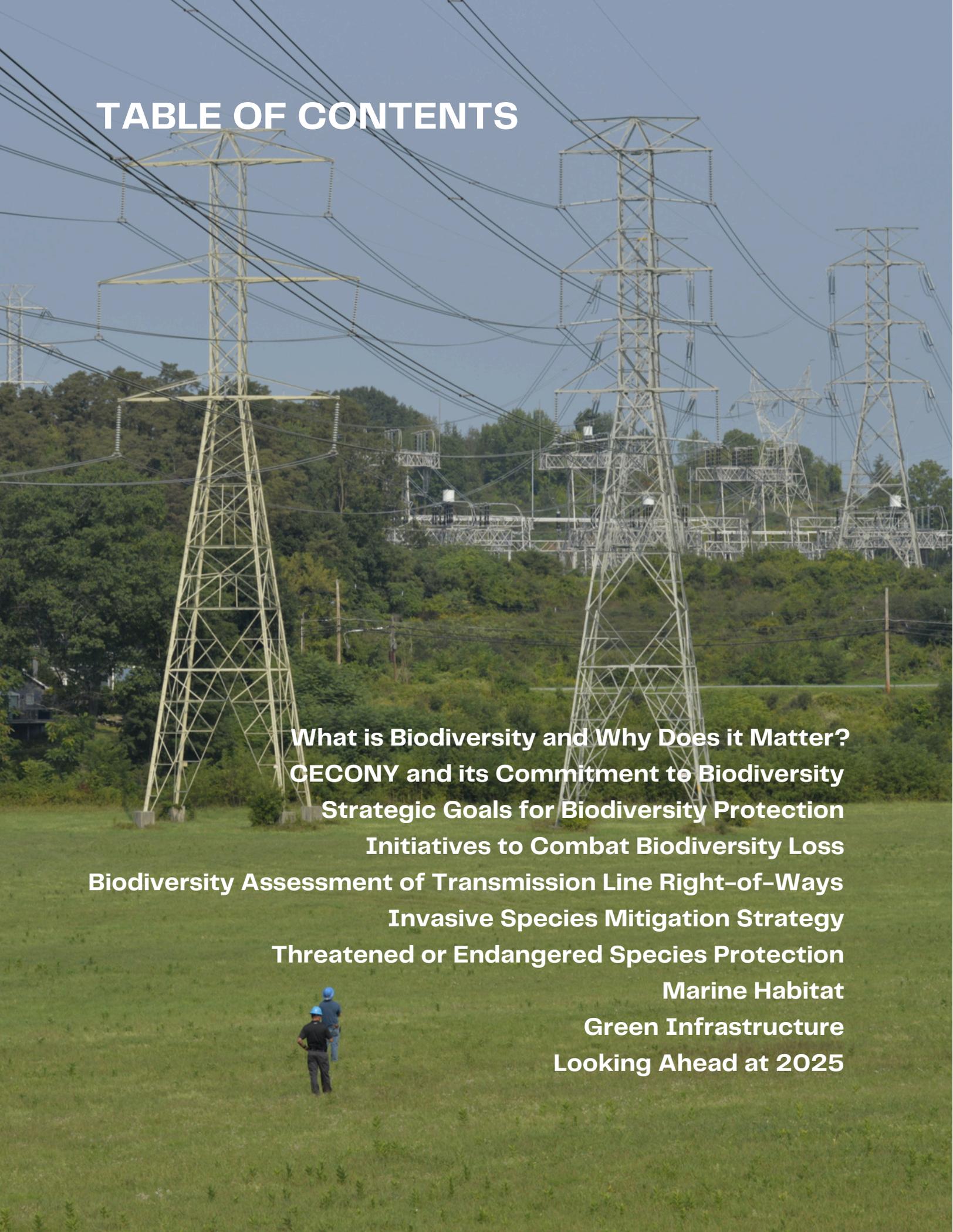


# Annual Biodiversity Report



**Consolidated  
Edison  
of New York  
Spring 2025**

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## WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

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Biological diversity, or biodiversity, refers to all life on Earth, and recognizes the value of maintaining a variety of living species. Biologically diverse environments are important for the integrity of Earth's ecosystems because variation improves the resiliency of all species. Species are commonly interdependent on one another, relying on certain biological processes or life cycles to survive. These intricate interdependent relationships provide "ecosystem services" that benefit both nature and human society. These services include buffering against extreme weather events, protecting soils, regulating hydrological cycles, moderating temperatures in urban environments, and mitigating food insecurity.

