



BUREAU OF INFORMATION AND EDUCATION MONTHLY REPORT

Al Ivany, Chief

August 16 – September 15, 2024

HUNTER EDUCATION/ RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, REACTIVATION (R3)/ NASP

Hunter Education (Joe Leskie, Keith Griglak, Sam Forlenza, Courtney Venuti)

During this reporting period, 14 Hunter Education classes were conducted. A total of 389 students successfully completed bow hunter education along with 408 students who successfully completed firearm hunter education for a total of 797 students certified.

A total of 501 emails were fielded and responded to during this reporting period. This is an average of 25 emails per business day. Included in these messages were 76 non-resident license applications and 16 rifle permit unlocks. The large majority of non-residents submitting for license privilege unlocks at this time tend to be those from neighboring states looking to participate in our fall bow hunting season.

Staff received a total of 110 voicemails. Twenty-seven percent of the messages received were in reference to our Live Fire Range Sessions which are wrapping up in early November for the 2024 education season. The next highest percentage of calls (23%) were requests for duplicate Hunter Education cards followed by 19% of calls that were not in reference to Hunter Education at all. Remaining percentages are as follows: 18% miscellaneous Hunter Education; and tied at 6% each were non-resident calls and calls about our classes in general. The least number of calls were trapper education inquiries at 1%.

Staff received 70 requests for duplicate Hunter Education cards. A total of 126 individual disciplines were successfully located, however 17 could not be found. Staff request information

from the constituent that is then used to locate records in an Access file. If records are located, they are added to the profile and instructions on how to obtain the card are then emailed out. If records are not able to be located (usually due to date of completion; records before 1986 are incomplete), instructions on how to proceed with Hunter Education in order to obtain a new card are emailed.

Trapper Education

Staff is preparing for upcoming trapper education classes around the state with classes being offered in Atlantic, Ocean, and Warren counties in September and October.

Miscellaneous

S. Forlenza assisted R3 program staff with its *Introduction to Muzzleloaders* workshop which included an evening classroom lecture and weekend range day. All participants left eager to take up muzzleloader hunting and/or shooting in the future.

Staff created and forwarded social media content and promotional information for the upcoming trapper education courses that will be held in September and October.

All unit staff attended an Information & Education bureau meeting at the Central Region Office to review budgeting, program updates and news on what things staff within the entire bureau are working on and accomplishing.

J. Leskie attended a Non-Lead Partnership meeting with staff from the Wallkill National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and the Peregrine Fund to discuss an upcoming workshop scheduled for October 11 and 12, 2024 at the Wallkill NWR. Details on the event will be forwarded to wildlife professionals inviting them to witness the presentation and demonstration.

Staff provided an archery setup and demonstration during an *NJF&W Experience* program for new employees on August 21 at the Pequest Trout Hatchery.

K. Griglak attended the Warren County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs' monthly meeting.

Recruitment, Retention, Reactivation/R3 (Joe Leskie, Tiffany Woolley, Courtney Venuti)

Staff completed rubric selections, and notifications for a waterfowl hunting workshop on August 24 at the Wallkill NWR. A partnership between Fish & Wildlife's R3 Hunting and Shooting Program, Ducks Unlimited (Wallkill Chapter), and the Wallkill NWR, a total of 30 people attended. Afterward, staff sent out a program evaluation to all participants and received back 23 responses. Post-program analytics are as follows: 100% said that they would recommend this program to others, 95% said that the program was very informative, 62% said they are ready to go out waterfowl hunting this season, 29% would like a little more time to digest the information, but would try to waterfowl hunt this season, and 10% are not ready to go out. The three most interesting topics covered during the workshop were waterfowl identification, equipment, and waterfowl hunting laws and regulations.

Staff conducted a two-day *Introduction to Muzzleloaders* workshop on Thursday, September 5 and Sunday, September 8, 2024, for 13 individuals. On the first day, participants attended a lecture that covered all aspects of muzzleloaders and .22 rifles. On day two, participants attended the range session where they could load, shoot, and clean a muzzleloader and a .22. Staff later sent out a program evaluation survey to all participants (13) and received 12 responses back. Post-program analytics are as follows: 100% would recommend this program to others, 83% are ready to go hunting or shooting with a muzzleloader, and 100% said this program was very informative. The three most interesting topics of the workshop were types of muzzleloaders, shooting/cleaning a muzzleloader, and equipment/supplies.

Staff opened the registration for two deer butchering workshops hosted by the NJF&W R3 Hunting & Shooting program in partnership with Hunters Helping the Hungry (HHH), Bringhurst Meats (Berlin-Camden County), and the Buck Stop (Norma-Salem County). Each workshop is open to deer hunters aged 18 and older. Participants will get an informative, in-depth lesson on how to skin, cut, and package their own harvested deer. Registration is currently open, but will close on Thursday, September 19. So far, over 190 participants have signed up. Later this fall, two additional deer butchering workshops will be offered in North Jersey.

Staff opened registration for the *Women's Introduction to Shooting Sporting Clays* workshop to be held in partnership with Fin, Fur, and Feather Sportsmen's Club of New Jersey on Sunday, September 22 at the club facility in Upper Freehold Township (Monmouth County). Fifteen women will attend the workshop which will include a brief lecture on safe gun handling and an in-depth introduction to shooting sporting clays.

R3 Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt

The Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt Lottery Application was developed and posted for registration. There are six designated hunting blinds available by application and a random lottery. The lottery application period is September 1-25, 2024. Results will be emailed by October 2, 2024. Participants who win a blind will be eligible to come to the Open House on Saturday, October 5 and Sunday, October 6, 2024. This will give awarded winners a chance to see their blinds and ask staff questions before their hunt date.

Staff continue to work on logistics for planning mentored waterfowl hunts. Staff recently visited the Tuckahoe impoundments to make notes on inventory and blind maintenance tasks. In the upcoming weeks, blinds will be prepared for the upcoming season.

Supplies were inventoried and ordered for the 2024 Tuckahoe Managed Hunt season, including hunting blind materials and supplies needed to indicate directions to parking and paths to the blinds. Other signs were also constructed for the upcoming season.

