

F. Conservation Zones, Assessments, and Strategies within the Pinelands Landscape

1. Southern Pinelands

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- d. *Conservation Goals*
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a. Habitats

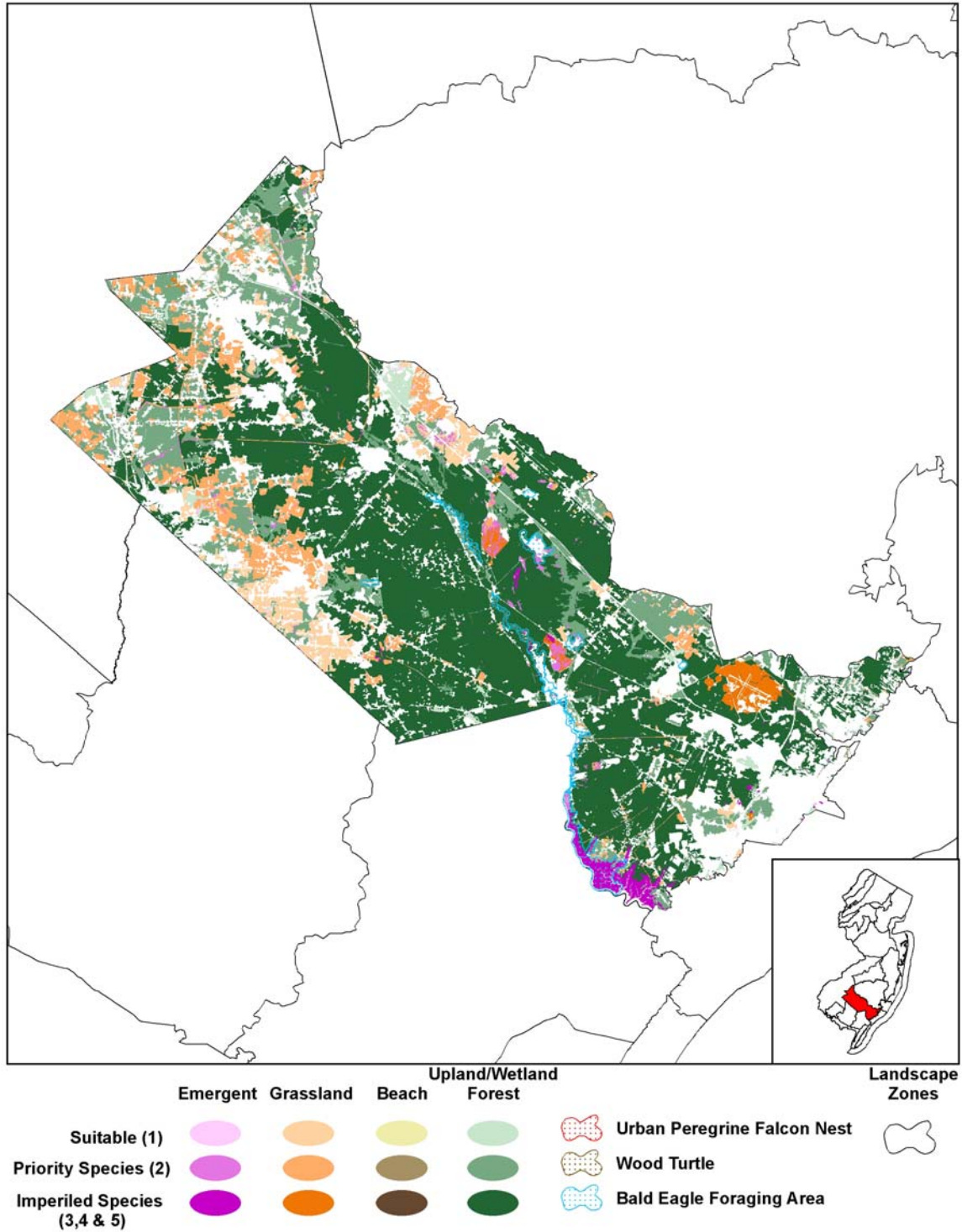
The Southern Pinelands Conservation Zone is primarily comprised of land within the Great Egg Harbor Watershed. Portions of Atlantic, Camden and Gloucester counties are contained in this zone (Figure 23). Deciduous forests, pitch pine-oak forests, and farmland characterize this landscape. The Pinelands National Reserve extends through this zone (72% of the total area), but 19% of this zone is classified as “urban” according to NJ DEP’s 95/97 Land-Use, Land-Cover (LULC) data. Large state-owned land holdings in this area include Winslow WMA and Makepeace Lake WMA. The Atlantic City Airport is also located in the Southern Pinelands and contains extensive grassland bird habitat and possibly the largest global population of frosted elfin.

b. Wildlife of Greatest Conservation Need

The Southern Pinelands support three state endangered, eight state threatened, 67 nongame species of conservation concern, and several important game species. Bald eagle, black skimmer, red-shouldered hawk, and upland sandpiper are state endangered, and state threatened species include barred owl, black-crowned night heron, Cooper’s hawk, red-headed woodpecker, northern pine snake, Pine Barrens treefrog, and frosted elfin. Special concern wildlife include cavity-nesters, forest passerines, freshwater wetland birds, grassland birds, raptors, scrub-shrub/open field birds, reptiles, amphibians, and butterflies. In addition, summer populations of forest-dwelling bat species occur in the Southern Pinelands.

Large patches of deciduous upland forest and forested wetland provide important habitat for barred owls. The forests (including forested wetlands) also support bald eagle, Cooper’s hawk, and Pine Barrens treefrog populations; provide nesting sites for cavity-nesters, habitat for forest passerines, raptors; coastal plain milk snake, eastern box turtle, eastern kingsnake, spotted turtle, carpenter frog, Fowler’s toad, and marbled salamander populations. Freshwater wetland birds and colonial waterbirds inhabit Southern Pineland wetlands along the Great Egg Harbor River. The grasslands on the Atlantic City Airport property support the largest population of frosted elfins in the state, and contain breeding upland sandpipers and grasshopper sparrows. Tables P9 – P15 identify the species of greatest conservation need within this zone.