Ecosystem services are considered some of the natural benefits of a healthy environment that humans rely on for survival and an enriched quality of life. Key ecosystem services that support human life include the pollination of food crops, the filtration of waterways, carbon capture, and shoreline resiliency.

### Key Drivers of Biodiversity Loss

In general, the scientific community attributes the following factors to biodiversity loss:

- Changes in land and sea use: habitat destruction, deforestation, urbanization, and land-use changes for agriculture or industry that displaces native species and disrupt ecosystems;
- Exploitation and overdevelopment: overfishing, unsustainable logging, and excessive resource extraction that diminishes animal populations and degrades habitats;
- Climate change: rising temperatures, shifting weather patterns, and increased extreme weather events alter ecosystems;
- Pollution: contaminants degrade air, water, and soil quality;
- Invasive species: non-native species to new environments often outcompete the native species, disrupting food webs and damaging native ecosystems.

Protecting biodiversity is of growing importance for Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. (CECONY). In late 2022, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group II released its report, "Climate Report 2022: Impacts, Adaptation & Vulnerability," which stated that over 20% of species found in threatened ecosystems will be at risk of extinction if humans do not reduce emissions and limit temperature rise to 2°C. As a result, CECONY is exploring ways to help preserve biodiversity and enhance natural resources both through our operations and on company property.

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## CECONY AND ITS COMMITMENT TO BIODIVERSITY

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CECONY maintains more than 4,000 acres of Transmission Line Right-of-Way and is the second-largest owner of waterfront property in New York City. CECONY's service territory includes the five boroughs of New York City and Westchester County, encompassing both a dense urban environment and vital natural areas such as forests, wetlands, and numerous waterways – each of which are impacted by the drivers of biodiversity loss. CECONY's mission to help protect biodiversity is an important element in the overall success of our company.

CECONY is dedicated to promoting and supporting biodiversity in our service territory. As a corporation with deeply embedded roots in its communities, we have the opportunity to conserve ecologically significant areas and support a thriving natural environment. Our efforts focus on reducing emissions and pollution, implementing sustainable design practices, and setting high environmental standards across our operations. We are working towards achieving “net-positive impacts” on biodiversity – a goal backed by our Board of Directors and aligned with our mission to enhance the quality of life of the communities we serve. This includes reintroducing native plant species, conserving natural resources, and fostering long-term environmental resilience to increase biodiversity benefits for our communities.



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## STRATEGIC GOALS FOR BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION

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CECONY recognizes the vision of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the critical role we play in preserving the integrity of our natural surroundings. The UN Convention's agreement, finalized in December 2022, underscores the urgent need to protect habitats amid growing environmental challenges.

In alignment with this global commitment, we have set ambitious biodiversity goals that focus on improving biodiversity on our properties by strengthening ecological resilience and reducing our impact on local ecosystems. This report outlines our progress towards these goals and highlights how our efforts align with and support the broader corporate climate objectives outlined in our Clean Energy Commitment.

Our strategic approach to biodiversity is guided by the following core principles:

- Strengthening governance and awareness: we are committed to integrating biodiversity considerations into our corporate governance framework and fostering greater awareness at all levels of our organization.
- Understanding biodiversity risks: we assess potential drivers of biodiversity loss across our company's value chain to identify and mitigate key environmental risks.
- Implementing targeted initiatives: we take action to protect and enhance biodiversity through a series of strategic initiatives outlined in this report.
- Ensuring transparency and accountability: we track and report our biodiversity efforts using industry-approved metrics to maintain transparency and measure impacts.
- Focusing on equity and environmental justice: we prioritize initiatives that benefit disadvantaged communities to be equitable with our ecological restoration efforts.
- Engaging and partnering with local stakeholders: we collaborate with community organizations, conservation groups, and local governments to address environmental threats and preserve biodiversity.

