



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
DELAWARE NATIVE SPECIES
COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED UNDER SENATE BILL NO. 153 OF THE
149TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE SENATE AND SPEAKER
OF THE HOUSE

DECEMBER 31, 2021

**Report to the Governor and General Assembly
from the Delaware Native Species Commission**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
COMMISSION ACTIVITIES	4
OVERVIEW OF MEETINGS	5
GOALS.....	6
APPENDICES	
A. SENATE BILL 153.....	9
B. SENATE BILL 84.....	14
C. COMPOSITION OF COMMISSION AND MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES.....	16
D. MINUTES FROM COMMISSION MEETINGS.....	25
E. TOP TEN LIST AND RECOMMENDATIONS	47

Members of the Commission

	Member	Organization
1	James White, Chair	Delaware Nature Society
2	David Saveikis	DNREC, Division of Fish & Wildlife
3	Darin Callaway	Department of Transportation
4	Michael Costello	Sussex County, County Administrator Appointee
5	Jessica Inhof	Department of Agriculture
6	Michael Petit de Mange	Kent County, County Administrator Appointee
7	Matthew Sarver	Botanist
8	Tracy Surles	New Castle County, County Executive Appointee
9	Susan Barton	University of Delaware
10	Valann Budischak	Delaware Nursery & Landscape Association
11	Sheila Smith	Delaware Ornithological Society
12	Jeffrey Downing	Mt. Cuba Center
13	Christopher Heckscher	Delaware State University
14	Janice Truitt	Delaware African American Farmers Association
15	Sarah Cooksey	Delaware Audubon
16	Lorene Athey*	Guided Path, LLC
17	Katherine Holtz*	Delaware Farm Bureau
18	Robert Thornton*	Silverstock Developers
19	James McCulley*	Watershed Eco LLC
20	Robert Ditmars, Jr.**	Still Pond Nursery Sales
21	Joseph Wick**	Joseph Wick Nurseries LTD
22	Terry Lempner**	Forest View Nursery Inc.
23	Katie Short**	East Coast Garden Center

*Term expired during 2021 **New appointed members in 2021



**DELAWARE
NATURALLY**

DELAWARE NATIVE SPECIES COMMISSION

Introduction

The Delaware Native Species Commission (“the Commission”) was formed by an action of Delaware’s 149th General Assembly, Senate Bill 153, to implement the recommendations of the Statewide Ecological Extinction Task Force (formed and authorized under Senate Concurrent Resolution 20) and is required to report to the General Assembly on a yearly basis. The membership reflects a balance of interests of environmental organizations, Delaware institutes of higher education, commercial interests, and government, with the Commission meeting six times annually on a schedule determined by the Commission. The Commission will sunset ten (10) years after enactment, in 2027, unless reauthorized by the General Assembly.

The overall goals of the Commission are to:

- Reverse the decline and extinction of native plant and animal species within Delaware.
- Implement the actions outlined in the Final Report of the Statewide Ecological Extinction Task Force.
- Provide expertise and assistance to all stakeholders.
- Educate the general public, industry professionals, state and local government decision makers, and educators on issues concerning the conservation of Delaware’s native species and their habitats.

Commission Activities

The Commission and its subcommittees worked diligently throughout 2021 despite the continued restrictions of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission continued to meet virtually, two additional subcommittees were established, and education initiatives focused on virtual outreach. Below are highlights from the subcommittees.

Law and Regulations Subcommittee -- Did not meet.

Education Subcommittee

- Hosted a virtual *Delaware Naturally: Spring Into Action!* summit series in March, 2021. The series consisted of three sessions: March 17, Kick-off and Keynotes featuring noted conservationists Collin O'Mara and Doug Tallamy; March 24, Natural Areas Conservation Roundtable; and March 31, Built Environment Roundtable. Over 100 people attended the three sessions.
- Developed and distributed branded *Delaware Naturally* posters promoting ecological gardening with native species, and branded bumper magnets and window clings to build awareness of *Delaware Naturally* as a resource for pro-environmental information.
- Reviewed project proposals for 2021-2022 and made recommendations to the Commission to prioritize initiatives that educate the community about Delaware's invasive plant ban and beneficial native alternatives to invasive plants, and to build a user-friendly website to raise the profile of the *Delaware Naturally* campaign.
- Developed a scope of work covering the Commission's 2021-2022 initiatives to contract with a suitable vendor to develop educational materials and a user-friendly website.

Conservation Science Subcommittee

- Met with Joe Rogerson (Delaware Fish and Wildlife manager) to discuss how the Commission could help promote and implement the Delaware Wildlife Action Plan. The subcommittee's recommendation was approved by the Commission for the Delaware Native Species Commission to support the process to web-enable the plan.
- Explored ways that the Commission could support recommendations made by the Division of Fish and Wildlife through the Preliminary Land Use Services (PLUS) process regarding the conservation of native species on land proposed for new development. It was suggested that staff from the Delaware Fish and Wildlife forward PLUS reports to the Conservation Science Committee for review and possible support by the Commission.
- Planned to reach out to local governments through the Delaware League of Local Governments to provide information on the conservation of native species within their jurisdiction.
- Five species of high conservation concern that are known to occur on state land were selected by the subcommittee and approved by the Commission to work with state agencies to increase conservation efforts concerning the following species:
 1. Eel grass (*Zostera marina*)
 2. Box huckleberry (*Gaylussacia brachycera*)
 3. Chermock's mulberry wing (*Poanes massasoit chermocki*)
 4. Black-banded sunfish (*Enneacanthus chaetodon*)
 5. Red Cornsnake (*Pantherophis guttata*)

Financial Management Subcommittee

- Developed guidelines and procedures and planned for the utilization of the General Assembly's second year of financial assistance to the Commission of \$25,000 focused on the Commission's priorities of website creation and educational materials.
- Reviewed four project proposals from Commission members and presented them to the full Commission.

Overview of Meetings

February 17, 2021

- Senate Bill 22 (SB22) to prohibit designed invasive plant species passed both chambers and has been sent to the Governor for signature.
- Education subcommittee will begin work on SB22 information for the public and business.
- Discussion on "Spring into Action" Summit kick-off date of March 17, 2021.

April 21, 2021

- Education Subcommittee's virtual summit was a success.
- Guest, Joseph Rogerson, Division of Fish and Wildlife Environmental Program Manager, presented a PowerPoint and spoke on the status of Delaware's Species of Greatest Conservation Need list.

June 16, 2021

- Commission notified that \$25,000 of General Funds are included in the proposed FY22 budget under the Division of Fish and Wildlife's budget.
- Discussion of responding to developments that potentially impact sensitive natural areas.
- Education Subcommittee is working to provide bumper magnets, window clings, and two-sided posters to provide to the public.

August 18, 2021

- Commission received a presentation on the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) from the Office of State Planning.
- Commission Chair gave a presentation on five of the species of greatest conservation need found on state lands identified by the Conservation Science Subcommittee for management action consideration.

October 20, 2021

- Introduction of four new commission members.
- Education Subcommittee briefed Commission on its meeting to discuss proposals on use the awarded General Funds and a proposal for hiring a project coordinator to develop an independent website for the Commission and to develop an outreach program to help educate the public and businesses of native and invasive species.

December 15, 2021

- Discussed the possibility of removing select plants from the list of invasive plant species in state law that will become illegal to sell in Delaware when the Invasive Plant Law goes into effect on July 1, 2022. It was decided that this could not be done without a change to the law. Currently, the Department of Agriculture can only make additions to the list through regulation after coordination with the Commission.
- The University of Delaware will send the Commission a proposal to enter into a contract with DNREC to develop educational materials for nursery points of sale that will explain the new Invasive Plant Law to customers and to develop a website for the Commission.
- The Commission formally requested that the Division of Fish and Wildlife submit its Preliminary Land Use Services (PLUS) land development project comments regarding species of concern to the Commission for the Commission to add its support.

Goals for 2022

The 2022 goals of the Commission are as follows:

1. Encourage government to lead by example

- Encourage state, county, and local governments to use native plants in landscaping of all new facilities, including parks and open spaces. Meet with city, county and state government leader to discuss the issue.
- Work with state agencies to identify a minimum of five priority species (both plant and animal) of high conservation concern listed as Tier 1, S1 in the State's Wildlife Action Plan that need immediate inventory and management. Work with agencies to identify a

source of funding to identify and support the necessary management needs for these populations to persist.

2. Create educational opportunities that support Delaware’s native biodiversity

- Flesh-out and pilot *Delaware, Naturally!* outreach programs to promote and explain the benefits of native species and associated conservation-minded practices, as well as the negative effects of invasive species proliferation on native species. (Develop a branded public relations educational/awareness campaign to promote native species and practices.)
- Develop and launch the *Delaware, Naturally!* website in conjunction with a public education campaign.
- Explore opportunities to enhance environmental literacy in Delaware K-12 education.
- Develop a “Certified Native Plant Garden Center” program for nurseries and garden centers that are trained and in the business of promoting native plant selections, along with qualifying criteria for attaining certification.

3. Support existing programs that assist the Commission in reaching its overall goals

- Advocate for adequate funding of State agencies and programs that work to conserve native species biodiversity in Delaware.
- Advocate to increase and sustain DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife's capacity to monitor, manage, and conserve rare plant and animal species in Delaware.
- Encourage the use of Open Space Program funds for purchasing high-quality native species habitats, especially those habitats required for species of special concern. Work to get Delaware Native Species Commission representation at the Open Space Program “table.”
- Support the Master Naturalist (MN) Program through publicity and providing instructors (council members) to help with invasive plant removal in Delaware’s parks and natural areas as well as other MN projects.
- Actively work with state agencies, NGOs, and other conservation partners to promote the use of the Delaware Wildlife Action Plan which provides a template for the conservation of native animal species in the state.

4. Create and implement a three-year strategic plan for the Commission.

5. Promote the development and enactment of legislation, policy or regulatory changes affecting biodiversity conservation.

