

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
to be done within next 10 years

OBJ	STD NO	TYPE	SILVICULTURAL PRESCRIPTION	AC	TO BE REMOVED		TIMING
					BA/AC	TOT VOL	
Ch61B		(All)	Paint Property Boundaries	NA	NA	NA	2020

In general, marking property boundary lines allows the landowner to monitor and manage the tract of land without encroaching on land of others, and helps prevent trespass or encroachment by others onto the subject property. The forest boundary courses were located by this writer, and then painted red in 2014. Boundary paint marks should last 6 to 10 years if a durable, brush type boundary paint is used. At present, there is no regulation regarding what color of paint to use. Red seems to outlast some of the other boundary paint colors. Examine the paint blazes by 2020, and repaint as needed.

The survey map for this property is titled "Lands of Henry M. Shepard to be conveyed to Ruth K. Astman," by Lane Land Surveys, April 6, 1970, and recorded in Map File #59 at the South Berkshire Registry of Deeds in Great Barrington, MA. A reduced copy is included in this Plan. In locating the boundary lines, this writer found all of the iron pipe boundary monuments noted on the 1970 map except for one on the north boundary that is 250 feet easterly from the northeast property corner.

Note: The forest is generally well stocked with desirable dominant trees that are healthy and have potential to grow and increase in value. In most areas, it will be best to maintain a dense overstory as trees continue to mature, and to refrain (over the next several years) from logging or other activity that would substantially disturb the soil surface, to best inhibit the spread of invasive plants. Salvage of damaged or declining trees is encouraged in circumstances where desirable wood products can efficiently be harvested.

Forest Stewardship Practices (optional, not necessary for compliance with Chapter 61B)

STEW	All	All	Invasive Plant Control - Consultation	10 (all forest areas)	-	-	2015-16
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Control of non-native invasive plants is highly recommended. A consultation with an invasive plant control specialist would first identify a range of options, priorities for working in specific areas with regard to cost-effectiveness, potential costs, and potential cost-share reimbursements. Cost-share funding for invasive plant control work may be available through the federal Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS - Pittsfield, MA office). The consultation would provide information to help the owner make decisions as to what control work might be reasonable to pursue and whether volunteer efforts may be reasonable. Most of the invasive plants observed (mainly Japanese barberry, multiflora rose, and honeysuckle shrubs, but also a patch of garlic mustard) occur in the easterly half of the property, though there are likely some sparse plants in the remainder of the tract. These plants displace other indigenous plants, and may preclude regeneration or survival of native vegetation that has more value for wildlife. Though control of invasive plants is desirable and attainable, long term control depends on frequent

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 STD= stand Type= Forest type AC= acre MBF= thousand board feet BA= basal area VOL= volume

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(annual) monitoring and follow-up control work as needed. Seed sources nearby, and seed dispersal by birds, will serve to replenish such plants. Maintaining a dense tree canopy will inhibit the rapid spread of invasive species, which prefer partial or full sunlight. The Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions website <http://maccweb.org/resources_invasive.html> has an identification guide with links to control strategies, and there are many other helpful websites.

STEW All Botanical Consultation 2015

It would be of interest to conduct at least an informal inventory of plants to determine whether there are any uncommon or rare species present, and perhaps to start a checklist of the common herbaceous plants and shrubs. Engage a botanist to inspect the property.

STEW Hiking/Skiing Trail Creation 2,500 feet± 2015-16

A trail or trail network will be created, as improved access for walking and nature study is a high landowner priority. A sketch is attached showing some suggested trail routing that considers the ground suitability (slope, moist soils, stoniness...), but more planning will be done to determine the final location. As sketched, the proposed route would pass the small stone cellar hole and 34" diameter sugar maple next to it at the northeast corner of the property, and pass some other impressively large trees in the back (east end) of the parcel. A couple of narrow drainage swales and one 80-foot+ section of wooded wetland may be crossed, possibly employing very simple wooden plank structures for firm footing.

Parking for those visiting the property needs to be determined, as there is a roadside ditch that prevents pulling cars safely off the west edge of the road along the property's frontage. Two possibilities could be considered:

1. Construct a small parking area in the southeast corner of the property, which is potentially the best location within the parcel to get off of the road. The ditch is shallow and seldom carries water here, and there is almost no embankment.
2. Alternatively, if any needed permitting and/or easements could be obtained, establish a graveled turnout across the road, on the east side of West Road, within the 10-15 foot wide public easement off of the pavement. This would involve much less construction effort, and possibly be safer with respect to traffic visibility.

