

# **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT**

January 21, 2025 to February 20, 2025

**Pete Winkler, Bureau Chief**  
Tyler Kinney, Coastal Biologist  
Benjamin Keys, Habitat Planner  
Melissa Woerner, Habitat Planner

## **COASTAL UNIT**

Tyler Kinney

### **Coastal Unit**

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney organized a meeting series between The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Stockton University, NJ Department of Transportation (NJDOT), and US Army Corps of Engineers to begin project planning for two Beneficial Use of Dredge Materials (BUDM) projects at Boot Island, Absecon Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Data collection planning is underway.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney continues to process a 076 Amendment to the Manahawkin WMA monitoring task order.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended a planning meeting for the Lighthouse Camp Restoration Project. Additional alternatives were examined to meet ecological target elevations.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association, NJDOT, and Stockton University to discuss a potential BUDM project at Tuckahoe Island, Tuckahoe WMA. NJDOT is collecting survey data. The ecological team will be looking at habitat targets.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney organized a meeting with Ducks Unlimited and the Green Acres Program to discuss property acquisition in Mannington Meadows. New Jersey Fish & Wildlife (NJFW) will be using this as an opportunity to pilot a new acquisition boundary method. Additionally, a meeting was attended associated with grant opportunities for a BUDM project at this site.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended the Partners of the Delaware Estuary Summit on February 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. Several developments were made from this attendance, including a contact to learn more about establishing submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in waterfowl impoundments and subsequent use of SAV from impoundments for restoration purposes. A follow-up meeting will be held in the Spring to discuss the matter further.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended several construction meetings for the Baypoint Restoration Project.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended several constructions meetings for the Pond Creek Restoration Project.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney organized and attended a meeting with vendor Solitude Lake Management to discuss phragmites treatments in the Abbotts Meadow WMA. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff discussed additional projects statewide.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended the Nature Based Solutions Workgroup.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney developed a justification for the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative to fund two contract employees for the Coastal Unit.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended a TNC Marsh Pipeline team meeting to finalize data collection areas across 5 sites.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney developed additional maps for a permit application for an emergency culvert install in the Heislerville WMA.

### **Upland Habitat & Land Management**

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney met with staff from the Endangered Species and Non-game program at our Annual Southern Region Biologist meeting. Updates were provided for bog turtle and kestrel management in Salem County. SAV management in impoundments was discussed with follow up meetings for Spring. Frosted Elfin habitat management was noted as a priority and subsequent meetings were planned and held to pursue action. And a project idea was presented to create wildlife crossings and vernal pool habitat; follow ups will be held in spring.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with northern region lands staff to look at equipment and habitat projects on northern region WMAs.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended a tour of the Pinelands Nursery and learned about available nursery inventory for habitat projects.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended a webinar on Managing Forest Habitats.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney is working with administrative staff to register Habitat Planners Benjamin Keys and Melissa Woerner to attend the Rutgers University Wetland Certificate Program.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney continues to work on the procurement of the T2931 Farm Service Contract. A vendor contact list was provided to Treasury. The contract has begun formal procurement.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended several meetings at the Stadnick Tract to assist Habitat Planner Benjamin Keys in planning and implementing the Corporate Business Tax Maintenance (CBT-M) reclamation project at this site.

### **Other**

None

# **HABITAT PLANNING**

Melissa Woerner

## **Northern Region**

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended four calls for the Hyperhumus wetlands restoration project at the Paulinskill River WMA: a call with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) staff to discuss potential carbon sequestration funding; a call with Land Resource Protection to discuss the rare and endangered plant compliance statement; and two bi-weekly status calls with the project team.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner conducted site visits with Jim Hartobey to see habitat work being conducted at the Pequest and South Branch WMAs.

Contracts were finalized for upcoming herbicide treatments at five WMAs in the northern region. These treatments will focus on managing invasive species such as water chestnut, phragmites, and Japanese barberry at Amwell Lake, Baldwin Lake, Paulinskill River WMA, Ryker Lake, and the White Lake WMA.

## **Central Region**

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a meeting with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service (NJFFS) to discuss upcoming prescribed burn fields in the central region.

A project in the Greenwood Forest WMA to expand early successional habitat for bobwhite quail and other wildlife species while reducing fuel loads and improving fuel break conditions was submitted through the Land Management Review process.

A contract was finalized for upcoming herbicide treatments at one WMA in the central region. This treatment will focus on managing invasive phragmites at the Manahawkin WMA.

A mini bid for forestry mowing services was developed and sent to contractors. This project will promote early successional habitat at the Assunpink WMA for woodcock and other species.

## **All Regions/Miscellaneous**

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner completed the Statewide Action Plan (SWAP) action prioritization assignment.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended the New Jersey Fish and Wildlife (NJFW) Bureau/Unit Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Point of Contact Group Meeting.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a guided tour of the Pinelands Nursery.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended the Atlantic Coast Joint Venture annual all-hands webinar to kick off 2025.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended the NJDEP Wetland Team meeting for Wetland Program Development Grant Planning.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a meeting with Solitude Lake Management to discuss upcoming herbicide treatment projects.

**Southern Region**

Habitat Planner Ben Keys attended a webinar hosted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on Managing Forests as Habitat in a Changing World.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys entered the fall work completed by the contract farmer into the WMA planning database.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys finalized the spring seed order for both forage crops and pollinator mixes and submitted a purchase order.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys attended the Upland Game Bird Meeting to introduce himself and discuss habitat restoration.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys conducted a site visit to the Winslow WMA CBT-M project to assist with wetland delineation. The rental equipment has been delivered to the site, and heavy equipment operator Steve Jefferies has begun reclamation work.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys attended a site visit to Pine Lands Nursery to observe the native plant operation.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys attended the Annual Southern Region Biologists' Meeting to receive updates and provide technical assistance to biologists conducting habitat work on the southern region WMAs.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys submitted an action plan to land management review for spraying invasive Japanese Mugwort at the Higbee Beach WMA.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys conducted a site visit with Robert Somes to the Lizard Tail Swamp WMA to discuss a restoration project focused on the Frosted Elfin.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys attended the Annual Habitat Meeting with Solitude Lake Management to discuss upcoming herbicide operations statewide.

