

State Wildlife Grants Program and the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy

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Today's Plan

- o SWG Goals and Objectives, Partners & CWCS
- o Update
 - 2007 RFA
 - 2008 RFA
- o 5-Year Action Plans
- o Next Meeting: November 1, 2007



Background of the State Wildlife Grants Program

- o Program grew out of Conservation and Reinvestment Act compromise language
- o The program was first authorized by congress in 2002



What does the program do?

SWG program is intended to assist states in **biodiversity preservation**

- Tied to "species in greatest need of conservation"
- These are species which have not traditionally received funding for management
- Intended to avoid new listings of endangered species



How does the program work?

- o Congress makes an annual appropriation
- o The funds are apportioned to each state based on a formula
- o States had to commit to write a Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy by Oct. 2005

How does the program work? (cont'd)

- o The individual states apply for their apportionment annually from USFWS
- o The program pays for both species investigations and implementation projects
- o Match required -- 50%

NY's SWG funding so far...

Federal Fiscal Year	National Total	NY Allocation
FFY 2001 (WCRP)	\$50 M	\$2.33 M
FFY 2002	\$85 M	\$3.73 M
FFY 2003	\$65 M	\$2.78 M
FFY 2004	\$70 M	\$2.95 M
FFY 2005	\$69.12 M	\$2.94 M
<i>FFY 2006</i>	<i>\$68.5 M</i>	<i>\$2.90 M</i>

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS)

- Mandated by congress to remain eligible for funding
- There are 8 required elements in the CWCS
- Submitted to USFWS for acceptance



8 Required Elements:

1. Info on the distribution and abundance of "species of greatest conservation need"
2. Descriptions of locations and condition of key habitats
3. Descriptions of problems and research/survey needs
4. Descriptions of the conservation actions proposed
5. Plans for monitoring species & habitats
6. Descriptions of procedures to revise the Plan
7. Plans for coordinating the development, implementation, review and revision of the Plan
8. Procedures for gaining public input

CWCS development process:

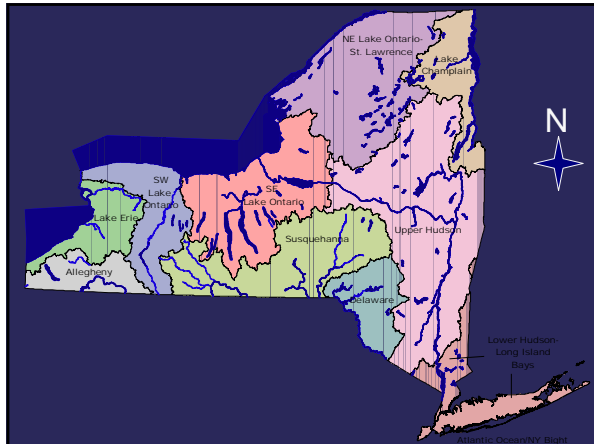
- Species of Greatest Conservation Need identified through staff & public process
 - Approximately 536 species organized in 131 taxonomic groupings
 - Lead staff identified within DFWMR for each taxonomic group
- Status of species, threats, critical habitats, and proposed actions identified for each group

CWCS development process:

- Monitoring section drafted at a conceptual level
- Plan will ideally be updated every 5 years and completely revised every 10 years
- We described the process we used to involve over 70 statewide agency, NGO, and tribal representatives, plus watershed review teams, and public comment

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy Structure

- Organized by major watersheds of the state
- Species information analyzed by each watershed
 - List species occurring in the basin
 - List critical habitats of the basin
 - Priority conservation actions in the basin
- Information from other planning documents reviewed and included.



Collaborative Process

- Steering committee
- Species and species groups
- Staff input
- Peer review
- Partnership group

New Ways of Working Under SWG

- Addressing both natural resources and environmental quality issues
- Creating stronger interdivisional relationships
 - Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources
 - Division of Lands and Forests
 - Division of Water

Other executive agencies involved

- NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation
 - Manage over 170 state park facilities, including state park preserves.
- NY Department of State
 - Delegated responsibility for Coastal Zone Management Act at the state level.

New Staff

- Federal Fiscal Year 2004 funds were used to hire 9 ecologists within 11 major watersheds and 1 data coordinator
- New staff will implement the SWG program and the recommendations in the CWCS
- This single year of funds will cover staff salaries for at least three years
- The new staff will work with multiple conservation partners to generate and implement new projects within watersheds



SWG in 2007



American black duck

- January 2007 DEC, advertised an Request for Applications for \$2.94 million in FFY 2005 funds to implement actions in the CWCS
- Any state agency, municipality, non-profit group were eligible to apply

Project Funding Parameters

- Projects must occur within the boundaries of NYS, or use data collected in NYS
- Projects must fall within one of the following categories:
 - Inventory and Research (\$590,517)
 - Planning and Coordination (\$738,146)
 - Management and Restoration (\$1,181,034)
 - Performance Monitoring (\$442,888)



American woodcock



Ruffed grouse

SWG FFY 2005 Application Summary

- 93 applications received requesting \$12,308,446
- 21 Applications were received for the Southwest Lake Ontario Watershed
- Award letters should be going out in the next week.
- Similar RFA will be going out in January

Northeast Regional Conservation Needs Grant Program

- Many of the conservation needs identified in the state wildlife action plans are best addressed at a landscape-scale – a scale that does not conform to state boundaries.
- [Regional Monitoring and Performance Reporting Framework Project](#)
- [Northeastern Wildlife Habitat Classification Project](#)
- <http://rcngrants.org/index.shtml>

What are we up to now?

