



## **BUREAU OF INFORMATION AND EDUCATION MONTHLY REPORT**

**Al Ivany, Chief**

**October 16 – November 15, 2024**

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

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

Staff held 13 hunter education classes and two trapper education classes during this period. A total of 1,193 certifications were issued with 473 bow and 720 firearm education students, along with 69 trapper education students completing our excellent program. That will conclude Hunter Education courses for the year. A huge thank you again to the fantastic Hunter and Trapper Education Instructors for another outstanding year.

Staff received 78 requests for duplicate Hunter Education cards. A total of 113 individual records were able to be found while 20 were not. Staff request information from the constituent that is making the request to locate the record. If the record is located, it is verified on the profile and instructions with links to our online licensing system and our licensing agents are emailed out on how to obtain the duplicate Hunter Education card. If records are not located, instructions on how to complete the New Jersey online Hunter Education course and information on the live fire range sessions are emailed out.

Staff received 166 voicemails during the reporting period. The breakdown is as follows: 22% live fire range sessions, 20% not related to Hunter Education, 20% duplicate Hunter Education card requests, 18% non-residents requesting permissions to purchase licenses in New Jersey, 14% miscellaneous Hunter Education calls, 4% in reference to general class questions, 1% rifle/muzzleloader permit purchasing permissions, and 1% Trapper Education.

A total of 857 emails were received by Hunter Education staff during the reporting period. This number indicates the largest number of emails ever received by the hunter education office in a single reporting period. Included in those emails were 87 non-resident hunting license unlocks, and 31 rifle permit unlocks. This reporting period tends to have the highest number of rifle permit unlocks due to the upcoming permit muzzleloader season.

Two remedial sportsmen education students completed required assignments for their license reinstatements. License revocations for these two individuals were WMA related violations relating to ATV use.

### **Trapper Education**

Two trapper education classes were held at the Hackettstown Fish Hatchery. The instructor support was very high. A new trapper education trailer to store all the equipment has made setting up the classes much easier and more efficient.

### **Miscellaneous**

Hunter Education staff assisted in the Annual Take a Kid Pheasant Hunt. Taking care of the logistics of the youth participants, dog handlers and mentors is a huge undertaking. Courtney Venuti did an excellent job coordinating this aspect. This event is a true team effort between Hunter Education, R3, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Law Enforcement and the State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs.

K. Griglak assisted the R3 staff in conducting the annual R3 Mentored Squirrel Hunting Program. This program included an evening virtual meeting and two separate mentored hunts at Clinton WMA and Assunpink WMA. A total of seven different mentors were utilized to work with 18 participants between the two days afield. All groups saw squirrels. Several mentees had shots. Two squirrels were harvested which were utilized for a skinning and field dressing demonstration. One of the successful participants who had never hunted before has kept in touch sharing in her successes of harvesting multiple squirrels since the event.

J. Leskie completed the Non-Lead Ammunition Partnership Survey regarding the presentation and demonstration on October 11, 2024, at the Wallkill National Wildlife Refuge in Sussex County.

S. Forlenza attended the Cape May Technical School's Natural Sciences advisory board meeting where industry professionals met with the Natural Sciences teacher to discuss industry trends and curriculum material to best prepare the students for careers in the natural sciences field.

K. Griglak scored three deer for the NJ Outstanding Deer Program. Only one of the three was big enough to make the minimum score. The buck was harvested with a crossbow from Deer Management Zone 7. The final score grossed 138 4/8 and netted 129 6/8.

K. Griglak attended the Warren County Federation meeting as a Division Representative during the report period.

### **R3 Hunting & Shooting Program (Joe Leskie, Tiffany Woolley, Courtney Venuti)**

Staff conducted two Mentored Squirrel Hunts: one at the Clinton Wildlife Management Area (WMA) on Friday, October 18, 2024, and the second held at the Assunpink WMA on Wednesday, October 30, 2024. There was a total of 18 participants who attended. All participants attended a Virtual Meeting regarding the Mentored Hunts on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, for an overview of the program and to ask questions prior to the mentored hunt. Participants said they learned a lot and enjoyed the experience with two squirrels harvested during the program. An individual survey was sent out and the analysis concluded that 100 percent of the participants are ready to hunt on their own after this mentored hunt. A total of 33 percent found cleaning and cooking their harvest the most interesting, while hunting equipment, and regulations and laws were tied with both coming in at 12 percent for the most interesting. Forty-four (44) percent found small game hunting equipment the most interesting. The Mentor rating was 75 percent exceptional, while 25 percent was great. A total of 67 percent of the 18 participants are intending to go small game hunting on their own this season while 17 percent intend to go with family and 17 percent are unsure at this time. One hundred percent of the participants would recommend this program to others.

Staff opened the registration for two deer butchering workshops hosted by the R3 Hunting & Shooting program, in partnership with Hunters Helping the Hungry (HHH), Growmark FS (Bloomsbury, Hunterdon County), and The Heritage Guild of Branchburg (Branchburg, Somerset 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, November 21. Over 150 participants have applied for this very popular R3 event.

Staff opened the registration for the two-day Women's Mentored Coastal Waterfowl Hunt that will take place on Thursday, December 5 through Friday, December 6, 2024, out at the Sedge Island Natural Resource Education Center. This mentored hunt is open to women 18 years of age or older who have some previous hunting experience but want to try waterfowl hunting for the first time or who are novice waterfowl hunters. Participants will learn about waterfowl biology and identification, hunting regulations, equipment, hunting techniques, and field dressing, followed by an actual, mentored hunt. Registration for this program will close on Sunday, December 1, 2024.

J. Leskie, T. Woolley and S. Forlenza worked on preparing waterfowl decoys and hunting blinds for the upcoming 2024 Mentored Women's Waterfowl Hunt at Sedge Island, scheduled for December 5-6, 2024. A special thank you to K. Byrne for her assistance in working with the R3 team on the logistics for this program.

Staff began working on logistics for the future Mentored Waterfowl Hunt to take place this season during December at the Managed Waterfowl Hunt blinds. Staff moved the entrance path to Blind Number One to allow for better hunter access. Staff continue to work on improvements to the blind access paths as well as the blinds.

