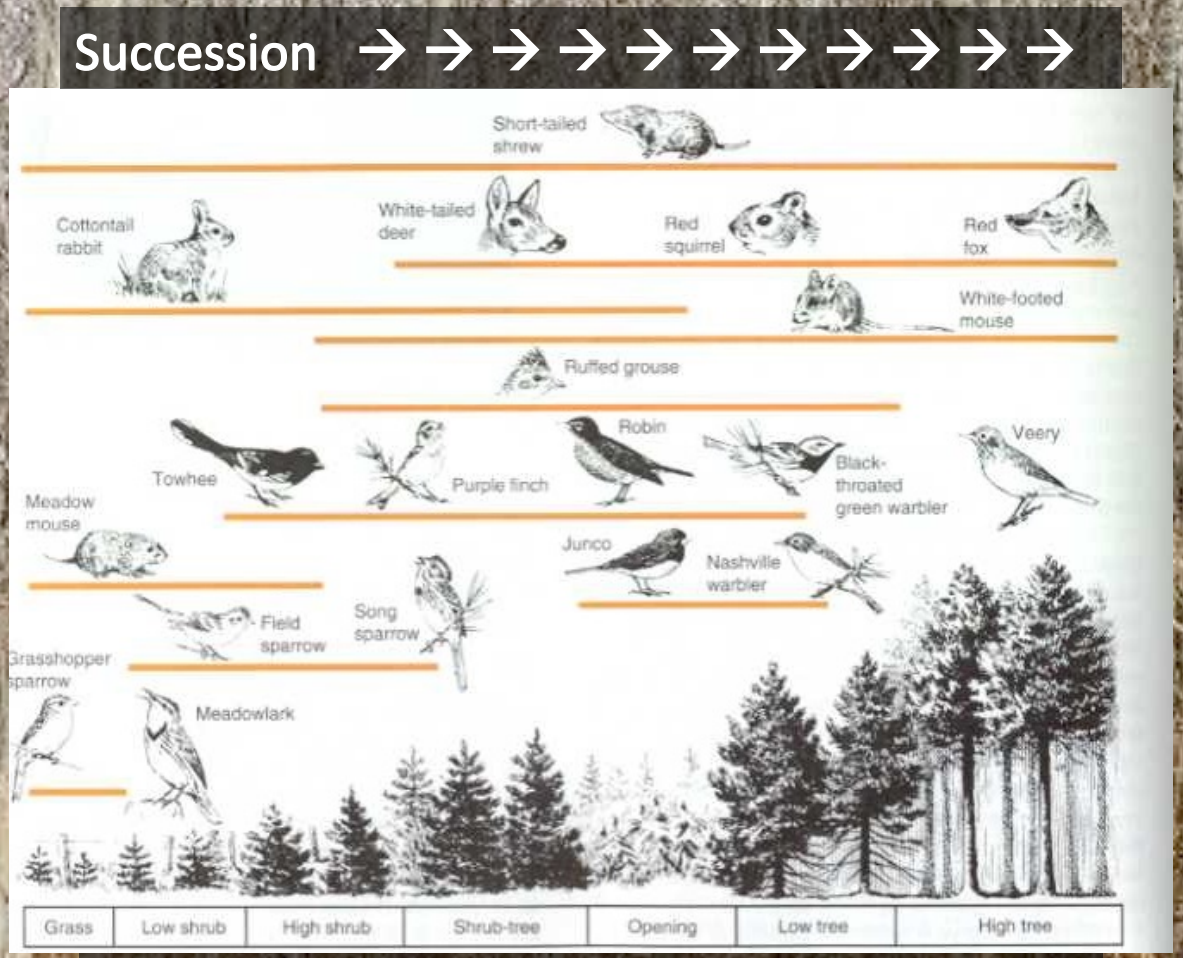
When a Tree Falls Everyone Needs to Hear It

Maximizing the Local Value of Timber Management on Wisconsin's County Forests

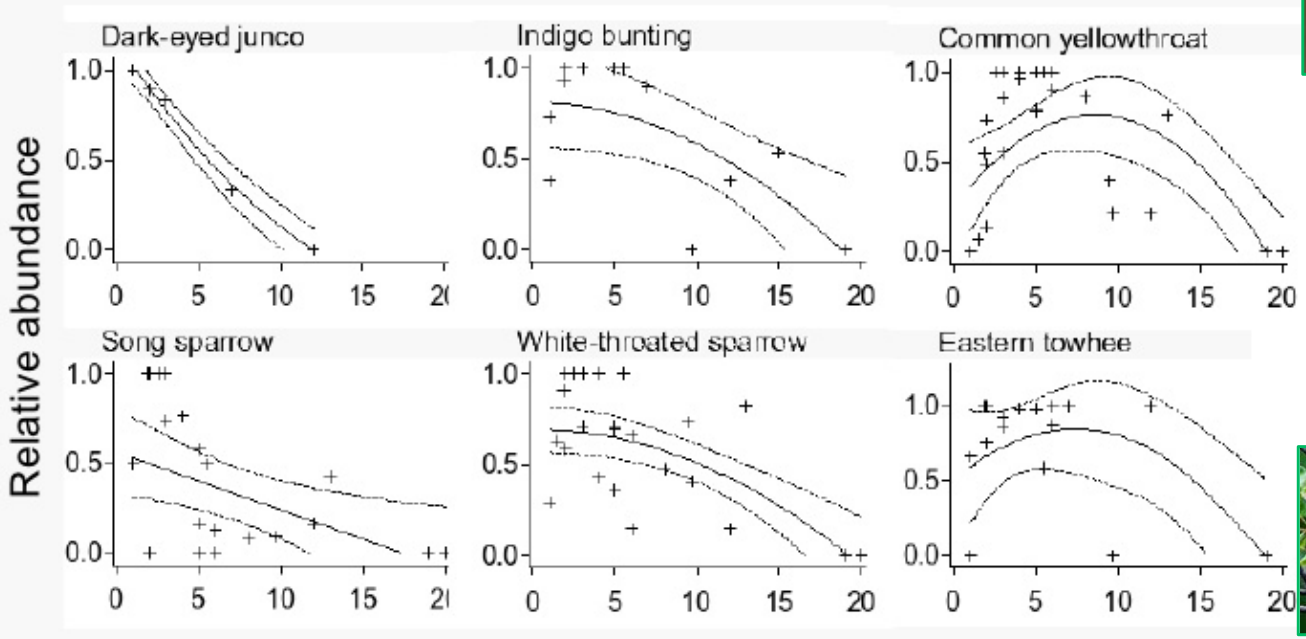
Scott Walter, Regional Biologist
Ruffed Grouse Society/American Woodcock Society