R3 Miscellaneous

C. Venuti is monitoring incoming applications for youth hunters and volunteer mentors/dog handlers as registration for our annual Take A Kid Youth Pheasant Hunt is now open. Staff are

confirming that young hunters possess a valid youth hunting license and are of the correct age to participate. Staff are also confirming that volunteers have completed their R3 Mentor Training successfully and are in good standing with Fish and Wildlife.

Staff attended a NEAFWA R3 *Hunt for Good Campaign* meeting to discuss the promotion prior to going live later in September. At that time, staff will be able to see the advertisements that were created with information we provided about our states. If we like the advertisements that are posted, we can incorporate them into our state's social media.

T. Woolley attended three NJF&W new employee field experiences (Bureau of Information and Education, Bureau of Land Management and the Endangered & Nongame Species Program).

NASP® (Joe Leskie, Craig Decker)

Staff ordered Basic Archery Instructor training packets during the report period for the upcoming NASP school year.

On August 17, staff provided an archery activity for the Spruce Run Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) JAKES DAY annual event at the Pequest Trout Hatchery and Natural Resource Education Center. Each year, 100-150 children and their families participate in this highly successful event. JAKES stands for Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics and Sportsmanship. Lunch, t-shirts, awards and prizes were included at no charge to the participants.

Staff provided an archery activity during an *NJF&W Experience* for new employees on August 21 at the Pequest Trout Hatchery and Natural Resource Education Center. The activity was held as part of an overview of the Bureau of I&E's programs. Each bureau was tasked with developing a *field day* to enhance the new hires' knowledge of our agency.

Staff conducted a site visit to evaluate conditions at the Heywood School in Orange, Essex County and later conducted a NASP Basic Archery Instructor certification event. Twelve teachers from all seven elementary schools in the Orange Township School System were successfully certified.

The new 2024-25 school season began in August with six new schools added to the program and 12 teachers certified.

Staff held a meeting with school personnel from the Ezra L. Nolan Elementary School in Jersey City (Hudson County) to discuss the new archery equipment kit that will be ordered to start their NASP program.

Staff attended a Bureau of Information & Education staff meeting on September 12 where various programs gave reports and updates.

Information on the 2024-25 NASP Easton Foundation Grant Program was announced to all certified basic archery instructors. Staff processed and approved grants for seven new schools and one existing school for a total of \$10,900.00 in funding to be utilized for NASP archery equipment purchases year-to-date.

Staff is working with marketing personnel to develop and print an updated NASP promotional brochure.

Staff is planning, coordinating and scheduling upcoming Basic Archery Instructor training/certification sessions.

Staff continues to field communication with various schools and organizations inquiring about the NASP program and how to become certified along with providing assistance to existing schools and organizations.

AQUATIC EDUCATION (Karen Byrne, Jessica Griglak, Alanna Newmark, Marc Rogoff)

Sedge Island Natural Resource Education Center

Sedge Island held one *Bay to Bowl* workshop for 10 adults. Participants of this locavore workshop spent time learning about the marine environment while harvesting fish, clams, algae and plants for consumption.

The first *Sedge Island Field Experience – Girls Edition* was held for 10 participants. This three-day two-night program invited previous *Sedge Island Field Experience* participants to return for a more in-depth program focusing on conducting field research in the salt marsh.

The Sedge Island facility had its annual fire inspection and passed.

Trout in the Classroom (TIC)

Registration for the TIC program has closed. There are 109 educators registered for the 2024-25 school year, with 17 new teachers. Each new teacher receives a customized water recommendation based on their registration form. It is hoped that by narrowing down issues that are already present before eggs arrive, that the survival rate may increase.

The Trout in the Classroom Activity Guide was transferred to an online digital format for the teachers this year.

Angler R3

One *Let's Go Fishing* workshop was held on August 16 at Thompson Park in Monroe Township (Middlesex County) for eight participants. Most participants at this workshop were females who had already participated in a previous introductory workshop with NJF&W, so staff and volunteers introduced new fishing techniques for participants to use beyond the basic bait fishing rig.

One *First Catch Center* family fishing workshop was held on September 8 for 27 participants ranging in age from 8 years old to over 70.

Staff, along with Fishing Education Instructor volunteers, conducted a fishing education class at the Pyramid Healthcare Hammonton Detox and Residential Treatment Center in Hammonton (Atlantic County) on September 10. Thirty individuals (15 women and 15 men) who are part of the facility's Life Skills program participated in the class. Administrators at Pyramid Healthcare were interested in providing fishing as an activity for clients during down time, since the facility is located directly on Hammonton Lake. The class provided instruction on how to set up and care for spinning rods and reels, casting instruction and fishing. Five loaner rod and reel combos, along with tackle, and bait were provided for clients to use.

Staff provided an introductory fishing education class at the Greenway Family Success Center of Avenel on September 14. Greenway staff had reached out after families had asked about learning to fish. Staff, along with Fishing Education Instructor volunteers and J. Rozema from the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries, provided instruction at the facility and then a fishing experience at Roosevelt Park in Middlesex County. Seven families enjoyed their time learning to fish.

Following the fishing class with Greenway families, staff held its first *Community Fishing Meetup* at Roosevelt Park. This location fit with the Angler R3 Plan with efforts to retain and recruit anglers in Middlesex County. Staff advertised the event to county residents who had purchased a 2023 fishing license, but not a 2024 license and to residents who were 2024 fishing license buyers. Staff, J. Rozema and Fishing Education Instructors were on hand to help this event run smoothly. Over 80 people fished that day as part of the meetup. Twenty-five rods and reels were loaned out and bait was provided to all who attended. Several anglers brought equipment they owned, and volunteers provided guidance with setting up and using it. Staff received positive feedback from anglers who attended the event as well as volunteers who assisted with the day. A big thank you to J. Rozema for assisting with the event and answering lots of questions about fishing in New Jersey and to the Middlesex County Parks and Recreation staff for providing equipment and assistance.

Staff began working on new angler resources, including a *Guide to Freshwater Fishing in New Jersey*. The goal of these resources is to provide new anglers with information they need to be able to go fishing on their own and to provide supportive post-workshop information to participants who attend any of the fishing education programs.

Staff met with a translation company to discuss getting documents translated into Spanish.