- Address weaknesses in our current state endangered species law; strengthen protection and/or conservation of the species on the list including addressing the possibility of adding plant species.
- Identify ways that the Delaware Native Species Commission can encourage protection of Delaware’s rarest plant communities such as Atlantic White Cedar Swamps, Bald Cypress Swamps, Coastal Plain Ponds, Interdunal Swales, Sea-level Fens, Piedmont Streamside Seepage Wetlands, and Piedmont Tuliptree Rich Woods.
- Develop a “Model Ordinance” for consideration for adoption by the Native Species Commission that would serve as a guide for local governments that would establish regulatory supports for promoting and protecting native plant species and their habitats and establishing criteria for eradication of invasive species as part of the Development Plan Review and Approval Process.

- Research native and invasive species Best Management Practices (BMPs) and develop or identify a topical BMP Guide Documents for consideration of adoption by the Commission that would provide quick reference technical assistance for permitting agencies, the development community, and the general public.

Appendix A: Senate Bill 153



SPONSOR: Sen. Hansen & Rep. Heffernan
Sens. Ennis, Henry, McDowell,
Sokola, Townsend; Reps.
Baumbach, Gray, Hudson,
Kenton, Mitchell, Osienski,
M. Smith, Viola

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
149th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE BILL NO. 153
AS AMENDED BY
SENATE AMENDMENT NO. 2

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 29 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE
DELAWARE NATIVE SPECIES COMMISSION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

WHEREAS, Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 20 passed by the 149th General Assembly created the bi-partisan Statewide Ecological Extinction Task Force (“Task Force”); and

WHEREAS, the Task Force was charged with studying the extinction of local plant and animal species in Delaware and reporting its findings and recommendations for action to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives for distribution to the members of the General Assembly, with a copy to the Governor and others by December 1, 2017; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force was comprised of environmental experts with an understanding of species extinction, stakeholders in land development, local government officials from all 3 counties, the agricultural community, and the business community; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force heard testimony from experts and developed findings and recommendations for action in order to reverse the trend of extinction and extirpation of our local plant and animal native species; and

WHEREAS, the findings and recommendations for action were numerous and wide ranging; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force issued the “Final Report of the Statewide Ecological Extinction Task Force” on December 1, 2017, incorporating its findings and recommendations for action; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force recommended the creation of the Delaware Native Species Commission reflecting a balance of interests between environmental professionals, government, and other stakeholders in order to implement the recommendations of the Task Force.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend Chapter 80, Title 29 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

Subchapter III. Delaware Native Species Commission.

§ 8071. Purpose.

The Delaware Native Species Commission is created to do all of the following:

- (1) Reverse the trend of decline and extinction of our local plant and animal native species.
- (2) Diligently pursue and perform those things necessary and proper in order that the recommendations in the Final Report of the Statewide Ecological Extinction Task Force be fully implemented.
- (3) Provide state and local lawmakers, policy makers, educators, and other stakeholders with expertise and assistance in projects meeting the goals and purposes of this subchapter.
- (4) Report back to the General Assembly on a yearly basis regarding the implementation of the Task Force recommendations.

§ 8072. Definitions.

For purposes of this subchapter:

- (1) “Appointed member” means an individual appointed by the Governor under § 8073(a)(2) of this subchapter.

- (2) “Commission” means the Delaware Native Species Commission.
- (3) “DNREC” means the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control.
- (4) “Task Force recommendations” means the recommendations in the Final Report of the Statewide Ecological Extinction Task Force established by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 20 of the 149th General Assembly.

§ 8073. Commission membership; qualifications; term of office.

(a) The Commission is composed of 15 members, as follows:

(1) Five members serving by virtue of position, or a designee appointed by the member, as follows:

- a. The Secretary of the DNREC.
- b. The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture.
- c. The County Executive of New Castle County.
- d. The County Administrator for Kent County.
- e. The County Administrator for Sussex County.

(2) Ten members who are citizens of the State and appointed by the Governor, as follows:

- a. Five individuals who represent environmental organizations or Delaware institutions of higher education, with expertise regarding Delaware plant or animal species.
- b. Five individuals who represent stakeholder commercial interests, such as land development, farming, and business.

(b) An appointed member serves for a term of up to 3 years and is eligible for reappointment. The Governor shall appoint members for staggered terms so that no more than 5 members’ terms expire in any 1 calendar year.

(c) If an appointed member fails to attend 3 successive meetings of the Commission without just cause, that member’s position may be deemed vacant and the Governor may appoint a replacement.

(d) Members of the Commission serve without compensation, except that the Commission may reimburse members for reasonable and necessary mileage and tolls

incident to duties as members of the Commission.

§ 8074. Authority; staffing.

(a) The Commission shall be placed within DNREC and shall have such powers, duties, and functions as described in this subchapter and such other duties and functions as may be referred to it by the Governor, the Secretary of DNREC, or the General Assembly.

(b) The Secretary of DNREC shall provide staff support to the Commission.

§ 8075. Chair and Vice Chair; selection and duties.

(a) The Commission shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair at its first meeting and the Chair and Vice Chair shall serve until a replacement is elected. If the Chair becomes vacant, the Vice Chair shall fulfill the duties of the Chair contained in subsection (b) of this section until a replacement is elected at its next meeting.

(b) The Chair of the Commission shall do all of the following:

(1) Set a date, time, and place for the meetings of the Commission.

(2) Supervise the preparation and distribution of meeting notices, agendas, minutes, and other documents prepared by or on behalf of the Commission.

§ 8076. Quorum and conduct of business.

(a) A majority of the membership of the Commission constitutes a quorum to conduct official business. Official action by the Commission, including making findings and recommendations, requires the approval of a majority of the members of the Commission present at a meeting with quorum.

(b) The Commission may adopt rules necessary for its operation.

(c) The Commission may undertake the following functions to implement the Task Force recommendations and to further the goals and purposes of the Commission:

(1) Establish subcommittees.

(2) Engage with other organizations to exchange ideas and information and to provide those other organizations with the opportunity to engage with the Commission.

(3) Study, research, plan, and make advisory recommendations to the Governor, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of DNREC, the Department of Agriculture, or the General Assembly.

(d) In carrying out the Commission's duties under this subchapter, the Commission shall consider any related plans and programs developed by other organizations with expertise in native species conservation or protection, or in the eradication of invasive species, and may designate representatives to serve on special committees, organizations, or other entities to plan, develop, and coordinate specific activities.

§ 8077. Annual Report.

On or before December 31, 2018, and on or before every December 31 thereafter, the Commission shall submit to the Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives for distribution to the members of the General Assembly, an annual report of the Commission's activities for the previous year and goals for the upcoming year. The report may also include proposals for legislation, administrative action, or other policy changes the Commission considers necessary to carry out its implementation of the Task Force recommendations or further the goals and purposes of this subchapter.

Section 2. The Secretary of DNREC shall set the date, time, and place for the initial organizational meeting and the Commission shall hold its first meeting no later than August 1, 2018.

Section 3. This Act expires 10 years after its enactment into law, unless otherwise provided by a subsequent act of the General Assembly.

Appendix B: Senate Bill 84



SPONSOR: Sen. Hansen & Rep. Lynn
Sens. Paradee, Richardson,
Sokola, Townsend

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
150th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE BILL NO. 84
AS AMENDED BY
SENATE AMENDMENT NO. 2

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 29 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE
DELAWARE NATIVE SPECIES COMMISSION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend § 8073, Title 29 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

§ 8073. Commission membership; qualifications; term of office [Expires June 7, 2028, pursuant to 81 Del. Laws, c. 256, § 3]

(a) The Commission is composed of ~~15~~ 19 members, as follows:

(1) ~~Five~~ Six members serving by virtue of position, or a designee appointed by the member, as follows:

- a. The Secretary of the DNREC.
- b. The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture.
- c. The County Executive of New Castle County.
- d. The County Administrator for Kent County.
- e. The County Administrator for Sussex County.

f. The Secretary of the Department of Transportation.

(2) ~~Ten members who are citizens of the State and~~ Thirteen members, appointed by the Governor, as follows:

- a. ~~Five~~ Six individuals who represent environmental organizations or Delaware institutions of higher education, with expertise regarding Delaware plant or animal species.
- b. ~~Five~~ Six individuals who represent stakeholder commercial interests in Delaware, such as land development, farming, and business.
- c. One member who is a current or retired botanist or similar professional with expertise in Delaware plant species.

Appendix C: Composition of Commission and Member Biographies

The Commission is composed of nineteen (19) members: six members serving by virtue of position, or an appointed designee; six members who represent environmental organizations or Delaware institutions of higher education, with expertise regarding Delaware plant or animal species; six members who represent stakeholder commercial interests, such as land development, farming and business; and one member who is a current or retired botanist or similar professional with expertise in Delaware plant species.

By Virtue of Position or designee:

I. Darin Callaway - designee for the Delaware Department of Transportation

Darin Callaway worked as an Environmental Scientist with the Delaware Division of Fish & Wildlife for over 9 years until he accepted the Supervisor position within the Delaware Department of Transportation's Roadside Environmental Program in 2008. In April of 2016, Darin was promoted to the position of Roadside Environmental Program Administrator where he currently serves. Darin graduated from the University of Delaware with a bachelor's degree in Entomology with a concentration in Wildlife Conservation.

II. Michael Costello - designee for County Administrator for Sussex County

Michael Costello worked at the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control in the Environmental Crimes Unit until joining Sussex County Government as the Chief Code Enforcement Officer in 2014. In October of 2016, Mike moved to the position of Government Affairs Manager where he currently serves. Mike has degrees in Emergency Management and Organizational Management.

III. Jessica Inhof - Environmental Program Administrator, Plant Industries Section, designee for Secretary of Department of Agriculture

Jessica Inhof serves as the Environmental Program Administrator for the Delaware Department of Agriculture's Plant Industries section. In her role as Administrator, Ms. Inhof is the State Plant Regulatory Official as well as a member of the Eastern Plant Board and the National Plant Board. The mission of the Plant Industries Section is to prevent the introduction, establishment, or spread of plant and honeybee pests, and suppress, control abate, or eradicate those pests that are dangerously injurious to the agricultural, horticultural, and forestry interests of the state. The Section also enforces the Plant Pest Law, the Nurseries and Nursery Stock Law, the Noxious Weeds Law, the Beekeeping Law, the Seed Law, and the Grain Testing Devices Law.

