

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

June 21, 2024 to July 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 a meeting with Atlantic City Electric to discuss vegetation management along a management easement in the Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Office of Transactions and Public Land Administration (OTPLA) has reviewed the request and determined that the proposed management is consistent with the easement language.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney coordinated with Land Management staff to mow portions of the Cape Island WMA woodcock management area.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney entered data for FY24 Spring Planting into the WMA Planning Database.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney saw through the completion of Wisteria and Bamboo treatments in the Dennis Creek and Port Republic WMAs.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney organized a meeting with the Gloucester County Sportsmen Federation to discuss habitat management in the Winslow WMA. The meeting will be held in August.

Coastal Unit

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney continues to attend bi-weekly meetings on the Pond Creek Marsh Restoration Project. Two site visits occurred, one of which was a presentation that was given to the NJDEP Youth Inclusion Program. The berm foundation construction is complete. Pond Creek Channel widening is underway.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting in Maurice River Township with the Army Corps of Engineers to discuss the dredging project at the mouth of the Maurice River. Several problem points were identified with the dredging that occurred in winter 2023.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney is coordinating with 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. Bids and funding transfers are complete.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a virtual meeting with project partners to discuss the Cape May Coastal Wetlands WMA beneficial use placement. An in-person meeting was also attended at The Wetlands Institute to stakeholders with Middle Township residents. A presentation was given by The Wetlands Institute.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney continues to work on the Manahawkin WMA monitoring amendment. The amendment is under review by the NJDEP OTPLA.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and members of Port Norris and Cumberland County to discuss a potential community resilience project. Several follow-up meetings will occur.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended two meetings related to the development of a New Jersey Coastal Restoration Task Force.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney conducted a site visit to Mannington Meadows with Ducks Unlimited and other project team members. The project team will convene to discuss potential restoration efforts at this site.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a bi-weekly meeting on the Stouts Creek Restoration Project. Project members will submit information for Land Management Review where the project footprint overlaps with Upper Barnegat Bay WMA.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting to assist in facilitating The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) marsh pipeline project. The final 5 sites were selected. Data collection plans are under development.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended several workgroups, including Coastal Habitat and Aquatic Resource Research and Monitoring workgroup and Nature Based Solutions workgroup.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney visited several restoration sites with staff from the Bureau of Shellfisheries to discuss our coastal habitat restoration efforts.

All Regions & Other

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended the NJDEP Supervisor Portal training, along with several other eLearning activities.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with several DEP agencies to discuss land management activities on state lands.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney placed a purchase order and coordinated with a contractor to remove an abandoned boat on the Elmer Lake WMA.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney placed a purchase order for the repair of a well water system in Tuckahoe WMA.

Melissa Woerner

Northern Region

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a meeting about the current permit application for the Hyperhumus wetlands restoration project at the Paulinskill River WMA.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a meeting with New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), NJ Fish and Wildlife, WSP, and TNC to discuss potential mussel surveys related to the current permit application.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a bi-weekly status call with TNC and WSP for the Hyperhumus wetlands restoration project at Paulinskill River WMA.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a site visit to the Musconetcong WMA with staff from New Jersey Audubon and Musconetcong Watershed Association to discuss a potential riparian buffer project.

Central Region

Internal comments for the draft Greenwood Forest WMA Natural Resource Stewardship Plan were submitted and sent to Pine Creek Forestry for review.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner participated on a field visit with staff from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Endangered and Non Game Species Program (ENSP) to the Stafford Forge, Whiting, and Manchester WMAs to view current habitat and discuss management for rare butterflies and moths.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a drone flight at the Colliers Mills WMA. This is part of a project conducted by Rutgers University to map habitat for fence lizards.

All Regions/Miscellaneous

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner developed a presentation about "Establishing a Wildflower Meadow" and presented it to the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Monmouth County.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a meeting regarding land management activities on state lands. The meeting was followed by a field trip to the Assunpink WMA to view habitat management projects.

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 the Columbia, Beaver Brook, Berkshire Valley, Flatbrook/Roy, Clinton, Walpack, Whittingham, Paulinskill River, and White Lake WMAs.

Staff continued ordering equipment for habitat work. Planting has been completed in the northern region and seed has been ordered for next spring.

Staff is preparing WMA fields for youth pheasant and regular pheasant stocking.

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

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride worked on Geographic Information System (GIS) based encroachment tracking for the northern region and provided coordinates for the Rutgers deer carcass study.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride met with representatives of North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development to go over instream habitat work at the Pequest WMA on a tributary of the Pequest River in Great Meadows, Warren County.

A Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) application for funding of the Warren Mill Dam decommissioning project was submitted to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in cooperation with American Rivers and Musconetcong Watershed Association.

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.

Land Management hosted an in-person meeting and field trip with representatives from NJ Parks, Forests & Historic Sites and Watershed & Land Management to review management activities performed on State Land.

Sr. Wildlife Worker Timothy Ruth completed his certificate in Wetlands Delineation.

All Central Region dam Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) were updated and submitted to the NJDEP Bureau of Dam Safety.

Crews are working to alleviate flooding caused by beaver activity at the Webs Mills bog within Greenwood WMA. The bog has an interpretive boardwalk and is the site of many rare Pinelands plants.

The Colliers Mill Crew delivered the I&E Education Trailer to an event at the Burlington County Fair Grounds.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended a meeting to review potential WMA encroachments.

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

Mosquito Control Commission Meeting
Bureau of Law Enforcement
WLM Work Plan
Management Team Meeting
Fish and Game Council Meeting
Mosquito Control Committee
NJDEP/ACOE WQC/401 Coordination Meeting
NJSFSC BOD
I & E Web Admin
NJSFSC State
NWTF
Bureau of Land Management

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
Vacant, 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.

Glassboro roads are complete and road crew staff moved onto multiple smaller jobs. Large dump piles in DOD Ponds, Salem River, Tuckahoe, Millville, and Buckshutem WMAs were cleaned up. Repairs were made to the Hansey Creek boat ramp. Roads in the Millville WMA, near Shaws Mill Pond were graded, and staff are staging material to repair an erosion gully that formed at the Gibson Creek Landing Boat Ramp. The grader will be serviced and then moved to Peaslee to begin grading roads there. This is a large area with extensive roadways. It is anticipated that this will take a month to complete.

Dumping continues to be a large problem on WMAs and recently many large items including jet skis, boats, and travel trailers have been dumped.

Th Road Crew and Salem staff rehabilitated a parking area in the Featherbed Lane WMA. Low growing branches were cut, and 5 dump truck loads of poison ivy vines were removed from the area. Material was hauled in to fill several large holes. Removal of vines and filling of holes will allow the Salem crew to routinely mow this area. A WMA sign will be installed here. This should benefit the many birders that frequent the area.

Steve Dobrosky will be retiring at the end of the month, that will leave the road crew with one staff member. As much as we hate to say goodbye to Steve, we wish him all the best in his retirement.

Staff continue routine maintenance mowing of dams, offices, boat ramps, and WMA access points. With a point of emphasis on dams during this period.

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

Staff participate 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.

Staff have reported that fields planted this Spring are doing well, despite the lack of rain just after planting. Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley continues to work on encroachments.

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

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SECTION

LAND ACQUISITIONS

Lisa Carben, Executive Assistant

The following lands have been acquired by the State and have been assigned to New Jersey Fish and Wildlife during this period.

WMA	COUNTY	TOWNSHIP	NAME	ACRES
Buckhorn Creek	Warren	White	Ann Glass	133
Sparta Mountain	Sussex	Sparta	Peter Bravman	.23

Acres assigned during this period: 133.23

Total acres statewide: 358,453