



# Annual Rare Species Awareness Briefing

## Sea Girt NGTC

March 2024



Presented by:

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# Stakeholders

Protection measures and natural resource management activities at the National Guard Training Center supported by

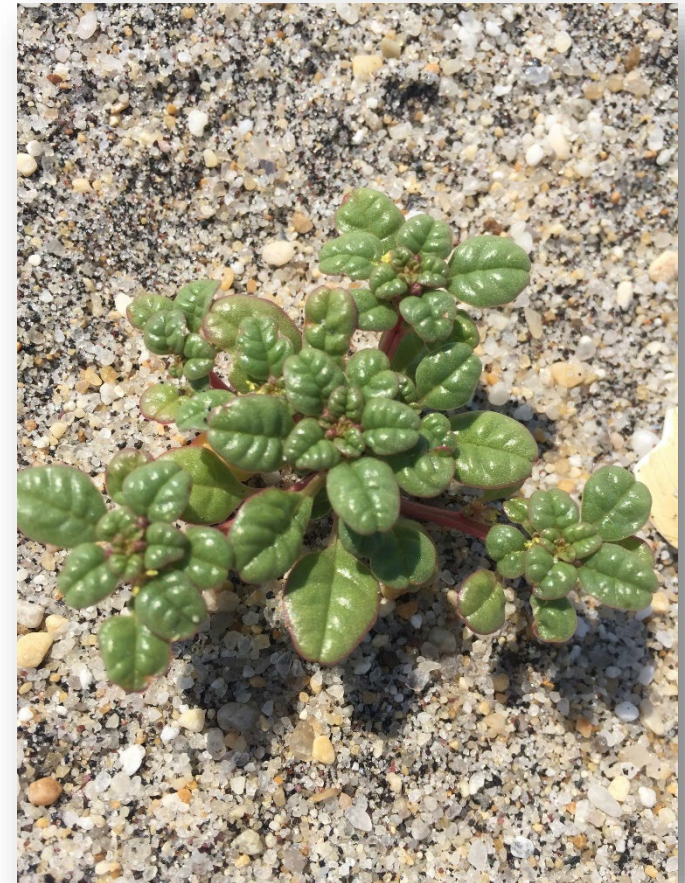
- National Guard Bureau
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- NJ Department of Environmental Protection
- NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
- Monmouth County
- Borough of Sea Girt
- Borough of Manasquan



# Rare Species and the National Guard

## Objectives:

- Overview of Rare Species Protection Measures and Regulations
- Overview of Sea Girt NGTC Natural Resources
- Overview of public health and safety efforts





# Regulations

- AR 200-1 – Army Environmental Regulation
- Endangered Species Act
- NJ Endangered and Nongame Species Conservation Act
- Wetlands Protection Act
- Coastal Zone Management Act



# NGTC Specific Documents

- Habitat Enhancement Permits (General Permits 24 and 16)
- Beach raking permit (now Borough of Sea Girt CAFRA IP)
- NJDEP Wetland Letter of Interpretation
  - Document that defines the location of all wetlands on site.
- Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan (2023-2027)
  - Overall document that describes how NJARNG/NJDMAVA will manage natural resources at the NGTC.
  - Updated INRMP 2023-2027 in process of being reviewed and signed.





# Sea Girt NGTC

## Natural Resources Overview

- Wetlands – Approx. 5 acres



- Coastal Zone – Approx. 16 acres (Including Beach and Dunes)





# Management Efforts

- Canada Goose Surveys
  - Hazing techniques
    - Screamers, lasers, remote-control cars, and noise deterrent
    - High-Powered Sidewalk Washing
- Wetland Restoration Project
  - Removing invasive plants
  - Split rail fence, boardwalk and clamshell pathway increased accessibility for public
- Habitat Quality Surveys
  - Macroinvertebrate study
  - Beach Vegetation Assessment
- Beach Nesting Bird Monitoring
- Rare Beach Plant Monitoring
- Predator Surveys
  - Game camera surveys
  - Predator management
- Osprey Monitoring



# Rare Species

- Piping Plover

- Federally Threatened, State Endangered

- Nested for 4 consecutive years at NGTC (2019-22) after nearly a decade without nesting there
    - “Hamlet” lost to predators in 2022
    - “Joey” did not return in 2023



