Introduction

Protecting significant ecological resources is central to the mission of The Trustees. Barrens are a significant habitat type that The Trustees have protected and restored at Long Point Wildlife Refuge, Wasque Reservation, Menemsha Hills, Weir Hill, Ward Reservation, Lyman Reserve, Appleton Farms Grass Rides and Mashpee River Reservation. Collectively, The Trustees maintains over 800 acres of barrens habitat across these eight properties from the Northshore to the Cape and Islands.
Barrens describes a suite of natural community types that occur in areas where water can be scarce, at least for part of the year, such as heathlands and grasslands to closed canopy pitch pine and oak forests on deep outwash soils or on drumlins. A majority of these habitats are considered Priority Habitat Types under the Massachusetts State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). See these links for more information https://www.mass.gov/info-details/dry-woodlands-and-barrens , https://www.mass.gov/info-details/dry-grasslands-and-heathlands.

Because these habitats typically occur on well-drained soils, they are prone to drought and fire resulting in these habitats also frequently being referred to as fire-adapted habitats (see link for more information on why fire is important). Regardless of what we call them, barrens are far from desolate landscapes, it is quite the opposite, and many species have adapted to—and even thrive in—this harsh environment, including scrub oak, pitch pine, blueberries and other specialized shrubs, grasses and herbs, and a diverse array of wildlife.

Approximately 40% of species listed under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) and other Species of Greatest Conservation Need identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) rely on barrens habitat. Species such as the frosted elfin butterfly, New England blazing star and whip-poor-will are virtually dependent upon barrens. New England blazing star, a rare plant in New England, depends on the well-drained sandy soil and reduced competition from other plants controlled by fire; frosted elfins only use one of two host plants to lay its eggs on and both plants disappear without disturbance such as fire: and whip-poor-wills benefit from the mosaic of habitat barrens provide such as dense cover for nesting next to open areas where they can catch moths and beetles that are abundant in barrens.

Trustees' properties that include barrens habitats are often our properties with the highest overall species documented highlighting their disproportionate value for protecting and maintaining biodiversity as well as their popularity with visitors as destinations for observing nature. The Trustees have documented 30 species listed under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (including two

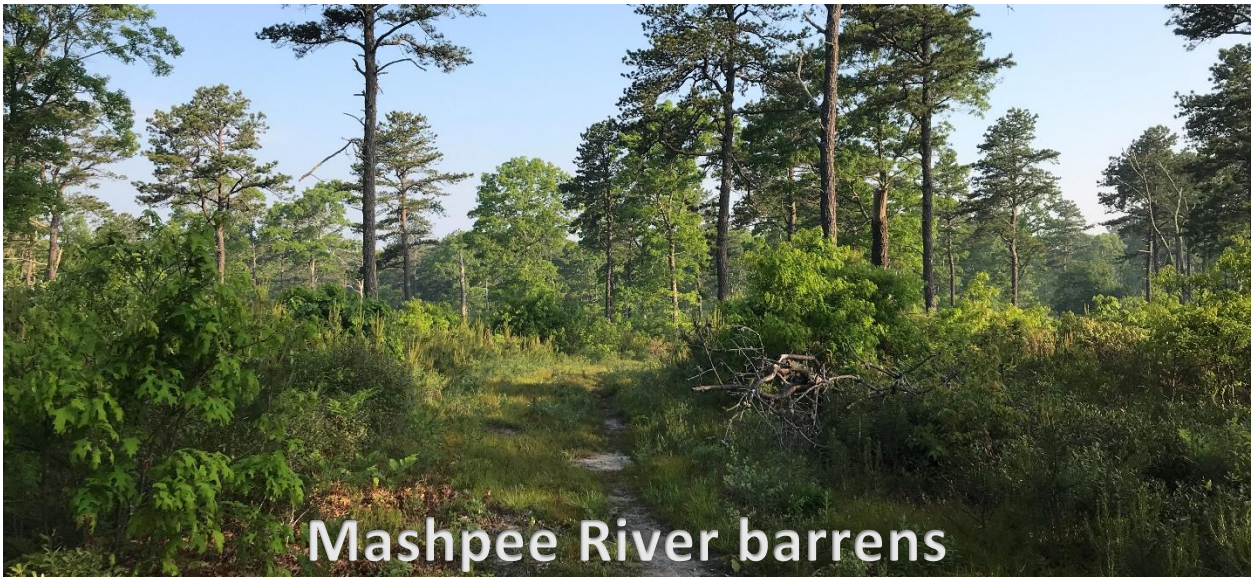
federally listed species) in our barrens, with many of these species occurring on at least three properties highlighting the overall quality of the habitat. In addition to the 30 listed species, an additional 38 species have been documented during their reproductive life cycle that are either on the states Watch List for plants or identified as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), but not state-listed. Similarly, many of these species can be found at the eight barrens properties.

