

Final Performance Report
South Carolina State Wildlife Grants Project F07AF00061 (T-38-R)
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2012

Project Title: Mink Restoration and Monitoring Development Project

Objectives:

To incorporate techniques and information from the project into a long-term, comprehensive, conservation management plan for coastal mink populations.

- Complete restoration of mink populations along the northern coastal marshes.
- Develop and implement monitoring strategies for use during normal tides utilizing track boards or other techniques that utilize lower manpower levels.
- Begin population assessments in all of the northern coastal marshes to determine where additional mink need to be relocated to supplement populations after all likely restoration areas have been restocked. Quantifying possible mink impacts on other species and methods to mitigate impacts on other species that may be of special concern to the Department.
- Investigate the potential impact(s) that mink may have on select species of special concern (i.e., nesting shorebirds, loggerhead sea turtles) within Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge.
 - Determine food habits of mink on the barrier islands and adjacent coastal marshes by examining stomach contents of all mink collected by Cape Romain NWR personnel during routine predator management activities.
 - Build a literature-based bioenergetics model to quantify the potential impact of mink on species of concern
 - Estimate consumption levels of prey items (e.g., egg, bird, fish) needed by an individual to meet daily energy requirements
- Determine activity pattern and home range of family groups

Work Completed:

Completion of two Master of Science Wildlife and Fisheries Biology theses entitled *Evaluation of Spotlight Surveys for Monitoring Mink Populations in Coastal South Carolina* and *Ecology of the American Mink and the Potential Impact of Species of Concern in Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, South Carolina* that describe the accomplishments of the project's objectives.

Significant Deviation: None

Estimated Federal Expenditure: \$ 142,500