Holding a degree in Agricultural Science with an emphasis in Soils and Agronomy from Penn State University, Ms. Inhof worked with the farming community on the

Delmarva Peninsula for over 22 years as a Senior Agronomist and part owner of a consulting company before taking her position at DDA. She is a Certified Crop Advisor, a Nutrient Management Planner in Delaware and Maryland, and a former member of the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission.

IV. Michael Petit de Mange - County Administrator for Kent County

Michael J. Petit de Mange, AICP, became the County Administrator for Kent County, Delaware on April 8, 2007, after serving as the County's Planning Director for nearly 5 years. Prior to joining Kent County, he served as Director of Planning & Inspections for the City of Dover, Delaware and as an Associate/Branch Manager for Landmark Engineering, Incorporated. While with the City of Dover, Mr. Petit de Mange also served a four (4) year term on the Kent County Regional Planning Commission. He has over 29 years of experience in municipal management and regional planning.

V. David Saveikis - Director, Division of Fish & Wildlife, designee for Secretary of DNREC

David (Dave) Saveikis currently serves as the Director of the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife, having been appointed to the position on February 1, 2011. He has worked in natural resource management since 1978 in both the public and private sectors, holding positions with the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife, Delaware Division of Water Resources and Maryland Department of Agriculture, and as a private environmental consultant. Mr. Saveikis has held biologist, environmental scientist and management positions involving fish and wildlife research, habitat restoration, aquatic resource monitoring, wetlands regulation and policy and water resources policy.

Dave received a B.S. in Biological Sciences from Salisbury University, Salisbury, Maryland. He is an avid angler, waterfowl enthusiast and naturalist, with a passion for tidal river largemouth bass fishing and light tackle saltwater fishing.

VI. Tracey Surles - designee for County Executive of New Castle County

Tracey Surles is the General Manager of New Castle County's Department of Public Works. As the General Manager, Ms. Surles oversees the planning, design construction and maintenance of over 6,000 acres of County parkland and open space, the sanitary sewer system, the storm sewer system, over 60 county buildings and the County's fleet. Ms. Surles has served the County for almost twenty years in various roles prior to her current position including serving as an Assistant County Attorney, Senior Manager for Public Works, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Administrative Officer. Ms. Surles has a B.S. in Civil Engineering and is also a member of the Delaware Bar. Prior to working for the County, she practiced environmental law in Wilmington and in Washington DC.

Representing environmental organizations or Delaware institutions of higher education

VII. Susan Barton - University of Delaware

Susan Barton, Ph.D. is an extension specialist and professor in the Plant and Soil Sciences Department at the University of Delaware. She has worked closely for the past 20 years with DelDOT to research and implement new roadside vegetation management strategies. She has also worked with partners to develop the Plants for a Livable Delaware Program, designed to provide alternatives to known invasive plants species and to promote sustainable landscaping. She teaches Plants and Human Culture, Farm to Table, Landscape Architecture Symposium, Representation I: Landscape Drawing and coordinates the Landscape Horticulture Internship. She also works closely with the nursery and landscape industry, writing newsletters, organizing short courses and conducting horticulture industry expos with the Delaware Nursery and Landscape Association. Susan received the Nursery Extension Award in 1995 from the American Nursery and Landscape Association and the Ratledge Award for service from the University of Delaware in 2007. Susan received her SITES AP certification in summer 2017.

VIII. Sarah Cooksey - Delaware Audubon

Sarah Cooksey serves on the Board of Delaware Audubon, resides in Sussex County and has been active in conservation matters since receiving her Master of Science degree in Biology from Towson University. She is past Director of Conservation for the Delaware Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, where she defined and managed implementation of the strategic priorities and strategies for the Chapter's conservation work, providing leadership and oversight of land, water oceans and climate initiatives. Ms. Cooksey is past Administrator of the Delaware Coastal Programs where she was responsible for both the coastal zone management program and the Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve. She coordinated with federal, state and local governments on coastal resource issues such as tidal and freshwater wetlands, energy policy, non-point source pollution, coastal hazards, essential fish habitat, ocean planning, biodiversity, sustainable development, and dredging issues. She is past President of the Coastal States Stewardship Foundation, a 501(3) (c) formed to assist state governments with pressing coastal management issues and past Chair of MARCO – the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council of the Ocean – a five state initiative to focus on offshore issues related to renewable energy, water quality, habitat protection and climate change adaptation. Prior to her work in The Nature Conservancy and the State of Delaware she spent several years in EPA's Office of Water in Washington DC working with states on water issues. Sarah is an active gardener and birdwatcher and spends time restoring Delaware's native habitat.

IX. Jeffery Downing - Mt. Cuba Center

Jeffery (Jeff) Downing is executive director of Mt. Cuba Center, a botanical garden in Hockessin, Delaware that inspires an appreciation of the beauty and value of native plants, and a commitment to conserve the habitats that sustain them. Prior to his arrival at Mt. Cuba Center in 2012, Jeff spent thirteen years at The New York Botanical Garden working in education as a manager, director, and finally as Vice President for Education from 2007 to 2012. Jeff earned a Bachelor of Arts in economics at Trinity College in Hartford, CT and a Master of Arts in Religion at Yale University in New Haven, CT.

X. Christopher Heckscher - Delaware State University

Christopher (Kitt) Heckscher earned a Ph.D. and M.S. in Entomology and Wildlife Ecology, from the University of Delaware. He also holds a B.S. in Wildlife Biology from Colorado State University. He was the Delaware state Zoologist for The Nature Conservancy and the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife's Delaware Natural Heritage Program from 1993 to 2008 where he was responsible for developing and maintaining the state's zoological database. Currently, he is a Professor of Environmental Science at Delaware State University (DSU). Prior to 1993, he worked as a Preserve Manager for The Nature Conservancy and a Wildlife Biologist for the U.S. Forest Service. His research at DSU primarily focuses on the ecology of migratory forest songbirds. Dr. Heckscher also has extensive expertise in the inventory and conservation needs of rare invertebrate species of high conservation concern. He has 30 years of professional experience in the collection of rare species information for the purposes of informing wise land management decisions for both private landowners and public agencies.

XI. Shelia Smith - Delaware Ornithological Society

Sheila Smith is a former Science educator, working for 19 years in the Red Clay School District and 7 years in private education, with a long-time interest in public education around the use of native plants. She graduated from the University of Delaware with a BFA and earned an MEd from Wilmington College. Sheila worked as a teacher/naturalist for Delaware Nature Society and was given a DNS Outstanding Environmental Educator Award for her work in school. She is member of the Delaware Ornithological Society and currently serves on the DOS Conservation Committee. Sheila is a Backyard Habitat Steward, assisting homeowners with the use of native plants for the past 8 years. She cares for her own habitat landscape, in development for 14 years, and was the co-creator and organizer for the 2013 and 2014 Newark Habitat Garden Tour. Sheila served on the Newark Sustainability Plan steering committee. She is currently serving her 5th term on the City of Newark Conservation Advisory Commission.

Sheila is also enrolled in the inaugural class of the Delaware Master Naturalist Program.

XII. James White - Delaware Nature Society

James (Jim) White has worked at Delaware Nature Society since 1982. In his role, he oversees Delaware Nature Society's land. A native Delawarean, he graduated from the Salesianum High School and the University of Delaware. Jim's natural history interests include birds, insects, amphibians and reptiles. He teaches herpetology at University of Delaware and with his wife has published a field guide to the amphibians and reptiles of the Delmarva Peninsula. Jim also leads natural history trips to many natural areas in the US and in Central and South America.

Representing stakeholder commercial interests, such as land development, farming and business

XIII. Janice Truitt - Delaware African American Farmers Association, Delaware Agricultural Lands Preservation Foundation

Ms. Truitt resides in the hamlet of Hartly, as a local organic produce farmer. She is the Founding Director of Delaware African American Farmers Association and the first African American ever to be appointed as a Trustee to Delaware Agricultural Lands Preservation Foundation Board. Currently, Ms. Truitt serves as a Governor's appointee to the Delaware State Medical Licensure and Disciplinary Board. Ms. Truitt has worked and visited seventy-two (72) countries world-wide including thirty-two (32) nations in Africa. She is a graduate of Delaware State University and is a current professor there, teaching Global Societies.

Beginning in 1991, Delaware farmland preservation program has two major components, agriculture preservation districts and agricultural conservation easements, in addition to a Young Farmers Program to assist the next generation of farmers. Agricultural easements are purchases of development rights by the foundation, placing a permanent agriculture conservation easement on the farm or forest land. To date, the foundation has preserved approximately 124,784 acres of farmland.

XIV. Valann Budischak - Delaware Nursery & Landscape Association

Valann has served as the Executive Director of the Delaware & Nursery Landscape Association (DNLA) since 1998. In 2003 she became a UD Extension Agent in Ornamental Horticulture in addition to DNLA. In that role she also served as State Master Gardener Coordinator. In 2007 she also joined the ranks of the UD Botanic Gardens as Volunteer & Education Coordinator. In July she took off her extension hat to become the interim director of the UD Botanic Gardens. Valann works in numerous professional capacities as project administrator for Delaware Livable Lawns, Plants for a Livable Delaware and Enhancing Delaware Highways. She also serves on the board of the Urban Community Forestry Council, and an appointee to the Governor's Water Supply Coordinating Council.

XV. Katherine Holtz - Delaware Farm Bureau – Term ended 7/30/2021

Katherine (Kitty) and her husband, Dave Holtz, have owned and operated Holtz Farms since 1969 and expanded the operation to include their youngest son, Brent, in 2013 as Holtz Farms, LLC. Dave and Kitty have three children and two grandchildren. Their home farm of 250 acres is located near Clayton and Kenton Delaware. They grow corn, soybeans and wheat. Holtz Farms, LLC farm approximately 1,800 acres within Kent County.

Kitty also worked for the State of Delaware for twenty years and was active with 4-H for ten years. She has been a member of Delaware Farm Bureau since 1976 and took a more active role within the organization in 2003, serving on the state and county boards for eleven years. She was president of Kent County Farm Bureau for two years before being elected the State Farm Bureau President in 2014, serving two terms.