Figure 23. Critical landscape habitats within the Southern Pinelands conservation zone, as identified through the Landscape Map (v2).



Wildlife Species and Associated Habitats of the Southern Pinelands

Table P9. Federal Endangered and Threatened Species*

Common Name	Water	Wetlands	Grasslands	Forests and Forested Wetlands
Mammals				
Indiana Bat				X**

*All Federal Endangered and Threatened species have an Endangered status on the NJ List of Endangered Wildlife

**Potential presence.

T: Federally threatened species.

X: Species occurs within the identified habitat.

Table P10. State Endangered Species

Common Name	Water	Wetlands	Grasslands	Forests and Forested Wetlands
Birds				
Bald eagle		X	X	X
Red-shouldered hawk				X
Upland Sandpiper			X	

X: Species occurs within the identified habitat.

Table P11. State Threatened Species

Common Name	Water	Wetlands	Grasslands	Forests and Forested Wetlands
Birds				
Barred owl				X
Black-crowned night heron		X		
Cooper's hawk				X
Grasshopper sparrow			X	
Red-headed woodpecker				X
Reptiles				
Northern pine snake			X	X
Amphibians				
Pine Barrens Treefrog		X		X
Invertebrates				
Frosted Elfin			X	

X: Species occurs within the identified habitat.

Table P12. Nongame Species of Conservation Concern

Common Name	Water	Wetlands	Grasslands	Forests and Forested Wetlands
Mammals				
Eastern red bat				X*
Eastern small-footed myotis				X*
Hoary bat				X*
Marsh rice rat		X		
Silver-haired bat				X*
Southern bog lemming				X
Birds				
Acadian flycatcher				X
American kestrel			X	
Baltimore oriole				X
Black-and-white warbler				X
Black-billed cuckoo				X
Black-throated green warbler				X
Blue-winged warbler				X
Broad-winged hawk				X
Brown thrasher				X
Cattle egret		X		
Cerulean warbler				X

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Nongame Species of Conservation Concern (continued)

Common Name	Water	Wetlands	Grasslands	Forests and Forested Wetlands
Birds (continued)				
Common Barn owl			X	
Common nighthawk				
Eastern kingbird			X	
Eastern meadowlark			X	
Eastern screech-owl				X
Eastern towhee				X
Eastern wood-pewee				X
Field sparrow			X	
Gray catbird				X
Great blue heron		X		
Great crested flycatcher			X	
Great egret		X		
Green heron		X		
Hooded warbler				X
Horned lark			X	
Indigo bunting			X	
Kentucky warbler				X
King rail		X		
Least flycatcher				X
Little blue heron		X		
Louisiana waterthrush				X
Marsh wren		X		
Northern flicker				X
Northern parula				X
Pine warbler				X
Prairie warbler				X
Prothonotary warbler				X
Rose-breasted grosbeak				X
Saltmarsh sharp-tailed sparrow		X		
Scarlet tanager				X
Seaside sparrow		X		
Snowy egret		X		
Spotted sandpiper		X		
Tricolored heron		X		
Veery				X
Whip-poor-will				X
Wood thrush				X
Worm-eating warbler				X
Yellow-billed cuckoo				X
Yellow-breasted chat				X
Yellow-throated vireo				X
Yellow-throated warbler				X
Reptiles				
Coastal plain milk snake				X
Eastern box turtle			X	X
Eastern kingsnake				X
Northern diamondback terrapin		X		
Spotted turtle			X	X
Amphibians				
Carpenter frog				X
Fowler's toad		X	X	X
Marbled salamander				X
Insects				
A slugmoth <i>Monoleuca semifascia</i>				X
Carter's noctuid moth <i>Spartiniphaga carterae</i>			X	
Dotted skipper <i>Hesperia attalus</i>			X	

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Nongame Species of Conservation Concern (continued)

Common Name	Water	Wetlands	Grasslands	Forests and Forested Wetlands
Insects (continued)				
Lemmer's pinion moth <i>Lithophane lemmeri</i>				X
Pink streak <i>Faronta rubripennis</i>				X
Scarlet bluet <i>Enallagma pictum</i>		X	X	
Fish				
Banded sunfish**	X			
Black-banded sunfish	X			
Mud sunfish	X			

*Potential presence.

**Species are also recognized as target species of ecoregional concern by the Nature Conservancy – NJ Chapter.

X: Species occurs within the identified habitat.

Table P13. Game Species of Regional Priority

Note: Species identified within the table have seasonal harvests within New Jersey.

Common Name	Water	Wetlands	Grasslands	Forests and Forested Wetlands
Birds				
American black duck		X		
American woodcock			X	X
Canada goose (Atlantic population)	X	X		
Northern bobwhite quail			X	X
Virginia Rail		X		
Wood duck		X		X

X: Species occurs within the identified habitat.

Table P14. Fish Species

Note: Species identified within the table are nongame species within New Jersey, currently without state or regional status.

Common Name	Water
Fish	
Ironcolor shiner	X
Pirate perch	X

X: Species occurs within the identified habitat.

Table P15. Game Species

Note: Species identified within the table have seasonal harvests within New Jersey and currently are not identified as regional priority species, but they are considered by NJDFW to be species of concern.

Common Name	Water	Wetlands	Grasslands	Forests and Forested Wetlands
Mammals				
River otter	X	X		X
Birds				
Ruffed grouse				X
Sora rail		X		

X: Species occurs within the identified habitat.

c. Threats to the Wildlife and Habitats of the Southern Pinelands

For complete literature review on the impacts of habitat loss and fragmentation, please see New Jersey's Landscape Project Report, Attachment A or visit our website:

www.njfishandwildlife.com/ensp/landscape/lp_report.pdf.