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# Initiatives to Combat Biodiversity Loss

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## Project Design Process

Our Design Review process aligns with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) section 304-5, Management of Biodiversity-Related Impacts, sub-section a, mitigation hierarchy. This structured review ensures that biodiversity considerations are integrated into project planning from the outset. When a project goes through a review, the environmental risks are assessed based on the work required, the location and surrounding areas, what equipment is needed and how we can restore or enhance the area after the project is completed.

Through our Design Review process, subject matter experts (SMEs) evaluate project designs and suggest alternatives that minimize or eliminate impacts on natural resources and/or biodiversity. Additionally, the review process helps confirm that all necessary environmental permits – such as wetland permits, among others – are secured before any physical work begins. This guarantees compliance by proactively addressing regulatory requirements and mitigation obligations while reducing our environmental footprint.

## Rewilding Program

**GOAL: REWILD 10 ACRES OF CECONY PROPERTY BY 2030**

**COMPLETED**

**3 acres** by the end of 2024

**ON TRACK**

**6 acres** by the end of 2026

Rewilding is a conservation approach aimed at restoring and protecting natural processes and reintroducing wilderness areas to our urban environment. It involves restoring native species that have been driven out and allowing the natural ecosystem to reclaim its balance. The goal is to create self-sustaining habitats that promote biodiversity, strengthen ecosystem resilience, and improve the environment's health.

There are two primary methods of rewilding land:

1. Passive rewilding: an area of land is left to its own devices, regenerating over an extended period with minimal human intervention.
2. Active rewilding: native species are actively and intentionally reintroduced, allowing for an expedited repopulation of native flora and fauna.

In both cases, long-term success of the rewilding effort is dependent on eventually leaving the area to maintain itself with minimal human involvement.

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# Initiatives to Combat Biodiversity Loss

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## Rewilding Program Progress and Achievements

Since launching our Rewilding Program in 2022, CECONY has transformed 4.5 acres of land at our facilities into native meadow habitat. These acreage goals are considerable when put in context with the population density and varied land use within our service territory.

In 2023, CECONY identified two opportunities for rewilding:

- 1.Utilizing our Transmission line Rights-of-Way (TROW): these corridors offer significant potential for habitat restoration while maintaining critical infrastructure.
- 2.Transforming unused company property: underutilized areas such as large, manicured lawns have been prioritized for conversion into native habitats that support biodiversity.

Initial efforts have focused on rewilding high foot-traffic areas, creating aesthetically pleasing native landscapes that not only enhance local ecology but also serve as educational tools for employees and the broader community. By demonstrating the benefits of native ecosystems in urban and industrial settings, CECONY is fostering greater awareness and engagement in biodiversity conservation.

## Key Rewilding Projects

### Eastview Facility (2024 - 2025)

At Eastview, we established an entire acre of rewilded habitat using two seed mixes, one devised as a general pollinator mix and the other tailored to promote milkweed as a dominant aid for monarch butterfly populations. Wildlife, including robins and northern mockingbirds, have already begun to inhabit the area.

In 2024, Con Edison hosted its first employee-led rewilding event at Eastview. Employees identified native species, documented insects, and assisted in removing invasive plants to further support native growth. Native species identified by employees included American pokeweed, common milkweed, blue false indigo and insects like the red admiral.

In 2025, a second invasive species removal project occurred that resulted in removal of mugwort and Japanese knotweed, which was inhibiting natural species from expanding onsite. After the removal, the areas were reseeded with a native seed mix to initiate growth this spring.

