



Other Features: Urban

Description

Urban areas are those areas where more than 25% of the structures are man-made (e.g., parking lots, buildings).

General Condition of Feature

Urban areas generally provide little wildlife habitat and new urban areas often displace more productive wildlife habitat.

Associated Natural Communities

N/A – No defined natural communities

Associated Species of Greatest Conservation Need

BIRDS

- peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)
- common nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*)

Associated Threats

HABITAT CONVERSION

- Industrial, residential, and recreational development

BIOLOGICAL INTERACTIONS

- Invasive plants and animals: House cats and other pets may pose a threat to local wildlife communities.
- Other biological interactions: Human provided food sources may allow for unnaturally high levels of some opportunistic species like raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) and skunks (*Mephitis mephitis*).

OTHER

- Historic status/current abundance: Urban areas are uncommon in the Eastern Upper Peninsula. The urban centers of Sault Ste. Marie and Escanaba both contain populations of less than 20,000 people. Most towns in the Eastern Upper Peninsula have populations of less than 5,000 residents.

Conservation Actions Needed [Threats addressed]

LAND, WATER & SPECIES MANAGEMENT

- Institute invasive species monitoring, prevention and control programs. [Invasive plants and animals]

LAW & POLICY

- Work with municipalities to develop planning and zoning ordinances which incorporate consideration of greenspace. [Industrial, residential and recreational development]

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

- Create awareness in the general public of wildlife populations using urban areas. [Other biological interactions]

Research and Survey Needs

- Develop models which predict urban growth and its impacts on wildlife.
- Evaluate land management and development practices within urban settings to determine methods that minimize impacts on conditions for wildlife.
- Assess the impact of contaminants on wildlife. Which contaminants are present and in what concentrations? Does the reaction vary by species?
- Evaluate the impact on wildlife populations of collisions, both with stationary and mobile objects.
- Evaluate the impact on wildlife of light pollution. Do different wavelengths have different effects? Do effects vary by species? Are there other characteristics of artificial light which are important to wildlife behavior and the value of urban systems to wildlife?
- Assess the biological and chemical composition of effluent and run-off that is generated in urban systems. How does this effect the value to wildlife of these systems?
- Examine the status of wildlife corridors in urban systems. How large do they need to be? How far may isolated patches of greenspace be separated before individuals require connecting habitat to travel between them? Are there characteristics of corridors that increase their value to wildlife?

Monitoring

- Track the density and distribution of urban systems across the landscape.
- Track collision mortality (vehicle, tower, etc.) of wildlife species.
- Track the intensity and diversity of pesticide use.