Healthy Forests, Abundant Wildlife, Sporting Traditions

Why Young Forest?



*42 species on state SGCN lists require YF habitat



Schlossberg & King, *J. Wildl. Mgmt.* 2009

New research shedding light on the value of Young Forests

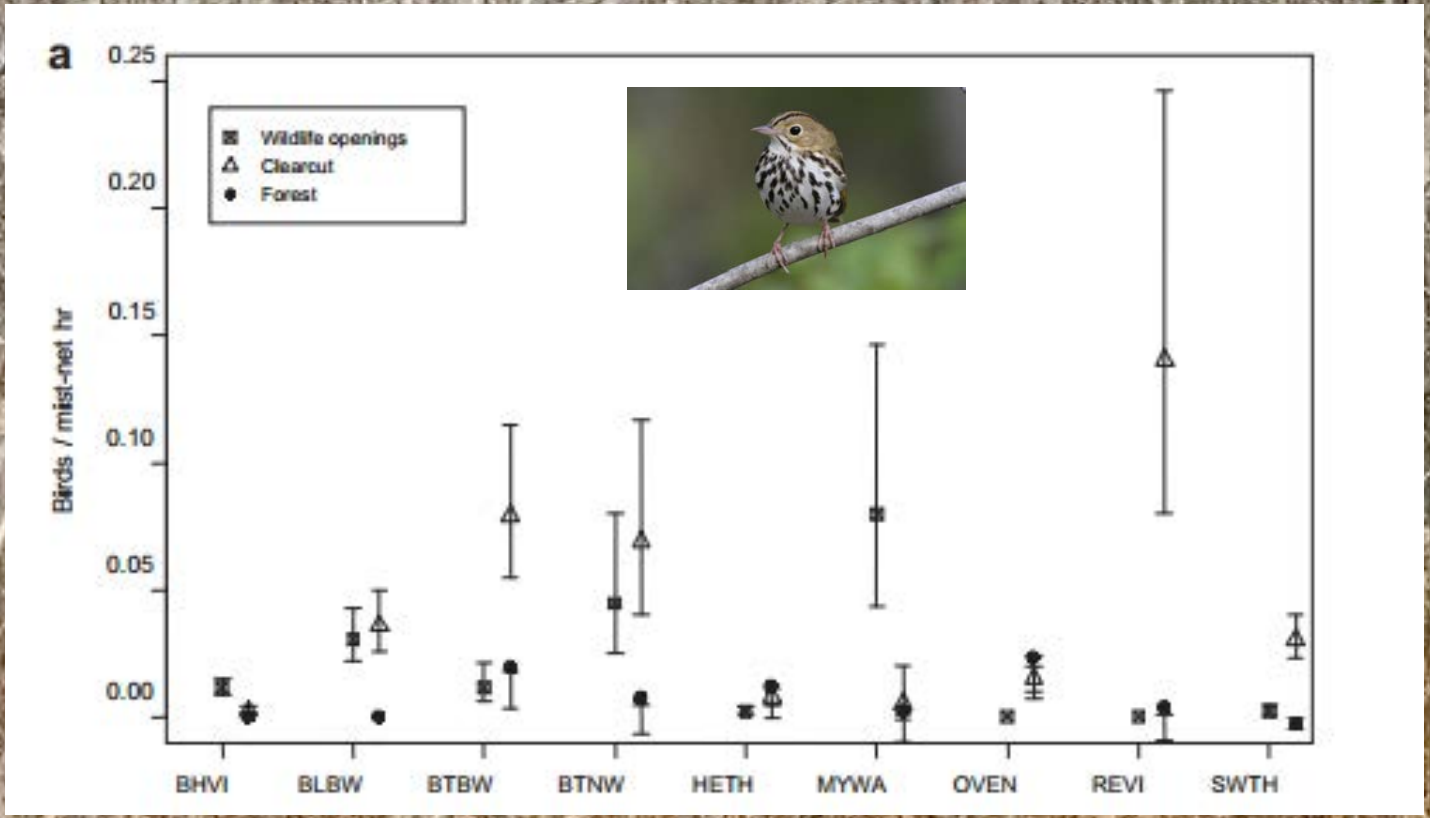
An old dichotomy:

"Young Forest Birds
- Need brushy areas

vs

"Forest Interior Birds"
- Need blocks of mature forest

Turns out, “interior” birds utilize young forests extensively during post-fledging period.

