

**Environmental Stewardship & Sustainability**  
**Wildlife Habitat Protection**

**T**housands of acres of land across the country are utility-owned rights-of-way. This substantial land base offers both challenges and unique opportunities for utilities to provide and conserve wildlife habitat on a scale that could benefit a large and diverse array of species.

**Wildlife Habitat Protection: The Basics**

- **A** wide range of species - especially land-based species - use power line rights-of-way as migration corridors. The rights-of-way also serve as critical “border habitats,” which are essential to the survival of many birds and small land-based mammals.
- **L**ands and waters owned by electric companies often serve as wildlife refuges or preserves and are thereby protected from development for other uses.
- **M**ore than half of the habitats for the vast majority of endangered species are found on nonfederal lands and water, including those owned or leased by electric companies for electricity transmission and generation.

**How PHI Protects Wildlife Habitats**

**PHI uses a number of proactive strategies for protecting and preserving wildlife habitat:**

- Through regular management and maintenance of the vegetation on transmission and distribution rights-of-way, we provide important habitat for many types of plants and wildlife.
- In addition to consulting with regulatory agencies and complying with the Endangered Species Act, PHI is proactive in protecting threatened and endangered species and critical habitats. We support numerous restoration efforts that create wildlife habitat and increase biodiversity. Biodiversity – among and within plant and animal species – is usually a good indicator of the health of an area’s ecosystem.
- PHI conducts habitat management surveys, not only to ascertain the general condition and components of the land in an area, but also to identify any animal or plant species that need particular care and attention.

*Pepco is the only electric utility in the nation whose rights-of-way vegetation management program is certified by the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC).*



- Whenever feasible, PHI adopts and implements specific wildlife protection measures such as installing riparian (i.e., river or stream bank) buffers along rights-of-way corridors; timing maintenance activities to avoid breeding seasons; building right-of-way crossings for target species; and applying the lowest effective concentrations of herbicides and pesticides.
- We use ecosystem-specific (i.e., grassland, shrubland, wetland) best-management practices to protect and preserve the unique characteristics of individual wildlife habitats.
- We integrate invasive species controls into vegetation management and wildlife habitat protection strategies, recognizing that invasive plant species are among the greatest threats to the world's biodiversity, and controlling them has become a priority for the scientific community.
- We plant native species whenever feasible to maintain the natural diversity of flora and fauna, promote environmental stewardship and provide diverse habitats and food sources for wildlife.
- In 2008, PHI received the *International Habitat Council's Conservation Award* for contributions to wildlife habitat along our rights-of-way.
- We enforce stringent environmental response procedures to minimize impacts on wildlife habitats and ensure that affected areas are effectively cleaned up, restored and monitored in the event of a spill or other environmental incident.
- We work with regulatory agencies to identify utility corridors where identify utility corridors where multiple electric, telephone and/or other facilities or rights-of-way can be grouped to minimize effects

on wildlife habitat and to avoid unnecessary proliferation of separate corridors and habitat fragmentation.

- PHI's *Meadow Management Program* promotes the germination and growth of dormant annual and perennial wildflower



seeds. Wildflowers provide food and nectar for bees, butterflies and caterpillars. Butterfly populations are an integral part of right-of-way wildlife habitats because they pollinate flowers, provide an essential food source for other wildlife and naturally beautify their surroundings.

- In 2005, Pepco was awarded the *Wild Turkey Management Award* for incorporating outstanding wild turkey management into its on-site habitat program. That same year, Pepco was also recognized by the *North American Pollinator Protection Campaign* and the WHC for establishing pollinator-friendly practices along its rights-of-way.

**For more information on Pepco Holdings, Inc.'s environmental programs, send your query to [enviroinfo@pepcoholdings.com](mailto:enviroinfo@pepcoholdings.com), or visit us at [www.pepcoholdings.com/services/environment/](http://www.pepcoholdings.com/services/environment/)**