Additionally, there are many other species recognized as SGCN species that utilize barrens habitat during migration or are overwintering in these habitats. At some properties containing barrens, we partner with others to conduct bioblitzes and encourage visitors to report their observations to iNaturalist that gets incorporated into The Trustees Biodiversity Monitoring Project on iNaturalist.

Table 1. iNaturalist Statistics per Barrens Property

Property	# of Species	# of Observations	# of Identifiers
Long Point Wildlife Refuge	897	3120	581
Appleton Farms	668	1755	625
Ward Reservation	519	1441	477
Weir Hill	283	595	216
Lyman Reserve	275	629	207
Wasque	166	259	159
Mashpee River	153	236	119
Menemsha Hills	117	321	162

This report summarizes management activities that occur on a yearly basis to maintain or restore barrens habitat at The Trustees. We use this report to track progress with management goals.



Barrens Management

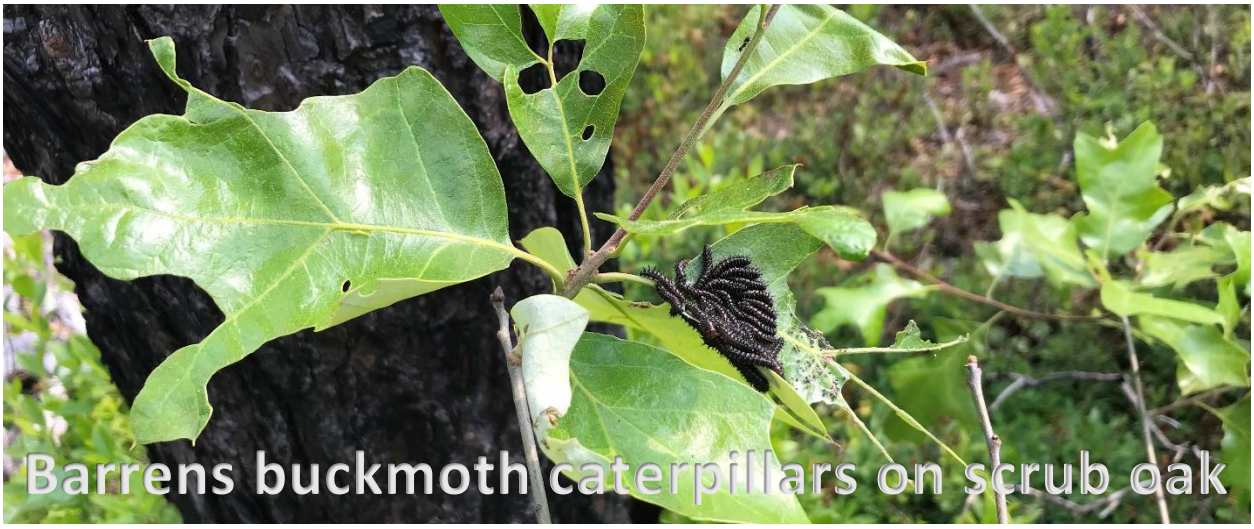
Given the ecological significance of barrens, especially their disproportionate importance for biodiversity (e.g., rare species and unique habitats in Massachusetts) The Trustees has prioritized managing barrens habitat. However, it is important to note that many additional acres owned by The Trustees falling within the barrens continuum are not actively managed, but support biodiversity at The Trustees (e.g., pitch pine – scrub oak communities at Peaked Mountain).