The Southern Pinelands have extensive tracts of critical wildlife habitat, yet habitat loss and fragmentation still constitute major threats to wildlife. At its eastern edge, this landscape has been greatly modified by development in Egg Harbor and Galloway townships. Similar changes have taken place in Monroe Township in the northwestern portion of this zone. Nonetheless, important habitats still remain for barred owls, Pine Barrens treefrogs, northern pine snakes, frosted elfins, and other rare wildlife. The effects of deer and invasive insect species, such as the southern pine beetle, may have a considerable impact on forest health in the Southern Pinelands. Protecting large forest patches, maintaining intact wetlands and riparian corridors, and managing existing grasslands are the key components to proper habitat management within this conservation zone. Also see Section I-E "Threats to Wildlife and Habitats" (page 17) of this document.

d. Conservation Goals

- Identify, protect, maintain, enhance and/or restore endangered, threatened and special concern wildlife and fish populations and their habitats through full implementation of Landscape Project.
- Identify, protect, maintain, enhance, and restore large contiguous tracts of forest and forested wetlands as identified by the Landscape Project for the long-term viability of forest-dwelling, area-sensitive and interior-nesting wildlife including interior-forest raptors and passerines, northern pine snake, freshwater wetland birds, frosted elfin, rare reptiles and amphibians, and rare dragonflies, damselflies, butterflies, and moths.
- Identify, protect, maintain, enhance, and restore important early succession (areas comprised of <5% woody vegetation, with a mix of native grasses, forbes and bare soil) as identified by the Landscape Project for grassland birds and scrub-shrub/open field wildlife populations.
- Identify, protect, maintain, enhance, and restore critical aquatic ecosystems, riverine and riparian habitats, and water quality to preserve aquatic ecosystems particularly for species of conservation concern that rely on high water quality or low pH waters such as rare amphibians, and native fish.
- Protect and restore characteristic Pinelands communities.
- Preserve the ecological quality and integrity of wetland habitats and vernal pool communities.
- Inventory, determine distribution, and monitor wildlife and nongame fish species of greatest conservation need.
- Prevent, stabilize, and reverse declines of interior-forest raptors and passerines, northern pine snake, freshwater wetland birds, frosted elfin, rare reptiles and amphibians, and rare dragonflies, damselflies, butterflies, and moths, grassland and scrub-shrub/open field wildlife populations, freshwater mussels, and native Pinelands fish species such as the blackbanded sunfish, banded sunfish, mud sunfish, and pirate perch.
- Prevent illegal collection of rare reptiles and amphibians.

- Maintain ecological integrity of natural communities and regional biodiversity by controlling invasive species and overabundant wildlife.
- Assess large-scale habitat change (every five to 10 years).
- Promote public education and awareness and wildlife conservation.

e. Conservation Actions

The actions below are identified as primary (1° or priority) and secondary (2°). Prioritization was determined by the Pinelands Regional Landscape stakeholders during a meeting held on June 13, 2007 (see *Attachment I*). These actions, with a focus on the priority actions, should be incorporated in planning and project development in conjunction with the priority state-level objectives (goals) and strategies (actions).

Priority	Conservation Action
Protect critical habitats identified by the Landscape Project and critical aquatic habitats	
1°	Review existing Landscape Project species occurrence areas through research and, where lacking, develop new species occurrence areas as data on species habitat requirements become available. Develop, review, and improve species-habitat associations as new land use/land cover data become available. (<i>Protect habitat - Landscape Project</i>)
1°	Identify, prioritize, and reclaim degraded rare species habitats by working with land management agencies to determine the appropriate actions needed to restore habitat values for the documented species. Appropriate actions might include the control of harmful, invasive, vegetation, restoring natural stream flows, revegetation with native plants or restoring habitat structure. (<i>Evaluate restoration - invasives</i>)
Protect critical forest and forested wetlands habitats identified in the Landscape Project	
1°	Use GIS measures, other remote sensing tools, and surveys to identify and assess critical core forests for forest-interior songbirds, forest raptors (red-shouldered hawk, barred owl, long-eared owl), forest-dwelling bats, Pine snakes, corn snakes, and bald eagles. Take action to minimize habitat loss and maintain large core areas by restoring, enhancing and/or protecting habitat on public and private lands through programs such as fee purchases, conservation easements, landowner incentives, forest management and stewardship plans. Maintain information in the Landscape Project and Biotics database, and provide this information to the Pinelands Commission. (<i>Silviculture - land management; Protect habitat - Landscape Project, development; Enhance habitat - private lands</i>)

Priority	Conservation Action (continued)
1°	<p>Manage forests on a regional scale to provide a mix of seral (successional) stages for a wide range of forest-dwelling species (e.g., woodland raptors, northern pine snakes, pine warbler, black-throated green warbler, ruffed grouse, and woodcock) within large contiguous tracts while maintaining suitability for area-sensitive species per the Forest Management Guidelines for Nongame Species in New Jersey. These forest types include but are not limited to: mature and near-mature forests with large trees, > 80% canopy closure and an uneven-age structure; mature forests with 65-85% canopy closure and structural diversity; pine-oak savanna with < 25% canopy closure; scrub-oak communities; and regenerating stands of forests (e.g., Atlantic white cedar).</p> <p><i>(Silviculture – Land management; Protect habitat – Landscape Project, migratory birds, rare wildlife)</i></p>
1°	<p>Increase the effective size and connectivity of forests on permanently protected public lands and surrounding private lands through incentive programs and targeted land acquisition. Use GIS measures, other remote sensing tools, and surveys to identify important corridors that connect large, contiguous tracts of forest and target these areas for acquisition to maintain a system of large, connected tracts of forest within and between conservation zones. Where appropriate, enhance and restore forested habitat through reforestation, revegetation, forest improvement cuts, and other forest management prescriptions.</p> <p><i>(Enhance habitat – private lands; Corridors – sprawl, migratory birds; Protect habitat – Landscape Project)</i></p>
1°	<p>Develop, implement, and evaluate best management practices (BMPs) for maintaining and enhancing healthy Pinelands forests. <i>(Protect habitat - Landscape Project; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i></p>
2°	<p>Use GIS measures, other remote-sensing tools, and wildlife surveys to identify forested stopover areas important for migrant forest raptors, passerines and bats during spring and fall migration. Use appropriate measures (e.g. regulations, land acquisition, incentive programs) to protect habitat and develop conservation forestry plans. <i>(Protect habitat – Landscape Project, migratory birds)</i></p>
2°	<p>Develop a species occurrence area of Indiana bat habitat to incorporate into the Biotics database. Identify appropriate protection strategies to maintain and enhance habitat (landowner incentives for protecting summer habitat, public education regarding importance of bat conservation, development of best management practices). As GIS data layers become available, develop a predictable model of Indiana bat summer habitat. <i>(Protect habitat – Landscape Project; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i></p>

