



BUREAU OF INFORMATION AND EDUCATION MONTHLY REPORT

**Al Ivany, Chief
Linda DiPiano, Supervising Biologist**

April 16, 2022 – May 15, 2022

HUNTER EDUCATION/ RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, REACTIVATION (R3)/NASP

Hunter Education (Joe Leskie, Keith Griglak, Sam Forlenza, Courtney Venuti)

Staff spent a considerable amount of time during this report period conducting Hunter Education courses throughout the northern and southern regions of the state. A total of nine classes were held, graduating 425 students. Of these, 151 students completed archery and 274 completed firearms. To date, the current year total of 1,260 unique graduates is down slightly from 1,538 at this point in 2021.

Staff worked with two remedial hunter education individuals providing them with assignments relating to their violations, so they could eventually apply to have their license privileges reinstated.

Staff responded to 135 emails during this report period and a total of 36 duplicate hunter education cards were issued, 13 non-resident hunting license unlocks (unlocking allows the ability to purchase the appropriate licenses and permits where applicable) and five rifle permit unlocks.

Hunter Education staff are preparing to virtually attend the International Hunter Education Association (IHEA) conference in mid-May. The conference will feature keynote speakers and a multitude of hunter education workshops, along with updates as well as awards presentations.

During this report period, two new instructors were added to our volunteer workforce and were immediately immersed in the program.

Staff prepared and offered two PowerPoint presentations at the 2022 NJ State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs Convention in Ocean City, New Jersey. Presentations included an update regarding the hunter education format and student number updates due to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as a discussion on the effectiveness and use of non-toxic ammunition.

Staff participated in the R3 Mentored Women's Turkey Hunt workshop, May 1-3 in Cumberland County. Hunter Education staff operated the shotgun patterning range during the day-long field session as well as mentored one of the participants for two days of the workshop.

Staff reviewed and edited content for the 2022-23 NJ Hunting and Trapping Digest. State Administrator Leskie will attend the follow-up meeting later this month to discuss edits and changes.

Staff continued to work on updating/editing the Hunter Education core page design and layouts for the new website.

Staff measured one deer harvested in Zone 42 (Atlantic County) during the 2021-2022 archery season. The buck received a net score of 140 7/8 inches.

Staff attended and presented information as part of the Fish and Wildlife representative report at the Warren County Federation's April meeting.

Staff also attended and represented NJ Fish and Wildlife at the Hunters Helping the Hungry board meeting during this report period.

R3 (Joe Leskie, Ryan Risher, Courtney Venuti)

Staff prepared and edited the R3 Newsletter for May 2022 and distributed it via the Division website and Gov Delivery system.

A turkey hunting webinar was conducted on April 18, entitled Talkin' Turkey. The presentation was offered with Lou Gambale, New Jersey State Chapter President of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf). The program reviewed wild turkey vocalizations and the sounds new hunters could expect to hear as well as what types of turkey calls are available, and how to replicate those sounds while turkey hunting. The webinar was recorded and posted on the DEP's YouTube channel for future viewing.

Staff prepared and presented PowerPoint presentations during the final week of the virtual Outdoor Women of New Jersey/R3 Mentored Turkey Hunt. Prior to the event, staff attended regular meetings and revised the content as necessary. The information offered was extensive and covered all aspects of the wild turkey and turkey hunting.

Staff coordinated and conducted Fish and Wildlife's dually hosted Outdoor Women of New Jersey and R3 Program's second annual Women's Mentored Turkey Hunt for nine individuals May 1-3, 2022. The event was made possible through a partnership with the Landis Sewerage Authority, which generously provided access to their property. After completing three weeks of

virtual content learning, the women paired with R3 mentors from Fish and Wildlife, the NJ Chapter of the NWTF and its Women in the Outdoors program. Prior to heading out into the woods, the students learned about shotgun patterning, turkey calling, scouting, planning and equipment. Over two mornings of hunting, four turkeys were harvested. Incredibly, all participants heard gobbles and were able to view spectacular action. Prior to the workshop, J. Leskie prepared and distributed hunting maps as well as assigned hunting mentors with mentees.

