



BUREAU OF INFORMATION AND EDUCATION MONTHLY REPORT

Al Ivany, Chief

May 16 – June 15, 2025

HUNTER EDUCATION/ R3 HUNTING & SHOOTING PROGRAM/ NASP

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

During the report period, staff conducted five hunter education classes statewide for 245 students which were comprised of 84 bow and 161 firearm hunter education students completing the mandatory requirements. Spring student numbers have been consistent for the past three years. Hunter Education classes will break until August, with some early course offerings in July. The public can view class schedules 75 days in advance and can register 45 days in advance.

Staff received 15 requests for duplicate Hunter Education cards during the reporting period. Of these requests, 26 individual disciplines were able to be located while seven were not. Staff notify constituents via email including instructions on how to obtain duplicate Hunter Education cards or with links on how to complete the course to obtain a new card if needed.

Staff received 38 voicemails on the Hunter Education line. The highest percentage of calls (29%) were for duplicate Hunter Education card requests. The second highest percentage (21%) were inquiries on live fire range sessions. The third highest (16%) miscellaneous Hunter Education calls which included topics such as state range use, prospective volunteers and creating CIDs for youth among other topics. The remaining topics are as follows: (13%) non-resident hunters, (10%) calls not related to Hunter Education, (8%) general inquiries about classes and (3%) Trapper Education.

Staff received 158 emails during this reporting period. Included in those emails were 14 non-resident hunting license unlocks in preparation for fall hunting seasons and two rifle permit unlocks in preparation for the muzzleloader deer season.

J. Leskie attended an IHEA (International Hunter Education Association) joint meeting with a presentation by Guidefitter to understand how PathPerks benefits Hunter Education programs and how to connect instructors and Hunter Education graduates. PathPerks is a program that partners Guidefitter and IHEA-USA in providing hunter education graduates with access to high-quality gear at preferred industry pricing. It's a way to support new hunters and encourage lifelong participation in hunting and shooting sports.

Regional staff K. Griglak and S. Forlenza began gathering data and preparing Fiscal Year 25 volunteer timesheets for review by State Administrator J. Leskie for the annual federal grant reporting process.

Trapper Education

Staff posted a trapper education class for student registration to be held on August 2, 2025, at the Assunpink Conservation Center to increase the availability of trapper education classes and better disperse them throughout the year. The available spots for this experimental summer class were nearly filled in the first two days after posting, indicating a very strong desire to offer our Trapper classes at other times.

Miscellaneous

S. Forlenza began working with the R3 team to plan/prepare for future and upcoming Muzzleloader and Trapping workshops.

C. Venuti-Williams continued working to assist with sponsorships for the upcoming ACI Conference in Atlantic City, July 21-24, 2025.

K. Griglak measured two deer for the NJ Outstanding Deer Program. One was a Warren County permit muzzleloader deer grossing 141 2/8 and netting 139 4/8 and the other was a Warren County six-day firearm deer grossing 155 2/8 and netting 148 4/8.

R3 Hunting & Shooting Program (Joe Leskie, Tiffany Woolley, Courtney Venuti-Williams)

Staff have been in contact with the Wallkill River Ducks Unlimited Chapter to start planning a Waterfowl Hunting Workshop at Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge. The workshop will take place on Saturday, August 23, 2025. This workshop is geared toward new or inexperienced waterfowl hunters looking to get started and will be a combination of lectures and hands-on demonstrations. R3 staff will handle the registration and promotion of the workshop, while Wallkill DU Chapter members will cover the workshop material. The agenda for this workshop is still being developed and once complete, staff will begin promotional efforts.

Staff have finalized the dates for an Introduction to Muzzleloader Workshop. This will be a two-day workshop introducing experienced and new hunters to a new discipline. The two-day workshop will include a lecture portion followed by a live range session where participants will gain hands-on experience shooting, cleaning, and safely handling a muzzleloader. The lecture portion will take place on Thursday, September 11, 2025, at the Conservation Center and the range session will be on Sunday, September 14, 2025, at the Colliers Mills Range. Staff will continue their inventory of supplies and finalize logistics.

Staff met with the New Jersey Audubon Society to discuss a possible partnership for an R3 Mentored Bow Deer Hunting Workshop at the Wattles Stewardship Center. Staff will be following up in the next few weeks to discuss the possible partnership.

Staff conducted an Introduction to Shooting Sporting Clays Workshop in partnership with the Freehold Fin, Fur, and Feather Sportsmen's Club of New Jersey. There were well over 50 people who applied for this workshop and only eight spots were available. All participants who attended gained the experience of shooting a sporting clays course with experienced instructors. A survey was sent to all attendees. The analysis concluded that 100 percent of the participants said that the workshop was very informative and a total of 75 percent of the participants said that they are ready to shoot sporting clays on their own while 25 percent would like a little more time but are willing to try. All participants rated the instructors as exceptional and would recommend this program to others.

Staff have been working on conducting another Women's Introduction to Shooting Sporting Clays Workshop at Freehold, Fin, Fur, and Feather Sportsmen's Club of New Jersey in September.

R3 Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt

J. Belfi continued general maintenance on the registration shed and equipment. Staff have been working on the logistics for Mentored Waterfowl Hunts through the Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt Program.

T. Woolley created separate registration forms and flyers for special hunt day experiences through the Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt Program. The special hunt days include Youth Days and Veterans/Active Military Days during the South Zone season.