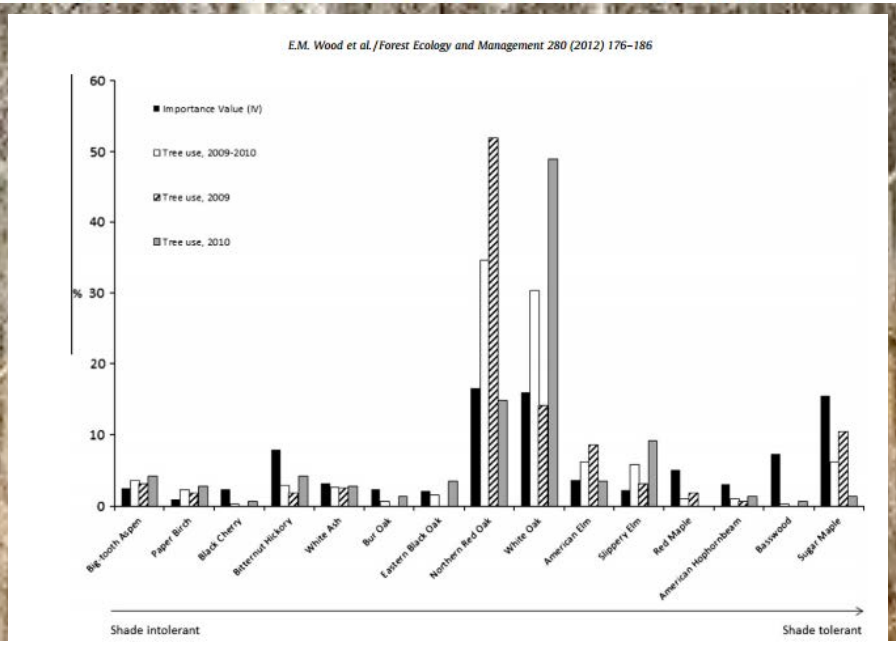


8 species of migrating songbirds express strong selection for oak canopies while foraging.

Birds see the trees inside the forest: The potential impacts of changes in forest composition on songbirds during spring migration

Eric M. Wood *, Anna M. Pidgeon, Feng Liu, David J. Mladenoff

Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1630 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706, USA



Migrating birds utilize young forests to escape predators.

A SERVICE OF THE OUTDOOR WIRE DIGITAL NETWORK WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2015

The Birding Wire

Presented By SWAROVSKI OPTIK

How Do Migrating Birds Avoid Predators While Fueling Up?

Wednesday September 16, 2015 |

Birds stopping for a break during their grueling migratory flights face a difficult tradeoff: They need to fuel up with food as efficiently as possible, but they need to avoid predators while they do it. To learn more about how they make these choices about food availability and predator risk, Jennifer McCabe and Brian Olsen of the University of Maine's Climate Change Institute spent two years capturing birds during fall migration along the coast of Maine. Their results, published in The Auk: Ornithological Advances, show that overall birds prefer to stop in habitat with plenty of dense vegetation in which they can hide from predators such as hawks. However, the longer the migration a bird is facing, the more likely it is to take risks in order to fill up with high-energy fruit.

Researcher Jennifer McCabe releases a robin caught in a mist net as part of the study. Image credit: University of Maine

The six sites they monitored in 2011 and 2012 on Maine's coastal headlands and islands fell into two categories. At some, there was no conflict between food availability and shelter from predators—birds could get both at the same time. However, at others, birds could only access the best food resources by venturing out into the open. Over the course of their two-year study, McCabe and Olsen captured almost 10,000 birds belonging to 28 species, and they found that bird abundance was higher overall in sites that didn't force a tradeoff. The authors speculate that migrants quickly assess a site's safety and productivity, and if a tradeoff is required, they soon move on.

While previous studies had looked at how individual species responded to these competing pressures, McCabe and Olsen's study is unique in that it encompassed all the fruit-eating migratory birds in the area. "The neatest

Diverse forests support outdoor recreation, bolstering local economies.

Sustainable Forestry is an Economic Engine in Wisconsin:

- ✓ 59,500 jobs
- ✓ $22.3 billion in products

We need to be bigger cheerleaders….

…. because public opinion can influence our ability to manage public or private acres.

