

WRAC Accomplishments 2013

The Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee was established in 2012 to work with the Division of Fish and Wildlife to improve the wildlife rehabilitation program and the care that is provided to displaced or injured wildlife by licensed rehabilitators.

The committee began its process of establishing communications with all rehabilitators and gathering information for discussion with the Division representatives. Many of these discussions clarified the concerns of the rehabilitation community.

1. The committee identified the need for consistent reporting by rehabilitators and recommended that the Division revise the permit renewal application so that quality data and statistics could be obtained annually. Revisions to the annual report and pre-printed name and addresses were included in the 2014 permit renewal application. .
2. The committee recommended the Division perform regular inspections of rehabilitation facilities, to ensure that the best care is provided to wildlife. Between 2009 and 2014, all thirty-one rehabilitation facilities have been inspected by Division personnel. Seven of those facilities have been inspected more than once, when secondary and tertiary rehabilitators were added or when new species and /or cages were added. Routine inspections will continue to be conducted by the Division as time allows.
3. The committee recommended the Division update the relocation policy. Modifications to the policy were made in 2014 which resulted in greater flexibility for rehabilitators when releasing rehabilitated wildlife.
4. The committee recommended the Division allow more than one mammal / reptile rehabilitator at a facility, thus enabling more apprentices to become licensed rehabilitators, and to provide coverage when the licensed rehabilitator is off-site. This change was implemented in 2013 and also allows rehabilitators to plan for future transitions in administration. More than one avian rehabilitator at a facility is not possible due to USFWS restrictions.
5. The committee recommended the Division provide the veterinary community with guidelines for wildlife in their care, as well as a list of wildlife rehabilitators and additional resources. A letter was emailed to every member of the NJ Veterinary Medical Association with a current email address in 2013 and to additional veterinarians whose email addresses could be obtained.
6. The committee recommended the Division update the game and non-game regulations found in the New Jersey Administrative Code, including regulations affecting wildlife rehabilitators, so that minimum standards could be defined, including mandatory testing of all new rehabilitators. The Division has accepted all recommendations and is actively working on updating the regulations.
7. The committee provided the Division with guidance on how a licensed rehabilitator could add additional species to their rehabilitation permit. This clarification on how to add species to a current permit was accepted and included in the 2014 permit renewal application.