Education

Staff met with State Museum staff to plan the creation of a fish ladder/dam diorama. The museum has agreed to cover the cost up to \$500.00.

The National Environmental Education Advisory Committee meeting was attended. The proposed focus/theme for the administrative document will be Sustainability, Climate and Wildlife in the Community.

Staff attended the Clearwater Festival held in Asbury Park (Monmouth County) on August 31-September 1. There was limited visitation and exhibitors at this event. Approximately 400 people attended.

Five exhibits/presentations are scheduled through Thanksgiving.

Other

Staff attended a Bureau of Information & Education staff meeting.

Staff attended a Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament meeting. The 34th Annual Tournament will be held May 18, 2025.

WILDLIFE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH (Karen Byrne, Jessica Griglak, Liz Jackson, Alanna Newmark, Adam Pollinger)

Pequest Natural Resource Education Center

Three group programs were held this reporting period for a total of 43 students. Programs included one Fishing Basics (25) and two Senior Fishing (18) classes.

Pequest also offered public programs, including a Saturday Hatchery Tour, Introduction to Fly Fishing Boot Camp, and Friday the 13th Night Hike. A total of 46 people participated in a program.

Staff hosted new employees as part of the *Fish & Wildlife Experience*. New employees enjoyed a hike up to McDowell's Pond, fly or spin-cast fishing at the education pond, and archery practice provided by the Hunter Education program.

The facility was used by three groups to conduct their own programs: Hunter Education, National Wild Turkey Federation's Spruce Run Chapter's JAKES Day and Healing Waters.

Mobile Education Trailer (MET)

The Bureau of Law enforcement staffed the MET at the Hunterdon County Fair with over 4,500 people walking through. Fall dates are currently being scheduled, including the following:

- 42nd Old Time Barnegat Bay Decoy and Gunning Show, September 28-29
- Bedminster Fall Festival and Community Day, October 12
- Batsto Living History Fair, October 20

Hooked on Fishing - Not on Drugs (HOFNOD) Program

Staff is coordinating a fall Team Leader Training for October 12-13, 2024. The training will take place at the Pequest Natural Resource Education Center on Saturday, and at the Hackettstown State Fish Hatchery on Sunday. Registrations are being received.

Staff is coordinating a Fish & Wildlife Career Immersion Program for youth in the Hooked on Fishing program. The weekend program will be held November 8-10, 2024, at the New Jersey School of Conservation in Stokes State Forest (Sussex County) for up to 30 youth. The program's goal is to introduce students in grades 7-12 to jobs and careers within New Jersey DEP Fish & Wildlife. Staff is developing an agenda and reaching out to other bureau staff for assistance.

Staff is preparing for a large statewide event to celebrate the Tenth Annual Youth Fishing Challenge which will be held on Free Fishing Day in June 2025. Lake Lenape in Atlantic County will be the site for the event.

WEBSITE ACTIVITY (Doug Rizio)

New and Updated Pages, Images, and Documents

One news update was posted in August.

Four job openings were also published; three were deleted after their closing dates.

Three new pages were created as well; while two more pages were deleted or consolidated into other pages.

Additionally, 25 event posts were updated or edited during the report period.

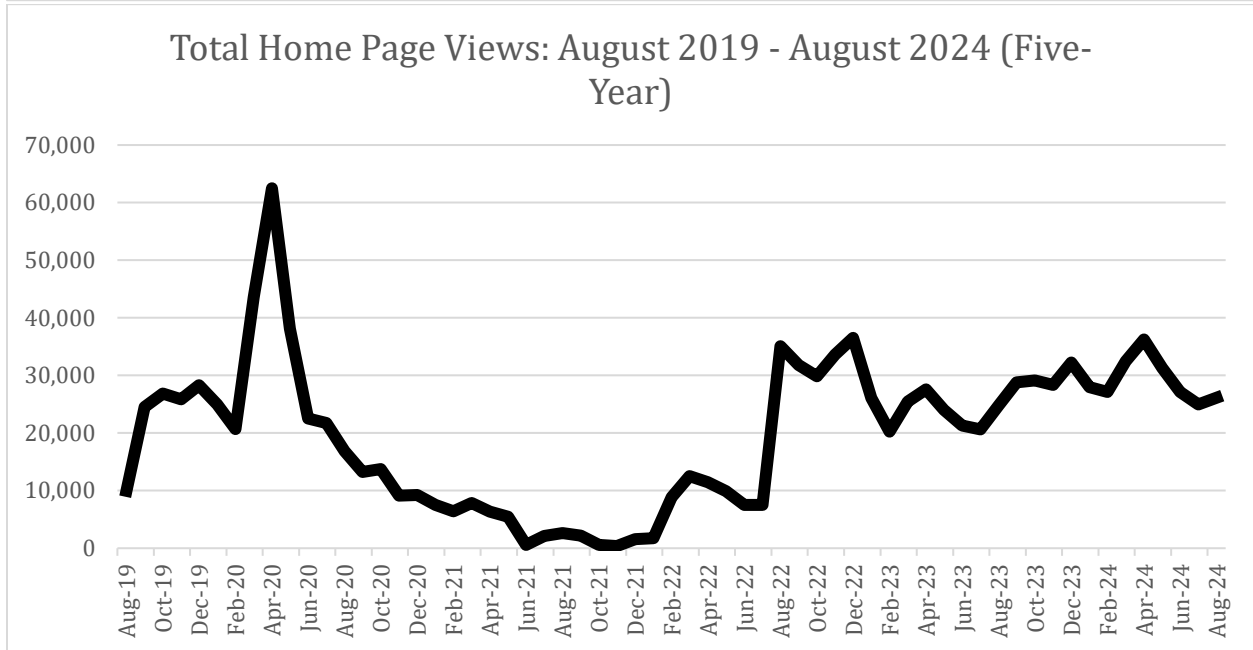
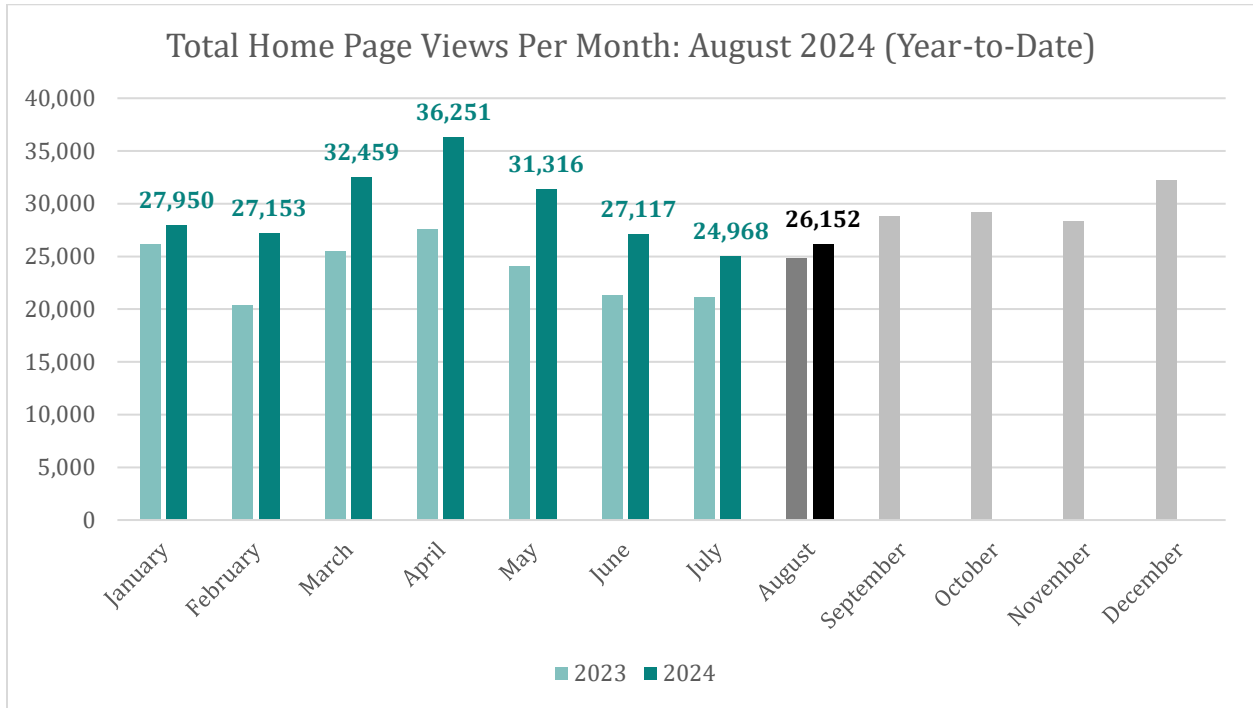
Approximately 51 pages were revised/updated throughout this duration.

