Forest Service

Hiawatha National Forest 2727 N. Lincoln Road Escanaba, Michigan 49829

Date: August 8, 1995

File Code: 2600

Route To: 2600

Subject: Kirtland Warblers

To: Phil Huber

Huron-Manistee National Forest,

Mio Ranger District

As you are aware, the Hiawatha National Forest has observed male Kirtland's Warblers on the Forest the past several springs, and this year for the first time have a confirmed sighting of a nesting pair.

Given this development, we want to ensure that our management activities conform with Endangered Species Act (ESA) requirements and coordinate with the objectives of the Federal Recovery Plan (FRP) for the species. We also want to ensure our activities are carried out in an ecosystem management context.

On September 18 a meeting will be held at the St. Ignace Ranger District office of the Hiawatha National Office, beginning at 9:30 and ending by mid-afternoon. Three broad areas of discussion for the meeting are:

Update on current and planned Kirtland's Warbler and related ecosystem management activities on the Hiawatha;

Compliance of Hiawatha NF management activities with the ESA;

Coordination of Hiawatha NF management activities with the FRP. and the need to possibly modify the FRP to incorporate portions of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

I feel this meeting will be an important step in ensuring pro-active coordination and compliance with the recovery team's efforts and the ESA. We also encourage attendance at this meeting from affected Hiawatha NF and Huron-Manistee NF's line officers, as well as representatives from the Ottawa NF.

WILLIAM F. SPINNER Forest Supervisor

cc: Steve Kelley Jim Bartelme

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United States
Department of
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"CARING FOR THE LAND AND SERVING PEOPLE"

Reply to: 2670

Date: September 13, 1995

Subject: Kirtland's Warbler Habitat Management Field Trip

September 5, 1995

To: Files

Phil Huber in cooperation with Jerry Weinrich, coordinated a field trip on the Huron National Forest and Michigan Department of Natural Resources lands. The day was spent reviewing Kirtland's warbler habitat management. Stops and topics are identified on the agenda that was provided by Phil. Fourteen people attended the field trip from three different agencies. Attendees consisted of one Fish and Wildlife Service person (Seney National Wildlife Refuge), four Michigan Department of Natural Resources people, and nine Forest Service people.

Overall I felt that this was a great trip and participants got a good understanding of our current planting and management programs. Interactive discussions occurred at all stops and successes and concerns were exchanged. This dialog will assist habitat managers as they proceed with future habitat planning efforts and reforestation opportunities.

Issues that I captured from this field trip consisted of natural regeneration and stocking criteria, fill-in planting, leave strips, and seeding techniques. The group felt that when considering whether a stand can be classified as fully stocked for acceptable Kirtland's warbler habitat by natural regeneration means, that agreement on the desired stocking density and distribution is needed. They also questioned how the first year stocking surveys are conducted as compared to third year stocking surveys. No agreement was reached on first year's plot size but generally it was felt that 1/800th acre plot would be accurate. It was felt that third year surveys should be 1/50 acre plots. These plots should also record the number of trees and tree species. A systematic method of tracking the third year plots needs developing so that stocked areas can be delienated from the planting area. A review of the fill-in planting efforts showed that container stock planted in the fall after spring planting or in later years was not producing trees likely to meet densities and structural objective. Bareroot trees fill-in planted during the spring after machine planting were similar to planted trees and will likely meet our desired stocking and structural objective. Leave strips or skips emulating natural wildlife disturbances can be 30 to 60 feet wide and still meet habitat management objectives. Significant changes in structural characteristics result in a few years following harvest activities. Several trees die and many others were blown down during wind events. A highlight of the trip was to see the early success from some of the MDNR planting sites. Early indications are that on some sites this practice is working. We observed numerous seedlings germinating after the first year. It appeared that site characteristics within and near the furrows do impact first year success. These sites need to be evaluated for additional success during

the next couple of years. MDNR stated that they are looking into a three year contract for additional seeding or furrowing work. This is something that we should look into as a possible joint effort. The cost of this action is similar to our current planting costs.

In addition to these planting observations, we reviewed several of the large, grater than 1000 acre, planting sites on MDNR Kirtland's warbler management areas. Perspectives varied among individuals, but data has shown that these areas have higher densities of Kirtland's warblers for greater periods of time. The visual perspective on these varied considerably depending upon topography, leave strips, amount of dead standing material left on the sites, and configuration. This change has recently been implemented upon MDNR and FWS lands in response to new information that has become available. MDNR stated that little negative response has been generated within the areas they have applied it.

These interagency reviews are important and provide an effective mechanism for the different agencies to exchange ideas, develop similar management approaches, and learn from each others successes and failure. I would encourage continuing these efforts every three years so that effective approaches to habitat management can continue to develop.

KENNETH REX ENNIS Forest Wildlife Biologist

Enclosure

cc:Districts
Leadership Team
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER AUDUBON SOCIETY
SEPT./OCT. 1995
OFFICERS

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Editor: Marilyn Marsh 4365 Weaver Rd. Comins, MI 48619 (517) 848-5968

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!! There's a new group in Oscoda County called the Kirtland's Warbler Audubon Society. I have to tell you this story first. About two years ago, Paul asked me what I thought about starting an Audubon Society in Oscoda County. I told him "Paul, I think you and I would be the only ones there?" Goes to show how much I know. Imagine the amazement when walking in the hall and finding 40 people there!!!

From the Northwoods Call? "Shep" the editor had two editorials of importance lately. In the mid-August edition he states that "The Jack Pine Warbler", newsletter of the Michigan Audubon Society has become more of a social calendar than focusing on the habitat issues of earlier years. He says there's not a word about critical issues facing the birds such as gas drilling, ORV's, squandering wet lands and shore lands and the rampant loss of habitat to golf courses. Have you noticed this? In the mid-September issue, Shep urges a coalition of conservation groups to band together to help save our loons and other diving birds from drowning in gill nets. A conservation group on the west coast has filed a lawsuit to ban the nets, on the grounds that they violate the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Most Memorable Birding Experience. I'd like to request a paragraph or two from each of our members on your most memorable birding experience to be published at various times in our newsletter. It would help us get acquainted and certainly help me.

Michigan Audubon Society address. When you join the Michigan Audubon Society you automatically become a member of the National Audubon Society.

Michigan Audubon Society 6011 W. St. Joseph, Suite 403 POB 80527 Lansing, MI 48908-0527

Next Meeting, Tuesday, September 26, 1995. Paul's going to tell us about and show us a video of the loons on Rhoads Lake. It's a very interesting story so mark it down on your calendar now. Come one, Come all. We're looking for new members and guests. Welcome!

Kirtland Warbler Audubon Society

1995-96 D	ues	Family \$12	Adults	\$7	Student \$4
Name: Address:					
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Make checks payable to Kirtland's Warbler Audubon Society.

Mail to: Emma Young, 317 Fairland, Mio, MI 48647 (#826-3949)