Management Area 4.3 - Roaded Natural Wetlands

Maps:

Shaded area depicts Management Area 4.3.

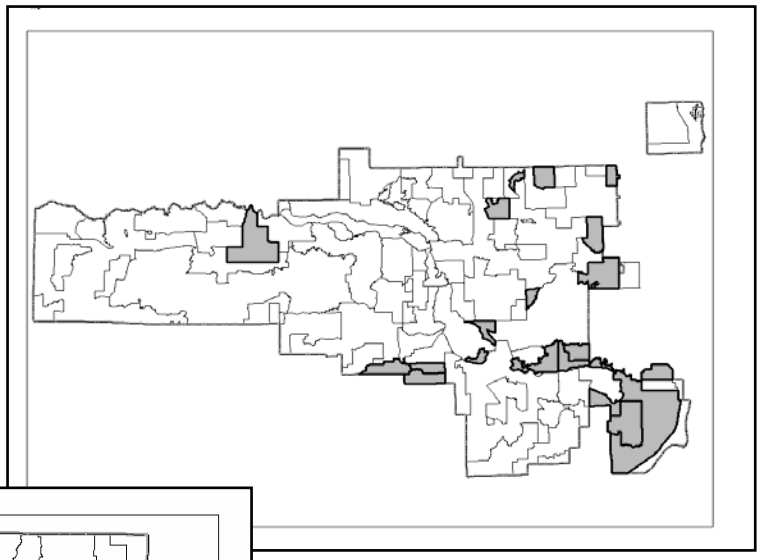

Figure III-5. Management Area 4.3 on the Huron National Forest.

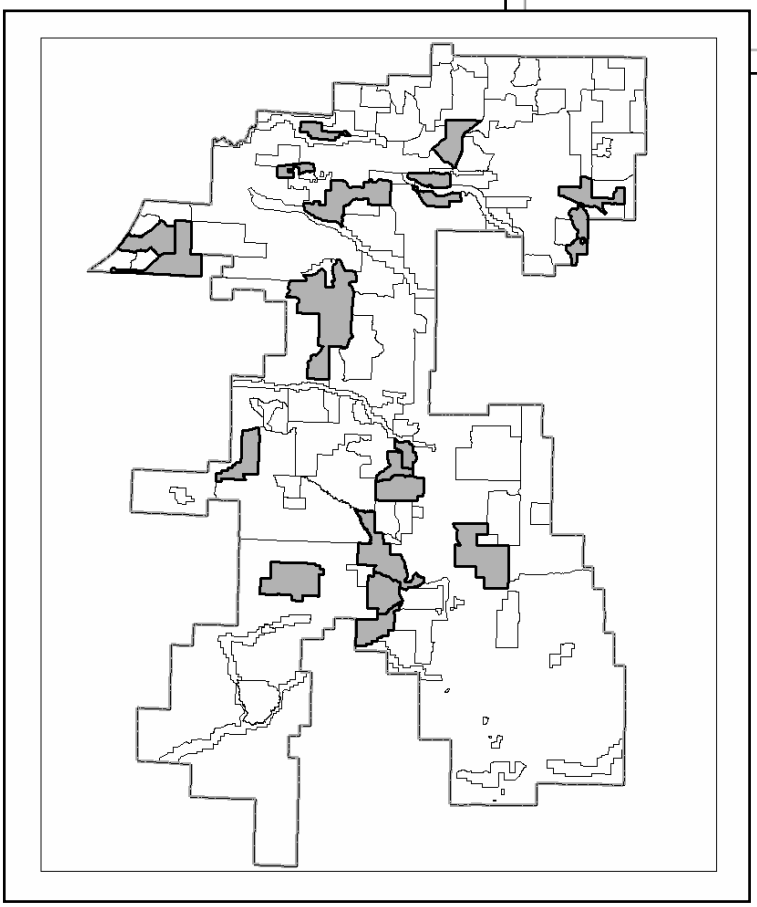

Figure III-6. Management Area 4.3 on the Manistee National Forest.

Purpose:

Management activities in these areas provide a variety of forest views and scenes and recreational experiences in a primarily motorized recreational environment. Fish and wildlife are abundant, and efforts are made to increase and enhance various habitats. Emphasis is given to managing deer, grouse and wildlife emphasis areas.

Landscape Description:

These areas are predominately maturing lowland hardwoods and conifer types, aspen, and wetlands. Rivers, lakes and associated riparian zones are common.

This prescription area contains approximately twelve percent of all National Forest System lands on the Huron-Manistee National Forests.