T. Woolley contacted Parvin State Park to reserve cabins for the participants and staff for the Women's Mentored Turkey Hunt that will again take place in the spring of 2025. The Women's Mentored Turkey Hunt is scheduled to take place on Sunday, April 27 to Tuesday, April 29, 2025. Staff will continue to work on logistics for this program.

### **R3 Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt**

The R3 Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt Staff worked the first split of the south zone for the Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt which was conducted during the report period. Three regular season dates, along with one Youth Day Waterfowl Hunting Experience and a Veterans/Active Military Hunt resulted in 37 waterfowl hunters (19 groups) having the opportunity to hunt. A total of 38 ducks were harvested. Species consisted of: Teal, Black Ducks, Pintail, Merganser and Mallards. In addition, 10 groups took advantage of the program's Decoy Loaner Program. Staff continue to make every effort to fill any canceled blinds for the Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt Program. Blinds are filled by a random lottery drawing from this season's lottery applications.

### **R3 Take a Kid Pheasant Hunt**

R3 and Hunter Education staff were extremely busy preparing for and conducting the 2024 Take a Kid Youth Pheasant Hunt on Saturday November 2, 2024. An increased total of 237 youth registered for the event with a 77% attendance rate, while 87 volunteers registered for the event with a 68% attendance rate. Prior to the event, staff sent out detailed notifications to all attendees with what was required on the day of the event and maps of where to meet. Each youth was confirmed to have completed Firearm Hunter Education and claimed their free youth firearm license. Each volunteer was confirmed to have completed the R3 Mentor training and have obtained a 2024 firearm license. After the event, a survey was sent out to all participants with a 54.59% response from our youth hunters and a 63.63% response from our volunteers. Survey response percentages that high indicate a highly successful response rate statistically. Staff sent a special thank you to our volunteers, site coordinators, Land Management and Hunter Education staff members for their assistance to R3 with this program.

C. Venuti, K. Griglak and S. Forlenza participated in the youth pheasant hunt as site coordinators, ensuring the mentor, dog handler and youth check-in process went smoothly and effectively.

### **R3 Miscellaneous**

C. Venuti began work on the R3 Hunting and Shooting Sports Fall 2024 newsletter.

The R3 Hunting and Shooting Sports program gained 44 new mentors between the Mentored Squirrel Hunt and the Take A Kid Youth Pheasant Hunt.

T. Woolley attended a Fish & Wildlife Experience session for new employees. This report period included the Office of Mosquito Control Coordination and introduced new employees to their role within Fish & Wildlife.

## **NASP® (Joe Leskie, Craig Decker)**

Staff conducted a site visit to evaluate range and equipment conditions at Lenape High School in Medford, Burlington County. The school's JROTC group is already registered with the NJ NASP program and this visit provided the groundwork to get the main student body to engage with the program, which is separate from the JROTC.

Staff conducted and managed the annual Take-A-Kid Pheasant Hunt event held at the Whittingham WMA on Saturday, November 2. Representatives from the Sussex County Chapter of the NJ State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs sponsored and assisted in the event along with providing food and refreshments to the attendees prior to going out to their field session. Seven volunteer dog handlers and 15 youth hunters participated with their adult family members.

Staff continues to assist schools that are evaluating their participation in this year's Easton Foundation Grant offer. This funding opportunity for both new and existing enrolled schools provides a valuable cost reduction in a school's archery equipment expenses.

Staff has secured a location for this year's 2025 NJ NASP/IBO 3-D Challenge. This in-person tournament will be held on Saturday, March 1, 2025, at Warren Hills High School's main gym located in Washington (Warren County). This annual event provides student participants from all divisions (Elementary, Middle and High School) with the opportunity to engage with 3-D game targets. Schools that successfully place will be qualified to move to the national tournament located in Louisville, KY. Qualifying winners of the tournament may participate in the 2025 NASP/IBO 3-D Championship occurring June 5 to 7, 2025, in Myrtle Beach, SC. Notification to all NJ NASP schools will be sent out later in November.

Staff has begun preparations for the 2025 NJ NASP State Bullseye Tournament. This is a virtual tournament that occurs from February through March each year. Qualifying winners in each school division (Elementary, Middle and High School) may participate in the NASP Eastern National Bullseye Tournament which occurs from May 8 to 10, 2025, located in Louisville, KY. Qualifying winners of the tournament may participate in the 2025 NASP Championship occurring June 5 to 7, 2025, in Myrtle Beach, SC.

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

Staff continues to communicate 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**

The Coastal Women's Waterfowl Hunt will be held at Sedge Island as part of the R3 Hunting and Shooting Sports program. Staff met on site to discuss logistics.

Staff continues to paint the facility and perform general maintenance to the Sedge House. Two new storm doors were installed. A volunteer day was held to put kayaks and equipment away for the winter as well as clean out the kitchen of perishables.

### **Trout in the Classroom (TIC)**

Egg Day, the day when Trout Unlimited (TU) volunteers deliver eggs to all the participating schools, was held on October 16. Along with the eggs, the teachers were also supplied with three different sizes of fish food to feed the fish throughout the year.

Communication with the teachers and the TU volunteers continues. Two new online books were created to have monthly email information in one location for teachers to easily reference. A new book will be created for each month of the program.

### **Angler R3**

A *Community Fishing Meetup* was held on Free Fishing Day, October 19, at Roosevelt Park in Edison. The event was promoted through email to residents of Middlesex County who purchased a 2024 fishing license or purchased a fishing license in 2023 but not in 2024. Offering the event in Middlesex County and promoting it to residents who currently or previously purchased a fishing license meets one of the objectives in the Angler R3 Plan. Nearly 80 people fished as part of the meetup using their own equipment, however loaner equipment was available, and 21 rods and reels were loaned out. Bait was also available. Staff received positive feedback from anglers who attended the event as well as volunteers who assisted with the day.

An *Ice Fishing Seminar* is strategically planned for November 16, at the Morris County Library in Whippany.

