

**Conservation Land Certification Checklist 22.1**  
**WOODLAND OWNER more than 5 acres**

*Check green boxes if you have implemented 2 items from each subsection and all required practices (marked \*). Criteria 6 is required only if harvesting, and criteria 7 is optional. See Biodiversity in the Forests of Maine and Focus Species Forestry (links on our website) for Criteria 7 practices. Some practices are awarded points in more than one criteria. You may be certified if you complete the above, without using the point system. Please schedule an initial visit by SWCD staff to complete the checklist. \*Indicates required practice. You must re-save this document to edit; please add your name to the document name. Properties less than 5 acres may add any of these criteria to their residential/small property checklist.*

**CORE CRITERIA 1 : Provide essential elements of wildlife habitat.**

**1.1. Provide food for wildlife**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_  
(5 points for each type present)

Manage to conserve or favor high value food plants in woodlands are yellow birch, beech, aspen, black cherry, sugar maple, apples, native shrubs such as dogwoods, blueberries, winterberries, etc. Ensure that woodland area has these and other food producing woody plants with:

- Seeds            Species \_\_\_\_\_
- Edible berries    Species \_\_\_\_\_
- Foliage/Twigs    Species \_\_\_\_\_
- Nuts: Maintain composition of mature nut producing trees.  
Species \_\_\_\_\_
- Other Fruits      Species \_\_\_\_\_
- Pollen/nectar    Species \_\_\_\_\_

Notes (You can add other species here)

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**1.2. Provide clean water source(s) for wildlife**

*Check if applicable only (2 items not required).*

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_  
(5 points for each source)

Document available water sources, and conserve water quality in sources on the property:

- Adjacent or nearby water source: Lake, bay, wetland, river, stream, pond
- Integrated water source: pond, wetland, woodland seeps and springs
- Other:

**1.3. Protect vernal pools.**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_  
(5 points for each practice)

**Required: \***

- Mark and map all vernal pools (seasonal small wetlands) using Maine Vernal Pool Assessment.\*
- Do not disturb the pool depression with equipment, sediment or slash \*
- Create and mark a 100 foot buffer area around vernal pools that will not be harvested or disturbed, no soil disturbance or compaction, no chemical application, and a 400 foot zone of 50% canopy retention and other amphibian life zone BMPs. Add 3 points if these are distances are exceeded.\*

- Conserve abundant coarse woody debris in vernal pool buffer and amphibian life zone 400 buffer.\*

Recommended vernal pools practices:

- Leave > 75% canopy between pools that are less than ¼ mile apart.
- Restore or enhance pool buffers/life zones.
- Implement other BMPs for vernal pools.                      List other BMPs implemented:

**1.4. Provide shelter for wildlife**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_  
(5 points for each)

Conserve:

Notes:

Required: \*

- Brush piles and/ coarse woody debris\*
- Slash left after harvest, not compacted or place in protected resources\*
- Dead trees or snags at various stages of decay. Inventory if smaller parcel. Leave all if less than 5 per acre, and at least 5 when more are present. Leave dying trees to become snags, and orient retained patches around snags. Use management practices that will foster future development of snags and debris.\*
- Intact ground cover vegetation\*

Recommended:

- Rock pile or wall
- Cave
- Dense shrubs or thicket
- Evergreens
- Burrows
- Mature/large (>18 inches in diameter) trees
- Older trees with cavities or branch structure to support raptor nests
- Post harvest young forest areas
- Nesting box(es)
- Significant host plants for caterpillars: oaks, cherries, birches, aspen, willows, others
- Riparian buffer restoration or enhancement. Describe in notes.

Notes

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**CORE CRITERIA 2 Practice soil and water conservation.**

**2.1. Reduce stormwater runoff**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_  
(5 point for each practice implemented)

Required \*

- Maintain undisturbed vegetation buffers for all riparian areas and shoreline that include mature woody vegetation, following Maine forestry rules (and DEP rules where applicable) for shoreline areas. \*
- Preserve shoreline integrity of all perennial streams and rivers, lakes and wetlands with an undisturbed, no harvest 100 foot buffer (10 points).\*
- Add additional undisturbed buffer from 75 to 250 feet (10 additional points)
- In harvest area, add water slowing and infiltration structures where needed: rocks, swale plantings, wetlands, ponds, ditching ending in vegetation absorption area.