Approximately 200 documents were edited in or converted to PDF or DOC format. These included: Bureau Reports (45) in five .zip files; recent Minutes/Notices/Agendas (9); old Minutes/Notices/Agendas for the State Mosquito Control Commission (85); Job Descriptions (4); and others (57).

Thirty images were also edited and posted.

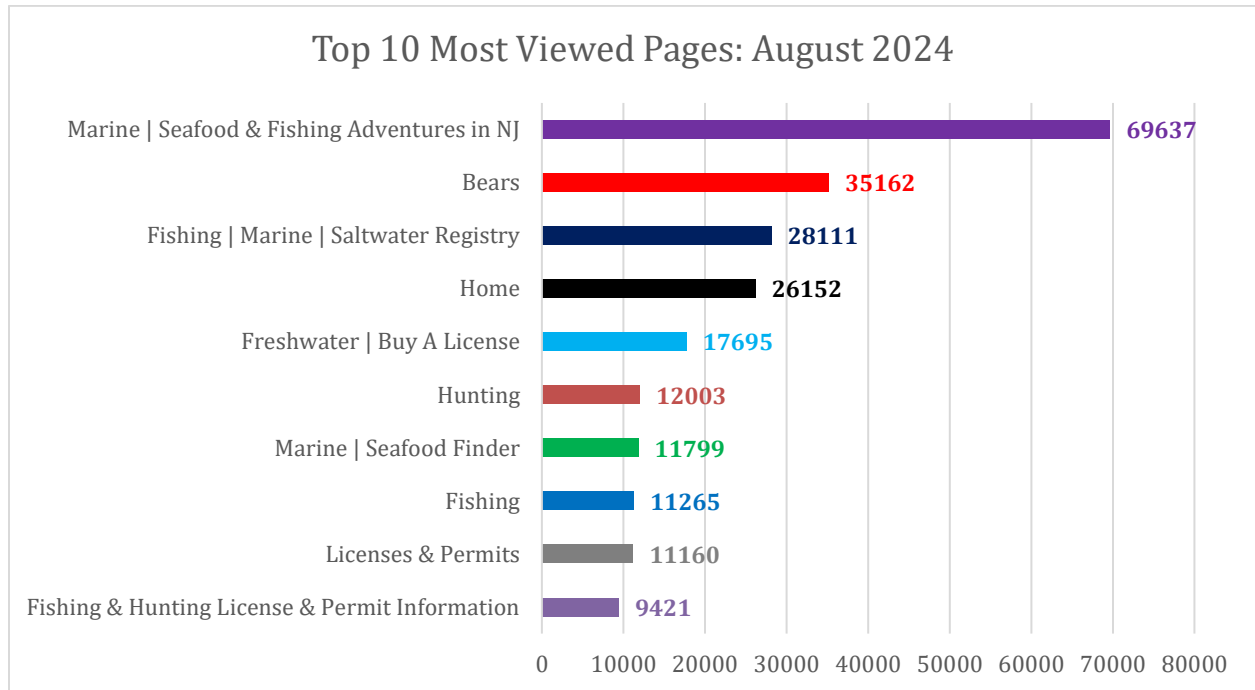
Analytics – Home Page

The number of views on the home page August was 26,152; an average of about 844 views per day. It is an increase of 1,184 views from the previous month of July (24,968) and an increase of 1,354 views from August of the previous year (24,798).