Depending on habitat goals, a range of management activities typically occurs. The primary management activities consist of canopy thinning, mechanical mowing, prescribed fire, and vegetation management (e.g., exotic invasive plants) using herbicide. Canopy thinning is often the first activity since decades of fire suppression have allowed trees to regrow forming dense, even-aged canopies that prevent sunlight from penetrating to the understory. With thinning, tree cover is reduced and understory plants, suppressed by dense shade, can bloom, fruit and thrive again. These are often the plants that are rare or used by other rare species. Mechanical mowing is then used to reset understory conditions and prevent trees from regrowing and blocking out the sun again. Mowing frequency is dependent upon habitat goals but usually conducted annually or every few years. Prescribed fire occurs less frequently but is critical for burning off the buildup of leaves and sticks that serve as a mulch that prevent many plants from reproducing while increasing soil moisture that allows non-fire adapted species (e.g., white pine and red maple) to grow. Finally, herbicides are occasionally used to control invasive plants or overabundant native species (often a result of past land use) impacting habitat quality or target species that cannot be killed using fire and mowing. Lastly, The Trustees monitors the habitat and species to ensure biodiversity goals are being achieved.

It is critical that the management above is implemented on a routine schedule according to the prescription to maintain and improve upon the barrens habitat and prevent deferred management that becomes increasingly costly and challenging to manage.

Barrens Management by Property

The following section will provide an overview of the barren's habitat at each property where restoration and management occurs including the primary goals, annual work completed, future work needed and results of monitoring. Other information pertinent to the management (e.g., trail conditions or severity of deer browse) will also be included. All of these properties have specific management plans and burn plans that go into great detail on both the significance of the habitat and management. Furthermore, all acres covered in this report are also designated Ecological Landscape Units or ELUs where metrics are tracked.



Northshore

Weir Hill

Weir Hill contains a surprising diversity of natural communities given its moderate size and suburban location. It's a rare gem that was spared being developed. The double drumlin with its well-drained glacial soils and steep slopes, combined with a well-documented legacy of human influence – fire and grazing – have created one of the best examples of barrens in northeastern Massachusetts. The barrens habitat has been a focus of management at Weir Hill because of its regional significance (i.e., one of the best examples of barrens not on sandy outwash soils); considerable documentation of fire history including an early railroad as an ignition source, fire scars on ancient trees and fire department records.

Starting in 2006, The Trustees thinned 60 acres of second growth oak/hickory forest over the course of the past two decades. These barrens support a population of frosted elfin, a state-threatened butterfly that is rare throughout its range and is one of the priority species benefiting from barrens habitat management, requiring a low shrub and herbaceous plant composition to be dominant. An additional 14 species of conservation concern benefit from management. These barrens support the only known location for the county where both species of scrub oak occur together, especially in abundance, further supporting the significance of this property as a refugia for many species once more common but now rare or uncommon.

- The management plan for MESA was completed in 2024. This plan will need to be renewed in 2034.
- A burn plan was updated in 2023 and due to be updated in 2028.

Given the significance of Weir Hill, additional management has been conducted through the form of rare plant augmentation and pollinator habitat enhancement, and barrens outreach. In 2023 the Trustees scarified a one-acre portion of the barrens (i.e., an old borrow pit) and introduced seed from barrens affiliated wildflowers and rare plants to enhance this one-acre section for pollinator species as well as to establish rare plant sub population to reduce their vulnerability. Once plants are established in this area, a trail, educational signage and bench will be installed to engage visitors.

In 2025 a three-year NRCS contract was secured for mowing, invasive control, one prescribed fire and fixing chronic drainage issues on the access road. This contract will reimburse nearly 100% of annual routine management costs for 3 years.

5-Year Management and Monitoring Actions:

TASK	METRIC	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average
Data Collection and Monitoring							
Frosted Elfin Survey	Hours Spent Surveying	4	4	5	4		
Wild Indigo Survey	1 Survey Conducted Every Three Years	N	Y	N	N		
# of Wild Indigo			N/A				
Breeding Bird Survey	Survey, or Deployed Acoustic Meter Annually	N	Y	Y	Y		
Routine Management							
Mowing	30 Acres Per Year	27	13.5	8	8		14.13
Prescribed Fire	20-30 acres every 3-5 years	0	19	0	0		4.75
Invasive and woody Plant Control	30 Acres Per Year	0	10	0	0		2.50

2025 Limiting Factors:

Mowing was not completed in 2025 due to equipment breakdown in conjunction with time of year (TOY) restrictions for rare species. This has been the trend since 2023 since we have been unable to secure funding for contractual mowing and did not yet have capacity to conduct mowing ourselves. A NRCS contract was secured in 2025 which will fund routine management needs for 3 years, but we are waiting for an archeological review by NRCS to be completed before the funding can be used. To remain in prescription with target management outlined in the NRCS contract and the approved habitat management plan, mowing was delayed in 2025 to 2026 pending NRCS approval (i.e., to align management practices with reimbursement from the NRCS).