### **Education**

Staff provided two programs during this reporting period. A Wildlife of NJ lecture and field trip for 25 Brookdale Community College students and a night sky presentation for 14 Hooked on Fishing students as part of the Weekend Career Immersion program.

Staff attended a National Environmental Education Advisory Council meeting and an Envirothon planning meeting. Staff will be coordinating and presenting portions of the 2025 Envirothon and will be writing the “problem” guidelines for participating schools. Staff also attended a Career Fair at Centenary College.

Staff has 3-D printed many new items for the speaker/display tables including skulls, teeth and claws of various NJ wildlife. Additional interactive tabletop models are being developed that will engage audiences both physically and mentally.

Staff is working with the NJ State Museum on interactives and display materials for an upcoming wildlife exhibit opening in July 2025.

## **Other**

A Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament meeting was attended. Suggestions for updating the brochure were shared. A new four-panel brochure was redesigned.

Staff attended the Aquatic Resources Education Association Biennial Conference for aquatic educators in Newport, Rhode Island from October 21 – 25. The conference theme was "*Fishing for Change – Relevance and Resilience*" and provided updates from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Aid Office; keynote speaker, Ayana Melvan, Director of Conservation in Action, spoke about the power of partnerships; multiple presentations and workshop sessions were offered to peer-learn, network and share fishing education strategies and resources. Staff also presented during the Aquatic Education discussions on Sedge Island's *Bay to Bowl* program.

## **WILDLIFE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH (Karen Byrne, Jessica Griglak, Liz Jackson, Adam Pollinger)**

### **Pequest Natural Resource Education Center**

Four group programs were held during this reporting period for a total of 121 students. Programs included Fishing Basics (25), Trout Habitat Hike and Hatchery Tour (50), Hatchery Tour and Fishing Basics (21) and Hatchery Tour (25).

Pequest also offered public programs, including a Senior Fishing Rodeo and a Fall Foliage Hike. A combined total of 29 people participated.

The facility was used by Hunter Education and the Office of Business Administration for a meeting.

### **Mobile Education Trailer (MET)**

During this reporting period the MET was used by the Bureau of Marine Fisheries at the Jordan School for an environmental education event with 125 students participating in a session at the trailer. The trailer was at the Batsto Living History Fair with 1,187 people going through it. The Fish & Wildlife trailer and tables were very popular and very busy at the Batsto event.

The MET will be at the League of Municipalities conference on November 19-21.

### **Hooked on Fishing - Not on Drugs (HOFNOD) Program**

Staff hosted a Hooked on Fishing Weekend Career Immersion program at the NJ School of Conservation on November 8-10, 2024. This first-time event had 14 youth participants and eight chaperones. Participants learned about careers with DEP and Fish & Wildlife through lecture and hands-on sessions. Presentations included freshwater fisheries biologists demonstrating fish sampling methods and the contribution of citizen science; the role of law enforcement and the

difference between poaching and managing natural resources; sharing how and why managing wildlife like deer is important; exploring the intrinsic value of nongame and endangered flora and fauna, and why improvement of habitat is worthy of our protection; demonstration of how and why stream assessments and water quality monitoring are done; and the importance of accuracy when hunting game. A special thanks goes to CPO Allen Sutton, CPO Cowan Sikora, Megan Mills, Robert Somes, Justin Rozema, Chuck Sedor, Robert Huth, Michael Kays and Alice Belskis for taking time out of their schedules to share about their careers.

Staff attended the Aquatic Resources Education Association Biennial Conference October 20-25 in Rhode Island. Conference highlights included improved skills using a Tenkura-style rod and ways to promote the Hooked on Fishing program as well as a staff-led roundtable discussion on Supporting Fishing Clubs and/or Teams.

There were two fishing charters offered this reporting period. An All-Aboard event for all Hooked on Fishing Teams was held on the MiJo II Charter Fishing boat on November 3 with 54 HOF students targeting striped bass. Lots of keepers were caught and taken home. The Brick High School and Middletown North High School HOF Teams took 30 students on a striped bass fishing charter on the Gambler Deep Sea Fishing boat.

A youth fishing event was held at Lake Musconetcong in partnership with the Sussex County Library System for nine youth participants with their families.

## **WEBSITE ACTIVITY (Doug Rizio)**

### **New and Updated Pages, Images, and Documents**

Five news updates were posted in October.

No new job openings were published, and none were deleted after their closing dates.

One new page was created as well; while one more page was deleted or consolidated into other pages.

Additionally, 16 event posts were updated or edited during the report period.

Approximately 59 pages were revised/updated throughout this duration.