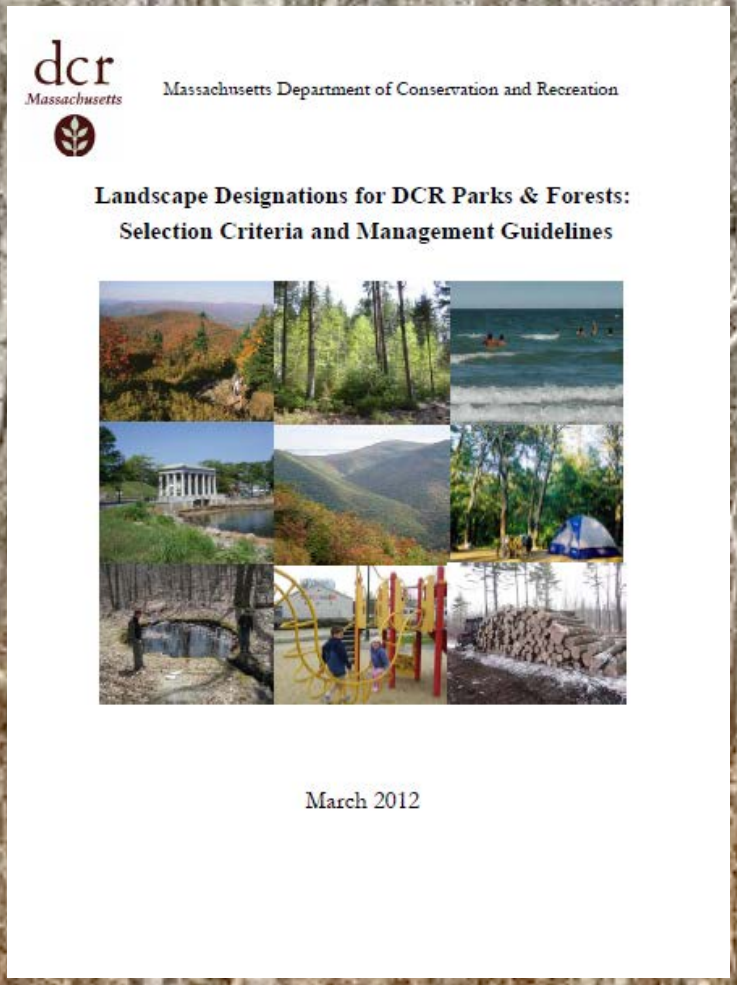
Indiana Forest Alliance * Wild Indiana Campaign *
6-minute testimonial

Indiana Forest Alliance (IFA)