XVI. Lorene Athey - Guided Path LLC – Term ended 8/10/2021

Lorene (Lori) Athey is a registered Landscape Architect in Delaware and a Certified National Wildlife Federation Host. During her career as a planner and landscape architect, she has worked with or for a variety of organizations and homeowners throughout Delaware including: Delaware Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control, Delaware Department of Transportation, New Castle County Land Use, City of Wilmington Public Works, City of Lewes, Delaware Nature Society, Delaware Center for Horticulture, University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration, Irwin Landscaping, and the Delaware Agricultural Museum. In addition to design and planning, she monitors conservation easements, and is a teacher and speaker on native plants and gardening for wildlife topics. Ms. Athey is former President of the Delaware Board of Landscape Architects and former Chair of the New Castle County Resource Protection Area Technical Advisory Committee. She earned a Master of Landscape Architecture from the University of Illinois and a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the University of Virginia. A native Delawarean, she grew up in Smyrna, and currently gardens in the City of Newark.

XVII. James McCulley - Watershed Eco. LLC – Term ended 7/30/2021

James (Jim) McCulley is the immediate past president of the Builders and Remodelers Association of Delaware (BRAD, previously known as the Home Builders Association of Delaware). He also serves as Life Director of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and BRAD. He is an Environmental Scientist with over 30 years of experience performing natural resource studies in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Florida, Georgia, Ohio and Indiana. He previously served on the National Academy of Sciences, Wetlands Advisory Committee which authored “Wetlands: Characteristics and Boundaries”. He has served on numerous local, State and National committees involved in

Natural Resource Policy. Jim is a certified Senior Professional Wetland Scientist #000471 under the Society of Wetland Scientists Professional Certification Program.

XVIII. Robert Thornton - Home Builders Association - Term ended 7/30/2021

Robert Thornton serves on the Board of Directors for the National Association of Home Builders and is the State Director for the Home Builders Association of Delaware. He also serves on the Board of Directors of Home Innovation Research Labs, which wrote and developed the National Green Building Standard (NGBS). He has the first certified Green Home in the nation under the NGBS in 2009, and in 2010 was the state of Delaware's "Builder of the Year." Thornton is frequently a guest speaker at the International Builders Show (IBS) in Las Vegas and Orlando on the topic of green sustainable building.

XIX. Katie Short - RSC Landscaping / East Coast Garden Center - Term started 10/04/2021

Katie started her career at RSC Landscaping 15 years ago. She worked on the landscape crew for 3 years. She was then promoted as the Department Head of East Coast Garden Center. She is originally from Delmar, DE. Introduced to plants at a young age she worked for Salisbury University in the grounds department. She graduated from University of Delaware with a degree in Landscape Horticulture and a minor in Plant Biology. Katie is a Certified Nursery Professional with a Pesticide License.

XX. Robert D. Ditmars - Owner and President, Still Pond Nursery Sales (MD & DE) and Elmer's Market (DE) - Term started 09/30/2021

Robert has worked in the wholesale nursery trade since April 1998. Primarily for wholesale growing operations, in no particular chronological order, located in Maryland, New Jersey and Oregon. In spring 2015 Robert entered into an agreement to purchase an existing wholesale nursery located in Kent County Maryland and renamed it Still Pond Nursery Sales. Still Pond Nursery Sales currently owns and operates wholesale production and retail nurseries on 155 combined acres in Millington, MD, Harrington, DE and Georgetown, DE.

In November 2021 Robert entered into an agreement to purchase Elmer's Market in Georgetown, DE moving his Garden and Landscape Supply Center operation from its old location to a stronger location on Seashore Highway (Rte. 404). '89 Springfield College (Springfield, MA) with a B.S.A. President, Radcliffe Creek School Board of Trustees, Chestertown, MD - (June 2020 - present)

XXI. Terry A. Lemper - Nursery Manager at Forest View Nursery - Term started 09/30/2021

After completion of a BS in Agriculture at UD in 1986, Terry went into field surveying and civil engineering drafting for several years. Throughout college, a design/build landscape company was being developed. He was co-owner of a family landscape company for over 35 years. Terry has been employed at Forest View Nursery as the nursery manager for 6 years.

XXII. Joseph Wick -Joseph Wick Nurseries LTD - Term started 10/05/2021

Joseph Wick has owned and operated Joseph Wick Nurseries Ltd with his sister Susan Wick since 1994. He was 20 years old when he took over the family business, he is a 3rd Generation Nursery professional. He has spent his entire lifetime learning how to better cultivate and sell plant material. Over time he modified the production nursery to include a wholesale yard. This expansion enabled the growth of his plant knowledge from 100 species to thousands of species of plants. He has served as President to the DNLA (Delaware Nursery & Landscape Association) for over 6 years. He also served on the Governor's Advisory to Forestry for 6 years. When he is not working with plants you can find him hunting with his kids, friends and his dog Toby or at a Ducks Unlimited Event.

Current or retired botanist or similar professional with expertise in Delaware plant species

XXIII. Matthew Sarver - Botanist

Matt is an expert field ecologist with a broad range of knowledge in a variety of taxonomic groups (plants, birds, invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles) and over 20 years of field experience identifying and studying the ecological communities, flora, and fauna of the eastern United States. He is an Ecological Society of America Certified Senior Ecologist and a Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner by the Society for Ecological Restoration.

Matt is principal of Sarver Ecological, LLC, which provides conservation planning, ecological assessment, and restoration services in Delaware and the surrounding Mid-Atlantic. He has special expertise in pollinator conservation, invasive plant species, field botany, and native plant community ecology, and has worked extensively on the Delmarva Peninsula.

Matt is a board member of the Mid-Atlantic Invasive Plant Council, President of the Society for Ecological Restoration Mid-Atlantic Chapter, Conservation Chair and Past President of the Delaware Ornithological Society, and a board member of the Christina Conservancy.

In the past, Matt has worked as a botanist, community ecologist, and invertebrate ecologist for state Natural Heritage programs in Pennsylvania and Maryland, and as an avian field biologist in Arkansas. He has field experience in numerous other

states, as well as Canada, Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, India, Oman, and Borneo.

Mr. Sarver possesses a Bachelor of Arts Degree, *cum laude* from Cornell University in Biological Sciences

Appendix D: Minutes from Delaware Native Species Commission Meetings

Meeting Minutes
Delaware Native Species Commission
February 17, 2021, at 10 am
Virtual Meeting- Video Conference through WebEx

Minutes approved on: April 21, 2021

Members Present

James White, Chair	Jeffery Downing
Robert Thornton, Vice-Chair	Jessica Inhof
Lori Athey	James McCulley
Susan Barton	Matthew Sarver
Valann Budischak	David Saveikis
Darin Callaway	Sheila Smith
Sarah Cooksey	Tracy Surles
Michael Costello	

Members Absent

Christopher Heckscher
Katherine Holtz
Michael Petit de Mange
Janice Truitt

Administrative Staff

Brandi Besecker Administrative Specialist II

Public Present

Senator Stephanie Hansen
Elan Alford
Steve Cottrell
Helen Fischel
Ashley Kennedy
Bill McAvoy

Call to Order

Mr. White called the meeting to order at 10:02a.m.

Review and Approval of Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the December 16, 2020, meeting. Ms. Budischak made a motion, seconded by Ms. Athey to accept the minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously by commission members present at that meeting.

Unfinished Business

Senate Bill 22 and Other Legislative Updates

Senator Hansen informed the commission that SB22 restricting invasive plant species passed both chambers and was in the Governor's office awaiting signature, which had yet to be scheduled. She proposed to Governor Carney's scheduler to have the signing on the first day of the summit. Senator Hansen also informed the commission of development of a General Assembly resolution regarding state non-tidal wetlands. The plan is to introduce the legislation when the General Assembly reconvenes. Senator Hansen spoke with members of the Legislative Joint Finance Committee on adding line-item funding for the commission to enable the execution of priorities mandated by legislature, of which there is support.

New Business

Law and Regulations Subcommittee Report

Nothing to report from the subcommittee members.

Education Subcommittee Report

Mr. Downing recommended the Delaware Naturally: Spring into Action Summit kick-off date of March 17th as the proposed date of the bill signing. Mr. Downing presented the agenda of events for each day and highlighted featured presenters. The purpose of the summit is to start the conversation and collaboration. Next steps are to develop questions to be asked in breakout sessions and flesh out the mini presentations. Mr. Downing indicated there would be no registration fee, as the fee for last year's planned event was to offset the cost of food and venue. He anticipates the registration website to be up and available no later than the end of the last week of February, dependent on the contract execution with the Delaware Center for Horticulture.

Senator Hansen and Ms. Barton provided comments on including particular invasive species mitigation groups and student organizations in the summit and potentially events going forward.

There was additional discussion among commission members on ideas for presentations, activities, and materials.

The Education subcommittee will begin work on SB22 information for the public and business.

Fiscal Management Subcommittee Report

Ms. Cooksey asked if there was any information or support the commission can provide to the Joint Finance Committee and Senator Hansen indicated she would reach out if there were any needs. She also described a proposed project request form which would be utilized for project funding.

Conservation Science Subcommittee Report

Ms. Smith will chair this subcommittee. The first task for the subcommittee is to work with the Division of Fish & Wildlife on updates to the list of species of conservation concern. Their proposal is to restructure the existing list into a consistent format by taxonomy instead of alphabetical. The subcommittee plans on reaching out to Fish & Wildlife representatives. Questions raised for future subcommittee discussion included how often the list should be updated, as well as who would be the authority for changes.

Ms. Smith discussed the idea of incentives to landowners whose property abuts habitats of concern, to both raise awareness and garner support for habitat conservation.

Other Business

Top Ten Tasks

No discussion.

Goals for 2021

No discussion.

Public Comments

Mr. Cottrell stated the need to create a public relations campaign for SB22 now that it is on the governor's desk for signature. As Delaware will be the first of the surrounding states to have this type of bill banning certain invasive plants, it is a big deal and communicating with the public, in the addition to the industries, is paramount. Mr. White mentioned that the summit will be the media kick-off.

Ms. Alford asked if the 2021 goals could be posted on the commission's website.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2021. Virtual meeting information will be provided.

