

Wharton State Forest  
Motorized Access Plan Public Meeting  
November 5, 2015



# Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Brief Recap of Where We are
- Hearing your input



# Stakeholder Meetings

- Not-for-profit Groups - 10/14
  - Mayors of the Forest region -10/14
  - Non-motorized Groups - 10/19
  - Hunters and Anglers organizations - 10/21
  - Local Emergency Responders - 10/22
  - Motorized Groups - 10/22
- Summaries of these meetings are being finalized and will be posted at:  
<http://www.nj.gov/dep/workgroups/past.html>

# Points of Agreement from Stakeholder Meetings to Date

- Increase enforcement and strengthen existing laws;
- Maintain the forest roads;
- Improve signage and communication to user groups overall;
- Establish a volunteer program of the various user groups to assist in maintenance/surveillance of the forest;
- Create a council of user groups to assist with development of a motorized access plan;
- Provide education on the unique nature of the forest;
- Explore shared services for maintenance and enforcement;
- Explain the laws and rules that govern forest management, and the criteria for decision-making, and
- Main cause of damage is illegal mudding.

# What is the Problem?

- The increasing popularity of motorized recreation in New Jersey has presented challenges for the management of public lands and the protection of natural and cultural resources. This unmanaged usage has caused extensive damage to sensitive natural areas and infrastructure with no provision for protection and restoration; has diminished the use and enjoyment of our public lands by other user groups; has diverted resources from other resource protection priorities; and has created potential hazards to the various user groups and administrative staff, including law enforcement personnel.
- The Division of Parks and Forestry promotes recreation activities which are sustainable within the natural and cultural resources in the care of the Department. Motorized recreation may be a sustainable recreational activity when appropriate precautions are taken to manage the amount, time and location of this activity.



# What are the Goals of a Motorized Access Plan?

- Identify routes currently suitable for motorized access
- Improve enforcement and coordination of emergency response and improve public safety
- Focus maintenance efforts
- Improve public awareness of impacts of use and abuse to the forest
- Protect endangered species, habitat and cultural resources while providing for public access
- Compliance with Federal, State and PC regulations

# Objective 1: Identify routes currently suitable for motorized access





# Objective 2: Improve enforcement and coordination with emergency response





# Objective 3: Focus maintenance efforts





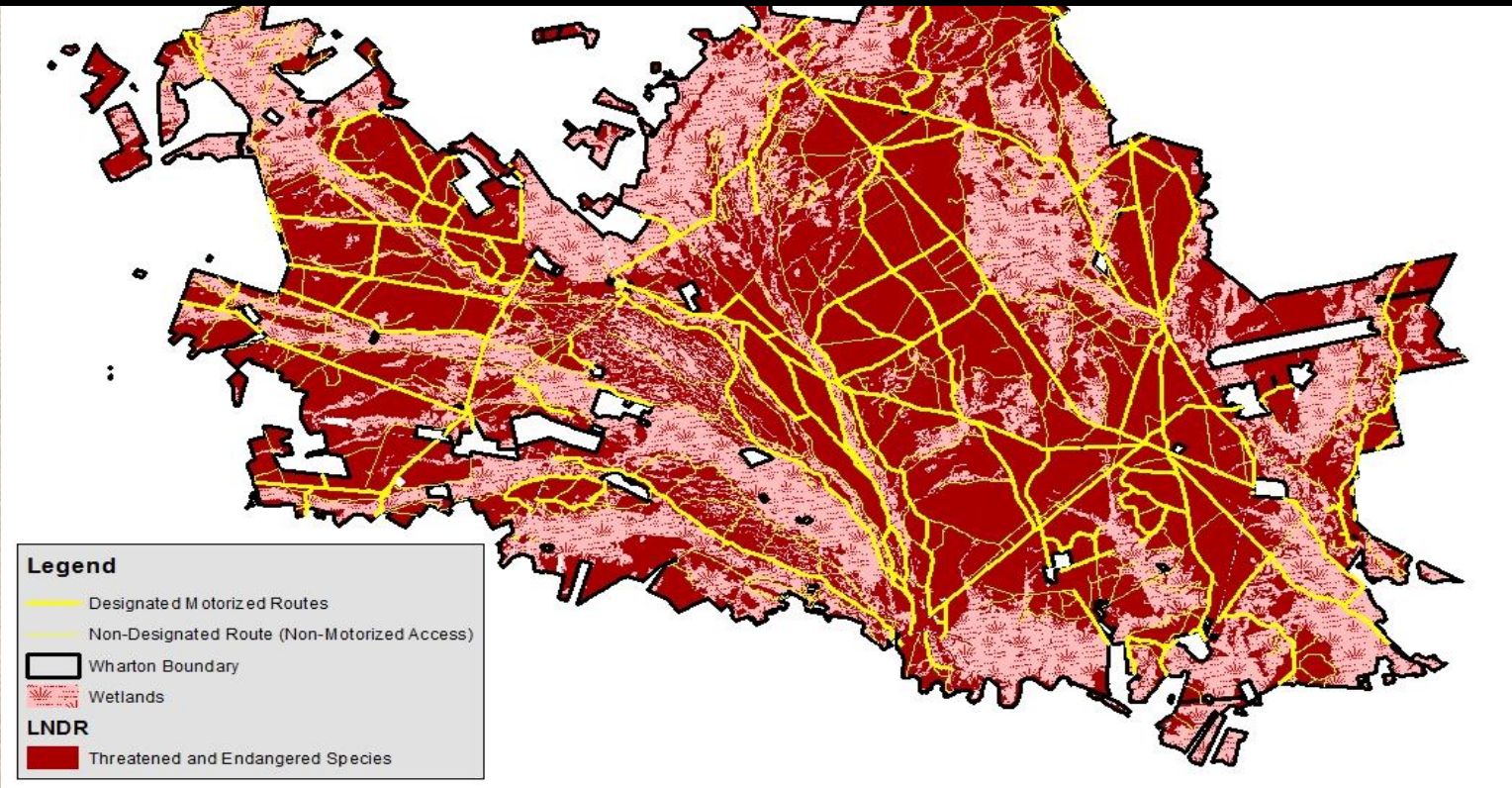
# Objective 4: Improve public awareness of impacts use and abuse of the forest





# Objective 5:

Protect Endangered Species, habitat and cultural resources while providing for public access



# Q&A Format

- The goal of this Q&A is: the DEP wants to hear your ideas, comments and concerns regarding the development of a motorized access plan:
  - For those who want to speak, please line up behind the standing microphones.
  - Everyone will have three minutes to speak.
  - We have a traffic light as a time keeper.
  - When the light turns yellow, you will have one minute more to speak.
  - When the traffic light turns red, your time is up.
  - DEP wants your input and will only respond to questions if time permits.
  - Questions that are unanswered will be addressed in an FAQ and posted to the DEP Parks page at: <http://www.njparksandforests.org>.
  - The meeting is being recorded and will be posted to the DEP stakeholder page following the meeting. <http://www.nj.gov/dep/workgroups/>



# Questions/Comments

[Depwhartonstakeholdermeetings@dep.nj.gov](mailto:Depwhartonstakeholdermeetings@dep.nj.gov)