

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

September 21, 2023 to October 20, 2023

Jason Hearon, Bureau Chief
Tyler Kinney, Habitat Planner
Melissa Woerner, Habitat Planner

HABITAT PLANNING

Tyler Kinney

Southern Region

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney saw the completion of a task order for the monitoring of the Manahawkin Wetlands Restoration Project by Rutgers University. A meeting was held with Rutgers staff to discuss the next steps.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney saw the completion of 52 acres of phragmites treatment in the Heislerville Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Contractors will be mobilizing to Tuckahoe shortly.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney continues to develop the best management practices for completing various types of coastal restoration and resiliency projects on WMAs.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney continues to coordinate with contract engineers to complete restoration activities in the Glassboro WMA. Purchase orders for construction of deer fencing and invasive species treatments have been procured, and subcontractors are mobilizing. New Jersey Fish and Wildlife (NJFW) is waiting on final comments from the Division of Land Resource Protection (DLRP).

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney met with the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) to discuss restoration plans at Shaw and Ephraim Islands. Concept plans for Ephraim Islands were chosen and engineered designs are in development. A concept design for Shaw Island is in development.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney set up and attended a meeting with Ducks Unlimited to discuss habitat projects in the southern region.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a field day with staff from the Wetlands Institute to review coastal restoration projects at Gull and Sturgeon Islands.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney submitted a land management review for the restoration of a shoreline at Baypoint, located in the New Sweden WMA.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with a member of the New Jersey Blue Bird Society to discuss the potential for habitat enhancements in the Holly Farm Tract.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney saw through the completion of fall planting, fall boom mowing, and fall early succession work. Acreage will be compiled shortly.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney has begun developing farm lease barter services for the calendar year 2024. Various matters were also attended to relating to the farm lease program.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney is consulting with the American Littoral Society to facilitate a breakwater installation and shoreline remediation project at Northwest Reach, located on the Hesilerville WMA, amongst various other projects at this site.

All Regions

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney reviewed conceptual projects for The Nature Conservancy's "Pipeline Project for Marsh Restorations".

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with the DLRP to discuss the potential for blanket habitat permits.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with the Office of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to review the Field Maps application.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with various coastal habitat and resiliency stakeholders to consult on the NOAA ESLR Project.

Melissa Woerner

Northern Region

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a pre-application meeting with the DLRP staff to discuss permit needs for a culvert installation project at the Pequest WMA.

A contractor planted approximately 30 acres of rye at the Musconetcong River WMA that will serve as winter forage and cover for wildlife.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner conducted field visits to northern farm lease areas to verify that 2023 in-kind plantings were completed.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a meeting with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff to discuss six potential field reclamation projects in the northern region. Three will be put on hold for now due to extensively overgrown field conditions and three will move forward with obtaining necessary permits and approvals.

Central Region

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner assisted with fence repairs at the wildlife crossing site on the Assunpink WMA following a vehicle going off the road into adjacent wetlands.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner visited the Greenwood Forest WMA to follow up on recent rye plantings and take pictures of various habitats for the pending Forest Stewardship Plan.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner conducted field visits to central farm lease areas to verify that 2023 in-kind plantings were completed.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a meeting with Rutgers University to discuss pre- and post-restoration monitoring plans for a wetland's restoration project at the Manahawkin WMA.

All Regions/Miscellaneous

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a meeting with staff from the Office of Fish and Wildlife Information Systems about ArcGIS Field Maps Training.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a meeting with the DLRP staff to discuss potential blanket permits for maintenance and habitat management activities on WMAs.

NORTHERN REGION

Anthony McBride, Regional Superintendent

Jim Hartobey, Crew Supervisor
Robert Bodnar, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Mark DeVito, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Trevor Hull, Heavy Equipment Operator
Vacant, Sr. Wildlife Worker

Christopher Murphy, Crew Supervisor
Bill DeYoung, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Septembio Garo, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Jonathan Kenney, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Nick Yanuzzelli, Wildlife Worker
Jonathan Kaye, Wildlife Worker

Staff continue with lot clean ups, equipment maintenance, and road maintenance at northern region WMAs.

Staff continue to push forward with habitat improvements: work continues at Columbia, Beaver Brook, Berkshire Valley, Flatbrook, Clinton, Whittingham, Paulinskill, and White Lake WMAs.

Staff have been mowing safety zones and preparing fields for pheasant season. The priority has been fields used for the youth hunting day.

Staff have been stocking chukars at dog training areas in the northern region.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride worked on ordering tractors for habitat work.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride met with the Mayor of Franklin Twp., Hunterdon County, and other Township representatives in a continuing effort on addressing erosion at the Capoolong Creek WMA trail.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride, Staff Specialist Diane Dow, Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner, and Crew Supervisor Jim Hartobey met to discuss plans for upcoming habitat work on the Pequest and Columbia WMAs.

Staff prepared northern region fields for fall planting and habitat food plots.