R3 Miscellaneous

J. Leskie and T. Woolley attended the 2025 National R3 Symposium in Portland, Maine from May 19 to May 22, 2025. The four-day conference provided the opportunity for state agency staff across the nation to present and discuss R3 efforts and marketing campaigns, as well as collaborate and share innovative R3 ideas to increase participation and learn from other states' successes.

Staff attended a NEAFWA R3 Committee Meeting to discuss the termination of a submitted grant and the next steps for another grant proposal. The original grant objective was to target volunteer recruitment needs in NEAFWA states. Due to there being no timeframe for another

grant proposal, it was voted on during the meeting that the committee will partner with Southwick Associates to run the Volunteer Survey to help identify the state's objectives.

Staff also attended the NEAFWA R3 Volunteer Committee Meeting to discuss the volunteer onboarding process and how we can develop best practices and recommendations. A survey was created to help states identify volunteer standards/onboarding processes. During the meeting we discussed and edited the survey. The next step will be to send it out to state R3 professionals to complete. This will help identify what states are looking for and if they are interested in being a part of the Volunteer Recruitment Marketing Campaign.

The Spring 2025 R3 Newsletter was posted to the R3 webpage and sent out to 57,000 recipients with a 41% open rate.

R3 Hunting & Shooting Program-NASP® (Joe Leskie, Craig Decker)

With the school year coming to an end, NASP programs have been completed for FY 25 and final reports will be evaluated in the coming months.

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

Staff continue to field communications with various schools and organizations inquiring about the NASP program and how to become certified.

Staff sent out an annual email to all active NJ NASP Basic Archery Instructors (BAI) to remind them they are reaching the deadline to report their activity. This procedure is done annually at this time of the year and completion is imperative for BAIs to maintain their certification. Several follow-up communications will be forthcoming up to the July 31st deadline.

Staff attended and presented at an award ceremony at the Delaware Township Board of Education Meeting on Tuesday, May 20. The awards were given to two students from Delaware Township Middle School who qualified in the 2025 NJ NASP Virtual State Bullseye Tournament. The first recipient was 8th Grader Nicholas Romaniello who achieved 3rd place for the Middle School Boys Division with a score of 264 out of 300 and was awarded the 3rd Place Boys Division plaque for his great performance. The second recipient was 8th Grader Henry Kusant who achieved 1st place not only in Middle School Boy's Division but also became a Co-Champion of the entire tournament. Since 2006, when NASP first started in New Jersey, this is the first time there have ever been co-champions, students with the exact same top score, 279 out of 300. Henry was awarded the 1st Place Middle School Boys plaque, the 1st Place Overall Boys trophy and a custom-made NJ State Champion Genesis bow for his outstanding achievement.

On June 5-7 NASP hosted its 2025 Championship Bullseye and 3-D Tournaments at the Myrtle Beach Convention Center in Myrtle Beach, SC. This year, we had 14 students who qualified and participated in the Bullseye tournament and 16 students in the 3-D tournament. Scores for the Boys' Bullseye ranged from 536 to 1589 out of 1604 and the Girls' Bullseye ranged from 523

out of 1522. Scores for the Boys 3-D ranged from 277 to 1116 out of 1125 and Girls 3-D ranged from 385 to 1091 out of 1102.

Staff taught the NASP Basic Archery Instructor (BAI) Certification class at Cedar Drive Middle School for five teachers. This brings the total number of participants receiving BAI certification for the 2024-25 school season to 35.

Staff continue to plan, coordinate, and schedule upcoming Basic Archery Instructor training/certification sessions.

Staff continue to field active 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

Bulkhead construction has started. This project is slated to run through early August.

A new water tank, spin filter and check valve were installed at Sedge after the check valve on the jet pump failed.

Nine groups have participated in a Sedge Island program this reporting period.

Intern training was held on May 30-June 1. Seven new interns were trained along with two returning individuals. Despite the windy weather that prevented staff from kayaking, lots of other activities were covered, and everyone is excited for the 2025 Sedge Island season.

Trout in the Classroom (TIC)

Registration is now open for the 2025-2026 school year with 61 teachers registered for the program.

Angler R3

A Military Veteran's Surf Fishing Experience was held on May 18 as part of the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament. Seven participants fished in the tournament with most indicating that they were new/inexperienced anglers or used to fish and would like to get back into it.

One *Let's Go Fishing!* workshop was held on May 30 for families with children aged ten and older at Laurel Acres Park in Mt. Laurel. Eleven participants were in attendance, including seven adults and four children between the ages of 10-16.

One family fishing workshop was held at the *First Catch Center* at the Hackettstown Hatchery on June 14. A total of 12 participants from six families enjoyed learning how to fish despite the rainy weather.

Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament

The Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament was held on May 18 at Island Beach State Park. Over 400 people registered for the event. Jason Zimerla of Manchester won the 34th Annual Tournament with a 39 3/4" black drum. Twenty-one additional prizes were awarded in the summer flounder, bluefish, and striped bass categories. The new Military Veteran Category awarded Tony Lopez of Camden with a rod and reel combo for a 28 1/4" bluefish. Three prizes were awarded in the High School Team Category with Emerson High School taking first place with a 29 3/8" bluefish.

This year the tournament had three sponsors, including Tsunami which donated the Governor's Cup Winner prizes, Grumpys Tackle that donated the veteran category rod, and Celebrity Ford for providing transportation for the disabled military veterans.

Education

After months of preparing, the NJ State Envirothon was held on May 17. Staff assisted with the Wildlife Station and Presentation Station during the competition.