After the successful event, staff provided content for a social post and forwarded it to K. Byrne for posting. Staff also provided information to the Landis Sewerage Authority for their social media efforts.

Staff continued working on R3 updates and edits to core page design and layouts for the new website.

Staff is creating a video tutorial for waterfowl hunters interested in applying for the 2022-23 season Tuckahoe Managed Waterfowl Hunt. The video will cover how to apply, as well as the on-site lottery process on the morning of the hunt, and other frequently asked questions.

Staff began outlining a series of off-season webinars to air during the summer months. Subjects include preseason deer scouting, a beginner's guide to scouting waterfowl, and a revision of the public land hunting etiquette webinar offered last year.

Two applications from individuals interested in assisting with R3 mentored upland game hunts were processed.

Staff attended the monthly NEAFWA R3 Leadership Committee meeting during this report period.

NASP® (Katie Paey)

Katie Paey returned from maternity leave.

No Basic Archery Instructor (BAI) trainings were held during this reporting period.

Information was sent to schools inquiring about the NASP program via email.

A meeting was held with BAIs to discuss trainings and tournaments held during Katie's maternity leave.

From October 30, 2021 – April 15, 2022, eight BAI trainings were conducted certifying 43 instructors and six new schools.

The Annual NJ NASP State Tournament was held virtually from February 14 – March 18, 2022. Eleven schools with 193 archers participated.

AQUATIC EDUCATION (Karen Byrne, Jessica Griglak)

Sedge Island Natural Resource Education Center

The Sedge House has been opened for the season. Intern training was held May 13-15 for four new interns.

A post-doctorate from Princeton University will use Sedge Island as a site for part of a microplastic research project. The woman had participated in a Sedge Island program as a middle school student and said she immediately thought of Sedge as one of the research sites!

Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament

Tournament pre-registration packets were assembled and mailed to participants. In addition, the head judge was provided with materials for distribution to fellow judges.

Staff coordinated with Island Beach State Park employees on set-up logistics prior to the tournament. Raffle and early entry prizes were picked up and given to the tournament committee president.

The Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament was held May 15, 2022.

Trout in the Classroom (TIC)

Staff updated webpages to open registration for the 2022-2023 school year.

Green Eggs and Sand (GES)

The virtual Green Eggs and Sand workshop began during this reporting period. Several teaching modules will be highlighted over this five-week program. Virtual content is coordinated and updated weekly by staff who then post the information on an exclusive webpage. A trip to view horseshoe crab spawning at Fortescue Beach is also planned for May 21.

Other

The second Outdoor Women of New Jersey *Mentored Turkey Hunt* was held for nine women May 1-3. Staff partnered with R3 and Hunter Education staff to offer this hunt. Three weeks of virtual content was provided to women participating in the mentored hunt as well as those who only registered for the virtual portion of the workshop. The virtual information was paired with weekly meetings that hosted a guest speaker each week.

The actual mentored hunt portion of the program began with a field session at Good Sports Gunning Club in Millville. Participants cycled through learning to pattern their shotgun, estimate distances, and become acquainted with turkey hunting equipment, calling, and scouting. Two mornings were then spent hunting Landis Sewerage Authority property with four turkeys harvested! As part of the program, participants got to field dress and clean their turkeys. In

addition, Conservation Police Officer Keith Fox stopped by to discuss turkey hunting safety and explain what happens during a law enforcement inspection.

Staff attended and assisted with the Women Afield – Fishing program at Hackettstown Hatchery. The session focused on participants filleting and preparing fish using a family recipe.

Marine Digest boxing breakdowns were given to the publisher along with the shipping list.

