

## Hiawatha Sportsman's Club

**Issue:** Concern has been growing for many years regarding the health of the aspen resource throughout the eastern UP. Aspen stands have reached the age where their ecological viability is jeopardized (assuming fire and windthrow are relatively rare events). Aspen is critical for deer, grouse, woodcock, and rabbits as well as many other species of animals.

The 1978 management plan anticipated regenerating the majority of the aspen resource by 1990. This plan was not implemented. During the 1990's the strategy was to spread the aspen harvest out until the year 2015. This would allow a steady flow of aspen habitat for the following 50 years (i.e. harvest approximately 1/50 per year). However as the resource has aged this strategy has become high risk. It is unlikely that the stands will remain viable for many more years.

In 1998 the HSC board approved a 5-year plan to accelerate the aspen harvest. This was only partially implemented in 1999 due to storm salvage and has been implemented in 2000 through 2008.

**It should be noted that the 2005 land purchase included aspen acreage.**

**Goal:** Maintain the existing aspen habitat component on the Club - approximately 25%.

<b>2008 Density distribution of pole size aspen/birch</b>			
<b>A6/B6</b>	<b>A5/B5</b>	<b>A4/B4</b>	<b>Total</b>
1,108	1,197	1,087	3,392
33%	35%	32%	100%

Assuming 80% of the A6/B6 can be regenerated, 80% of the A5/B5, and 50% of the A4/B4, would leave approximately 2,387 acres in need of harvest. Harvesting this over the next 10 years would indicate 239 acres/year but if we need to harvest it over the next 6 years the harvest would be 398 acres/year.

**Past:** The 7 year average aspen harvest has been 264 acres/year.

Recent years have seen priorities change due to forest health issues (jack pine budworm and BBD).

Some stands or portions of stands have already converted to pine (red or white), or hardwoods.

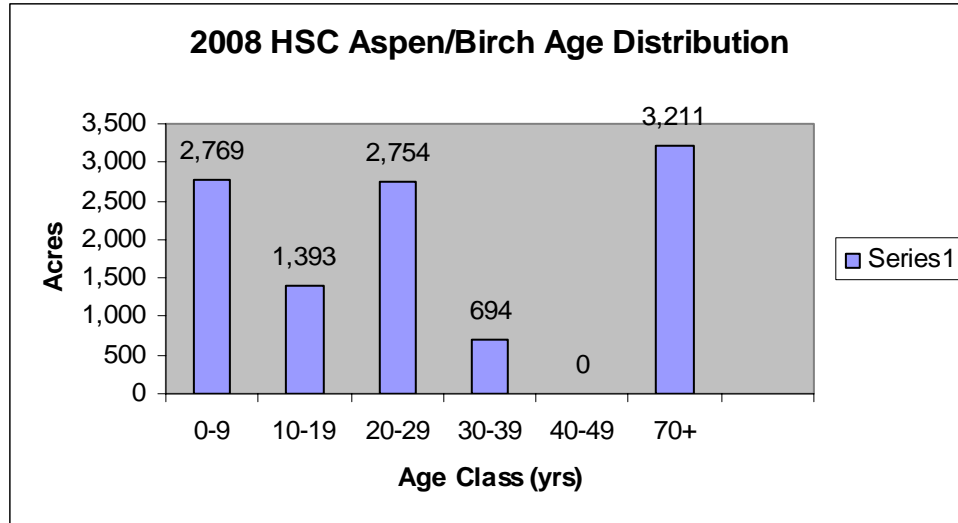
Aspen harvest areas are included within other harvest types.

Below is the actual harvest by year, by forest type. **Type and acres are from the existing type and acres after harvest and re-inventory (i.e. the most recent data).**

Sum of ACRES	TYPE										Grand Total
	Z_YR_HARVE	A	G	J	M	N	O	Q	R	W	
2002	277					123	1				401
2003	219	4	373	71	128			84			879
2004	215		247	41	15						518
2005	250	5	30	187	37		29		2		540
2006	199	7	70	607					1		884
2007	288		20	230						6	543
2008	399			85	10					6	500
Grand Total	1,846	16	740	1,222	313	1	29	85	13		4,266

Recommendation:

1. 2009 aspen harvest should be 300 to 400 acres+- (the 1/1/09 to 3/31/09 aspen harvest was approximately 120 acres).
2. Maintain an accelerated aspen harvest.
3. Provide information to the Board and membership why this is our recommendation.
4. Let membership know that this accelerated harvest will be visible.
5. Mark pine leave trees within the harvests rather than leaving all pine. This will allow better establishment of the new habitat.



2008 Size distribution of aspen/birch		
<b>Aspen/birch</b>		
Saplings	7,432	69%
Poles	3,392	31%
	10,823	100%

**2008 Forest stocking by age for aspen/birch forest type.**

Age Class	Nonstock	poor	medium	good	Total	%
0-9		10	562	2,197	2,769	26%
10-19		0	112	1,281	1,393	13%
20-29		0	411	2,343	2,754	25%
30-39		0	112	582	694	6%
40-49		0	0	0	0	0%
70+		1,087	1,093	1,032	3,211	30%
	0	1,097	2,290	7,435	10,822	100%
	0%	10%	21%	69%	100%	

No age information is available for 10 acres saplings.  
Poles without age information are assumed to exceed 70 years old).

Note: During the late 1990's the deer impact on aspen regeneration was significant.

