

GUIDANCE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO PARTNERS, STAFF, AND TECHNICAL STAKEHOLDERS (SWAP 2025)

Drafting Action Instructions

Draft actions that are effective and achievable for a particular threat.

If the action is important and impactful but could be challenging to implement, include it.

Actions must be active and decisive.

We are not creating a laundry list of actions. These are actions that, if collectively focused on, will have the greatest benefit to our Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Remember our motto: Working Together on Focused Actions We Can Move the Needle for NJ's SGCN.

Start with your region's Level-3 Priority Threats and draft important actions you'd want to take to address that threat.

Use the template below to draft your conservation actions. Note that these examples are not long, detailed, or very prescriptive.

Action Verb(s) + What needs to be done + How/Why + Result = Results Chain Action

Action verb(s)	Monitor
What needs to be done	Monitor the amount and regularity of habitat creation through flooding
How/Why	to provide insight into the potential impacts of flood control dams
Result	informing water policy makers about those impacts.

Action verb(s)	Create, amend, or influence
What needs to be done	Create state regulations regarding the take of native reptiles and amphibians
How/Why	to protect species from collection
Result	reducing the number of species removed from the population to serve commercial pet trade markets.

Action verb(s)	Engage
What needs to be done	Engage with landowners to adopt early successional forest management practices
How/Why	through education and outreach efforts
Result	to increase the availability of habitat for young forest obligate species.

Prioritizing Actions

Definitions of "Priority" and "Important":

Priority – this is an action that we know if it’s done, there will be a measurable impact on the habitat and associated species. We know the partners who have the tools, knowledge, and, ideally, funding. They are **actionable**!

It can be a priority action if it may take 2-5 years to accomplish but the benefits are big.

Also consider the urgency of addressing the threat; “urgent” suggests priority.

If you can’t determine the urgency, likelihood of success, or benefits, it’s likely an important action.

Important – this is an action that if we had additional resources, we know it would be effective in addressing the threat.

Below are the Threat Characteristics used to determine Regional Priority Level-3 Threats. Reviewing these may help evaluate the impact of the threat as you review and prioritize the actions.

Characteristics used to determine Priority Threats

Threat Characteristic	Low Impact	Moderate Impact		High Impact
*Actionability (the ability/feasibility of a person or organization to take steps to address the threat.) (e.g. culvert replacement, dam removal, wildlife crossings)	Low: understanding how to address the threat is unknown or the barriers are insurmountable.	Medium: the tools and knowledge to address the threat are known. Implementing actions is challenging due to resource constraints (time, personnel, money, etc.) (e.g. moving roadways)		High: the tools and knowledge to address the threat are known. Implementing action is feasible and results can be measured.
*Spatial Extent (Consider impact of threat within 10 years for taxa and 20 years for ecosystems; this is referred to as “threat scope” in NatureServe)	Small: (<10%) A small portion of the habitat or population is negatively impacted by the threat.	Restricted: (10-30%)	Large: (30-70%)	Pervasive: (>70%) A large portion of the habitat or population is negatively impacted by the threat.
*Urgency/Immediacy (This characteristic assesses the time scale over which impacts of the threat will be observable.)	Long-term: Effects of the threat are expected in 10-100 years given known ecosystem interactions or compounding threats	Near-term: Effects of the threat are expected within the next 1 - 10 years		Immediate: Effects of the threat are immediately observable (current or existing)
*Severity (the degree or probability of impact on a species or habitat within the	Slight: Degree or probability of impact is minor (reduce population by 1-10%)	Moderate: Degree or probability the threat could reduce the	Serious: Degree or probability of the reduction	Extreme: Degree or probability of elimination of occurrence or

region. Consider impact of threat within the spatial extent (above) over the next 10 years for taxa and 20 years for ecosystems)	population by 11-30%	of a population(s) by 31-70% is possible.	reduction of the population by 71-100%.
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Metrics for Future Prioritization of Priority Actions Elevated to Highest Priority Actions

Data Field	Description	Content
*Metrics	The unit to measure implementation of the action	Units include: acres, number of meetings, landowners contacted, landowners enrolled, number of animals, tons of waste, etc.
*Partners	A landowner, organization, or agency responsible for managing the action and/or partners that should be consulted or engaged.	Partners can be kinds of land managers (e.g., Academic institution, Farmers, Federal Agency, State Agency, Land Trust, Local Government, NGO, Private Landowners, Utility).
*Urgency	This is a relative estimate of the urgency of the action given the severity of the threats and the priority of the species or habitat	<p>The urgency of the action should estimate the ideal timeframe for completing the action.</p> <p>Categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate immediately • Initiate within 5 years • Initiate within 5-10 years • Can wait 10 years to initiate
*Likelihood of Success		<p>To what degree will the action address the threat or improve species' populations or habitats?</p> <p>Categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely/Unknown <30% (not tested/implemented anywhere) • Likely 30-90% (e.g., Best Management Practices or sufficient information available) • Certain/Very Likely 90-100% (demonstrated by other projects)
*Duration		<p>How long will action take to complete (or need to persist)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <2 years

- 2-10 years
- Regular maintenance (>10 years)