



2001 Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

Program Focus —

Hackettstown High School biology teacher Bob Vellucci and over 250 of his students have volunteered for several years as part of a WHIP fish habitat enhancement project on the Musconetcong River in Warren County in rural northwestern New Jersey. In 1998 a private landowner near the high school was awarded \$2,500 in WHIP funds to enhance fish habitat on this popular trout-fishing stream. Since then high school biology students have planted trees, shrubs and herbaceous wetland plants along the river to provide shade and prevent soil erosion. The students have also moved tons of rock by hand to help construct stone deflectors, designed by the NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife, that will improve habitat for trout and other stream life. The students have adopted the stream reach as their outdoor classroom and regularly monitor stream flows, macroinvertebrates, fish and plant life along the stream. The WHIP project has helped students foster positive attitudes about fish and wildlife. In addition, a unique partnership among landowners, a school, and government agencies has evolved.



New Jersey Summary

Overview

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop or improve wildlife habitat on private lands. It provides for both technical assistance and financial assistance through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). With the cooperation of the NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Trout Unlimited, NJ Audubon and others, NRCS has developed a state plan to target WHIP financial and technical assistance in several areas.

We have targeted three priority wildlife habitat areas in New Jersey: Walkkill River Watershed in Sussex County, Inner Coastal Plain Agricultural Lands from Mercer to Cumberland County, and Lower Cape May. We have also targeted three priority species of wildlife impacted by agriculture. These are the Bog turtle, Bobwhite quail, and grassland birds. Lastly, we included three statewide important practices: school site habitat development, fish habitat enhancement in streams, and invasive exotic vegetation control.

Accomplishments

In FY2001, NRCS received 74 applications requesting \$252,965. Of these, 25 were funded. These 25 contracts provided funding for wildlife management on 495 acres. Management activities included both wetland and upland wildlife management, along with management of 18 acres for bog turtle habitat.

In addition, two WHIP Cooperative Agreements were implemented this year. An agreement was signed with the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife's Endangered and Nongame Species Program, providing WHIP funds for management of habitats for the federally threatened bog turtle on private and state lands throughout New Jersey. A second agreement was signed with New Jersey Audubon to provide funds for wildlife habitat management in Lower Cape May, a critical stop over for birds and insects migrating along the Atlantic Coast.

Program Benefits

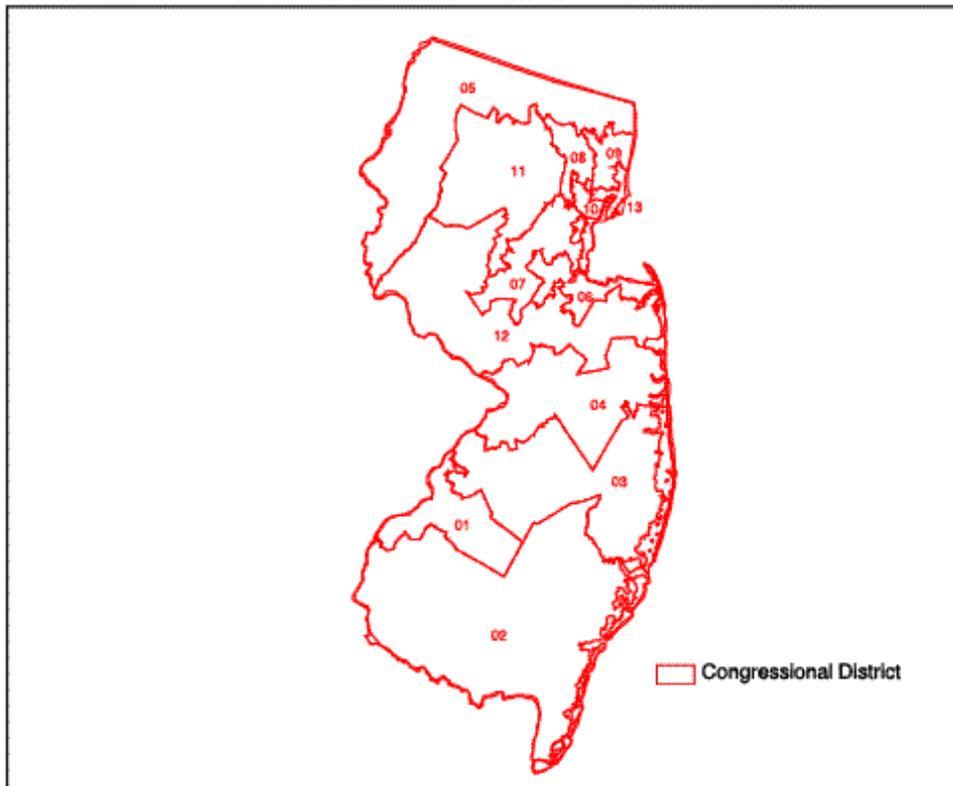
WHIP has not only provided direct benefits to wildlife, but has improved environmental education among the state's school children. Numerous school site habitat developments have been installed throughout the state, providing increased awareness of wildlife and other environmental issues to many children who might not otherwise have an opportunity to explore wildlife management and issues.

Community projects with organizations such as Trout Unlimited have helped to restore valued trout habitat and have increased community awareness. These activities have spawned other projects and volunteer contributions to wildlife management.

State contact

Tim Dunne, Biologist, Box 3, Suite 21, 1322 Route 31 North, Annandale, NJ 08801
Telephone: (908) 735-0737; email: tdunne@nj.nrcs.usda.gov

New Jersey Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District



New Jersey Dollars and Contracts

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2001		Cumulative Total (95-01)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	0	0	13,701	4
District 2	27,118	8	151,060	41
District 3	9,250	1	53,001	14
District 4	578	1	10,170	6
District 5	42,402	5	117,398	31
District 6	2,106	2	5,606	4
District 7	0	0	12,640	3
District 8	0	0	0	0
District 9	0	0	2,500	1
District 10	0	0	0	0
District 11	13,438	3	19,847	6
District 12	35,836	7	133,941	37
State Totals	130,728	27	519,864	147

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