Adjournment

There being no further business or time, the meeting adjourned at 11:41am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brandi Besecker, Administrative Specialist II
DNREC, Division of Fish & Wildlife

Meeting Minutes
Delaware Native Species Commission
April 21, 2021, at 10 am
Virtual Meeting- Video Conference through WebEx

Minutes approved on: June 16, 2021

Members Present

James White, Chair
Lori Athey
Susan Barton
Valann Budischak
Darin Callaway
Sarah Cooksey
Michael Costello
Jeffery Downing
Katherine Holtz

Jessica Inhof
James McCulley
Matthew Sarver
David Saveikis
Sheila Smith
Tracy Surles
Janice Truitt

Members Absent

Sarah Cooksey
Christopher Heckscher
Michael Petit de Mange
Robert Thornton, Vice-Chair

Administrative Staff

Brandi Besecker Administrative Specialist II

Public Present

Senator Stephanie Hansen
Elan Alford
Helen Fischel
Amy Highland
Ashley Kennedy
Bill McAvoy

Call to Order

Mr. White called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Review and Approval of Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the February 17, 2021 meeting. Ms. Athey made a motion, seconded by Ms. Truitt to accept the minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously by Commission members present at that meeting.

Unfinished Business

Senate Bill 22 Rollout (newly enacted law prohibiting certain invasive plant species)
Mt. Cuba Center staff are prospecting media attention with WHYY.

There was a question if the final version of the law could be linked or posted to the website. Department of Agriculture staff have a “Mistaken Identity” booklet and are working on obtaining editing capabilities to update. It was decided that further discussion on material purchases, outreach materials and potential staffing needs would be further discussed in the Education Subcommittee and brought back to the full Commission.

New Business

Law and Regulations Subcommittee Report

Nothing to report from the subcommittee members.

Education Subcommittee Report

Mr. Downing thanked everyone who made the virtual summit a success. During the summit series in March, 10-15 people volunteered to be a part of a conservation coalition. The group will be meeting soon, and Mr. Downing will report.

Conservation Science Subcommittee Report

The subcommittee invited Joseph Rogerson, Division of Fish and Wildlife Environmental Program Manager, who spoke on the status of Delaware’s Species of Greatest Conservation Need list and how it is maintained, the Natural Heritage Program and the Wildlife Action plan. Ms. Besecker will send Mr. Rogerson’s presented PowerPoint to Commission members.

Several groups have approached members in the past requesting the Commission’s position on land development projects. Recently, Mulberry Knoll requested input on a building project and how it would impact the kestrel population. Would the Commission be willing to provide statements on how the area/habitat is important? Mr. Saveikis reminded the Commission that it had decided to not intervene in land use issues, but to limit our input to providing without judgement biological site information for such requests.

Fiscal Management Subcommittee Report

Ms. Cooksey was not present, but members reported that the subcommittee was awaiting information from Senator Hansen regarding the Joint Finance Committee recommendation regarding possible state funding for the Commission.

Other Business

Top Ten Tasks

The Commission seldom returns to Top 10 Tasks to review progress. Mr. Downing requested members to review for discussion at the next meeting.

Goals for 2021

No discussion.

Public Comments

Ms. Fischel requested that the Commission look at other states and what they offer for incentives to businesses and homeowners for sale of and to plant only native plant species.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2021. Virtual meeting information will be provided.

Adjournment

There being no further business or time, the meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brandi Besecker, Administrative Specialist II
DNREC, Division of Fish & Wildlife

Meeting Minutes
Delaware Native Species Commission
June 16, 2021, at 10 am
Virtual Meeting- Video Conference through WebEx

Minutes approved on: August 18, 2021

Members Present

James White, Chair
Lori Athey
Susan Barton
Valann Budischak
Darin Callaway
Sarah Cooksey
Michael Costello
Jeffery Downing

Christopher Heckscher
Katherine Holtz
Jessica Inhof
James McCulley
David Saveikis
Sheila Smith
Tracy Surles

Members Absent

Michael Petit de Mange
Matthew Sarver
Robert Thornton, Vice-Chair
Janice Truitt

Administrative Staff

Brandi Besecker Administrative Specialist II

Public Present

Elan Alford
Helen Fischel
Gayle Dubois
Rick Mickowski

Call to Order

Mr. White called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Review and Approval of Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the April 21, 2021, meeting. Ms. Budischak made a motion, seconded by Ms. Inhof to accept the minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously by Commission members present at that meeting.

Unfinished Business

None discussed.

New Business

Law and Regulations Subcommittee Report

Ms. Cooksey reported that she reached out to Tricia Arndt from the Office of State Planning to provide the subcommittee an overview of the PLUS (Preliminary Land Use Service) process. Ms. Arndt expressed interest in attending a commission meeting, and Ms. Cooksey will confirm availability for the August 18 meeting. If anyone has questions, they would like to send, please provide them directly to Ms. Cooksey.

Education Subcommittee Report

Mr. Downing provided additional follow-up on the Delaware Naturally launch event in March, which was to develop collateral materials to promote the campaign. The materials, such as bumper magnets, window clings and two-sided 8 ½” x 11” posters, are being created through the Delaware Center for Horticulture. As soon as the designs are finalized and materials in hand, they will begin distribution. Mr. Downing asked the commission to let the subcommittee know of potential locations and quantities needed. Options provided included public libraries statewide, garden centers, nature centers, the state fair and online.

Mr. Downing is still working on the formation of a forum of conservation-oriented volunteers recruited from the Delaware Naturally event. Process has been slow due to lack of resources and time. Will report back out once the forum gets going.

Mr. Saveikis provided an update on the FY22 budget. There will be an annual \$25,000 of general funding available for the commission as well as an appropriated special funds (ASF) line that will hold up to \$5,000 of funds raised by the commission under the Division of Fish & Wildlife’s budgetary lines.

Conservation Science Subcommittee Report

Ms. Smith reported that the subcommittee was discussing how the commission could respond to developments that potentially impact sensitive natural areas and using PLUS to help formulate responses in a timely fashion. Some questions to pose to Ms. Arndt include if the commission could request a copy of the report when the Division of Fish & Wildlife submits their environmental review comments to the Office of State Planning, and what the commission could then do with that information.

The subcommittee also identified members who will recommend five species in the Delaware Wildlife Action Plan, found on public lands, that the subcommittee feels require attention. They are working on finalizing their selections.

The subcommittee recommended that the commission should request that the Division of Fish & Wildlife web-enable the Wildlife Action Plan for ease of use. Currently, the Plan is online, split into several PDF documents. This will be added to the August agenda for vote.

Fiscal Management Subcommittee Report

Ms. Cooksey created a one-page template for supporting project proposals for spending. She recommended the subcommittee chairs submit proposals for discussion at the next commission meeting to begin budgeting the anticipated state funds. Ms. Cooksey will send the form to Ms.

Besecker for dissemination and commission chairs are to return the completed forms by August 1. Completed proposals will be submitted with the minutes and agenda.

Other Business

Top Ten Tasks

- #1: Poster in development by the education subcommittee begins to address this task.
- #2: The website still lists the sale of invasive species legislation as pending, needs to be updated with the signed law once Delaware Code is published, completing this task.
- #3: Educational material discussed by the education subcommittee. Ms. Smith is interested in creating a permanent tri-fold display.
- #4: Have not addressed yet. Mr. White recommends adding to the August agenda to discuss what methods the commission can develop to incentivize landowners.
- #5: New Castle County has begun this. Working with Kent and Sussex Counties has not been initiated yet. Ms. Smith has contacts with the Delaware League of Local Government and is working with them to get contacts.
- #6: Address in the same fashion as task #5.
- #7: Address in the same fashion as task #5.
- #8: Legislation – have not started yet.
- #9: New Castle County has good standards in place. Need to look into for Kent and Sussex Counties.
- #10: The commission supported this. Follow up on the status of the funding.

The chair will work with members on updating the goals and removing completed tasks from the top ten.

Goals for 2021

The website lists the goals for 2020, which the commission did not have an opportunity to address or update for 2021.

#4: have not created a strategic plan yet.

Commission members were tasked with submission of thoughts or ideas to the Chair prior to the August meeting.

Public Comments

Mr. Mickowski announced that the Delaware Invasive Species Council elected a new president - Blake Moore - and is working on an online publication with the University of Delaware. He also announced the Native Plant Society has been working to add to their pollinator project at the Sharp Campus in Lewes with a grant from the Xerxes Project.

The chair asked Mr. Saveikis when the commission would be allowed to resume in-person meetings. There are logistical challenges on the technology side, but a new law was recently passed allowing for hybrid meetings. Mr. Saveikis will keep the commission updated on any laws or policies that would allow for an in-person meeting in August.

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting is scheduled for August 18, 2021. Virtual meeting information will be provided.

Adjournment

There being no further business or time, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brandi Besecker, Administrative Specialist II
DNREC, Division of Fish & Wildlife

Meeting Minutes
Delaware Native Species Commission
August 18, 2021, at 10 a.m.
Hybrid Meeting - Video Conference through WebEx.
DNREC Auditorium, 89 Kings Highway, Dover, Delaware

Minutes approved on: October 20,2021

Members Present

James White, Chair
Lori Athey
Susan Barton
Valann Budischak
Darin Callaway
Sarah Cooksey
Michael Costello

Katherine Holtz
Jessica Inhof
Matthew Sarver
David Saveikis
Sheila Smith

Members Absent

Jeffery Downing
Christopher Heckscher
James McCulley
Michael Petit de Mange
Tracy Surlis
Robert Thornton, Vice-Chair
Janice Truitt

Administrative Staff

Brandi Besecker Administrative Specialist II
Bobbie Pearson, Administrative Specialist III

Public Present - some public attendees may not be listed due to limitations of virtual meeting

Elan Alford	Ashley Kennedy
Tricia Arndt	Terry Lemper
Jeff Brothers	Rick Mickowski
Gayle Dubois	Blake Moore
Senator Stephanie Hanson	Edna Stetzer
Amy Highland	Steve Sterling

Call to Order

Mr. White called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Review and Approval of Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the June 16, 2021, meeting. Ms. Holtz made a motion, seconded by Ms. Inhof to accept the minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously by Commission members present at that meeting.

