

Delaware State Wildlife Action Plan Revision

Oversight Committee Meeting

December 18th, 2013



Opportunity and Responsibility to Revise Delaware's Wildlife Action Plan

Opportunity to build upon the foundation of the original 2006 plan

- Provide an updated, renewed vision and direction for wildlife conservation in Delaware for the next decade.
- Engage partners in identifying and prioritizing species, habitats, threats, and actions
- Build and strengthen interagency and intra-agency partnerships through the WAP
- Encourage ownership of WAP by partners and broader constituency of the Teaming With Wildlife coalition



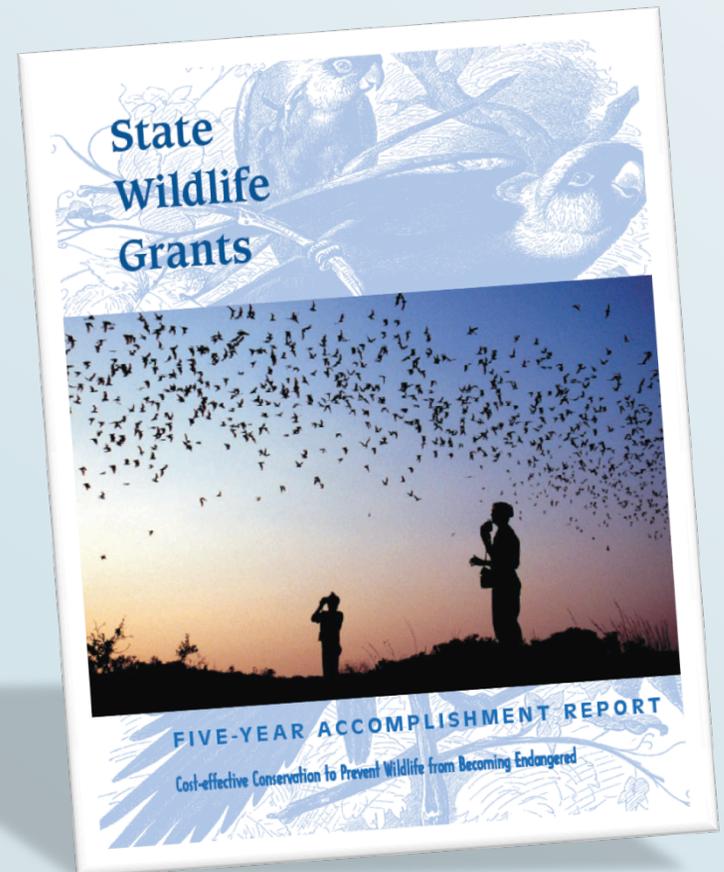


Responsibility to Revise Delaware's Wildlife Action Plan

State Wildlife Grants (SWG) is the Nation's core program for preventing endangered species listings, and is the primary funding source for conservation of non-game species and their habitats.

To initially qualify for State Wildlife Grants, Delaware developed a Wildlife Action Plan in 2006.

For Delaware to continue receiving SWG funds, the DE Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) must be revised and updated by October, 2015.



Major Goals for Revision

- Increased Accessibility
- Increased Specificity
- Increased Tractability
- Increased Cooperation



Approach

DE Division of Fish and Wildlife and the project team have initiated the process of revising the WAP and will be assembling a core team planners, managers, and wildlife & fisheries biologists.

A comprehensive revision of the WAP will involve addressing each of the eight elements of the original plan.

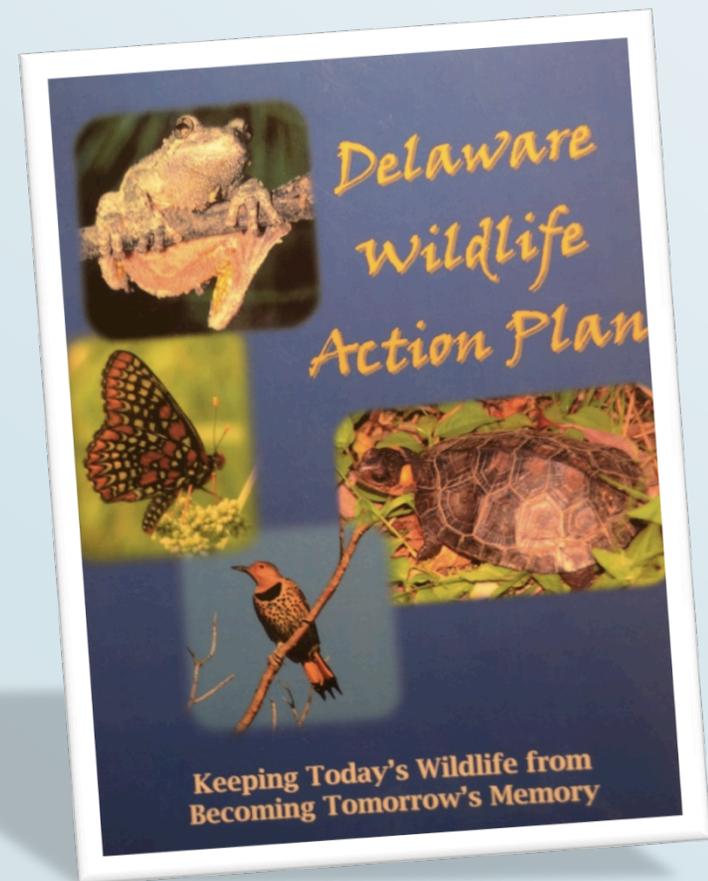


Building on a Solid Foundation...