Subscribe 20

2,366 views

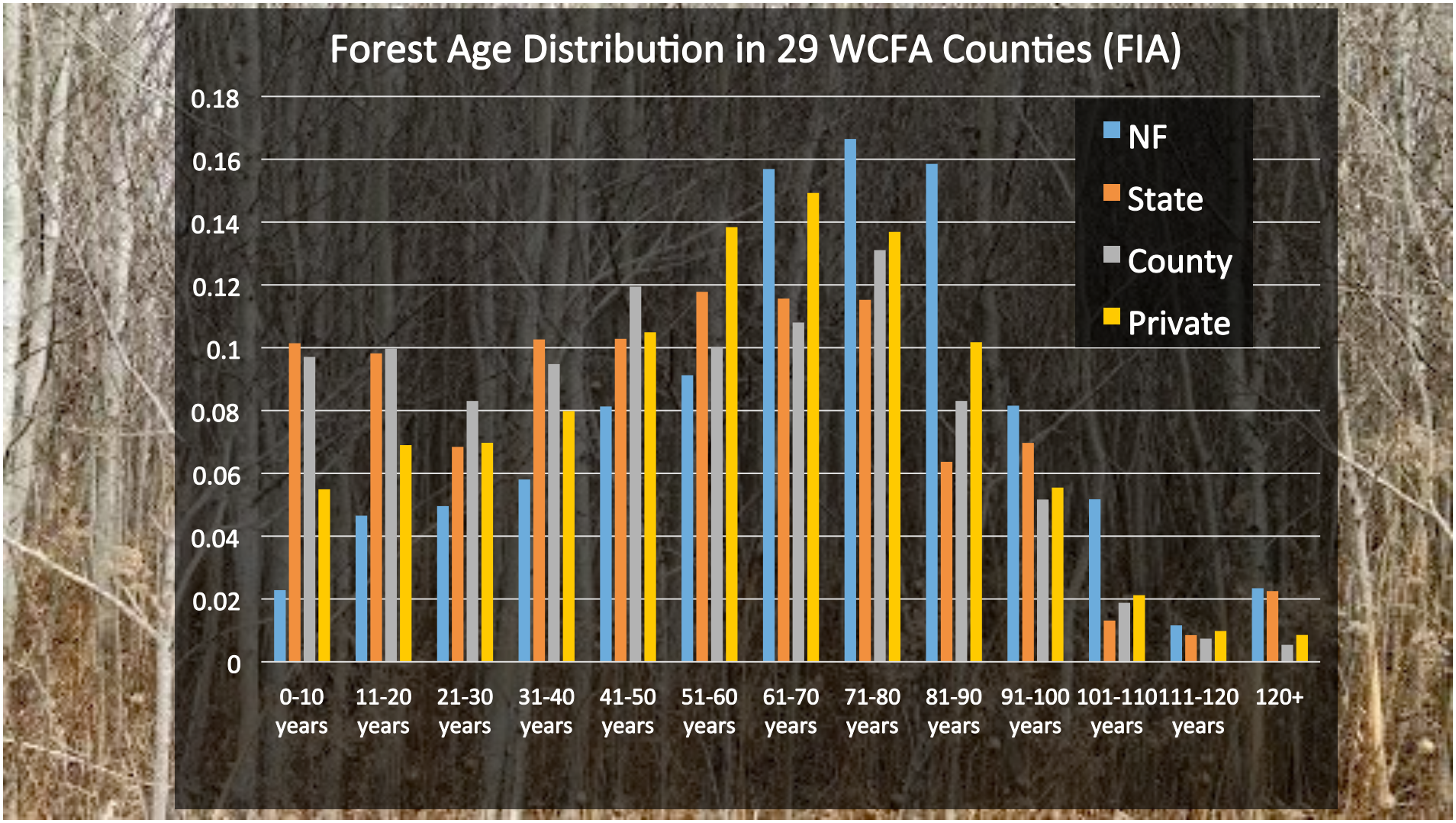
INDIANA FOREST ALLIANCE

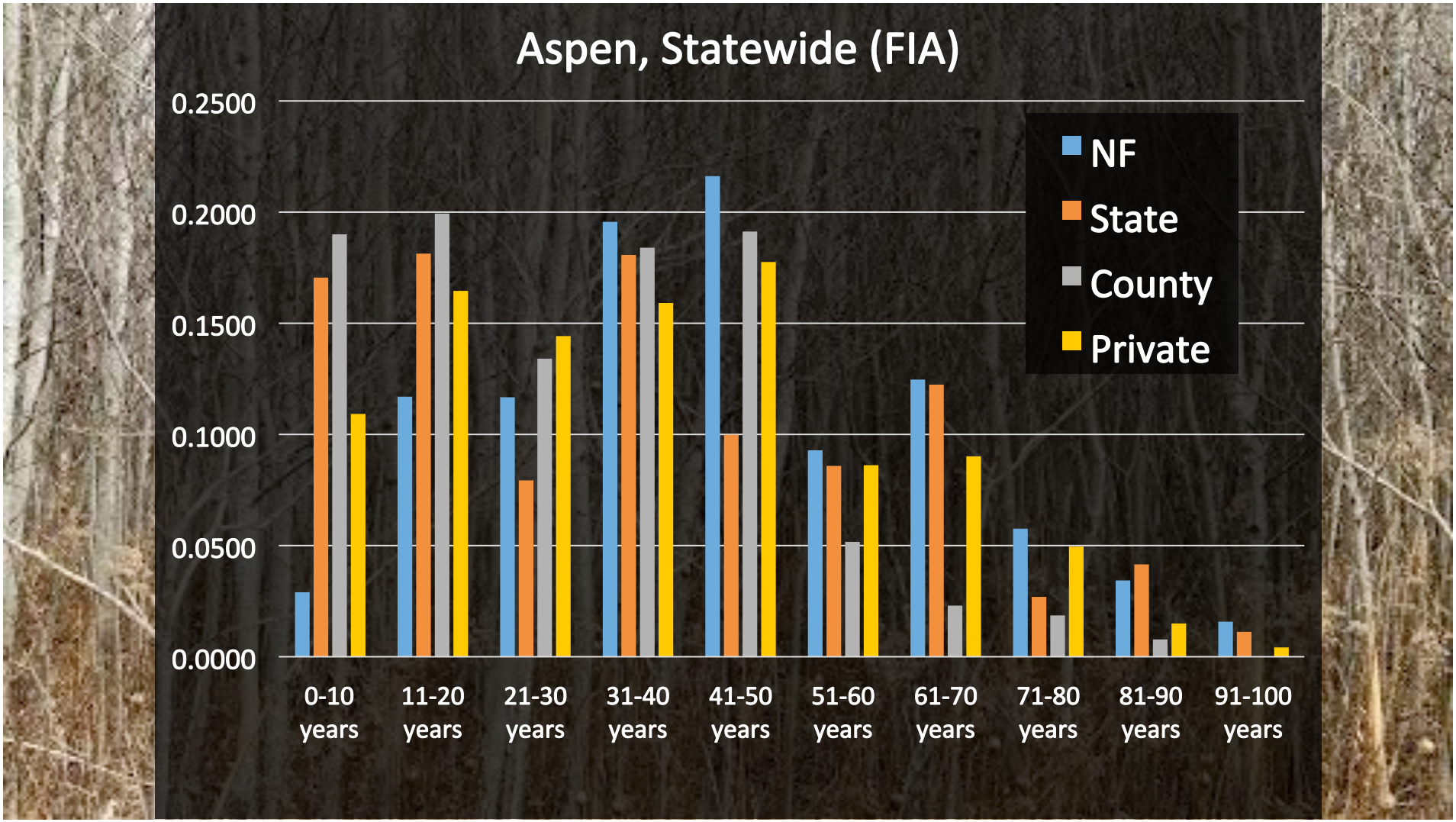


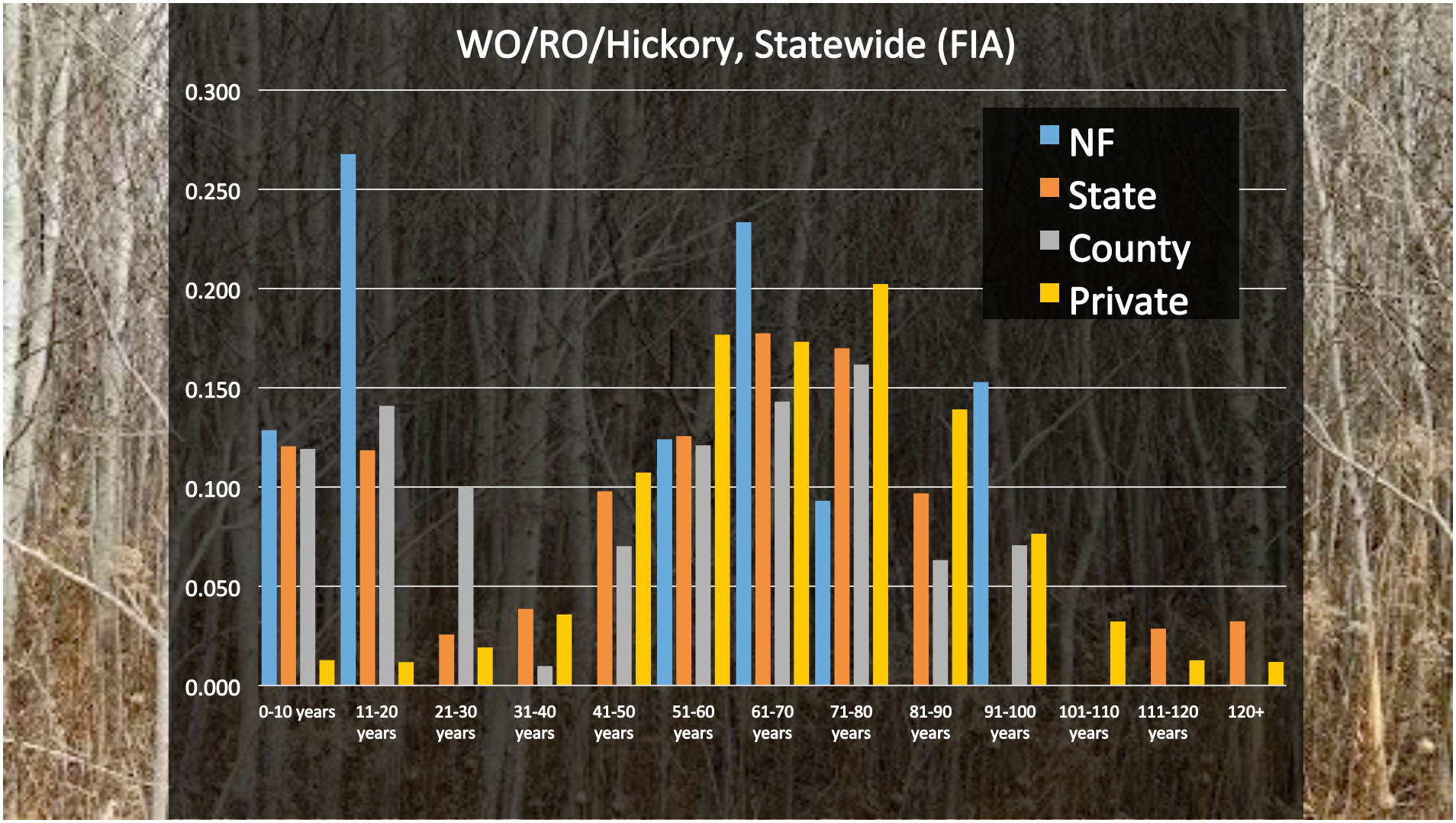
- ✓ 1/3 acre limit on canopy gaps
- ✓ Classifies state forests as:
  - Reserves
    - 90,000 – 120,000 ac
    - No Timber Harvest
  - Parklands
    - 70,000 – 90,000 ac
    - Targeted timber extraction
  - Woodlands
    - 100,000 – 150,000 ac
