Wildlife Habitat on Westside Small Woodlands

A few quick Recommendations for your land

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Goal = Habitat Diversity - maintain and enhance the various habitat types on your property.   This will provide the best opportunities for the myriad of species that live on your woodland
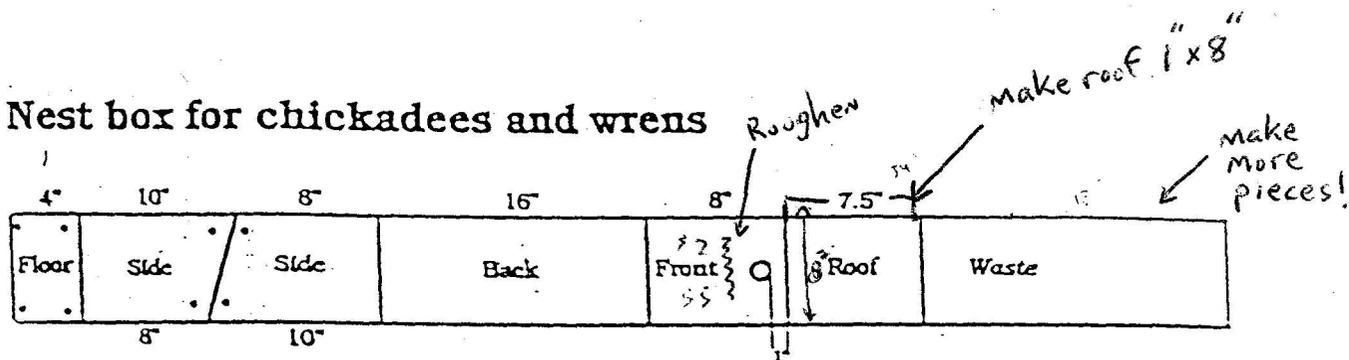
Protect existing habitat features
1.   Locate and protect unique habitats - wetlands, springs and seeps, aspen stands, riparian zones.   Retain buffers, and use fencing if necessary to keep livestock out.

2.   Wildlife Trees - locate best quality snags and live trees with dead tops, cavities, feeding excavations.   Protect those standing dead trees in decay states providing cavity habitats.   Retain broken and multiple topped trees. Buffer with no cut patches around best snags if harvesting to prevent falling for safety.

3.   Down logs - retain and protect all larger down logs, esp. those in advanced decay - If in way during logging, move them to a safe place. Try not to crush.

4.   Understory shrubs and low trees - Retain preferred species such as cascara, huckleberry, elderberry, wild rose, etc.   Emphasize those that bear fruit for wildlife.

5.   Gather firewood by cutting small diameter green trees: Thinning.   Allow to cure for a year or more before burning.   This will help with retention of snags and development of cavity trees.

Enhancements
1.   Create snags during thinning and harvests.   Mechanical harvesters can snip stems off at 8-15 feet with little effort.   These short snags become cavity habitat in a few years.   Thinning crews can make short snags out of 4-6" trees. Snags can be created by girdling and/or removing tops.

2.   Create Habitat piles.   Stack larger branches and stems into crisscross piles with stems/branches at least 4" diameter.   Use larger material piled at least 4-6 layers deep to form the core.   Cover with a "roof" of smaller branches 1-2 feet thick.

3.   Create Openings in stands with uniform canopies.   Patch cuts approximately 100 to 200 feet across will allow sun to reach the ground and provide low plants for wildlife.

4.   Plant shrubs - identify preferred species of fruit bearing shrubs (elderberry, serviceberry, chokecherry) and plant in openings or along edges.   These may need browse protection.

5.   Plant seed mixes on disturbed sites such as skid trails and landings.   This can provide forage for wildlife and help prevent weeds.

6.   Install Nest Boxes.   These can provide cavity habitat for nesting birds and small mammals (such as squirrels and chipmunks).   Birds such as chickadees and wrens will use boxes installed within the forest canopy.   Bluebirds and swallows will use boxes around the edges of openings.

NEST BOX DESIGNS FOR CHICKADEES, WRENS, & SWALLOWS

Nest box for chickadees and wrens

Roughen

make roof 1"x 8"

make more pieces!