Much of the ground work has been laid in the original 2006 document.

- Identifying species of greatest conservation need and their habitats
- Identifying the threats and problems that affect wildlife and habitats
- Developing conservation actions to address and mitigate these threats

DFW staff and project consultants have already begun a preliminary review of these elements and will make recommendations informed by the current status of species and key habitats.



Implementation Successes

- Habitat protection with partner support
- Species-specific conservation plans
- Addressing existing and emerging threats:
 - Climate change and sea-level rise
 - White-nose Syndrome in bats
 - Consistent response to development projects
- Closing knowledge gaps:
 - Intensive bird survey work through BBA
 - Increased knowledge of invertebrate species presence and distribution

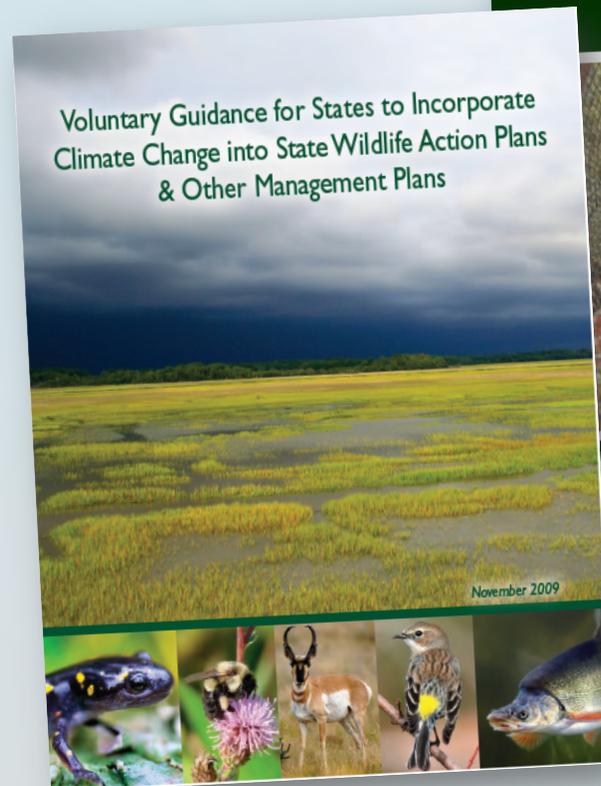


National Guidance

In addition to the eight required elements, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) has developed voluntary guidance for:

- Incorporating Climate Change
- Measuring Effectiveness
- Best Practices for Revision

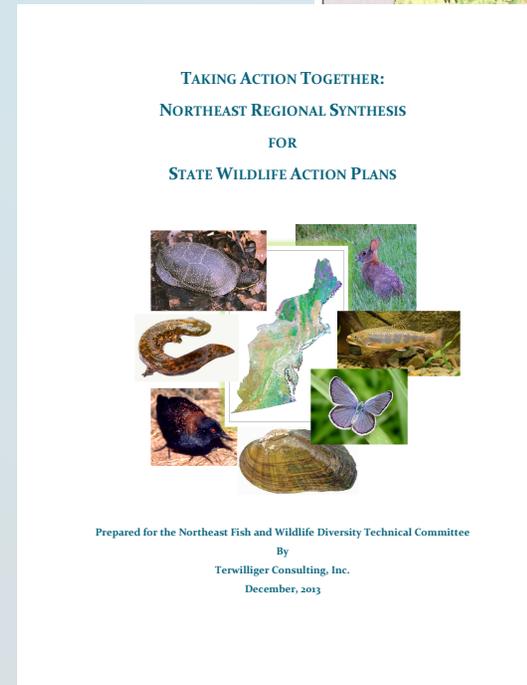
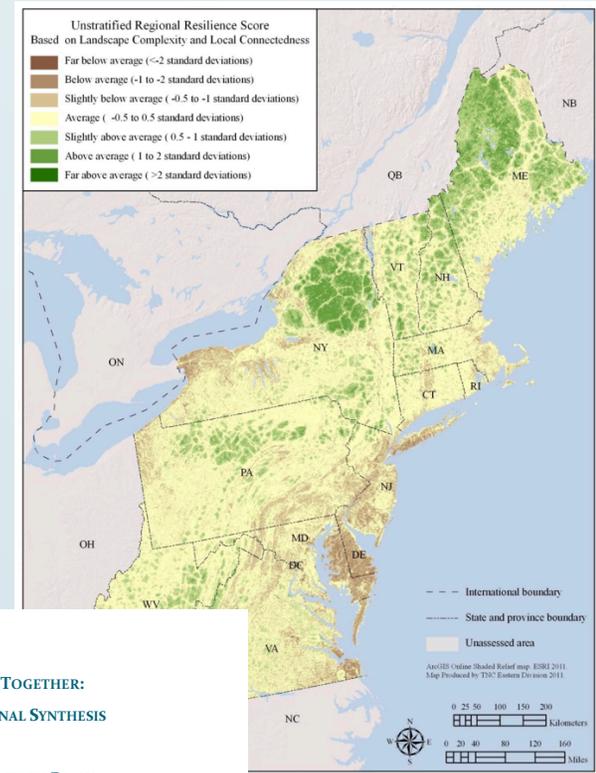
We will continue to work closely with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to keep abreast of any new developments or guidance.