Priority	Conservation Action (continued)
Protect critical early successional habitats identified in the Landscape Project	
1°	Research different techniques for maintaining suitable habitat for species dependent on early successional habitats (e.g., prescribed burning, mowing, brush-hogging, and other methods). <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
1°	Develop, implement, and evaluate best management practices (BMPs) for maintaining and enhancing early succession habitats which will improve habitat quality for grassland- and scrub-shrub-dependent species. BMPs will be implemented on large patches on public lands, and areas such as at the Atlantic City Airport (grassland areas with >75 % herbaceous and <25% woody vegetation), and along utility line rights-of-way (scrub-shrub). <i>(Protect habitat – humans; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife; Agriculture – land management; Other practices – land management)</i>
2°	Encourage landowners to delay mowing to allow grassland-dependent species to successfully breed; this can be accomplished through public education and incentive programs. Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of delayed mowing for grassland-dependent species including birds, invertebrates, reptiles, and amphibians. <i>(Protect habitat – humans; Enhance habitat –private lands)</i>
2°	Use GIS measures, other remote sensing tools, and wildlife surveys to identify grassland habitats (areas with >75 % herbaceous and <25% woody vegetation), assess their condition for nesting grassland birds and other wildlife, and maintain information. Identify protection (e.g., landowner incentives, farmland preservation, and acquisition) and management (timing restrictions for mowing, prescribed burning) strategies to maintain and enhance these habitats in perpetuity. Focus on habitat patches that can be managed at a size and scale that is similar to historic patch size of this habitat type as being researched by the Pinelands Commission as part of their "Right-of-way Project." <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife; Enhance habitat – private lands; Agriculture – land management Protect habitat – sprawl, Landscape Project, development)</i>
2°	Use GIS measures, other remote sensing tools, and surveys to identify critical scrub-shrub habitats (areas with >25% woody vegetation <20 feet in height), assess their condition for nesting birds (golden-winged warbler and woodcock) and other wildlife, and maintain information. Identify protection (e.g., landowner incentives, farmland preservation, and acquisition) and management (e.g., timing restrictions for management, cooperative agreements with utility companies for maintenance of rights-of-ways) strategies to create them. <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife; Enhance habitat – private lands; Agriculture – land management Protect habitat – sprawl, Landscape Project, development)</i>

Priority	Conservation Action (continued)
Protect critical riverine and riparian habitats identified in the Landscape Project	
2°	Increase the effective size and connectivity of wetlands on permanently protected public lands and surrounding private lands through incentive programs and targeted land acquisition through local land use policy and planning. Use GIS measures, other remote sensing tools, and surveys to identify important corridors that connect wetland habitats and target these areas for acquisition or work with public and private landowners to enhance and restore the corridors. <i>(Enhance habitat – private lands; Corridors – sprawl, migratory birds; Protect habitat – Landscape Project)</i>
2°	Use GIS measures, other remote sensing tools, and surveys to identify and assess core forested wetland and riparian/floodplain habitat for forest-dependent breeding species: forest raptors (red-shouldered hawk, long-eared owl, and barred owl), forest-interior songbirds, timber rattlesnakes, and Indiana bats. Take action to minimize habitat loss by restoring, enhancing and/or protecting habitat on public and private lands through programs such as fee purchases, conservation easements, landowner incentives, and/or forest management and stewardship plans. <i>(Silviculture – land management; Protect habitat – Landscape Project, development; Enhance habitat – private lands)</i>
2°	Identify and protect habitat for fish by performing QA/QC of the NJDEP - DFW, Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries' FishTrack Database and plotting distributions of special concern fish species (as identified by the Delphi process), and integrate those data into the Biotics database. <i>(Protect habitat – Landscape Project, fish)</i>
2°	Protect water quality and aquatic-dependent species by appropriately designating Category One waters. <i>(Protect habitat – rare wildlife, fish)</i>
Protect and restore characteristic Pinelands communities	
1°	Restore the dynamic nature of this ecosystem by developing management plans for state lands which incorporate the needs of Pinelands plants and animals and generate the spatial patch diversity needed by species within this community. <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
1°	Research different management techniques (e.g., ecologically-based forestry activities, prescribed burns) that might be used to mimic the historic role of fire and other natural disturbances in shaping this ecosystem. Implement appropriate management actions in areas where natural disturbances, such as wildfire, have been precluded. <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
1°	Identify, enhance, and restore Atlantic white cedar communities within the Pinelands for black-throated green warblers, red-shouldered hawks, barred owls, and Cooper's hawks. <i>(Protect habitat - Landscape Project; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
2°	Use GIS measures, other remote sensing tools, and surveys to identify rare and unique Pinelands plant communities and increase protection for these areas through acquisition, proper management, or increased enforcement. <i>(Protect habitat - Landscape Project)</i>