No funding was secured for prescribed fire for the 2025 calendar year. Ideally, at least one annual fire should be built into the operating budget for North Andover (i.e., Weir Hill and Boston Hill). This will allow the five burn units to be on a five-year burn rotation.

Trail maintenance and impacts have been an issue within the barrens at Wier Hill. Highly erodible soils on steep slopes combined with heavy visitor use leads to erosion and loss of topsoil. Visitors are also widening trails by avoiding eroded trail surfaces and because of visitors walking 2 or more abreast where trails are single track only. This is a chronic problem at Weir Hill. While water bars and some trail resurfacing has been implemented, the problem is growing, threatening priority habitat and species. Installation and maintenance of water bars in 2025 was alarming due to significant excavation and disturbance of priority habitat. Water bar installation and maintenance need to be prioritized in the coming years and coordinated with Ecology staff.

2026 Actions:

- Continue working with NRCS to ensure work is completed for reimbursement.

- Mow 30 acres according to area identified under NRCS contract.
- Conduct herbicide spot-treatment on 30 acres according to NRCS contract following mowing and subsequent regrowth.
- Conduct surveys for frosted elfin, baptisia, vegetation and breeding birds.
- Stewardship and the Trails Team to review trail standards and maintenance procedures for water bars and trail locations.
- Stewardship and Trail Teams need to follow equipment cleaning BMPs to reduce introduction of exotic and invasive plants.
- Conduct trail edge mowing on Northeastern portion of barrens – vegetation is growing into the trail and forcing visitors to walk into the barrens to avoid vegetation.
- Remove white pine growing behind split rail fence along the eastern side of the property near Sutton Pasture.

Ward Reservation

Ward Reservation encompasses 700 acres of protected land including drumlins and vast wetlands. Fire has exerted some influence on the plant communities, particularly the top and west-facing slope of Boston Hill. Massachusetts BioMap designates Boston Hill as Priority Habitat for rare species and as Natural Community Core habitat. Boston Hill is one of the highest points in Essex County and habitat management maintains an impressive scenic vista.

Restoring and managing barrens habitat at Boston Hill has been a focus at Ward Reservation for 15 years. Since 2010, The Trustees have thinned roughly 30 acres of canopy to restore barrens habitat. Prior to 2010, small portions of the hill were mowed annually to maintain the long-distance vistas. The goal of habitat management at Boston Hill is to maintain 30 acres of barrens mosaic dominated by low shrubs and herbaceous species surrounded by open oak and pitch pine woodlands. Currently the habitat supports two state listed species and five Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

- The management plan for MESA was completed in 2023. This plan will need to be renewed in 2028.
- A burn plan was updated in 2022 and due to be updated in 2027.

5-Year Management and Monitoring Actions:

TASK	METRIC	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average
Data Collection and Monitoring							
Frosted Elfin Survey	Hours Spent Surveying	2	2	2	2		
Wild Indigo Survey	1 Survey Conducted Every Three Years	N	Y	N	N		
# of Wild Indigo			N/A				
Breeding Bird Survey	Survey, or Deployed Acoustic Meter Annually	N	Y	Y	Y		
Routine Management							
Mowing	15 Acres Per Year	0	0	0	0		0
Prescribed Fire	15 Acres Every 3-5 Years	15	17	0	0		8
Invasive and Woody Plant Control	15 Acres Per Year	10	0	0	0		2.5

2025 Limiting Factors:

Mowing has not been completed for the past four years due to vegetation size (diameter of trunks) and inappropriate mower deck. Although a new mower deck was purchased in 2025, the heavy snowpack in early 2026 prohibited mowing. We also did not receive funding through a grant application to the MassWildlife Habitat Management Grant that would have funded contract mowing in 2024.

No funding was secured for prescribed fire for the 2025 calendar year. Ideally, at least one annual fire should be built into the operating budget for North Andover (i.e., Weir Hill and Boston Hill). This will allow the five burn units to be on a five-year burn rotation. Fortunately, the habitat has received prescribed fire on two occasions in recent years.

