



NEW JERSEY FIELD OFFICE

FIELD NOTES

MAY 2016



Congratulations to Wendy Walsh, the New Jersey Field Office's USFWS Region 5 – 2015 Endangered Species Recovery Champion!

As an endangered species biologist, Wendy Walsh is recognized for her leadership in advancing the recovery of the piping plover, swamp pink, seabeach amaranth, and, most notably, the red knot. Her role as a species lead for the red knot, taken on midway through a contentious listing process, underscores her ability to coordinate effectively with various interests while navigating the complexities of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Walsh's efforts led to a final rule that was widely acclaimed for its critical analysis, particularly with regard to the projected effects of climate change on this wide-ranging shorebird. Her emphasis on the collaborative conservation intent of the ESA has resulted in a higher level of security for the piping plover, swamp pink, seabeach amaranth, and red knot. She has filled in critical gaps in our knowledge of these species and made important contributions toward their recovery.





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Protecting Knieskern's beaked-rush **By Jeremy Markuson**

This month the New Jersey Field Office reviewed a Jersey Central Power & Light (JCP&L) transmission line reinforcement project in Monmouth County. Part of the review addressed potential impacts to the federally listed (threatened) Knieskern's beaked-rush. To avoid and minimize impacts to the species, JCP&L will implement several conservation measures and incorporate three years of monitoring activities to document changes in habitat conditions. In addition to incorporating several important conservation measures into the project designs, JCP&L has agreed to contribute approximately \$34,000 in mitigation to address the potential loss of Knieskern's beaked-rush habitat. The mitigation funds will be used to further the recovery of the species in the Pinelands of New Jersey. Congressional District 4.



JCP&L transmission line reinforcement project in Monmouth County.
Photo Credit: Jeremy Markuson, USFWS



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Knieskern's beaked-rush

Photo Credit: Jeremy Markuson, USFWS



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World Fish Migration Day at Spring Lake By Katie Conrad

On Saturday May 21, 2016, the USFWS, the American Littoral Society, and the Wreck Pond Pals manned a table for World Fish Migration Day at the Spring Lake Irish Festival. We educated men in kilts, Irish step dancers, and festival-goers about their local migratory fish species and how we were working on improving fish passage within the Wreck Pond watershed. However, the fun was cut short due to (ironically) rain. Congressional District 4.



Posing with their favorite migratory fish: Katie Conrad (USFWS), Zack Royle (American Littoral Society), and Eileen Eilenberger (Wreck Pond Pals). Photo credit: Thomas Yip.



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New Jersey Field Office Strategic Conservation - NRDAR **By Melissa Foster**

The Federal Trustee Council for the Pompton Lakes Works (PLW) Site Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR; Melissa Foster of the New Jersey Field Office, Mark Barash of the Department of the Interior Solicitor's Office, and Nancy Werdel of the National Park Service), held a public information session in Pompton Lakes, New Jersey. The Trustee Council presented an overview of the NRDAR process and an update on the status of the PLW case. The audience included members of the PLW Citizen's Advisory Group, the general public, and the media. Congressional District 11.





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Draft Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment Addressing In-River Injury By Melissa Foster

The Environmental Contaminants Staff of the New Jersey Field Office announce the May 6, 2016 release of a Draft Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment (RP/EA) addressing in-river injury to natural resources resulting from hazardous substance releases at the American Cyanamid Co. Superfund Site in Bridgewater Township, New Jersey. The Draft RP/EA, developed in coordination with co-trustees (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the State of New Jersey), proposes the removal of the Weston Mill Dam on the Millstone River, and a feasibility analysis and design of fish passage at the Island Farm Weir on the Raritan River. The Draft RP/EA will be available for public review and comment until June 6, 2016 at the following website: <https://darrp.noaa.gov/hazardous-waste/american-cyanamid>. The Trustees will develop a final Restoration Plan after completion of the public comment period. Congressional District: 12.



Weston Mill Dam. Photo Credit: Carl Alderson, NOAA



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Strategic Conservation - Aquatic Connectivity **By Eric Schrading**

The Fisheries Program notified NJFO that they are funding (\$50,000) for the removal of the Blackwells Mills Dam on the Millstone River in Somerset County, NJ. The NJFO has worked with the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association (SBMWA) for a number of years to prepare a Feasibility Report. The NJFO will assist SBMWA and the Fisheries Program in obtaining permits for the project, oversight, as well as securing additional funds for project implementation. Congressional District: 12.





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HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY!



Portage Glacier, Portage, Alaska
Photo Credit: Elizabeth Ciuzio Freiday, USFWS