

Prescription Narrative, SGL 082 "Crazy Beaver" 082-11-01

The game land is located in the townships of Brothers Valley, Larimer, Northampton, and Summit in Somerset County.

Adjacent land surrounding the game land is rural; a mixture of agricultural land and deciduous forest, with some open water and herbaceous and forested wetland.

The first goal of this habitat project is increase the old field reverting herbaceous and shrub habitat on this game land. The strategy is to clearcut several of the older declining white pine plantations no longer beneficial as winter thermal cover and allow them to revert naturally to old field conditions. Prior to the establishment of these pine plantations forty years ago, these areas were likely cultivated herbaceous areas or old field habitat. The second goal of this habitat project is create and promote the establishment of understory hardwoods, shrubs and herbs within the densely stocked red pine plantations. The strategy is to implement a two-stage shelterwood in the older red pine stands, allowing sunlight to penetrate the canopy to promote the establishment of an understory. After the establishment of an understory, the overstory will be removed to increase the old field reverting herbaceous and shrub habitat. This game land is within the focal area for Golden-winged Warbler habitat management, and best management practices will be followed when the overstory is removed, including the retention of 10 to 15 residual red pines per acre.

Apple trees along the perimeter and within the pine stands will be day lighted in conjunction with these treatments. The Food and Cover intends to plant  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre patches of spruce seedlings within the clearcut white pine stands post harvest, re-establishing pockets of winter thermal cover within the newly created old field habitat. Following the recommendation of the Regional Biologist, several red pines per acre within the shelterwood will be girdled post harvest to create loose bark and provide roosting opportunities for bats as well as supplying insects for woodpeckers and other birds. Residual red pines damaged as a result of logging operations will be targeted for this treatment.

The habitat management goal for SGL 082 is to maintain mixed succession conditions. This habitat project will convert declining white pine plantations that have outgrown their value as winter thermal cover into an old field habitat component that is lacking on this game land. Hemlock-mixed hardwood forests and younger pine plantations on this game land provide a valuable source of winter thermal cover habitat. The re-establishment of small pockets of young spruce will also continue to provide future winter thermal cover within the newly created old field habitat. In addition, the two-stage shelterwood in the densely stocked red pine plantations will result initially in the growth of understory trees, shrubs and herbs and increase food and cover conditions for many species of wildlife. The future overstory removal in these stands and the retention of residual trees follows best management practices for Golden-winged

warbles, and benefits other game and non game species that require early succession habitat.

