



Aroostook County Conservation Association 2023 Mission Update

The primary mission of the Aroostook County Conservation Association (A.C.C.A.) is to enhance and preserve the white-tailed deer herd in Aroostook County. Our motto is “Helping One Deer at a Time”. However, all species of wildlife will benefit from our habitat improvement projects and the wise use of renewable resources. We enthusiastically support landowner partnerships to accomplish this goal. In doing so, we educate and inspire County children by providing them with outdoor experiences in which they learn about wildlife conservation and habitat management, which in turn, helps to ensure sporting opportunities for future generations.

We have been very successful in this effort, but on a small scale because we lacked the funding to buy land to protect it from harvesting. Now, there is some exciting news regarding a State program called *Land for Maine’s Future*. A significant amount of money has been earmarked for the acquisition and management of large parcels of land suitable for deer wintering areas in Aroostook County. The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife will be responsible for overseeing the expenditures of this money and the A.C.C.A. has already strongly advocated for the purchase of 930 acres in two parcels along the Caribou stream in Washburn and Woodland. Additional parcels are currently under consideration.

And there is more good news! The A.C.C.A. has entered into a partnership with the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine to raise money to be used to restore winter habitat in the County. This program is called the ***Aroostook County White-tailed Deer Collaborative*** (ACWDC). Through generous donations we have already raised about \$25,000 dollars. When this money is used to buy IF&W approved deer wintering areas, it becomes eligible for a 3 to 1 match from Pitman-Robertson funds. That means the real value of these donations is actually \$100,000 dollars!

Accordingly, we encourage our members and the public to donate to this fund. It's easy to do using our new website which you can find at <http://www.accamaine.com>. You see, deer can also be important drivers of our local economy and make a big contribution to our "quality of place"! Not too long ago, Northern Maine was a prime destination for deer hunters from all over the country. Ecotourism has declined sharply over the last 25 years but it can be revived. Good deer wintering areas, like the Washburn and Woodland parcels, are critical components of any plan to restore the deer population to its former glory. When the deer flourish, so do we.

We thank you in advance for your generosity and financial support.