Programs conducted during this reporting period:

- May 19 – Co-presentation with Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ to the McManus Middle School in Linden for approximately 75 students.
- May 22 – “*Wildlife of NJ, Past & Present*” program was conducted for five classes of disabled students at Egg Harbor Township High School.
- May 31 – “*Wildlife of NJ, Past & Present*” presentation was given at Woolwich Township with approximately 50 people in attendance.
- June 9 – a *Project Sampler* training was held at the Princeton-Blairstown Center for their new education staff.

Events attended with the Fish & Wildlife exhibit during this reporting period:

- May 28 – Manchester Township Green Fair. The event was poorly attended due to inclement weather.
- May 29 – Mr. B's Nature Fest at Galloway Township Middle School with an estimated 2,100 students attending.
- June 1 – Manalapan Nature Fest and Plant Sale with approximately 600 residents attending.
- June 8 – Tenaflly Nature Day with approximately 800 people in attendance.

Staff also attend a Sustainable Jersey for Schools review committee meeting. Preparations for the next school year included some modifications to the guidelines.

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

Pequest Natural Resource Education Center

School groups continue to visit and participate in a variety of programs. There were 15 school programs with 252 students participating in the following programs: two Habitat Hike and Fishing Basics classes, six Hatchery Tour and Fishing Basics classes, three Fishing Basics classes, one Hatchery Tour and Habitat Hike, two Hatchery Tours and Trout Habitat Hikes, and one Hatchery Tour.

Several public programs were offered this reporting period including Intro to NJ Trout Fishing, Fly Casting Crash Course, Fly Fishing Boot Camp, and Advanced Fly Casting. A total of 37 people participated in these programs.

The facility was used for Hunter Education and Teen Anglers. Additionally, the NY-NJ Trail Conference was out to clean up the trails.

Staff met with DEP Construction Management to review the scope of work for updating and replacing the windows, doors, floors and exhibits in the education center.

Mobile Education Trailer (MET)

The Bureau of Law Enforcement staffed the trailer at Holly Heights Elementary School with 100 students participating in trailer activities.

The trailer also attended Ridgefield Park Earth Day Festival on June 14 with 179 people passing through it.

Hooked on Fishing - Not on Drugs (HOFNOD) Program

The 10th Annual Youth Fishing Challenge (YFC) was the biggest it's ever been with 52 host sites across all 21 counties! Despite the inclement weather, most sites held their event. Three sites postponed their event to Sunday, June 8 or Free Fishing Day in October. Staff is currently finalizing overall attendance numbers.

Staff led a fishing class at the Pequest Education Pond for the Department of Children & Families Warren Campus for seven participants.

One Hooked on Fishing team participated in the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament. Cedar Creek Anglers (Cedar Creek High School, Atlantic County) had seven students, and four parents who participated in the tournament.

Westwood Police Department borrowed one of the HOFNOD loaner trailers for their YFC event at Pascack Brook County Park. The trailer holds 12 rod/reel combos and an assortment of terminal tackle and other supplies.

WEBSITE ACTIVITY (Doug Rizio)

New and Updated Pages, Images, and Documents

Two news posts were published in May.

No older posts were updated retroactively in the news archive.

No new job openings were also published; no old job openings were deleted after their closing dates.

Sixteen new event posts were created; 12 old event posts were updated during the report period as well.

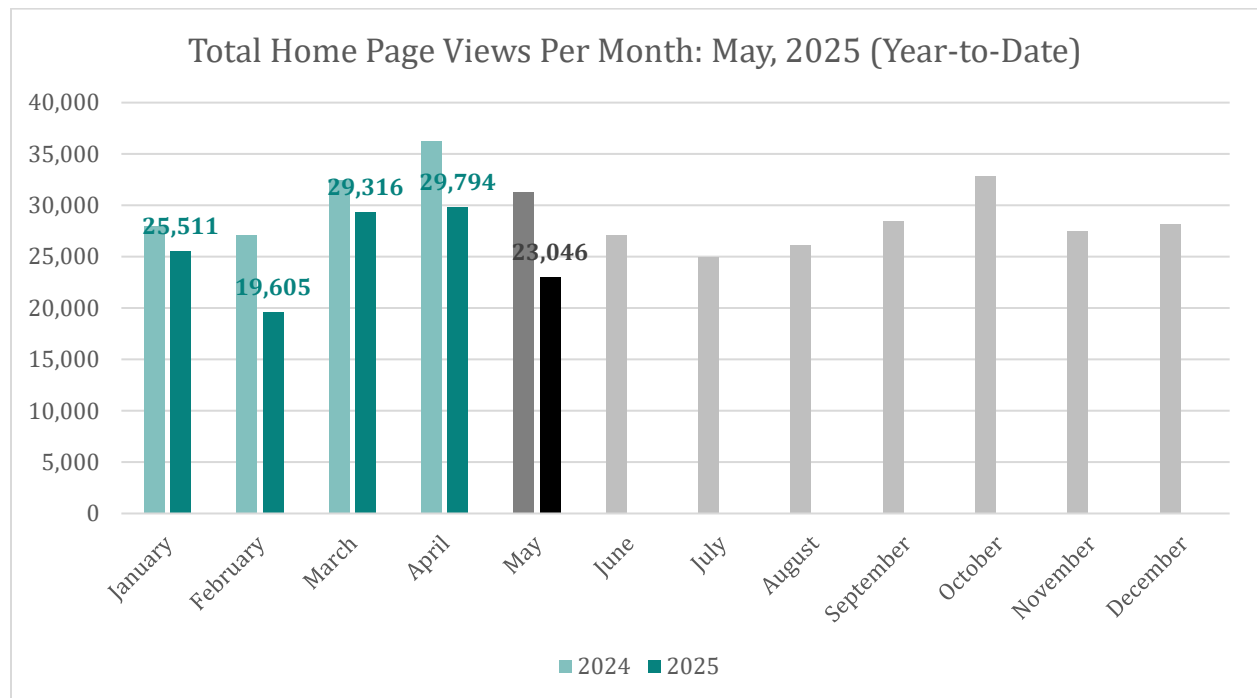
Additionally, one new web page was created; while three old web pages were deleted or consolidated into other ones; and approximately 46 existing web pages were updated throughout this duration. Also, seven new URL redirections were created from one web page to another.

