

# **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT MONTHLY REPORT**

January 21, 2022 to February 20, 2022

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

## **HABITAT PLANNING**

Tyler Kinney

### **Southern Region**

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney successfully bid out 5 forestry mowing projects on the Salem River, Menantico Ponds, Tuckahoe, Dennis Creek, and Cape Island Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). All 5 projects will be completed by contractor Steward Green LLC. Projects are expected to begin in late February, site conditions permitting.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended a meeting with Southern Region Crew Supervisors to discuss spring planting operations.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney prepared maps for spring planting and reclamation operations. Approximately 424 acres of spring forage/cover mix planting is planned, with seed ordered for 50 extra acres should crew supervisors decide to expand their efforts. Roughly 90 acres of pollinator planting is planned.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney has begun planning for 2022 aerial seeding operations in the Tuckahoe and Heislerville WMA impoundments. At this time, impoundments Lester, Yellow Legs, and Impoundment #3 are expected to be seeded. There are ongoing efforts to develop a seed mix appropriate for the saline soils of Yellow Legs and Impoundment #3.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney is working with New Jersey Audubon to plant riparian areas in the Salem River WMA.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney has touched base with the American Woodcock Society (AWS) to gauge interest in a volunteer tree planting effort in the Salem River WMA, for the purpose of enhancing woodcock habitat. AWS is interested and planning efforts are ongoing.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended several meetings with the Sandy Blue Acres Program and Division of Coastal Engineering to discuss ongoing beach restoration efforts in the New Sweden WMA.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney continues to work with the Division's Office of Geographic Information Systems (OGIS) to make progress in our WMA Planning initiative. Several meetings were attended to discuss organization of domain coding.

### **All Regions**

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney reviewed CLIP training modules and made several suggestions for the Division's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice work group.

Habitat Planner Tyler Kinney attended the 2022 Division wide meeting.

### **Northern Region**

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a virtual meeting with NJ Forest Fire Service to discuss prescribed burning plans in the Northern Region.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a virtual meeting hosted by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to discuss scoring protocols for an upcoming Request for Qualifications for the Hyperhumus Wetlands Restoration Project at the Paulinskill River WMA. Scoring recommendations were submitted to TNC to finalize the weighted ranking process.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner conducted a field visit to the Beaver Brook and Columbia WMAs to evaluate fields for potential habitat management.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner created pheasant stocking maps for the Northern Region.

### **Central Region**

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended the monthly meeting of the Barnegat Bay Partnership Estuarine Habitats Working Group meeting.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner began developing planting plans and seed requirements for spring plantings at the Assunpink and Medford WMAs.

### **All Regions/Miscellaneous**

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a virtual meeting to discuss updates to New Jersey Fish and Wildlife's organic farming initiative. Comments were also submitted on the draft organic farming license.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner gave a virtual presentation on the Pond Creek Marsh Restoration Project for the Cumberland County Bald Eagle Festival.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended two meetings to review coding of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) habitat patch files and asset data for the WMA Planning grant.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a virtual meeting hosted by Bob Longcor to discuss Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) funded lands.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended a virtual meeting with United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Ducks Unlimited to discuss low-tech marsh restoration techniques.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner attended the virtual Division Staff meeting.

Habitat Planner Melissa Woerner submitted comments on the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) draft Invasive Species Implementation Plan.

## **NORTHERN REGION**

### **Vacant, Regional Superintendent**

Jim Hartobey, Crew Supervisor  
Imre Bene, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Robert Bodnar, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Mark DeVito, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Trevor Hull, Heavy Equipment Operator

Christopher Murphy, Crew Supervisor  
Bill DeYoung, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Septembio Garo, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Jonathan Kenney, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Randy Ujvary, Wildlife Worker  
Stephen Wilson, Sr. Wildlife Worker

Northern Region crews continued plowing snow from parking lots, boat ramps, office roads and sidewalks throughout the Northern Region.

Staff continued to sort through the trout stocking runs and assigning drivers and helpers names to the 2022 trout stocking schedule, to ensure that there was adequate coverage.

Crews will be mowing now that the hunting seasons are coming to an end.

Crews have been opening access points and clearing the overhanging branches so trout tankers can stock throughout the Northern Region.

Crews have been working collaboratively with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service, weighing options throughout the region.

Staff met with Dam Safety to evaluate erosion damage to the berm at the Clinton Pond Dam. The area is currently being analyzed to determine an acceptable solution, but the area continues to erode.

Staff coordination of safety lights on the tankers is back on schedule and should be installed prior to trout stocking.