WILDLIFE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH (Karen Byrne, Jessica Griglak, Liz Jackson, Alanna Newmark, Steve Verdi, and Tom Hill)

Pequest Natural Resource Education Center

The following programs were offered:

- Two Fishing Basics Programs for 44 participants
- One Hatchery Tour and Fishing Basics Program for 20 participants
- One Hatchery Tour and Habitat Hike for 13 participants.

Additional programs have been scheduled for the spring and summer.

Staff is working on a virtual tour of the facility.

Staff also met with a contractor to evaluate the pond and provide a cost estimate for repairing the eroding shorelines.

The facility was used for a hunter education class and a DEP Urban Fishing Program to train Watershed Ambassadors.

Mobile Education Trailer (MET)

The MET was present at six events during this report period welcoming a total of 1,849 guests who viewed the inside.

The events included the DEP 50+2 celebration in Jersey City, Atlantic County Utility Authority's Earth Day festivities in Egg Harbor Township, Green Fair in Stafford Township, a Charity Hike at Hudson Farms, and Barnyard Days in Phillipsburg.

The MET will be present at a Somerset Fish and Game Protective Association event on June 4 and is scheduled for events in July and August as well.

Hooked on Fishing - Not on Drugs (HOFNOD) Program

The Youth Fishing Challenge will be held Sunday, June 5, 2022. A total of 33 sites (several are new to the event) registered to host a gathering. Materials were organized for distribution to host

sites and three pick-up locations were selected: Pequest, Island Beach State Park and Nacote Creek.

The Women Afield – Fishing program is underway with seven families participating in the 6-session program. Session Three (taking place during this reporting period) was held at the Hackettstown Hatchery and focused on safe fish handling techniques as well as how to fillet and cook fish. Families were asked to bring a family fish recipe to share with the group. DEP Urban Fishing Program Representative H. Nebling discussed the department’s Fish Smart, Eat Smart initiative and spoke about fish consumption advisories. Also, during that session NJ PBS was there to film a segment for a new series, *Table for All*.

Session Four was also held during this reporting period and focused on surf fishing. Island Beach State Park instructors provided a morning of surf fishing instruction followed by a practice session at the beach. Participants also had the option to stay overnight and spend the evening learning to tie flies as well as hear about striped bass conservation and management from a Stockton University professor. On the following day, all the families participated in the Governor’s Surf Fishing Tournament.

WEBSITE ACTIVITY (Doug Rizio)

New and Updated Pages, Images, and Documents

Six (6) new pages were posted this report period: one (1) job post, one (1) news post, and four (4) others.