    - Sustainable timber harvest

Take-home message: God Bless !!!

And a special thanks to the Rusk County foresters…..

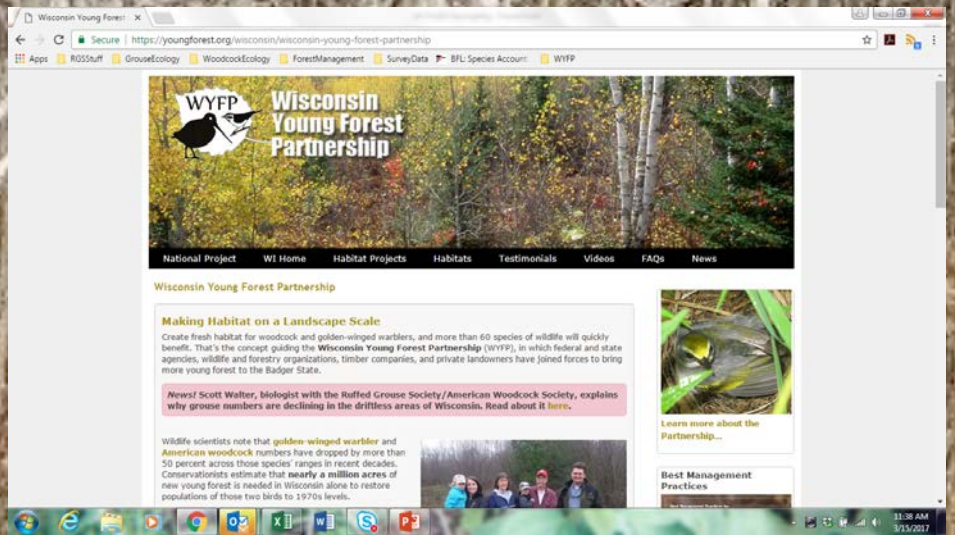

Forest Age Distribution in 29 WCFA Counties (FIA)
0.18
0.16
0.14
0.12
0.1
0.08
0.06
0.04
0.02
0
NF
State
County
Private
0-10 years
11-20 years
21-30 years
31-40 years
41-50 years
51-60 years
61-70 years
71-80 years
81-90 years
91-100 years
101-110 years
111-120 years
120+