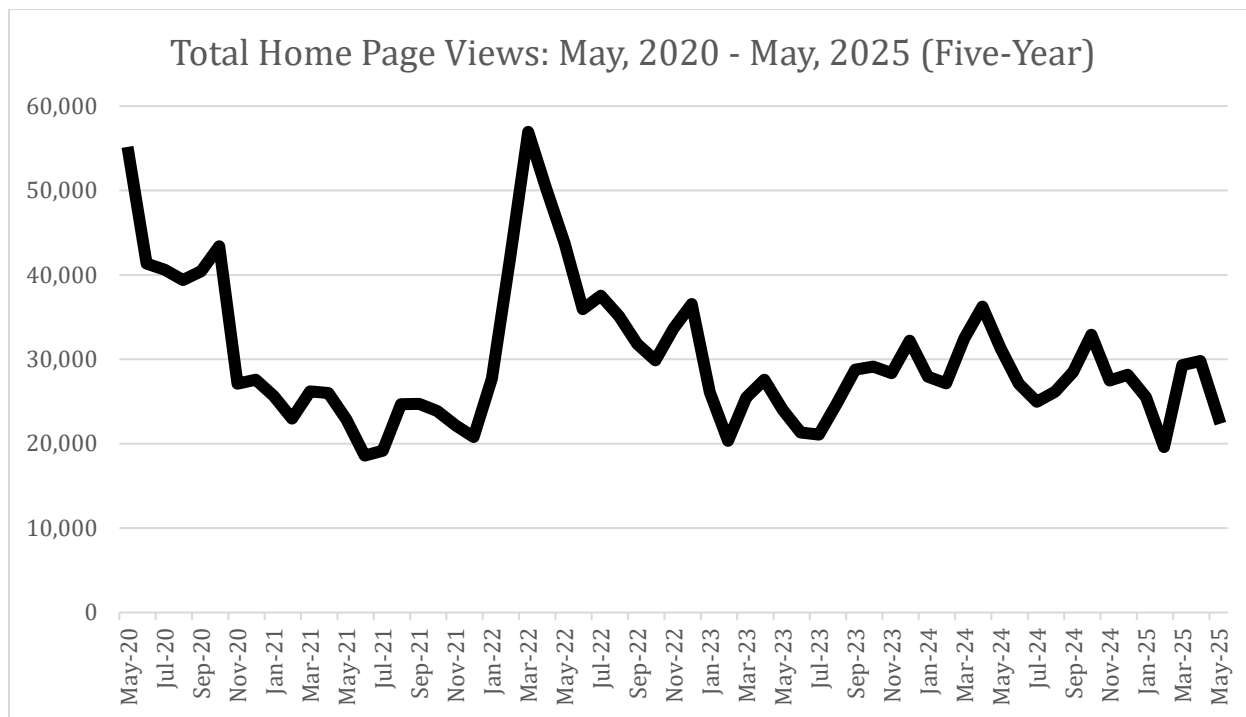
Approximately 64 documents were either uploaded for the first time or re-edited and re-uploaded into PDF format. These included: Bureau Reports (9) in one .zip file; Meeting Documents (20) in three .zip files; Minutes/Notices/Agendas (12); and others (23).

51 images and three videos were also edited and posted.

Analytics – Home Page

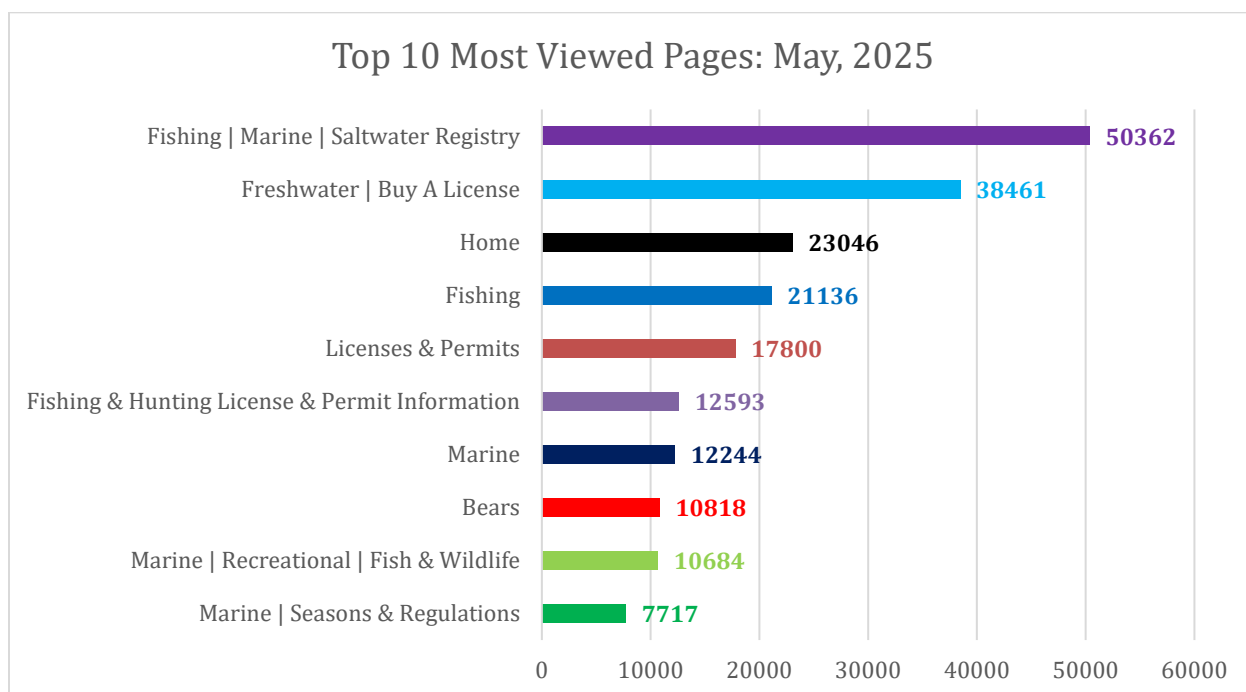
The number of views on the home page this May was 23,046; an average of about 744 views per day. It is a change of -6,748 views (or -22.65%) from the previous month of April (29,794), and a change of -8,270 views (or -26.41%) from May of the previous year (31,316).