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STEW	1	WH	Selection Cut/ Improvement Cut	4ac±		5 MBF± & 10 cd±	2015+

Alford Land Trust may choose to perform some selection cutting for various reasons:

1) To create one or more small openings (e.g. ¼ to 1 acre – known as group selection cutting) in the forest canopy by harvesting a chosen group or groups of low quality trees for firewood, sawlogs, or other products to establish dense brush and seedling growth for wildlife habitat diversity. All trees (sapling-size and larger) would be removed from the designated group(s) to allow sunlight to reach the ground. Brush piles beneficial to wildlife could be constructed from some of the remaining slash. Black birch and yellow birch are apt to regenerate most prolifically, though the numerous species present in the overstory now may all regenerate to some extent. (Note: NRCS cost-share funding may be available for creation of early successional habitat as intended here. Check to determine the specifications – particularly the minimum size of the habitat clearing – for eligibility.)

2) To harvest and conserve wood products from one or more mature trees, possibly using some of the wood on site for trail construction (e.g. hemlock planks for walkways over wet ground, benches...).

3) To demonstrate to residents the process of harvesting wood and sawing boards in the context of forest stewardship for combined goals of forest products, wildlife habitat management, and recreational use.

A unique opportunity exists to accomplish small scale, low impact harvesting on this land. David Shepard currently has a small sawmill at the farm just a few hundred feet south, and does some logging with both farm tractor and skidder. Logs or firewood could be skidded directly to his mill site with no trucking needed.

Any prospective wood harvesting within the 10-year term of this plan would likely be done in the westerly half of the property.

STEW

Monitoring

Annually

Alford Land Trust staff or a contracted individual with forestry or natural resources training will monitor this property annually, when foliage is on, to assess the presence of invasive plants, unusual insect or disease occurrence or general forest health symptoms often evidenced by thinning, paling, or absence of foliage, and damage to the forest from severe weather. This can be done in conjunction with monitoring for unauthorized uses of the property. Follow up with an assessment by a specialist if indicated.

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STEW	All	Prepare/Update Forest Management Plan	2025
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Once every ten years, an updated forest management plan must be prepared and approved by the state forester (Department of Conservation and Recreation) to qualify the forest area for Stewardship and for Chapter 61B. (If forest management is practiced for a property classified in Chapter 61B, a DCR-approved forest management plan must be in place.) Schedule this with consulting forester in 2024.

Other General Management Suggestions:

1. For all logging practices, use up-to-date Best Management Practices. Since there are wooded wetlands and areas with seasonal high water table, logging should be performed when the ground is dry, or during freezing winter weather, when log skidding trails would freeze.
2. For any anticipated logging practices (even salvage cutting of one or more damaged trees), inspect for presence of invasive plant species in working areas and attempt to eliminate or inhibit their growth and spread. These most commonly include Japanese barberry, bittersweet, honeysuckle, multiflora rose, and common buckthorn.
3. Preserve all historic cultural features, such as stone walls and stone foundations. Add additional features to the map when encountered.
4. Every 1 to 2 years (at least) examine the management plan and consider the need for amended practices based on stand conditions, markets, and possible changes of ownership goals.
5. All activity on the property should take into account the potential for uncommon or rare plant species -- particularly in or near wetlands. At this writing, the Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program maps do not indicate Priority Habitat or Estimated Habitat (for rare or threatened species), though an area of Species of Conservation Concern is mapped just across the road along the Alford Brook corridor.
6. Harvesting: The standard cable-type log skidder is by far the most common logging method locally, though a small percent of loggers use grapple skidders. Smaller models of skidders, bulldozers, or even a farm tractor with cable winch, would be well suited to selection cutting or salvage cutting anticipated on this parcel in the future. Mechanized tree fellers are in operation, but are more commonly used for larger scale timber harvesting and land clearing in this locality. Compliance with Massachusetts Best Management Practices for logging, including suspending log skidding operations during wet periods and observing appropriate buffer or filter strips near wetlands and vernal pools, will generally satisfy most environmental concerns related to timber

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harvesting. For commercial timber harvests, seek out local loggers with established reputations and apparent commitment to land stewardship, and supervise forest management activities directly or through a consulting forester.

7. TO MAINTAIN CHAPTER 61B TAX CLASSIFICATION, APPLY TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSORS BY OCTOBER 1 EACH YEAR, USING STATE TAX FORM CL-1.

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