Regional Guidance

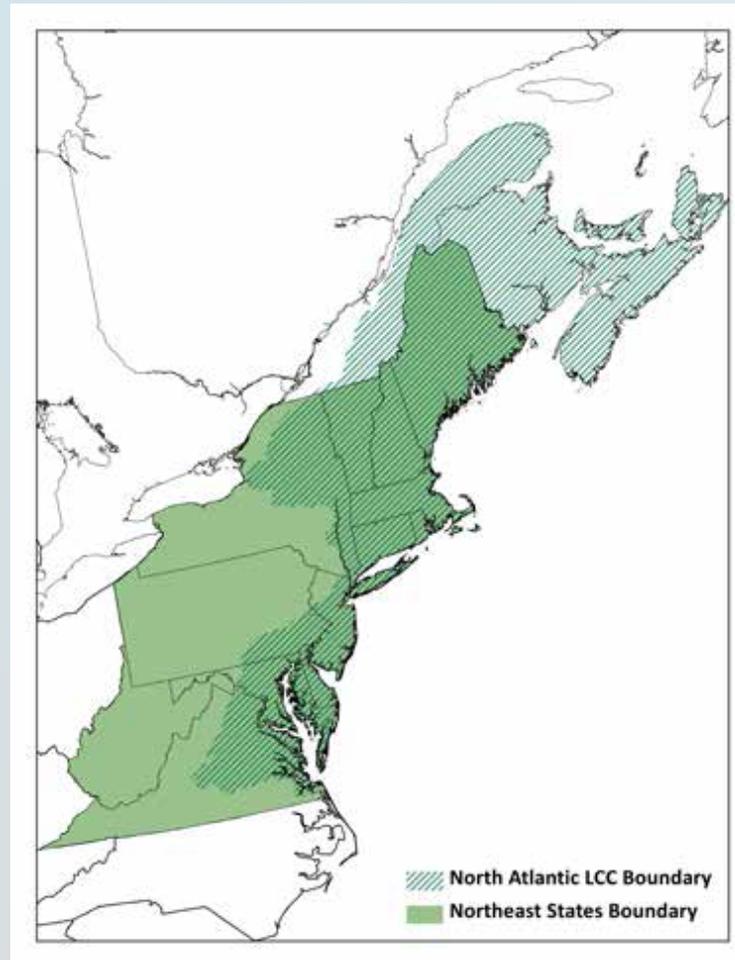
NEAFWA- 13 Northeast states and DC have agreed to improve collaborative conservation work by standardizing the terms and processes used in WAP elements via the **Northeast Lexicon for State Wildlife Action Plan Revision**.

The **Northeast Synthesis** provides a regional perspective on each of the 8 Elements of the WAP, with lessons learned from 50 Regional Conservation Network projects.