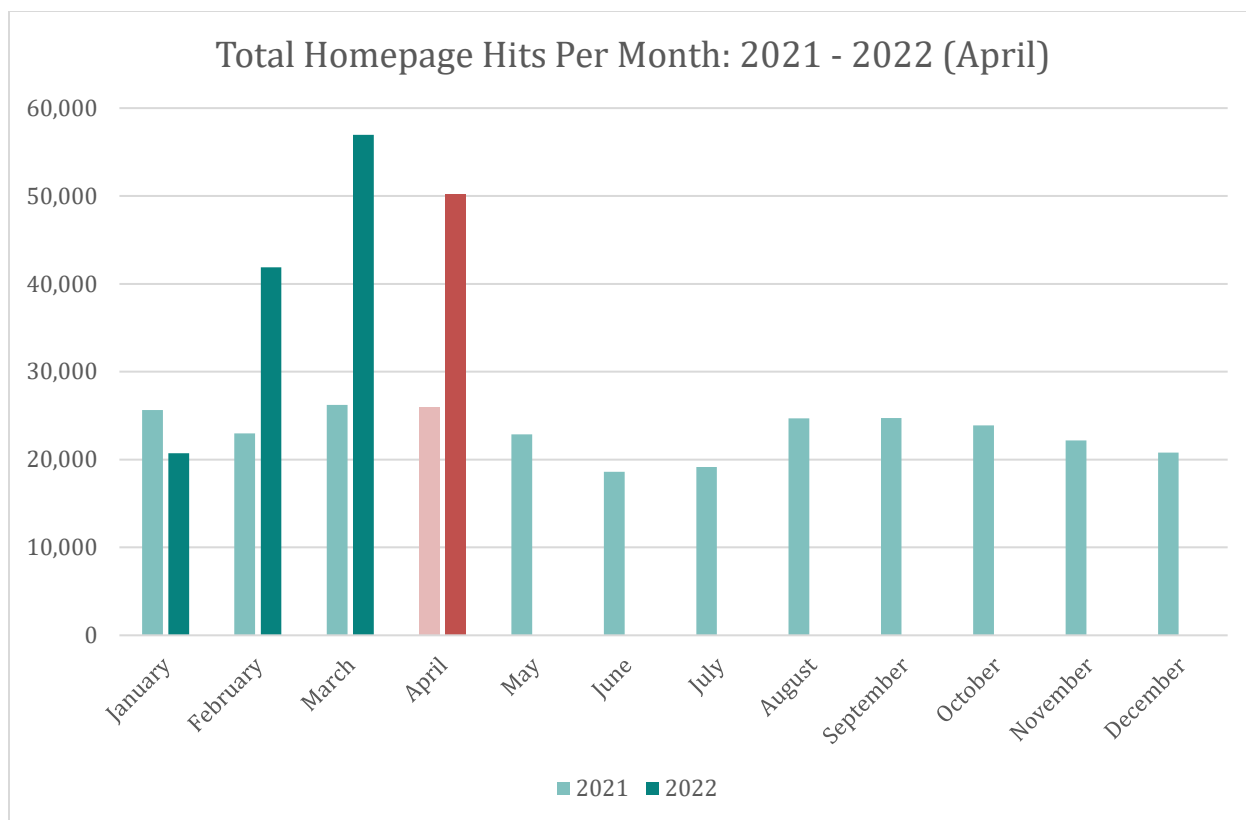
Approximately forty-two (42) pages were revised/updated during the report period.

Seventeen (17) images were also edited and posted: six (6) skillful angler leaderboard photos, and eleven (11) others.

Approximately sixty (60) documents were edited in or converted to PDF format. These included: job post PDF’s (1); Bureau Reports (9) in one .zip file; Meeting Documents (9) in one .zip file; Minutes/Agendas (10), PDF segments of the 2022 New Jersey Marine Digest (7); and twenty-four (24) others.

Analytics

The number of hits on the homepage in April was 50,191; an average of 1,673 hits per day. It is a decrease of 6,758 hits from the previous month of March (56,949) and an increase of 24,181 hits from April of the previous year (26,010).



The ten most visited pages in April were:

2022 Spring Trout Fishing Information – 39,812; https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/trtinfo_spring.htm
 Fishing License Information – 31,983; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/fishneed.htm>
 License Information – 24,300; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/licenses.htm>
 Regulations – 20,523; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/njregs.htm>
 Wildlife Habitat Supporter Program – 15,453; <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/whsp.htm>
 Striped Bass Bonus Program – 13,952; <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/bonusbas.htm>
 Trout Fishing Information – 13,879; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/trtinfo.htm>
 Saltwater Fishing – 11,259; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/saltwater.htm>
 Fishing Access Locations on Trout Waters – 11,127; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/accesscnty.htm>
 Freshwater Fishing – 9,783; https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/fishing_fresh.htm

Other popular pages were:

Fishing in New Jersey – 8,938; <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/fishing.htm>
 Wild Turkey in New Jersey – 8,261; https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/turkey_info.htm
 Places to Fish – 6,597; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/fishplc.htm>
 Hunter Education – 6,523; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/hunted.htm>
 2022 New Jersey Freshwater Fishing Digest – 6,319; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/digfsh.htm>
 2022 Striped Bass Bonus Program (SBBP) Individual Angler Application - 6,076;
https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/sbbp_application.htm
 License Agents – 6,038; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/agentlst.htm>
 Summer Flounder (Fluke) Information – 5,659; <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/fluke.htm>