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## INITIATIVES TO COMBAT BIODIVERSITY LOSS

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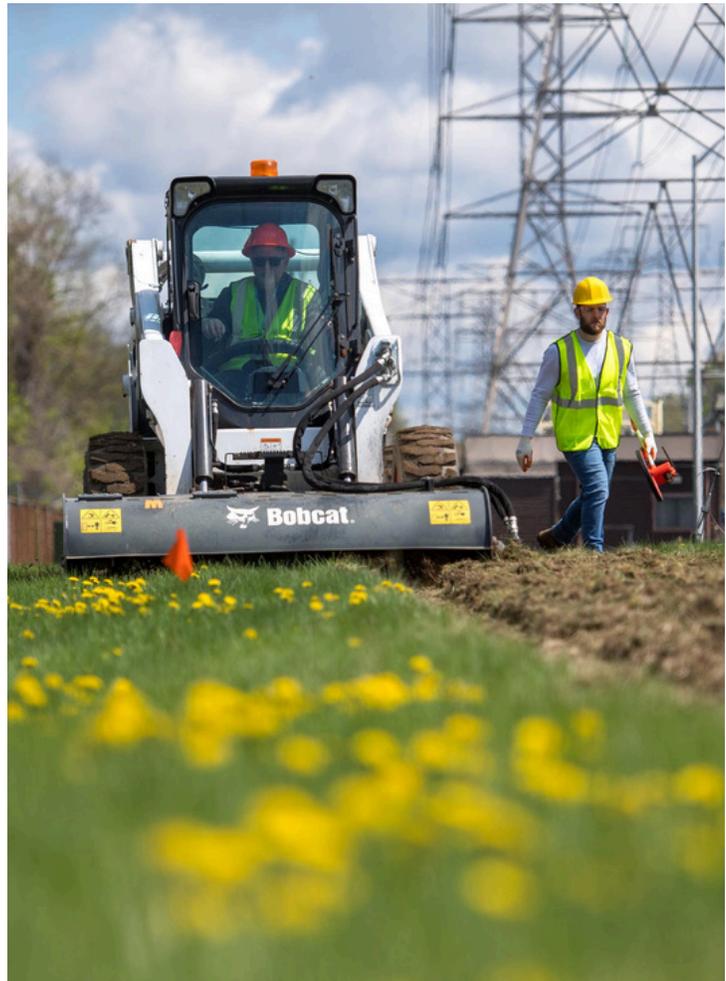
### Yonkers (2024)

St Casimir:

In 2024, Con Edison rewilded a half-acre (0.5) site along St. Casimir Avenue in Yonkers. Located inside a disadvantaged community, this site was seeded with a pollinator-friendly mix that promotes food sources for native species. St. Casimir will be reassessed in 2025 by our natural resources group to monitor plant health and biodiversity updates.

Fern Terrace:

Along Fern Terrace in Yonkers, a one-acre section within our transmission right-of-way was restored. This area, previously overrun with invasive species and debris, was cleared and reseeded with native plants. A follow-up assessment will be conducted in the spring of 2025.



### New Rochelle – David and Pea Islands (2024)

The largest rewilding project of 2024 took place over the summer in New Rochelle on David and Pea Islands during repair work on the Y50 transmission feeder, which went offline on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024. During the pre-construction phase on the islands, Con Ed Environment, Health & Safety (EHS) completed a biodiversity assessment to understand what inhabited the islands. Both remote islands were heavily infested with invasive species including porcelain berry, mug wort and Japanese knotweed. After completing the infrastructure repairs, Con Edison undertook a comprehensive restoration effort to revitalize the disturbed areas. Approximately two acres were reseeded with native seeds mixes designed to restore the islands' original grassy meadow ecosystems. These mixes included plants like common milkweed and other pollinator friendly species that provide essential habitat for monarch butterflies and support a broad range of other native pollinators. The grasses will act as nesting areas for various animals that inhabit the islands.

