

# Wildlife Habitat Inventory Report – RK&K

## Summary of Findings

### Findings/Observations:

- In addition to the large pond and the Neshaminy Creek, additional habitat types observed included mid-late successional mixed hardwood forest, cornfield and maintained lawn
- In the forested areas, herbaceous groundcover was present but shrub layer was minimal, likely due to deer browse. Habitats observed within the Project Study Area (PSA) were typical of suburban and semi-rural environments in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States.
- Some portion of the woodland is forested wetland. Seeps and emergent vegetation typical of wetlands, including jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*) and reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) were observed.
- No vernal pools were observed, nor was evidence of such present.
- Wildlife species, and their regulatory status, observed during the field investigation included:
  - Birds
    - Great blue heron – Protected by [Migratory Bird Treaty Act \(MBTA\)](#) / Listed as a “maintenance concern” species in the [Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan](#)
    - Red-tailed hawk - Protected by Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)
    - Northern flicker - Protected by Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)
    - Gray Catbird - Protected by Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)
  - Reptiles
    - Eastern-painted turtle – No protected status, Native to Pennsylvania
    - Northern red-bellied cooter - - [Threatened species](#)
    - Red-eared slider – No protected status, considered an exotic/nuisance species
  - Amphibians
    - American bullfrog – No protected status
  - Mammals
    - White-tailed deer – No protected status
    - Raccoon – No protected status
- A wide variety of more common wildlife species, including songbirds and small mammals, are likely to inhabit the PSA. As observed, these would include species more typical of suburban edge-habitats, rather than undisturbed forested interiors or wilderness areas.
- Other species of concerns based on searches of the [United States Fish & Wildlife Service iPAC database](#) and the [Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory](#)
  - Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat – No potential hibernaculum were observed in the Project Study Area
  - The USFWS generated a letter stating that the project activities may affect Northern long-eared bat, based on the assumption that some tree clearing/removal will take place as part of trail construction. However, the incidental take of this species is not prohibited under the [Endangered Species Act Section 4\(d\) rule](#).

**Recommendations and Conclusions:**

- Northern red-bellied cooter was documented during the study and potential nesting habitat is present within the Project Study Area. Coordination with the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission is recommended to verify appropriate impact minimization measures for this species including exclusion devices constructed of silt fence to prevent nesting turtles from entering work ones, installed between October 15 and April 15
- Tree clearing should be conducted outside of the active breeding season for songbirds and outside of the summer foraging season for bats (i.e. no tree cutting from middle of April through the end of August)
- Culverts or pipes designed to convey drainage beneath the trail can be designed to allow for small wildlife crossings. Similarly, raised boardwalks could be used to minimize impact to these areas
- Rain gardens may be incorporated into the stormwater management plans to create additional microhabitats for amphibians and reptiles
- Restoration plans should incorporate native plantings of trees, shrubs and herbaceous species that encourage insect larval diversity and pollinators

Implementation of these measures should enable trail construction with minimal impacts to the natural environment and would provide enhancements to wildlife habitats.