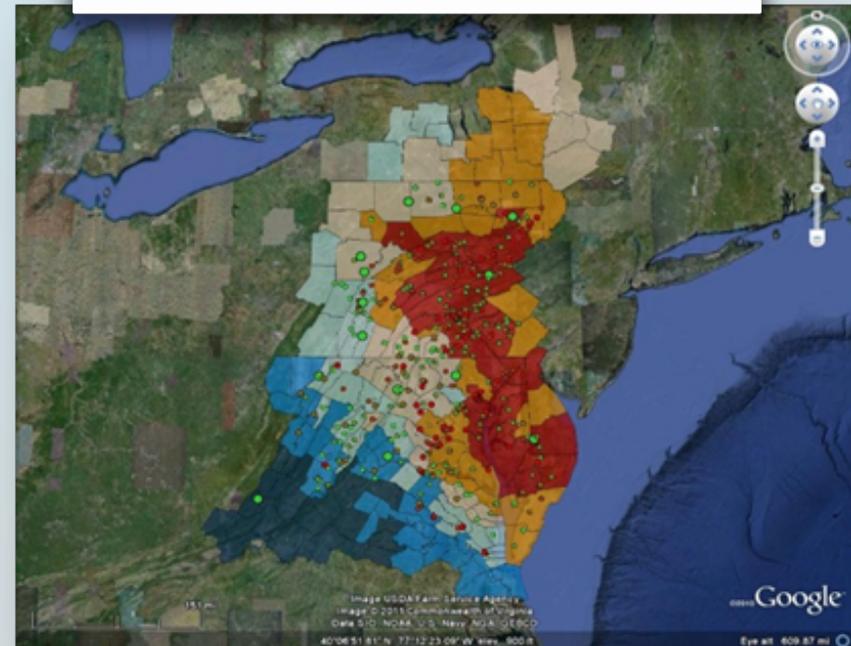
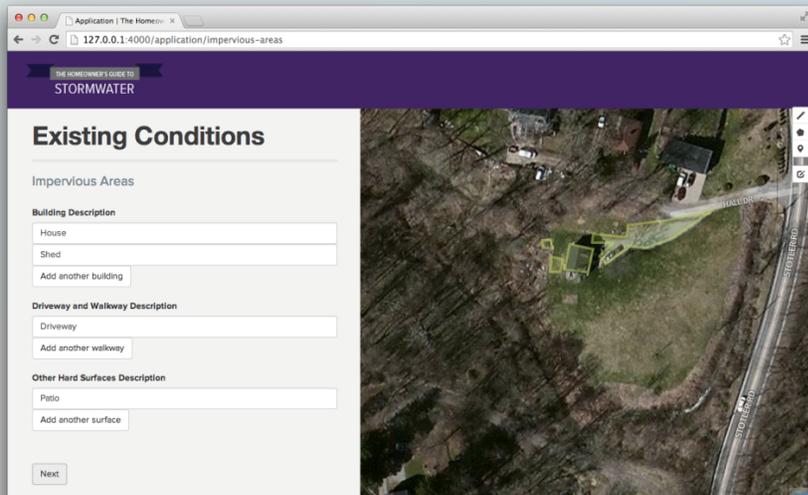
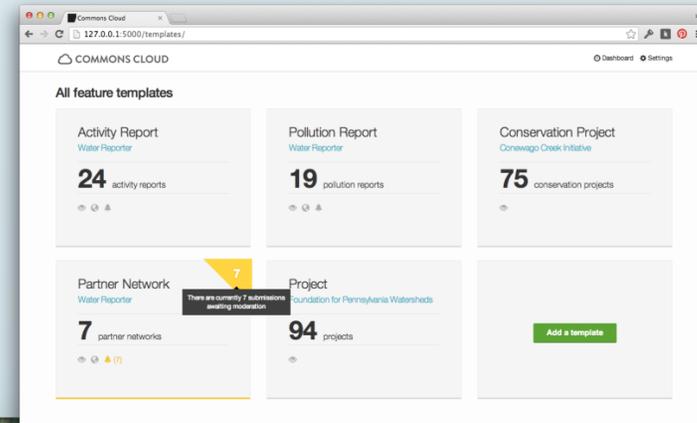
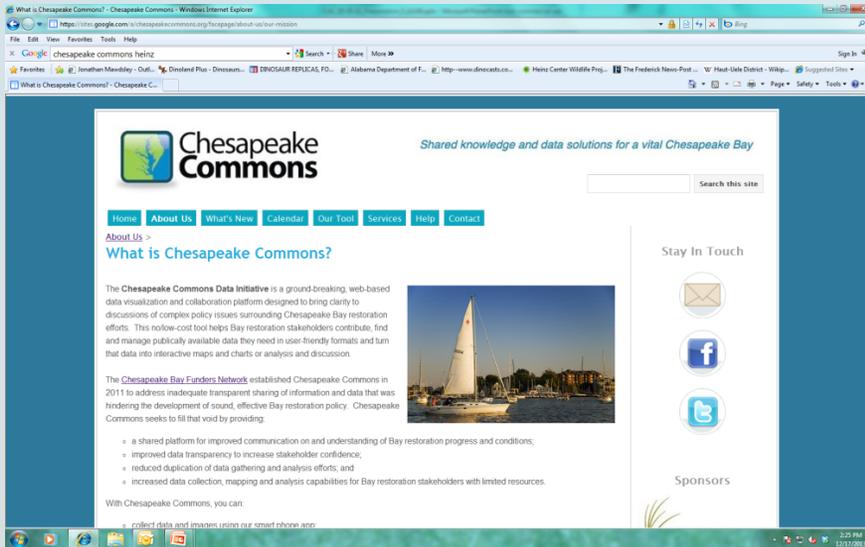
Working in a Regional Context. . .

Use data products from North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative on Regional species and Habitats of concern