Priority	Conservation Action (continued)
2°	Work with the Division of Parks and Forestry including the Office of Natural Lands Management, the Forest Fire Service, and Forest Service to determine the historic and future role of fire in the creation and management of unique Pinelands communities. <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
2°	Develop, implement, and evaluate best management practices (BMPs) for utility line rights-of-way that favor the establishment and persistence of native, early-successional Pinelands communities. <i>(Protect habitat - Landscape Project; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
Preserve the ecological quality and integrity of wetlands and vernal pool communities	
1°	Locate potential vernal pools through aerial imagery and surveys, conduct species surveys, and integrate certified vernal pool data into the DEP regulations database and Landscape Project. <i>(Protect habitat – Landscape Project)</i>
1°	Identify threats to vernal pools through systematic monitoring and devise strategies to protect vernal pool-dependent species. <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
1°	Maintain optimal biological buffers (beyond regulatory requirements) around wetlands, riparian, and floodplain areas and minimize destruction per the NJ DEP Wetland Buffer Guidelines for Species of Conservation Concern in New Jersey (in prep). Stabilize wetland buffers and streambanks by encouraging plantings of native vegetation through public education, volunteer programs, and land managers to stabilize wetland buffers and stream banks and prevent erosion. <i>(Protect habitat – Landscape Project, sprawl; Enhance habitat – private lands)</i>
2°	Protect water quality and aquatic-dependent species by appropriately designating Category One waters. <i>(Protect habitat – rare wildlife, fish)</i>
2°	Maintain stream water chemistry/ water quality important for species native to the Pinelands by limiting developed land and upland agriculture to less than 10% of a watershed. For example, maintain low pH waters important for breeding populations of carpenter frogs. <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife; (Protect habitat – rare wildlife)</i>
Inventory and monitor endangered, threatened, and special concern wildlife and fish	
1°	Use the Biotics database and Landscape Project to identify where species location data and monitoring gaps exist. Design and implement coordinated presence/absence surveys and monitoring to acquire data in those areas.
1°	Conduct surveys for dragonflies and damselflies in appropriate habitats throughout the Southern Pinelands to determine species distributions and identify habitat protection needs. <i>(Enhance habitat – odonata)</i>
1°	Determine baseline abundance and establish long-term monitoring programs for wildlife of greatest conservation need (e.g., develop population estimates for rare Pineland species and conduct range-wide surveys every four years). <i>(Monitor wildlife – long-term monitoring)</i>

Priority	Conservation Action (continued)
1°	Continue volunteer-based summer bat concentration surveys to locate maternity sites and determine roost characteristics. Trap bats at summer concentration sites to identify bat species; apply colored, plastic bands to Indiana bats to aid in recognition during hibernation surveys. <i>(Monitor wildlife – long-term monitoring)</i>
1°	Identify and research water quality parameters for endangered, threatened, and native Pinelands species. Assess impacts and incorporate into BMPs. <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife; Protect aquatic wildlife - humans, development)</i>
1°	Develop and conduct nighttime surveys to inventory nightjars (whip-poor-wills and common nighthawks), northern saw-whet owls, and eastern screech-owls. <i>(Monitor wildlife – long-term monitoring)</i>
2°	Continue ground surveys of all known great blue heron rookeries every 3-5 years. Improve census methods to capture population and reproductive success metrics at a finer scale. <i>(Monitor wildlife – long-term monitoring; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
2°	Establish a formal ground survey for inland colonies of colonial waterbirds, with a particular emphasis on black and yellow-crowned night herons. Once the survey is instituted, continue on a rotation of once every other year. <i>(Monitor wildlife – long-term monitoring; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
2°	Conduct concentrated field sampling for listed or special concern fish species at areas indicated by Fish Track Database queries and incorporate data into Biotics database. <i>(Protect habitat – fish; Monitor wildlife – fish)</i>
2°	Conduct the Atlantic Flyway Breeding Waterfowl Survey annually to monitor population trends. <i>(Monitor wildlife – long-term monitoring)</i>
2°	Conduct telemetry study during summer months to determine roost characteristics and habitat requirements for Indiana bat maternity colonies. <i>(Protect habitat – Landscape Project)</i>
2°	Conduct sampling to determine distribution, range, and habitat use of summer bats. <i>(Protect habitat - Landscape Project; Monitor wildlife – long-term monitoring)</i>
Prevent, stabilize, and reverse declines of rare wildlife, freshwater mussels, and native Pinelands fish species	
1°	Evaluate and assess the potential impacts of wind turbines to populations of breeding and migratory birds and bats. Carry out post-construction monitoring of both existing and future wind turbines to assess the actual impacts these structures have on birds and bats. <i>(Protect habitat - humans)</i>
1°	Work with state and non-government agencies to evaluate the impacts of enduro events on listed species and species of special concern. If such events are to be permitted in the future, work with the Division of Parks and Forestry to designate riding areas and BMPs should be developed. <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife; Protect habitat – humans)</i>

Priority	Conservation Action (continued)
1°	Evaluate the impacts of roads on endangered and threatened species and other nongame wildlife. Research, develop, and implement methods to reduce roadside mortality of wildlife (e.g. wildlife underpasses, road closures). (<i>Corridors – roads, sprawl; Protect habitat – roads, fish, mussels</i>)
1°	Research the intensity and characteristics of threats to wildlife species of conservation concern and their habitats, including the causes and effects of habitat loss, degradation, and alteration, edge, disturbance, impacts of roads, predation, competition by invasive plants and animals, disease, and how water quality degradation and contaminants affect rare species. (<i>Protect habitat – sprawl, recreational vehicles, humans; Conserve wildlife – contaminants, invasives, rare wildlife, subsidized predator; Evaluate restoration – roads</i>)
1°	Develop and implement proactive habitat conservation goals that will meet and maintain recovery needs of endangered and threatened wildlife and fish populations, particularly for those restricted to the Pinelands region. These include guidelines for forest silviculture on public and private lands to enhance forest health and habitat diversity. (<i>Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife; Protect habitat – Landscape Project; Silviculture – land management; Enhance habitat – private lands</i>)
1°	Develop and implement management actions to enhance populations of special concern and rare fish. (<i>Protect habitat – fish</i>)
1°	DEP to work with partners in conservation to establish a policy to control damage to native wildlife populations resulting from feral and free-ranging domestic cats on public lands. (<i>Conserve wildlife – cats, subsidized predators</i>)
1°	Protect wildlife species of conservation concern, especially slow moving terrestrial-bound species (e.g. reptiles, amphibians) and sensitive forest nesters (e.g. red-shouldered hawks, barred owls) by prohibiting off-road vehicles from all public and private conservation lands except where authorized by the governing agency by working with law enforcement agencies and implementing other means as they are developed. (<i>Protect habitat – recreational vehicles; Conserve wildlife – recreational vehicles</i>)
1°	Conduct surveys to find more information about species and management requirements for secretive marsh nesting birds. (<i>Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife</i>)
1°	Research the habitat requirements for species of conservation concern and implement planned silviculture practices to enhance forests for these species. (<i>Protect habitat – Landscape Project; Silviculture – land management; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife</i>)
2°	Collaborate with DOTs, NGOs, and volunteers to identify areas with known wildlife mortality issues including road crossings for breeding amphibians and roads with high incidences of road mortality (snakes, turtles, large mammals). (<i>Protect habitat – roads; Corridors - roads</i>)

