

Forestry for Maine Birds



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Forest Management Plans for Central Maine Lower Kennebec River Watershed An Overview and Funding Agreement for Landowners

Forestry for Maine Birds (FFMB) integrates bird conservation with forest management. Developed in 2012, the goal of FFMB is to help foresters, loggers, and landowners manage woodlands "with birds in mind" by promoting habitat features that are critically important to forest birds.

Are you interested in seeing more forest birds, brook trout, and other wildlife in your woodland? Want to improve habitat for birds and other fish and wildlife on your land?

Maine Audubon is excited to offer you an opportunity for funding through a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to help pay for the cost of wildlife stewardship or forest management plans that will benefit a wide range of fish and wildlife species in the Central Maine - Lower Kennebec River Watershed.

Participating landowners who agree to have the following elements addressed in their management plans will be provided funding on a first come, first served basis:

- ✓ A variety of forest habitats, including different native tree and shrub species, ages and sizes
- ✓ Habitat for older-forest bird species and species that require large patches of continuous forest
- ✓ High-value habitats such as wetlands, vernal pools, old growth or late successional stands, and deer wintering areas, if they are present on the property
- ✓ Rare, threatened and endangered plant and animal species if they are present on the property
- ✓ Habitat for other species of conservation concern, such as Maine Audubon's "Priority Forest Birds"
- ✓ Areas adjacent to streams, ponds, lakes, and wetlands
- ✓ Maintenance or restoration of pathways for fish and other aquatic creatures where roads or trails cross streams
- ✓ Important wildlife trees - such as dead standing trees, trees with nesting cavities, and nut-producing trees - as well as rotting logs that help support habitat diversity on the forest floor

Whenever possible, your forester will include these elements in the plan as well:

- Using current Best Management Practices to protect soils and water quality
- Identifying and controlling invasive plants that threaten our native forests
- Ensuring that new forest roads and trails are located so they will minimize impacts to sensitive wildlife habitats (including those listed above), and existing roads and trails are retired if no longer needed
- Recommending management activities to promote a more resilient forest in the face of changing climate conditions

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Please note: For more detailed definitions and information about each of these habitat elements and recommendations on how to manage for them, please talk with a forester or see the Fact Sheet titled *Managing Your Woodland with Birds and Wildlife in Mind* and *A Woodland Owner's Guide to Forestry for Maine Birds*. You can find these and other helpful materials on Maine Audubon's Forestry for Maine Birds webpage at <https://www.maineaudubon.org/FFMB>. Your forester will incorporate each relevant element into your plan.

We can provide you with a list of professional wildlife biologists and licensed consulting foresters who are familiar with these elements and/or have participated in our trainings on developing wildlife-friendly Plans for the Central Maine/Lower Kennebec region.

Maine Audubon also has funds available to update an existing forest management plan with wildlife-friendly management practices or to fund activities that will enhance fish and wildlife habitat on your land.

Landowner Financial Assistance

If you own 10 or more forested acres, Maine Audubon has funding available for you to

- 1) enhance wildlife habitat on your woodland for species of conservation concern;
- 2) reconnect streams to improve fish passage;
- 3) work with forestry and wildlife professionals to develop a wildlife stewardship or wildlife-friendly forest management plan; and
- 4) receive funding to help pay for preparing a management plan or conducting habitat improvements in your woods.

Here's how the program works:

Step 1: If you own 10+ acres in the Lower Kennebec River Watershed and are interested in wildlife-friendly forest management, contact Maine Audubon to learn how to access funds to prepare a wildlife-friendly plan or improve habitat on your woodland. Email Hannah at hyoung@maineaudubon.org or call (207)781-2330 x 219.

Step 2: Maine Audubon will connect you with a Maine Forest Service District Forester, who will walk your land with you to discuss options for wildlife-friendly management, incorporating recommendations from our Forestry for Maine Birds and Stream Smart programs.

Step 3A: If you already have a forest management plan, you can talk with Maine Audubon about updating your plan to include more wildlife-friendly forest practices.

Step 3B: If you do not already have a forest management plan, Maine Audubon can help you find a wildlife biologist or private consulting forester to help you write a Plan.

Step 4: Once you commit to creating a Plan that includes provisions to enhance habitat for species and habitats of conservation concern, Maine Audubon can provide funds directly to you to help defray the cost of preparing the plan.

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Maine Audubon Payment will be awarded as follows:

1. Landowner must first sign this agreement to work with a wildlife biologist or forester to prepare a wildlife-friendly stewardship or forest management plan (see below).
2. Landowner must provide documentation to Maine Audubon that they have either:
 - a) contracted with a professional wildlife biologist to draft a habitat stewardship plan, or
 - b) contracted with a Maine licensed consulting forester to draft a wildlife-friendly forest management plan, or
 - c) contracted with a Maine licensed consulting forester to update an existing forest management plan with wildlife-friendly practices.
3. After #1 and #2 above have been completed, Maine Audubon will award funds to landowners to help defray the cost of preparing the stewardship or management plan on a first come-first served basis as follows:

• Woodlots of 10-50 forest acres:	\$300
• Woodlots of 51-150 forest acres:	\$500
• Woodlots of 150-300 forest acres:	\$800
• Woodlots of >300 forest acres:	\$1,000
4. Maine Audubon also has funds available for landowners who already have a fish and wildlife-friendly management plan and are ready to start enhancing habitat right away. Landowners should call Maine Audubon to discuss a proposed project. We can then determine if it is eligible for funds and how much it is likely to cost. Examples of eligible projects include:
 - a) harvesting/cutting competing trees around trees that produce nuts and fruits eaten by wildlife (such as beech, oak and apple trees);
 - b) harvesting/cutting trees crowding high quality large trees to encourage better growth of those trees;
 - c) creating a small gap (from 1/10 to 2 acres) within an older forest stand to increase diversity of both plants and animals;
 - d) creating standing dead trees; and
 - e) replacing a poorly functioning stream crossing to improve stream flow and fish movement.

If you have any questions about this program, please contact Hannah Young, Conservation Assistant at Maine Audubon, at hyoung@maineaudubon.org or 207-781-2330 x219.



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