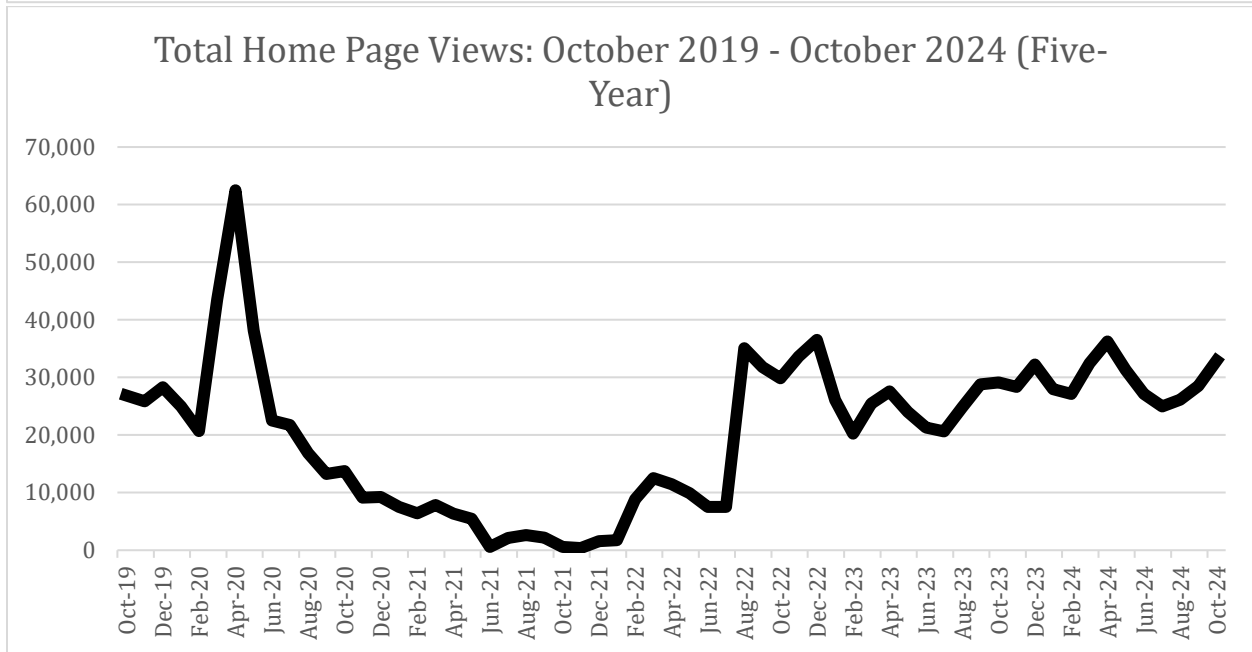
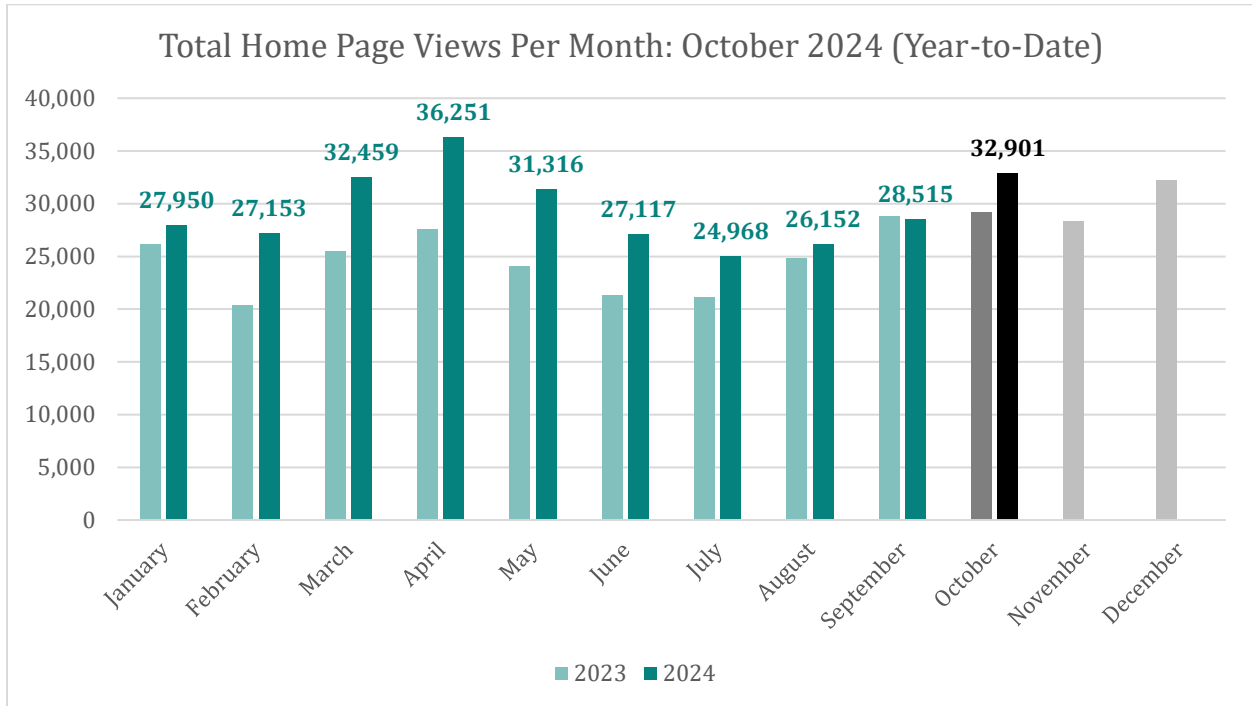
Approximately 86 documents were edited in or converted to PDF format. These included: Bureau Reports (27) in three .zip files; Meeting Documents (7) in one .zip file; BLE Yearly Case Highlights (12) in one zip file; Minutes/Notices/Agendas (9); BLE Monthly Case Highlights (10); and others (21).

A total of 26 images and five videos were also edited and posted.