Marine Licenses and Permits – 5,649; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/marinelicenses.htm>
Hunting & Trapping License Information – 5,562; <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/hntlicfe.htm>
The ten most requested PDFs this report period were:
2022 Spring Trout Stocking Schedule – 25,838;
https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/2022/stocking_schedule_trout_allocations22.pdf
2021-22 Turkey Regulations – 7,621; <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/2021/turkregs21-22.pdf>
2021 Marine Regulations Summary – 5,938; <https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/2021/maregsum21.pdf>
2022 New Jersey Freshwater Fishing Digest – 5,631;
<https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/2022/digests/digfsh22.pdf>
Snakes of New Jersey – 5,454; https://nj.gov/dep/fgw/ensp/pdf/snake_broch.pdf
Deer Regulation Sets – 4,998; <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/2022/regsets22-23.pdf>
2022 Trout Regulations – 4,894; <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/2022/trtregs22.pdf>
Snake Identification: Avoid Being Confused – 4,387;
https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/ensp/pdf/snake_id-avoid_confusion.pdf
R3 Program April Newsletter – 4,195;
https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/2022/r3program/news_22-04_april.pdf
NJ Wildlife Rehabilitators – 3,816; https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/rehab_list.pdf

Additional Activities

Additional activities included research and meetings for the Natural Working Lands Strategy initiative, Shellfish Aquaculture website, migration of the main Fish and Wildlife website to WordPress; weekly social media meetings; and Commissioner’s Updates.

WILDLIFE INFORMATION - TRENTON (Kathy Porutski)

Internal Communication (IC) topics that were *written or edited* and sent out this month include:

NOV Postings (4) -

- Science and Research (Research Scientist 3)
- Management and Budget (Agency Services Representative Trainee)
- Office of Record Access (Agency Services Representative Trainee)
- Watershed & Land Management (Environmental Services Trainee)

NJF&W Welcomes Two New Employees

NOV Posting - Water Resource Management (Executive Secretarial Assistant)

NJEMS Update Tomorrow Evening

No Need to Contact Help Desk - Self-Service Password Reset Now Available

NOV Postings (2)

- Community Investment and Economic Revitalization (6-Month Temporary Lateral Reassignment Opportunity)
- Emergency Management (Communications Operator Trainee)

Michelle Smith Receives 2022 NECI&E Association’s Professional of the Year Award

NOV Postings (5) –

Site Remediation & Waste Management Program

Environmental Services Trainee

Administrative Analyst 3

Research Scientist 3

Environmental Engineer Trainee

Program Specialist Trainee

NOV Posting - Site Remediation & Waste Mgt. Program (Manager 4 Waste Management)

Citrix Replaced by zScaler Private Access

CPO Jordan Holmes Promoted to Lieutenant in Northern Region

NOV Postings (2) –

Management & Budget (Secretarial Assistant 3 - Non-Stenographic)

Community and Economic Revitalization Program (Analyst Trainee - Hourly)

NOV Postings (2) –

Community Investment & Economic Revitalization

Real Estate Appraiser 2 (Hourly)

Program Specialist 1 (Hourly)

April Bureau Reports

NOV Posting - State Park Service (Agency Services Representative Trainee)

Staff Can Access Virtual F&G Council Mtg.