- Least Tern

- State Endangered

- Small colony in NPA in 2020, no nesting since



- American Oystercatcher

- State Species of Concern

- 1 pair nested outside NPA in 2023 – was depredated







# Rare Species

- Osprey

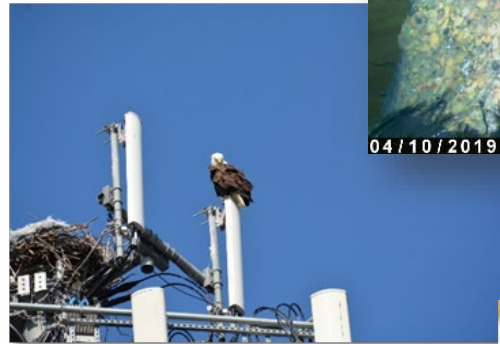
- State Threatened

- 3 pairs nested in 2023

- Bald Eagle

- State Endangered

- Frequently sighted in the off-season



- Seabeach Amaranth

- Federally Threatened, State Endangered

- 2 plants in 2023
    - 3 plants in 2022
    - 4 plants in 2021
    - 6 plants in 2020
    - 39 plants in 2019
    - 6 plants in 2018
    - 1 plant in 2017





# Rare Species

- Seabeach Knotweed
  - **State Endangered**
    - 1 plant in 2022
    - Prior to 2022, was not documented on site since 2003



\*Other State-listed species include yellow and black-crowned night herons, American kestrel, black skimmer, horned lark, northern harrier, seabeach evening primrose, sea-milkwort, seabeach sandwort, seabeach purslane and Fowler's toad





# Sea Girt NGTC Beach and Protection Areas



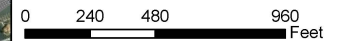
## Legend

- Fluker post
- Plant protection strip
- 2024 Beach replenishment boundary
- No Rake Zone
- Wetland
- Wetland buffer
- Northern Protection Area
- Vegetation clearing area
- Dune boundary
- 100-meter vehicle free buffer
- Property boundary
- Range road alternate driving route
- Physical training area

## Species location

- Osprey nest
- Osprey nest on cell tower
- Piping Plover 2019-2022
- Osprey nest removed in 2023

Source: Data gathered from NJDMAVA, VHB, Conserve Wildlife Foundation, and Stockton University





# Protection Measures

- In effect from 15 March to 1 December.
- Scope of protection measures are determined by the presence/absence of rare species.
- Protection area may change depending on location of species.
- USFWS and NJDEP performs regular surveys of entire NJ beaches to enforce protection measures (April 1 to August 31).
  - Delayed opening of the range until 0800 hours two days during the work week between 1 April and 31 August to allow rare species monitor/NJDEP to conduct survey. This year it's Mondays and Thursdays but may change each year. This management practice will be suspended **after July 15** if no piping plover or least tern nesting activity has been observed by that date.
- NJDMAVA and CWFNJ staff will monitor the beach on a regular basis between April and December.
- Bona fide emergency negates all protection measures.



Installing Fence





# Protection Measures: Level 1

## General Measures Include:

- String and sign fence installation around protection areas in mid-March. Fencing will extend eastward to two vehicle widths from the wrack line.
- No beach raking, vehicle use, or pedestrian traffic in the protection areas.
- **No beach raking or vehicle use** (unless responding to an bona fide emergency) **in front of the northern protection area** (no rake zone). Vehicles will be routed around the protection area via the “Range Road Driving Route.” Vehicle restriction signs will be in place. This practice may be suspended after **July 15** if no nesting activity has been observed.
- **No beach raking, vehicle use or placement of permanent or semi-permanent structures in the Plant Protection Strips.** Plant Protection Area signs will be in place.
- No pets on the beach.
- Predator management and litter/trash overflow control to reduce predators.
  - Predator management will be conducted this spring and summer.
  - Last year removed 8 red fox
- Designated monitor and/or NJDEP will continue weekly surveys of the beach.
- Helicopters will not fly over or within 475 lateral feet of northern rare species protection area and achieve a minimum altitude of approx. 500 feet. Not applicable if safety is compromised -implemented at the pilot’s discretion.



# Protection Measures: Level 2

**Measures when rare species nesting, but chicks not present (Level 2):**

- All general protection measures in effect.
- **Vehicles (including beach rake) are not allowed to drive through the no rake zone.** Vehicle restriction signs will be in place.
- Vehicles will be routed around the protection area via the "Range Road Driving Route."
- Protection areas and buffer zones may be extended depending on nest locations
- Depending on the location of nests, physical training on the beach may be moved or curtailed.