4"	10"	8"	16"	8"	7.5"		
Floor	Side	Side	Back	Front		Roof	Waste

8"   10"

One six-foot 1" x 6" (nominal size) board, cut as shown.
Entrance hole is 1-1/8 inches in diameter.
(-1 ½")

Hinge side or FronT with nails or
screws To open for cleaning.
LaTch with benT nails.
Roughen inside of door To
help babies climb ouT

★ An excellenT, general design
for mosT foresT criTTers ThaT
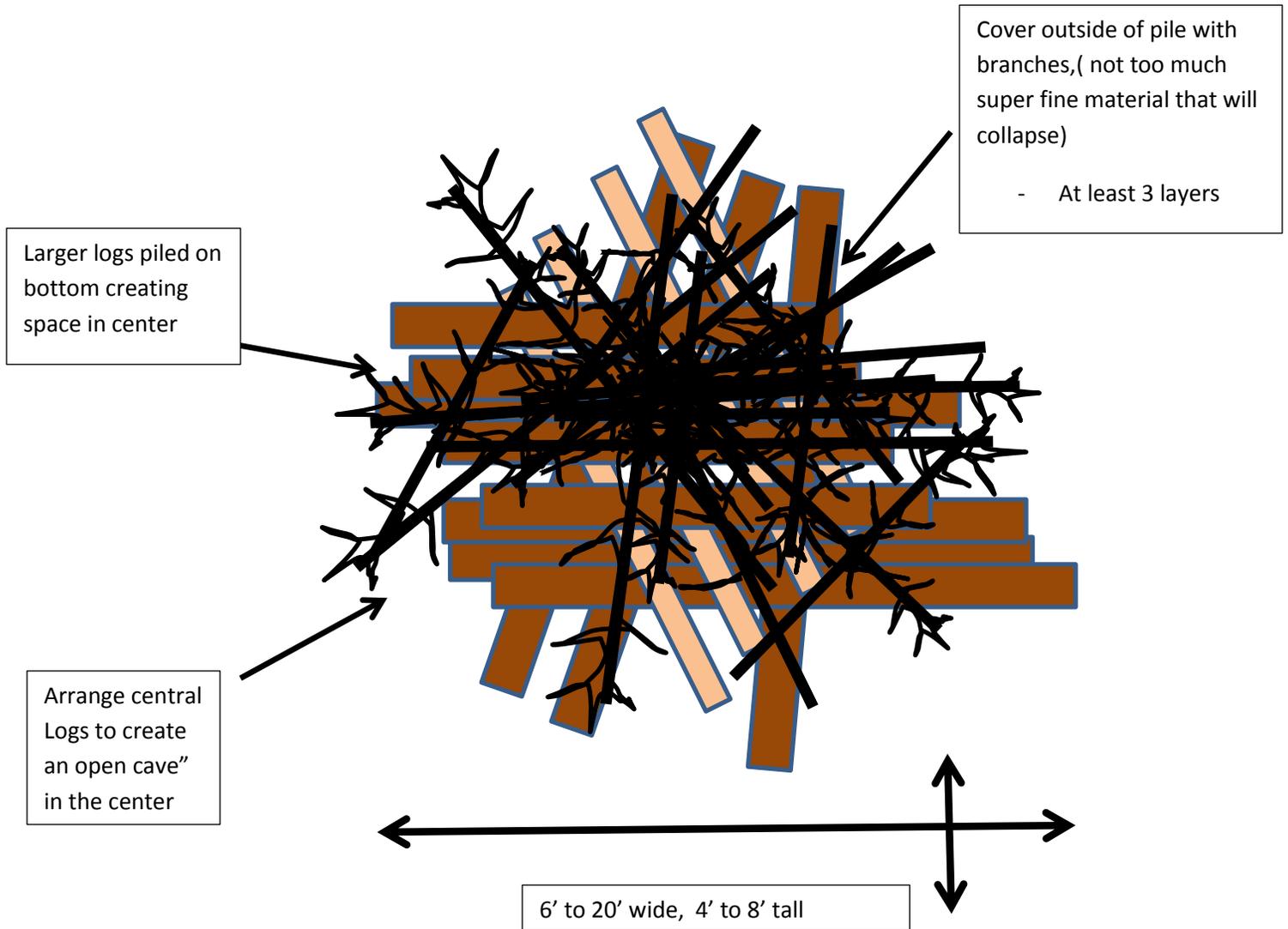use caviTies. Place aT eye
level with a few leaves or
dry needles in box. Clean box annually.