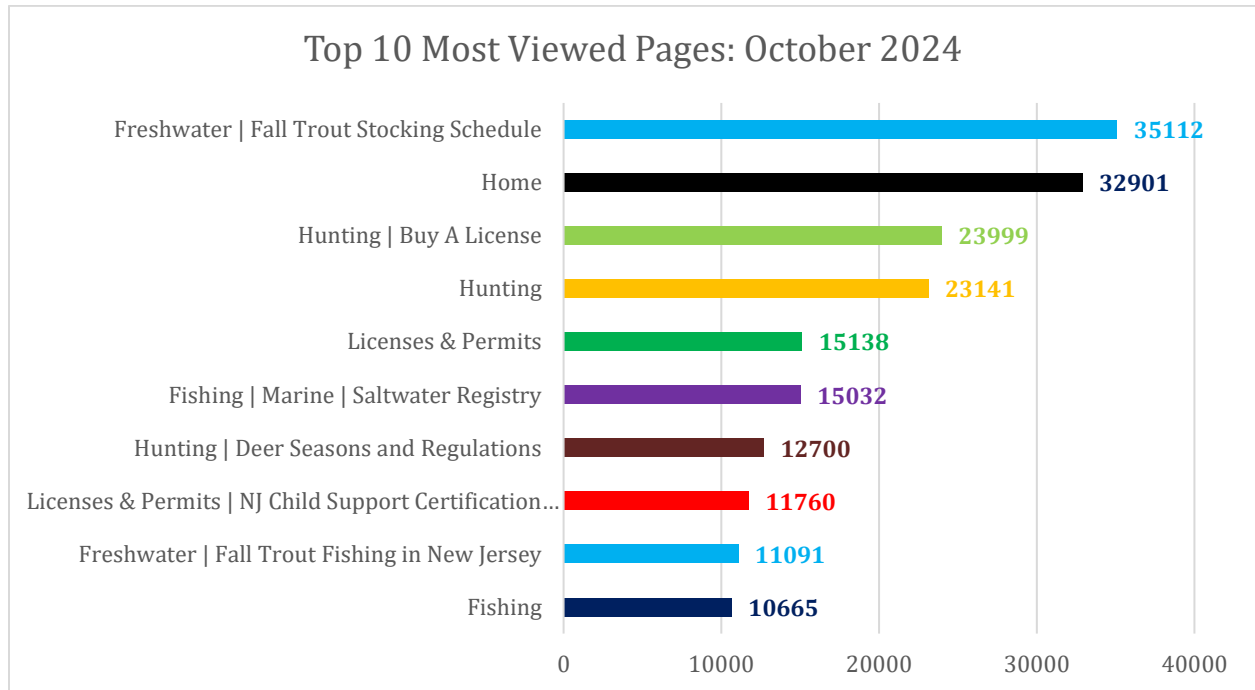
## Analytics – Home Page

The number of views on the home page this October was 32,901; an average of about 1,062 views per day. It is an increase of 4,386 views from the previous month of September (28,515) and an increase of 3,765 views from October of the previous year (29,136).

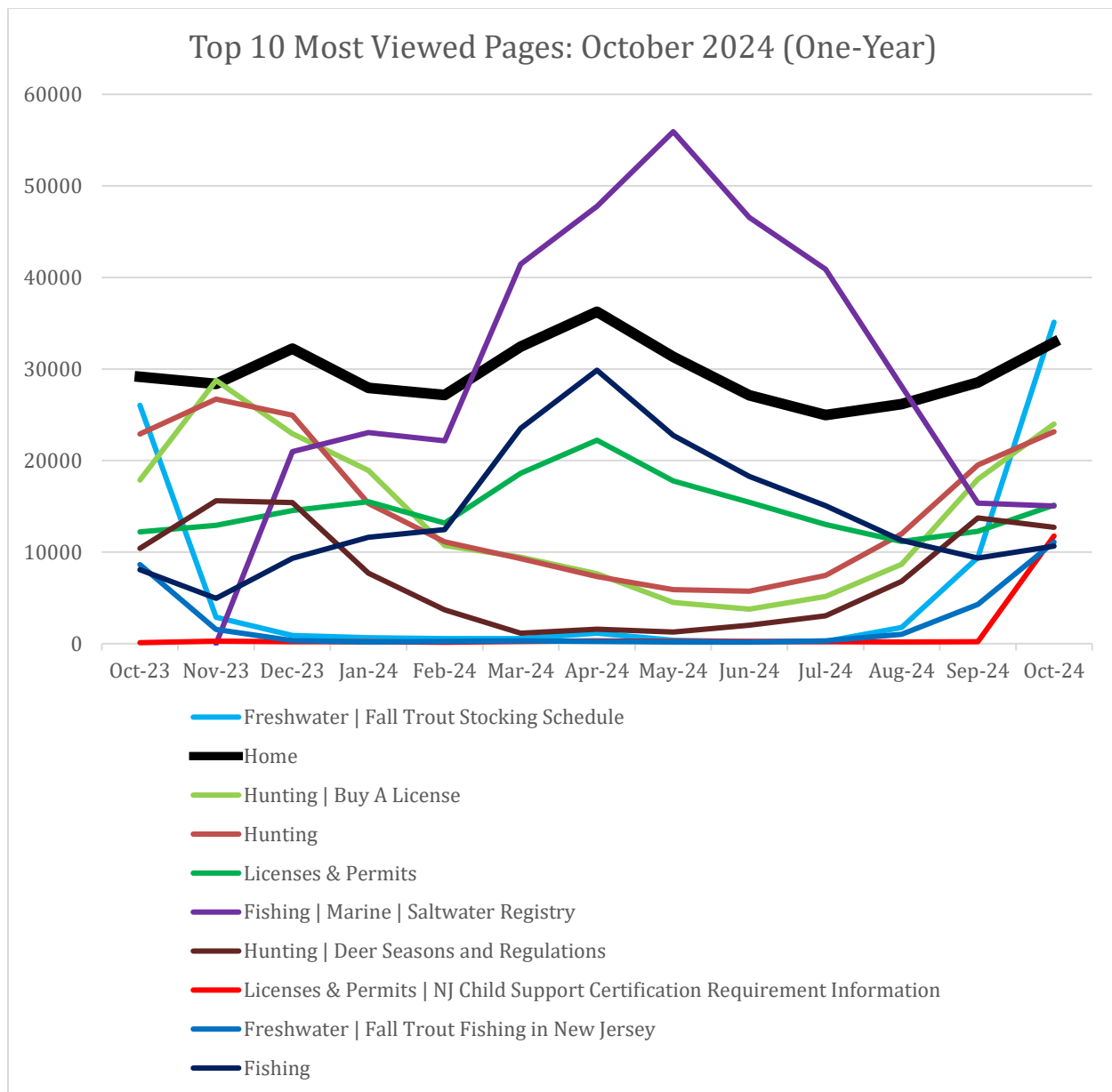


## Analytics

The top 10 most viewed web pages of the month (including the home page) are shown below:



Also shown below are the performances of this month's top 10 pages since the previous year:



