Title: Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation

Leader: Scott Jackson

Overview

Massachusetts is the third most densely populated state in the nation. The rate of land consumption for residential development is steadily increasing far out of proportion to its population growth. Haphazard growth has impacted water resources, natural resource-based enterprises, open space, wildlife habitat, and community character. Nearly half the state’s communities lack professional planning staff, while volunteer boards struggle with increasing levels of responsibility, liability, time demands and public mistrust.

The Fish, Wildlife & Biodiversity Conservation Project addresses these concerns through related initiatives that focus on habitat loss and fragmentation, establishing priorities for ecological restoration and mitigating development impacts on wildlife and ecosystems.

Project: Wildlife Conservation

UMASS Extension engages in applied research and provides information, educational materials and programs based on current research to promote wildlife conservation including efforts to better understand the impacts of roads and highways on wildlife and ecosystems and to develop and evaluate techniques for mitigating those impacts.

Activity Summary

- Book Chapters: Wildlife Crossing Structures for Small Vertebrates(3)
- Coordination of the MA Calling Amphibian Survey as part of the North American Amphibian Monitoring Program (NAAMP)(1)
- Maintain the MA Snakes web site(1)
- Maintain the Massachusetts North American Amphibian Monitoring Program (NAAMP) web site(1)
- Maintain the Mill River Watershed Web Site(1)
- Service on Graduate Research Committees(2)
- Update and maintain the MA Herp Atlas Web Site(1)
- Workshops, presentations and technical assistance on mitigating the impacts of transportation on fish, wildlife, and ecosystems(14)
- Workshops, presentations, and technical assistance on wildlife natural history and conservation(6)
**Total educational contacts**

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| Indirect Contacts (Print, Web, etc...) | 122,527         

**Narrative Summary and Impact**

UMass Extension serves as a general resource on fish, wildlife and biodiversity conservation with a particular emphasis on reptiles and amphibians, and the impact of roads and highways on wildlife and ecosystems.

UMass Amherst continues to play a leadership role in Massachusetts and the region for wetlands assessment and wetlands protection. UMass works with the MA Department of Environmental Protection, MA Office of Coastal Zone Management and U.S. EPA to develop cost-effective tools and techniques for assessment and monitoring of wetland and aquatic ecosystems.

**Collaborating Organizations**

- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
- Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions
- Massachusetts Environmental Trust
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service