Emphasis areas within Management Area 4.3 are displayed in Table III-6.

Table III-6. Emphasis Areas Within Management Area 4.3.

Emphasis Area	Approximate Acreage	Location	Objectives
Grouse	14,100	Huron-Manistee National Forests	• Manage intensively to provide quality grouse habitat.
Deer	14,900	Huron-Manistee National Forests	• Manage intensively to provide quality deer habitat with special emphasis on providing winter thermal cover.
Wildlife Emphasis Areas: Approximately 24,800 acres			
Blockhouse Swamp		Huron National Forest	• Identify the thermal cover and use only those treatments that improve and sustain thermal quality. • Identify and schedule cuts, commercial or non-commercial, that will develop and sustain age class diversity or winter browse conditions in the area. • Maintain existing permanent openings outside of designated old growth.

Table III-6. Emphasis Areas Within Management Area 4.3 (Continued).

Emphasis Area	Approximate Acreage	Location	Objectives
Huron Shores		Huron National Forest	• Maintain the beach tracts in their current undeveloped condition. • Identify those portions of the area to be managed through regeneration cuts to provide desired age class diversity for food and cover conditions for various species. • Maintain existing openings outside of designated old growth. • Develop limited access to key habitat management areas. • Consolidate key tracts through acquisition.
Tuttle Marsh		Huron National Forest	• Provide opportunities for various habitat improvement projects within the complex of wetlands. • Provide winter deer range. • Provide habitats in open water and deep marshes for a variety of wildlife species.
Cooke Dam		Huron National Forest	• Obtain cooperation of private landowners to protect potential or existing nest sites and/or acquire conservation easement or fee title to any lands that become available within the territory. • Schedule regeneration cuts to improve winter deer range.
South Branch River		Huron National Forest	• Maintain up to 5 percent of the area as permanent openings outside of designated old growth to provide wildlife forage. • Maintain the integrity of the identified potential eagle nest sites and remoteness of the lakes. • Acquire water frontage lands that become available in this area.
Mio Pond		Huron National Forest	• Acquire private lands within the eagle territory, where possible. • Where possible, reduce road density or close roads.

Table III-6. Emphasis Areas Within Management Area 4.3 (Continued).

Emphasis Area	Approximate Acreage	Location	Objectives
Jenks Lake		Manistee National Forest	• Provide habitat for potential eagle territories. • Acquire key tracts as they become available.
Otterman Lake		Manistee National Forest	• Provide thermal cover for deer in the winter deer range within the lowland conifer areas. • Manage to improve browse conditions in intermingled deciduous stands.
Oxford Swamp (North and South Portions)		Manistee National Forest	• Where feasible, maintain isolation of the wetlands. • Maintain or develop grassy openings outside designated old growth–5 acres or larger when possible. • Improve wetlands through brush removal to favor herbaceous plant communities. • Develop a long-range treatment schedule for the timber stands within the area that will maintain present species composition or favor the short lived types adjacent to lowland conifer and ultimately provide a “balance” of age classes throughout the area. This would include: o Making regeneration cuts in 15 percent or more of the upland and lowland hardwood stands each decade. o Maintaining and improving the lowland conifer stands for thermal cover. Stands of this type should be held as long as possible, but they will have to eventually be regenerated. o Identifying stands, 20 to 80 percent of the forested area, that will become over-mature, preferably within close proximity to open wetlands.

Table III-6. Emphasis Areas Within Management Area 4.3 (Continued).

Emphasis Area	Approximate Acreage	Location	Objectives
Olga Lake		Manistee National Forest	• Develop and improve non-forested wetlands by increasing open water areas, providing more nesting structures and enhancing the quality of wetland vegetation. • Maintain and improve lowland conifer stands for thermal cover. • Identify stands for regeneration cuts to improve age class diversity and provide habitat for grazers, browsers and early succession species, and to provide horizontal diversity and low cover; including conversion of pine to other timber types or to grass/shrub openings. • Maintain or develop openings outside of designated old growth to enhance production of forage in the area and provide nesting or feeding areas for species such as bluebirds, vesper sparrows, voles, waterfowl, snapping turtles and sandhill cranes. • Manage the American marten in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, university researchers and volunteers in monitoring movements and reproduction success.
Walkinshaw Wetlands		Manistee National Forest	• Manage the wetlands to provide desired water and vegetation conditions. • Continue vegetation management through grazing and grass-land improvement that will maintain desired conditions for sandhill crane and other species associated with the wetland/ grassland communities. • Maintain or develop dispersed grassy openings, outside designated old growth, in the west area.

