

Threats to Ecological Value

Although this is the largest PCA, in terms of conservation value, its size benefits wildlife most if human encroachment does not disturb the central portions of the site.



The timber removal on the western end of the property, while limited in area, generates large trails due to the heavy equipment involved. Additionally, the resulting open areas of disturbed soil will facilitate the spread of more light-sensitive foreign plants that will reduce the floristic quality of the understory.

If the upland habitats are altered extensively, the conservation value of some parts of the property will diminish.

Management Recommendations



PCA 15 is a very good candidate for conservation priority. Its large size and mixture of upland and wetland communities provide a great habitat for wildlife. In addition, the wetland system acts to strip nutrients and other chemicals from the water that flows into Augusta Creek.

Maintaining native plant communities and managing certain areas for wildlife would help realize the potential ecological value of this large site.

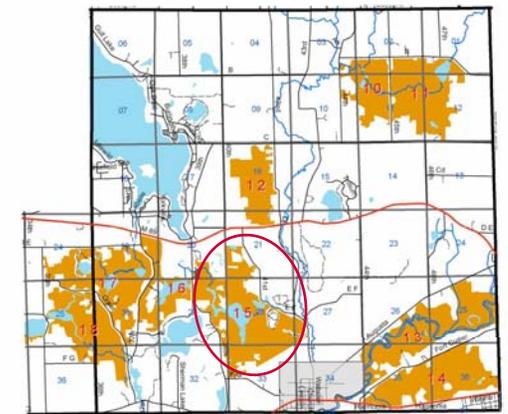


In addition, the property is part of a larger conservation area that spans PCAs 15-19. Large wildlife corridors like these are uncommon in the area and should, if possible, be conserved.

Ross Township Brook Lodge PCA 15

Location

Potential Conservation Area (PCA) 15 is located in sections 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 32, and 33 of Ross Township. Most of the PCA is part of Brook Lodge. The site is roughly bounded by M-89, 41st St., 42nd St., FG Ave., 39th St., and 28th St.



High priority potential conservation areas
Ross Township (and portion of Richland)

Legend

- state highways
- county roads
- township boundary
- Village of Augusta
- lakes
- rivers
- sections
- potential conservation areas



MICHIGAN STATE
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EXTENSION



Michigan
Natural
Resources

Diverse Ecosystems

Site Description

The largest Potential Conservation Area (PCA) in the study, this 890-acre property contains mostly upland forest with several depressional wetlands and a large marsh in the center of the site. The property is bordered by roads, low-density housing, old fields, and a golf course.



Potential conservation area 15
Ross Township
890 acres



- Legend**
- potential conservation area
 - roads
 - wetlands

Communities and Ecosystems

This site comprises an expansive upland forest that is separated in some areas by wetland and lake ecosystems.

In the center of the property is a large depression known as Sherman Farm Marsh,



and east of this marsh is Douglas Lake. Both aquatic habitats are part of the Ransom Creek system, which flows east through the marsh and the lake to eventually join Augusta Creek.

Wetland plant communities vary across PCA 15. Sherman Farm Marsh is approximately half open water and half emergent marsh with many water lilies. Douglas Lake is a shallow lake surrounded by emergent marsh. There is a southern shrub-carr community in the southeastern portion of the site.

The upland areas are almost entirely dry-mesic southern forest of oak-hickory; there are also several pine plantations and old fields on the property.

Plants and Animals of Interest

The large, shallow lake in the center of this PCA experiences little human contact and provides excellent habitat for waterfowl and other aquatic organisms.



Blanding's
Turtle

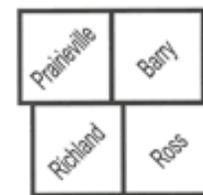


Eastern Box
Turtle

The Blanding's turtle and the Eastern box turtle, both species of special concern, were found in this PCA.

The large size forest in this PCA offers the range necessary for many birds. The 2003 Michigan Breeding Bird Census reported 72 species of birds including four species of special concern in Michigan: prothonotary warbler, hooded warbler, Louisiana waterthrush, and trumpeter swan.

Cut-leaved water parsnip, a state threatened plant, was found on the perimeter of Douglas Lake in the emergent marsh community.



Four Township Water Resources Council

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