



CONSERVE WILDLIFE
FOUNDATION OF NEW JERSEY

December 14, 2009

PRESS RELEASE:

The Ballanger Creek Enhancement Project of the US Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, is intended to enhance habitat for wildlife and improve forest health.

In late 2009, the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ received notification from the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, US Forest Service that it was receiving a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The funding is intended to help create both jobs and wildlife habitat in New Jersey. The scope of the project includes the creation and enhancement of wildlife habitat and helps control the spread of invasive species inside Bass River State Forest in Bass River Township, Burlington County. The site is located along Ballanger Creek and is the former site of an old saw mill owned by the French family in the early 1900's.

Ballanger Creek feeds into the Mullica River, a relatively unspoiled, estuarine system. The surrounding forested habitat is mostly unfragmented (to the south) and is comprised of pine-oak woodlands and emergent saltwater marsh. Some portions of the freshwater wetland are dominated by common reed where old fill was dumped which provides little habitat for wildlife. Several different habitat types can be found on site and include a fallow field, a man-made freshwater impoundment, and a unique mature forest type that is uncommon for Bass River State Forest that contains large Pitch pine, American holly, and White oak. The design of this project maximizes the site for use by wildlife and people for outdoor recreation, wildlife viewing and environmental education.

Habitat treatments will include the enhancement of 5.5 acres of grassland habitat, creation of .3 acres of scrub-shrub habitat, and the enhancement of approximately 6 acres of freshwater wetland edge habitat, which includes removing any invasive species encountered. Grassland habitat, that provides both food and cover, will be enhanced by planting native warm-season grasses and wildflowers. This habitat will benefit small mammals, many invertebrates, songbirds, and small gamebirds. Scrub-shrub habitat will be created by planting a variety of native fruit-bearing shrubs that offer both food and cover for migratory birds. Here a variety of shrubs will be planted to provide food during different seasons. The wetland edge will be enhanced by removing Common reed and planting native shrubs and herbaceous plants to create a more suitable habitat for wildlife, including egrets, herons, and

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songbirds. Additionally, a series of interpretive signs will be designed and installed after the project is completed.

We expect to retain and create several jobs from the funding for this project. We are currently in the process of acquiring private bids for design and construction by local consulting and contracting companies. This project will encompass a wide variety of professionals in the private business sector, including landscape architects, civil engineers, contractors, heavy equipment operators, truck drivers, nursery employees, environmental consultants, and landscaping professionals.

To learn more about this project visit our website (www.conservewildlifenj.org) and click on the **PROJECTS** tab. Locate the **Habitat Program** and more information will be under the **Ballanger Creek Project** listing.

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ABOUT US:

The Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey (CWF) is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to New Jersey's rare wildlife, including the 71 species protected by law and the hundreds of others considered Species of Conservation Concern. Since our inception in 1990, CWF has worked to protect our wildlife resources through research, management, outreach, and education.

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"This institution is an equal opportunity provider."

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