Leveraging Agricultural BMPs with Wildlife Habitat on Working Lands in South Jersey

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New Jersey: The Garden State

New Jersey has the highest population density in the US, averaging 1,030 people per square mile. It is the only state where all 21 counties are considered a metropolitan area.

New Jersey is made up of about 790,000 acres or 16.7% of productive farmland.

The Garden State also boasts over 2.1 million acres or 45% of forest land.
Diverse Habitats in NJ

- Mountains & Forests in Northern NJ
- Forests & Wetlands in Southern NJ
- Pine Barrens
- Saltmarshes & Delaware Bay
- Grasslands & Agricultural Lands
- Beaches & Dunes
Diverse Habitat Means Diverse Wildlife

Over 460 birds
Over 250 nesting birds
79 reptiles and amphibians
400 fish
90 mammals
100 butterflies
Thousands of moths, dragonflies, and other insects

To put things into perspective, Alaska has:
102 mammals
10 reptiles and amphibians
150 fish
425 birds
According to NJDEP, approximately 81.7% of all land in NJ is privately owned.

According to US Fish and Wildlife Service, nearly half of all federally protected species rely on habitat that is on private lands.
The Kirkwood Cohansey Aquifer: Voluntary Restoration on Private Lands
Agricultural Restoration Focus Areas
Southern New Jersey
NJ Audubon rolled out the Healthy Land & Waters Grant program that provides technical and financial assistance to producers in the KC Cluster who are implementing practices that build soil health, improve water quality, and restore wildlife habitat:

- Riparian buffers & filter strips
- Cover crops
- Till management
- Pollinator habitat
- Grassed waterways
- And more!

Enrollment is now open for New Jersey Audubon’s Healthy Land and Waters Grants

Calling all producers who are interested in improving soil and water quality! If your land falls within one of our focal areas on the reverse side, this program is for you!

New Jersey Audubon is offering incentive payments to South Jersey farmers to reduce water consumption, build soil health, and improve water quality through a number of eligible practices. If you qualify, you could earn hundreds of dollars per acre while investing in a healthier watershed!

You could fix this...
- Address or redirect water pooling
- Protect and build up soil health
- Provide pollinator or wildlife habitat
- Reduce water consumption and fuel
- Protect natural waterways from runoff

By implementing this...
- Diversion, Graded waterway
- Cover crops, crop rotation, reduced till
- Conservation cover
- Irrigation upgrades
- Filter strips, riparian buffers

And we will help cover some expenses!

For more information, contact New Jersey Audubon Staff:
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Farmers who have an existing or new contract with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) or Farm Service Agency (FSA) are preferred; however, if you do not qualify for NRCS or FSA funding, we may still be able to help!
Whole Farm Conservation

Combining on-farm practices, such as no-till and cover crops...

...with wildlife habitat, such as riparian buffers and pollinator habitat

Providing technical and financial resources to make it happen!
Outreach is Key
Connecting with the Landowner/Producer
Gathering Information

- Discuss goals for the property/operation
- Identify *their* concerns or issues
- Walk the property and identify additional resource concerns
- Identify wildlife habitat opportunities that fit their operation
- Ask questions!
Soil & Water Conservation Practices
Wildlife Habitat on Working Lands
Wildlife Considerations

- Identify what habitat types exist on the property
- Identify what species may be using those habitats
- Look beyond the property boundaries
- Many wildlife species can co-exist with agriculture!
Finding Ways to Include Wildlife Habitat on Working Lands
Resources are Available!

- USDA Conservation Programs, including:
  - Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
  - Working Lands for Wildlife
  - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
  - Wetlands Reserve Easement (WRE)
- US Fish and Wildlife Partner’s for Wildlife Program
- Other State and Federal Conservation Programs
- Private Funding
- Delaware River Watershed Initiative Funding