Unfinished Business

Motion to enable the Conservation Science Subcommittee to draft letters of support for Commission consideration/action reflecting DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife environmental reviews of land development projects was tabled and deferred back to the subcommittee to further develop a proposed process to recommend to the full Commission.

New Business

Law and Regulations Subcommittee Report

Ms. Tricia Arndt, Office of State Planning, presented information on the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) process, which provides for state agency reviews of major land use changes. The PLUS process provides a mechanism to review and mitigate development impacts outside of municipalities and to provide early coordination of efforts by state, local and commercial entities. The Commission can follow the PLUS process and monthly meetings via the State Planning Coordination's [website](#) and listserv. All PLUS meetings are open to the public, but only state agency reviewers and project applicants can speak.

Ms. Arndt offered a recommendation that the Commission submit any letters regarding published comments submitted by the DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife on native species to the local government that will be acting on the project.

Ms. Arndt also provided information on ongoing updates to PLUS to make all information on the website interactive by geographic reference. The updates are currently in testing and scheduled to be available to demonstrate in October.

Education Subcommittee Report

Ms. Inhof presented the report on behalf of Mr. Downing. In their July meeting, the subcommittee discussed project proposals and submitted two for funding by the Commission. The Commission's education display was completed for use at outreach events and distribution. Commission flyers and bumper magnets are available at the Mt. Cuba Center for pickup through Mr. Downing.

Conservation Science Subcommittee Report

Secretary Scuse was unable to attend the meeting to discuss the invasive plant statute established through enactment of SB 22. Ms. Smith reported that the subcommittee discussed concerns from businesses involved in plant sales affected by the invasive plant statute, addressed linking to the Delaware Invasive Species Council assessment list online for ease of access and reviewing expert assessments on potential invasives to add to the plant list established by SB 22.

Mr. White gave a presentation on five species of greatest conservation need found on state lands that the subcommittee identified for management action consideration. Species recommended were Eel Grass (*Zostera marina*), Box Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia brachycera*), Mulberry Wing Skipper (*Pones massasoit*), Black-banded Sunfish (*Enneacanthus chaetodon*) and Red Cornsnake (*Pantherophis guttata*). Recommendations for other species or on the species presented should be provided to Mr. White.

Ms. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Cooksey, that the Commission request that the Division of Fish and Wildlife interactively web-enable the 2025 Wildlife Action Plan when it is developed. The motion carried unanimously by Commission members, with Mr. Saveikis abstaining from voting.

Fiscal Management Subcommittee Report

Ms. Cooksey requested that a member of each subcommittee jointly review the project proposal submissions for funding under the Commission's general fund budget. Ms. Smith and Mr. Costello volunteered. Ms. Cooksey will reach out to Mr. Downing to participate as well. The four proposals were emailed to the Commission members.

Aquatic Invasive Species Presentation

Ms. Edna Stetzer, Division of Fish and Wildlife fisheries biologist, presented on aquatic invasive species, covering state, regional and national resources, how invasive species enter the state, tracking expansion, education and mitigation efforts.

Other Business

Top Ten Tasks

No discussion.

Goals for 2021

No discussion.

Public Comments

None

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting is scheduled for October 20, 2021. Meeting information will be provided.

Adjournment

There being no further business or time, the meeting adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brandi Besecker, Administrative Specialist II

Meeting Minutes
Delaware Native Species Commission
October 20, 2021, at 10 am
Virtual Meeting- Video Conference through WebEx

Minutes approved on: December 15, 2021

Members Present

James White, Chair
Valann Budischak
Darin Callaway
Sarah Cooksey
Michael Costello
Jessica Inhof
Matthew Sarver
David Saveikis
Sheila Smith
Jeffery Downing

Christopher Heckscher
Tracy Surles
Katie Short (new member)
Robert Ditmars (new member)
Joseph Wick (new member)
Terry Lemper (new member)
Cynthia Albright
Sarah Cooksey

Members Absent

Lori Athey
Michael Petit de Mange
Janice Truitt
Susan Barton

Administrative Staff

Brandi Besecker Administrative Specialist II

Public Present - some public attendees may not be listed due to limitations of virtual meeting

Elan Alford
Jeff Brothers
Senator Stephanie Hanson
Rick Mickowski

Helen Fische
Kara Okonewski
DDA Secretary Michael Scuse

Call to Order

Mr. White called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Introduction of New Commission Members

Katie Short, Joe Wick, Terry Lemper and Robert Ditmars

Jim has asked if the members have been through the formal process of subscribing to their oath of office. Rob Ditmars stated that he has his completed. Katie is partially there, and others did not answer.

Review and Approval of Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the August 18, 2021, meeting. Ms. Cooksey made a motion, seconded by Ms. Budishat to accept the minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously by Commission members present at that meeting.

Unfinished Business

DNREC process for supporting comments on land and development has not made much progress. Ms. Cooksey referred to Ms. Tricia Arndt's, Office of State Planning, presentation and it suggested that there was more information online for the PLUS (Preliminary Land Use Service). As Ms. Arndt had recommended that comments sent to the local governments directly and made emphasis on every five (5) years all Delaware's municipalities and county level suggest to the comprehensive planning. Ms. Cooksey also stated that Ms. Arndt encouraged the commission to get more involved in that process.

Ms. Cooksey recommended that the commission receive a copy of DNREC's comments on the land and development as soon as they go public.

New Business

Law and Regulations Subcommittee Report

Mr. Michael Costello stated that he has not heard anything about the information going out to the municipalities. He stated that education to our new officials and appointed positions would be a large opportunity moving forward.

Education Subcommittee Report

Mr. Jeff Downing stated that there has been about 6,000 flyers, 700-750 bumper magnets along with window clings are in inventory and are available at the Mt. Cuba Center for pickup; please contact Mr. Downing.

Ms. Cooksey, Ms. Sheila Smith and Mr., Downing had met to discuss submitted proposals on the \$25,000 and how it could be used. They received a suggested proposal for a coordinator for education for approximately \$18,000 annually. Not sure if this could be a state employee or a contractor. The question is how the commission could move forward with this proposal.

Conservation Science Subcommittee Report

Mr. White presented the first five species found on state lands that were selected for consideration for species of greatest conservation needs. Species recommended were Eel Grass (*Zostera marina*), Box Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia brachycera*), Mulberry Wing Skipper (*Pones massasoit*), Black-

banded Sunfish (*Enneacanthus chaetodon*) and Red Cornsnake (*Pantherophis guttata*). Commission to vote on these species during the December meeting.

Mr. Dave Saveikis asked if the Bethany Beach had been considered. Mr. White had said they were not currently on Delaware land. However, Mr. Saveikis stated that they have been seen on state parks property. Mr. Christopher Hecksch brought to the commission's attention that Division of Fish & Wildlife along with the US Fish & Wildlife Service are giving a lot of attention to this species.

Ms. Smith requested about two main questions on three species that are on the plant list. As there is a discrepancy between The Delaware Invasive Species Council (DISC) has SB22 listed. Ms. Smith also asked when we necessarily need to have that done that might be a question for Senator Stephanie Hansen. Mr. White stated that Mr. Matt Sarver will be coordinating with Blake with the Department of Agriculture. Secretary Michael Scuse stated he needs the list as soon as possible due to the nurseries need to get them into the ground.

Mr. White would like to have a discussion with Mr. Sarver along with the new members for their insight on creeping jenny and the consideration for ease of control.

Mr. Saveikis wanted the commission to know that if an amendment to the list would want to be done, it would need to be in December. He knows that the legislation allows changing the list by addition but not sure about deletion. Secretary Scuse said that according to chapter 101 title 29 that the Secretary may make the alterations to the invasive plant list. It states alteration not just additions, but they would get a better interpretation on that.

Secretary Scuse was invited to speak with the Commission. He agrees with meeting with the new members that are in the nursery industry to review some of the plants that are the list. He feels that those in the industry should look at the sterile plants and have some sort of provisions to use those plants going forward.

Secretary Scuse had spoken to Senator Hansen about an issue with the law that the Governor signed into law, which was there needs to be identification for all plants with their own individual tags. The Department of Agriculture does not have the staff to enforce this law. His recommendation to Senator Hansen was to do something similar as the State of Maryland. Any plants that are on the watch list must have signage in front of all those plants. Senator Hansen is going to look at legislation that would change the law to allow signage change.

Mr. White, Chair, would like to set up two meetings (virtual) to clarify on the list with the invasive species commission or council and meet regarding the sterile plant species. Ms. Jessica Inhof would like to be involved and Mr. White would like to have those in the industry as well.

Fiscal Management Subcommittee Report

The subcommittee received four (4) proposals on the \$25,000 the committee has use of per their discretion. The subcommittee had a meeting and chose to have a coordinator to help with developing education and website design. Mr. Saveikis suggested to not hire a state employee that it would be better as a contractor to get the education outreach to the garden centers regarding the native and invasive plants. Ms. Budischak agreed with Mr. Saveikis with stating that it ends with

the consumer so therefore the more educated that the garden centers are the better help they can provide

Either hiring or contracting a coordinator will need a good scope of work, meaning layout the expectations and deliverables that are on a timeline to be completed. Mr. Saveikis stated that this could go to the open market-professional services.

This \$25,000 is a one-time distribution therefore, if this is not used by June 30, 2022, it will go away.

Ms. Sheila Smith motions: we adopt the project proposal that was put forth by the education subcommittee to hire a project coordinator or two. The scope of work would include the development of a website for Delaware Naturally and include the public education component regarding oversight of the Delaware Naturally working group to complete the website and to develop the educational materials for the nursery landscape industry. Seconded by Mr. Saveikis. Mr. White place this up for vote, with proposal passing and accepted by 10 commission members. Motion passed.

Aquatic Invasive Species Presentation

No discussion.

Other Business

Top Ten Tasks

No discussion.

Goals for 2021

No discussion.

Public Comments

No Comments

Next Meeting Date and Location

The next meeting is scheduled for December 15, 2021. Hybrid meeting information will be provided.