End Products: User Friendly Plan and Database

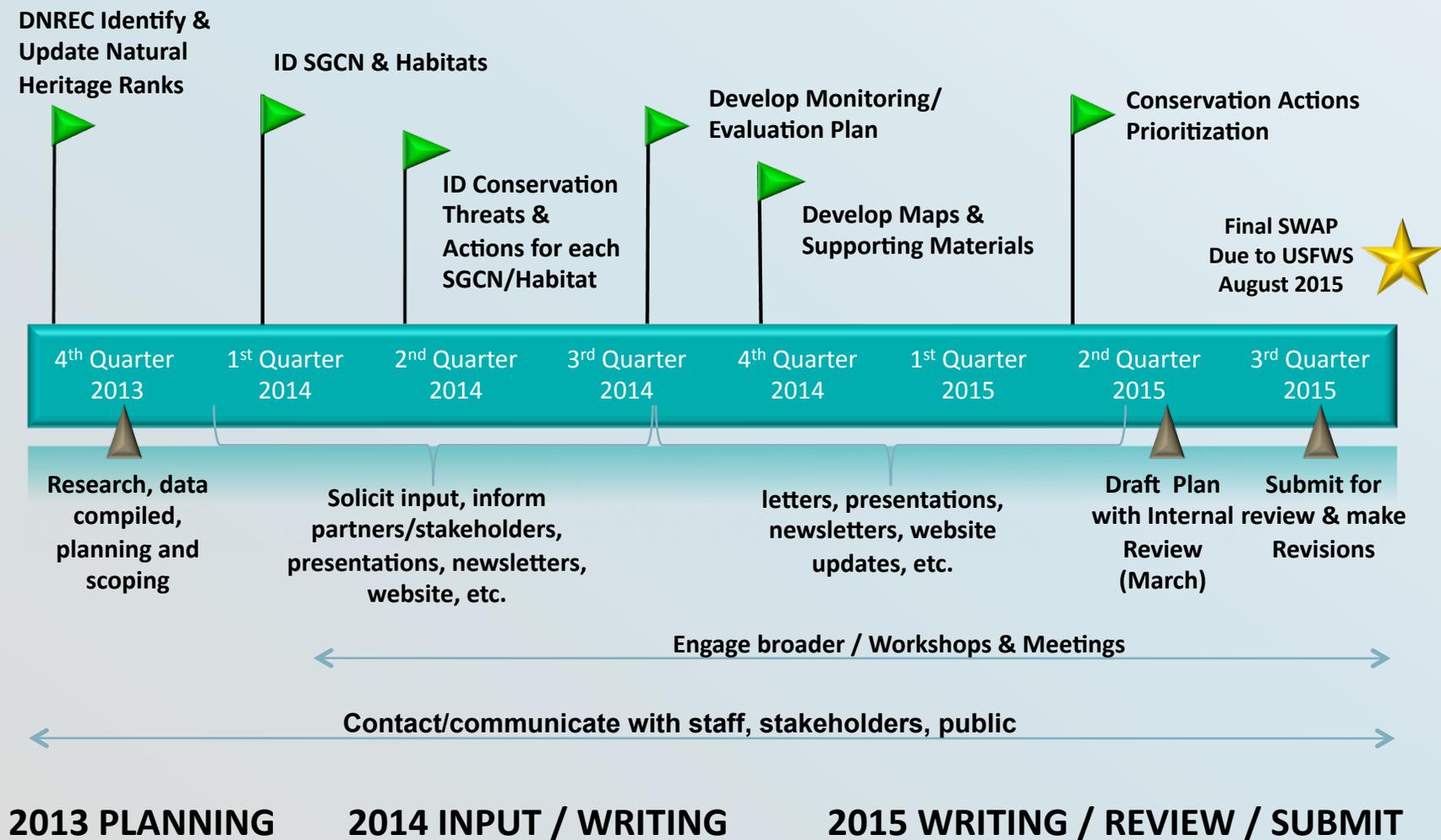
Innovative data management, data collection, and data analysis tools



Wildlife Action Plan – Eight Required Elements

- 1 • Species of Greatest Conservation Need
- 2 • Key Habitats
- 3 • Threats
- 4 • Conservation Actions (*prioritized*)
- 5 • Monitoring, measuring effectiveness, adaptive management
- 6 • Plans for future revision and Review of WAP
- 7 • Coordination with Partners
- 8 • Public Participation

Delaware Wildlife Action Plan Timeline



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Delaware's Wildlife Diversity

Although we are a small state, Delaware supports a remarkable diversity of wildlife.



There are over 1,000 species documented in the state, plus thousands of additional invertebrate species, all depending on a landscape that includes over 100 distinct terrestrial and wetland habitats.



Element 1. Greatest Conservation Need (GCN) Species



- REVIEW: 2006 GCN Criteria and GCN Species Lists
- UPDATE: GCN Criteria and Lists (staff and expert input)
- IMPROVE: Regional scope by including Regional GCN species
- IMPROVE: Develop a prioritization method to identify which species to focus the most resources on