# Protection Measures: Level 3

## Protection Measures when chicks are present (Level 3):

- All general protection measures in effect.
- **No vehicle use, including the beach rake, in the “No Rake” zone.** Vehicles will be routed around the protection area via the “Range Road Driving Route.” This is consistent through all protection levels, regardless of the presence of chicks.
- **NO ROUTINE VEHICLE TRAFFIC/RAKING WITHIN 300 FEET OF PROTECTION AREA** (subject to change based on brood dynamics – such as the mobile chick from 2009). Vehicle buffer zone signs will be in place if chicks are present.
- Pedestrian and recreational activities (such as ball playing) and some beach access may be limited. Fishing area may be shifted or closed down depending on proximity to nests and chicks.
- Bona fide emergency negates protection measures. This does not include routine lifeguard or police patrols.
  - After an emergency, responders must prepare an After Action Report and forward it to NGTC and NJDMAVA (Sherry Tirgrath - [Sherry.Tirgrath@dmava.nj.gov](mailto:Sherry.Tirgrath@dmava.nj.gov)) NLT 24 hrs after incident.



# Protection Measures: Plants

## Protection Measures for Rare Plants:

- All general protection measures in effect.
- Plant Protection Area Strips established with signage throughout year.
  - No driving, raking or placement of structures in the back 10% (south of Northern Protection Area) or 25% (in front of Northern Protection Area) of the beach eastward of the toe of the dunes
  - Does not include entrance/access points
- Any plants growing outside the fenced protection area will be fenced with at least a 3-meter buffer around each plant.







# Protection Measures

## Military Training

- All protection measures in effect.
- Conduct a briefing 1 month prior to training event with unit commander where a unit “rare species monitor” will be identified.
- Unit Rare Species Monitor will ensure that all protection measures are met.
- For sea survival skills, unit will launch life rafts/jet skis from outside protection area/buffer zone and keep vehicles in military parking area while on beach.



# Protection Measures

While beach-nesting birds are present, any tenants using north beach for PT must keep vehicles (including first response Polaris) parked on northern beach access road and cannot drive or park on beach, within the buffer zone, unless responding to an emergency.



# Protection Measures

## Pets on the NGTC Property

- Pets, leashed or unleashed, are not permitted year-round
- Pets pose threat to beach-nesting birds and other rare species
- Predators on site have been observed with painful, infectious mange which can be easily transmitted to dogs
- Trained service animals are allowed - different from pets or emotional support animals



MOULTRIE ○ 51 °F CAMERA 3 16 JAN 2023 02:30PM



MOULTRIE ○ 50 °F CAMERA 1 31 DEC 2022 03:14PM



# Protection Measures

## **North Manasquan Rare Species Protection Area**

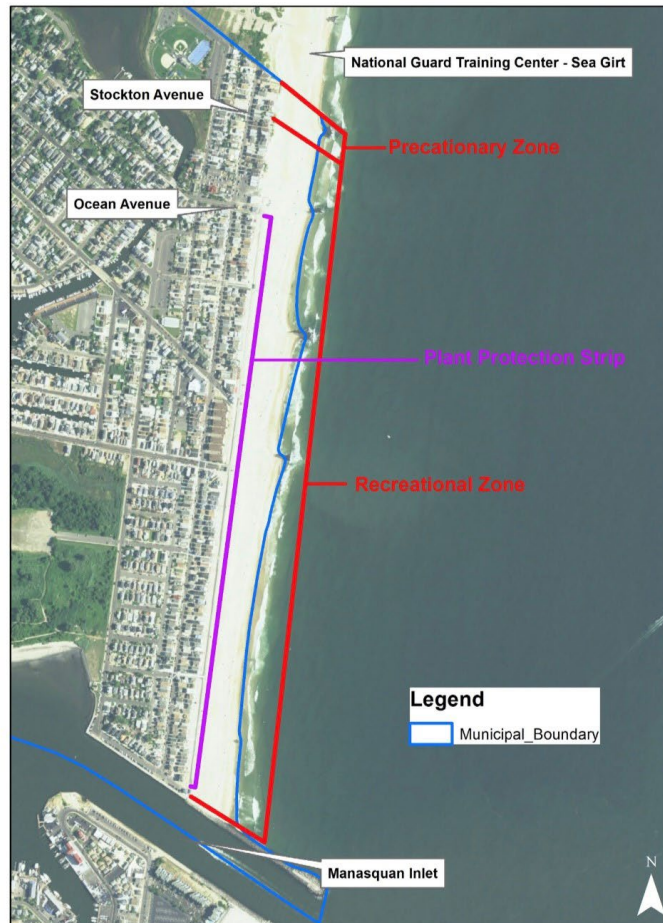
- Manasquan Precautionary Zone - Stockton Ave to NGTC border
- Raking and driving in this area prohibited March 15th-August 31st.
- Permitted activities: recreational uses, hand-cleaning of debris, beach/dune maintenance and inspection when necessary.
- Sand-scraping prohibited year-round.