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## INITIATIVES TO COMBAT BIODIVERSITY LOSS

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### **Pollinator Habitat Creation**

Pollinators are animals or insects such as birds, bats, bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, and flies that facilitate the transfer of pollen from the anther of one flower to the stigma of another. This process, known as pollination, is crucial for the reproduction of many plants, enabling them to produce seeds, fruit, and thus food. These species are responsible for pollinating 35% of the world's food supply, yet many pollinators are under severe threat due to habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change: half of bee species are in decline and a quarter are at risk of extinction.<sup>5</sup>

Recognizing the urgency of this issue, CECONY has launched several initiatives to protect pollinators within our service territory.

### **Community Partnerships for Pollinator Conservation**

With pollinators at risk in key areas of our territory, CECONY has developed a partnership with City Growers, an organization that promotes education on pollinator habitat, community gardens in urban areas, and innovative rooftop farming for beekeeping and vertical agriculture. Through City Growers, young students in NYC learn about conservation efforts and how they can help pollinator populations flourish.

Additionally, CECONY is a proud partner of the Bee Conservancy which helps build habitat for pollinators and expands green spaces throughout NYC. In 2024, the Bee Conservancy organized multiple stewardship events at the Urban Farm on Governors Island, adjacent to CECONY's storage container farm project, which produces the equivalent of 2.5 acres worth of produce annually (about the area of a Manhattan city block). Looking ahead, CECONY and the Bee Conservancy plan to relocate materials from the urban farm to a new indoor facility, redesigning the space for educational programs, field trips, tours, and public events. The redesigned space will include 0.11 acres of raised beds to support the bee population from the hives on Governor's Island.

Con Edison will also be supporting community projects around Newtown Creek in Queens and Brooklyn. In collaboration with Con Edison, NYC H2O is working to expand restoration efforts surrounding the Ridgewood Reservoir. Con Edison's contribution will help facilitate six stewardship events, expand the existing onsite pollinator garden, and establish a new pollinator habitat to enhance biodiversity for the public space



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## INITIATIVES TO COMBAT BIODIVERSITY LOSS

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### **Protecting the Monarch Butterfly Habitat**

In 2023, CECONY and Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc. (O&R) jointly applied to become members of the Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA), an initiative led by the University of Chicago to allocate land for the endangered monarch butterfly. This effort aligns with our broader rewilding initiatives and aims to protect critical habitats along our transmission rights-of-way (TROWs). The CCAA is a voluntary agreement between a utility provider and the federal U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to undertake conservation practices for monarch butterflies, a pollinator species that inhabits our TROWs. The finalization of the agreement highlights that CECONY is committed to preserving vital habitat for migratory monarch butterflies in a way that is consistent with the TROWs' continued use for utility purposes. While the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has postponed until 2025 its final ruling on listing monarch butterflies as an endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has already placed the monarch butterfly on its Red List of threatened species.<sup>1</sup> In response, CECONY is incorporating more pollinator-friendly seed mixes into its properties and expanding habitat restoration efforts to help support monarch populations throughout NYC with the goal of transforming our sites into a sustainably integrated ecosystem.

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# BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT OF TRANSMISSION LINE RIGHT-OF-WAYS

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CECONY manages approximately 4,000 acres of Transmission Line Right-of-Ways TROWs. The company maintains these areas according to established vegetation management procedures that prevent tree growth from interfering with transmission wires. However, the diverse landholdings within the TROWs also provide an opportunity to support regional ecosystems while remaining consistent with their utility function.

## Evaluating Biodiversity in our TROWs

In 2023, CECONY began collaborating with the State University of New York College of Environmental Science & Forestry (SUNY ESF) to conduct a long-term ecological evaluation of our TROWs. This four-year study is designed to evaluate and examine the ecosystem contributions and economic benefits of the land.

For the initial phase, researchers selected 60 acres across CECONY's TROWs to establish a baseline biodiversity assessment, which was completed in summer 2023. Future research will build on these findings to explore ways to improve vegetation management, regulate the growth of invasive species and increase biodiversity where such opportunities exist.

