

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

April 21, 2023 to May 20, 2023

Jason Hearon, Bureau Chief
Tyler Kinney, Habitat Planner
Melissa Woerner, Habitat Planner

HABITAT PLANNING

Melissa Woerner

Northern Region

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended two bi-weekly status calls with The Nature Conservancy and contractor WSP for the Hyperhumus Wetlands Restoration project at the Paulinskill River Wildlife Management Area (WMA). A site visit was conducted on May 11th for stakeholders to see pre-restoration conditions and discuss design plans.

Land Management Review (LMR) comments were received for field reclamation and planting operations of approximately 30 acres at the Musconetcong River WMA. Work is currently on hold pending consultation with the NJ Commission on American Indian Affairs.

LMR comments were received for four maintenance projects at the Black River WMA. These projects will improve public access, parking facilities, and drainage at several locations. Since one of the locations falls within a Natural Area, work there will be limited to maintenance of the existing parking lot footprint.

Seed for spring plantings in the northern region were ordered and received: approximately 900 pounds of dwarf sorghum for planting at the Musconetcong River WMA and 960 pounds of a custom native warm season grass and wildflower mix for the South Branch WMA. Seed was delivered to the South Branch WMA where the lease farmer will plant approximately 32 acres for in-kind work. Planting operations at the Musconetcong River WMA are pending as noted above.

Central Region

Soil sample results from three fields at the Stafford Forge WMA and two fields at the Manasquan WMA were received from the Rutgers Soil Testing Laboratory. Based on these recommendations, a contractor was hired to apply lime and fertilizer to the fields to improve soil quality. Application at both sites was completed and planting operations are upcoming.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner has been working with a contract farmer to complete Treasury paperwork for planting approximately 90 acres of fields at the Prospertown Lake WMA. A purchase order and funding request was submitted.

Approximately 4,625 pounds of seed for spring planting operations at the Assunpink, Manasquan River, Prospertown Lake, and Stafford Forge WMAs was delivered to the central region.

A virtual meeting between NJ Fish and Wildlife and Ducks Unlimited was held to discuss the Manahawkin Coastal Wetlands Restoration Project. Permit applications are currently in review and project members discussed plans for construction bids and materials purchase.

All Regions/Miscellaneous

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a virtual meeting for the Barnegat Bay Partnership Estuarine Habitat Working Group.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a virtual meeting for the NJ Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan Working Group.

Tyler Kinney

Southern Region

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney continues to work on developing a task order for monitoring at the Manahawkin WMA wetland restoration. The task order has completed OTPLA review, and the spending plan approval is awaiting signature.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney worked with the Jersey Shore Chapter of the American Woodcock Society to complete the 2023 woodcock habitat creation project in the Dennis Creek WMA. 100 Bayberry seedlings were planted in a mosaic pattern. Seedlings protector tubes were installed.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney installed silt barriers for the Glassboro WMA restoration project. A meeting was attended at the same site to discuss restoration efforts.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney placed a purchase order for the aerial seeding of 170 acres of waterfowl impoundment in the Tuckahoe WMA. Seed has been procured and dropped off at the vendor. Impoundment draining has begun. Seeding is expected to take place in the second or third week of June.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney resolved an issue related to field access for a farm lease in the Nantuxent WMA.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting related to the shoreline restoration at Baypoint.

Habitat Planner attended the May 2023 Endangered and Nongame Species Advisory Committee (ENSAC) meeting to present on the Glassboro WMA restoration.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney saw through the completion of 2023 spring planting operations. GIS shapefile updates and acreage calculations are currently being compiled.

All Regions

Nothing to report.

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

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

Staff continue stocking trout at northern region locations.

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 the Columbia, Beaver Brook, Berkshire Valley, Flatbrook/Roy, Clinton, Whittingham, Paulinskill River, and White Lake WMAs.

Heavy Equipment Operator Trevor Hull and seasonal B. Karlak conducted habitat work at the White Lake WMA.

Crew Supervisor Jim Hartobey continued work on the powerline easement portion of the quail area at the Columbia WMA. Work has begun prepping fields for planting this spring.

Crew Supervisor Christopher Murphy and Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride visited additional sections of the Capoolong Creek WMA to assess mitigation needs for erosion of the hiking trail.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride attended a meeting on chainsaw safety for Bureau of Land Management employees.

Crew Supervisor Christopher Murphy, Heavy Equipment Operator Trevor Hull, and Crew Supervisor Jim Hartobey continue to work on habitat plantings at the Walpack and Flatbrook WMAs in cooperation with the National Wild Turkey Federation.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride attended a stakeholder meeting at the Hyper-humus section of Paulinskill River WMA to view and discuss habitat management activities.

