

5

WAYS COMMUNITIES CAN

Protect Wildlife in a Changing Climate

#1 Make connections

Protect areas for habitat expansion and connect habitats via travel corridors, such as streams, that will allow wildlife to migrate as climate changes.

#2 Include climate adaptation in municipal documents

Incorporate climate change factors into town documents, such as natural resources inventories, conservation plans, master plan chapters, hazard mitigation plans, etc.

#3 Reconnect the watershed

Remove barriers to flow like dams and undersized culverts to restore aquatic connectivity (also reduces flood damage!).

#4 Restore & manage habitat with climate in mind

Develop and implement restoration and management plans that support wildlife resilience (it will be good for people too!).

#5 Keep an eye out for invasive species

in your community. These species are expected to increase with climate change, and monitoring and managing them will become even more important.



There are many more actions that communities can take to help wildlife in a changing climate.

The Issue

Climate change is resulting in:

- Rising air and water temperatures
- Less snow in winter and earlier ice-out
- Shifting seasonality and phenology (i.e., the timing of seasonal changes, such as flowering, emergence of insects, migration of birds)
- Increased frequency of heavy rain events and storms
- Water quality issues, such as cyanobacteria blooms
- Increased risk of drought and fire
- Changing habitat distribution and species composition
- Increasing invasive species, pests, and diseases
- Rising seas and acidification in coastal/marine systems

The Goal

To permanently protect a network of connected and biologically intact sites representing the full diversity of physical and biological features

Climate Resilience:

The ability of a species, habitat, or ecosystem to adjust to an environmental disturbance caused by climate change by evolving, taking advantage of local opportunities, or relocating to more suitable habitat.

Recommended Actions

Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Learn about the expected impacts of climate change on the species and ecosystems ✓ Explore data related to climate impacts and conservation ✓ Learn about common invasive species, how to identify them, and how to control them ✓ Raise awareness about the benefits of conservation and restoration to build ecosystem resilience ✓ Put informative signs on public lands about the impacts of climate change on wildlife and natural resources ✓ Encourage school groups and residents to take part in citizen science efforts to track climate impacts ✓ Raise awareness about the projected impacts of ticks and mosquitos on wildlife populations
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider local ordinances to protect buffers for wildlife and encourage smart floodplain management ✓ Promote permanent conservation of important wildlife habitats in your community, especially areas that will connect already protected lands ✓ Use available data to inform conservation prioritization and planning in your community ✓ Incorporate climate impacts and adaptation strategies into forest management plans ✓ Encourage wildlife protections in renewable energy projects
Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Protect riparian and shoreland buffers which provide vital refuges and migration corridors for wildlife species, and can protect humans and infrastructure from flooding impacts as well. ✓ Support municipal efforts to address barriers to stream flow (e.g., dam removal, culvert replacement) to restore connectivity for wildlife and adapt to increased precipitation ✓ Organize invasive species management days or pollinator habitat plantings in your community ✓ Plant trees in your community to provide habitat benefits as well as human benefits (i.e., reducing the urban 'heat island' effect and promoting carbon sequestration) ✓ Explore opportunities to reduce stormwater runoff and impervious surfaces, particularly near water resources and sensitive wildlife habitats

For more resources, visit:

www.takingactionforwildlife.org/resources/climate-change-wildlife