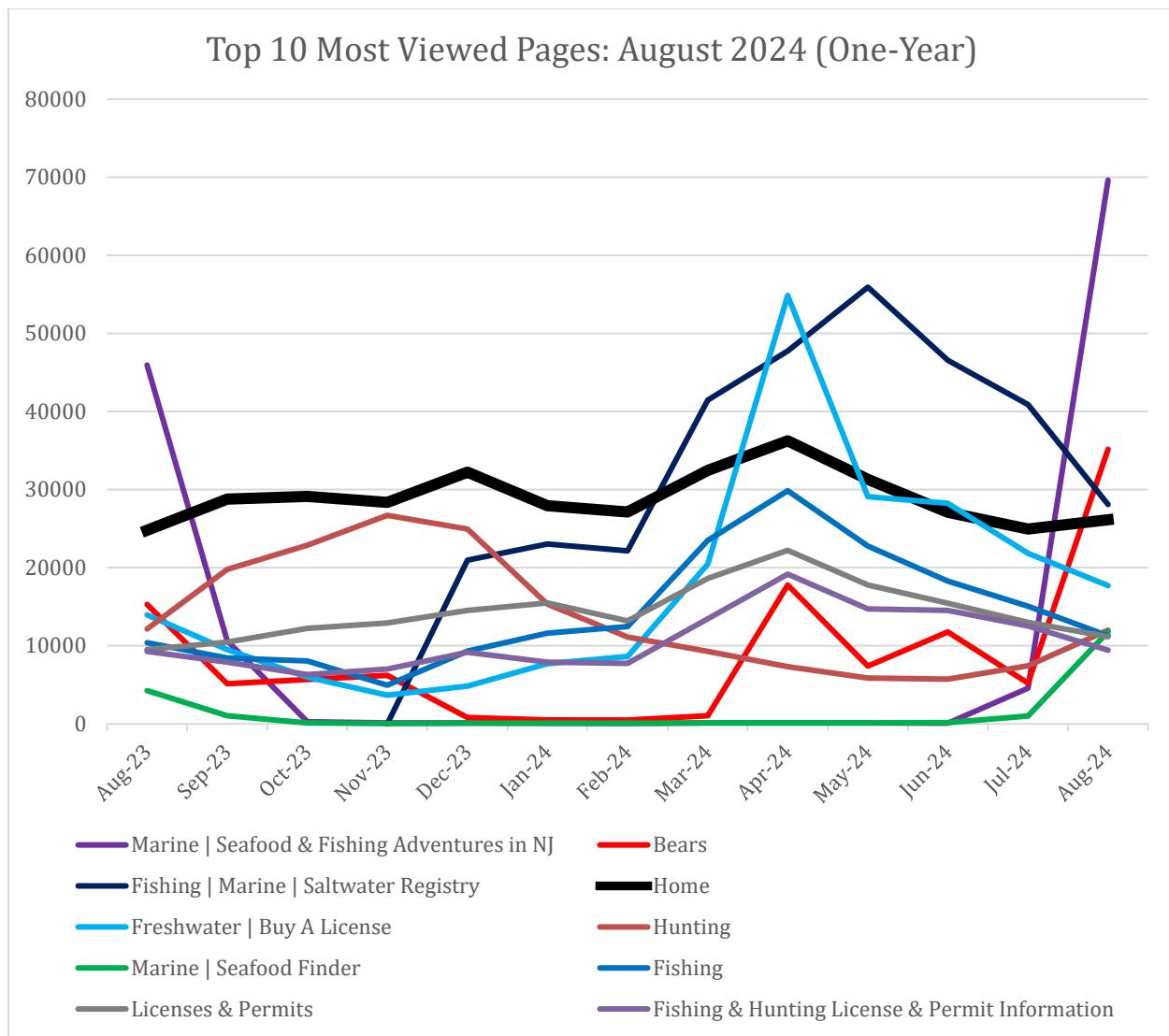


Analytics

The top ten most viewed web pages in August (including the home page) are shown below:



Also shown below are the performances of this August's top ten pages since the previous year:

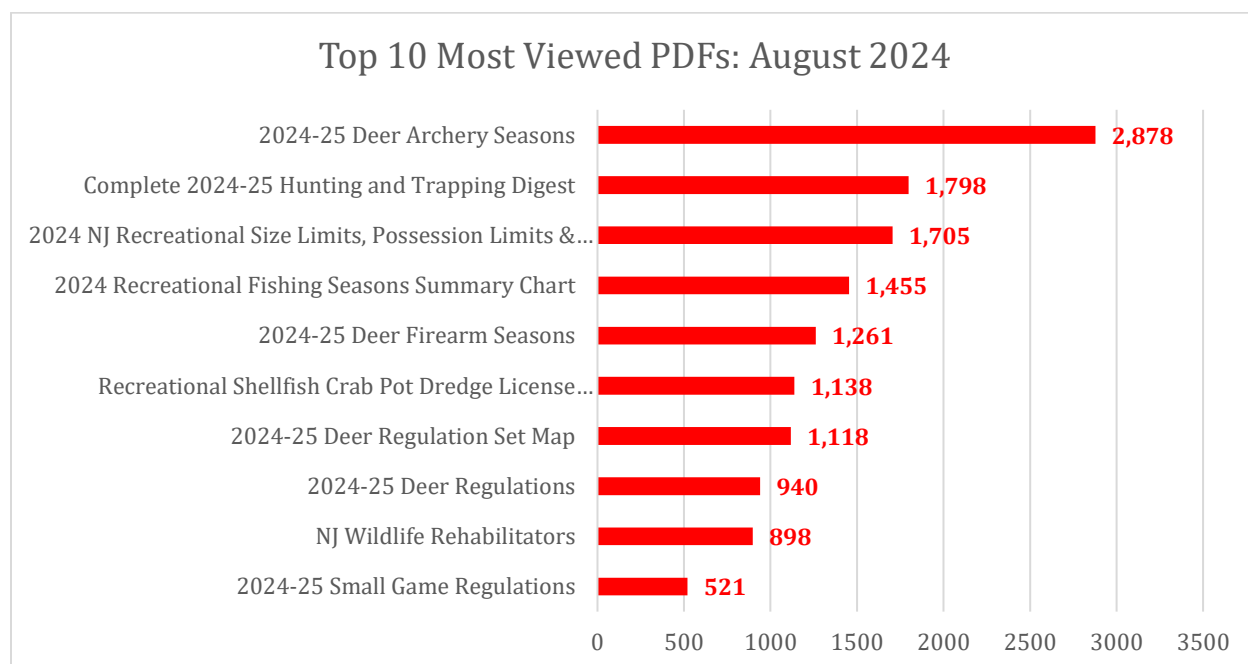


Rank	Page Name	Views
1	Marine Seafood & Fishing Adventures in NJ	69,637
2	Bears	35,162
3	Fishing Marine Saltwater Registry	28,111
4	Home	26,152
5	Freshwater Buy A License	17,695
6	Hunting	12,003
7	Marine Seafood Finder	11,799
8	Fishing	11,265
9	Licenses & Permits	11,160
10	Fishing & Hunting License & Permit Information	9,421

