

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

April 21, 2024 to May 20, 2024

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

HABITAT PLANNING

Tyler Kinney

Southern Region Habitat Management

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended to several matters related to the Glassboro Restoration Project. The fencing is fully constructed, and planting activities are nearly complete. A meeting was held with the Gloucester County Soil Conservation District to review the site. Discussions will be had relating to monitoring in the coming month.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney submitted land management reviews for herbicide treatments of Wisteria in the Dennis Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and bamboo in the Port Republic WMA. Purchase orders were placed for each. Treatments are expected to be completed in June.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney continues the process of reprocuting the T2931 Custom Farm Services Contract. RFP draft development is ongoing.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney held a field meeting to review Atlantic White Cedar restorations completed several years prior in the Tuckahoe WMA. A meeting will be held with staff from the Office of Natural Resource Restoration (ONRR) to discuss potential future restorations in the Tuckahoe and Buckshutem WMAs.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney resolicited final approval for the final draft of the Buckshutem Natural Resource Conservation Plan. Additional comments were submitted by the Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP). These comments will be provided to the forester.

Coastal Unit

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney continues to attend weekly meetings on the Pond Creek Marsh Restoration Project. Construction of berms is currently underway. Concerns from contractor staff were addressed related to the presence of coyotes near the construction site.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney is coordinating with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Coastal Engineering and NJDEP Land Resource Protection to install an emergency culvert to alleviate flooding issues associated with an impoundment in the Heislerville WMA. This project was submitted for Land Management Review.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney organized a meeting with the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and the Wetlands Institute to discuss a restoration project at Ephraim Island in the Cape May Coastal Wetlands WMA. Concept plans will be redesigned to address several issues identified in the meeting.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney developed and ordered signage for use at Beneficial Reuse of Dredge Material restoration sites.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney has submitted the Manahawkin Monitoring spending plan to the Division of Budget and Finance to be amended to include funding for additional monitoring efforts associated with the Manahawkin Wetland Restoration Project.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney is coordinating with NJDOT to procure an intragovernmental payment voucher for the treatment of phragmites in the Abbotts Meadow WMA this coming fall.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with the NJDEP Coastal Management Program to discuss National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grant opportunities.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with Ducks Unlimited and associate partners to discuss the restoration of the Mannington Meadows Marsh.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting related to the dredging activities associated with the New Jersey Wind Port. There is potential to beneficially reuse this material to enhance surrounding marshes.

All Regions

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended several classes held by Rutgers University to learn how to identify and delineate wetlands. Several more classes are scheduled in the coming weeks.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a Division of Science and Research webinar to learn about Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) as it relates to coastal wetland analysis.

Melissa Woerner

Northern Region

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended two bi-weekly status calls for the Hyperhumus wetlands restoration project at the Paulinskill River WMA. Permits have been submitted to the Division of Land Resource Protection.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended two bi-weekly calls for a potential Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant to fund part of the Hyperhumus restoration project. Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner also attended an applicant outreach webinar for the RCPP grant.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a call to discuss the Sparta Mountain Forest Stewardship Plan.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a call with staff from the Office of Natural Lands Management to discuss rare plant concerns in relation to potential phragmites treatment at the Hyperhumus section of Paulinskill River WMA.

A contractor treated Amwell Lake and Baldwin Lake to help control invasive aquatic species, including water chestnut and phragmites.

The seed was delivered to the permit farmer at the Merck Tract of South Branch WMA. Approximately 9 acres of native grasses and wildflowers will be planted as in-kind work this year.

Central Region

Seed was delivered from two companies in preparation for planting approximately 94 acres of fields that will benefit a variety of wildlife at the Assunpink, Colliers Mills, Stafford Forge and Greenwood Forest WMAs. Planting at Stafford Forge and Greenwood Forest WMAs has been completed by a contractor. Planting at Assunpink and Colliers Mills WMAs is currently in progress.

NJ Fish and Wildlife partnered with the Jersey Shore Chapter of the American Woodcock Society for a habitat project at the Prospertown Lake WMA. Volunteers planted 126 smooth alder trees and 20 common persimmon trees to improve habitat for woodcock, deer, turkey, and other wildlife species.

All Regions/Miscellaneous

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, Clinton, Whittingham, Paulinskill, and White Lake WMAs.