Element 2. Key Habitats

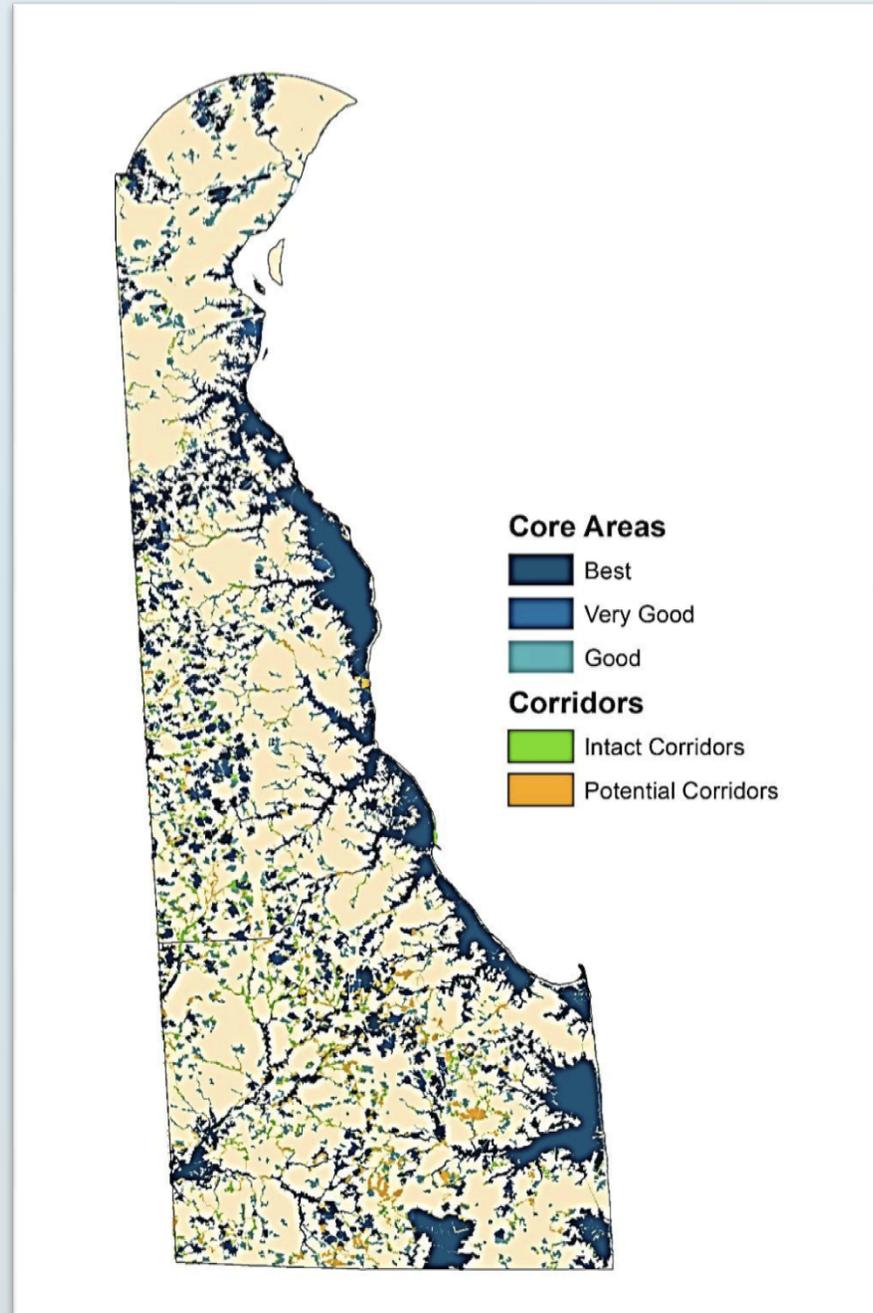


- REVIEW: Vegetation Communities, Habitats, and links to GCN Species
- UPDATE: Habitat nomenclature and classification
- IMPROVE: Cross-reference Habitats to standard regional systems (e.g. NE Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife Habitats)
- IMPROVE: focus of habitat conservation by Identifying and Mapping **Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs)** for GCN Species

Delaware Ecological Network

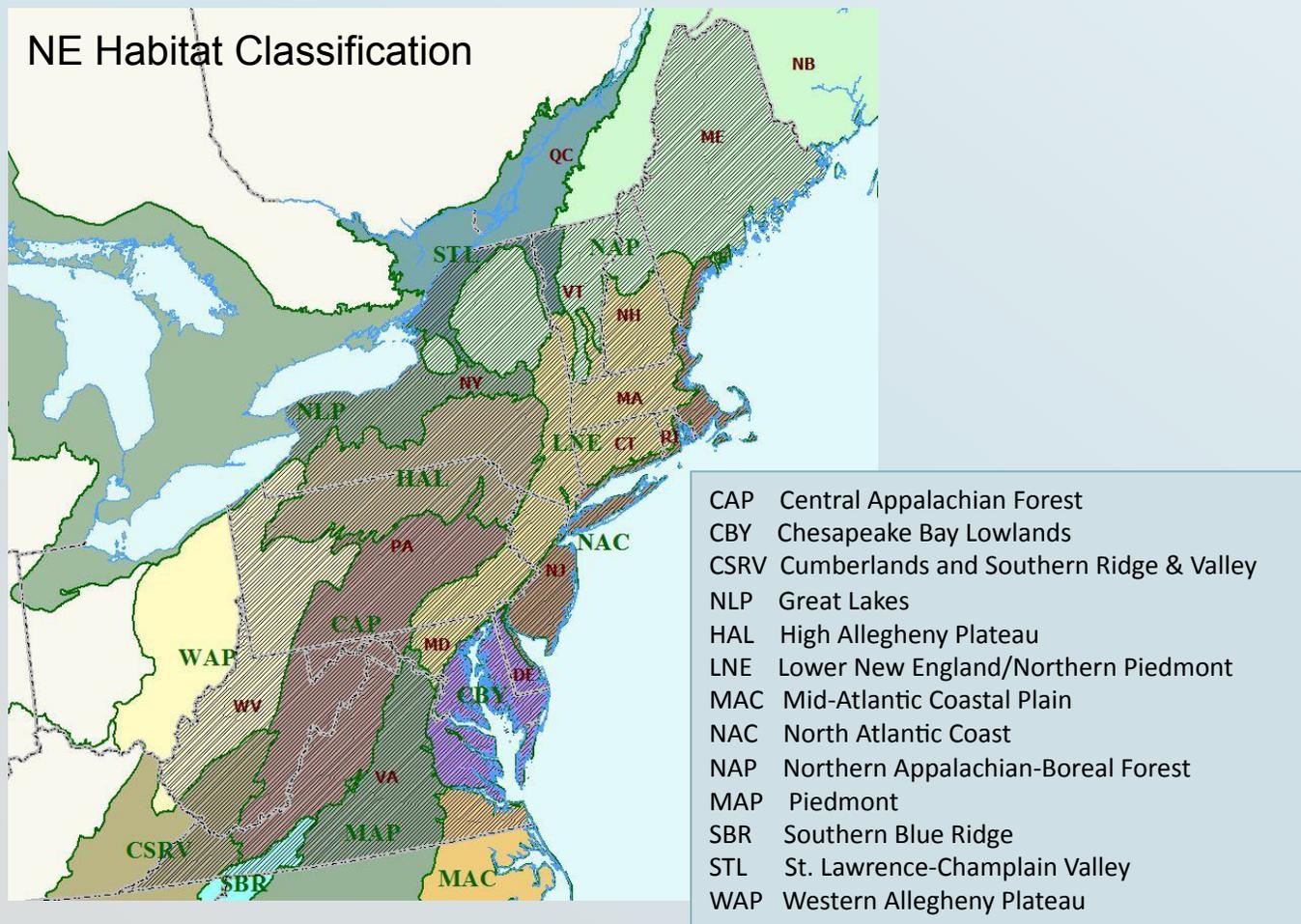
Spatial model to ID most ecologically important areas.