2026 Actions:

- Mow a total of 15 acres where vegetation is the tallest; this could be in both units. This will address the worst of the deferred maintenance.
- Conduct herbicide spot treatment on 15 acres to lower grey birch abundance and control invasive species.
- Conduct surveys for frosted elfin, baptisia, and breeding birds.
- Work with stewardship to schedule a workday to remove large diameter sub canopy trees that have not been controlled for many years along the western side of the barren's unit.

Appleton Farms Grass Rides: Liatris Field

The Grass Rides total 255 acres and abuts the 698-acre Appleton Farms, also owned and managed by The Trustees. The property is a mosaic of forested uplands and wetlands with a network of wide grass paths (i.e., Grass Rides) designed for carriage driving. Near the center of the property is the "Liatris Field", a 7-acre warm season grassland/heathland. Historically the field was maintained as a training field for horses. The field is dominated by little bluestem and low blueberries. Recent stewardship has included removing a tree hedgerow that ran the center of the field and trimming back branches and small trees around the perimeter to reclaim field area and reduce shading to the field interior. The field is mowed annually late in the season to maintain the habitat and aesthetics for visitors and occasionally prescribed fire has been implemented.

This management, together with the field not being used for agriculture and soils being well-drained, is likely the reason the field currently supports a robust diversity of native species associated with barrens including New England Blazing Star (*Liatris novae-angliae*) a listed plant species endemic to the Northeast. Current conditions represent what is desired for this unit – warm-season grasses and low ericaceous heaths with a robust population of New England Blazing Star and little to no invasive plants.

- The management plan for MESA needs to be completed.
- A burn plan was updated in 2023 and due to be updated in 2028.

5-Year Management and Monitoring Actions:

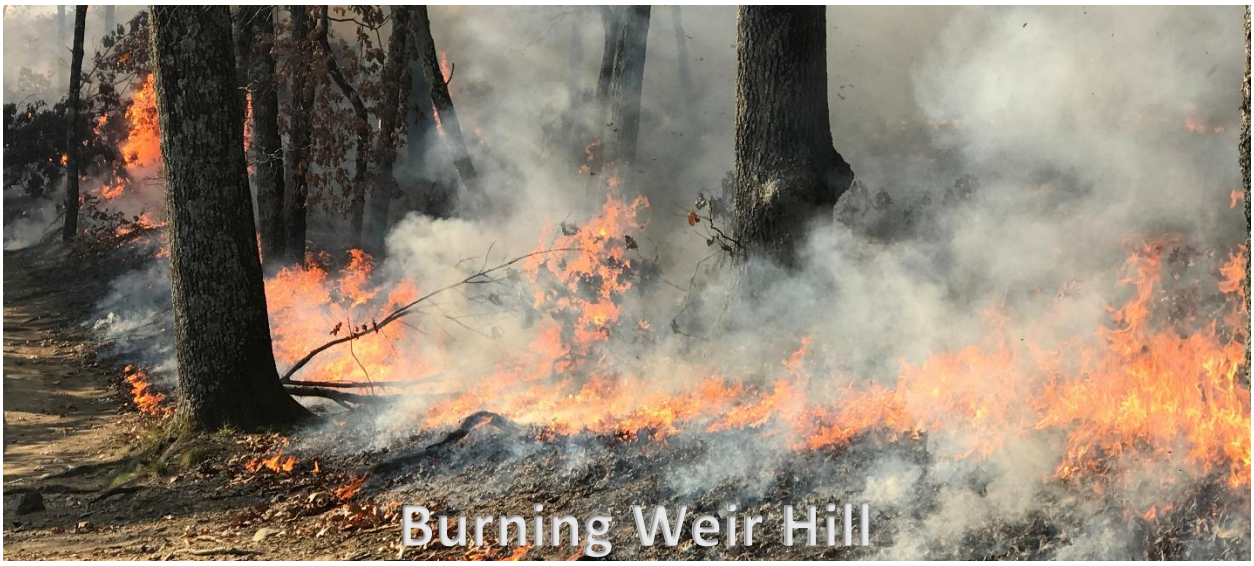
TASK	METRIC	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average
Data Collection and Monitoring							
New England Blazing Star Survey	1 Survey Conducted Every Three Years	N	N	Y	N		
Invasive Plant Monitoring	7 Acres Per Year	N	N	N	N		
Routine Management							
Mowing	7 Acres Per Year	7	0	7	7		5.25
Prescribed Fire	7 Acres Every 3-5 Years	0	7	0	0		1.4
Invasive and Woody Plant Control	Not Applicable	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A

2025 Limiting Factors:

Management activities this year occurred without limitations.