Aspen, Statewide (FIA)
0.2500
0.2000
0.1500
0.1000
0.0500
0.0000
NF
State
County
Private
0-10 years
11-20 years
21-30 years
31-40 years
41-50 years
51-60 years
61-70 years
71-80 years
81-90 years
91-100 years


WO/RO/Hickory, Statewide (FIA)
0.300
0.250
0.200
0.150
0.100
0.050
0.000
NF
State
County
Private
0-10 years
11-20 years
21-30 years
31-40 years
41-50 years
51-60 years
61-70 years
71-80 years
81-90 years
91-100 years
101-110 years
111-120 years
120+

Partnerships- Keeping the Pedal to the Metal

Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership



Partnerships- Keeping the Pedal to the Metal

2015-2019 RCPP Grant
-Leverage for $5 million to enhance YF habitat in WI, MI, and MN.

USDA
United States Department of Agriculture

Wisconsin

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Improving Forest Health for Wildlife

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a special effort to build young forest habitat in twenty Northern Wisconsin counties (see map inset). The Natural Resources Conservation Service, in close partnership with the American Bird Conservancy and other key partners, have teamed up to provide planning assistance and funding to offset landowner costs through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for projects that target the Golden-Winged Warbler and also benefit Ruffed Grouse, Woodcock, and White-tailed Deer.

Through RCPP-EQIP, NRCS and partners will help with projects that benefit wildlife, particularly the Golden-Winged Warbler. This forest dependent bird is in decline and benefits from the creation or improvement of young forest habitat. Landowners with extensive areas of alder growing along wetland areas or who have large blocks of even-aged aspen have the best opportunities to create young forest habitat. Young forest habitat improvements most commonly involve shearing alder stand and managing aspen stands for a mix of age classes. The creation of forest openings within those stands provides excellent habitat for a diverse mix of wildlife, including more wildlife edge, increased cover diversity, and additional wildlife food sources.

To get started, contact your local NRCS office or Callie Bertsch, ABC Habitat Coordinator, at (715) 362-5941 x107 or CBertsch@abcbirds.org. Forest owners with an existing forest management plan in place will be a high priority for funding. Technical assistance for forest plan development is also available.

This RCPP project is built through the efforts of many northern Wisconsin partners for conservation. The goals are to increase the quantity and improve the quality of young forests. Wisconsin RCPP partners include the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, American Bird Conservancy, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources, Wisconsin County Forests Association, Ruffed Grouse Society, Wildlife Management Institute, and other organizations.

Additional information about EQIP and RCPP, including an application form and the location of your local NRCS office, may be found at www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov.

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program focuses on restoring habitat for the Golden Winged Warbler (top left), and also benefits other wildlife species like the American Woodcock (top right), the Ruffed Grouse (bottom left), and the White-tailed Deer (bottom right, credit: Flickr/jjgeology). Focus on the Golden Winged Warbler is important because Wisconsin has 22% of the global breeding population. Golden Winged Warblers need open areas, with young stands of aspen or alder to thrive.

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Follow us on Twitter @NRCS_WI

www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. - Financial Assistance Programs - October 2015

Partnerships- Keeping the Pedal to the Metal

RGS Drummer Fund

*Since 1985:

- ✓ 53 projects
- ✓ $497,326
- ✓ 105,658 acres

Ex: Tracy Lake Grouse Project -RGS, Ashland County, Class ACT Charter School.

Ex: 2017 DF Project:

-Promoting Grouse Management Areas on Wisconsin County Forests

Partnerships- Keeping the Pedal to the Metal

Forest-Wildlife Partnership

- ✓ Marketing campaign to educate public

Possible Collaboration: Motorized Forestry Tour

- ✓ Goal: Educate/engage surrounding private landowners.

