

# Forest Habitat Management for Wood Turtles



## *Wood Turtle Workshop*

*October 21, 2020*

Phillip deMaynadier & Derek Yorks

Wildlife Research and Assessment Section  
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife



Photo: M. Jones



Photo: J. Mays

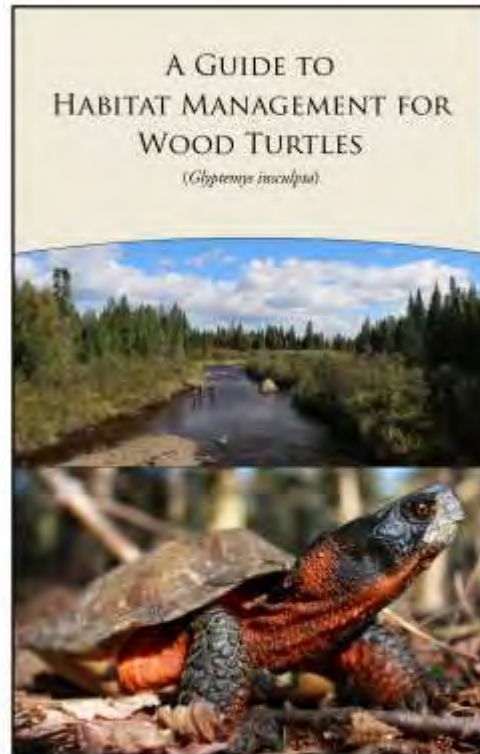
# Forest Habitat Management for Wood Turtles



Status and Conservation  
of the Wood Turtle  
in the Northeastern United States



Made possible by State Wildlife Grants  
and funded by the Northeast Regional Conservation Needs Program



**Northeast Wood Turtle  
Working Group (2009):**



Northeast Association of  
Fish & Wildlife Agencies



# Forest Habitat Management for Wood Turtles



**Potential Concerns:**

**Potential Opportunities:**

# Forest Habitat Management for Wood Turtles



## Potential Concerns:

- Increased public access to trails & roads (roadkill, illegal collection)
- Death or injury by crushing (skidders, feller-bunchers)
- Streambank integrity & riparian zone rutting/erosion
- Coarse woody debris inputs
- Invasive plant species

## Potential Opportunities:

Photo: K. Briggs



# Forest Habitat Management for Wood Turtles



## Potential Concerns

- Increased public access to trails & roads (roadkill, illegal collection)
- Death or injury by crushing (skidders, feller-bunchers)
- Streambank integrity & riparian zone rutting/erosion
- Coarse woody debris inputs
- Invasive plant species

## Potential Opportunities

- New detections and collector vigilance (illegal pet trade)
- Early successional openings (foraging, basking)
- Nesting area creation/enhancement
- Forestry = forests

Photo: K. Briggs



# Forest Habitat Management for Wood Turtles



## Recommended Management Practices:

**Extent:** Maintain a forested riparian management zone within 300 ft of streams and rivers hosting wood turtle populations; for at least 2.0 mi up and downstream.

# Forest Habitat Management for Wood Turtles



## Recommended Management Practices:

**Extent:** Maintain a forested riparian management zone within 300 ft of streams and rivers hosting wood turtle populations; for at least 2.0 mi up and downstream.

### Activity within the Riparian Management Zone (0 to 300 ft):

- **Avoid cutting operations and motorized access between April 15 and October 15**
- Harvest only during dry or frozen ground conditions
- Avoid harvest activity within 50 ft of the shoreline (or associated wetlands)
- Maintain partial canopy cover within 300 ft of the shoreline
- Employ Maine Forest Service BMPs for tributary stream culverts and road crossings
- Minimize construction of permanent roads or openings; discontinue logging roads after operations to discourage access and vehicle use (up to 1000 ft if possible)

# Forest Habitat Management for Wood Turtles



## Potential Co-Occurring Species of Conservation Concern (>20 spp):

*E = State Endangered, T = State Threatened, SC = State Special Concern, FE = Federally Endangered*

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Cobblestone Tiger Beetle (E)                       | Western         |
| 2. White Mountain Tiger Beetle (SC)                   | Western         |
| 3. Brook Floater mussel (T)                           | Central/Eastern |
| 4. Boreal Snaketail (T)                               | Statewide       |
| 5. Riverine Clubtail dragonflies (SC; 5 spp)          | Statewide       |
| 6. Atlantic Salmon (FE)                               | Central/Eastern |
| 7. Brook Trout (SGCN)                                 | Statewide       |
| 8. Riparian Passerine Birds (SC; >10 spp)             | Statewide       |
| 9. Tri-colored & Little Brown Bats (E, SC)            | Statewide       |
| 10. Hardwood Floodplain Forest natural community (S2) | Statewide       |



Photos: J. Abbott, E. Nedeau, J. Mays, and J. DePue



# Forest Habitat Management for Wood Turtles



Photo: M. Jones

## Northeast Wood Turtle Working Group:



Northeast Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

## Workshop Partners:

