

Issues and Concerns Raised by Black Racer Working Group
August 29, 2007

1. Why are the black racer listed as an Endangered Species in Maine?
2. After being involved in the Shorebird Significant Habitat Rulemaking process, I feel the Department need to work closely with townships and other potentially affected entities early in the process if they plan to develop regulatory habitat protections for the black racer.
3. The federal Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) will receive no funding this coming fiscal year; are there other tools or funding sources that can fill this need?
4. Beginning with Habitat (BwH) data are non-regulatory and often do not affect land use decisions by towns. BwH non-regulatory data do not carry much weight or influence. BwH data should include a stronger regulatory component – this would be more helpful for town planners.
5. Endangered and Threatened species data should be made available to towns as soon as possible.
6. What should be considered the baseline population for black racers in Maine given historical fluctuations in abundance and distribution?
7. What are the limiting factors for black racers at the northern edge of their range – food and winter survivorship? Will these questions be studied?
8. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using Essential Habitat as a regulatory tool for protecting black racers? Should we consider this tool given the concerns expressed above and its success with bald eagles?
9. Is it more difficult to designate Essential Habitat for a generalist species?
10. I would recommend that key biological information is collected by the Department before designating habitat protection areas (e.g. Essential Habitat).
11. How much funding is available to the Department to answer some of the key biological questions?
12. Consider including Maine Municipal Association (MMA) as an important Department constituent for all public meetings involving BwH, species mapping, or regulations.
13. There is a need for adequate funding to help attain the management goals and objectives for the black racer.