

Cumberland Town Forests Management Guiding Principles

The Town of Cumberland owns multiple properties that are forested and may be appropriate for active forest management. Below is a list of forest management goals for all primary town-owned forest sites, including as of 2020 the Town Forest, Rines Forest, Knights Pond, and Twin Brook. This list refers specifically to forest management and related activities and not to all other management considerations that are pertinent to each site, such as what types of use are allowed. That will be covered in the other parts of the Management Plan for each property. A site-specific Forest Management Plan shall be developed for each primary forest site that is consistent with these guiding principles and is designed to protect and reflect the unique characteristics of each of the town's forested properties (such as landscape setting, geography, important natural resources, and public use). The Town will strive to manage the town's forests as models of a well-managed community forest.

- Maintain and protect productive soils and water quality, including using Stream Smart crossings, with a particular emphasis on the Mill Creek and Presumpscot River watersheds (see Maine Forest Service 2017 Water Quality BMPs).
- Protect special ecological features and functionality intrinsic to each Forest (i.e., rare plant or animal sites, wetlands, riparian areas, vernal pools, deer wintering areas, rare or exemplary natural communities, late successional forests, dead and downed wood, etc.).
- Manage forest stands in a manner that maintains or improves habitat and the overall biodiversity of native plant communities and fish and wildlife species to the extent possible. Particular emphasis will be on maintaining and expanding structurally complex, mature portions of the forest, balanced by special and unique areas, small gaps of early successional habitat, and reserve areas. Two programs that can help guide this approach are Focus Species Forestry and Forestry for Maine Birds.
- Identify and protect reserve areas as forest stands or compartments which express the following attributes: large blocks of forest, older forest, unusual natural areas (e.g., streams, wetlands, riparian areas, rare natural communities), presence of legacy trees, and topographically or geologically diverse or interesting areas.
- Focus long-rotation silvicultural efforts on stands and compartments with productive soils, good access and of reasonable size and quality. Long-term goals may include increasing structural and species diversity, emphasizing the growth of high-quality sawlogs of commercially important species, promoting the continued sequestration of carbon, and contributing to the local wood products market.
- Maintain resilience of native biodiversity and ecosystem processes in the face of climate change. Increase resilience by managing for multiple age classes; managing for the forest types and species best suited to the site; avoiding conversion to other types (e.g., spruce-fir dominated to hardwood-dominated); and using natural regeneration to retain and increase species diversity characteristic of the site and forest type, including the proportion of species predicted to be better adapted to future

conditions, such as white pine and red oak. In addition, plan for high-volume runoff by using Stream Smart crossings.

- The actual balance of forest type, age, and silvicultural treatment recommended within each forest should be determined in consideration of the habitat matrix of the surrounding landscape. This would include an analysis of the extent and age-class structure of habitats in the surrounding lands as well as opportunities for maintaining and enhancing both terrestrial and aquatic habitat connections and recreational trail connections; and management opportunities across all town forests. In other words, different properties may be managed for different site-specific goals as long as the sum of the whole meets the overall town's forest management goals.
- Make every reasonable effort to control invasive plant species in the forest while reaching out to adjacent landowners to encourage the same.
- Implement exemplary forest management that is consistent with sustainable forestry standards such as those provided by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).
- Strive to keep forest harvesting activities revenue neutral over the long run (this is separate from the cost of managing other activities in the forests such as reducing invasive species, building and maintaining trails, and providing educational signs, etc.).
- Offer quality aesthetic, educational and recreational opportunities to the community for the benefit of the public as long as it doesn't detract from above goals. All trails should be built and maintained to minimize soil erosion and compaction and limit disturbance to fish and wildlife.
- Conduct all harvests in a manner that minimizes impacts to soil, water, and fish and wildlife, including avoiding or minimizing the use of new roads and road-stream crossings; using Stream Smart crossings where crossings are needed; putting unused roads to bed; giving preference to harvesting on frozen ground or dry-soil conditions; avoiding harvesting during peak amphibian and bird nesting times (April 1-July 31); and using appropriate equipment given the silvicultural goals.

Adopted December 14, 2020
Cumberland Town Council