

Menge Creek and Huron Mountains Deer Wintering Complex Cooperative Habitat Management Pilot Project



Jeff Joseph, Plum Creek Resource Supervisor

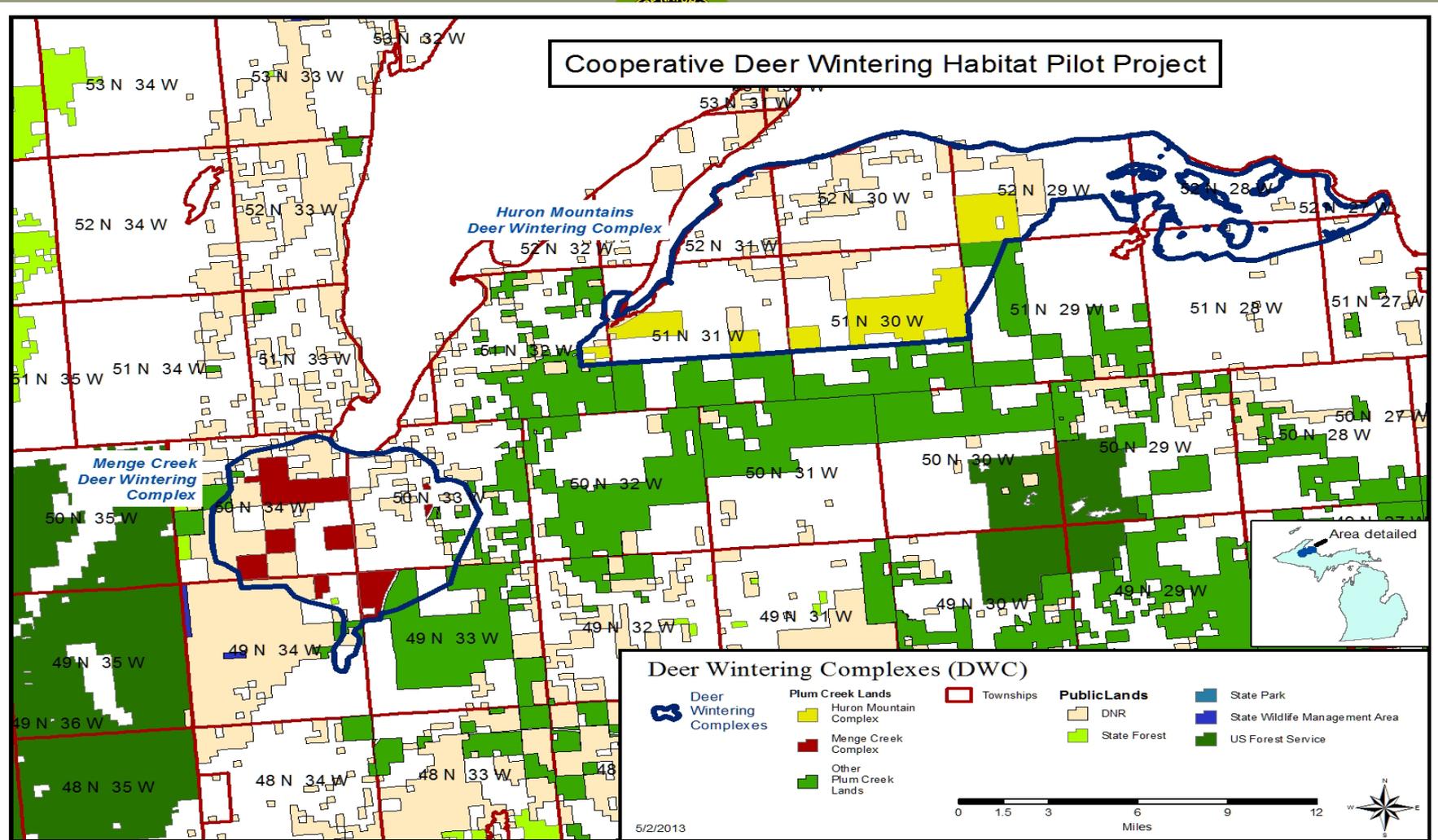
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PlumCreek

DWC Pilot Project Areas:



Plum Creek

PC Contribution to DWC Project Areas



Menge Creek

- 22,449 total DWC acreage
- 5,927 acres of PC ownership (19% of DWC)
- Migratory deer believed to be from Baraga Southern Houghton Counties.

Huron Mountains

- 72,804 total DWC acreage
- 10,567 acres of PC ownership (13% of DWC)
- Migratory deer believed to be from Baraga and Marquette Counties.

16,494 acres in total of PC ownership (17% of the DWC's).