Goals and Objectives and Desired Future Condition:

Goals and Objectives:

- Provides high amounts of dispersed recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, viewing scenery, bird watching, canoeing, with limited Off-Highway Vehicle use.
- Provides low to moderate amounts of recreational facilities such as canoe landings, campgrounds and picnic areas.
- Provides low volumes of timber products.
- Management will strive to increase utilization of wood residues and other currently non-merchantable material, when not needed for resource concerns such as soil productivity and wildlife habitat, for fuelwood and other special forest products.
- Quality sites and opportunities for intensive timber management practices will be identified commensurate with the site's ecological capabilities.
- Manage permanent openings and/or grasslands to meet species viability needs. Distribution of openings will recognize the contribution of adjacent private lands.
- Manage for mesic grassland habitats.
- Provide opportunities for mineral exploration and development.

Desired Future Condition:

Each prescription area usually contains more than 1,000 acres, and ownership is primarily National Forest System lands. Human activities are evident and interaction among users is moderate. The area will provide roads and trails appropriate for motorized and non-motorized uses. A net reduction of road miles is noticeable.

Extensive stands of softwood and hardwood species occur throughout the area and create a natural forest appearance. The dominant tree species are aspen, cedar, hemlock, red maple, elm, black ash and paper birch. There are approximately 29,100 acres of designated old growth in this management area. Openings are interspersed throughout the area.

Standards and Guidelines:

2200 RANGELAND MANAGEMENT
- I Allow grazing only to maintain specific wildlife habitats. **G**

2300 RECREATION, WILDERNESS AND RELATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
- I Trails (Other than North Country National Scenic Trail)
  - A Off-Highway Vehicles, Including Snowmobiles
    - 1 Allow competitive use of Off-Highway Vehicles where appropriate. **G**
- II River Road National Scenic Byway
  - A Federal oil and gas leases will contain a no surface **G**

occupancy stipulation within 300 feet along the River Road National Scenic Byway.

2400 TIMBER MANAGEMENT

I The following Standards and Guidelines apply to both even- and uneven-aged silvicultural systems.

A Uneven- and even-aged systems will be used. They will be consistent with area management objectives and the following restrictions:

1 Even-aged management will be the primary silvicultural system used. **G**

2 The uneven-aged system will normally be used only in northern hardwoods. **G**

3 Stand size in wildlife emphasis areas may be less than 10 acres. **G**

4 Seasonal restrictions on time of entry for timber harvests may be applied to protect other resources, activities and facilities. **G**

5 Standard cutting methods such as single-tree and group selection, shelterwood, seed-tree and clearcutting may be used. **S**

6 Major considerations of sale layout are logging system feasibility, road system adequacy and feasibility, adjacent landowners, visual aesthetics and resource protection, use and facilities. **G**

7 Silvicultural standards will incorporate genetic improvement principles, practices and programs. **G**

8 Regeneration activities:

a Site preparation activities can include mechanical, prescribed fire, hand and chemical. **G**

b For revegetation, use native vegetative species for timber production purposes. Revegetation activities can include natural–preferred–artificial or seeding methods. **G**

c Fertilization may be used to establish vegetation on disturbed areas. Manage use of fertilizers or soil enrichments to prevent movement into lakes and streams. **G**

II The following Standards and Guidelines apply only to the even-aged silvicultural system:

A Temporary openings created by the application of the even-aged silvicultural system:

1 Will be separated by a stand of at least 10 acres, except in wildlife emphasis areas. **G**

2 In deer, grouse and wildlife emphasis areas, temporary **G**

openings created by even-aged management will generally not exceed 15 acres. They may be as large as 40 acres in major deer wintering or adjacent areas, or for golden-winged warbler they may be 25 acres.

B Firewood gathering will be allowed except in old growth areas. A permit is required. G

C Intermediate treatment guidelines include:

1 Using mechanical, chemical, or hand release methods in all vegetative types. G

2 Pruning for timber–crop trees–visual improvement, safety and wildlife–fruit trees. G

3 Thinning. G

4 Using precommercial thinnings to maintain winter thermal cover for deer in lowland hardwood and conifer types. G

D Harvest guidelines include the following: (See Appendix B for a discussion of each harvest method):

1 The clearcutting method may be used only for jack, red and white pines; oak; aspen; lowland conifers and northern hardwoods with adequate advanced regeneration. G

2 The seed-tree cutting method may be used only for jack, red and white pines and lowland conifers. G

3 The shelterwood cutting method may be used only for jack, red and white pines; all oak, northern hardwoods; lowland conifers and lowland hardwoods. G

