

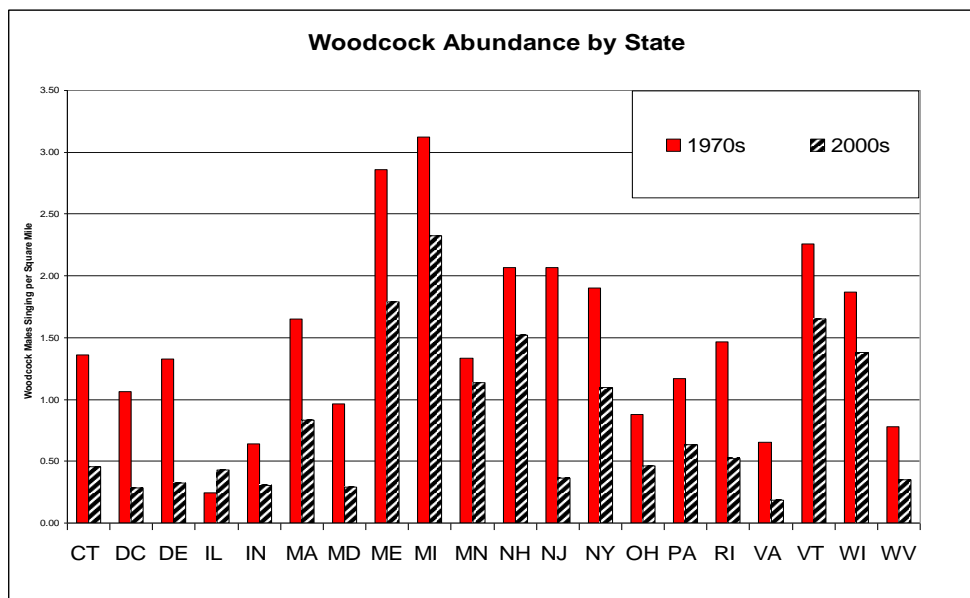
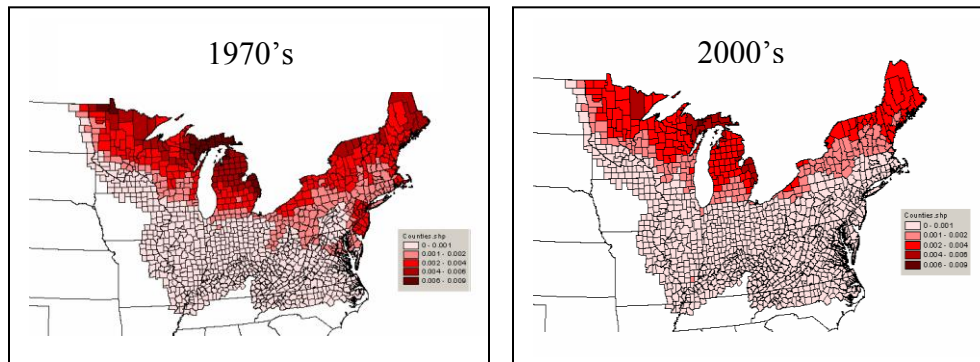


UPPER GREAT LAKES WOODCOCK INITIATIVE

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WOODCOCK ARE DECLINING AS YOUNG FOREST AND SHRUBLAND HABITATS DECLINE

American Woodcock populations have declined 2 to 4 percent per year since the early 1970s. Research has documented that the loss of young forest and shrubland habitats is the primary cause of the decline.



WILDLIFE WITH SIMILAR HABITAT
REQUIREMENTS TO WOODCOCK
ALSO ARE DECLINING

Habitats used by woodcock also support other high priority species in need of conservation action. State Wildlife Action Plans for the Upper Great Lakes states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota list at least 32 species of “Greatest Conservation Need” that require young forest and shrubland habitats.

CONSERVATION AGENCIES AND GROUPS
HAVE RECOGNIZED THE PLIGHT OF WOODCOCK
AND ARE PRIORITIZING RECOVERY ACTIONS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has named American woodcock as one of eight national focus species. The states of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin have declared American woodcock to be a species of greatest conservation need within their respective Wildlife Action Plans. Partners in Flight and the North American Bird Conservation Initiative have ranked woodcock as a highest (global) priority species in need of conservation action.

A PLAN TO REVERSE THE DECLINE IN WOODCOCK HAS
ESTABLISHED HABITAT GOALS

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies assembled the continent’s woodcock scientists to develop a North American Woodcock Conservation Plan. For each region of the continent within woodcock range, the Plan establishes goals for early successional habitat to restore woodcock populations.

THE UPPER GREAT LAKES

WOODCOCK INITIATIVE

State fish and wildlife agencies, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Wildlife Management Institute have assembled a private-public partnership to achieve the goals of the North American Woodcock Conservation Plan in the Upper Great Lakes region. The Upper Great Lakes Woodcock Initiative is based on similar initiatives in the Northern Forest Region and the Appalachian Mountains.

OBJECTIVE OF THE UPPER GREAT

LAKES WOODCOCK INITIATIVE

To halt the decline of American Woodcock populations in the Upper Great Lakes region by implementing woodcock habitat Best Management Practices (BMPs) on public and private lands, monitoring woodcock populations, and providing extensive outreach to private landowners to manage their lands for woodcock habitat.

APPROACH OF THE UPPER GREAT

LAKES WOODCOCK INITIATIVE

This program is envisioned to benefit woodcock habitat on a landscape scale through coordinated research, further development of wildlife/forest management practices, implementation guidelines, and technical education assistance directed toward private landowners. The first project area overlaps with woodcock breeding range. Subsequent projects will address woodcock migration and wintering habitats.

The approach of the Initiative is a linked set of six strategies as follows:

1. Develop Best Management Practices (BMPs) for American Woodcock in diverse habitat types. BMPs will be based on metapopulation theory to aggregate the variety of habitats important for woodcock to create distinct source populations.

2. Implement and test BMPs on public and selected private land demonstration areas. Demonstration areas will reflect the diversity of ecoregions and habitat types available for woodcock.
3. Develop monitoring protocols for woodcock that measure on a scale sensitive to population response to site specific activities and include both measures of abundance and woodcock vital rates.
4. Use monitoring protocols to monitor the population response of woodcock to habitat management.
5. Create case histories for each demonstration area that showcase habitat management BMPs and the response of woodcock populations.
6. Use modern marketing techniques to determine effective outreach strategies to private landowners with BMPs, demonstration areas and case histories as key instructional tools. Techniques will include identification of primary audiences, evaluation of impediments, construction of key messages, development of effective outreach tools and responsive monitoring strategies.

COOPERATORS

**U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U. S. Geological Survey
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Ruffed Grouse Society
Woodcock Minnesota
Wildlife Management Institute**