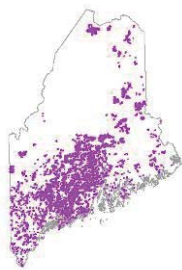




MAINE DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

HABITAT DATASET FACT SHEET

Deer Wintering Areas



Dataset Use: Natural Resource Protection Act (NRPA)

Keywords: DWA, deer, winter, habitat, SWH, NRPA, land cover, significant habitat

DESCRIPTION

A deer wintering area is defined as a forested area used by deer when snow depth in the open/hardwoods exceeds 12 inches, deer sinking depth in the open/hardwoods exceeds 8 inches and mean daily temperatures are below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. Non-forested wetlands, non-stocked clear-cuts, hardwood types, and stands predominated by eastern larch are included within the DWA only if less than 10 acres in size. Agricultural and development areas within DWAs are excluded regardless of size. Evaluation (rating procedure): Deer wintering areas are evaluated based on three criteria: 1) quality of softwood shelter, 2) intensity of deer use, and 3) size. Information on the quality of softwood shelter and intensity of deer use are based on ground survey plots within the final boundary of the DWA being evaluated. The acreage of the DWA is determined after the final outline of the DWA has been drawn. The final rating of the DWA is determined by summing the scores for the three criteria and assigning a rating as follows: high (score of 10-12), moderate (score of 7-9.9) or low (score of 0-6.9). A regional biologist may recommend a rating change with justification and approval by the management section supervisor. No delisting criteria for regulated NRPA DWAs have been developed. Currently all DWAs are rated as indeterminate.

PURPOSE

Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act (MRSA 38.3.1 Article 5-A, Section 480-B.10) defines 'Significant Wildlife Habitat,' which includes 'high and moderate value deer wintering areas and travel corridors as defined by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.' Please see the referenced statute for further information. The polygons

mapped in this GIS dataset delineate the location of each DWA as accurately as possible given available information at the time they were created; however, consultation with a MDIFW Regional Biologist is strongly advised for a final determination of the boundaries and current habitat quality of any specific area. For any Significant Wildlife Habitat, a field determination by the MDIFW Regional Biologist takes precedence over the mapped polygon.

SOURCE HISTORY

Deer use is determined from ground/aerial surveys. Polygon boundaries were primarily digitized from field sketches on topographic quadrangles.



EXAMPLE OF DEER WINTERING AREAS LAYER AND IMAGERY (NAIP 2009)

ACCESS AND USE LIMITATIONS

Distribution of these data to other users by anyone other than Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW), Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP), or Maine Office of Geographic Information Systems (MEGIS) is NOT authorized. Use of these data for identifying Deer Wintering Areas under Maine's Natural Resource Protection Act is the only use that is endorsed by MDIFW; other uses may or may not be valid.

These data are public information provided by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife through the Maine Office of GIS (MEGIS). The MEGIS Data Catalog and MDIFW's website are the only sources of these data that MDIFW ensures are current; copies of these data obtained from any other sources may be out of date (note - the Beginning with Habitat webservice accesses MDIFW's data from the MEGIS Data Catalog and therefore is current as well, but hard-copy maps may not be). These data may not be sold



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and should not be redistributed. These data are not intended to be the final determination of Significant Wildlife Habitat boundaries; please consult with a MDIFW Regional Biologist when a final determination is needed.

For more information about this and other habitat data layers, please contact the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Research and Assessment Section's Habitat Group at (207) 941-4466 or visit our website www.maine.gov/ifw/wildlife/habitat_data/requesting_data.htm

GEOGRAPHIC EXTENT

This dataset includes DWAs in organized townships that qualify as Significant Wildlife Habitat under Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act as mapped by MDIFW Regional Biologists.

ACCURACY

Unknown. Polygons are based on field sketches on topographical maps that were digitized in the 1990s.

UPDATE STATUS

Updates are rare but done on an "as needed" basis with input from the Management Section. A major update is currently in progress.

FUTURE PLANS

A full update of this layer is currently in progress. The update is using historical records, P-FWs, Co-operative DWAs, and current field collected data as a base. The biological DWA is then defined from that base, adjacent softwood stands, and travel corridors that connect large blocks with the DWA complex. The resulting polygon may be modified to close small gaps or to define the boundary by some physical feature that would make management of the area easier, such as a road or a stream. It is unknown when this update will be completed, but possibly by summer 2013.

NEXT SCHEDULED UPDATE

Currently ongoing

CITATION

Habitat data layer fact sheet for Deer Wintering Areas, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, 650 State Street, Bangor, ME 04401

DATA ACCESS LOCATION(S)

MEGIS Data Catalog, State SQL Server, HMAP, MDEP Website