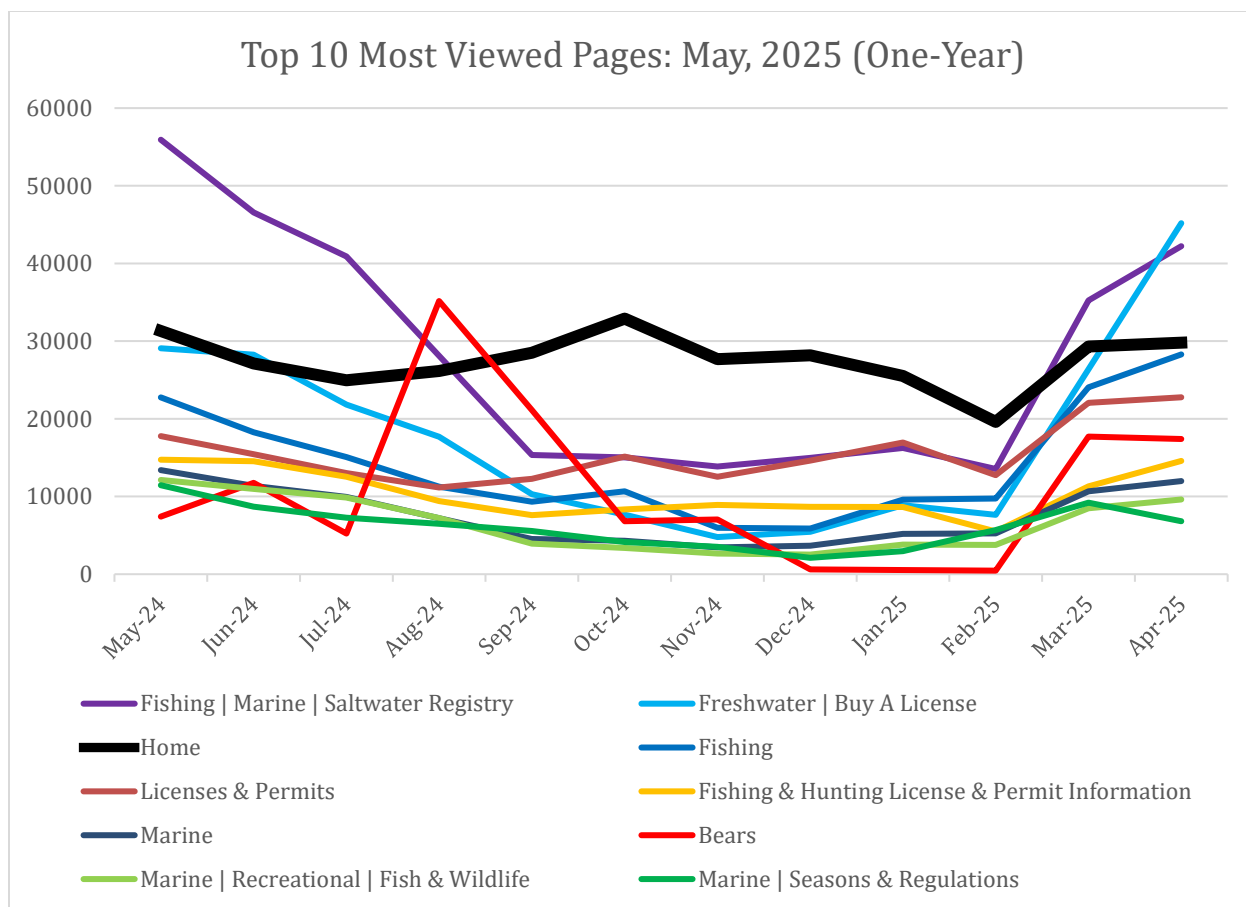


Analytics

The top 10 most viewed web pages in 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:



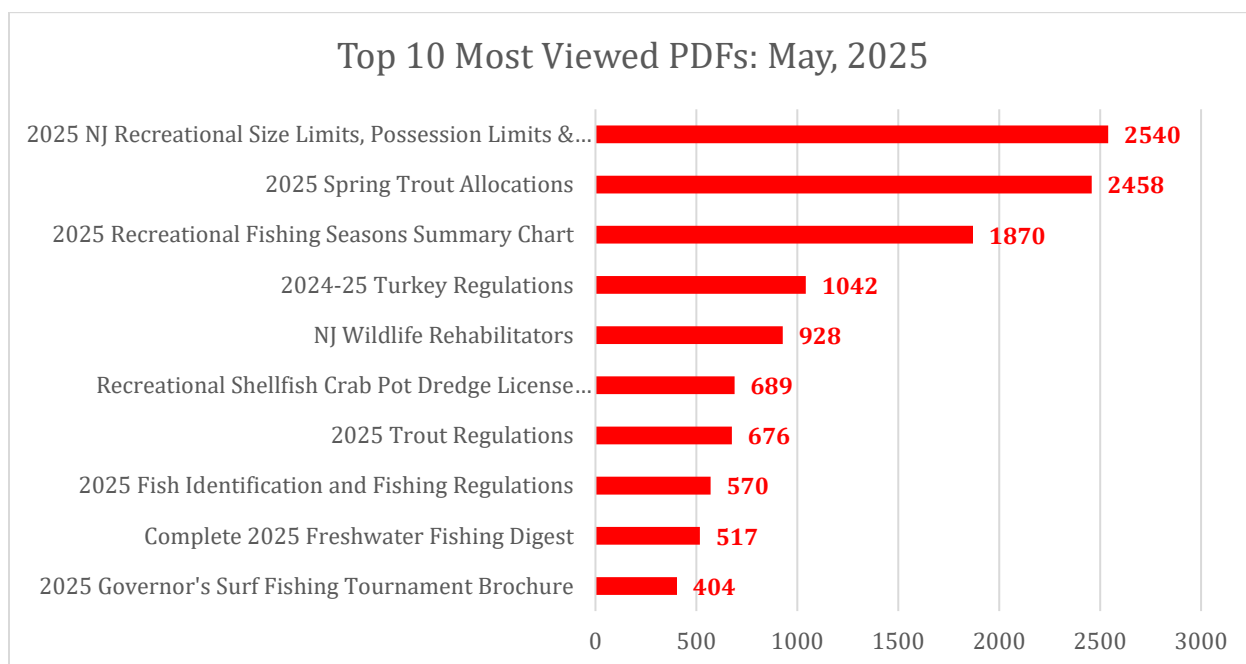
| Rank | Page Name | Views |
|------|--|-------|
| 1 | Fishing Marine Saltwater Registry | 50362 |
| 2 | Freshwater Buy A License | 38461 |
| 3 | Home | 23046 |
| 4 | Fishing | 21136 |
| 5 | Licenses & Permits | 17800 |
| 6 | Fishing & Hunting License & Permit Information | 12593 |
| 7 | Marine | 12244 |
| 8 | Bears | 10818 |
| 9 | Marine Recreational Fish & Wildlife | 10684 |
| 10 | Marine Seasons & Regulations | 7717 |

Other popular pages on the website were:

| Rank | Page Name | Views |
|------|--|-------|
| 11 | Marine Recreational Licenses and Permits | 7618 |
| 12 | Freshwater Spring Trout Fishing Information | 6982 |
| 13 | Freshwater | 6872 |
| 14 | Freshwater Places to Fish - Ponds, Lakes, and Reservoirs | 6305 |

| | | |
|----|--|------|
| 15 | Marine Striped Bass Bonus Program (SBBP) Individual Angler Application | 5914 |
| 16 | Hunting | 5850 |
| 17 | Freshwater Free Fishing Days | 5765 |
| 18 | License Agents | 5183 |
| 19 | Hunting Buy A License | 4336 |
| 20 | Freshwater Fishing Access Locations on Trout Waters - County Listing | 4133 |

The ten most requested PDFs this report period were:



| Rank | PDF Name | Views |
|------|---|-------|
| 1 | 2025 NJ Recreational Size Limits, Possession Limits & Seasons | 2540 |
| 2 | 2025 Spring Trout Allocations | 2458 |
| 3 | 2025 Recreational Fishing Seasons Summary Chart | 1870 |
| 4 | 2024-25 Turkey Regulations | 1042 |
| 5 | NJ Wildlife Rehabilitators | 928 |
| 6 | Recreational Shellfish Crab Pot Dredge License Application | 689 |
| 7 | 2025 Trout Regulations | 676 |
| 8 | 2025 Fish Identification and Fishing Regulations | 570 |
| 9 | Complete 2025 Freshwater Fishing Digest | 517 |
| 10 | 2025 Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament Brochure | 404 |

Additional Activities

Additional activities included occasional meetings to determine personal work goals as part of the DEP Inspire Mentorship Program, weekly meetings to plan the development of the new State Wildlife Action Plan website, bi-weekly Outreach Group meetings, and Commissioner's Updates.

WILDLIFE INFORMATION/PUBLIC OUTREACH (Linda DiPiano)

GovDelivery (Listserv) Messages

Two (2) 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. REMINDER - Summer Closures in Five WMAs effective May 22 - September 1 (5/21/25)
2. Spring Turkey Season Hunter Survey (6/11/25)

GovDelivery List Numbers to Date

| | |
|---|----------|
| | 6/1/2025 |
| Freshwater Fishing | 62656 |
| Hunting | 44232 |
| Marine Fishing | 59003 |
| Wildlife | 40613 |
| Education | 35810 |
| Endangered Species | 32253 |
| Shellfish | 38326 |
| Outdoors | 47082 |
| Sparta Mt. | 27879 |
| CHANJ | 32137 |
| Marine CARES Act Information | 17552 |
| Marine Fisheries Grant and Assistance Information | 5659 |
| Total | 443202 |

Responses to the Public Email Address

Approximately 262 email messages were received through the public email address. All were directly responded to or forwarded to agency staff for response, all others required no response.