Adjournment

There being no further business or time, the meeting adjourned at 12:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bobbie J. Pearson, Administrative Specialist III
DNREC, Division of Fish & Wildlife

Meeting Minutes
Delaware Native Species Commission
December 15, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.
Virtual Meeting- Video Conference through WebEx

Minutes approved on:

MEMBERS PRESENT

James White, Chair
Christopher Heckscher
Katie Short
David Saveikis
Valann Budischak
Susan Barton
Joseph Wick

Matthew Sarver
Jeffrey Downing
Michael Costello
Tracy Surles
Sheila Smith
Darin Callaway
Jessica Inhof

Members Absent

Michael Petit de Mange
Sarah Cooksey
Janice Truitt
Robert Ditmars
Terry Lemper

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Bobbie J. Pearson, Administrative Specialist III

Public Present - some public attendees may not be listed due to virtual meeting limitations

Elan Alford
Senator Stephanie Hansen
Melanie Cucunato
Mikaela (no last name)

Rick Mickowski
Lori Brown
Bill McAvoy

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. White called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. Mr. White requested that when speaking to please identify yourself for the record to add to the official minutes.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the October 20, 2021, meeting. Ms. Barton made a motion, seconded by Ms. Smith to accept the minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously by Commission members present at that meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. White, Chair, raised the issue of the Commission supporting Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) comments on development projects as submitted by the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Division of Fish & Wildlife.

Ms. Smith inquired who would be the contact for the Division of Fish & Wildlife to obtain these PLUS comments. Mr. Saveikis stated that there would be many programs involved and that the Division provides comments that include species present on proposed development sites. He also informed the Commission that the Division does not have the capacity to screen all DNREC's PLUS comments. Select PLUS comments could be submitted to the Commission with guidance and some criteria. Ms. Smith had also reached out to Lincoln Willis of the Delaware League of Local Governments and is waiting to present at one of his meetings regarding the Commission's support of PLUS comments.

Mr. White indicated that the Commission would like the Division of Fish & Wildlife to look through projects that may impact species of concern and to provide the Division's comments to the Commission to add its support. Mr. Saveikis inquired who the Commission contact would be, with Mr. White indicating that PLUS comments can be sent to Ms. Smith, Chair of the Science Subcommittee.

Mr. White asked new members if that have been sworn in. Ms. Short indicated that she had been sworn in and Mr. Wick stated that he would go to the county office to be sworn in. Terry Lempner and Robert Ditmars were not in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS

Law and Regulations Subcommittee Report

Mr. Costello stated that there was nothing to report.

Education Subcommittee Report

Mr. Downing indicated that he has sent the draft statement of work (SOW) for a contracted Commission Coordinator to members of the subcommittee and Mr. Saveikis for comment.

Ms. Barton indicated that this was not part of her proposal. She suggested that the subcommittee work with University of Delaware (UofD) students to create the marketing materials on prohibited invasive plants for distribution this spring to garden centers and landscapers. Mr. Downing commented that it would be acceptable to hire any qualified individual or company that meets state contractual requirements.

Mr. Wick added that material developed by the UofD students, or a Coordinator could assist in helping to educate the general public. Ms. Smith indicated that initiating the marketing of point-of-sale information has been discussed for about two years and should be a top priority. Ms. Barton expressed that she had a person to be considered as the lead for this work and UofD undergraduate students could complete the marketing materials and the webpage. Mr. Wick stated that the webpage does not have to be complicated; it just needs to have information on the plants that are not desirable in the state.

Mr. Downing stated that the Mt. Cuba Center has purchased two web domains for Commission use, delawarenaturally.com and delawarenaturally.org. He also stated someone should work with Mr. Saveikis to finalize the SOW to move forward. Ms. Barton stated she would be happy to work with Mr. Saveikis. Mr. Downing specified that the proposed SOW budget included \$4,000 for website development, however the budget could support a more professional design for a costup to \$8,000.

Mr. Saveikis stated that there are two ways to approach a contract with UofD, a definitive lump sum with justification or by direct billable costs such as for hours worked and materials used, further stating that lump sum would be the most efficient.

Ms. Inhof informed that invasive plant species cannot be added or deleted from the statutory invasive species list without legislation. Senator Hansen stated that according to the attorney that drafted the legislation you cannot delete from the list without going through the legislative process and you can add to the list through regulation. Ms. Inhof stated that means there will be two different invasive plant lists, which can be confusing.

Ms. Inhof stated that there are species on the current list that have not been reviewed and that species cannot be deleted since the statute says, "at a minimum" and that her proposal is to remove the current list from the statute and put in regulation. Senator Hansen responded that the implemented intent of law resulted in the list going through a rigorous review process with many stakeholders, including this Commission and the Invasive Species Council. To remove the list and make it solely within the realm of the Department of Agriculture and to cut out other reviewing entities would not be a good idea. Ms. Inhof indicated that this is not the intent of the Department of Agriculture and that they would continue with the current coordination process required by state law for the Commission to provide recommendations to the Secretary (Department of Agriculture) regarding what species to add and remove.

Ms. Inhof inquired about the Commission's review process regarding recommending placing invasive plant species on the list. Mr. White indicated that the Commission would coordinate with the Delaware Invasive Species Council (DISC), which would make recommendations to the Commission. Mr. Saveikis added that even though the Commission previously referenced the DISC list, the Commission did not adopt the full DISC list, with some plants excluded and others added to the list that was adopted in state statute. Ms. Inhof further asked if there was a process in place for the Commission to review the recommendations made by DISC, to which Mr. White responded "No."

Mr. Wick inquired if anyone reached out to the nursery trades. Mr. White stated that he was unsure if anyone on the Commission was an independent owner of a nursery. Mr. Wick suggested that no one represented the nursery industry for review of the invasive plant list. Mr. White replied that Commission meetings are open to the public for input, suggestions or comments, and that public input had been provided. Mr. Wick asked who represented this industry in order to speak with them regarding to their input. Senator Hansen replied that she could not say that the industry wasn't represented but that they would have a say about what is

on the list, further stating that it would be up to their industry to convince the Delaware Native Species Commission that species should be removed from the (current) list legislatively.

Mr. Saveikis pointed out that the regulation promulgation process must be done through the Administrative Procedures Act, which provides ample opportunity for public input, including from this Commission. This process can take up to 6-7 months.

Mr. Sarver clarified that DISC does not make a recommendation to the Commission on any of these species, they merely provide the results of their evaluation. They are an independent organization assisting us by doing their own process of performing expert evaluations. They are not making a “yes” or “no” recommendation as to whether species should be included on the state’s official list, rather they are just providing the ranking of invasiveness and concern. This Commission considers DISC’s list in making its recommendation.

Conservation Science Subcommittee Report

Mr. White made a motion to finalize the selection of the five species of conservation concern that the Commission would like to start to work on in the coming new year.

The five species are:

1. Eel grass (*Zostera Marina*)
2. Box Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia brachycera*)
3. Chermock’s Mulberry Wing (*Poanes Massasoit Chermock*)
4. Black Banded Fish (*Enneacanthus Chaetodon*)
5. Red Corn Snake (*Pantherophis Guttata*)

If accepted, the Conservation Science Subcommittee will be working on a path forward for each species and how to work with Delaware government to enhance conservation of these species on state lands. Mr. Saveikis questioned if the Bethany Beach firefly was given any further consideration as it was determined that most of the population is on state land. Mr. Heckscher stated that this was brought up at the last meeting and that the Bethany Beach firefly was not included since it is getting recognition and research and inventories are being performed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mr. White asked if there was a motion to accept these five species. Ms. Smith moved that the Commission accept these five species as the first five to add to our new list. Mr. Heckscher seconded the motion, with the Commission approving the motion unanimously, with Mr. Saveikis abstaining from the vote as several of the species are on the Division of Fish & Wildlife land.

Fiscal Management Subcommittee Report

Ms. Sarah Cooksey has resigned, so there is no report.

OTHER BUSINESS

Senator Hansen plans to introduce legislation to amend Title 7 and Title 29 of the Delaware Code to require use of only native plants on state land. Mr. White requested that the Commission have until the February 2022 meeting to review the proposed legislation.

Top Ten Tasks

Ms. Smith wanted it noted that the Commission should implement the recommendation to promote the distribution of a list of native plants and trees, which might be handled by the Education Subcommittee.

Goals for 2021

No discussion.

Other Business

Mr. White stated that the 2021 annual report is due and requested that the subcommittee chair send an email with highlights of accomplishments over the past year.

Mr. White stated that the Commission needs to elect a new chair and vice-chair – if anyone has an nomination, please email Mr. White before the next meeting in February.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

The next meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2022. Meeting format and information will be provided.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or time, the meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bobbie J. Pearson, Administrative Specialist
IIDNREC, Division of Fish & Wildlife

Appendix E: Delaware Native Species Commission Top Ten List and Recommendations

The Statewide Ecological Extinction Task Force (Task Force) identified a series of recommendations to be considered by the Delaware Native Species Commission. The Commission is tasked with completing or assisting with the completion of all recommendations. To provide a focal point, the Commission, over the course of 5 months, created a “top ten” list of recommendations to start working on. The list below reflects the Commission’s “top ten” with the remaining recommendations listed in no particular order. Bold text following recommendation refers to the Task Force’s original categorizing of the recommendations.