(Expand proporTions for owls, squirrels, eTc.)

Caulk

Hinge
NAIL
or
screw

BENT
LaTch
NAILS
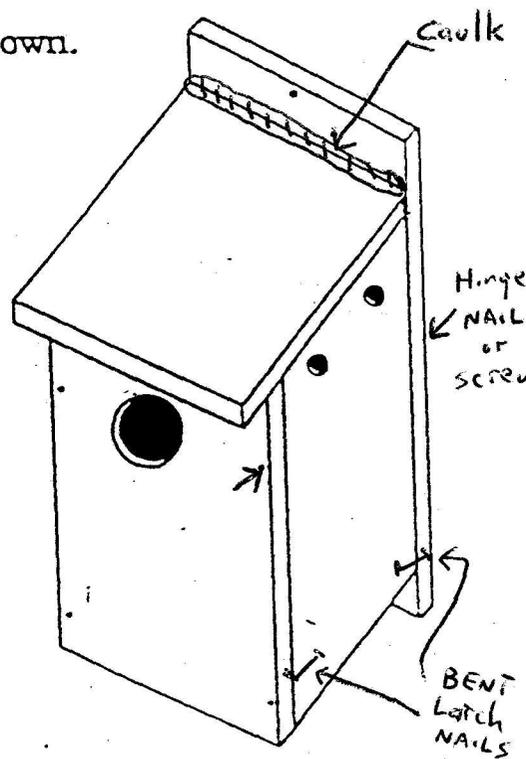
Constructed Habitat Pile for Wildlife

(top view)

Cover outside of pile with branches,(not too much super fine material that will collapse)