Staff attended Field Maps training so that they can report on work done on WMA parcels.

Staff met with TNC representatives to install restoration work signs at the site of the Columbia Dam.

CENTRAL REGION

Pete Winkler, Regional Superintendent

Wendy Barbuck, Agency Services Rep. 1

Bill Torry, Crew Supervisor WMAs
Timothy Crotchfelt, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Zachary Mahon, Wildlife Worker
Tim Ruth, Wildlife Worker

Vacant, Crew Supervisor
Anthony Carben, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Brian Kubin, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Robert Madden, Heavy Equipment Operator

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended the Board of Directors Meeting at the Horse Park of New Jersey and for the Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education representing Fish and Wildlife.

Crews continue maintenance and mowing of road edges throughout the Central Region WMAs.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended bi-weekly meetings for a feasibility study to dredge Lake Assunpink. In collaboration with Freshwater Fisheries staff, we will be designing the project to optimize largemouth bass habitat within Lake Assunpink, one of NJ's Lunker Bass lakes. Core Sediment sampling will begin September 27th.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler began working with a potential Scout to develop a project to fulfill his Eagle Scout Badge. The Eagle Scout will rehabilitate the stations at the Stafford Forge skeet range.

Crews completed Fall Trout stocking.

Central region crews continue performing routine trash clean-up at boat ramps, shooting ranges, and other high use WMAs.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler reviewed the fall trout stocking schedule.

Crews are completing fall plantings, mowing safety zones, and getting areas ready for the Youth Pheasant hunt.

Crews began stocking chukars at our Dog Training Areas.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler participated in the Jackson Township Community Wildfire Protection Plan meeting.

All Central region staff ePARS were completed.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended the Joint Council and New Jersey Waterfowl Stamp Committee meetings.

Interviews were conducted for the Crew Supervisor position for the Colliers Mills Region.

Staff continue to issue Field Trial and Special Use Permits consistent with the latest State issued Covid-19 related Executive Orders.

The following groups and activities utilized the Assunpink Conservation Center and the Central Office Meeting Room during this reporting period:

NJSFSC State
Mosquito Control Commission Meeting
OIS
NJSFSC
ENSAC
Watershed & Land Resource Protection
NJ Licensed Site Remediation Professional Assoc
Bureau Business Administration
NJ Water Monitoring Council
NJSFSC BOD
I & E
4-H
UST - Line Tightening Training
Land Use
Fish and Game Council Meeting
Duck Stamp Meeting
Non-Lead Meeting
NJ Chapter of the Wildlife Society
NWTF
SWAP Technical Advisory Group

SOUTHERN REGION

Nathan Figley, Regional Superintendent

Brad Heffley, Crew Supervisor
Sean Clayton, Sr. Wildlife Worker

Dan Baker, Crew Supervisor
Steve Dobrosky, Heavy Equipment Operator
Jennings Jones, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Erin Peek, Heavy Equipment Operator

Mason Reeves, Crew Supervisor
Nicholas Carros, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Ben Keys, Wildlife Worker
Jeffrey Wettstein, Sr. Repairer
Rich Ingraldi, Wildlife Worker

Seasonal - Curt Riggins

Southern region crews continue performing routine trash clean-up at boat ramps, shooting ranges, and other high use WMAs.

The Road Crew completed grading of Tuckahoe WMA roads and began work at the Mad Horse Creek WMA. The following are a list of the next roads to be graded:

- 1) Heislerville WMA
- 2) Winslow WMA
- 3) Glassboro WMA

Staff continue to issue Field Trial and Special Use Permits consistent with the latest State issued Covid-19 related Executive Orders.

Staff completed fall plantings and started preparing for the upcoming pheasant stocking season. Staff built two new back boards for trucks to facilitate stocking and made improvements to the boards used on trailers.

Staff reviewed the 2023 stocking schedule and created a list of staff members that will be responsible for stocking each WMA. In the case of illness or other absence, additional staff are prepared to assume these responsibilities.

Staff met with dam safety to perform the annual inspection of the Union Lake Dam. A water lowering permit was acquired from the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries as part of the prep work for the inspection.

Staff assisted with fall trout stocking on 11 waterbodies within the Southern Region.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley participated in interviews for hiring of a Crew Supervisor at the Colliers Mills WMA.

Senior repairer Jeff Wettstein scheduled routine maintenance of all Southern Region Office heating units. He also repaired broken posts and railings at several boat ramps. He recently inspected a wooden guardrail at the Salem River Boat Ramp that was severely damaged. He is putting together a project plan to replace the broken sections.

Staff continue routine mowing/weed whacking at boat ramps, parking areas, offices, and dams.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley provided a monthly report to Dam Safety for the no name dam located on the Salem River WMA.

Meetings Attended: BLM Staff Weekly, Bureau of Law Enforcement, NJSFSC, Blanket Permit meeting.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SECTION

LAND ACQUISITIONS

Lisa Carben, Executive Assistant

Nothing to report this period.