

- Evaluate possible measures of success, including increases in habitat area via reduction and mitigation of habitat fragmentation; increases in cluster, in-fill and urban development; increases in habitat connectivity; and reductions in the rate of loss of natural lands from large-acre or "sprawl" development.

**e. Information Gaps**

- Encourage municipalities to acquire GIS capability and proficiency. Promote the use of the Landscape Project in planning efforts by offering technical training to municipal planning authorities.

**Motorized Recreation Vehicles**

Reducing illegal off-road vehicle (ORV) use and heavy personal watercraft use in sensitive wildlife habitats will require concerted education and law-enforcement efforts and the establishment of legal riding areas. Because of the funds and effort required, law enforcement should focus on areas that are most used by motorized vehicles and most sensitive for terrestrial and water-dependent wildlife.

**a. Conservation Goals**

- *Priority:* Conduct long-term monitoring to evaluate protection and restoration efforts of both wildlife and their habitats. *(Evaluate restoration - recreational vehicles)*
- *Priority:* Identify and actively protect public natural lands and waters with rare wildlife from ORV and personal watercraft use. *(Protect habitat – recreational vehicles)*
- Restore and maintain wildlife populations through the collaborative protection of species and habitats from disturbance and habitat degradation by motorized recreation vehicles. *(Conserve wildlife - recreational vehicles)*

**b. Conservation Strategies**

- *Priority:* Identify areas where off-road vehicle (ORV) or personal watercraft (PWC) use occurs in critical wildlife habitats and direct law enforcement to concentrate on those areas to enforce seasonal restrictions and posted/restricted areas. Obtain funding for additional officers to assist with enforcement.
- *Priority:* Investigate the impacts that personal watercraft and off-road vehicles have on those species whose breeding, roosting, haul-out, and migratory stopover areas' requirements make them vulnerable to injury, mortality, or disturbance. Use Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) and economic methods to quantify benefits and losses relative to these resources and ORV/PWC damages.
- *Priority:* Collaborate with off-road organizations and state and non-government agencies to address the problem of unlawful use of public and private natural lands by off-road vehicles. Develop and disseminate educational materials to all riders via registration, public areas and public service announcements, and investigate mentoring programs by off-road organizations.
- *Priority:* Identify appropriate areas for establishing off-road vehicle use in accordance with local and/or regional Habitat Conservation Plans to minimize impact to important wildlife habitat. Concurrently, increase the legal and financial penalties for illegal off-road vehicle use.
- *Priority:* Enact legislation to require registration of all all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) at time of purchase and annually thereafter.

- Exclude personal watercraft from important shorebird roosting, breeding, and foraging areas through designation of “conservation zones” (e.g., northern Barnegat Bay), and alternatively “no landing” zones (e.g., Stone Harbor Point and Champagne Island).
- c. Potential Partnerships to Deliver Conservation**
- DFW and conservation organizations will work with private landowners that have rare wildlife and significant vegetative communities on their properties to minimize the impact of off-road vehicles (all terrain vehicles, tractors, trucks, dirt bikes, etc.).
  - DFW will work with NJ Audubon Society to develop methods to minimize the impact of personal watercraft on avian species.
  - DFW will share site information and expertise with state and federal law enforcement to protect sensitive areas and monitor illegal use of off-road recreation vehicles.
- d. Monitoring Success**
- Staff and law enforcement personnel to qualitatively monitor ORV use and improvement of habitat condition on state lands. A sample of the most critical and heavily used sites may be monitored for recovery of habitat and wildlife diversity.
  - Conduct survey of ORV users through recreation associations to determine their level of satisfaction and use of designated ORV areas.
- e. Information Gaps**
- Investigate the potential of collaborating with ORV user groups to develop outreach materials on environmental impacts of ORV use on natural lands.
  - Siting ORV parks continues to be a difficult problem because communities and those involved in low-impact recreation often do not want high-noise, high-impact recreation activities adjacent to homes, parks, golf courses, etc. This relegates ORV parks to remote areas that are most critical for wildlife. Scenarios for siting ORV parks must be investigated to develop the least disruptive and destructive areas for residents, low-impact users and wildlife.

### ***Subsidized Predators***

Reducing the impacts on native wildlife of subsidized predators such as raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) and free-roaming “owned” and feral cats will require the concerted effort and collaboration of many government and non-government agencies, but must commence with an aggressive and thoughtful public outreach campaign. Such a campaign should be developed via the collaboration of wildlife biologists, the veterinary community, environmental educators and representatives from local and county animal shelters and advocacy groups.

#### **a. Conservation Goals**

- *Priority:* Reduce the adverse impacts of subsidized predator populations such as raccoons, red fox, American crow, and free-roaming and feral cats on critical wildlife, natural communities, and habitat quality. (*Conserve Wildlife –subsidized predators*)
- Identify and restore more natural predator-prey relationships through the management of subsidized predators and restoration of natural predators. (*Restore habitat - subsidized predators*)