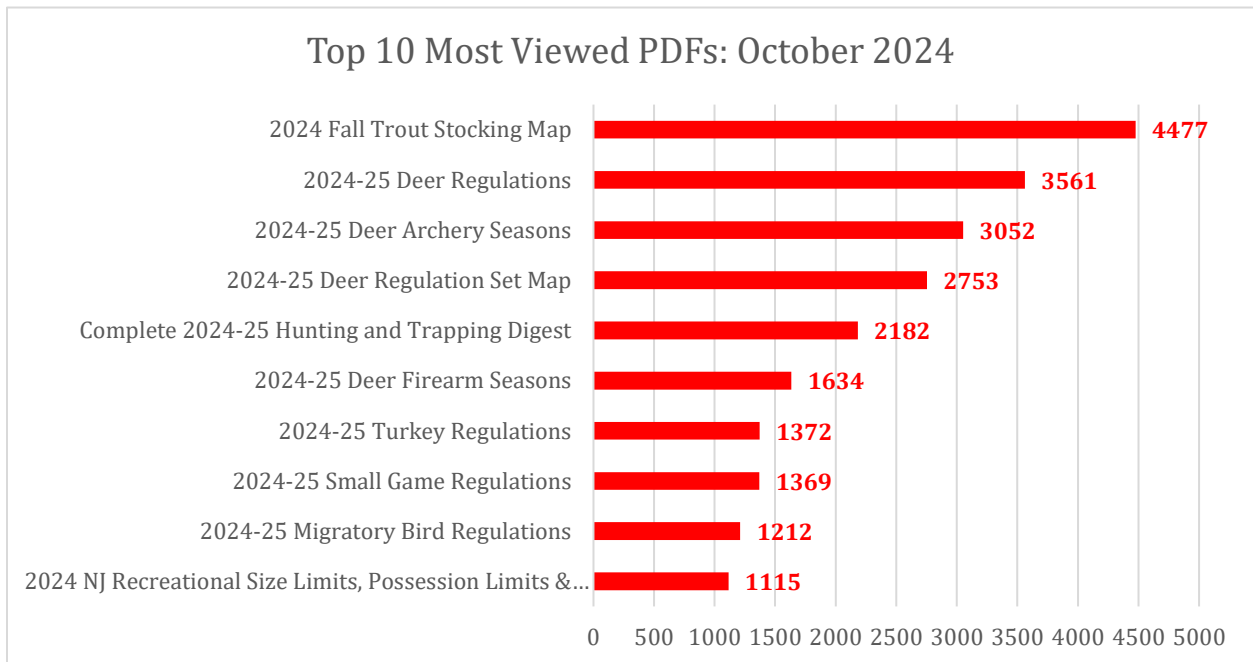
Rank	Page Name	Views
1	<a href="#">Freshwater   Fall Trout Stocking Schedule</a>	35,112
2	<a href="#">Home</a>	32,901
3	<a href="#">Hunting   Buy A License</a>	23,999
4	<a href="#">Hunting</a>	23,141
5	<a href="#">Licenses &amp; Permits</a>	15,138
6	<a href="#">Fishing   Marine   Saltwater Registry</a>	15,032
7	<a href="#">Hunting   Deer Seasons and Regulations</a>	12,700
8	<a href="#">Licenses &amp; Permits   NJ Child Support Certification Requirement Information</a>	11,760
9	<a href="#">Freshwater   Fall Trout Fishing in New Jersey</a>	11,091

<b>10</b>	<b><a href="#">Fishing</a></b>	<b>10,665</b>
-----------	--------------------------------	---------------

Other popular pages on the website were:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Page Name</b>	<b>Views</b>
<b>11</b>	<b><a href="#">Bears   Bear Hunting Season Information</a></b>	<b>10,015</b>
<b>12</b>	<b><a href="#">Hunting   Automated Harvest Report System</a></b>	<b>9,121</b>
<b>13</b>	<b><a href="#">Hunting   Hunter Education</a></b>	<b>9,110</b>
<b>14</b>	<b><a href="#">Fishing &amp; Hunting License &amp; Permit Information</a></b>	<b>8,336</b>
<b>15</b>	<b><a href="#">Freshwater   Buy A License</a></b>	<b>7,653</b>
<b>16</b>	<b><a href="#">Hunting and Trapping Digest</a></b>	<b>7,653</b>
<b>17</b>	<b><a href="#">Marine   Striped Bass Bonus Program (SBBP) Individual Angler Application</a></b>	<b>7,365</b>
<b>18</b>	<b><a href="#">Bears</a></b>	<b>6,818</b>
<b>19</b>	<b><a href="#">Migratory Bird Season Information and Population Status</a></b>	<b>6,329</b>
<b>20</b>	<b><a href="#">Bears   Black Bear Harvest Data</a></b>	<b>5,618</b>

The ten most requested PDFs this report period were:



<b>Rank</b>	<b>PDF Name</b>	<b>Views</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b><a href="#">2024 Fall Trout Stocking Map</a></b>	<b>4,477</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b><a href="#">2024-25 Deer Regulations</a></b>	<b>3,561</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b><a href="#">2024-25 Deer Archery Seasons</a></b>	<b>3,052</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b><a href="#">2024-25 Deer Regulation Set Map</a></b>	<b>2,753</b>	
<b>5</b>	<b><a href="#">Complete 2024-25 Hunting and Trapping Digest</a></b>	<b>2,182</b>	

6	<a href="#"><u>2024-25 Deer Firearm Seasons</u></a>	1,634	
7	<a href="#"><u>2024-25 Turkey Regulations</u></a>	1,372	
8	<a href="#"><u>2024-25 Small Game Regulations</u></a>	1,369	
9	<a href="#"><u>2024-25 Migratory Bird Regulations</u></a>	1,212	
10	<a href="#"><u>2024 NJ Recreational Size Limits, Possession Limits &amp; Seasons</u></a>	1,115	

### **Additional Activities**

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

### **WILDLIFE INFORMATION/PUBLIC OUTREACH (Linda DiPiano)**

#### **GovDelivery (Listserv) Messages**

Ten (10) email messages were drafted and sent to various e-mail lists and outdoor writers. Assistance was provided to staff for six (6) additional messages.

