



Pledge Supporting NJ Wildlife Action Plan

The Wildlife Action Plan Pledge is a community's first step in recognizing the important role that wild animals play in healthy, sustainable communities. In adopting the pledge, communities pledge their support for New Jersey's Wildlife Action Plan, and commit to seven essential principles that incorporate the interests of New Jersey wildlife into municipal planning. Doing so results in significant benefits for animals, people, and the environment, including: improved human health and social, and recreational opportunities; conservation of limited and valuable resources; reductions in human-animal and human-human conflicts; improved community-wide quality of life; preservation of New Jersey's natural heritage (including the State's ecological integrity); and elevated civic pride.

The Pledge reflects a holistic approach to balancing the relationship between animals, people, and the environment based on respect, sound science, ethics, and ecological sustainability.

Who should lead and be involved in this action?

The Mayor and governing body, by necessity, as well as the municipal Green Team, Planning Board and Zoning Board leaders, Transportation Department, animal control, and the Environmental Commission could all be engaged to build community and political support for the adoption of the resolution. This committee should then appoint from its membership a "lead" for shepherding the pledge through the political process.

Timeframe

This resolution, with expected municipal legal review and local adaptation as necessary, can be adopted within 3 months.

Project Costs and Resources Needed

Depending upon the level of legal review, adoption of this pledge resolution

should result in few if any costs beyond staff time.

Why is it important?

The New Jersey Wildlife Action plan is a comprehensive action agenda for the conservation of native wildlife, the restoration of important lands and water, and public education targeting the needs of rare wildlife in New Jersey. The Plan, developed for the benefit of biologists, wildlife experts, municipal leaders, land stewards, non-profit organizations, educators, planners, researchers, outdoor recreation enthusiasts, and landowners, recognizes that wildlife species are integral to maintaining healthy ecosystems and therefore preserving species and their habitats is a hallmark of a sustainable community.

By adopting the Pledge, municipalities resolve to become more ecologically sustainable communities by incorporating the Plan's principles into public lands management, the environmental resources inventory, master plan revisions, and zoning. Fostering respect for and understanding of the relationships between animals, people, and our shared environment is a critical step towards sustaining community quality of life over the long term.

What to do and how to do it (“How to”)

Below we have listed the requirements for earning points for this action.

1. The Pledge must be officially adopted and distributed to appropriate municipal personnel prior to or during the year you are applying for certification.
2. While the pledge may be adapted to your municipality's unique conditions, the core provisions of the model pledge must be addressed. These include the intent to support the State Wildlife Action Plan and incorporate the list of seven principles into public lands management, environmental resources inventory, master plan revisions, and zoning.
3. The Pledge must minimally be distributed to Planning, Transportation, and Zoning Board members as well as the Economic Development Committee, Animal Control officers, and Environmental Commission.

We have provided extensive guidance and recommendations for implementing the action. You do not need to follow this guidance exactly as long as your final product meets the requirements.

1. Form a task force, or assign an existing body such as the environmental commission, to draft the pledge and manage the process of adoption. Draft the pledge based on the template provided below, with adaptation if necessary to reflect community circumstances.

2. Introduce the pledge and provide for a public discussion period.
3. Once the pledge is officially adopted by the Mayor and governing body, distribute it along with a memo to outline expectations for municipal staff. Distribution should include the Planning, Transportation, and Zoning Board members as well as the Economic Development Committee, Animal Control officers, and Environmental Commission.

PLEDGE of Municipal Support for New Jersey's Wildlife Action Plan

This Plan is in support of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish and Wildlife, State-level Priority Conservation Goals and Strategies

Recognizing that animals are an integral and valuable part of all communities and believing concern for the wellbeing of wild animals and wild species is a hallmark of a sustainable natural community the Municipality pledges its support for the New Jersey Wildlife Action Plan as outlined:

WHEREAS, New Jersey is home to a rich diversity of wildlife and ecologically significant natural communities,

WHEREAS, New Jersey's wildlife and wild places are under threat from development, fragmentation, invasive species and the impacts of people,

WHEREAS, the populations of mammals, birds, invertebrates, fish, reptiles and amphibians that live in and migrate through New Jersey find themselves clinging to smaller and smaller pieces of wild clean lands and aquatic habitats,

