

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

November 21, 2023 to December 20, 2023

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

HABITAT PLANNING

Melissa Woerner

Northern Region

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a field meeting with staff from New Jersey Audubon to view parcels at the Musconetcong Wildlife Management Area (WMA) that are under a current management agreement. Habitat management needs and current Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) grant objectives were discussed.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended two project status calls for the Hyperhumus wetland restoration project at the Paulinskill River WMA. A stakeholder meeting was held in Trenton to review 60% design plans and prepare for upcoming permit applications. Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner coordinated with the Office of Natural Lands Management (ONLM) to share rare plant data with project partners. Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner submitted the restoration project through the Land Management Review process.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a virtual call to discuss a culvert installation and field reclamation project at the Pequest WMA. Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner developed maps of the culvert details for permit applications. Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner coordinated a meeting with contractors WSP to develop a proposal for delineating wetlands at the field reclamation site.

Proposals were received from Solitude Lake Management for treatment of invasive species at Hainesville, White Lake, Ryker Lake, Amwell Lake, Baldwin Lake, and the Hyperhumus section of Paulinskill River WMAs. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff are reviewing proposals and available funding to decide which projects to move forward with in 2024.

Central Region

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner assisted with pheasant stocking at the Manasquan, Medford, and Assunpink WMAs.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner hosted a call with Pine Creek Forestry to discuss edits to the draft Greenwood Forest WMA Forest Stewardship Plan.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner completed a performance report for the NJ W-79-R-1 Habitat Restoration Monitoring and Evaluation federal grant. This grant is funding Rutgers University to conduct pre- and post-restoration monitoring of birds and vegetation for the Manahawkin coastal wetlands restoration project.

Proposals were received from Solitude Lake Management for treatment of invasive species at the Assunpink and Manahawkin WMAs. Contracts were signed and Preserve New Jersey (PNJ) funding requests are being submitted for 2024 treatments.

All Regions/Miscellaneous

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended multiple meetings with staff from the Office of Fish and Wildlife Information Systems regarding the Geographic Information System (GIS) habitat patch file.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner reviewed and edited the New Jersey Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner completed the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) Statewide Threats survey.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner provided photos of BLM habitat work for the 2023 Fish and Wildlife Year in Review slideshow.

Tyler Kinney

Southern Region

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended several meetings for the beneficial use of dredge materials in the Abbotts Meadow WMA. Nearly 400,000 cubic yards of material have been placed in placement areas 1 and 2 to date.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney continues to coordinate with contract engineers to complete restoration activities in the Glassboro WMA. Several revisions were made to the plan at the request of the Division of Land Use Regulation.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers for the beneficial use of dredge materials in the Heislerville WMA. Dredge placement is complete, and demobilization has begun.

All Regions

Nothing to report.

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

Crews 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/Roy, Clinton, Whittingham, Paulinskill River, and White Lake WMAs.

Staff stocked fields for pheasant season on northern region WMAs.

Staff continued ordering equipment for habitat work.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride and Crew Supervisor Christopher Murphy met with DEP staff and Readington Twp., Hunterdon County staff for a site visit at the Rockafellows Mills site on the South Branch of the Raritan River to examine buildings to be demolished and a dam to be removed.

Crew Supervisor Christopher Murphy and Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride met at Round Valley to look at the condition of the boat ramps.

Crew Supervisor Jim Hartobey submitted plans for northern WMA field plantings for spring habitat work.

Staff met with representatives from DEP Dam Safety and conducted a site visit at the Buckhorn Creek WMA dam in Oxford, Warren County to determine the best access point for work to be done on the dam.

CENTRAL REGION

Pete Winkler, Regional Superintendent

Wendy Barbuck, Agency Services Rep. 1

Bill Torry, Crew Supervisor WMAs

Vacant, Wildlife Worker

Zachary Mahon, Wildlife Worker

Tim Ruth, Wildlife Worker

Brian Kubin, Crew Supervisor

Anthony Carben, Sr. Wildlife Worker

Vacant, Wildlife Worker

Robert Madden, Heavy Equipment Operator

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended the Board of Directors Meeting at the Horse Park of New Jersey representing NJ DEP Fish and Wildlife.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler approved 2 Eagle Scout projects. One project will rehabilitate the stations at the Stafford Forge skeet range. The other project will install fish cleaning stations and rod holders at the Point Pleasant Boat Ramp/Fishing Access site.

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

Crews continue stocking Pheasant and Quail according to the 2023 schedule.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended a meeting to discuss the proposed ADA trail at the Pemberton Lake WMA.

Interviews were completed for a Wildlife Worker Position for the Colliers Mills Crew. We are working on selecting a candidate.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended the NJDEP GIS Users meeting.

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

ENSAC

Deer Project

VBDWG

NJ Women in The Outdoors

Mosquito Control Commission Meeting

NJSFSC BOD

4-H

WRM Office Retreat

OIS

Fish and Game Council Meeting

AEMC

B.E.A.R.S.

NJSFSC State

NJ State Parks

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.

Road Crew staff are working on roads in the Glassboro WMA. This job is expected to take approximately one month, rain events have already slowed progress on this project.

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

Staff continue to stock pheasant and quail. Stocking will continue through the month of December.

Staff completed inspections of Maskells Mill Pond and Paradise Lake Dams.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley met with Office of Coastal Engineering staff to discuss the final design of a water control structure to be installed on the Heislerville Dike. Final design plans are approved, and the project will be going out to bid. This structure will replace an existing spillway that collapsed and is no longer functioning.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley worked with the Bureau of Law Enforcement to have a sailboat removed from the shores of the Higbee Beach WMA. The night prior to the removal the sailboat caught fire. Due to limited access to the vessel, firefighting crews opted to let it burn out as there was no threat of spreading. The following morning NorthStar Marine removed the remnants of the burnt vessel.

Staff are working with the Bureau of Law Enforcement to resolve the posting of a portion of Millville WMA.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley developed a list of WMA sign needs for the Southern Region and forwarded that to the sign shop. They are currently completing an order for the Central Region and will begin work on South's order when it is completed.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley is working with a college student from Southeastern Illinois State University to install wood duck boxes in the Cox Hall Creek WMA. They will be completing the project as part of an internship program. In addition to constructing and installing the boxes, he will help staff stock pheasant/quail.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley met with USACE staff at the Heislerville Dike to view the beneficial reuse project. Based on previous visits, the dredge material continues to build up along the toe of the dike, really bolstering this area. During this recent visit the dredge pipe was being moved to a new location. This project is nearing completion, and this initial step is expected to be completed by the end of December.

During recent severe weather events, staff removed trees that had fallen in parking areas and across WMA roads. One such tree fell across powerlines along the Tuckahoe WMA driveway, resulting in loss of power at the Tuckahoe Office and reduced access to the WMA. Because the tree was across the powerlines, staff were unable to remove it and had to call Atlantic City Electric. Eventually that tree was cut from the lines and Bureau of Wildlife staff assisted by dragging the cut pieces off the road.

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