- Mulch disturbed areas with slash during harvest.
- Create turnouts and water bars for roads where needed.

**2.2. Other water conservation practices**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_  
(10 points for each practice implemented)

**Note: Items needed here only if shore area on property. Please describe each in writing if checked.**

- StreamSmart principles applied to all stream crossings: Add crossing structures of sufficient size to maintain stream channel width, flow rate and natural substrate. Attach documentation.
- LakeSmart requirements implemented near developed shore areas including camps

**2.3. Control soil erosion**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_  
(5 points for each practice)

Required:\*

- Mulch disturbed slopes\*
- Create vegetation buffers with plants of different heights for water bodies.\*
- Avoid wetland crossings and operating in wetlands.\*
- Minimize soil disturbance during harvest: mulch equipment areas with slash, avoid water crossing, site landings appropriately according to MFS BMPs, only in frozen or dry soil conditions.\*
- Use Maine erosion and sediment control practices during any construction or activity near slopes.\*
- Maintain gravel road, woods road and trail surfaces and ensure proper drainage.\*
- Add plants to areas that need soil stabilization.
- Do not disturb vegetation on slopes greater than 8%.
- Other soil conservation practices (note below).

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**CORE CRITERIA 3 Control invasive species.**

**3.1 General Practices**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_  
(10 points for each practice implemented)

Required\*

- Assess invasive plant presence and populations.\*
- Have an invasive plant management plan developed.
- Remove, contain or suppress invasive plants and animals based on recommended priorities.\*
- Monitor for invasive pests and plants and practice Early Detection Rapid Response to control new infestations.\*
- Avoid creating areas of bare soil or operating equipment in a manner that facilitates transfer and growth of invasive plants.
- Report uncommon or new invasive species to state or local conservation agencies.

Describe invasives management activities and monitoring

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**CORE CRITERIA 4 Manage vegetation for ecosystem support.**

**4.1. Create or conserve varied functional plant assemblages and structure.**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_  
(10 points for each practice)

Required: \*

- Implement harvest practices that create different age classes and cover, such as uneven aged individual and small group selection, 3 stage shelterwood, patch retention.\*
- Conserve late successional and old growth forest areas, with single tree, small group selection or no harvest.\*

Recommended:

- Create or conserve vertically structured plant communities that include several layers, from groundcover to large trees.
- Add or conserve spatial complexity of vertical structure and assemblages where possible.
- Create open areas with forbs, shrubs, and small trees, mowed periodically to protect wildlife and provide pollinator plants.
- Increase rotation length to greater than 100 years for selected areas to foster mature age classes and retain large trees.
- Document and conserve all natural communities present on the property. Consult MNAP as needed to define natural communities present. See also Natural Landscapes of Maine by Gawler and Cutko.

**4.2. Enhance biodiversity through planting and vegetation management**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_  
(5 points for each practice)

- Conserve or add high invertebrate support plants: oaks, willows, cherries, birch, blueberry
- Conserve tree species diversity present, limited or no harvest of less common or unusual species, preserve inclusions, harvest in monotypical stands.
- Add plants that meet wildlife needs where species are lost or declining, such as adding hard (nuts) and soft (fruit and seeds) mast trees to replace chestnut, beech, elm and ash seeds.
- Maintain microhabitats such as hemlock stands, cedar swamps, floodplain forests, etc.
- Increase site plant diversity by planting species not currently present, including adaptive nearby native trees (white oaks, hickories, etc).
- Protect planted trees from deer and other browsing.

Notes List plants species applicable and species added :

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**CORE CRITERIA 5 Implement integrated pest management practices.**

**□ 5.1 General practices**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_

(5 points for each practice implemented)

Notes:

- Practice Integrated Pest Management.\*
- Eliminate or reduce chemical pesticides
- Avoid use of pesticides within 100 feet of water bodies
- Follow MDIFW guidelines for working on utility line areas.
- Use less toxic or persistent pesticides and herbicides.
- Mechanically remove pests.
- Trap pests.
- Add or lure organisms that control pests, such as insect support shrub and herbaceous planting belts.
- Suppress weeds with cutting and mowing.
- Selectively remove diseased or vulnerable plants
- Control invasives through early detection, mechanical methods and other non-chemical practices.
- Plan carefully to control pests through multiple actions including planning and monitoring, using all available strategies
- Add or foster vigorous plants that can suppress weeds and invasives
- Use approved biocontrol organisms to reduce insect pests
- Combine any of the above to control a particular pest or invasive