Staff continued ordering equipment and seed for habitat work.

Crew Supervisors James Hartobey and Christopher Murphy worked on seed orders for spring habitat planting. Both crews prepared fields for planting.

Staff continued stocking trout in the northern and southern regions.

Crew Supervisor James Hartobey and Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride attended Rutgers courses on wetlands delineation.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride continued to work on the decommissioning of several dams, including the Warren Mills Dam, Buckhorn Creek Dam in Warren County and the Rockafellows Mills Dam in Hunterdon County.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride met with representatives of NRCS at Capoolong Creek WMA to go over a report that contained information on restoring the trail at this WMA.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride attended the Lower Delaware River Access Managers Forum.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride and Sharon Petzinger met with Three Sisters Farm regarding the Organic Farm Lease at the Whittingham WMA and steps to take to avoid impacts on native wildlife.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride attended the Fisheries Forum webinar.

CENTRAL REGION

Pete Winkler, Regional Superintendent

Wendy Barbuck, Agency Services Rep. 3

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

Brian Kubin, Crew Supervisor
Anthony Carben, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Brian Hankins, 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.

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

Crews finished stocking trout following the 2024 stocking plan.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended the Barnegat Bay Lighthouse restoration meeting and the Joint Permit Preparation meeting for the restoration project.

Crews are planting spring pollinator and food plot plantings.

Demolition of an abandoned structure was completed at the Butterfly Bog WMA. The former location of the structure will be converted into a parking area.

Staff removed an abandoned boat from the Greenwood Forest WMA.

The fueling station at CRO was replaced.

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

NJ Fish and Game Council
NJ Fish and Wildlife ENSP
NJ Fish and Wildlife Bureau of Law Enforcement
Game Committee
Eastern German Shorthair Pointers
NJSFSC BOD
UBNJ
4 – H
WRAC
EGSPC Education / Training
CIER Manager Summit

SOUTHERN REGION

Nathan Figley, Regional Superintendent

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

Vacant, 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

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

Road Crew staff continue working on roads in the Glassboro WMA. Staff expect to complete this project this week and move on to the DOD Ponds, Egg Island, Maple Lake WMAs. Potholes in the parking area of the Spicers Creek boat ramp will be addressed this week in anticipation of a busy summer season.

Staff continue routine maintenance mowing of dams, offices, boat ramps, and WMA access points.

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

Staff continue working with the Office of Resource Development (ORD) to complete repairs on the Maskells Mill, Shaws Mill, and Harrisonville Lake Dams. A consultant has inspected these dams and is working on putting together a quote to repair them.

Staff continue to monitor Union Lake levels as mandated by Dam Safety. Staff are inspecting the Thundergut Pond Dam for loose matting that has been uncovered during heavy Spring rain events. The matting holds together an earthen berm and will most likely need additional material spread on it.

Staff participated in weekly construction meetings regarding the Pond Creek Project. Work continues, with the focus on the creation of the earthen berm and installation of silt fencing in preparation for additional vegetation clearing. The vegetation clearing is currently on hold due to timing restrictions.

Land Management staff are busy planting fields throughout the southern region. This year's plantings include pollinator mixes, sunflowers, dwarf sorghum, and buckwheat.

Staff completed trout stocking for the season and cleaned/stored transfer tanks.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley is working on hiring seasonal staff to help wildlife workers in their day-to-day activities. Tasks will include stocking of game/fish, mowing, weed whacking, planting/discing/plowing fields, maintenance of parking areas and boat ramps, and picking up trash. Three candidates have been selected and paperwork has been sent to Human Resources. Two of the candidates withdrew their application because they received full-time job offers. Staff will seek two new candidates to fill the vacancies.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley began review of an application that was developed by the Bureau of Geographic Information System (GIS) for detecting encroachments.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley worked with Students from the Stockton S.A.V.E. and Atlantic County Utilities Authority to clean up a section of the Makepeace Lake WMA. The roadway near the Makepeace Range and small parking area were cleaned up. The Stockton group filled a 20-yard dumpster in a few hours of work.

Meetings Attended: BLM Staff Weekly, Bureau of Law Enforcement, NJSFSC, Higbee Beach Project Meeting

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SECTION

LAND ACQUISITIONS

Lisa Carben, Executive Assistant

Nothing to report this period.