Based on rare species occurrence and size and type of habitat.



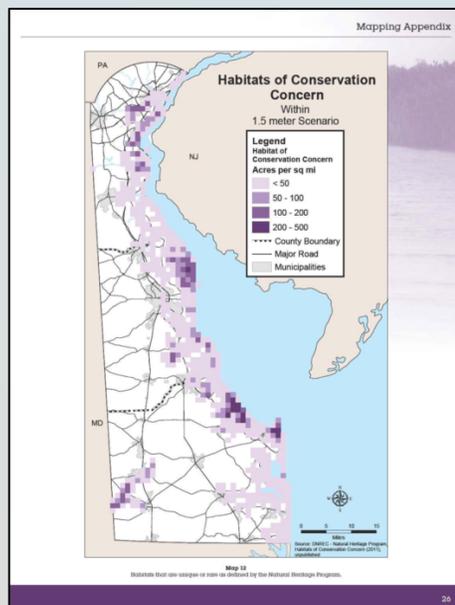
Working in a Regional Context. . .

Advances in regional habitat mapping provide the opportunity to put DE habitats into the context of the northeast landscape.

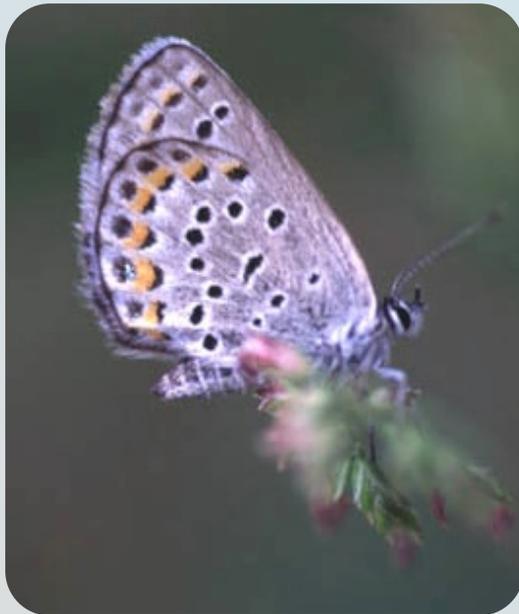


Element 3. Threats

- REVIEW: Threats to Species and Habitats
- UPDATE: Threat names and classification scheme to standard terminology
- IMPROVE: New Emphasis on **Climate Change** and associated threats



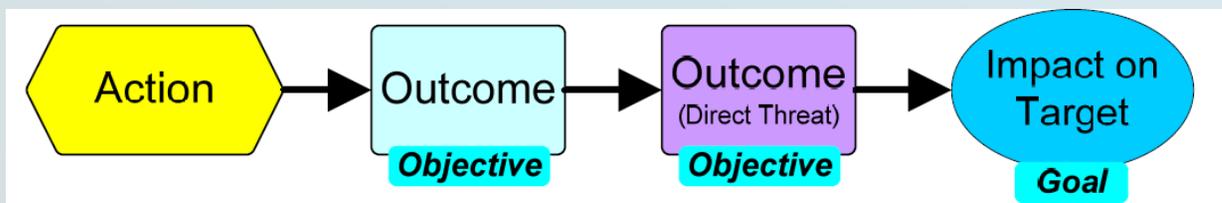
Element 4. Conservation Actions



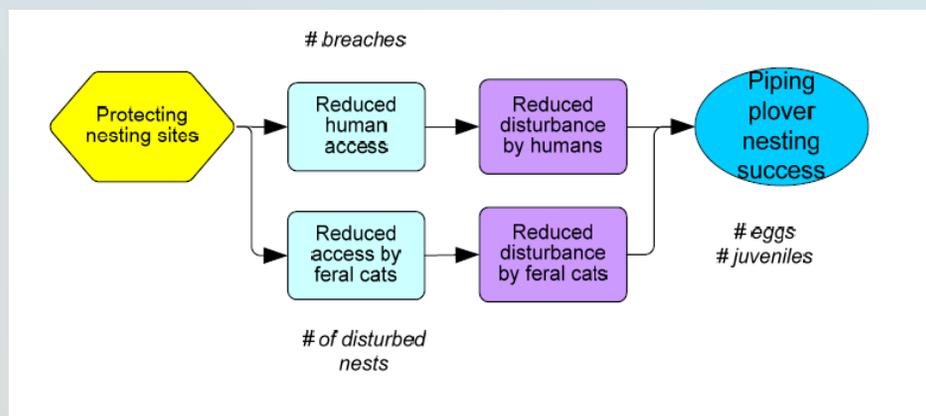
- REVIEW: 2006 Conservation Actions
- UPDATE: Generate more **specific** Conservation Actions with the input of partners and stakeholders
- IMPROVE: Conservation Actions by **prioritizing** on the basis of biological impact, cost, and opportunity
- IMPROVE: Directly engage partners in Conservation Actions