NOV Re-Posting - Watershed and Land Management Program (Fiscal Asst./Temporary Position)

Donating Benefit Time for Johnathan H. White

Spotlight *Announcements* Created w/ Images:

May 8, 2022 – Happy Mother’s Day

May 30, 2022 – Memorial Day ~ Honor and Remember

Also, during this reporting period: the Bureau of Information and Education’s Monthly Report for April was compiled and edited; Commissioner’s Teams Meetings were remotely attended; staff offered assistance with changing the Marine Fisheries Administration’s name/contact information to the *Marine Resources Administration*; and assistance was offered to a marine fisheries staff member regarding current printing procedures.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND DIGITAL MEDIA (Jonathan Carlucci)

Publications/Graphics

- Dynamic QR codes generated for ENSP in vector and raster for other programs
- WSFR signs modified to fit 12”x18” requested production size
- A shareable folder structure was made to organize images for the website
- Core page images searched and selected for the Oxford website rebuild
- Photos modified to fit wide formats, text removed and faded for website overlays
- Secondary thumbnail images searched and selected for the Oxford website rebuild

- Images modified, flipped, blurred and clipping paths created for website formatting
- Photos manipulated for staff to remove license info
- Bureau reviews of website content were collated into one working document
- A second set of images were collected and organized by website navigation structure in response to requested changes and feedback provided by bureaus.
- Additional images were provided to Oxford Communications for the website rebuild
- Slides modified in Photoshop for video production support
- Logos shared with print vendors

Please note: Katie Paey returned at the end of April and is back to handling social media posts.

Photography/Videography

- Youth Hunting photo Photoshopped for use requirements
- Aerial stills and footage of Hackettstown State Fish Hatchery recorded
- Photos of Pequest Trout Hatchery opening day event shared with staff
- Photography of DEP Commissioner at TYKTWD event at WCSP and shared with DEP communications staff.
- Women Afield program photographed at Hackettstown Fish Hatchery
- Video recorded of Artificial Reef program reef ball project in Montville - 2 days
- Video reviews and feedback
- Eagle Banding photographed, and video support provided at a site in Medford
- The Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament was photographed, and images were shared with Parks and NJFW staff
- Photo folders added to OneDrive for I&E and other staff
- Internal requests for photographs individually addressed

Meetings/Training

Oxford Communications meeting with staff

Friday Social schedule meetings

Meeting with Oxford contact and Michelle Smith

Monthly flight training performed

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND DIGITAL MEDIA (Matt Hencheck)

Video Production

- *NJ DEP Fish and Wildlife's Fishing Instructional videos* – These videos are short tutorials intended for beginner anglers. Each video will cover a variety of options a new angler has when it comes to purchasing a fishing rod and the types of rods available. Hook sizes for various fish, bait choices, baiting a hook, and casting are all covered. We started filming last fall, and plan to film more this spring. These videos will be posted to the new website this summer.
- *National Amphibian Week* video – This commemorates National Wildlife Week with some of New Jersey's researched species such as brown bats, black bears, American

kestrels, and the Allegheny woodrat. Brief facts were added for each of the species mentioned in the video.

- *Artificial Reef Balls and Deployment* video – This video will show our Marine Fisheries staff working with middle school students from Montville, New Jersey as they help assist building concrete artificial reef structures that will be deployed into the ocean a few miles off the Manasquan inlet next month. The students will be taking a field trip using a charter boat to witness each reef ball being deployed into the ocean.
- *Hackettstown Fish Hatchery* – filming has begun to highlight the work conducted by staff on a daily basis. Much of this footage will be used for additional projects and plans for creating a video of the hatchery's 110th anniversary has been scheduled.
- *NETWC Welcome video* – Staff from the Endangered and Nongame Species Program will be hosting the Northeast Transportation Wildlife Conference in September. Staff is creating a welcome video highlighting many of the program's recent projects and field trips that will be featured at the conference.
- *Bald Eagle Banding video* – Staff and volunteers are filmed working in the field as they take samples and band eagle chicks. This video shows the measures staff take to keep the chick safe and secure before placing it back into the nest. This video will be posted to our social media on 5/20.
- *Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament* – Staff assisted with taking photos and filming tournament participants. Footage of these anglers will help build our catalog and be used for future projects and promotional use.

SOCIAL MEDIA (Katie Paey)

Katie Paey returned from maternity leave.