2026 Actions:

- Mow 7 acres.
- Field edges need to be assessed for mowing to prevent field encroachment and shade impacts to the grassland/heathland habitat.



Southeast and Islands

Lyman Reserve

The Lyman Reserve is a 222-acre property owned by The Trustees where the towns of Bourne, Plymouth, and Wareham meet. Following the restoration of Red Brook, a Forest Management Plan was prepared for Lyman in 2015. Multiple forest stands were identified to be converted from Pitch/White Pine Oak Forest into Scrub Oak Shrubland and Pitch Pine - Scrub Oak Woodland (two barrens habitat communities). Since 2005, The Trustees, with assistance from MassWildlife, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and The United States Fish and Wildlife Service have transformed these forest stands to open woodland and scrub oak shrublands. Currently, approximately 40 acres have had initial canopy thinning completed and at least one prescribed fire and 2-3 mowings conducted. Prior to Trustees management to restore barrens habitat, much of the property was being managed for white pine as a cash crop.

The primary driver behind undertaking this work was for New England cottontail, recognizing that the management will benefit a suite of other species, including listed lepidoptera whose host plant is scrub oak and a variety of Species of Greatest Conservation Need dependent on early successional barrens habitat and a secondary benefit of reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire to the surrounding community.

- The management plan for MESA was completed in 2025. This plan will need to be renewed in 2030.
- A burn plan was updated in 2023 and due to be updated in 2028.

5-Year Management and Monitoring Actions:

TASK	METRIC	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average
Data Collection and Monitoring							
Barrens Buckmoth Survey	Survey Conducted Annually	N	Y	N	N		
Breeding Bird Survey	Survey, or Deployed Acoustic Meter Annually	N	Y	Y	Y		
Invasive Monitoring	22 Acres Per Year	N	N	N	N		
Routine Management							
Mowing	15 Acres Every 3-5 Years	0	0	0	0		0
Prescribed Fire	15 Acres Every 3-5 Years	0	0	0	16		4
Invasive Plant Control	Quail Plots, trail edge (.75 acre)	0	0	0	0		0

2025 Limiting Factors:

Management activities this year occurred without limitations. Both prescribed fire and mowing occurred on schedule according to the barrens management plan. Fire was made possible through an America the Beautiful Grant and assistance from DCR.

2026 Actions:

- Prescribed fire has been funded and is planned for the spring of 2026.
- Conduct Baseline Assessments (including vegetation monitoring, acoustic meters, breeding bird surveys, barrens buckmoth and scrub oak survey).
- Conduct invasive species control (primarily along southern edge of Unit 10).
- Work with Stewardship to finalize trail rerouting and closures to align trail system with firebreaks and to reduce erosion.
- Mow Quail Plots.
- Mow firebreaks.

Mashpee River Reservation

Mashpee River Reservation (Mashpee), is located in the Cape Cod Coastal Lowland and Islands Ecoregion of Massachusetts. The Mashpee River, which originates at Mashpee/Wakeby Pond and empties into Pirate's Cove on Popponesset Bay, is the centerpiece of this 248-acre property. A riparian community dominated by red maple and black gum rises up steep river embankments before transitioning into dry pitch pine and oak forest (i.e., barrens). Mashpee River abuts the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and is within the designated area for the Great Thicket NWR. Furthermore, the reservation is near the large and ecologically significant Joint Base Cape Cod that serves as a refuge and source (metapopulation) for many rare species.

In 2013, The Trustees, with assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (Partners Program), and MassWildlife conducted roughly 40 acres of thinning to convert a pine – hardwood forest into an open canopy shrub dominated barrens. An additional 10-acre buffer was not thinned along the adjacent roads on the west and south sides of the treated unit to provide a visual buffer from adjacent roadways and a refugia for New England Cottontail (NEC) and other species during the habitat conversion. The primary driver behind undertaking this work was for NEC, recognizing that the management will benefit a suite of other species dependent on early successional barrens habitat, many of which are of conservation concern (i.e., State-listed or SWAP species).

