

# **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT**

March 21, 2025 to April 20, 2025

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

## **COASTAL UNIT**

Tyler Kinney

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended several meetings between The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Stockton University, New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to begin project planning for two Beneficial Use of Dredge Materials (BUDM) projects at Boot Island, Absecon Wildlife Management Area (WMA). NJDOT continues to collect non-resource data. Stockton University began instrument deployments on 04/14. Water-level loggers were placed across the marsh platform to collect tidal data. Wave and current loggers were placed off the northeast edge of the island. I join staff from New Jersey Fish & Wildlife's (NJFW) Bureau of Shellfisheries to collect shellfish resource data along the northeast edge of the island, however results were inconclusive due to deeper than expected waters. Staff will return with specialized equipment to complete collection later this spring.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney continues to process a 076 Amendment to the Manahawkin WMA monitoring task order. Several requests were placed to determine the expected time of completion of this amendment.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended several planning meetings for the Lighthouse Camp Restoration Project. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Division of Land Use Regulation permit applications were successfully submitted. NJDOT consultants are currently modifying this application to be submitted to the USACE to satisfy federal permitting requirements.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney is working with NJDOT to complete an intragovernmental payment voucher to fund 2025 Abbotts Meadow phragmites treatments. Planning is underway with a contract vendor to complete this work via aerial application.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended several Beneficial Use Restoration Task Force (BURT) planning meetings. BURT will be housed under the New Jersey Coastal Resilience Collaborative. This task force will facilitate and match-make sediment availability and coastal BUDM restoration projects, as well as provide technical assistance to project managers. A meeting is scheduled to meet with NY/NJ Harbor Regional Dredge Teams to gain a better understanding of how to structure BURT in a way that efficiently collaborates with dredge team needs.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney drafted and submitted a write-up for the NJDEP Nature Based Solutions webpage that discussed the importance of Nature Base Solutions on state WMAs.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended a Saltmarsh Workgroup Collaboration with administrative staff across several states and entities to discuss high-level initiatives impacting saltmarshes in our region.

Heavy Equipment Operator Steve Jeffries continues to work with road crew members to repair roads across various WMAs. Tyler Kinney is working with Steve Jeffries to address some issues associated with his state cellphone.

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

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with staff from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Endangered and Non-Game Species Program (ENSP) to discuss potential wildlife crossings installed at

the Holly Farm Tract of the Menantico Ponds WMA. Discussions are ongoing. Additional data may be needed to make a better determination of where crossings should be placed if some were to be installed.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended a stakeholder meeting for the development of a forest stewardship plan for Wharton State Forest. Several broad habitat management goals were discussed, and a data request was placed to the New Jersey State Forest Fire Service (NJSFFS).

### **Other**

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney attended the Conservation Knowledge Exchange. Time was spent learning about the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and a tour was given of the Lighthouse Center restoration project.

Coastal Biologist Tyler Kinney gave a presentation at the April 2025 Fish and Game Council meeting on adaptive management practices at the Abbotts Meadow WMA Restoration site.

## **HABITAT PLANNING**

Melissa Woerner

### **Northern Region**

Permit application documents for the Hyperhumus wetlands restoration project at the Paulinskill River WMA were resubmitted to Land Resource Protection for review. Documents included the final plans for the Freshwater Wetlands permit and a minor modification for the Flood Hazard Area permit.

In coordination with NJSFFS, NJ Audubon ran a volunteer tree planting event at the Musconetcong River WMA to enhance riparian habitat. Seeding with native vegetation adjacent to the newly planted trees is upcoming and will create a feathered edge within the riparian zone.

The BLM has been coordinating with state contract vendor Solitude Lake Management to tailor herbicide treatments for Japanese barberry at the White Lake WMA in order to reduce harmful effects to nearby vegetation.

### **Central Region**

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a call with NJSFFS to discuss the development of a stewardship plan for the Wharton State Forest. BLM followed up with recommended metrics for American woodcock and pine savanna habitat which NJSFFS will use to locate potential management areas based on forest inventory data.

Soil sample results from fields in the Greenwood Forest and Colliers Mills WMAs were received from the Rutgers Agriculture Experimental Station. A state contract vendor will be applying lime and fertilizer to fields based on recommendations provided by the sample results.

Rutgers University is conducting the final round of pre-restoration avian surveys at the Manahawkin WMA. Avian surveys will be conducted from March to October with a final pre-restoration report planned for November.

Quotes were obtained for over 5,600 lbs. of seed for spring plantings at six WMAs in the central region: Assunpink, Colliers Mills, Greenwood Forest, Prospertown Lake, Stafford Forge, and Whiting. Plantings of wildlife food plots, native grasses, and wildflowers will be conducted by BLM staff and a state contract vendor on nearly 190 acres of fields. These plantings will benefit game species including deer, turkey, and pheasants, as well as pollinators and early successional habitat species. The first shipment of seed was ordered and delivered.

