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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Hudson River / New York Bight Ecosystem Restoration Initiative

Federal Trust Resources



The mission of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

The New York - New Jersey Harbor Estuary is the core area of the Hudson River / New York Bight Ecosystem. Although under considerable pressure and threat from competing development, federal trust fish and wildlife resources are diverse and impressive. Through focused coordination of federal and State agencies, and non-government environmental organization activities, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service) can take a pro-active role to sustain and safeguard this estuary via habitat restoration and land acquisition.

Primary Objectives of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Land Acquisition

Preservation of priority sites via acquisition will be a key component in protecting significant habitats for federal trust resources within the harbor estuary. Priority sites will be selected from various sources, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Harbor Estuary Program, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Hudson - Raritan Estuary Study Plan, the Service's (1997) Significant Habitats and Habitat Complexes of the New York Bight Watershed, and non-government environmental organizations.

Habitat Restoration

Site remediation and management are essential elements in further reducing adverse impacts of contaminants and habitat fragmentation in the harbor estuary. Remediation includes restoration and improvement of nursery habitat for estuarine and anadromous fish, restoration and enhancement of degraded wetlands and riparian habitats, water quality improvement, invasive species control, and completion of landfill clean-up.

Federal Project Coordination

The Service's New Jersey Field Office and Hudson River / New York Bight Ecosystem Team will promote balancing sustainable development with fish and wildlife conservation in reviewing water resource and associated land-development projects, dredging and navigation projects, special area management plans, port development, and other activities occurring in the harbor estuary.





Hackensack Meadowlands, New Jersey

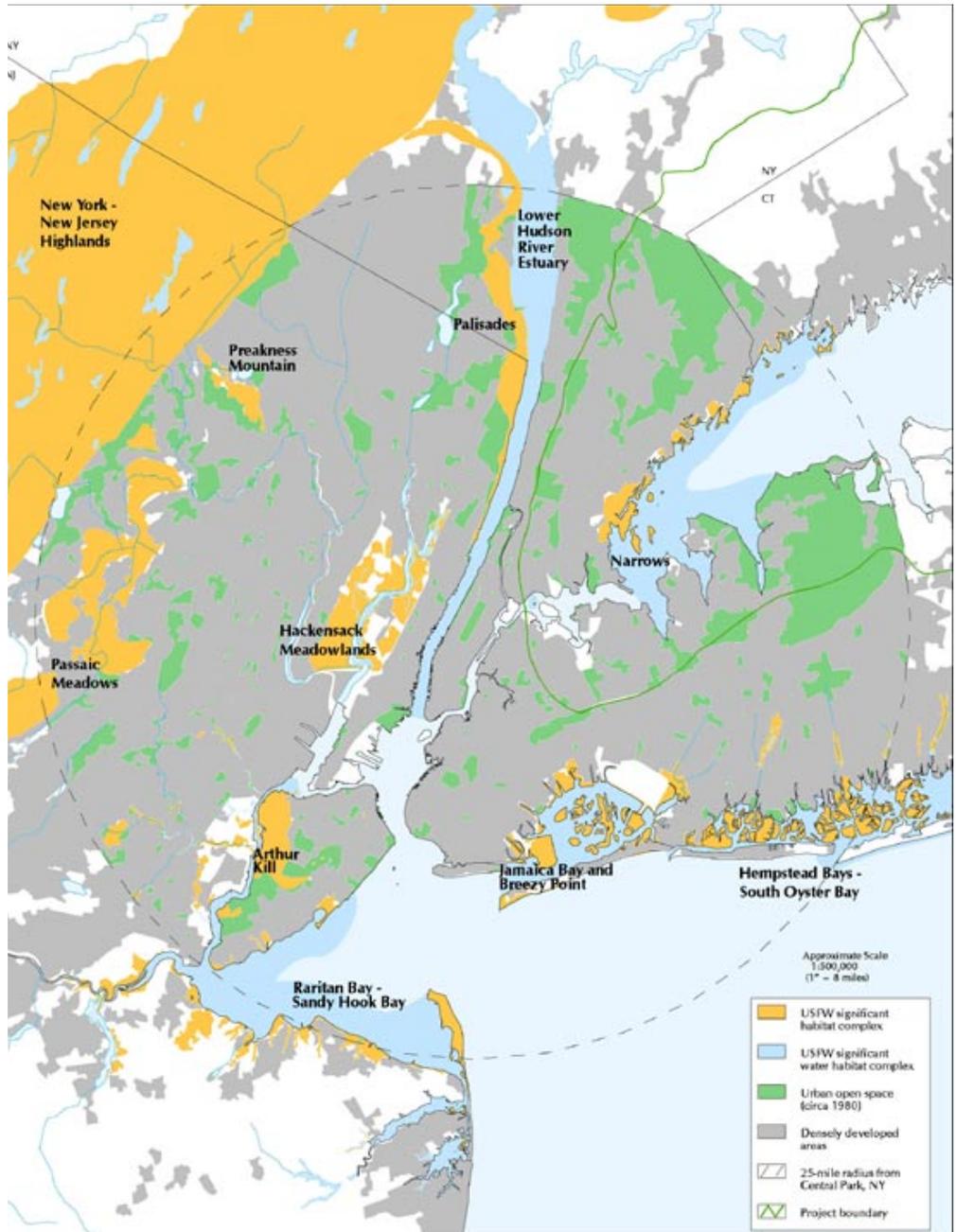
Photo: USFWS/Gene Nieminen

Partnership Development

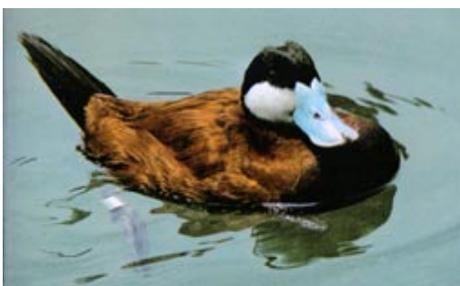
The initiative will rely heavily on development of partnership agreements with environmental groups concerned about the harbor estuary. Such groups include the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Environmental Defense, New Jersey Audubon Society, American Littoral Society, Natural Resources Defense Council, Hackensack Meadowlands Preservation Alliance, New York/New Jersey Baykeeper, and Columbia and Rutgers Universities.

Ecological Vision Plan

A comprehensive Ecological Vision Plan for habitat restoration and management of the New York - New Jersey Harbor Estuary will be developed in coordination with the Hudson River / New York Bight Ecosystem Team. The Vision Plan will be used to guide the Service's efforts in making sound restoration, acquisition, and management recommendations and evaluating agency and non-government environmental organization initiatives.



Significant Habitat Complexes in the New York / New Jersey Harbor Area



Ruddy Duck