

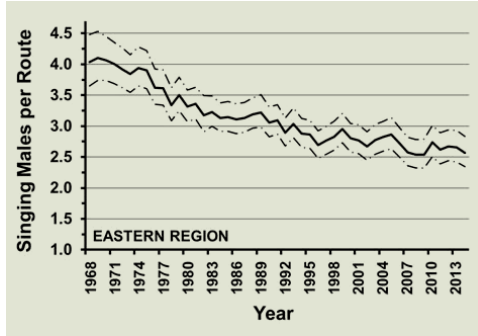
# Managing Habitat for an Iconic Young Forest Species



## *Land Management Research and Demonstration for the American Woodcock*

### The Challenge: A Disappearing Habitat

American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) are an easily overlooked part of our northern forest ecosystem that have been suffering a steady population decline due to the loss of suitable habitat.



Gerrit Vyn: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology

### The Research: Moosehorn NWR

Since 1937, Moosehorn NWR has been a pioneer in woodcock research. By studying this species we understand the specific habitat conditions they require to breed successfully, and how to manage for those conditions.



Tom LaPointe: USFWS



Tom LaPointe: USFWS

*The results of these investigations are invaluable as they provide private landowners, resource managers, and practitioners with information that can be used to guide management elsewhere.*



Tom LaPointe: USFWS



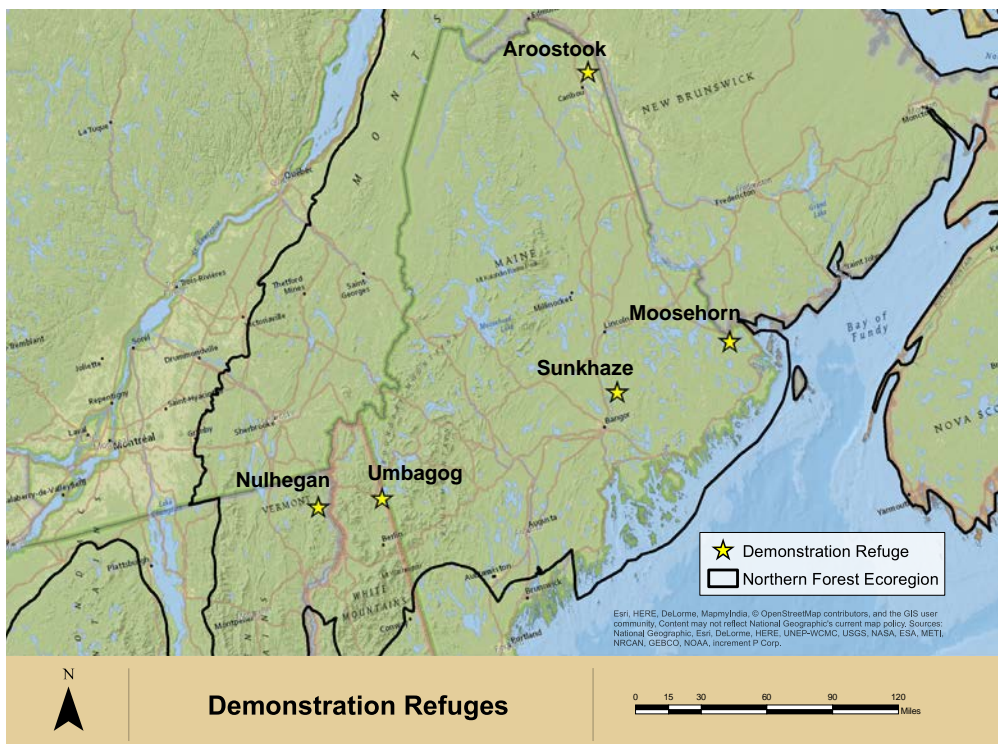
Tom LaPointe: USFWS

### The Mission: Join Forces

National Wildlife Refuges in the Northern Forest ecoregion are working together to manage habitat for woodcock and other young forest species that are of conservation concern.

Well planned forest management is used to provide high-quality habitat for woodcock and serve as demonstration areas that are accessible to the public.

*Providing suitable woodcock breeding habitat is an important part of the conservation design of National Wildlife Refuges in the Northern Forest ecoregion.*



## Not All Woodcock Habitat Is Created Equally...

*Woodcock have some of the most specific habitat requirements of any early successional wildlife species.*

Upon arrival to their breeding range in early spring, American woodcock require an important combination of habitat conditions. Properly distributed habitats are strategically managed for breeding requirements on northern forest refuges.

- Woodcock *nest and raise their young* in young hardwood forests.
- They require forest openings where they conduct their evening *courtship displays*.
- They need thickets with rich moist soils that are abundant with earthworms and other invertebrates for feeding.
- At night woodcock need large open areas with sparse vegetation for *roosting*.