## **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

Vacant, Crew Supervisor  
Bill DeYoung, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Septembio Garo, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Jonathan Kenney, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Nick Yanuzzelli, Wildlife Worker  
Jonathan Kaye, Wildlife Worker

Crews continue with lot clean ups, equipment maintenance, and road maintenance at northern region WMAs.

Staff continue to push forward with habitat improvements: work continues at Columbia, Beaver Brook, Berkshire Valley, Flatbrook, Clinton, Walpack, Whittingham, Paulinskill, and WMAs.

Staff continued ordering equipment and seeds for habitat work.

Staff began scheduling for spring trout stocking.

Staff worked to clear invasive vegetation from field edges.

Staff continue to work on WMA roads to ensure access for spring. Recent windstorms have caused trees to fall across roads on many WMAs.

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

Staff worked to prepare equipment for the upcoming spring habitat work.

Crew Supervisor James Hartobey and Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride investigated ownership of the Oxford Mt. tunnel at the Pequest WMA.

Staff have ordered stone to work on WMA roads and access points as part of a CBT-M project on northern region WMAs.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride attended a nursery tour at Pinelands Nursery.

## **CENTRAL REGION**

### **Vacant, Regional Superintendent**

Wendy Barbuck-Jones, 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

Bureau Chief Pete Winkler attended the Board of Directors Meeting at the Horse Park of New Jersey and for the Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education representing Fish and Wildlife.

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

Crews are preparing fire breaks to conduct prescribed burning at WMAs throughout the Central Region in coordination with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service.

Bureau Chief Pete Winkler met with State Long Trail group to go over potential WMA acquisitions to support the trail.

Plans are being finalized for spring plantings and field work for the coming season.

Bureau Chief Pete Winkler met with WSFR representatives to discuss the updating of real Property reporting for our Federal Grant.

Bureau Chief Pete Winkler attended 2 property inspections in the Southern Region as potential additions to the WMA system.

A public meeting was held at the CRO regarding the Assunpink Watershed Plan for rehabilitation of the dams along the Assunpink Creek.

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

NJ LSRPA Board Meeting  
UNBJ  
Law Training  
NJSFSC State  
Fish and Game Council Meeting  
OIS  
ENSAC  
Permitting  
NJSFSC BOD  
Bureau of Land Management  
Upland Game Committee  
NJ Bass Nation  
Mosquito Control Commission Meeting  
Horse Park  
PBA Local 120 Conservation Police  
4-H  
SPFHS & F&W Project Coordination Workgroup  
Resiliency Training – Law Enforcement  
8B Training Course

Watershed and Land Management  
Permit Section Training

## **SOUTHERN REGION**

### **Nathan Figley, Regional Superintendent**

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

Vacant, Crew Supervisor  
Steve Jeffries, Heavy Equipment Operator  
Jennings Jones, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Erin Peek, Heavy Equipment Operator

Mason Reeves, Crew Supervisor  
Nicholas Carros, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Drew McClure, Wildlife Worker  
Bobby Murphy, 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. During the recent cold snap, a portion of the concrete walkway at the Millville WMA Range cracked, most likely due to upheaval. Staff are soliciting bids from a mason to resolve the issue, which is a potential tripping hazard.

Staff are frost seeding several fields with crimson clover, this is a first, so results will be closely monitored this Spring. We opted to go this route due to the lack of rain during the fall planting season and concerns the seed would not germinate. Frost seeding is done by spreading seed on frozen ground in late Winter/Early Spring. The freeze/thaw cycle then buries the seed, providing soil contact for germination.

Road Crew Staff completed road work in the Peaslee, Egg Island and Ackeley Road in the Millville WMA near the shooting range. Staff are currently working on a field reclaim/road improvement project in the Winslow WMA. The reclaim portion of the project is anticipated to be complete by February 21<sup>st</sup>. Upon completion, staff will focus on grading the road and creating a parking area for access to the site.

Road crew staff are currently grading Snowhill Road in the Millville WMA and moved equipment (loader and grader) to the Winslow WMA, where they will begin grading all roads when road material purchase is approved.

A road crew seasonal staff member was hired and has already had a positive impact.

Winslow Staff are replacing some portions of the archery target holders that are deteriorating due to use (a good thing—meaning there are a lot of archers using the range, the bad side—means they are missing the large block target often and hitting the target holder instead). They will also replace bag targets as needed.



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

Staff participated in weekly construction meetings regarding the Pond Creek Project and Baypoint Shoreline Restoration Project. Both projects are on schedule to be completed within the initially anticipated time constraints. Staff met at Baypoint to discuss the layout for the parking area. A contractor is beginning demobilization of equipment and only has a few smaller jobs to complete to finish the restoration project.

Road Crew staff and Wildlife Workers cleared snow at offices, ranges, and boat ramps.

Wildlife Workers continue pole sawing road and field edges in preparation for the upcoming planting season.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley has been working with the Office of Resource Development staff and Treasury on the Jakes Landing Boat Ramp improvements.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley continues to work on encroachments. Each encroachment presents itself with unique challenges, multiple parties needing to get involved, and are time consuming.

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

## **PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SECTION**

### **LAND ACQUISITIONS**

Lisa Carben, Executive Assistant

Nothing to report this period.