Other popular pages on the website were:

Rank	Page Name	Views
11	Hunting Buy A License	8,676
12	Freshwater Places to Fish - Ponds, Lakes, and Reservoirs	7,776
13	Hunting Hunter Education	7,651
14	Marine Recreational Licenses And Permits	7,297
15	Marine Recreational Fish & Wildlife	7,239
16	Marine	7,200
17	Hunting Deer Seasons and Regulations	6,811
18	Marine Seasons & Regulations	6,491
19	Hunting and Trapping Digest	6,128
20	Marine Recreational Saltwater Volunteer Angler Survey	5,284

The ten most requested PDFs this report period were:



Rank	PDF Name	Views
1	2024-25 Deer Archery Seasons	2,878
2	Complete 2024-25 Hunting and Trapping Digest	1,798
3	2024 NJ Recreational Size Limits, Possession Limits & Seasons	1,705
4	2024 Recreational Fishing Seasons Summary Chart	1,455
5	2024-25 Deer Firearm Seasons	1,261
6	Recreational Shellfish Crab Pot Dredge License Application	1,138

7	2024-25 Deer Regulation Set Map	1,118
8	2024-25 Deer Regulations	940
9	NJ Wildlife Rehabilitators	898
10	2024-25 Small Game Regulations	521

Additional Activities

Additional activities included bi-weekly Outreach Group meetings and Commissioner's Updates.

WILDLIFE INFORMATION/PUBLIC OUTREACH (Linda DiPiano)

GovDelivery (Listserv) Messages

Nine (9) email messages were drafted and sent to various e-mail lists and outdoor writers. Assistance was provided to staff with five (5) additional messages.

1. Introduction to Muzzleloader Workshop (8/19/24)
2. The R3 Newsletter Has Fallen! (8/27/24)
3. Waterfowl Lottery Application Period for Tuckahoe WMA Is Now Open (9/1/24)
4. Closed WMA Areas Reopen Tomorrow! (9/2/24)
5. Attention Outdoor Women Shooters! (9/4/24)
6. Registration for 2024 Youth Pheasant Hunt is OPEN! (9/5/24)
7. Venison 101: Deer Processing Workshop (9/6/24)
8. Permits On Sale Today (9/9/24)
9. Fall Bow Opens Saturday 9/14 In Early Zones (9/12/24)

GovDelivery List numbers To Date

	9/1/2024
Freshwater Fishing	63200
Hunting	44187
Marine Fishing	59487
Wildlife	41453
Education	36524
Endangered Species	32756
Shellfish	39121
Outdoors	46715
Sparta Mt.	28319
CHANJ	32700
Marine CARES Act Information	17469

Marine Fisheries Grant and Assistance Information		5018
Total		446949

Responses to the Public Email Address

Approximately 188 email messages came into the public email address. All were directly responded to or forwarded to agency staff for response; all others required no response.

Outstanding Deer Program

Twenty (20) applications (14 adults and 6 youth in 10 categories) have been received for the 2025 Deer Classic.

All applicants have been informed by email that their application was received and that they will receive more information once we have reached the application deadline, and the scores have been ranked.

The application deadline has been extended from November 1 to December 1.

The Deer Classic will occur on April 26, 2025, during the NJ State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs Annual Convention and Sportsman's Jamboree at the Gloucester County Dream Park in Logan Township.

Freshwater Fishing Digest

Received the 2025 Freshwater Fishing Digest from the publisher as well as the production schedule that will be followed to keep us on track for a December 23 shelf date.

Sent the digest to Freshwater Fisheries staff with a due date for materials of September 6, 2024.

Received the materials submission back from Freshwater Fisheries staff on September 6, reviewed all edits, and uploaded the pass to the publisher on the same day (9/6).

Wildlife Conservation Corps

The Wildlife Conservation Corps now has 4,852 members.

There were no volunteer opportunities available during this reporting period.

Other

Participated in the “*Fish and Wildlife Experience*” initiative where new employees are introduced to what each bureau does. I&E’s took place at Pequest where new-hires went on an educational hike, fished in the education pond, and shot NASP-style archery.

Met with the NJSFSC president regarding restructuring NJFW’s Representative Program.

Attended a Northeast Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies’ (NEAFWA) Conservation Information and Education Administrators’ meeting and discussed the 2025 Association for Conservation Information’s (ACI) Conference to be held in New Jersey. All of the northeast states were invited to attend. Staff asked to be placed on the 2025 NEAFWA Conference’s business meeting agenda to discuss the ACI meeting.

Attended an Engagement Manager Training session with staff from ASPIRA.

Attended a Governor’s Surf Fish Tournament Meeting. The date of May 18, 2025, was chosen for the 34th annual tournament at Island Beach State Park.

Attended an Association for Conservation Information board meeting and discussed the status of planning the 2025 conference. The ACI organization will process all registration information and funds.

Attended the Bureau of Information and Education staff meeting.

WILDLIFE INFORMATION – INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (Kathy Porutski)

Internal Communication (IC) topics that were *written or edited* and sent out this month include:

NOV Posting - NJFW (Agency Services Representative)

NOV Posting - NJFW (Wildlife Worker)

NJFW Staff Day Thursday, September 19

Congratulations to ENSP’s Emily Heiser!

Congratulations to Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries’ Kyle Civalier!

