

Dr. Burger noted a scientific collecting permit issued by the USFWS can be issued for an extended time period (beyond 1 year), and requested staff consult with Linda DiPiano, Wildlife Permitting Unit, to see if the DFW can do the same.

ENSP Bureau Chief's Report

On behalf of Dave Jenkins, Kathy Clark reported on the following:

Budget – ENSP staff will be meeting with Director Chanda to discuss ENSP fiscal concerns. Federal funding received from the State Wildlife Grants Program has declined by 40%. While the decline in funding will cover fixed costs (salaries, etc.), there will be limited or no funding available for costs for nongame projects. Members expressed concern about the decline and will also brainstorm for possible alternative budget/funding options.

Bulls Island - Kathy Clark referenced the tragic incident at Bull's Island in June 2011, when a man was killed after a large tree in the campground fell on an occupied tent. A survey was conducted and the health of each tree on the northern 1/3 of the island was evaluated. Discussions continued, including concerns that the response to this incident would result in the removal of a large portion of the trees from the northern 1/3 of the island and on the potential impact to nongame wildlife in the area (including 2 regional priority avian species) and endangered plants.

Land Management

Bureau Chief Tony Petrongolo reported ENSP Zoologist Dave Golden has successfully filled the Land Management Regional Superintendent position and has begun work on several nongame habitat projects. Members requested a review of Nongame/Endangered habitat projects as a future agenda item.

Understory Moths & Butterflies

ENSAC member Dr. Dale Schweitzer gave a presentation on the *Current Status of Arboreal and Understory Macrolepidoptera in Northwestern New Jersey Forests*. Data collected from Stillwater, Hardwick and High Point State Park from 2005 to 2011 resulted in identification of 387 of primarily forest species. The data were compared to historic specimen records. Detection success was 93-100% for species for which the primary larval food plants are trees, leaf litter, ferns (which deer generally avoid), or browse-tolerant lowbush blueberry, but only about 55% for other understory specialists. The few undetected tree feeders were mostly last collected in the 1950s or 1960s, while most undetected understory species were still being found in the 1970s or 1980s. Among tree feeders, detection success was 90-100% for all families except Saturniidae. Discussions continued noting the next step is to compare the temporal correspondence of the decline in the number of understory moth and butterfly species with the estimated NJ deer populations.

Rare Plant Protection Legislation

Dr. Amy Karpati, Director of Conservation Science at Pinelands Preservation Alliance, gave a presentation on Rare Plant Protection Legislation. Dr. Karpati reported there are over 2100 native plant species in NJ, 339 species are defined as Endangered, 486 have been assigned a status of special concern and 32 species have been defined as extirpated. The 1989 New Jersey Endangered Plant Species List Act (N.J.S.A. 13:1B-15.151 et seq) which defines procedures and criteria by which plant species are determined endangered, but unlike ENSCA, the legislation does not include verbiage to actually protect rare plants. Pinelands Preservation Alliance, New

Jersey Conservation Foundation, and the Partnerships for New Jersey Plant Conservation are drafting legislation that would incorporate protection for rare plants. Members recognized the lack of protection for rare plant species, provided a few comments on the proposed regulatory language. The Committee may wish to make sure that the proposed legislation is reviewed by member Howard Geduldig before offering any additional guidance.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Members proceeded to the informal Aquaculture Development Zone site visit.