WHEREAS, it is more cost-effective to prevent species from becoming imperiled than it is to recover them once their populations have declined,

WHEREAS, a naturally functioning and healthy ecosystem represents a healthy environment for NJ wildlife and our citizens,

WHEREAS, the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, other state and federal agencies, and many partners in conservation have worked together to develop a state Wildlife Action Plan for the benefit of biologists, wildlife experts, municipal leaders, land stewards, non-profit organizations, educators, planners, researchers, outdoor recreation enthusiasts, landowners and all the people who know the wild places of New Jersey State,

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Wildlife Action plan is a comprehensive action agenda for the conservation of native wildlife, the restoration of important lands and

water, and public education targeting the needs of rare wildlife in New Jersey,

WHEREAS, the residents of, and visitors to, New Jersey also enjoy and benefit from New Jersey's wildlife and wild spaces.

NOW THEREFORE, we the town of, resolve to take the following steps with regard to our municipal land-use decisions with the intent of making an ecologically sustainable community. It is our intent to include these principles in our public lands management, our environmental resources inventory and to inform the next master plan revision and update our zoning accordingly.

- We will identify imperiled species, critical habitat and unique ecosystems in our Environmental Resource Inventory.
- Acknowledging that it is more cost-effective to protect species than recover species, we will protect populations of rare and imperiled species that live and breed in, and migrate through, the municipality and the habitats they depend upon.
- Because habitat integrity is critical to healthy biodiversity we will manage publicly owned lands in accordance with wildlife management actions laid out in the New Jersey Wildlife Action Plan and will promote the management of all protected lands to promote biodiversity.
- We will protect wildlife habitats and maintain connectivity of habitat when formulating an open space acquisition strategy, open space stewardship plans and through the municipal master plan including planning and zoning ordinances.
- We will seek to minimize disturbance of critical wildlife populations and their habitats from human activities, subsidized predators and invasive species.
- When possible and appropriate, we will work with neighboring municipalities to implement the aforementioned principles across municipal boundaries.
- When possible and appropriate, we will strive to monitor and implement appropriate management of municipal easements to ensure native vegetation and wildlife takes precedence over invasive and/or exotic species.

Agenda and date voted : xx/xx/2010

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify this is a true and exact copy of a resolution adopted by the
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Township Committee on xx/xx/20xx

What to submit to get credit/points

In order to earn points, your submission must meet the following standards:

1. The Pledge must be officially adopted and distributed to appropriate municipal

personnel prior to or during the year you are applying for certification.

2. While the pledge may be adapted to your municipality's unique conditions, the core provisions of the model pledge must be addressed. These include the intent to support the State Wildlife Action Plan and incorporate the list of seven principles into public lands management, environmental resources inventory, master plan revisions, and zoning.
3. The Pledge must minimally be distributed to Planning, Transportation, and Zoning Board members as well as the Economic Development Committee, Animal Control officers, and Environmental Commission.

Submit the following documentation to verify the action was completed to the above standards. (Log in to the password protected webpage where you submit your online application for certification to write in the text box and upload documents).

1. In the text box, please provide a short narrative (300 word max) to summarize what was accomplished and the general steps taken to accomplish it.
 - Upload: Officially adopted copy of the Pledge.
 - Upload: Memo introducing the Pledge and outlining expectations for the municipal staff regarding implementation. Please include the list of staff receiving the memo as well as their affiliations.

IMPORTANT NOTES: You can upload up to six separate documents for each action. Please excerpt relevant information from large documents. Please remember that your submissions will be viewable by the public as part of your certified report.

Spotlight: What NJ towns are doing

In Glen Ridge, the resolution to adopt the Pledge in support of the NJ State Wildlife Action Plan was unanimously adopted by the Borough Council without objectors. View Glen Ridge's certified report for details.

The Borough Commissioners in Haddonfield adopted the Pledge in 2010, Please see Haddonfield Borough's certified report for details.

Resources

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife: <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/index.htm>

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Action Plan Page:
<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/ensp/waphome.htm>

Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey: <http://www.conservewildlifenj.org>

New Jersey Audubon: <http://www.njaudubon.org>

See also: Animals in the Community, Wildlife Interaction Plan resources.