1. Free Fishing Day Saturday! (10/16/24)
2. Permit Bow Opens & Buck Permit Deadline This Saturday (10/21/24)
3. Fall Trout Stocking Update (10/21/24)
4. Did you purchase your Fall Turkey Permit? (10/23/24)
5. Have you Applied for your Beaver and/or Otter Permits? (10/28/24)
6. Upcoming Veterans/Active-Duty Waterfowl Hunting Day (10/29/24)
7. Pheasant/Quail Season Opens Saturday! (11/5/24)
8. Pheasant Stocking Adjustment Due To Glassboro WMA Forest Fire (11/8/24)
9. Pheasant Stocking Postponed Nov. 12 in Glassboro WMA (11/11/24)
10. Pheasant Stocking to Resume Nov. 16 in Glassboro WMA (11/14/24)

#### **GovDelivery List Numbers To Date**

	11/1/2024
Freshwater Fishing	63164
Hunting	44283
Marine Fishing	59421
Wildlife	41202
Education	36299
Endangered Species	32584
Shellfish	38869
Outdoors	46874
Sparta Mt.	28180
CHANJ	32524

Marine CARES Act Information		17498
Marine Fisheries Grant and Assistance Information		5204
Total		446102

### **Responses to the Public Email Address**

Approximately 255 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**

Thirty-five (35) applications (26 adults and 7 youth in 11 categories) have been received for the 2025 Deer Classic. One adult and one youth have applied for two categories.

All applicants have been informed by email that their application has been 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 second pass edits back from freshwater fisheries on October 18. Reviewed all edits and uploaded the pass to the publisher on the same day.

The third pass of the digest was received back from the publisher on November 7, 2024, and immediately sent to Freshwater Fisheries staff with a due date of November 13, 2024.

Received third pass edits back from freshwater fisheries on November 13. Reviewed all edits and uploaded the pass to the publisher on November 17.

### **Marine Digest**

Uploaded changes, updates, and new information for the 2025 Marine Digest to the publisher on October 23, 2024.

## **Hunting and Trapping Digest**

Received the working copy of the 2024-25 Hunting and Trapping digest from the publisher and began working with the Bureau of Wildlife Management on possible scenarios due to the Game Code changes.

## **Wildlife Conservation Corps**

The Wildlife Conservation Corps now has 4,873 members.

There were no volunteer opportunities available during this reporting period.

## **Other**

Staff attended a Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament meeting.

The November Fish and Game Council meeting was attended.

## **WILDLIFE INFORMATION – INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (Kathy Porutski)**

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

NOV - F&W-2024-23 - Heavy Equipment Operator (Re-post)  
NOV Posting - NJFW (Senior Biologist - Wildlife Management)  
NOV Postings (2) - NJFW (Supervising Biologist - Fisheries; Senior Biologist - Fisheries)  
Revised NOV Posting - NJFW (Supervising Biologist - Fisheries)  
NOV Posting - NJFW (Principal Biologist - Fisheries)  
NOV Reposting - NJFW (Research Scientist 3)  
Memorandum to Request Donated Leave for Cody G. Meyer (NJFW)  
Guidelines for Attending the 2024 League of Municipalities Annual Conference

## **Responses to the Public Email Address**

As stated earlier, approximately **255** email messages came into the public email address. All were directly responded to or forwarded to agency staff for response. A small percentage (i.e., unsolicited advertisements, etc.) required no response.

Assisting the public with their questions via email is a time-consuming process. Every effort is made to **NOT** simply forward messages to colleagues based on subject matter. Regulation/law enforcement issues are always vetted through BLE so that the correct information is given out.

Ultimately, the majority of responses can be handled by I&E; those that require in-depth information are forwarded to the appropriate programs.

## **Other**

- The Bureau of Information and Education's Monthly Report for October was compiled and edited.
- Staff listened to the CSC Chair National L&D Month Closing Message that was added to the Learning Plan.
- Efforts were unsuccessfully made to locate a hunting digest from 1980.
- Computer information was obtained for the I&E inventory spreadsheet.
- Staff offered editing suggestions regarding buddy fishing license information.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND DIGITAL MEDIA (Jonathan Carlucci)**

### **Publications/Graphics**

- WHSP decals short supply requested and picked up from printer
- Buddy Fishing license flyer recreated design and layout for license vendor display
- QR code for Fishing Buddy license
- R3 fishing QR code made with UTM
- Communications review of brochures requested
- Tracked down and collected Deer Management and Community Brochures, transported boxes for delivery to Deer Project
- WHSP decal specs and print request forms made, estimate request sent to print shop
- CWD Deer brochure edits made per Deer Project and Communications feedback
- Places to Fish brochure format determined based on content cuts and scaling
- CWD brochure specs and print request forms filled out, order sent to print shop
- Places to Fish brochure redesigned to fit 11x17 format
- Received delivery of Marine Fisheries business cards and distributed
- Places to Fish Brochure edits and layout adjustments made
- Review of previously printed bear education materials x 4 pieces
- WHSP order completed with Treasury Print Shop
- NASP brochure asset collection
- Additional business cards for staff created and shared for review
- Black bear education pieces edited for logo and branding changes; fonts replaced on all due to system changes since last production
- Art modified for staff and video production
- Communications review of additional publications requested
- Follow up on outstanding print requests with Treasury Print Shop
- Five additional QR codes created in Adobe for program support



## **Photography/Videography**

- Box turtle video reviews and feedback
- Fall bat mist netting video and photo reviewed and processed to share with editor
- Production talks with staff on upcoming video projects
- Calendar updates for upcoming shooting schedule
- Assisted video production staff with video interviews
- Nantuxent WMA site visit, footage and stills taken
- Review of large volume storage solutions and tested accessibility
- Fall scenic footage taken and reviewed to share
- Review of video equipment for future productions
- iCloud image and video review, and compilation for uploads
- Wild Horse Creek WMA site visit, footage and stills taken
- Internal requests for photographs fulfilled
- Total review and upload of 62 GB of footage and stills shared with video editor and I&E staff

## **Meetings/Training**

- ACI Board meeting attended for ACI 2025 updates
- Outreach Group Teams meetings
- sUAS meeting
- Monthly flight training

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND DIGITAL MEDIA (Matt Hencheck)**

- *Nantuxent WMA of the Month promo* video – Filmed landscape and drone footage of Nantuxent Wildlife Management Area for the WMA of the Month promo. Each month, I&E's video production team will highlight a different wildlife management area highlighting the landscapes and activities the public can enjoy. This video has been posted to NJ Fish & Wildlife's social media platforms.
- *Bat Swarm Survey* video – NJDEP Fish & Wildlife and partners surveyed bats outside a former iron mine to catch, assess and band bats arriving at their winter hibernation site. Surveys were done on several nights from late August to early October as bats trickled in from across the landscape. The team used special mist nets and harp traps to gently capture bats flying around a small area of woods, fattening up on bugs and preparing to go underground for the next 5-6 months. This video was posted to social media in late October.
- *Delaware Bay Trawl* video – Filmed Marine Resources Administration staff conducting their finfish survey on the Delaware Bay. This video is completed and scheduled to post to social media in late November. In addition to the full version video that will be posted

on NJDEP Fish & Wildlife's YouTube channel, a short teaser version will be posted to Instagram and Facebook.