Top Ten

1. Recommend the Task force promote the distribution of a list of native plants and trees that are easy to grow in our area. *(Please note that the Commission assumes this recommendation should read Recommend the Commission promote...)* **Education**
2. Make the sale of invasive plants illegal in Delaware, allowing an appropriate phase-out period after legislation passes. (A) Invasive species are those on the Delaware Invasive Species Council plant list, as periodically amended. (B) The Delaware Invasive Species Council plant list must be reviewed and amended, if necessary, on a regular basis. **Legislation to Prohibit the Sale of Invasive Species**
3. Educational material should be developed, tailored to the specific target audience, which will explain the benefit of native species as well as the effect of non-native and invasive species proliferation, and their contribution to the decline of our local species. **Education**
4. Encourage the preservation of the remaining intact forest habitat (largest tracts should receive highest priority). **Incentivizing Private Landowners**
5. All Delaware state facilities and departments should set the example, reducing lawn and replacing with native plants or pollinator gardens, and revising land management practices to be more pollinator friendly. **Government Leads by Example**
6. Encourage municipalities to adopt native landscaping in their codes. **Government Leads by Example**
7. Encourage new public facilities to use native plants in landscaping. **Government Leads by Example**
8. Encourage protection of Delaware’s rarest plant communities such as Atlantic White Cedar Swamps, Coastal Plain Ponds, Interdunal Swales, Sea-level Fens, Piedmont Streamside Seepage Wetland, and Piedmont Tuliptree Rich Woods. **Legislation Affecting Development**
9. Encourage all counties to adopt environmental design standards for development projects in order to protect key wildlife habitats and species of greatest conservation need (SGCN). **Legislation Affecting Development**
10. Fund the Delaware Open Space Program at the level required by statute. **Funding Open Space Program at Statutory Level**

Education

11. Educational material should be developed, tailored to the specific audience, on the preservation and management of open spaces within communities, on private property, and on public property.
12. Educational material should be developed to specifically guide property owners on the identification of non-native and invasive species, the native species alternatives, and proper management of property landscaping.
13. A curriculum should be developed to bring the educational material into our children's classrooms and various outreach programs.
14. The educational material should be distributed to professional organizations having responsibility in property development such as engineers, landscape design professionals, landscape contractors, and professional builders.
15. Encourage incorporating the educational material in obtaining or maintaining professional licensing.
16. The educational material should be distributed to homeowner associations and property management associations. This will not only inform those organizations, but this should be encouraged as one method of subsequent distribution to the individual homeowners.
17. (A) The educational material should be available to individual property owners through home and garden centers, state and local government, and other organizations as available.
(B) Recommend to the Delaware Real Estate Commission to add a line on the Sellers Disclosure forms directing homeowners to a webpage of educational material.
18. The educational material should form the basis of training seminars and trade symposiums geared toward local government officials involved in land use planning.
19. Education through media outlets should be investigated and implemented. Examples include advertising and discussion on social media, radio and television (including local cable television and New Castle County's television station).
20. Education through demonstration projects by local government, business owners, non-profits and others should be encouraged and properly recognized. Signage associated with the project is critical and should be encouraged.
21. Education through public presentations to interested groups and organizations should be encouraged.
22. Methods of funding centered on implementing the educational initiatives recommended by the Task Force should be explored, including public/private arrangements.
23. Educational campaigns centered around informing the public on the value of wildlife and how wildlife and their native habitats benefit humans including how all three are interconnected should be encouraged.
24. A program to either educate landowners on living/green shoreline options and their benefits and/or a program to train engineers in living/green shoreline construction including the pros and cons of various options to minimize shoreline erosion should be encouraged.
25. Encourage landscape contractors to remove, manage, and control invasive plants and replant with native species.
26. Promote/follow Delaware Livable Lawns practices on lawns in Delaware. (<https://www.delawarelivablelawns.org/>).
27. Recommend that education and incentives be used to encourage property owners to plant and or convert to native plants and trees on their properties.

28. Prepare several examples of single-family home landscape plans that use native trees and plants (+ or - 75% of those chosen) to show how native plants and trees may provide an aesthetically pleasing yard and one that is easy to maintain.
29. Encourage the development of a training course and/or seminar that developers, landscape professionals, and others may attend to provide education and a forum for collaboration of ideas to promote the planting of native trees and plants.
30. Governmental, educational, and environmental organizations should work together to develop a comprehensive, environmental education program regarding using native species versus non-native and invasive species.

Incentivizing Private Landowners

31. Method of Incentivizing: Establish incentives such as expedited permitting and density bonuses for environmentally sensitive landscape design practices such as those included in Sustainable Sites, the National Green Building Standard, Energy Star, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, or green technology best management practices.
32. Incentivize land development applicants to incorporate DNREC's PLUS recommendations regarding specific potential impacts to state rare and federally listed species and their habitats into their development plans.
33. Create incentives for reducing lawn area and replacing it with native plants.
34. Encourage the incorporation of pollinator and other insect habitat into incentive programs.
35. Provide incentives for home buyers with native landscaping such as the Green4Green program.
36. Seek funding to cost share native habitat improvements on private lands.
37. Incentivize homeowners and developers to retain tree species of high wildlife value (e.g., oaks, hickories).
38. Encourage the funding of the Forestland Preservation easement program.
39. Explore opportunities to provide state-level add-on incentives and best management practices to targeted species via NRCS and FSA programs.
40. Explore opportunities to provide state income tax exemptions for state or federal conservation incentive payments.
41. Encourage tax ditch associations to implement BMPs that minimize impacts to key habitats.
42. Encourage the development of and/or marketing of biodiversity certification programs for private forestland and farmland.
43. Encourage enrollment in the Backyard Wildlife Habitat Certification Program.
44. Increase access to prescribed fire as a management tool.
45. Encourage support of the Landowner Incentives Program.
46. Preserve or otherwise conserve and manage as much of the remaining (*non-tidal*) freshwater wetlands as possible – e.g., Delmarva Bays (Coastal Plain Ponds).

Government Leads by Example

47. Create incentives for using native plants on public property.

48. Provide funding/incentives for the removal of invasive plants on public property and, where appropriate, replant with native species.
49. Provide incentives/requirements for reduced lawn areas in passive open space public landscapes.
50. Provide funding/incentives for demonstration landscapes on public land to demonstrate sustainable landscape practices including reduced lawn, use of native plants, reduced mulch, etc.
51. On all highway medians, mow a strip of grass adjacent to the roadway (beauty strip) and allow the rest of the vegetation to grow. Mow median once or twice a year in late fall or early spring. *
52. On all highway roadsides, mow one mower passes above the ditch line to allow for designed drainage function. Mow the rest of the right of way once or twice a year in early Spring or late Fall as needed to control invasive species. Woody vegetation may be allowed to grow on some rights of way if invasives are controlled. *
53. On highway cloverleaves created by on/off ramps, mow one mower passes adjacent to the ramp/roadway. Mow the rest of the cloverleaf one or two times a year as needed to control height, visibility and invasive species. Woody vegetation may be allowed to grow on some rights of way if invasive species are controlled.
54. On secondary roads, apply reduced mowing standards whenever feasible.
55. Encourage the removal and stump treatment of woody invasive plants on DelDOT rights of way.
56. On new highway projects that involve landscaping, plant predominantly native species.
57. Develop model legislation or policy to make it easier for state or local government to make changes, such as adopting legislation or policy requiring native species of new government buildings and parks.
58. Encourage state and local governments to make better use of existing land by creating better habitats on available land. Examples could include creating native meadows, creation of wetlands, reforestation, etc.
59. Review DelDOT's policies and work collaboratively to enhance the role of DelDOT in species conservation, without reducing highway safety, by: (A) designating reduced salt use in environmentally sensitive areas (B) native plantings (C) increased collaborative management of ROWs and water control structures (D) Coordinate timing of mowing and construction to minimize impacts (E) Integrate key habitat and Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) conservation into long-range transportation planning.
60. Given the State of Delaware owns a large percentage of land in the state, we recommend increasing funding, staffing, and better management practices of state-owned lands.
61. Work with DNREC and the individual Tax Ditch Organizations to explore the feasibility of establishing landscape buffers along tax ditches in order to reduce erosion along ditch banks, reduce maintenance requirements, and improve water quality.

* Ideally, if mowing once per year, mowing should take place in early spring, with late fall being a less desirable alternative. The second mowing, if desired, should occur in late June. (Technical clarification provided by Susan Barton, Delaware Landscape and Nursery Association)

Legislation Affecting Development

62. Review existing regulations to determine their effectiveness in protecting state-endangered species.
63. Look for linkages and connectivity between native habitats in existing and new development to connect native habitat in subdivision site plans.
64. Encourage drafting of legislation for use by local governments that would provide exemptions for common areas, buffer zones, and open space areas from tall weeds/grass property code violations, when maintained in accordance with an approved plan.
65. Encourage Kent and Sussex Counties to adopt overlay zoning ordinances incorporating sensitive natural resources.
66. Encourage the revisitation of wetlands regulations to ensure protection of freshwater non-tidal wetlands via regulation and incentives.
67. Ensure that all State, County, and local codes allow for managed meadow areas as defined by neatly mowed edges, mowed paths, and management plans.

Funding Open Space Program at Statutory Level

68. Open Space Program funds should be used for purchasing high-quality habitats with native plants and trees, especially those habitats required for species of special concern and those that connect existing protected lands.
69. Continue dedicating funds toward the Agricultural Land Preservation Program as finances permit.

Deer Management

70. Encourage the review of county code or local ordinances that may be inhibiting adequate deer harvest.
71. Encourage landowners and land managers to increase deer harvest as necessary to reduce impacts to key habitats.
72. Promote the availability of deer damage permits to non-agricultural landowners.
73. Encourage farmers to utilize their crop damage tags by allowing hunting on their property.
74. The sign-up process for the DE Severe Damage Program should be streamlined and more user-friendly.

Recovering America's Wildlife Act

75. By offering support of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, the Delaware Ecological Extinction Task Force supports the efforts of the Blue-Ribbon Panel to identify an adequate and sustainable source of money dedicated to the conservation of species in greatest conservation need in an effort to prevent further population declines in some species of wildlife thus reducing the risk of more species becoming endangered.
76. The Delaware Ecological Extinction Task Force supports the efforts of the Blue Ribbon Panel to identify an adequate and sustainable source of money dedicated to the conservation of species in greatest conservation need and offers support of this effort by joining the Recovering America's Wildlife Sign-On Letter which can be found here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScvMgnygWgk_nLeygYJ4tTVpX4bCDpFG_cbbZ_tOPA_JRwUlg/viewform

77. Following the introduction of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act a letter on behalf of the Delaware Ecological Extinction Task Force shall be sent to Representative Lisa Blunt-Rochester and Senators Thomas R. Carper and Christopher A. Coons requesting their support for the legislation.

Formation of the Delaware Native Species Commission **COMPLETE**

78. The Delaware Native Species Commission should be formed by an action of the General Assembly to implement the recommendations of the Task Force and report back to the General Assembly on a yearly basis. Its membership should reflect a balance of interests between environmental professionals, government, and other stakeholders, and meet on a regular basis to be determined by the Commission. The Commission will sunset ten (10) years after enactment unless reauthorized by the General Assembly.