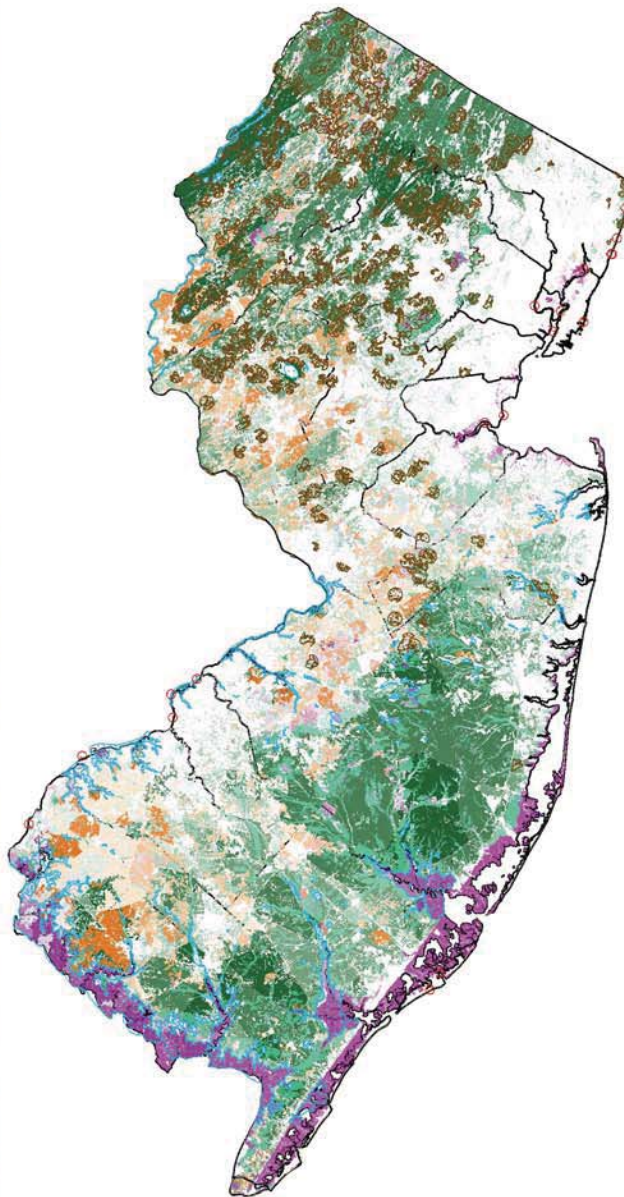


NEW JERSEY WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN

JANUARY 23, 2008



**New Jersey Wildlife Action Plan
for Wildlife of Greatest Conservation Need**

**Prepared by the
NJ Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Fish and Wildlife
September 9, 2004
Revised: November 15, 2004
Revised: March 8, 2005
Revised: May 5, 2005
Revised: July 1, 2005
Revised: August 3, 2005
Revised: September 29, 2005
Revised: July 26, 2006
Revised: February 16, 2007
Revised: January 23, 2008**

a. Conservation Goals

- **Priority:** Reduce the adverse impacts of subsidized predator populations such as raccoons, red fox, American crow, and free-roaming and feral cats on critical wildlife, natural communities, and habitat quality. (*Conserve Wildlife –subsidized predators*)
- Identify and restore more natural predator-prey relationships through the management of subsidized predators and restoration of natural predators. (*Restore habitat - subsidized predators*)

b. Conservation Strategies

- **Priority:** Educate the public about the negative impacts of free-roaming cats (“owned” and feral) on New Jersey’s native wildlife and encourage responsible cat ownership and care through public service announcements, brochures, public presentations, etc.
- **Priority:** Develop and support research to provide better information on the impacts of feral and free-roaming cats on native wildlife populations.
- **Priority:** Collaborate with animal rights/welfare groups, local municipalities and conservation organizations to develop and implement model ordinances, policies and guidance documents to address the impacts of predators, including feral and free roaming cats, on native wildlife species, including:
 - A model ordinance for municipalities that elect to implement or allow trap, neuter, and release (TNR) programs to attempt to reduce feral cat populations.
 - A guidance document/protocol for minimizing the impacts TNR on native wildlife.
 - A model ordinance for regulating feeding of wildlife.
 - A model pet-licensing ordinance.
 - Mapping of colonies to evaluate impact on species of conservation concern.
- **Priority:** Identify areas where predation is significantly diminishing reproductive success of wildlife species of conservation concern and apply appropriate integrated predation management techniques.
- Provide educational materials at all public and non-government organization natural land areas.
- Distribute Cats Indoors brochures and available informational material on the hazards of feeding wildlife to all county, state, and local nature/environmental centers and all NGO nature/environmental centers/environmental centers.
- Develop and support research to improve management practices (e.g., predator enclosures and electric fences) that reduce predation on native wildlife.

c. Potential Partnerships to Deliver Conservation

- Government and non-government wildlife biologists, the veterinary community, environmental educators, and animal welfare organizations, local animal control agents, and local and county animal shelters should collaborate on educational materials regarding the negative impact of feral and free-roaming cats on native wildlife and methods for pet owners to minimize those impacts.
- DFW and NJ Audubon Society will continue to work with American Bird Conservancy’s “Cats Indoors” program to develop outreach materials, press releases, and partnerships with local conservation organizations.

- DFW will work with and encourage conservation organizations to include educational materials regarding free-ranging house cats and feral cats within their constituency newsletters (e.g., Conserve Wildlife Foundation, NJ Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy-NJ Chapter).
- d. Monitoring Success**
- Establish long-term monitoring efforts where concentrations of vulnerable wildlife exist and where active control or management of feral cats is being conducted.
- e. Information Gaps**
- Pursue a comprehensive peer-reviewed paper compiling results of current research worldwide on the impact of cats to native wildlife.
 - Develop and distribute recommendations for control and management of feral and free roaming cats that are sensitive to both animal welfare concerns and effectively protect native wildlife populations.
 - Launch a public outreach campaign, possibly through the creation of a thoughtful documentary about cats and wildlife that could be shown on public television stations nationwide.
 - Develop a better understanding of the effectiveness of TNR programs in effecting reductions in feral cat populations.

Oil Spills

a. Conservation Goals

- **Priority:** Identify and protect breeding, migration, and wintering habitats and landscapes essential for long-term viability of wildlife and fish populations of species of conservation concern. (*Protect habitat – oil*)
- Assess, reduce and mitigate the impacts of oil spills on critical habitat. (*Protect habitat – oil*)

b. Conservation Strategies

- Use the Landscape Map as the basis for emergency response planning by prioritizing sensitive habitats according to location and seasonality of spills. Insert the prioritized mapping into maps used by Office of Emergency Response and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Develop specific plans for the highest priority species (Delaware Bay migratory shorebirds, piping plovers, and wintering waterfowl) and most vulnerable habitats (e.g., shorelines of Delaware River and Bay). These specific plans should be simple and be included in the mapping noted above, as biologist input during a spill event will provide the greater detail needed. Update species plans and mapping annually or as needed with printouts from Biotics to reflect the most current species distribution information.
- Hold annual meetings with staff from DEP Office of Emergency Response to incorporate updated information and mapping on priority wildlife areas, and review response actions in previous years' spill events. Review criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of New Jersey's response to oil spills with respect to rare wildlife and sensitive habitats, including area of impact, timeliness and effectiveness of cleanup, and number/species affected.
- Develop methodology to identify all long- and short-term impacts of oil spills on critical habitat and rare species populations in spill areas.