### The Management:

#### Strategic Habitat Management

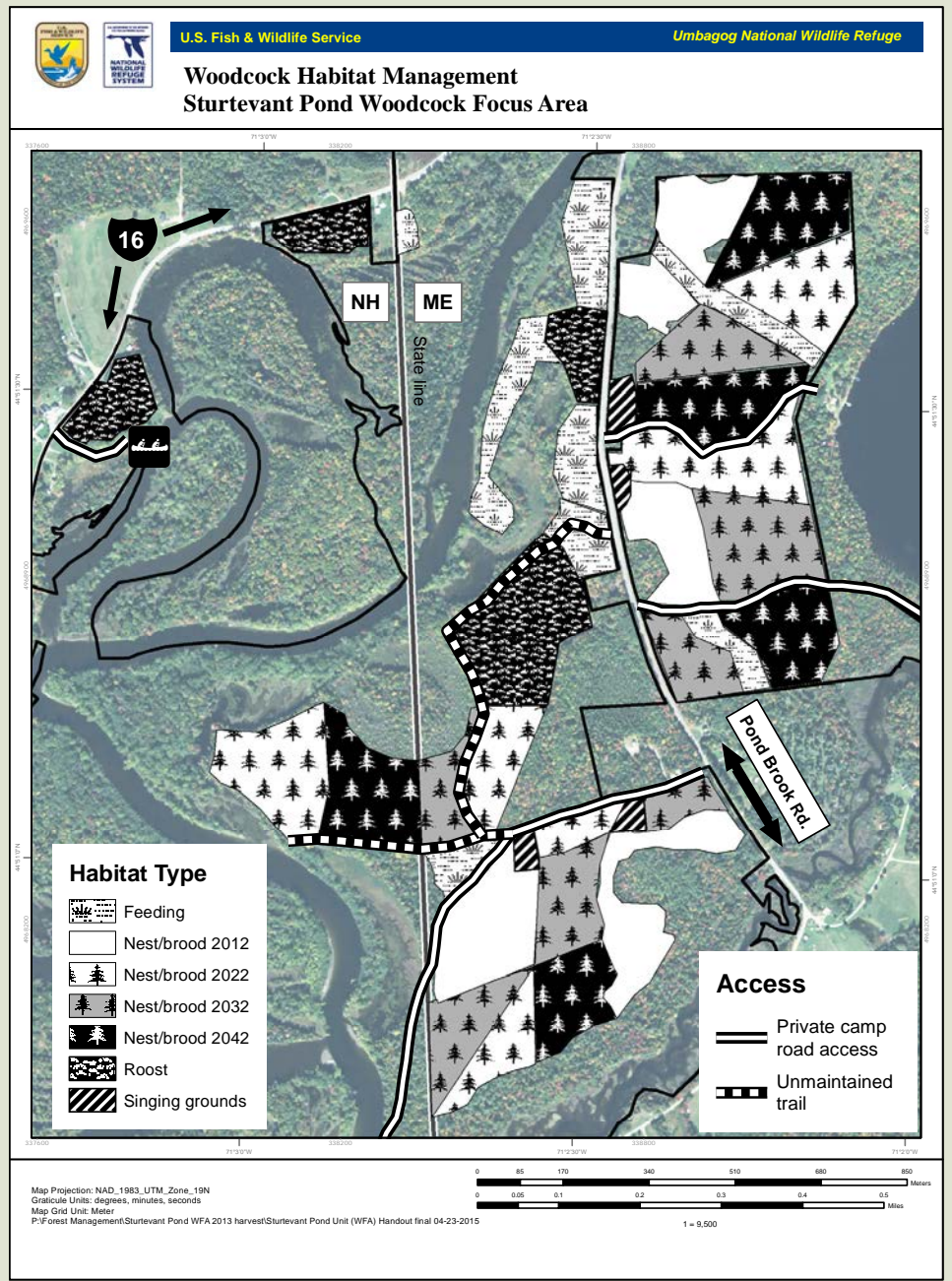
Refuges balance conservation priorities and strategically manage their lands to achieve a variety of conservation goals. This is often done using techniques that range from *no management* to *intensive management*.

#### Forest Management

Intensive management is used in locations that have the greatest potential to provide all of the conditions woodcock require to successfully breed and raise their young. Percent of each refuge designated for early successional forest management.

- Moosehorn NWR: 18%
- Umbagog NWR: 13%
- Nulhegan: 1%

### Example Forest Management Design at Umbagog NWR



For more information on Land Management Research and Demonstration of the American Woodcock, visit:

- <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/lakeumbagog/>
- <http://www.fws.gov/refuge/moosehorn/>
- [http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Silvio\\_O\\_Conte/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Silvio_O_Conte/)



William H. Majoros



Kenneth Dweith Harrison



Jon Sullivan



Seabamirum: Flickr

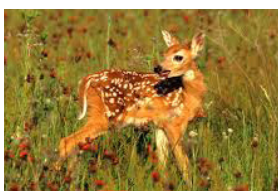


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Dave Govatski: USFWS

*By providing young forest habitat for woodcock we are providing habitat for a host of species, many of which are also of conservation concern.*



Herbert Lange: Wisconsin DNR



William H. Majoros



Piero Lyptic



Ryan Hageny: USFWS