Priority	Conservation Action (continued)
2°	Work with the Pinelands Commission to investigate terrestrial habitat requirements for the northern pine snake and develop a predictive model to identify pine snake habitat and habitat use at critical life stage sites (e.g., nesting areas) that require additional protection from collection, disturbance, and destruction. Such a model could be a fundamental tool used in the Pinelands Commission's evaluation of development applications. <i>(Protect habitat - Landscape Project; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
2°	Work with local agencies and stakeholders to develop and implement proactive habitat management/conservation plans for Pine Barrens treefrog. Such a plan should include ongoing surveys for this species to identify healthy populations and a scheme to protect habitats to connect populations and maintain viable metapopulations. <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
2°	Work with public and private landowners and managers with significant grassland bird and scrub-shrub/open field bird populations, bald eagle, northern pine snake, Pine Barrens treefrog, cavity-nester, freshwater wetland bird, and raptor populations to enhance targeted wildlife habitat through the implementation of best management practices and incentive programs. <i>(Enhance habitat – private lands; Protect habitat – rare wildlife; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife; Agriculture – land management; Silviculture – land management)</i>
2°	Develop Indiana bat recovery plan in accordance with federal guidelines and strategies set forth in the USFWS Indiana Bat Recovery Plan (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1999). <i>(Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
2°	Determine carrying capacity of pinelands wetlands for breeding wood ducks, including available nest cavities and breeding season food resources. Use this data to develop appropriate management strategies (e.g., installation of wood duck boxes or habitat management to enhance and support targeted native invertebrate populations). <i>(Conserve wildlife – game species)</i>
2°	Prevent declines in wildlife populations by utilizing the Delphi process to determine species that may warrant elevated or listed status among taxa that has not undergone Delphi review (e.g., fish, moths). <i>(Monitor wildlife – fish; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
2°	Use GIS measures, other remote-sensing tools, and surveys to identify critical habitats for breeding, migratory, and wintering waterfowl and assess their condition for maintaining populations. Work with the DFW, Bureau of Wildlife Management to develop protection strategies to maintain and enhance existing waterfowl habitat. <i>(Protect habitat – game species)</i>

Priority	Conservation Action (continued)
Prevent illegal collection of rare reptiles and amphibians	
1°	ENSP biologists will be responsible for notifying the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Law Enforcement and the Division of Parks and Forestry Bureau of Law Enforcement and managers, where and when appropriate, of critical sites (nesting, basking, gestation, dens) to implement stringent enforcement of endangered species laws, including protection of wildlife from illegal collection (northern pine snakes) and human disturbance (off-road vehicles). (<i>Protect wildlife – humans, recreational vehicles</i>)
2°	Recruit and provide training for local law enforcement personnel that are willing to assist in the enforcement of endangered species laws. Develop a partnership between local law enforcement, USFWS-NWR officers, US Army Natural Resources Managers, the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Law Enforcement, and the Division of Parks and Forestry's park police to enforce protection of native wildlife from illegal collection (northern pine snakes), and human disturbance (off-road vehicles). (<i>Protect wildlife – humans, recreational vehicles</i>)
Maintain ecological integrity of natural communities and regional biodiversity by controlling invasive species and overabundant wildlife	
1°	Identify areas where invasive, non-indigenous plants and animals are either already established or are becoming established through GIS, surveys, public participation, and creating a system for reporting and qualifying new locations of invasive species. Prioritize areas in need of control projects according to the potential level of impact on the ecosystem and species of conservation concern and the likelihood of success. (<i>Conserve wildlife – invasives</i>)
1°	Work with appropriate government agencies to survey for and monitor the spread of invasive insect species that jeopardize the health of Pinelands forest types (e.g., Atlantic white cedar, pitch-pine lowlands, oak-pine uplands, and others). (<i>Evaluate restoration – invasives</i>)
1°	Work with public and private landowners and managers and regulatory agencies to employ appropriate physical, chemical, or biological control measures, or a combination of these, to reduce invasive non-indigenous plants and animals in areas that are identified as providing critical habitat for endangered, threatened, or priority wildlife species and are being threatened by invasive non-indigenous plants. (<i>Conserve wildlife – invasives</i>)