E Allow commercial thinning in all vegetative types. Precommercial thinning in all types is allowed if necessary to meet objectives of timber, wildlife and/or visual quality objectives. G

2600 WILDLIFE, FISH AND SENSITIVE PLANT HABITAT MANAGEMENT

I General Management

A Mesic Grasslands

1 Manage mesic grassland habitats as areas 250 acres or larger. G

2 If 250-acre areas are not attainable, provide multiple patches 75 acres or larger, which total at least 250 acres within a 640-acre area. G

3 Manage multiple habitat areas within one mile of each other to increase suitability if possible. G

B Dry Grasslands G

1 Manage dry grassland habitat, 250 acres or larger in Landtype Associations 1 and 2. Manage multiple habitats as blocks when they are within one mile of each other to increase suitability. G

II Endangered and Threatened Species and Their Habitat Management

A Piping Plover

1 Active nest sites and areas used for raising young will be protected from human disturbance and pets. Pets will be required to be on a leash between April 1 and August 31 and at anytime near an active nest. **s**

2 The following access restrictions will apply from April 1 to August 31 and any time around active nest sites: **s**

a Except for emergency, administrative use, vehicle traffic will be prohibited along the beach. Efforts will be made to coordinate emergency, administrative use with individuals knowledgeable of nest sites. **s**

b Trail management and construction will direct the public away from active nest sites. **s**

c Pedestrians will be prohibited from leaving trails and entering nest site areas. **s**

d Kite flying will be prohibited within 650 feet of active nest site areas. **s**

3 Signing and psychological/symbolic fencing, such as 2 strands of twine tied between posts, will be allowed to keep human activity at least 134 feet away from predator exclosures. If needed, a larger protection area may be designated. Fencing and signing will be installed using current acceptable procedures. **G**

4 Where necessary, nesting and feeding areas will be protected from predators through predator exclosures and other proven devices and methods. Exclosures will be as follows: 5 feet between the nest and the predator exclosure, and 134 feet between predator exclosure and the psychological/symbolic fencing. Construction will occur at a time that does not subject the eggs to adverse weather during absence of adults. Fencing and signing will be installed using current acceptable procedures. **G**

B Piping Plover Critical Habitat

1 Human disturbance, including pets, will be kept at a low level from April 1 through July 1 by prohibiting the following: **G**

a Pets, unless on a leash. **G**

b Loud noise. **G**

c Off-Highway Vehicles. **G**

d Beach fires within 400 feet of the shoreline. **G**

e Collecting of driftwood, dunewood, root masses and dead shrubs. G

2 Prohibit sand mining and oil and gas leasing and development in critical habitat, except for reserved and outstanding mineral rights. S

3 Beach stabilization and vegetation planting for artificial dune stabilization will not be allowed if they impair natural processes. S

4 Management activities related to treatment of Lombardy poplar are prohibited between April 1 and July 1, or whenever piping plover are present. S

5 Between April 1 and July 1, prescribed burning activities will be limited to conditions when smoke will not drift into critical habitat areas or whenever piping plover are present. G

6 The following apply for the protection, restoration and maintenance of piping plover critical habitat containing primary constituent elements: G

a No new trail construction will occur. G

b Existing trails will be relocated where necessary. G

c Non-native woody vegetation–non-native invasive species–will be controlled. G

d Surveying will be conducted for the presence of active nest sites. G

C Pitcher's Thistle

1 See Chapter II, 2600 for Standards and Guidelines. G

III Regional Forester Sensitive Species

A Standards and Guidelines for the management of Regional Forester Sensitive Species are:

1 Within core northern hardwood habitat areas:

a In 80 percent of the high-quality mesic northern hardwood (ginseng) habitat:

1 Permit non-ground disturbing activities that mimic natural disturbance regimes common to this habitat. G

2 Permit maintenance of existing improvements. G

b In the remaining 20 percent of the high-quality mesic northern hardwood habitat: G

1 Maintain 80 percent crown closure. G

2 Allow potential high-quality mesic northern hardwood forest habitat adjacent to core areas to convert to actual high-quality mesic northern hardwood forest habitat. G

3 New motorized trails will not be constructed in G

cedar swamps, hardwood conifer swamps and sub-irrigated forests unless there are no other reasonable routes.