### **All Regions/Miscellaneous**

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner successfully completed coursework for a Hydric Soils class through Rutgers University. This is the first of three required courses to obtain a Wetland Delineation Certificate.

Benjamin Keys

**Southern Region**

Habitat Planner Ben Keys submitted a purchase order for aerial seeding operations at the Tuckahoe impoundments. The seed has been delivered to the airport, and the work is scheduled for early June.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys is currently attending a wetland delineation course offered by Rutgers.

The proposed Pollinator Habitat Creation Project at the Higbee Beach WMA was postponed, allowing additional time to account for public feedback.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys attended a meeting with ENSP staff to discuss a wildlife crossing project that is planned for the Menantico Ponds WMA.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys attended a meeting with the NJSFFS to discuss management goals for Wharton State Forest. A data request was submitted outlining the habitat requirements for the American woodcock.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys coordinated with the National Wildlife Turkey Federation (NWTF) to place an order for donated food plot spring seed.

Crimson clover, chicory, buckwheat, and sorghum were purchased by NWTF to be planted by land management staff.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys reviewed literature on submerged aquatic vegetation to reassess impoundment management practices.

Habitat Planner Ben Keys helped land management staff finish installing a parking lot in the Winslow WMA.

## **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  
Robert Makin, 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/Roy, Clinton, Walpack, Whittingham, Paulinskill River, and White Lake WMAs.

Staff continued ordering equipment and seeds for habitat work.

Staff continued in-season 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.

Heavy Equipment Operator Trevor Hull felled over two hundred dead ash trees from the edges of northern WMA parking lots and entrance roads and in the vicinity of Fish and Wildlife offices and powerlines.

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.

Staff completed mowing fields in preparation for spring habitat work.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride worked with staff on issues with access to various WMAs in the northern region.

## **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  
Vacant, 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 started stocking trout following the 2024 stocking plan.

Bureau Chief Pete Winkler attended the Barnegat Bay Lighthouse restoration meeting.

Crews are prepping for spring pollinators and food plot plantings.

Bureau Chief Pete Winkler attended the Lead by Example Energy Team quarterly meeting.

All Regional Superintendents met with Trailforks representatives to understand how Mountain Biking Trails and other trails on WMAs are represented on their website. We will be looking into their data to determine the best practices for closing trails during appropriate times to avoid conflicts with our main user groups.

Staff responded to a potential issue with a dam in the Greenwood Forest WMA. The issue was addressed, and the dam has been repaired.

Demolition of an abandoned structure has begun at the Butterly Bogs WMA.

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

Monmouth Conservation Foundation  
Fishing Education Instructor Training  
Division of Climate Change Mitigation and Monitoring  
Mosquito Control Commission Meeting  
Solid Waste and Compliance  
OIS  
CWA 1037  
Conservation Collaborative  
CLUE  
Take Flight Training for DCCMM  
NJ Coalition of Game Bird Conservation (NJCGBC)  
ORD  
Bureau of Law Enforcement  
Deer Project  
I & E  
ENSP Staff Meeting  
4-H  
Fish and Game Council Meeting  
SWAP TAG Steering Committee Meeting

NJSFSC  
ENSP  
WRAC  
BWM Supervisors Meeting  
UNBJ  
NWTF

## **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.

Staff are busy with Spring planting work. A large portion of their time is now devoted to plowing, discing and planting fields throughout the Southern Region.

On bad weather days when staff cannot get into fields, they have been completing other jobs such as installation of signs and guardrail, parking lot clean ups, water control structure maintenance, equipment maintenance, building gates, and dam/dike maintenance.

The Road crew continue to work on Winslow WMA roads. Winslow has an extensive road system, which was inundated with large potholes. While in the Winslow WMA, staff have also assisted with removing large dump piles using the loader and dump trucks. Road crew staff are also preparing to work on dikes in the Makepeace Lake WMA, as well as removing bamboo. Recently, small patches of bamboo have been showing up on WMAs, which based on the site appear to have been dumped there most likely by homeowners trying to eradicate it on their property and then disposing of it on a WMA.

Staff have been completing weekly trout stockings in lakes, ponds, and streams.

Staff continue to issue Field Trial and Special Use Permits.

Regional Superintendent Nate Figley has been working with the Office of Resource Development staff and Treasury on the Jakes Landing Boat Ramp improvements, the addition of a fueling station and electric gate at the Southern Region Office.

Regional Superintendent Nate Figley is working on two demolitions, one in the Winslow WMA and the other in the Higbee Beach WMA.

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.