Priority	Conservation Action (continued)
2°	The NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Wildlife Management will consider forest health and biodiversity as one of the primary determinants in making deer management decisions regarding deer densities. Forest health and biodiversity will be determined by using long term monitoring of forest regeneration via a system of exclosures and vegetative sample plots (or other methods that will empirically and objectively measure the effect of deer herbivory) throughout New Jersey in order to evaluate habitat health in response to changing deer densities. DFW will recommend adjustments to existing Deer Management Zone deer densities goals and recommend changes to zone specific deer harvest and control strategies, as required in order to meet this objective. <i>(Conserve wildlife – deer; Evaluate restoration - deer)</i>
2°	Develop area-specific deer density or percent-reduction targets to reduce herd size to a sustainable level where regeneration of native vegetative communities is possible and to enhance forest health and biodiversity. <i>(Evaluate restoration – deer; Conserve wildlife – deer, rare wildlife)</i>
2°	Work with the Division of Fish and Wildlife to identify areas (primarily refuge areas where hunting is prohibited) where deer densities exist at unhealthy levels and develop a strategy to reduce deer numbers and maintain them at acceptable levels that encourage natural forest regeneration. <i>(Conserve wildlife – deer)</i>
2°	Where appropriate, continue to develop and expand incentives for harvesting antlerless deer. <i>(Conserve wildlife – deer)</i>
Assess large-scale habitat change every five years	
1°	Collaborate with NJ DEP's Bureau of Geographic Information and Analysis and Rutgers Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis to develop methods to update DEP's land use/land cover data every five years and perform critical habitat change analysis to assess trend in habitat loss and conversion.
Promote public awareness and conservation	
1°	Preventing establishment of non-indigenous species is the simplest and most cost-effective means of stopping invasions. Encourage native plant use in landscaping through public awareness and discouraging sales of non-native ornamental plants which are often a major source of non-indigenous species that invade natural plant communities. <i>(Education – humans; Conserve wildlife – invasives)</i>
1°	Develop and encourage nature tourism opportunities in the Pinelands including wildlife viewing sites, interpretive signage highlighting unique ecosystems/habitats, and wildlife-related recreational opportunities that do not negatively impact species of conservation concern and their habitats. <i>(Education – humans)</i>

Priority	Conservation Action (continued)
1°	Educate public about the importance of keeping cats indoors through newsletters, press releases, brochures, presentations, web pages, etc. Work to develop a statewide policy for local communities to discourage managed cat colonies and trap, neuter, and release programs; encourage academic research that examines the full range of impacts of feral cat colonies on local wildlife populations and of feral cat colony management (including TNR) on local wildlife populations and local feral cat populations. <i>(Education – humans; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
1°	Engage landowners and NJ citizens in protection and survey efforts for endangered species by increasing enrollment in landowner incentives, forest stewardship, backyard habitat management, and Citizen Science Program. <i>(Education – humans; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>
1°	Develop educational programs, brochures and posters for the public regarding tolerance and protection of timber rattlesnakes and their habitat. <i>(Education – humans)</i>
2°	Educate homeowners, through newsletters, press releases, brochures, presentations, etc., on the proper eviction of house-dwelling bat populations and the importance of providing alternative roosting structures for maternity colonies. <i>(Education – humans)</i>
2°	Develop brochures and posters regarding the most aggressive, invasive non-indigenous plants to educate and involve the public in detecting problem areas early while they are still manageable. Early recognition of the establishment of new populations is the key to successful control. <i>(Education – humans; Conserve wildlife – invasives)</i>
2°	Develop educational brochures and posters describing habitat management practices that can be carried out on both private and public lands. These brochures and posters should focus on the management, enhancement, and creation of habitat for early successional species and include descriptions of various forestry management techniques; the primary and secondary benefits of prescribed burning should be highlighted. <i>(Education – humans; Conserve wildlife – rare wildlife)</i>

f. Potential Partnerships to Deliver Conservation

Private Landowners

- Protect and enhance habitat through innovative partnerships with private landowners.
 - Implement best management practices that protect bald eagles, frosted elfins, cavity-nesters, forest passerines, freshwater wetland birds, grassland birds, raptors, and scrub-shrub/open field bird nesting sites.
 - Utilize incentive programs that encourage the management of forests, grassland and scrub-shrub communities.
 - Through incentive programs, encourage private landowners surrounding public natural lands to manage land for large forest patches in order to increase effective size and connectivity of forests.
 - Encourage farmers to preserve farmland with conservation easements through partnerships with Green Acres, The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Lands, and

local municipalities for the conservation of forests, grassland and scrub-shrub communities.

- Develop and implement landowner incentives for providing, maintaining, and protecting summer bat habitat.
- Develop/maintain cooperative relationships with Atlantic City Airport to encourage the management of grasslands for species of conservation concern.
- Work with landowners to inventory their properties for the presence and severity of invasive non-indigenous plant invasions and harmful insect infestations. Work with them to develop effective control or eradication measures to protect critical wildlife habitats.
- Work with landowners to maintain/enhance existing habitats where listed and special concern fish species occur.
- In the context of landowner incentive programs such as LIP, Forestry Stewardship, etc., work with landowners to develop and implement deer management plans that achieve desired deer densities.

Public

- Expand volunteer Citizen Scientist recruitment and activities.
 - Collaborate with conservation groups such as the Pineland Preservation Alliance (PPA), NJ Audubon Society (NJAS), local land trusts, The Nature Conservancy – NJ Chapter (TNC), and NJ Conservation Foundation (NJCF) and other environmental, member-based organizations to recruit and train Citizen Scientists to locate, survey, and monitor wildlife habitats and populations in a systematic manner to achieve short and long term monitoring goals.
 - Collaborate with PPA, NJAS, NJCF, TNC, and other environmental, member-based organizations to recruit and train Citizen Scientists to monitor vegetative plots (exclosures) on state lands for evaluation of vegetative structure in response to deer densities.
 - Involve Citizen Scientists in management and protection projects, such as protection and posting of bald eagle nesting areas.
 - Recruit North American Butterfly Association volunteers to conduct surveys for Lepidoptera species.
 - Continue volunteer-based summer bat concentration surveys.
- Collaborate with NJ Audubon Society to educate public on the effects of feral cats on wildlife species of conservation concern.
- Promote backyard habitat management for migratory raptors and passerines, and for vernal pools where appropriate.

Wildlife Professionals

- Collaborate with researchers in New York, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia to develop best management practices and conservation plans for scrub-shrub/open field birds.
- Consult with animal control officers and extermination companies to implement proper removal of bats from houses and educate them on the importance of providing alternative roosting structures.