B Manage wetlands identified as good and excellent sandhill crane nesting habitat to improve habitat conditions for this species. G

C Develop and implement management direction for each osprey nesting area and great blue heron colony. G

D Cerulean Warbler

1 Timber management and road construction activities should not occur in occupied habitat within 400 feet of a cerulean warbler nest tree–approximately a 10-acre area– during the breeding season. G

IV Wildlife Emphasis Areas

A Blockhouse Swamp

1 Maintain low road density within the area. Any roads constructed to facilitate management activities should be closed when the activity ceases. G

B Huron Shores

1 Identify and protect potential bald eagle nest sites. G

2 Identify thermal cover and apply only those management treatments that improve and sustain cover quality. G

C Cooke Dam

1 Establish the required buffer zones around bald eagle nest(s). G

2 Identify perch trees and potential nest areas and protect from development or alterations. G

3 Reduce the potential of disturbance by closing trails where necessary and feasible. G

D South Branch River

1 Identify and protect potential bald eagle nest sites. G

2 Maintain a low road and trail density and do not improve or develop access to the lakes within the area. G

3 Identify the thermal cover areas used by deer and use only treatments that are needed to improve or sustain thermal qualities. G

4 Identify those stands that are to be managed through regeneration cuts to increase and sustain winter browse conditions for deer. Such cuts should favor regeneration of short-lived types. G

E Mio Pond

1 Identify and maintain the protection zone around bald eagle nests. G

2 Identify and protect potential bald eagle nest sites. G

F Jenks Lake

1 Identify potential bald eagle nest and roost sites and protect these from development and other activities. G

G Otterman Lake

1 Treatment in lowland conifers will be made only to improve thermal cover conditions. G

2 Regeneration cuts will be scheduled to improve and sustain browse conditions in locations strategic to thermal cover. Short lived types will be favored. G

3 Openings outside of designated old growth will be maintained or developed to enhance forage production. G

4 Where feasible, new roads or roads improved to facilitate management should be closed when not being used. G

H Oxford Swamp (North Portion and South Portion)

1 Over-mature stands within close proximity to open wetlands should be greater than 50 years old and should not be thinned to less than 80 square feet of basal area to attempt to produce a "park like" structure. G

2 Stands to be maintained or developed as grassy openings should be 5 acres or larger. G

3 Regeneration cuts should be made in 15 percent or more of the upland and lowland stands each decade. G

I Olga Lake

1 Conduct periodic drawdowns of Olga Lake to improve aquatic and emergent vegetation within the flooding. G

2 Manipulate vegetation to improve habitat for important prey species without infringing upon essential habitat needs of the American marten. G

J Walkinshaw Wetlands

1 Provide habitat diversity within the forested types through periodic regeneration cuts. In areas adjacent to thermal cover, short-lived types will be favored. G

K Deer Yards

1 Manage recognized deer yards outside old growth areas to provide a sustained supply of winter thermal cover and associated browse. G

2700 SPECIAL USES MANAGEMENT

I Decisions on applications for special uses involving National Forest System lands would be made on an individual basis. G

II Adhere to the Federal Power Act Section 4(e) Forest Service Conditions on the eight hydro-electric projects licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. S

III Provide for utility transmission corridors. Emphasize the use of G

corridors when granting appropriate rights of way.

2800 MINERALS AND GEOLOGY

I Wildlife Emphasis Areas

A Federal oil and gas leases will contain a lease notice that the lands are being managed as Wildlife Emphasis Areas and occupancy is subject to more restrictive controls than routine areas. **S**

B Access to oil and gas development is by low standard road with minimum clearing. These roads are gated. The access road should be obliterated upon abandonment of the site. **G**

II Common Variety Minerals

A Use of common variety mineral deposits will be considered with the following limitations: **G**

1 Permit use of common variety mineral deposits subject to the environmental limitations of the site. **G**

5100 FIRE MANAGEMENT

I Suppression

A Use of tractor plows, retardant, constructed helispots and wheeled vehicles will be common. **G**

II Fire Use and Fuels Treatment

A Constructed fuel barriers will be no longer than eight miles in length, and temporary or permanent openings will be limited to no more than 500 acres. **G**

III Activity fuels–slash–will be treated to a level commensurate with the allowable fire intensity and rate of spread that meets resource objectives in established prescriptions. Treatment along highways and adjacent properties will meet applicable state laws. **G**

IV Management action to address high fuel hazards may occur in old growth when public safety and property are at risk. **G**

7700 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

I Oil and Gas

A All temporary roads will be planned and constructed to be revegetated within one year of termination of contract, lease or permit. **G**

B Arterial roads will be, as a minimum, designed and constructed to transport forest products and accommodate planned motorized recreation use, remain open, and, be maintained at level 3 standards or higher. **G**