Staff met to evaluate several WMAs for the potential of expanding a quail stocking location in the area. Although, there are suitable locations, there is a concern about stocking quail in the north because of snow loads. Stocking of quail was discontinued in the past because the adverse weather conditions proved difficult on the stocked birds and operations.

## **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

The crew completed customizing a new bed to fit a trout tank for our Hook Lift F550. This will enable more versatility for this vehicle during the trout stocking season. The beds can be interchanged throughout the season and the vehicle will no longer be tied up with a tank during the entire trout season.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler created maps and is coordinating with the Hydro Axe contractor to perform multiple projects at Assunpink, Musconetcong River, South Branch and Buckthorn Creek WMAs for early successional habitat enhancement. Assunpink was completed during the reporting period.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended the virtual Board of Directors Meeting at the Horse Park of New Jersey.

All affected Central Region staff attended the title merger meeting and the staff meeting.

Crews prepared snow removal equipment and performed preventative maintenance on tractors and other farming equipment.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended a meeting on the proposed WMA regulations.

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

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended a meeting on the proposed Trout stocking schedule for 2022. Crews are reviewing the routes and stops.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler has been filling in within the Northern Region since Sue Predl retired.

In coordination with the Bureau of Law Enforcement, crews cleaned up 2 illegal dumping cases at the Turkey Swamp WMA. The offenders were both charged in the cases.

Regional Superintendent Pete Winkler attended a pre-bid meeting for the renovation of the Point Pleasant Fishing Access site. Plans for the redesign included updated parking, boat ramp, fishing dock and living shoreline.

Crews are preparing fire breaks to conduct prescribed burning at WMAs throughout the Central Region in coordination with the NJ Forest Fire Service.

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

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

Deer Project  
Law Enforcement  
NJSFSC BOD  
Bureau of Land Management - Planning

## **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  
Johnnie McGaha, Sr. Wildlife Worker  
Jeffrey Wettstein, Sr. Repairer

Seasonal - Rich Ingraldi, Curt Riggins

Millville Crew staff member John McGaha officially retired. We wish John the best in retirement, his work ethic and attitude will be missed. The Bureau hopes to fill this vacant position.

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

Road Crew staff were finally able to get back out to the Port Republic WMA to complete road grading. The delay was caused by ground being frozen from the cold temps experienced in January. Material was ordered for the Higbee Beach WMA, where staff will grade roads and parking areas.

Staff began discing field edges for the upcoming prescribed burn season. The disced edge creates a fire barrier and is less intrusive than a plow line. Staff have been coordinating with State Forest Fire personnel to determine which will receive this prescription.

Road Crew specked-out job needs for work at the Maple Lake, Millville, Egg Island, and Clarks Pond WMAs. After completing work in the Higbee Beach WMA, staff will focus their attention to these areas and boat ramps, in preparation for the quickly approaching boating/fishing season.

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 received an approved purchase order for renovations to be completed at the Southern Region Office. He has contacted the contractor and waiting on a response for a start date.

Staff have cleared roads of downed trees that were inhibiting access to boat ramps and parking areas.

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

Staff spread salt in parking lots and sidewalks in preparation for a recently predicted snow/ice storm.

Staff continues to monitor the Matt's Landing Dike located in the Heislerville WMA. Sacrificial material was placed in a sinkhole until a permanent fix to the problem can be completed.

Regional Superintendent Nathan Figley attended the monthly meeting of the Cumberland County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs.

Final interviews were conducted for the Crew Supervisor, Heavy Equipment Operators position.

The Money Island Restoration Project is moving along at a fast pace. Work is expected to be completed within the next two weeks. This project will restore a portion of the Delaware Bay Shore that will benefit many

species, including but not limited to horseshoe crabs, red knots, and diamond back terrapins. A similar project will be completed at Bay Point, with planning stages underway.

The Holly Farm Design Committee provided final comments to the Holly Farm design plan.

Meetings Attended: BLM Staff Weekly, BLM/BLE monthly, Money Island Meeting, Cumberland County Sportsmen's Federation, Friends of Lake Audrey, Habitat Planning Meeting, Spring Planting Meeting, and Low-tech Marsh Restoration Meeting, DCE/BA/BLM Money Island and Bay Point Restoration

## **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.

<b>WMA</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>TOWNSHIP</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
Clarks Pond	Cumberland	Fairfield	Diane Jenke-McMahon	65
Cape Island	Cape May	Lower	SHLM, LLC	2
Turkey Swamp	Monmouth	Freehold	Edward Betz	2
Menantico Ponds	Cumberland	Millville City & Maurice River	Atlantic City Electric	1310

Acres assigned during this period: 1,378