

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT

May 21, 2023 to June 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 (TNC) and contractor WSP for the Hyperhumus Wetlands Restoration project at the Paulinskill River Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

Field reclamation of approximately 30 acres at the Musconetcong River WMA was completed by a contractor. The fields will later be planted with sorghum and serve as a wildlife food plot. This project received approval from the NJ Commission on American Indian Affairs after consultation at their last public meeting.

A drilling contractor performed a geotechnical investigation for the Hyperhumus restoration project at the Paulinskill River WMA. Bore holes were drilled at future load bearing areas along the existing gravel rail bed.

Central Region

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner met with a Rutgers University professor and students from an "Ecological Field Techniques" class at a fence lizard study site at the Colliers Mills WMA. Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner was asked to speak to the students about habitat management objectives and methods applied on our WMAs, as well as career opportunities with New Jersey Fish and Wildlife (NJFW).

A contract farmer planted approximately 90 acres of fields at the Prospertown Lake WMA in a native warm season grass/wildflower mix. This planting will benefit pollinators and early successional species such as grassland birds and upland game birds.

A virtual meeting between NJFW 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 meeting to discuss NJFW's barter policy.

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

A two-year extension was requested for a federal grant dedicated to restoration monitoring projects. The remaining balance of the grant is planned to be used for pre- and post-restoration monitoring at the Manahawkin WMA.

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 is awaiting review by the Assistant Commissioner.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney oversaw the completion of 170 acres of aerial seeding in impoundment Lester, located in the Tuckahoe WMA. A Japanese millet and redtop panic grass mixture was sowed into the impoundment to provide forage for waterfowl.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney compiled acreage and updated Geographic Information System (GIS) layers for 2023 spring planting operations. 231 acres of spring food/cover mix and 53 acres of pollinator mix was planted in the southern region.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney assisted in the review of documents related to farm lease barter services.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney developed maps and a GIS layer for an update to the GP16 permit for the application of herbicide to phragmites in the Tuckahoe WMA impoundments.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting to discuss marsh restoration projects in the Cape May Coastal Wetlands and Abbotts Meadow WMAs. Several tasks were completed including conservation plan research, grant proposal language development, and the submittal of a land management review.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney completed a survey to compile suggestions for changes to the Fish and Wildlife website.

All Regions

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a webinar to learn about National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant applications.

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

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 and Columbia WMAs.

Crew Supervisor Jim Hartobey completed work on the powerline easement portion of the quail area at the Columbia WMA. Work continues planting the fields at this location.

Senior Wildlife Worker Bill DeYoung planted fields at the Walpack and Flatbrook/Roy WMAs with seed provided through a cooperative agreement with the National Wild Turkey Federation to improve habitat for turkeys and other wildlife at these locations.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride attended a dam safety workshop hosted by the Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Dam Safety and the Association of State Dam Safety Officials.

The northern region crew has been working on installing new archery target holders.

Senior Wildlife Worker Septembio Garo met with Conservation Police Officer Brice Paey to install new signs at the Lockatong WMA due to increased incidence of swimming and after hours use.

Regional Superintendent Anthony McBride met with representatives of the Musconetcong River Association to discuss erosion of riverbanks at the Musconetcong River WMA in Franklin Twp., Hunterdon County.

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 the Central Region WMAs.

Crews finished 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 completed spring pollinator and food plot plantings.

Staff attended a Chainsaw Training class through NJ Forest Fire Service for Fish and Wildlife staff.

Staff completed road work to open a road within the Colliers Mills WMA that was closed due to damage from illegal off-road vehicles.

NJ Fish and Wildlife would like to congratulate Mike Haines on his retirement on June 1st. Mike has worked for Fish and Wildlife for 34 years out of our Colliers Mills WMA. Mike served as the Central Region Heavy Equipment Operator and the Heavy Equipment Supervisor and Wildlife Management Area Supervisor. Thank you, Mike for your years of service and for coming in on all those snow days and other emergencies to keep the offices open and the WMAs accessible. Mike's history and institutional knowledge of the WMAs will be missed. He also served as a great liaison with NJ Forest Fire Service.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler reviewed and submitted comments to SPF & HS – Office of Natural Lands Management on the Draft Recovery Plan for Broom Crowberry and Pine Plains Habitat.

Crews completed dam maintenance on all Central WMAs in time for the annual inspections. Inspections went well.

A major improvement was completed to the HVAC system at the CRO, Assunpink 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
NJ AISMP Working Group Meeting
ENSAC
I & E Bear/Waste Management Meeting
NJSFSC State
BLM Chainsaw Training

NJ Saltwater License
Law Candidate Interviews
I & E Workshop
Aspira Vendor
Deer Project
Fish and Game Council Meeting
VBDWG
NJSFSC BOD
United Bow Hunters of NJ
Endangered & Nongame Species Program
Land Resource Protection

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 DOD Ponds and Salem River WMAs, and graded several parking areas (Nantuxent WMA, Union Lake WMA, and Dix WMA). Staff are currently grading Dix WMA roads.

- 1) Winslow WMA
- 2) Glassboro WMA
- 3) Union Lake 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 and WMA shooting ranges.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley is developing a project plan for installing solar lights at the Mosquito Landing Boat Ramp located on the Tuckahoe WMA.

Staff continue routine mowing and weed whacking at boat ramps, parking areas, offices, and dams.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley provided monthly report to Dam Safety for the no name dam located on the Salem River WMA.

Two staff members completed CDL training and passed their road test.

Winslow staff are working with the Bureau of Law Enforcement to create an access plan for the Penbryn Pond WMA to reduce the illegal activities taking place there. This has become the new party spot. Staff have been policing trash, but over the last couple weeks the amount of litter has gotten out of control. We will work with a volunteer group to complete a large-scale cleanup of this WMA.

Meetings Attended: BLM Staff Weekly, Cumberland County Federation 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 New Jersey Fish and Wildlife during this period.

WMA	COUNTY	TOWNSHIP	NAME	ACRES
Forked River Mountain	Ocean	Ocean	Southern Ocean Landfill	169
Maple Lake	Atlantic	Estell Manor City	Joe Young Louie	8
Rockaway River	Morris	Jefferson	Girard Estate	173
Turkey Swamp	Monmouth	Freehold	Scout Investments	2

Acres assigned during this period: 352

Total acres statewide: 358,181