

from Harold Mayfield  
October 24, 1975

### CRITICAL HABITAT

The critical habitat for the Kirtland's Warbler is defined to mean areas that are presently occupied by nesting pairs and areas that may be utilized by nesting pairs at some future time. The inclusion of potential nesting areas is vital because the bird's occupancy of any tract is temporary, extending through only one early stage of the jack pine growth cycle.

Criteria for identifying critical habitat not now occupied by Kirtland's Warblers are as follows:

1. Land previously used by the species.
2. Forest cover now mainly jack pine.
3. Soil type, Grayling Sand.
4. Very small hardwood (oak) component.
5. Tracts of about 320 A. or larger, preferably where 5 or more of them lie within 2 miles of each other.
6. Preferably now in public ownership (state or national forests).
7. Limited development for other purposes.

The plan calls for forests to be managed also for eventual harvesting of the timber. In this region jack pine may be cut economically at about 45 years of age. Within this age span, the warbler occupies a tract for about 12 years. Therefore, a stable population of 1,000 pairs calls for 30,000 acres of prime habitat at all times (30 A. per pair), which will be available in a managed critical habitat of at least 100,000 acres.