- At least 3 layers

Larger logs piled on bottom creating space in center

Arrange central Logs to create an open cave" in the center
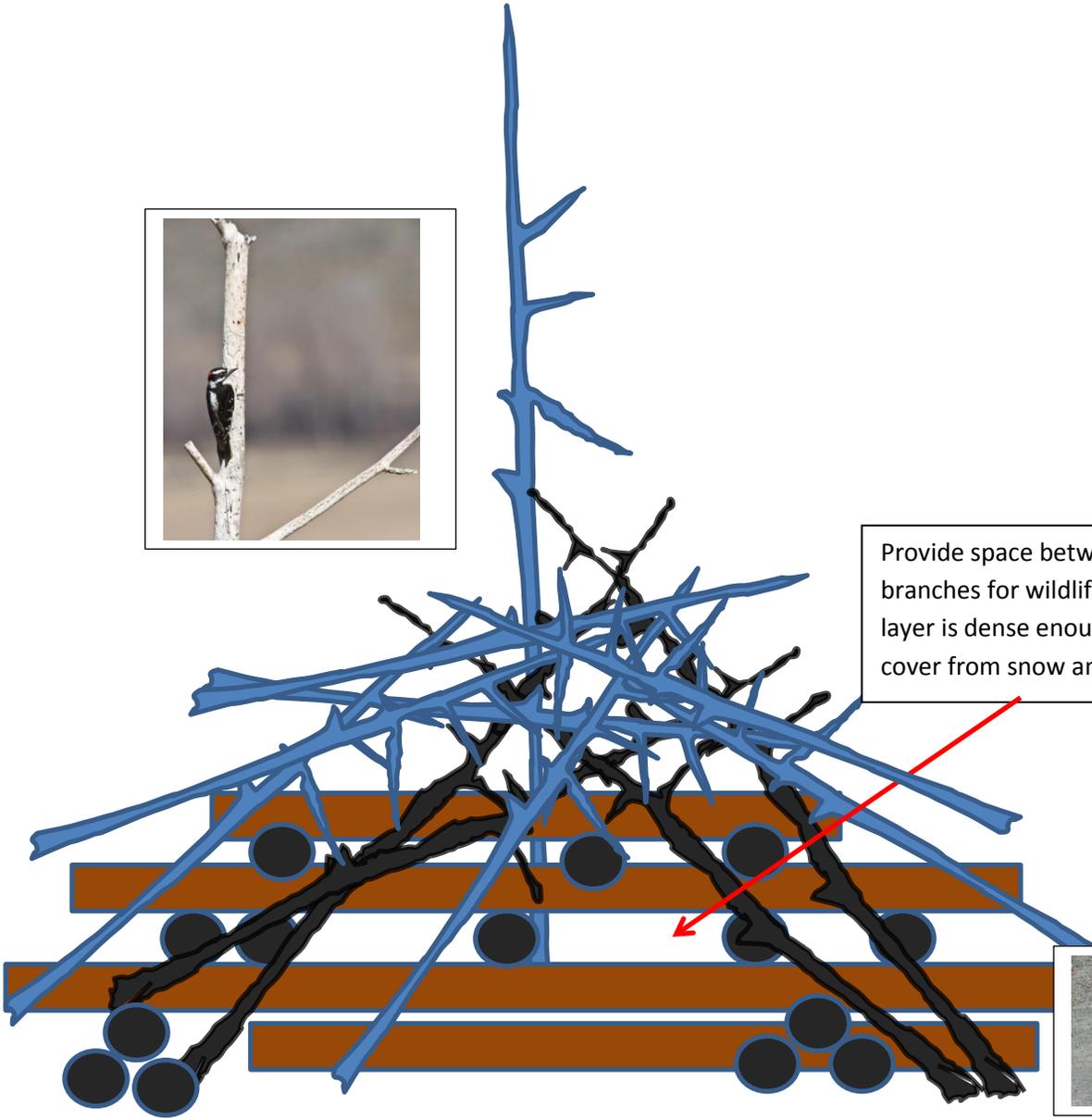
6' to 20' wide, 4' to 8' tall

These provide habitat for birds, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Especially important in winter so piles need to be adequately sized. Wedge one larger branch upwards as a perch. Create internal "cave" for larger animals such as snowshoe hare.

For hand construction: Need approximately 15-18 4"-8" logs, 60-80 branches with or without foliage.

Install or maintain at least one per acre, preferably in clusters of 3-5 within 100 feet of each other.
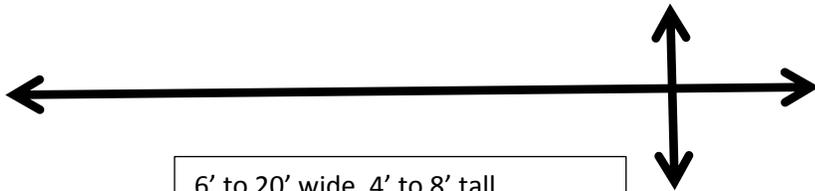
Side View with perch

Provide space between logs and branches for wildlife to hide. If top layer is dense enough it can provide cover from snow and rain.

Arrange some logs in **piles** of 3 to create small tunnel b/t logs

6' to 20' wide, 4' to 8' tall

By Ken Bevis, DNR Stewardship 1/14

Within-Stand Features Subject to Habitat Management

Within-Stand Features	Lots	Few	None	Comments
Canopy Type – Closed Canopy				
Canopy Type – Partially Closed Canopy				
Canopy Type – Open Canopy				
Short, small Snags (feeding)				
Hardwood Inclusions in Conifers				
Conifer Inclusions in Hardwoods				
Large Cavity Trees -Live				
Large Cavity Trees -Dead				
Large Cavity Trees -Hallow				
Large Cavity Trees –nest holes present				
Hard Mast (nuts and seeds) – acorns, walnuts, cones				
Soft Mast (fruit) – blackberry, elderberry, raspberry, serviceberry, other				
Midstory Layer				
Shrub Layer				
Coarse Woody Debris – Large Diameter				

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