At the end of 2024, CECONY received an annual report summarizing key findings from the sites selected for last year's observations.

## Key Findings from the 2024 Report

- The presence of uncommon specialist pollinators and rare predator species were also found, which indicates that our TROWs serve as important ecological corridors;
- Many of the species recorded rely on open-meadow or shrubland habitat, which are increasingly rare in our region.

**285**  
PLANT  
SPECIES

**116+**  
INSECT &  
BIRD SPECIES

were identified across the  
study sites.

## Native Plants and Pollinator Interactions

The report identified early goldenrod, black raspberry shrubs and common milkweed as the most prevalent native shrub and flowering species within CECONY's TROWs. Common milkweed was found at 53% of the observed sites, while black raspberry was present at all seventeen locations. These plants play a crucial role in supporting pollinators by providing abundant nectar and pollen. One standout site in Mt. Airy, NY, exhibited the highest concentration of unique shrubs and flowering plants, with 111 documented species, including black raspberry, highbush blueberry and white meadowsweet – all key contributors to a thriving pollinator habitat.

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# BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT OF TRANSMISSION LINE RIGHT-OF-WAYS

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## **Rare and Specialist Species**

The assessment also revealed that some of our TROWs host several rare wasp species. The *Stenodynerus blepharus* and *Psammaletes mexicanus*, two wasp species that help control the population of pest insects and other common bee species were observed.<sup>2</sup> Notably, the discovery of the *Stenodynerus B* is only the second ever digitized recording of the species in New York state while the *Psammaletes mex.* has fewer than 100 records on the Global Biodiversity Information Facility, an organization which collects and reports open-source biodiversity data for the international community. The presence of both wasp species confirms that CECONY's TROWs not only provide habitat for pollinators but also support complex ecological interactions (predator-prey relationships) that increase biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

Specialist bees, which require specific native plants in their habitat to survive, were also documented:

- *Megachile campanulae*, a bellflower resin bee;
- A single *andrena violae*, a violet flower bee;
- *Melitta eickworti*, a deerberry specialist bee; and
- *Melitta melittoides*, a maleberry specialist bee.

The presence of these species in our TROWs, along with their specific plant preferences, underscores Con Edison's role in preserving critical biological processes and protecting regional biodiversity. The transitional meadow habitat maintained by Con Edison presents an opportunity for further ecological enhancement. By strategically tailoring seed mixes to include the native plants essential to these pollinators, we can strengthen the overall biodiversity within our TROWs.

## **Informing Future Conservation Efforts**

The study recorded 224 unique plant-insect interactions for 61 bee/fly taxa and 60 flowering plant species across all CECONY sites. The native plant that supported the highest number of pollinator species was the early goldenrod, with 12 unique pollinator partners. Examining these interactions is vital to understanding which plants attract pollinators and what locations could be rewilded in the future to increase the availability of resources for these species.

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# BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT OF TRANSMISSION LINE RIGHT-OF-WAYS

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## **Next Steps:**

The initial findings confirm that CECONY's TROWs serve as a hub for native species. As we continue our research, we will refine vegetation management practices to better support native species while controlling invasive plants. Moving forward, Con Edison plans to:

- Develop tailored seed mixes that will expand the range of specialist pollinators;
- Enhance meadow habitat management to better support biodiversity;
- By applying these insights, CECONY is committed to transforming TROWs into thriving ecosystems that contribute to regional biodiversity and environmental resilience.



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# INVASIVE SPECIES MITIGATION STRATEGY

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## **Understanding the Impact of Invasive Species**

Invasive species are organisms that are introduced, whether intentionally or accidentally, into ecosystems where they are not native.<sup>3</sup> To be classified as invasive, a species must cause or have the potential to cause harm to its new environment. These species often thrive because they lack natural predators, outcompete native species for resources, or destroy the natural habitat of the native species. Invasive species can cause harm on many levels, disrupting food webs, altering landscapes, and even introducing disease – causing potentially significant economic and ecological impact. An invasive forbs species, for example, can inhibit the growth of native plants, reducing the food supply available to small animals and leading to cascading effects across the ecosystem.