Element 5. Monitoring

- REVIEW: Existing Species and Habitat Monitoring Programs being conducted by agencies, NGOs, and academia
- UPDATE: 3 Tiers of Monitoring: Species and Habitats, Effectiveness Measures, Adaptive Management
- IMPROVE: Use standard Northeast Regional Monitoring and Performance Measures; incorporate US FWS reporting metrics



Use “Results Chains” to structure the monitoring data



Standard metrics for tracking and reporting progress

Element 6. Plan for Future Revision

- Web-enabling will allow for minor revision when needed throughout the life of the WAP
- Plan is no longer static document



Element 7. Coordination With Partners

- Engage partners in identifying and prioritizing species, habitats, threats, and actions
- Build and strengthen interagency and intra-agency partnerships through the WAP
- Encourage ownership of WAP by partners
- Revitalize state Teaming With Wildlife coalition

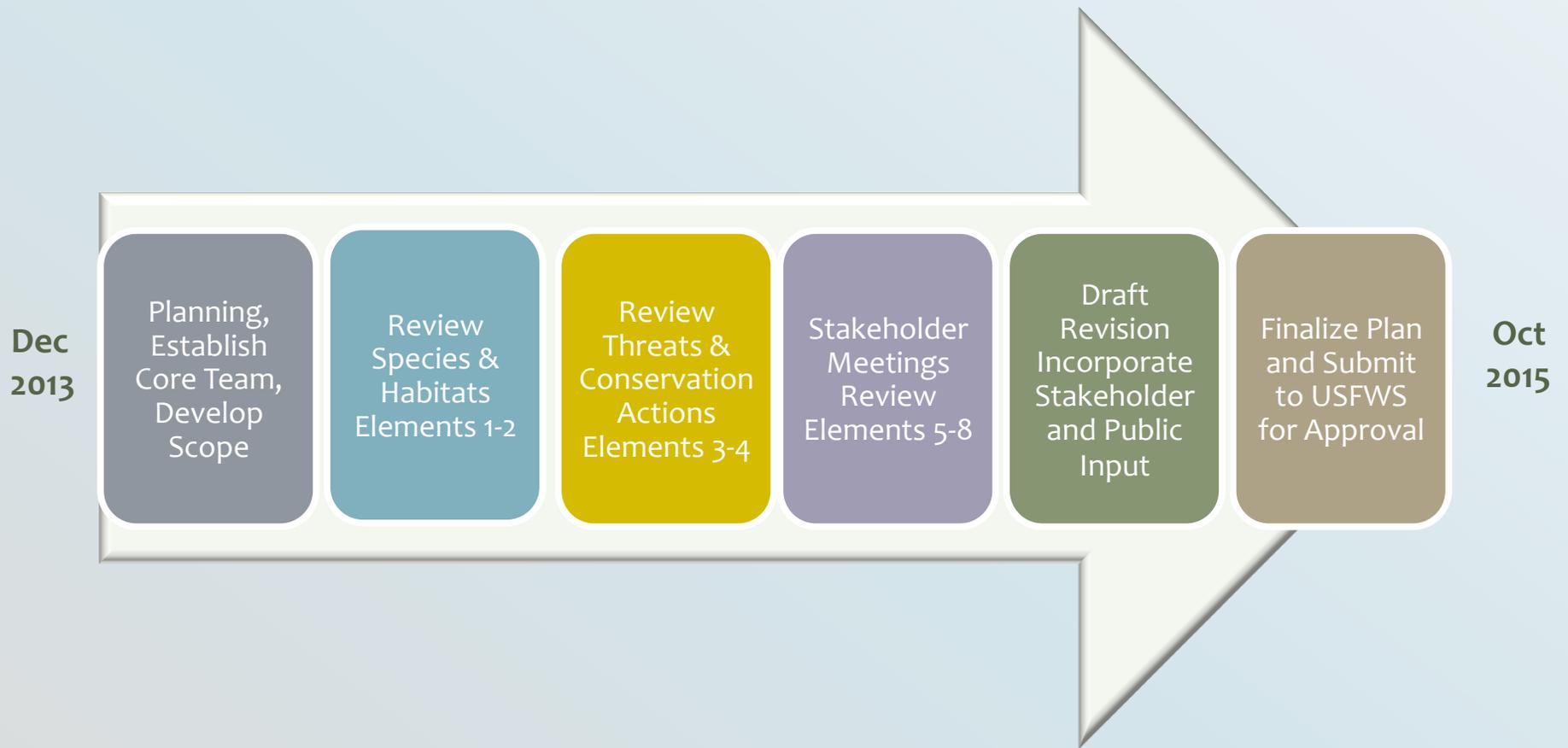


Element 8. Public Participation

- Identify key audiences
- Identify involvement goals appropriate to each audience
- Define involvement strategies
- Use Delaware's existing public comment procedure



WAP Revision Process



Increasing Levels of Stakeholder/Public Engagement

DNREC Participation

- Staff Expertise and Input for each Key Element
- Discussion



Delaware DNREC