- The management plan for MESA was completed in 2025 and will need to be renewed in 2030.
- A burn plan was updated in 2023 and due to be updated in 2028.

5-Year Management and Monitoring Actions:

TASK	METRIC	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average
Data Collection and Monitoring							
Barrens Buckmoth Survey	Survey Conducted Annually	N	Y	Y	Y		
Breeding Bird Survey	Survey, or Deployed Acoustic Meter	N	Y	Y	Y		
Invasive Plant Monitoring	20 Acres Per Year	N	Y	Y	Y		
Routine Management							
Mowing	20 Acres Every 3-5 Years	0	0	0	0		0
Prescribed Fire	20 Acres Every 3-5 Years	0	0	0	20		5
Invasive Plant Control	Not Applicable	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A

2025 Limiting Factors:

- Management activities this year occurred without limitations. Prescribed fire and mowing occurred on schedule according to the barrens management plan for Mashpee. Fire was made possible through an America the Beautiful Grant and assistance from DCR.

2026 Actions:

- Prescribed fire has been funded and is planned for the spring of 2026 Unit B.
- Conduct Baseline Assessments (including vegetation monitoring, acoustic meters, breeding bird surveys, barrens buckmoth and scrub oak survey).
- Conduct invasive species control (primarily along southern edge near the parking lot).
- Mow firebreaks.

Wasque Reservation

Wasque Reservation covers 200 acres at the southern edge of Chappaquiddick Island, Edgartown. In addition to its grasslands and heathlands, the reservation includes coastal beach, sand dunes, pitch pine and oak forests. The Trustees acquired the property in 1967 and since then the heathlands and grasslands of Wasque have been maintained and expanded in increments. Starting in 1993, large sections of forest were removed, more than doubling the amount of cleared acreage. Current habitat work at Wasque focuses on maintaining the grassland and heathlands created, monitoring and removing invasive species, rehabilitating the mineral soil environment, and minimizing habitat fragmentation.

Approximately half of the reservation is covered by sandplain grassland and maritime heathland. These ecological communities support a unique assemblage of species, including several rare and endangered plants and animals. These early successional habitats are located within the heart of Wasque and are threatened with encroaching pitch pine and oak growth. The maintenance of this mosaic of habitats is dependent on disturbances and stresses such as salt spray, wind, mowing and fire to maintain its early successional characteristics.

Fortunately, there are very few invasive plants on this site. Only a small patch (<100 plants) of spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*) has been recorded near the southern parking lot. Due to its proximity to a parking area, this population was likely introduced to the property on visitors' vehicles. There is a large, established population of this plant at the Chappy Ferry landing so seeds hitching a ride on arriving vehicles is a likely occurrence. Wasque's population has been hand pulled annually since 2021 and has been almost eradicated.

- The management plan for MESA has yet to be submitted.
- A burn plan was updated in 2023 and due to be updated in 2028.

5-Year Management and Monitoring Actions:

TASK	METRIC	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average
Data Collection and Monitoring							
New England Blazing Star Survey	1 Survey Conducted Every Three Years	N	Y	N	N		
Breeding Bird Survey	Survey, or Deployed Acoustic Meter	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Invasive Plant Monitoring	21 Acres Per Year	N	N	N	N		
Routine Management							
Mowing	14-63 Acres Annually	59	61	25	14		39.75
Prescribed Fire	10-63 acres every 3-5 years	0	27	0	0		6.75
Invasive Control	Not Applicable	0.1	0.1	0.1	0		0.08

2025 Limiting Factors:

State funds through the DFW Habitat Management Grant were not secured for the 2024/2025 season, preventing the use of prescribed fire. Mowing was completed as scheduled.

2026 Actions:

- Prescribed fire funds have been secured through the MDFG Biodiversity Grant to burn units 2 and 4.
- Conduct a *Liatris* survey.
- Monitor for invasive spotted knapweed near the swim beach parking lot and treat as necessary.
- Mow firebreaks and management units 1 and 3 if prescribed fire is not funded for 2026.
- Survey for Northern Harrier nesting.
- Complete implementation of Southern Pine Beetle treatment on 28 acres.