Crew Supervisor Jim Hartobey and Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride met with a dock vendor at the Split Rock Reservoir to discuss plans for re-attaching and winterizing the kayak dock.

CENTRAL REGION

Pete Winkler, Regional Superintendent

Wendy Barbuck, Agency Services Rep. 1

Bill Torry, Crew Supervisor WMAs
Timothy Crotchfelt, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Zachary Mahon, Wildlife Worker
Tim Ruth, Wildlife Worker

Mike Haines, Crew Supervisor Equipment Operations
Anthony Carben, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Brian Kubin, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Robert Madden, Heavy Equipment Operator

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

Crews continue maintenance and mowing of road edges throughout Central Region WMAs.

Crews continue stocking trout following the 2023 stocking plan.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended bi-weekly meetings for a feasibility study to dredge Lake Assunpink. In collaboration with Freshwater Fisheries staff, we will be designing the project to optimize largemouth bass habitat within Lake Assunpink, one of NJ's Lunker Bass lakes.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended bi-weekly meetings for the restoration team at the Barnegat Bay Lighthouse Camp.

Crews began spring pollinator and food plot plantings.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended a meeting to discuss illegally built mountain biking trails at the Manasquan River WMA.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler coordinated a Chainsaw Training class through NJ Forest Fire Service (NJFFS) for Fish and Wildlife staff.

Documents were submitted for a demolition of a structure at the Butterfly Bogs WMA. The project received approval with no restrictions through New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) LMR.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended a meeting to discuss onshore transmission lines from offshore wind power production to go through the Manasquan River WMA.

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

Mosquito Control Commission Meeting
I & E
NJSFSC BOD
Deer Project
Associate Executives of Mosquito Control
Fish and Game Council Meeting
United Bow Hunters of NJ
Law CPO Recruits

SOUTHERN REGION

Nathan Figley, Regional Superintendent

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

Dan Baker, Crew Supervisor
Steve Dobrosky, Heavy Equipment Operator
Jennings Jones, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Erin Peek, Heavy Equipment Operator

Mason Reeves, Crew Supervisor
Nicholas Carros, Sr. Wildlife Worker
Ben Keys, Wildlife Worker
Jeffrey Wettstein, Sr. Repairer
Rich Ingraldi, Wildlife Worker

Seasonal - Curt Riggins
Seasonal – Benjamin Keys

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

Road Crew staff completed grading of the Corbin City section of the Tuckahoe WMA and several sections of the Salem River and Menantico Ponds WMAs. Equipment has been moved to the DOD Ponds WMA and work was started.

- 1) Dix or Egg Island WMA—determined by field conditions at Dix WMA
- 2) Winslow WMA
- 3) Glassboro WMA

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

Senior repairer Jeff Wettstein completed minor repairs to boat ramp facilities, which included installation of fence posts and rails, replacement of dock deck boards, maintenance of porta-pot enclosures.

Staff have completed planting in the Southern Region, with the exception of the Port Republic WMA. These fields remain notoriously wet, and conditions are finally dry enough for staff to complete work there.

With the warmer weather, staff have started routine mowing/weed whacking at boat ramps, parking areas, offices, and dams.

Provided monthly report to Dam Safety for the no name dam located on Salem River WMA.

Mosquito Landing boat ramp work is complete, and the ramp was officially reopened. The public has been very happy with the results of this project. Staff met with the Office of Resource Development to discuss plans for upgrading the boat ramp located off Jakes Landing Rd in Dennis Creek WMA, Cape May County.

Six staff members successfully completed a 4-day chainsaw safety training course. Thank you to NJFFS and Central Region BLM staff for scheduling and conducting this training.

Recently, staff were notified about tires dumped on the Millville WMA. Approximately 100 tires were located, upon Bureau of Law Enforcement (BLE) completing their investigation, BLM staff will work with Cumberland County to remove and properly dispose of the tires.

Meetings Attended: BLM Staff Weekly, Higbee Beach WMA Multi-use Plan, Mosquito Landing Boat Ramp Meeting, and Beneficial Reuse meetings (Heislerville WMA and Mad Horse Creek WMA)

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SECTION

LAND ACQUISITIONS

Lisa Carben, Executive Assistant

The following lands have been acquired by the State and have been assigned to the Division of Fish and Wildlife during this period.

WMA	COUNTY	TOWNSHIP	NAME	ACRES
Cox Hall Creek	Cape May	Lower	Gary Mohler	.35
Port Republic	Atlantic	Galloway	Township of Galloway	41

Acres assigned during this period: 41.35

Total acres statewide: 357.830