Other/ Notes:

**CORE CRITERIA 6 (*Optional, use if actively harvesting*) Choose harvest practices that support healthy ecosystems.**

**□ 6.1 General practices**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_

(5 points for each practice implemented)

Required \*

Planning

- Identify owner objectives, classify forest stands, review and integrate wildlife management guides and integrate all into a forest management plan.\*
- Consult a licensed forester in planning, layout, supervision and close out of management activities.
- Have a licensed forester develop the plan integrating the items on this checklist.
- Map natural communities with the assistance of a forester or SWCD staff.

Harvest

- Use continuous cover silvicultural practices, e.g. small group, single tree and shelterwood methods, depending on the stand type and wildlife needs. Use intermediate treatments such as thinning and crop tree management to manage species, structure, and growth. See Focus Species Forestry Practices.
- Harvest in winter when ground is frozen.\*

- Protect water bodies and avoid crossings by equipment where possible. Use MFS Best Management Practices.
- Implement crop tree management, linear patch cut, small group selection as primary harvest methods.

Retention / Protection

- Leave groups of high quality, mature trees.\*
- No harvest old growth forest on the site.\*
- No harvest in rare or exemplary natural communities designated S1, S2, or S3.\*
- Maintain or extend required buffers around Atlantic salmon, brook trout, alewife and other important fish habitat.\*
- Follow all stream and river buffer regulations.\*
- Create corridors and connections of non-harvested areas.
- Reduce harvest in mature stands.
- Leave greater stream and river buffers than required by law.
- No harvest in floodplain and swamp forests.
- No harvest in areas of woodland springs and seepages
- No harvest in rare or endangered species presence areas
- No harvest in high and moderate value waterfowl and wading bird habitat
- Maintain canopy cover type percentages over the site or in large stands.
- Where practical, allow beaver activity and flooding.

Notes:

**OPTIONAL CORE CRITERIA 7 Implement other best practices in ecological forestry.**

**7.1 Other recommended practices**

Optional Points \_\_\_\_\_

(10 points for each system where any additional practice not checked above is implemented from these guides. Attach an additional sheet if need for descriptions)

- Implement other Focus Species Forestry recommendations for your stand types.
- Implement other Biodiversity for Maine Forest practices.  
(see our website for information on these systems)

Describe practices implemented from these guides, or attach other documentation:

**Resources** See our website for online and other resources for each Criteria on this checklist. The criteria numbers are matched with some resource links.

**Feedback** Please submit your suggestions for this checklist, including your suggestions for items that could be added to this checklist.

**CONSERVATION LAND CERTIFICATION APPLICATION FORM**

**How to submit your certification application**

- 1. Complete this checklist. If all Criteria are met (2 from each subsection and all required practices), you qualify for basic conservation land certification provided the practices are implemented correctly on your site. Criteria 6 required if harvesting. Criteria #7 is optional. Submit the checklist by mail to our office or by email to [projectdirector@androskogginswcd.org](mailto:projectdirector@androskogginswcd.org), or to the Contact form on our website.

If you would like to assess your progress in more detail, you can do point totals for each section, and work towards our Master Conservationist level of certification:

Beginning 30-224      Certification 225      Master Conservationist Level 400

**POINT TOTAL FOR THIS APPLICATION** \_\_\_\_\_ **AWARDED** \_\_\_\_\_ **(SWCD USE)**  
**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Staff** \_\_\_\_\_

- 2. Contact us on our website or by phone to schedule a time for our staff to visit your property and review your practices on site. You can complete the checklist at this time or prior to the site visit.
- 3. If you successfully complete your land certification, you can receive a sign to post and /or a certificate of certification, which may be used to support other land applications and requirements as applicable.
- 4. Certified Conservation Forest landowners will be recognized in our Annual Report and in other ways as we develop this program. You may also volunteer to help others complete this process.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Directions to property

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Acres \_\_\_\_\_ Uses/ Notes \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Forestry plan? \_\_\_\_\_ Forester \_\_\_\_\_