Outstanding Deer Program

Official scoring forms continue to come in for the 2026 Deer Classic. With the Deer Classic taking place June 6-7, 2026, the deadline for the program applications has been pushed back to December 31, 2025.

Freshwater Fishing Digest

Received the working copy of the upcoming 2026 Freshwater Fishing Digest from the publisher and sent it to Bureau Chief Shawn Crouse.

We would like to get a head start on editing with the upcoming Fish Code changes.

Hunting and Trapping Digest

Received the third pass of the digest back from agency staff before May 19, 2025. All edits were reviewed, and the pass was uploaded to the publisher on May 20, 2025.

Received the fourth pass of the digest back from the publisher on June 2, 2025. Made edits and sent it to Wildlife, Licensing, Law, Lands, Hunter Education, and the Office of GIS staff with a due date of June 11, 2025.

Received the fourth pass of the digest back from agency staff by June 11, 2025. All edits were reviewed, and the pass was uploaded to the publisher on June 12, 2025.

Wildlife Conservation Corps

The Wildlife Conservation Corps now has 4,999 members.

There were no volunteer opportunities available during this reporting period.

Other

Attended the Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament.

Attended a meeting with Jason Freeborn regarding FY25 exterior and auditorium construction projects at Pequest.

Attended a Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament committee wrap-up meeting.

Met with staff at the hotel in Atlantic City where we will be hosting the upcoming Association for Conservation Information conference in July to finalize some of the conference items.

Attended a meeting with agency staff regarding the saltwater registry and promotion of the program.

Attended the June Fish and Wildlife Council Meeting.

WILDLIFE INFORMATION – INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (Kathy Porutski)

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

Passing of Former F&G Councilman David Flitcroft
May Bureau Reports

Responses to the Public Email Address

As stated earlier, approximately **262** 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.

During this reporting period, many of the questions had to do with young or diseased wildlife sightings (mostly foxes, but also deer and coyote); fish kills; and the legality of carrying bear spray.



Some of the more unusual: a woman who thought she had found the skeleton of a sea serpent on the beach in Wildwood Crest (which turned out to be a sturgeon – at left); the suspected release of an alligator into the Clark Reservoir; and a mountain lion sighting in Hunterdon County.

Other

- The Bureau of Information and Education's Monthly Report for May was compiled and edited.
- Atlantic City potential conference sponsor addresses were compiled with contact names for L. DiPiano so that hard-copy follow-up letters could be mailed.
- A virtual meeting regarding the upcoming ACI Conference was attended on May 21
- Travel request information was completed on eTrips for the ACI Conference.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND DIGITAL MEDIA (Jonathan Carlucci)

Publications/Graphics

- Photos background extensions and aspect ratio changes to fit brochure formatting
- Vector art created of standard archery target for scalable use in print materials
- QR codes made to shift from old unsupported technology
- Shortened URL requested for print materials
- Photo subjects clipped for use without backgrounds
- WHSP art conversation follow up and species list finalized, shared for staff
- NASP brochure draft finalized and shared with staff
- CRO kiosk art template information reviewed and initial analysis and measurements input into InDesign for layout
- Jpegs created for code sharing
- WHSP sticker follow-up, staff handling production
- Follow up on outstanding print requests with Treasury Print Shop
- Additional QR codes made for pages and applications, coordinated with webmaster for dynamic code creation and analytic capabilities
- Program logo versions shared with staff
- Acted as VO and supported pilot for DEP GIS data collection
- New trout stocking sign modifications made
- Reviewed ACI website and provided feedback

Photography/Videography

- Photo Shelter setup and AI testing
- SharePoint content modified for staff
- Review of Greenwood Forest footage and uploaded to staff
- Musconetcong WMA site visit with staff models, photo and video captured on five cameras for video production and future uses
- Underwater footage pulled from camera and shared with video producer
- Review/organization of footage and stills from four cameras for WMA of the month
- Photo review with staff for ENSP projects
- Site visits to Cape May area – Cooks Beach, Kimbel Beach, Norbury's Landing, Sunray Beach – coordinating with ENSP - searching for red knot
- UAV maintenance
- Photo and video of red knot groups obtained
- Site visit and cliff swallow filmed at bridge with extension pole
- Photos for Commissioner tracked down with assistance from BLE staff
- New species images organized, reviewed and added to the cloud folder
- Internal, press and communications requests for photographs and logos fulfilled
- Follow up with DOIT on long-term cloud storage and sharing solution, still unresolved
- Footage downloaded, reviewed and uploaded to video producer
- Video interview setup and tear-down trial run performed with video producer for future F&W productions
- iCloud image download, video review, and compilation for uploads to state drive

- Total review and upload of 8.2 GB of footage and stills shared with video editor

Meetings/Training

- PhotoShelter follow up meeting with DEP staff
- UAV Training
- Outreach Group Teams meetings
- sUAS meeting
- Monthly flight training

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND DIGITAL MEDIA (Matt Hencheck)

Video Production

- *Black Rail eDNA survey* video – Filmed ENSP Biologist Christina Davis along with partners from Rutgers and Natural Lands as they conducted eDNA samples of black rail in specified areas. Additional footage of eDNA lab work will be filmed in July.
- *Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Survey* video – Filmed MRA staff and Project Leader Nina Colagiovanni as they performed submerged aquatic vegetation surveys along the Barnegat Bay. Additional footage of the survey will be filmed over the next few weeks.
- *Heislerville WMA of the Month promo* video –Started filming the landscape of the Hesilerville Wildlife Management Area for the WMA of the Month promo. Each month I&E’s video production team highlights the landscape and activities the public can enjoy at each wildlife management area. This video will be posted to NJ Fish & Wildlife’s social media platforms and website in early June.