Facebook

The DFW Facebook (FB) page had **43,582 followers** and **39,361 likes** at the end of this reporting period.

Twenty-seven (**27**) Facebook posts were posted this period. Posts include photographs and video taken by staff, graphic pieces created for special promotions and shared posts from other pages.

Post topics included: Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament, Turkey Hunting webinar, Bird of the Month, National Volunteer Week, DEP 50+2 Event, Youth Turkey Hunting Day, Go Fish

Fridays, Trout in the Classroom registration, Employment Opportunity, Amphibian Week content, Marine Digest, Women's Mentored Turkey Hunt, young wildlife reminder, seasonal WMA closures, Youth Fishing Challenge, World Migratory Bird Day, and Peace Officers Memorial Day.

Posts with the most reach and engagement this period – **Reach** is the number of unique people who have seen content associated with our Facebook page. **Engagement** is post clicks, likes, comments and shares (any action someone takes on the page or post):

4/26 – Trout in the Classroom registration - reached **103,019** people, **8,445** engagements

5/10 – Seasonal WMA closures - reached **47,850** people, **9,632** engagements

Staff continues to like and respond to comments and other questions on our FB page in post comment threads, direct messages to our page, event postings and outside timeline posts.

If you have ideas for a Social Media post, please contact katie.paey@dep.nj.gov.

Instagram

The DFW Instagram page had **12,006 followers** at the end of this reporting period.

Twenty-five (**25**) Instagram posts were posted this period. Posts include photographs and video taken by staff, and graphic pieces created for promotions.

Post topics included: Turkey Hunting Webinar, Bird of the Month, National Volunteer Week, Youth Turkey Hunt, Go Fish Fridays, Trout in the Classroom registration, Employment opportunity, Amphibian Week content, Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament, Women's Mentored Turkey Hunt recap, young wildlife reminder, seasonal WMA closures, Youth Fishing Challenge, World Migratory Bird Day, and Peace Officers Memorial Day.

One (**1**) Instagram story was posted this period.

Instagram posts with the most reach this period –

4/22 – Go Fish Friday - reached **4,902** people

5/6 – Go Fish Friday - reached **5,268** people

Staff monitored and responded to comments and private messages.

If you have ideas for a Social Media post, please contact katie.paey@dep.nj.gov.

Other Activities

Staff participated in weekly Social Media/GovDelivery Planning Meetings.

BLACK BEAR EDUCATION PROGRAM (Michelle Smith)

Black Bear Outreach Program

Fish and Wildlife's digital black bear outreach marketing campaign creatives continued to run to help reduce negative human/bear interactions. The public safety ads were developed in both English and Spanish. Examples of these creatives include digital banner ads, social media ads, video ads for social and streaming platforms like Hulu, SXM audio spots and announcer-read PSAs. The creative ads are driving traffic to the Fish and Wildlife bear education webpages. Ultimately, the campaign will reach millions of residents across the state with information about coexisting with black bears, including residents in bear dense areas, those in urban settings who recreate in areas with bears, and residents in southern New Jersey.

Bulk quantities of the black bear safety literature were distributed to the public upon request.

Division Website Development

Development of the new agency website continued. Agency staff worked on building secondary pages in WordPress. Copy edits and layout changes were made to various hub pages and the layout design was finalized in the mobile platform. Core page images were uploaded to most pages including the new Home, Freshwater, Hunting, Wildlife, Conservation, and Education pages. Working group meetings were held with staff to review various aspects of the new site. The developer updated the schedule for the remaining website development milestones until the site launches in early summer.

Wildlife Habitat Supporter Program

The Wildlife Habitat Supporter program marketing campaign concluded. The marketing vendor is preparing the final campaign report for agency review. Quotes were requested for Wildlife Habitat Supporter program signs that will be produced for placement at certain Wildlife Management Areas across the state to promote the program to WMA users, especially to non-traditional constituents.