NOV Postings - NJFW (3)

Research Scientist 2

Research Scientist 3

Executive Assistant 2

NJFW Staff Day Thursday, September 19 - REMINDER to CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE by 9/9

NOV Posting - NJFW (Heavy Equipment Operator)

NJFW Staff Day September 19 - REMINDER to CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE by Thursday, 9/12

Also, during this reporting period: the Bureau of Information and Education's Monthly Report for August was compiled and edited; staff participated in a TEAMS call to discuss F&W Staff Day; the I&E staff meeting was attended on 9/12 at Assunpink; and arrangements were made to share in the responsibility for answering messages from the public email address.

Editing on the FY24 Annual Report continues. During this reporting period, the following bureaus/offices were completed: Law Enforcement, I&E, and Fish and Wildlife Health & Forensics.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND DIGITAL MEDIA (Jonathan Carlucci)

Publications/Graphics

- Request *Deer Management In Your Community* Communications review
- Finalize four versions of bobcat art for WHSP, layout elements, logos and text
- Request *Deer Management In Your Community* brochure edits x 3
- *Great Fishing Close to Home* edits made after review
- *Deer Management In Your Community* specs, TAP form, and make print request
- Review and edit *Deer and the Farmer* brochure for reprint
- Request *Deer and the Farmer* brochure Communications review
- Keep NJ CWD Free brochure review and modifications analysis
- Conversion of files on graphics machine, fix broken documents
- Four QR codes created in Adobe for program support
- New publication asset collection, requests and creation x 7 images
- Images acquired from stock source through DOIT contact for publications

Photography/Videography

- Upload HOIS overview and interviews, shared with video editor
- American Oystercatcher footage shared with ENSP staff
- Download footage from cloud and camera sources and upload to share folder
- Black Skimmer footage uploaded and shared
- Review turtle release video and provide feedback
- Communicate with Nikon Customer Service, pack and return faulty accessories
- Hairy Woodpecker documented in natural setting photo/video
- Wood Turtle release footage download from camera, review and upload to editor
- Document cliff swallow nest construction and interview for bridge installation project
- Pequest site visit, document Jane Chapel section clearing work
- Rockport site visit, document planting, interview with BLM staff, site overview
- Review Flight Operations Manual and SOP from DEP Lead Pilot sUAS
- ENSP footage uploaded for cliff swallow habitat construction project

- Wildcat Ridge WMA site visit and documentation
- Habitat serial images taken for museum project with video editor
- Pollinator footage taken and uploaded to share drive
- Review and upload WMA of the month footage, share with video editor
- Aerial footage of CRO taken for various projects
- Internal, press and communications requests for photographs fulfilled
- Total review and upload of 38 GB of footage and stills shared with video editor and I&E staff

Meetings/Training

I&E Staff meeting

ACI Board Zoom meeting

NJ Habitats Teams meeting

Outreach Group Teams meeting

Monthly flight training

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND DIGITAL MEDIA (Matt Hencheck)

Video Production

- *Wildcat Ridge WMA of the Month promo* video – Filmed ground footage and drone footage of Wildcat Ridge Wildlife Management Area for the WMA of the Month promo. Each month the video team highlights a different area showcasing the landscapes and activities available for the public to enjoy. This video has posted to NJ Fish & Wildlife’s social media platforms.
- *Chinese Pond Mussel Survey* video – This project was filmed and has been in the editing stages since May. Additional shots must be filmed as well as a short, animated segment. Once this video is completed and approved by staff, we intend to post by late September or early October.
- *Early Successional Habitat Initiative* video– Early successional habitat (i.e., grasslands, scrub-shrub meadows, young forest, herbaceous freshwater wetlands, etc.) across New Jersey is disappearing at an alarming rate. In 1986, there was approximately 1,470,000 acres of early and mid-successional habitat across the state. In 2020, that number had dropped to 1,095,000 acres, a decline of more than 375,000 acres. This decline is primarily due to development and natural succession, a natural process that changes the structure of a habitat over time. The Information and Education video team has been working with staff on producing a video of this initiative to restore these important areas. Currently, the producer has been scheduling and filming interviews with staff from the

Bureau of Land Management and Endangered and Nongame Species Program as well as filming several WMAs that include early successional habitat. The intended completion and post-date is November.

- *NJ State Museum* video – The I&E video team has been selected to produce a variety of video segments highlighting many topics and regions of the Garden State, including – the Delaware Bay, Atlantic Coast, Pinelands, Delaware River, Species of Success, ENSP’s Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey (CHANJ) project, and Piedmont bird boxes. We are currently conducting interviews with Fish & Wildlife staff and filming the aforementioned environments and landscapes for this video. The production will play on a loop in the NJDEP Fish and Wildlife exhibit at the NJ State Museum beginning in April 2025 and run for one year until April 2026.
- *Box Turtle Release* video – In August we filmed the release of 50 box turtles at a secure WMA with ENSP Zoologist Brian Zarate and partnered staff. These turtles were captured illegally, then confiscated by New Jersey conservation police officers more than a year ago. The turtles were brought to Woodlands Wildlife Refuge for rehabilitation and prior to their release, transmitters were attached to each of their shells for data collecting. This video requires additional reshoots and interviews before its completion.
- *J1 – An American Oystercatcher Story* video – We filmed ENSP beach nesting staff as they monitored a popular oystercatcher named “J1.” This special bird is well-known among staff, as he is approaching 19 years old. Despite missing one foot, he has continued to migrate back to Stone Harbor year after year to breed. This video posted to social media in late-August.

SOCIAL MEDIA (Katie Paey)

Facebook

The NJFW Facebook (FB) page had **51,614 followers** at the end of this reporting period.

A total of **29** Facebook posts were posted this period. Posts include photographs and video taken by staff, graphic pieces created for special promotions and shared posts from other pages.

Post topics included: Go Fish Fridays, Summer of CHANJ campaign content, World Mosquito Day, Staff at Hunterdon County Fair, Goldfinch is the State Bird, Bats in Buildings, “Supercats” Channel Catfish Stocking, National Dog Day, Employment Opportunities, Trapper Education Classes, Keep NJ CWD Free, Hunter Education Program, Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt Lottery, Small Sections of Closed WMAs Have Reopened, Women’s Introduction to Sporting Clays Workshop, Take A Kid Pheasant Hunt Registration, Deer Butchering Workshops, Permit Availability for Deer and Turkey Seasons, American Oystercatcher J1, Avoid Placing Tree Stands in Ash Trees, Know the Regulations Before Heading Into the Field, Early Fall Bow

Season Information, Wildcat Ridge WMA of the Month, and Opening Day of Early Fall Bow Deer Season.

