), Stoner Creek (headwaters), and Shotgun Creek (headwaters). There is a patterned fen Ecological Reference Area (ERA) within this MA, and a Special Conservation Area (SCA) deer wintering area. Management for wintering deer is another primary attribute in this MA. In addition, MNFI has identified a rich conifer swamp and a dry mesic forest. There are also potential Biodiversity Stewardship Areas (BSA) in this MA.
- Ownership size and connectivity - While fairly concentrated, the state land in this management area is interspersed with private parcels and commercial forest act land. The Shingleton Unit is responsible for management of state-owned lands.

### Major Cover Types

- Upland Hardwoods - Covers about 18,406 acres of the MA, most of which are managed in uneven aged stands. Many of the stands are composed of good quality sugar maple, with lesser amounts of other species, and have had harvests within the last decade.
- Northern White Cedar - Occurs on 11,909 acres in this MA. Harvesting is currently done with prison labor crews that cut 10 to 15 acre per year within the active deer yard. This cutting regime and management strategy encourages deer to browse on cedar tops within the active harvest area and, due to deep snows that occur at this location, discourages browsing on nearby cedar seedlings and saplings, allowing regeneration to be successful. This strategy has been successful here, allowing the deer yarding habitat to be sustained. Prescribed burning and seeding have been used here to regenerate cedar.
- Mixed Swamp Conifer - Occurs on 5,346 acres of this MA. These tend to be wetter than the northern cedar stands, with a more open canopy.
- Lowland Brush - Is found on 3,411 acres in this MA. Many wildlife species use these low wet shrub swamps.
- Aspen - Found on 2,101 acres in this MA, 85% of which are in the 10-39 year age classes. Most of the stands in the older age classes are not accessible.

Cover Type	Cusino Complex		Age Class (Years)											Uneven Aged
	Total Acres	%	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90-99	100+	
Upland Hdwds	18406	36%	35	84	90	137	117	16	40	62	0	0	0	17825
Cedar	11909	24%	67	165	61	60	326	598	1112	749	1989	1174	4971	637
Mx Swmp Cnfr	5346	11%	211	30	390	107	340	230	1335	794	602	433	511	363
Lowlnd Brush	3411	7%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aspen	2101	4%	69	549	821	408	49	107	57	34	7	0	0	0
Black Spruce	1753	3%	48	13	0	20	20	102	565	532	403	50	0	0
Marsh	1358	3%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swamp Hrdwds	1134	2%	9	21	57	32	11	9	78	79	0	0	186	652
Grass	967	2%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jack Pine	619	1%	24	88	91	247	24	121	10	0	14	0	0	0
White Pine	545	1%	0	31	25	78	0	0	0	0	97	23	33	258
Hemlock	525	1%	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	12	59	57	91	304
Spruce Fir	498	1%	20	0	28	23	42	45	133	65	10	0	0	132
Non Stocked	496	1%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Treed Bog	469	1%	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	457
Water	320	1%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Types	677													
Total	50,534													

Other Types include: Bog or Marsh, Paper Birch, Lowland Poplar, Red Pine, Tamarack, Upland Brush and Rock

## Concepts of Management

- Upland Hardwoods (36% of the MA) - Manage uneven age stands using single tree selective harvesting, focusing on both species and size class diversity. Consider shelterwood and other harvesting systems where quality is poor. Where stand objectives allow, underplant oak and disease resistant beech in suitable areas to increase the availability of hard mast; also consider underplanting mesic conifers within the MA. Where present, retain some large diameter aspen within upland hardwood stands to increase habitat for primary cavity nesting species.
- Northern White Cedar (24% of the MA) - A major focus of this management area will continue to be deer management, with emphasis on deer wintering yards. Manage for closed canopy within the core of the Petrel deer yard. The strategy of cutting small blocks of cedar annually will continue for several decades.
- Mixed Swamp Conifer (11% of the MA) - Manage primarily for deer yards where opportunities allow. Consider regeneration harvests if they can be accomplished while avoiding adverse impacts to wetland soils.
- Lowland Brush (7% of the MA) - Continue to manage for wildlife species that use this cover type by maintaining this habitat type where appropriate. Passive management will allow many of these areas to be maintained.
- Aspen (4% of the MA) - Continue to work on balancing the age class distribution of aspen and lowland poplar where opportunities exist. In inaccessible areas, aspen will succeed to more shade tolerant species.
- Other –
  - ERA's will be managed in a way to enhance or protect their vegetative and associated wildlife communities, as directed by site-specific management plans for each ERA.