

**NJ Endangered and Nongame Species Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2012
Central Region Office
Robbinsville, NJ**

ATTENDEES

Committee: B. Brummer (Chair), J. Galetto, E. DeVito, H. Geduldig, J. Applegate, E. Miller

Absent: J. Burger, R. Lathrop, D. Mizrahi, J. Shissias, D. Schweitzer

Staff: L. Herrighty, D. Jenkins, C. Varra, K. Clark, K. Korth, G. Fowles,
T. Petrongolo, T. Pover, G. Kenny

Guests: Scott Angus (NE Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation), Kristin Manafo
(NJ Audubon Society)

Approval of meeting minutes from Sept 2012 (joint meeting with the NJ Fish and Game Council): Change “PSE&G” to “PSEG.” With that change, E. Miller moved for approval, seconded by E. DeVito, minutes approved.

J. Applegate recommended that ENSAC continue participating in and encouraging these joint meetings, as well as events like the PSEG estuary management field trip.

Review of proposed meeting dates for 2013: Discussion of the possible dates for the joint meeting with Fish & Game Council (possibly scheduling that for Sept. 10, 2013), and inviting the Marine Fisheries Committee to ENSAC’s January 16 meeting when migratory shorebirds will be a topic. **Action: The September 18 meeting will be changed to Tuesday, September 10, 2013 to be held jointly with Fish & Game Council. The January 16, 2013 meeting location may be moved to better accommodate the Marine Fisheries Council.**

There was no list of action items today, so there was no review of those items today.

Any actions taken by Committee members at today’s meeting will be ratified at the next meeting.

Director’s report

L. Herrighty reported the preliminary assessment of storm damage: impoundment dikes at Tuckahoe, Corbin City and Heislerville were damaged and are undergoing emergency repairs. The Sedge House suffered water damage with about 1’ of water in the house, but the house was not shifted off its foundation. J. Galetto reported that according to L. Pettigrew, the contractor’s business was wiped out by the storm, putting the remediation project in jeopardy because a

portion of the funding will expire in December. **Action item: determine if ENSAC can help make sure the project goes forward.**

Mammal Delphi Status Review

Members reviewed tables from the draft report on the status review of terrestrial mammals that was distributed prior to the September meeting. B. Brummer suggested that members discuss the results today but not vote on recommendations until next meeting when full Committee membership is present. B. Brummer suggested that the results be listed in taxonomic order to the next meeting. E. DeVito stated there is very little data to assign a status to the two species for which consensus was not reached. D. Jenkins said ENSP could make a recommendation for those two species, and G. Fowles added that the Delphi reviewer comments contain information to be considered by Committee. The mammal status results discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

Guest S. Angus added that he has captured the two species in question, and asked whether ENSP can solicit by-catch data in the course of their nongame scientific collection permits. **Action item: identify ways to solicit and record this type of data for holders of scientific collection permits.**

ENSAC Nominating Committee Status

H. Geduldig stated the Nominating Committee will be meeting next week. Terms that are expiring in April 2013 are R. Lathrop and E. Miller, as well as the officerships (chair and vice-chair) are up for consideration.

Developing agenda items, and meeting scheduling, for 2013

At the January meeting, members may bring ideas for what Committee members would like to see considered. Agenda items that might be considered: ENSP annual work plan with list of projects. **Action item: the March meeting will include review of ENSP work plan (current and consideration for input into the following year's project planning).**

In a brief discussion of meeting schedule, there seemed to be general consensus remains supportive of current scheduling for bi-monthly meetings that include lunch as opportunity for informal discussion (as opposed to morning-only meetings or a return to monthly meetings).

ENSP Habitat Connectivity Initiative Update

D. Jenkins and G. Fowles presented on the goals and context of the project. The kick-off meeting of this project with stakeholders in transportation and conservation was held October 26, 2012. G. Fowles reported on the attendance at the meeting, the objectives, and the anticipated products (mapping and a guidance document). The keynote speaker was Scott Jackson, who has been working on Massachusetts wildlife crossings for over 20 years. The meeting included breakout sessions to help identify needs of anticipated users. The meeting identified a plan for going forward: core teams will develop mapping methods and document template, create a map, validate and prioritize, create a priority guidance document, create outreach materials and website. Eighty-four people have committed to participating in the working group, with 59 volunteering for the three core teams.

Action item: request a presentation on past attempts to reduce wildlife mortality, such as the turtle barriers set up by the Wetlands Institute. Identify follow-up results for other wildlife crossing corridors created by others.

Enduro routes in State parks, presentation by Gail Kenny and Kim Korth

The DEP's approach to reviewing and managing the Enduro motorcycle events on state lands was put under review due to the amount of time staff has had to spend on piecemeal review of events. Events are timed events that can be one or two days, can cover 80 miles of trails, can involve up to 300 riders. Prior to 2008, the events were reviewed only by state park staff; since then, Land Management Review protocols require review by all natural resource sections. Potential event routes in Wharton State Forest were the focus of a revised approach and a stakeholder meeting held last week. The DEP goals are to create a menu of pre-approved routes (348 miles of route approved in Wharton) from which events would be created, to reduce the DEP review time and minimizing negative impacts. Restrictions include time (allowed only 10/15-4/14) and types of routes (existing plow lines, unimproved roads, non-state maintained roads). **Action item: Gail's PowerPoint presentation will be posted on ENSAC's web library.**

Questions raised: What is the fee structure and is it adequate? Are groups required to post a security bond? Can trail cams be used to help enforce use of approved trails? Are there any deterrents to prevent illegal use of state land trails (such as suspension from the Enduro club)?

Super Storm Sandy impacts to shore and other habitats

T. Pover gave a presentation on preliminary post-storm impacts to shorebirds. American oystercatchers, a species for which we have years of fall-winter monitoring data, numbers did not shift much at all on surveys conducted immediately before and after the storm. Migratory shorebird habitats: Delaware Bay beaches (Pierces Point to Reeds) were seriously damaged, with rubble and sod bank newly exposed. Beaches Moore's to Fortescue also damaged. Beach nesting bird habitat: significant changes to coastal habitats, less in southern Cape May County, more severe to the north. Too early to determine effects to nesting birds because over-winter sand movement may change conditions prior to the 2013 nesting season.

Gov. Christie issued an executive order allowing emergency infrastructure work to proceed without permits as long as permit paperwork is submitted within 6 months. Some emergency work to repair and protect infrastructure like roads has already been done and may result in additional shoreline hardening.

NFWF is providing funding for wildlife and habitat impact assessment, for which Manomet Bird Observatory is a major recipient at this time. B. Brummer asked where is the voice of wildlife in the DEP's response to storm damage? D. Jenkins said that DFW provided a list of important beach nesting bird habitats to minimize additional damage in the course of recovery (such as moving sand from existing nesting areas).

Motion to adjourn by H. Geduldig, approved. Meeting adjourned at 2: 15 PM.

Summary list of Action Items:

Action: The September 18 meeting will be changed to Tuesday, September 10, 2013, to be held jointly with NJ Fish & Game Council. The January 16, 2013 meeting location may be moved to better accommodate attendance by the Marine Fisheries Council.

Action: Determine if ENSAC can help make sure the project (cleanup of Thompson's Beach) goes forward.

Action: Identify ways to solicit and record incidental or non-target species records from holders of scientific collection permits.

Action: Request a presentation on past attempts to reduce wildlife mortality on roads, such as the turtle barriers set up by the Wetlands Institute. Identify post-management results from wildlife crossing corridors created by others.

Action: Post Gail Kenny's PowerPoint presentation on ENSAC's web library.