- *Early Successional Habitat Initiative* video— Early successional habitat 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. Currently, I've filmed key staff interviews and scheduled upcoming interviews with the staff from the Bureau of Land Management and Endangered and Nongame Species Program as well as filming the many wildlife management areas that include early successional habitat.
- *NJ State Museum* video – The I&E video team have been selected to produce a variety of video segments highlighting many topics including – Delaware Bay, Atlantic Coast, Species of Success, ENSP's Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey (CHANJ), Pinelands, Piedmont Bird Boxes and the Delaware River. Currently, this video is in the editing stages with the intended completion date due in early January 2025. This video will play on a loop in the NJDEP Fish and Wildlife exhibit at the NJ State Museum starting in April 2025 and run for one year until April 2026.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA (Katie Paey)**

### **Facebook**

The NJFW Facebook (FB) page had **52,598 followers** at the end of this reporting period.

**27** 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, Free Fishing Day, Silty Pond Mussel video, Fall Trout Stocking, Permit Bow season, Eastern Box Turtle release, Fall Turkey season, Keep NJ CWD Free, Bat Week content, Fall Turkey and Permit Bow season opener, Youth Pheasant Hunt, Hybrid Striped Bass stocking, State Police PDF law reminder, recreational shellfish water reminder, employment opportunity, Pheasant and Quail season, Pequest Trout Hatchery, Glassboro WMA alert, WMA of the Month content, verify email in license system, Buddy Fishing License update, and National Take a Hike Day Pequest program.

**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):

**10/21** – Fall Trout Stocking – reached **94,390** people, **3,641** 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 **18,863 followers** at the end of this reporting period.

The total organic reach of the NJFW Instagram page during this reporting period was 19,763 people.

**26** 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, Free Fishing Day, Silty Pond Mussel video, Fall Trout Stocking, Permit Bow season, Eastern Box Turtle release, Fall Turkey season, Keep NJ CWD Free, Bat Week content, Fall Turkey and Permit Bow season opener, Youth Pheasant Hunt, Hybrid Striped Bass stocking, State Police PDF law reminder, recreational shellfish water reminder, Pheasant and Quail season, Pequest Trout Hatchery, Glassboro WMA alert, WMA of the Month content, verify email in license system, Buddy Fishing License update, and National Take a Hike Day Pequest program.

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 –**

**10/17** – Silty Pond Mussel reel – reached **5,873** people with **414** 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 campaign links were created for use on the website, GovDelivery emails and social media and shared with appropriate staff for distribution.
- Google Analytics data was monitored for the WMA of the Month campaign.
- Google Analytics data reports were generated for the webmaster for top clicks on the NJFW website and PDFs.
- Musconetcong River WMA was photographed, and photos were uploaded onto the V: drive.

## **OUTREACH GROUP (Michelle Smith)**

Job support was provided to Outreach Group staff on initiatives including the bear outreach program, social media, the 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 commenced its fall bear activity period pulse. 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 request for proposal was put together to solicit bids from marketing firm vendors to implement a Fiscal Year 2025 statewide black bear multi-media outreach campaign. Fish and Wildlife will contract with a marketing firm to commence the project in the spring 2025 with peak marketing coinciding with the spring, summer and fall bear activity periods.

Price quotes were explored and obtained for various bear outreach purchases, including computer equipment, updating all bear safety publications, and acquiring a new vehicle to conduct seminars and staff the bear exhibit at events throughout the state.

A bear outreach seminar was attended along with an NJFW website meeting.

## **BLACK BEAR EDUCATION PROGRAM (Stephanie Getto)**

### **Bear Literature Distribution**

- Over 9,500 pieces of black bear safety literature were distributed to the following:
  - State and County Park Systems
    - High Point State Park, Sussex
    - Environmental Education Center at Lord Stirling Park, Somerset
  - Senior Residents (Cedar Crest Village Senior Center, Morris)

- Scouts (Sussex, Bergen)
- Water Supply Maintenance and Field Employees (NJWSA Trenton Office, Mercer)
- Children (Great Beginnings Academy, Sussex)

<b>Literature Type</b>	<b>Amount Distributed</b>
English Brochures	1,410
Spanish Brochures	10
Kids Activity Books	200
Camper Cards	8,090
Tyvek Signs	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,710</b>

### **Bear Presentations and Exhibits**

- A total of six presentations and one exhibit spanning five counties were given, reaching 574 people.

<b>Program Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Attendees</b>
Exhibit	10/20/24	Celebrate Fall Reeves-Reed Arboretum (Union)	350
Presentation	10/24/24	Cedar Crest Village Senior Center (Morris)	25
Presentation	10/28/24	Cub Scout Pack 276 (Sussex)	45
Presentation	10/30/24	NJ Water Supply Authority - Trenton Office (Mercer)	20
Presentation	11/13/24	Great Beginnings Academy (Sussex)	54
Presentation	11/14/24	Boy Scout Troop 138B (Bergen)	40
Presentation	11/15/24	Cub Scout Pack 229 (Bergen)	40
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>574</b>

### **Bear Lesson Plans**

- The development of an original bear education lesson plan to provide teachers with classroom activities about black bears in New Jersey continued.

### **Other**

- Continued to update education materials for the bear program, purchasing several new items
- Assisted with Black Bear Check Station at Pequest location

- Attended the BearWise Association of F&W Agencies Workgroup Meeting
- Attended three Fish and Wildlife Experiences for new employees
- Attended New Employee Orientation (NEO)