Posts with the most reach and engagement this period – **Reach** is the number of unique people who have seen content associated with our Facebook page. **Engagement** is post clicks, likes, comments and shares (any action someone takes on the page or post):

8/23 – “Supercats” Channel Catfish stocking – reached **275,883** people, **18,482** engagements

Staff continues to like and respond to comments and other questions on our Fish & Wildlife FB page in post comment threads, direct messages to our page, event postings and outside timeline posts.

Instagram

The NJFW Instagram page had **18,478 followers** at the end of this reporting period.

The total organic reach of the NJFW Instagram page during this reporting period was **19,474** people.

A total of **27** Instagram posts were posted this period. Posts include photographs and video taken by staff, and graphic pieces created for promotions.

Post topics included: Go Fish Fridays, Summer of CHANJ Campaign content, World Mosquito Day, Staff at Hunterdon County Fair, Goldfinch is the State Bird, Bats in Buildings, “Supercats” channel catfish stocking, National Dog Day, Trapper Education Classes, Keep NJ CWD Free, Hunter Education Program, Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt Lottery, Small Sections of Closed WMAs Have Reopened, Women’s Introduction to Sporting Clays Workshop, Take A Kid Pheasant Hunt Registration, Deer Butchering Workshops, Permit Availability for Deer and Turkey Seasons, American Oystercatcher J1, Avoid Placing Tree Stands in Ash Trees, Know the Regulations Before Heading Into the Field, Early Fall Bow Season Information, Wildcat Ridge WMA of the Month, and Opening Day of Early Fall Bow Deer Season.

Two (2) Instagram stories were posted this period. Topics included: Employment Opportunities.

Instagram highlighted stories were updated and expired stories were removed from page highlights.

The Linktree account links in the NJFW Instagram page bio were updated.

Instagram post with the most reach this period –

8/23 – “Supercats” Channel Catfish stocking – reached **10,011** people with **887** interactions.

Staff monitored and responded to comments and private messages.

Other

- Content was added to the shared Social Media/GovDelivery content calendar.
- Information from the Social Media/GovDelivery content calendar was composed into weekly updates and sent to outreach and R3 staff.
- Graphics were created for use on social media.
- Photos were edited for use on social media.
- Biweekly Outreach Group meetings were attended.
- WMA of the Month content and UTM (Urchin Tracking Module – i.e., additional text added to a URL that can track the success of marketing campaigns in Google Analytics) campaign links were created for use on the website, GovDelivery emails and social media as well as shared with appropriate staff for distribution.
- Google Analytics data was monitored for the WMA of the Month and Summer of CHANJ campaigns.
- The *Responsible AI for Public Professionals: Using Generative AI at Work* eLearning course was completed.
- A Bureau of Information & Education staff meeting was attended.

OUTREACH GROUP (Michelle Smith)

Job support was provided to Outreach Group staff on initiatives, including the bear outreach program, social media, agency website, videography, graphics projects and administrative matters.

Biweekly Outreach Group meetings were conducted.

New Jersey Fish and Wildlife's FY2024 black bear multi-media outreach campaign concluded its summer bear activity period pulse. Additional marketing creative assets were developed in Spanish and will run during the fall flight of the campaign. Final campaign results will be provided when it concludes, at which time millions of residents will have been reached in their homes and on their mobile devices with bear safety information.

A fall activity bear safety news release was drafted.

A Wildlife Habitat Supporter Program promotional message was drafted for posting during New Jersey Climate Week.

A Summer of CHANJ PowerPoint program was developed and finalized for the August DEP Broadcast to showcase the promotional campaign and educate employees about the initiative. CHANJ promotional messages continued to go out via social media and GovDelivery. Promotional messages will continue to be developed and posted for the remainder of the summer.

A Bureau of Information and Education staff meeting was attended along with meetings on various Outreach program matters.

BLACK BEAR EDUCATION PROGRAM (Stephanie Getto)

Bear Literature Distribution

- Over 4,500 pieces of black bear safety literature were distributed to the following:
- Municipal Open Space Land (Frelinghuysen Forest Preserve, Warren County)
- State Land (Wharton State Forest, Atlantic County)
- Girl Scouts (Passaic County)
- Religious Organization (Morris County)
- County Facility (Wayne Dumont, Jr. Administration Building, Warren County)
- Retail Store (Morris County)

Literature Type	Amount Distributed
English Brochures	1,015
Spanish Brochures	500
Kids Activity Books	2898
Camper Cards	500
Tyvek Signs	0
TOTAL	4,913

- The Black Bear Education Trunk was used for a program in Passaic County.
- An inventory of the printed bear education materials was conducted to determine reprinting needs.

Bear Presentations and Exhibits

- Staff reviewed and updated the *Know the Bear Facts* presentation's long version and the version for kids.
- Interested parties were contacted about scheduling bear programs.
- One bear presentation was scheduled with the New Jersey Water Authority and the bear exhibit was scheduled for three events, including the Chatham Sustainability Fair, and Bedminster's Fall Fest.

Bear Webpages

- Staff updated the bear education PowerPoint program available to the public on the Materials and Publications page.
- The addition of a new BearWise tab and a BearWise Partnership webpage were made to the website.

Bear Lesson Plans

- Staff began to develop original bear education lesson plans in addition to searching for ready-made materials from other organizations, such as the National Park Service and other state fish and wildlife agencies to provide teachers with classroom activities about black bears in New Jersey.

Other

- Corresponded with girl scouts looking for advice on obtaining their Silver Award by possibly developing a children's bear program for their local library.
- Cleaned and organized education materials.
- Accompanied Bureau of Wildlife Management staff for research trapping.
- Completed several NJDEP new employee trainings through eLearning.
- Attended three *Fish and Wildlife Experience* events for new employees.
- Developed flowcharts on bear encounter response for potential future use.