



Bog Turtle

Listing Status: Threatened

Connecticut

Background

The bog turtle (*Glyptemys muhlenbergii*), America's smallest turtle, is federally listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Bog turtles depend upon a habitat mosaic of open, sunny, spring fed wetlands and scattered dry areas. Bog turtles can be an indicator of water quality and wetland function; the wetland habitats that they require provide important ecosystem services including purifying water, recharging underground aquifers, and absorbing floodwaters. The wetlands also support many rare plants and animals.

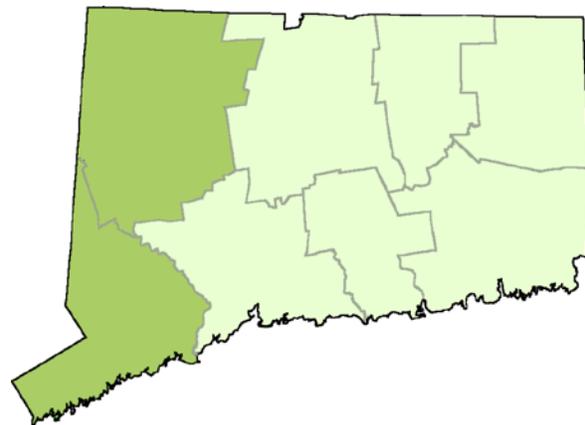
The greatest threats to bog turtles include habitat degradation and fragmentation from land conversion, habitat succession due to invasive exotic and native plants, and illegal trade and collecting. Changes in land use or alterations in water flow reduce a wetland's ability to function. Wetland habitats have been drained and filled for development, agriculture, road construction, and impoundments have severely fragmented the remaining habitat and have created physical barriers, isolating existing bog turtle populations.

Private landowners control the majority of bog turtle habitat remaining in the northeast. Many of the wetlands are located in agricultural areas that are subject to frequent livestock grazing. Proper grazing management conserves habitat by slowing natural plant succession and minimizing the encroachment of invasive native and exotic plant species. However, heavy grazing may destroy bog turtle habitat that is necessary for nesting, basking, foraging, and cover.

NRCS has worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to initiate a range-wide Biological Opinion for bog turtle habitat restoration activities. Working Lands for Wildlife will provide financial and technical support to increase conservation efforts.

Focal Area in Connecticut

Bog Turtle



Resource Concern	Total Acres Needing Treatment
Fish and Wildlife Inadequate Habitat; Food and Cover; Habitat Degradation	TBD
Degraded Plant Condition Excessive plant pest pressure	TBD
Water Quality Degradation Excessive nutrients and pesticides	TBD

Goals/Objectives

Through Working Lands for Wildlife, NRCS will help private landowners combat habitat fragmentation and degradation to restore bog turtle populations in seven states, and increase landowner confidence that the conservation practices they volunteer to implement will not harm the species or its habitat. Restoration activities will complement the existing NRCS Wetland Reserve Program effort to protect bog turtle habitat.

Actions

- Protect, maintain, and restore bog turtle habitat
- Increase connectivity of existing bog turtle habitat
- Improve weed and invasive species management
- Support sustainable grazing management that supports native plant communities
- Promote use of government programs that provide incentives for development or restoration of habitat on private lands

Core Practices	Supporting Practices	
643 Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitats	314 Brush Management	472 Access Control
644 Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management	315 Herbaceous Weed Control	516 Livestock Pipeline
645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	327 Conservation Cover	528 Prescribed Grazing
647 Early Successional Habitat Development and Management	338 Prescribed Burning	578 Stream Crossing
	382 Fence	580 Streambank and Shoreline Protection
	390 Riparian Herbaceous Cover	587 Structure for Water Control
	391 Riparian Forest Buffer	614 Watering Facility
	393 Filter Strip	642 Water Well
	394 Firebreak	657 Wetland Restoration
	395 Stream Habitat Improvement	659 Wetland Enhancement
	410 Grade Stabilization	

Outcomes and Impacts

Landowners will enhance, restore, and protect habitat for bog turtle, aiding in the implementation of its recovery plan and increasing landowner confidence that conservation practices they implement will not harm the species or its habitat.

Additional species benefiting in this focal area are: wild turkey, northern bobwhite, mourning dove, bass, and trout.



Contact Information

Danielson Field Office – 71 Westcott Road, Danielson	850.779.0557
Hamden Field Office – 51 Mill Pond Road, Hamden	203.287.8038
Norwich Field Office – 238 West Town Street, Norwich	860.887.3604
Torrington Field Office – 1185 New Litchfield Street, Torrington	860.626.8258
Windsor Field Office – 100 Northfield Drive, 4 th Floor, Windsor	860.688.7724

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex (including gender identity and expression), marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410. Or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.