SOCIAL MEDIA (Katie Paey)

Facebook

The NJFW Facebook (FB) page had **57,553 followers** at the end of this reporting period.

The total organic reach of the NJFW FB page during this reporting period was **389,610** people.

30 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, Wild About NJ Campaign content, Endangered Species Day, Law Enforcement dumping case assistance, GSFT winners, slow down for turtles crossing

the road, Hackettstown State Fish Hatchery water used for wildfire, Migratory Birds of the Delaware Bay state museum video, World Turtle Day, navigational buoy comments, Pequest Trout Hatchery programs, Youth Fishing Challenge, horseshoe crab surveys, National Fishing and Boating Week, channel catfish egg take, Free Fishing Day, your license dollars make a difference video, warmwater fish stocking, Wild Turtle Week, NJ Wildlife Tracker, doe and fawn trail camera video, and Piedmont Bird Boxes state museum video.

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):

5/20 – Slow down for turtles in coastal areas – reached **114,766** people, **3,589** interactions. 93% of views were from non-followers.

5/23 – In-season trout stocking closures – reached **114,530** people, **1,591** interactions. 93% of views were from non-followers.

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 **20,289 followers** at the end of this reporting period.

The total organic reach of the NJFW Instagram page during this reporting period was **29,667** people.

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, Wild About NJ Campaign content, Endangered Species Day, Law Enforcement dumping case assistance, GSFT winners, slow down for turtles crossing the road, Hackettstown State Fish Hatchery water used for wildfire, Migratory Birds of the Delaware Bay state museum video, World Turtle Day, navigational buoy comments, Pequest Trout Hatchery programs, Youth Fishing Challenge, horseshoe crab surveys, National Fishing and Boating Week, channel catfish egg take, Free Fishing Day, your license dollars make a difference video, warmwater fish stocking, Wild Turtle Week, NJ Wildlife Tracker, doe and fawn trail camera video, and Piedmont Bird Boxes state museum video.

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 –

5/19 – Law Enforcement dumping case assistance – reached **12,284** people with **809** 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, YouTube and social media and shared with appropriate staff.
- Google Analytics data was monitored for the WMA of the Month campaign.
- One Free Fishing Day GovDelivery email was drafted and sent during this reporting period.
- An Aquatic Invasive Species Reporting Form GovDelivery email was drafted and approved during this reporting period. The email will be sent after a Postmaster notifying staff is distributed.
- An Association for Conservation Information Conference Sponsorship meeting was attended. Potential sponsor mailing addresses were added to a shared spreadsheet.
- A meeting was attended with R3 Angling staff to discuss a summer fishing email campaign to reach 2024 license buyers who have not purchased licenses in 2025.

OUTREACH GROUP (Michelle Smith)

Outreach Group

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 FY25 black bear multi-media outreach campaign's first flight concluded and the campaign broke benchmarks on every channel that messages were live. For example, the YouTube completion rate was 79% when the benchmark was 15%. A brand lift study will start in flight two and run during the additional periods of marketing during the summer and fall bear activity periods. Millions of residents will be reached in their homes and on their mobile devices with safety information during the campaign.

Bear marketing campaign invoices were processed.

An order for the 3rd edition of the Wildlife Habitat Supporter Program sticker was placed to replenish the depleted inventory.

An Angler R3 marketing meeting was attended.

BLACK BEAR EDUCATION PROGRAM (Stephanie Getto)

Bear Presentations and Exhibits

- 10 presentations were given, reaching 936 people across three counties.

| Program Type | Date | Location | Attendees |
|---------------------|-------------|---|------------------|
| Presentation | 5/17/25 | Panther Lake Camping Resort (Sussex) | 43 |
| Presentation (x2) | 5/20/25 | Tulsa Trail Elementary School (Sussex) | 100 |
| Presentation | 5/22/25 | Helen Morgan Elementary School (Sussex) | 220 |
| Presentation | 5/27/25 | Tewksbury Elementary School (Hunterdon) | 60 |
| Presentation | 6/6/25 | Plainsboro Preserve Nature Center (Middlesex) | 25 |
| Presentation | 6/10/25 | Community Middle School (Middlesex) | 33 |
| Presentation | 6/11/25 | Kittatinny Valley State Park (Sussex) | 25 |
| Presentation (x2) | 6/12/25 | Lounsberry Hollow School (Sussex) | 430 |
| TOTAL | | | 936 |

Bear Literature Distribution

- 29,200 pieces of black bear safety literature were delivered to residents, state parks, and county facilities.

| Literature Type | Amount Distributed |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| English Brochures | 4,950 |
| Spanish Brochures | 4,600 |
| Kids Activity Books | 1,000 |
| Camper Cards | 17,000 |
| Tyvek Signs | 1,650 |
| TOTAL | 29,200 |

Other

- Attended research trapping with Bear Project Staff
- Continued work on citizen science project involving hard mast surveys

- Responded to public inquiries about bears over the phone and through email
- Continued promoting black bear literature to parks and county facilities