Long Point Wildlife Refuge

Long Point is one of the most ecologically significant properties in the Trustees' statewide portfolio. It is critical to perpetuating the presence of highly specialized species and the Trustees are committed to maintaining (and restore when necessary) the natural communities which support them. Over 40 species of conservation concern and many more of local significance rely on Long Point's varied landscape and thus, management.

Long Point Wildlife Refuge sits along the southern shore of Martha's Vineyard. It is 633 acres comprised of beach, dunes, pitch pine and oak woodlands, sandplain grassland, coastal heathland, savannah, and coastal pond shores. Long Point has experienced a varied and long history of land use. After centuries of Native American and subsequent colonial use, Long Point was officially acquired by the Trustees in 1977. Thus began a new period of habitat management focused on preserving rare and ecologically important ecosystems. Currently, the Trustees maintain several habitats of global significance through a variety of vegetation management techniques including mowing, prescribed fire, canopy thinning, and invasive species control. Thankfully, invasive species are fairly minimal at this property, so the focus is on managing small populations and early detection and rapid response for new populations. To better direct our management, we have divided the property into 14 management units, each with unique habitat structures and management prescriptions and goals.

- The management plan for MESA has yet to be submitted.
- A burn plan was updated in 2023 and due to be updated in 2028.

5-Year Management and Monitoring Actions:

TASK	METRIC	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average
Data Collection and Monitoring							
***Agalinis acuta* Survey**	1 Survey Conducted Annually	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Breeding Bird Survey	Survey, or Deployed Acoustic Meter	N	N	Y	N		
Invasive Plant Monitoring	100 acres Per Year	N	N	N	N		
Routine Management							
Mowing	100 Acres Annually	127	57	50	86		80.00
Prescribed Fire	65 acres every 3-5 years	0	166	0	0		41.50
Invasive Control	Not Applicable	0	0.25	0	0		0.06

2025 Limiting Factors:

Grant funds were not secured for the 2024/2025 season, preventing the use of prescribed fire. Mowing was completed as scheduled.

2026 Actions:

- Grant funding was secured in 2026 to burn Nehommons Neck Grasslands and Nehommons Neck Barrens units.
- Conduct federally listed rare plant surveys.
- Monitor for invasive spotted knapweed along the road to the summer parking area and treat as necessary.
- Treat invasive bittersweet in the southwest corner of Long Point Heathland unit.
- Mow firebreaks and the following management units: Middle Cove Frost Bottom, Long Point Heathland, Scrubby Neck Heathland, and Nehommons Neck Grassland.
- Survey for Northern Harrier nesting.

Menemsha Hills Reservation

Menemsha Hills is located on a glacial moraine along the northwestern shore of Martha's Vineyard. The 234-acre property includes rocky shoreline, coastal erosion cliffs and maritime shrublands and oak forests. Sections of its rolling hills support a mosaic of heathlands, thickets, and shrublands. Wetlands are present in low-lying areas and include vernal pools, springs, seepage areas, and intermittent streams. Habitat management focuses on mowing maritime shrublands, scrub oak barrens, and heathlands, which support several rare species, including the spiny oak worm moth. Prescribed fire is not used at this property due to highly varied topography and erratic winds.

The western portion of Menemsha Hills is divided into three ecological management units totaling 63 acres. Units 1 and 3 are managed as coastal heathland using a three-year mowing rotation. Unit 2 was established to support broom crowberry, a species of greatest conservation need identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. This unit has not been treated for approximately 10 years due to difficult terrain.

Invasive species are thankfully limited at this property with the exception of two mature *miscanthus* plants in Unit 3 and several Autum Olive trees in the hedgerow along Gosnold Road (Unit 3).

- The management plan for MESA has yet to be submitted.

5-Year Management and Monitoring Actions:

TASK	METRIC	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average
Data Collection and Monitoring							
Breeding Bird Survey	Survey, or Deployed Acoustic Meter	N	N	Y	N		
Invasive Plant Monitoring	21 Acres Per Year	N	N	N	N		
Routine Management							
Mowing	21 Acres Mowed Annually	5	60	30	22		29.25
Invasive Control	Not Applicable	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A

2025 Limiting Factors:

Mowing was completed however, recurring mechanical issues with the skid steer (i.e., track derailment) and challenges attributed to extreme topography and dense stump sprouting prolonged the process.

2026 Actions:

- Mow the western half of management unit 1.
- Complete a habitat management plan.