Conservation Organizations

- Partner with conservation organizations, Pinelands Preservation Alliance (PPA), The Nature Conservancy-NJ Chapter (TNC), NJ Audubon Society (NJAS), NJ Conservation Foundation (NJCF), and environmental, member-based organizations to protect and enhance habitats.
 - Work with TNC, NJAS, NJCF and environmental, member-based organizations to protect and enhance large tracts of contiguous forest, especially those adjacent to state (or otherwise permanently preserved) lands, beneficial to bald eagle, barred owl, cavity-nesters, and raptor nesting and foraging sites.
 - Work with PPA, TNC, NJAS and other environmental, member-based organizations to identify, manage, and protect bald eagle and raptor nesting and wintering areas.
 - Conduct habitat surveys to determine geographic distribution and severity of invasions of invasive non-indigenous plants and invasive insects that can affect forest health.
 - Protect and enhance critical habitat where listed or special concern wildlife and fish occur.
- Encourage the use of the Landscape Project's critical habitat mapping to guide land acquisition by conservation organizations through programs such as Green Acres, State Agricultural Development Committee (SADC) Farmland Preservation, and local land trusts.
- Consult with conservation organizations to develop educational programs.
- Continue participation in regional and national bat conservation efforts such as the Northeast Bat Working Group and the North American Bat Conservation Partnership.

Local Government, Other State and Federal Agencies

- Partner with local, state, and federal government agencies including municipal and county planning boards, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) - NJ Field Office, US Department of Defense (DOD), and the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Office of Smart Growth to protect, enhance, and create habitats and protect NJ's native wildlife.
 - NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Divisions of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) to collaborate with the Pinelands Commission to identify and protect important habitat for wildlife. When appropriate, change the boundaries of Pinelands Management Areas to better manage development around sensitive areas.
 - Identify valuable habitats for preservation and work with the DEP's Green Acres Program to pursue acquisition of these areas.
 - DFW to lead in protecting sensitive bald eagle and northern pine snake sites from disturbance.
 - DFW to share site information and expertise with state and federal law enforcement to increase surveillance of bald eagle and timber rattlesnake sites.
 - Foster a relationship between the DFW and private/public landowners to restrict the use of off-road vehicles (ORVs) in critical wildlife habitats.
 - DFW and USFWS to work with New Jersey's Forest Fire Service and the DEP's Office of Natural Lands Management to develop a strategy for reintroducing fire ecology into the Pinelands ecosystem through the use of prescribed burns.
 - ENSP, Pinelands Commission, conservation organizations, and the DEP's Land Use Regulation Program to protect vernal pools and appropriately classify wetlands for spotted turtle and other vernal pool species.

- Expand efforts to create habitat and implement best management practices for frosted elfin, northern pine snake, cavity-nesters, forest passerines, freshwater wetland birds, raptors, and scrub-shrub birds on state lands and with other natural resource managers, county and municipal utility authorities, utility companies, and planners.
- Expand efforts to create habitat and implement best management practices for forest passerines and raptors, forest reptiles, and bald eagles on state lands and with other natural resource managers, county and municipal utility authorities and planners.
- DFW to work with DEP's Division of Watershed Management and other DEP agencies to establish ecologically relevant buffers for riparian and floodplain areas for forest passerines.
- DFW to work with USFWS and other state and federal partners to implement the American Woodcock Management Plan as appropriate.
- DFW to work with neighboring state fish and wildlife agencies to radio-track dispersing Indiana bats across state boundaries.
- DFW to lead in the development of specific conservation plans for special concern reptiles and amphibians on state lands.
- DFW will integrate results of research on vegetative structure in response to deer densities into deer management strategies within deer management zones.
- DFW to work with land management agencies at the state, local, and federal levels to implement deer management plans and harvest quotas that achieve desired deer densities to maintain ecological integrity of natural communities.
- DFW to work with USFWS and other state and federal partners to implement North American Waterfowl Management Plan as appropriate.
- DFW to work with state and county mosquito commissions to prevent the use of deleterious insecticides and biological controls at known amphibian breeding sites.
- DFW and DEP's Bureau of Water Monitoring and Standards to work together to recommend classification upgrades in water bodies where listed or special concern species occur.
- DFW to partner with local, county, and state authorities to establish best management practices in areas where listed or special concern fish, freshwater mussels, and wildlife species occur.
- DFW to work with DEP's Land Use Regulation Program to make recommendations on stream encroachment permit issues for areas where listed or special concern species occur.
- DFW to work with the USFWS and Department of Defense to develop effective plans to eradicate invasive non-indigenous plants that are threatening critical wildlife habitats on federal and state lands and aquatic systems.
- DFW to lead in the development of educational materials for public and private landowners about forest-dependent and grassland-dependent wildlife and their habitats.
- DFW, conservation organizations, and park commissions to expand public outreach through on-site programs and wildlife viewing opportunities.
- DEP to encourage the use of the Landscape Project's critical habitat mapping to guide habitat protection and land acquisition by federal, state, and local governments through programs such as DEP's Green Acres Program, State Agricultural Development Committee (SADC), Farmland Preservation, local land trusts, and through mitigation.

- DEP to encourage the use of the Landscape Project's critical habitat mapping to guide land use planning and zoning decisions by planning agencies at the federal, state, and local level.

g. Monitoring Success

- Conduct habitat assessment and monitor habitat changes over time; monitor efficacy of habitat management and restoration efforts.
- Monitor abundance, productivity, distribution, and trends of frosted elfin, bald eagle, northern pine snake, cavity-nester, colonial waterbird, forest passerine, freshwater wetland birds, grassland bird, raptor, and scrub-shrub/open field bird populations.
- Monitor contaminant levels that may impact bald eagle populations.
- Continue the long-term monitoring of reptile and amphibian populations through the Herp Atlas Project, the Calling Amphibian Monitoring Program, and the volunteer coverboard surveys.
- Monitor populations of breeding, migratory and wintering waterfowl of conservation concern.
- Work with volunteers, private landowners, and conservation groups to monitor the success of eradication/control projects that target invasive non-indigenous plants.
- Continue to monitor deer densities and deer harvest data.
- Develop indicator metrics for monitoring forest health and implement at the scale necessary to monitor effectiveness of deer management strategies.
- Employ/implement adaptive management techniques for the goals and conservation actions established for species of greatest conservation need. Review effectiveness of research and management, and improve techniques as necessary.