Price County Forestry Department

Self-Guided Forest Management Tour Series

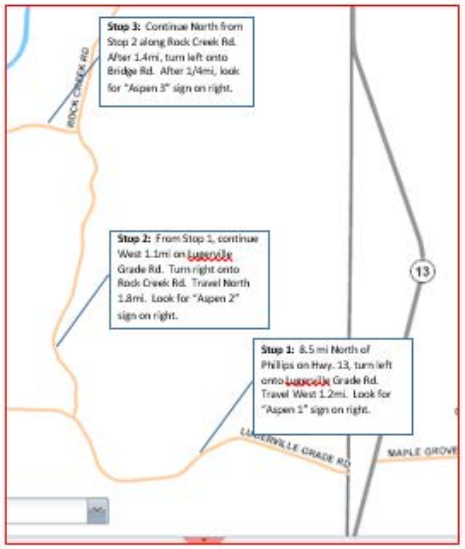
Aspen Regeneration

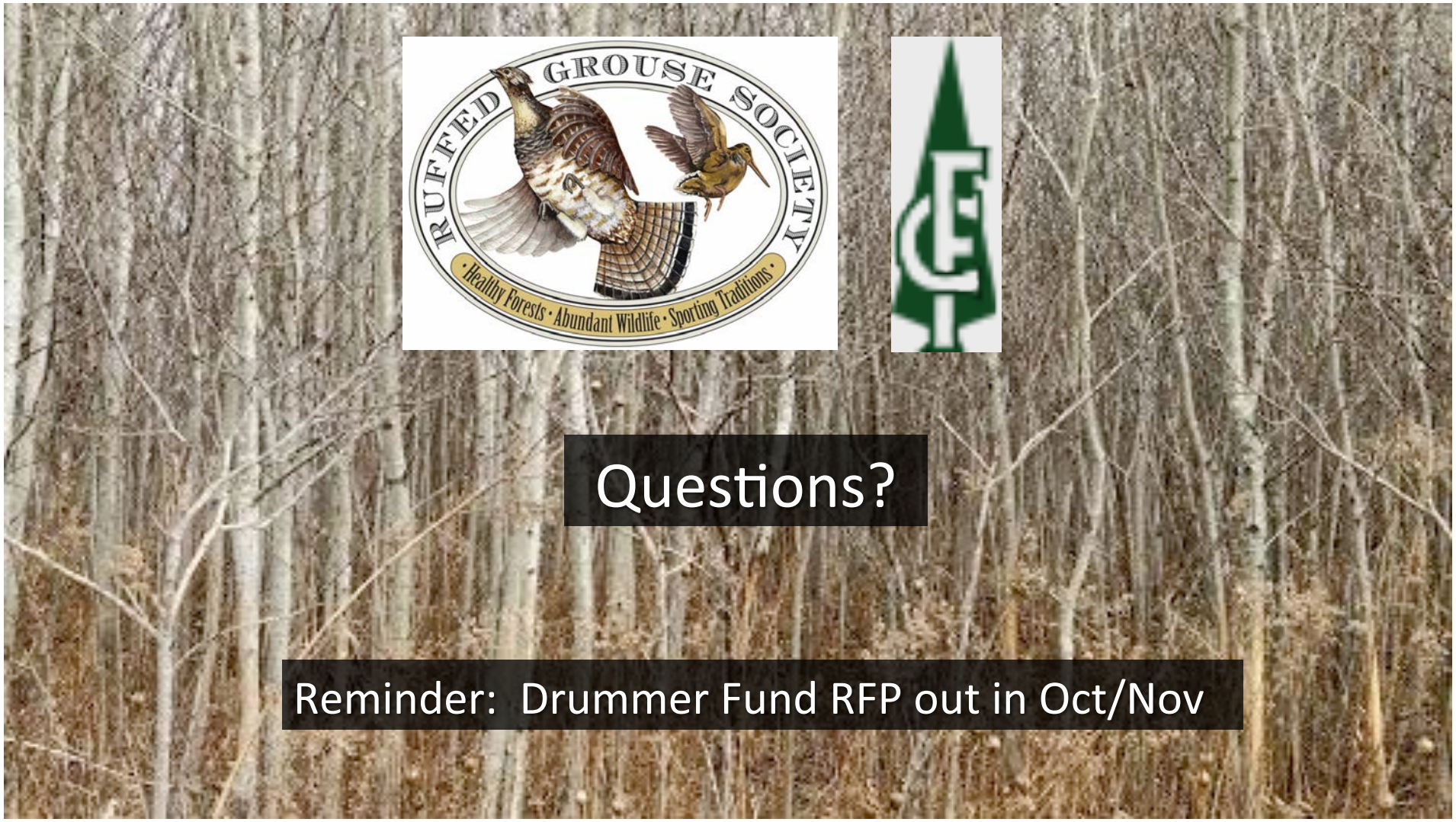
Through active forest management, landowners can increase the economic, aesthetic, and recreational value of their lands, while increasing the habitat base for a diverse wildlife community. The Self-Guided Forest Management Tour Series is intended to allow landowners to view and experience a variety of forest management practices to assist them in developing management options and engaging in appropriate forest management on their own forested acres.

Stop 1: This aspen stand was harvested in 2014. Aspen regenerates by sending thousands of suckers per acre up from its root system, and requires full sunlight to grow. Removing older trees via intensive harvests when they reach economic maturity is therefore the best means of maintaining aspen as a component of your forest. The dense young forest that results provides habitat for a diverse assemblage of wildlife species that would not have been present in the preceding older forest, abundant winter browse for deer, and protective cover for young and migrating songbirds. Leaving residual standing trees as singing perches can also allow use by species such as the rare golden-winged warbler.

Stop 2: This stand was harvested in 2008, and has reached the point where it provides prime cover for ruffed grouse, American woodcock, and other wildlife species that depend upon dense young forest habitats. Evident is the self-thinning process that naturally occurs as individual aspen stems compete with one another for sunlight. This gradual process results in dramatic changes in the structure of aspen stands through time. Also present is a scattered understory of hazel and winterberry, both of which provide food resources and enhance the protective cover of this stand for wildlife.

Stop 3: This aspen stand, harvested in 1989, will be reaching economic maturity in the next 10-15 years. It now resembles an older forest, with fewer, more widely-spaced trees, and provides quality nesting cover and winter food for ruffed grouse, as well as habitat for wildlife species requiring mature forest habitat. Rotating harvest among blocks of aspen ensures all age classes are present on the landscape at any one time, and harvesting in blocks no larger than 10 acres will increase habitat interspersion. If not regenerated, aspen will be replaced by later-successional tree species, sacrificing the long-term diversity in this landscape.




RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY
Healthy Forests · Abundant Wildlife · Sporting Traditions
Questions?
Reminder: Drummer Fund RFP out in Oct/Nov