

NORTHERN GOSHAWK
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR HABITAT IN BIRD CONSERVATION
REGION 14

Introduction

The Northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentiles*) is an uncommon to rare nester in BCR 14. It nests in the interior of pine, hemlock or mixed mature forest. It is very sensitive to disturbance during the courtship and nesting season (March through the end of July). Its numbers are apparently increasing. The goshawk appears on the "Species of Greatest Conservation Need" list of at least one of the state Wildlife Action Plans in BCR 14.

Habitat Needs

This bird will nest on the lower limbs, close to the trunk, or in a crotch of beech, birch, pine or hemlock. The nests are usually located at the bottom of the canopy layer. It prefers mature forests with large trees and open understories.

Its home range is about a square mile and the territory it defends during nesting season ranges around fifteen acres.

Habitat Management Practices

These birds are sensitive to disturbance so any management activity should be limited to fall and winter seasons, particularly around known nesting locations. The habitat management objective for the goshawk would be to manage to maximize the mature component for oak/pine, hemlock or mixed wood forest.

When assessing properties for habitat potential for this hawk, look for soils that will produce hemlock, oak/pine and mixed wood. Soil to consider in Important Forest Soil Groups IC include Adams, Colton, Croghan and Deerfield. Soil to consider in Important Forest Soil Groups IB include Acton, Canton, Chichester, Gloucester, Hermon Monadnock, Sunapee and Waumbek. There are others in these categories depending on where you are in BCR

Recommended Silvicultural Practices

Consider extending rotations in the hemlock, oak/pine and mixed (hardwood/hemlock) wood stands to provide for nesting larger trees.

Periodic light maintenance cuts will maintain the larger tree with an open understory characteristics needed for this species.