- Watershed teams are being created to prioritize conservation efforts
 - 5 year Watershed Action Plans will be created for each watershed
 - Partners and sources of match will be identified for future projects
- Need to increase capacity to work with private land owners
- Need to create effective private easement and purchase options



Top threats to Species of Greatest Conservation Need Statewide

- Habitat loss and fragmentation
 - Only 15% of state land area in public ownership
- Contaminant deposition
 - Acids
 - Mercury
 - Nitrogen products
- Degraded water quality & altered hydrology



Top threats to Species of Greatest Conservation Need Statewide (cont'd)

- Invasive species
- Changing farm and forestry practice
- Direct human-wildlife interactions
 - Collisions
 - Poaching
 - Unregulated harvest
- Climate change

Outcomes – Conservation Recommendations

- Data Collection
- Planning
- Management and Restoration
- Land Protection
- Regulatory and Legislative
- Information Dissemination
- Incentives and Disincentives

Outcomes – Policy and Practice

- Moving away from single species management.
- Integrating fish and wildlife management with environmental quality.
- Dealing with species metapopulations
- Integrating fish and wildlife disciplines through habitat management.

Highlights of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (Full List)

- Birds (118)
- Freshwater fish (40)
- Marine & Diadromous fish (51)
 - Forage species
 - Anadromous fish
 - Sharks, skates, rays
- Invertebrates
 - Mollusks (59)
 - Insects (197)
 - Crustacea (7)
- Mammals (21)
- Herpetofauna (44)

Fish Highlights

- Sturgeon
- American eel
- Longear sunfish
- Brook trout



Bird Highlights

- Raptors
- Shorebirds
- Marsh birds
- Common nighthawk
- Waterfowl
- Colonial nesters



Mammal highlights:

- Bats
- River otter



Amphibian and Reptile Highlights:

- Snakes
- Salamanders
- Frogs and toads
- Turtles



Invertebrate Highlights:

- Moths
- Dragonflies and damselflies
- Mussels



Southwest Lake Ontario Watershed

- The Southwest Lake Ontario Basin covers an area of 2.2 million acres in western and central New York.
- Three major subwatersheds, the West Lake Ontario, Lower Genesee, and Upper Genesee.
- All or part of 10 counties.
- Estimate in 2000 was 1.2 million people



5 year Action Plan

- Draft by the end of 2007
- Incorporate existing efforts in the watershed
 - LaMP
 - GLHI
 - Parks Master Planning Process
 - Sturgeon Draft Recovery Plan
 - Local Watershed Planning Efforts
 - Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISMS)

Goals and Objectives

- Determine the current and historical extent of grasslands, early successional and shrub, deciduous/mixed forest cover, and wetlands in the basin.
- Conduct habitat mosaic planning and set target goals for these habitat types (e.g., maintain X acres of wetlands, maintain Y acres of forests with larger diameter trees, increase the amount of grassland and early successional forest and shrub habitat by Z percent, etc.).
- Determine locations and monitor trends of SGCN in the basin.
- Maintain and improve stream systems by protecting and enhancing riparian buffers.
- Reduce pollution and siltation runoff into streams and tributaries.

Goals and Objectives (continued)

- Improve connectivity and habitat function of protected areas in the basin.
- Restore priority habitats affected by land use practices.
- Prevent further introductions of aquatic and terrestrial non-native invasive species.
- Monitor the quality and quantity of habitats on a 10-year rotational cycle.
- Identify specific threats to SGCN in order to prioritize habitat protection and restoration efforts.
- Identify key areas for acquisition, restoration, and/or other means of protection.

Action Planning

Identify priority actions for the next 5 years

- Activities where the threat to the resource is acute
- Short term activities that can be easily accomplished
- Long term activities that need to be started

Next Steps

Identify:

- Additional existing efforts for collaboration
- Logical lead for priority actions
- Intermediate steps need to accomplish or address priority actions
- Time frame for implementation

Watershed Meetings

- November 1, 2007 – Letchworth State Park Visitor Center
 - Continue with prioritization
 - Establish work groups
 - Aquatics, Fish, Mussels, Water Quality
 - Birds, Reptiles and Amphibians
 - Agriculture, Forestry, Local Land Use, and Acquisition
- Save the date: November 14th and 29th

Thank you!

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