# Protection Measures

## Precautionary Zone - Manasquan



Map provided by USFWS, February 2021.  
NJ 2017 Natural Color Base Map.

0 0.075 0.15 0.3 Miles



# Mosquito Control

- Performed by Monmouth County Mosquito Control Division 2019-2023
- Testing for mosquito-borne diseases
  - West Nile, Zika, St. Louis Encephalitis, etc.
- SUEIP conducted site-wide surveys to locate potential breeding habitat and help reduce sources of stagnant water at the NGTC
  - Report prepared to guide NGTC on management of open bins, lids, basins, etc. that may contain standing water



# Poison Ivy Control

- New project in development for CY2024
- Poison ivy is native but poses health and safety concerns
- Removal of poison ivy in areas with high exposure for tenants, visitors
- Revegetation with native plants that are ecologically viable replacement options
- On-going monitoring for PI spot treatment, evaluation of effectiveness, durability of replacement vegetation



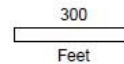
- Legend**
-  Site Boundary
  -  Project Area
  -  Poison Ivy Area



**Figure 2**  
**Invasive Species Survey Map**

Sea Girt National Guard Training Center  
Block 106, Lot 1 - Sea Girt Borough and  
Block 54, Lot 2.01 - Manasquan Borough  
Monmouth County, New Jersey

DRGNJ Project # 4848



Sources:  
Project Area and Poison Ivy Areas provided by Davey Resource Group, Inc.,  
based on aerial photographic interpretation and fieldwork conducted October 2022.  
New Jersey 2020 High Resolution Orthophotography, NAD83 NJ State Plane  
Feet, MDD10 1M53 Tiles, State of New Jersey Office of Information Technology,  
Office of Geographic Information Systems (NJOGIS), Trenton, NJ, April 2021.



# Conclusions

- Several rare species call Sea Girt NGTC home
- Sea Girt NGTC is required under several Federal, State, and Army Regs. to protect them.
- Compliance with regulations depends on YOUR actions. So please follow the rules.
  - If we get an enforcement action from USFWS or NJDEP we must report it to the NJARNG, CFMO-EMB, so everyone knows when we've been bad.
- Contact NJDMAVA (Sherry Tirgrath – [Sherry.Tirgrath@dmava.nj.gov](mailto:Sherry.Tirgrath@dmava.nj.gov)) in early planning stages if activities are planned on the beach that may impact rare species.
- Protection measures may change depending on annual life cycles of rare species.
- Some protection measures were revised in 2024 to be consistent with federal and state agency guidance.





# Trivia

1. What was the last year that Joey and Hamlet nested at the NGTC?



# Trivia

**Answer: 2022**



# Trivia

2. Are emotional support animals allowed on the NGTC property and beach?



# Trivia

**Answer:** No. Only trained service animals are allowed on the NGTC property. Service animals have been trained to perform a specific task to assist their handler with a disability. Pets and animals that solely provide comfort, emotional support or companionship do not qualify as service animals.



# Trivia

3. What protection level becomes active when piping plover chicks have hatched on site?





# Trivia

**Answer:** Protection Level 3. When chicks are present, there is no driving or raking in front of or within 300 feet on both sides of the protection area.



# Trivia

4. Where are Plant Protection Strips established on the NGTC beach? (new restriction for 2024 onward)



# Trivia


**Answer:** In the back 10% of the beach eastward of the toe of the dunes for the entirety of the beach south of the NPA (minus access points). In front of the NPA, the PPS is the back 25% of the beach eastward of the dunes.




# QUESTIONS?

**DRAFT v3**  
**INTEGRATED NATURAL**  
**RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
**(2023-2027)**

**NEW JERSEY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD**  
**SEA GIRT NATIONAL GUARD TRAINING CENTER**



**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY**  
**AND VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**NEW JERSEY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**



**DECEMBER 2023**

The central graphic is a composite image. At the top, it features the title "DRAFT v3 INTEGRATED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN (2023-2027)" and the location "NEW JERSEY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SEA GIRT NATIONAL GUARD TRAINING CENTER" over a background of military personnel and equipment. Below this is a map of New Jersey filled with various nature-related images, including a bird, a field, and a person. To the right of the map is a smaller image of a group of people with the text "NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS NEW JERSEY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT". At the bottom right are the Army National Guard and Environmental Management logos, and the date "DECEMBER 2023".