

Report
State Wildlife Grants
T-10-P-4
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New Jersey's Wildlife Action Plan

Interim Report for the Period
January 01, 2020 – December 31, 2020

NJ Department of Environmental Protection

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

ENDANGERED AND NONGAME SPECIES PROGRAM



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project:	New Jersey's Wildlife Action Plan
Federal Aid Project:	T-10-P-4 (State Wildlife Grants)
Report period:	January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020
Project Leaders:	Kris Schantz, John Heilferty

OBJECTIVE: To continue to refine and improve the NJ State Wildlife Action Plan (Plan), enhance its accessibility and use by conservation partners, and monitor implementation of the Plan through outreach to NJ's conservation partners, land and wildlife stewards, and citizens.

Key Findings:

- In 2020, the Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP) investigated options for improving the online accessibility of the Plan. Staff held meetings with potential contractors to discuss the state of the current Plan database and development of an online database-supported Plan that would facilitate ease of use for the public. The ENSP met virtually with:
 - Lucas Marxen, Associate Director, Rutgers University, NJAES Office of Research Analytics to discuss their capabilities and the Plan's current data format.
 - Christopher Tracey, Ecologist/Conservation Planning Manager at Western Pennsylvania Conservancy/Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program and Catherine D. Haffner, Wildlife Biologist and Wildlife Diversity Conservation Planning Coordinator for the Pennsylvania Game Commission for a presentation and discussion regarding Pennsylvania's online Plan "dashboard," along with their successes and difficulties, and expenses related to its development.
 - NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection's Office of GIS to determine their capabilities and the potential of conducting this work in-house. These discussions are on-going.
- The ENSP staff continued to format data in preparation for an online database. This effort focused on some of the remaining tasks, including identifying associations between NJ's 777 conservation actions and 442 threats/action drivers with the 11 general habitats and 49 Conservation Focal Areas (CFAs) identified within NJ's Plan, and between the CFAs and 21 State Counties.

Conclusions:

- New Jersey's Wildlife Action Plan continues to be referenced as guidance for conservation from various partners throughout the state.
- The Plan can be difficult for some users to navigate and locate information pertaining to their specific interests.
- The ENSP continues to investigate potential contractors to develop an online database-supported Plan that is user friendly.

Recommendations:

- Continue to pursue a source or sources that can develop an online database-supported Plan that achieves the ENSP's vision.
- Continue to identify the associations between the Plan's components (FSGCN, habitats, CFAs, etc.) in preparation for the development of the database.
- Work with species experts to identify the highest priority actions for focal species (by taxon) and focal habitats (by landscape region). If possible, identify links with potential partners and funding sources, create references for this information, and incorporate the information into the database for public access.