DWC Cooperative Habitat Management Pilot Project:



What are Plum Creek's interest and goals

- Foster cooperative relationship with agency partners on habitat management issues.
- Develop a framework that provides long-term planning predictability for landowners.
- Implement an adaptive management approach with practical habitat guidelines and prescriptions with the goal of continual learning and improvement.
- Willing to commit 16,000 acres to this collaborative pilot project.

Broad DWC Project Habitat Goals:



- Continued monitoring regarding effectiveness.
- Identify additional opportunities for collaboration on deer winter habitat management within the DWC's.



70% Conifer Canopy Closure Rule



- Why strive to maintain a 70% conifer canopy cover in DWC's?
 - Below 70% canopy and deer usage declines
 - 70% maintains a optimal snow intercept canopy while enabling forest regeneration process to occur.
 - Multistoried conifer canopy ensure adequate snow intercept and wind disruption
 - Limited light penetration to enable shade tolerant forest species to regenerate
 - Enables room for limited thoughtful and deliberate timber selection
 - Long-lived conifers are the target species.
 - Hemlock has a historical and continued importance on landscape.
- Difficulty is in translating to a operational prescription!
 - From conifer canopy to Basal Area

Project Operational Considerations:



Silvicultural Prescriptive Language Guidelines:

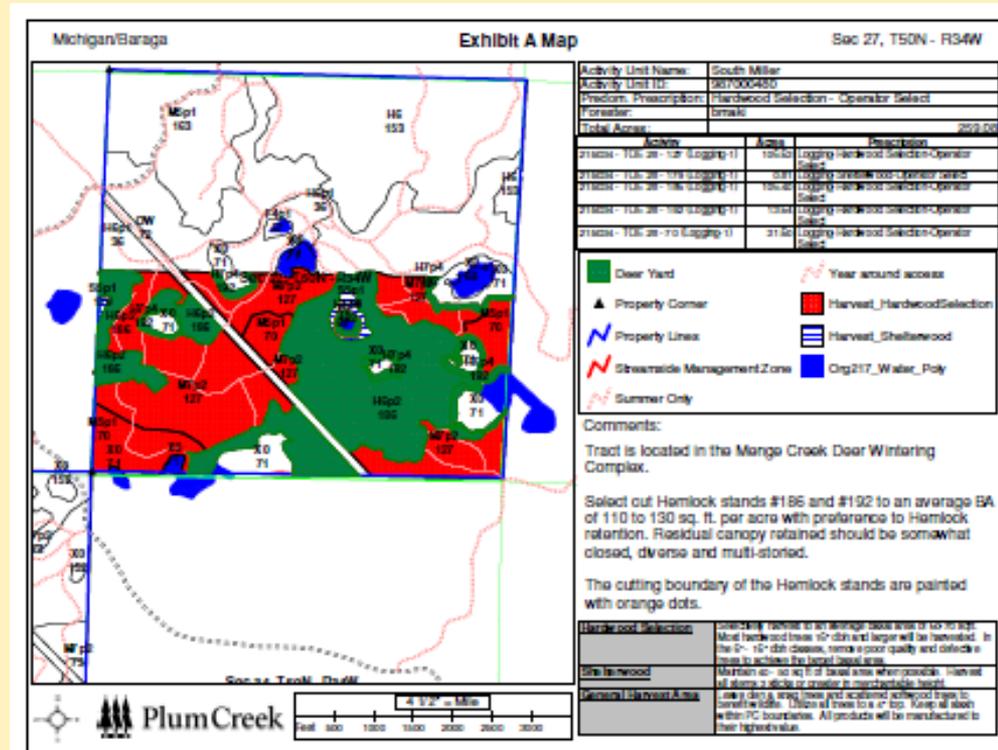
- In hemlock stands- Thin stands to 100 to 130 sq. ft. /acre with preference to hemlock retention.
- In northern hardwoods stands with areas of hemlock/inclusions- Select harvest northern hardwood stands to an average basal area of 60-70 sq. ft. / acre. Thin areas of hemlock with mixed hardwoods to 90 to 100 sq. ft. /acre with preference for hemlock (conifer) retention.

Bruce Maki, PC Forester developed these working guidelines

Operational DWC pilot project:



- Harvested in 14 stands totaling 829 acres.
 - Post harvest residual basal areas have ranged from 100 to 130 sq. feet /acre favoring hemlock
 - Resulted in 25 to 35 additional tons of residual soft wood left on landscape
 - Normal would have been 70 Sq. feet / acre, favoring northern hardwoods as retention



2014 scarification project



- Scarification using a dozer with a rock rake.
- Intended to expose 90%+ bare mineral soil as seedbed for hemlock and other light seeded species.
 - Expand existing stands and connectivity
- Treated 350 acres.