## **CECONY's Approach to Invasive Species Management**

CECONY has incorporated best management practices to help combat the spread of invasive species within key areas of our operations. These practices educate employees on ways to identify, monitor, and remove invasive species found on our properties.

### **Key components of CECONY's invasive species management strategy include:**

- Vehicle and equipment cleaning protocol: company vehicles operating in areas with invasive species are cleaned to prevent unintentional spread. This policy extends to mutual aid efforts in other utilities' service territories, and we enforce the same decontamination policy when they reciprocate within our service territories.
- Invasive species disposal: Invasive plant materials are removed and stockpiled onsite before being properly disposed of at designated facilities. Wood waste is assessed by a registered forester, and infected trees are chipped into 1-inch or smaller fragments to eliminate harmful larvae.
- Ongoing monitoring and collaboration: CECONY regularly updates our database of information on new invasive species in our service territory based on guidance from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

## **Employee Engagement & Training**

CECONY prioritizes employee education and communication in our invasive species management plan. Employees receive regular updates on invasive species within our territory, including the Spotted Lanternfly, Emerald Ash Borer, Tree of Heaven, and Princess Tree. When invasive species are identified on company sites, our trained personnel carefully remove the species from our property and dispose of it off-site.

By integrating these practices, CECONY is committed to reducing the ecological and economic impacts of invasive species, preserving native biodiversity, and maintaining the integrity of our operational sites.

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# THREATENED OR ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION

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## Understanding the Risks to Threatened and Endangered Species

A threatened species is one that is likely to become endangered in the near future, while an endangered species is one that is at high risk of becoming extinct. Today, habitat loss due to development or climate change is the primary driver of extinction. As populations shrink, they begin to lack genetic variation, making them less adaptable to environmental change and more vulnerable to extinction.<sup>4</sup>

## CECONY's Commitment to Species Protection

CECONY has established strict policies and procedures to mitigate the impacts of construction and operational activities on vulnerable species and their habitats. Key components of this strategy include:

- Erosion and sediment controls: these measures help prevent habitat degradation, particularly in sensitive areas such as wetlands, New York City parks, and urban tree canopies.
- Compliance with Company environmental regulation: Our employees are required to follow the guidelines stated within our Managing Wildlife and Natural Resources policy to minimize impacts on natural resources and reduce disturbances to threatened and endangered species within our service territory.

## Proactive Environmental Review Process

Before beginning any construction or maintenance work, CECONY's environmental review team conducts a comprehensive assessment of the project site and analyzes the projects' designs. This evaluation process determines whether the proposed work may impact protected species or sensitive ecosystems. If potential risks are identified, the project's designers are asked to adjust the plans to minimize impacts. CECONY is committed to aligning our infrastructure projects with our environmental stewardship principles.



# MARINE HABITAT

## **Our Commitment to Living Shorelines**

In 2023, CECONY committed to implementing living shorelines into future waterfront projects. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration defines a “living shoreline” as:

[...] a protected, stabilized coastal edge made of natural materials such as plants, sand, or rock. Unlike a concrete seawall or other hard structure, which impede the growth of plants and animals, living shorelines grow over time. Natural infrastructure solutions like living shorelines provide wildlife habitat, as well as natural resilience to communities near the waterfront. Living shorelines are sometimes referred to as nature-based, green, or soft shorelines. They are an innovative and cost-effective technique for coastal management.

By integrating natural infrastructure solutions into our projects, CECONY aims to restore marine habitats for native species while simultaneously protecting our waterfront properties and the surrounding communities from erosion and storm surges.

## **Innovative Approaches to Marine Habitat Restoration**

One living shoreline methodology CECONY is exploring involves marine-friendly concrete – a PH-balanced, textured material that facilitates marine species attachment and colony formation, supporting marine life. Over the next several years, the company will work to incorporate marine-friendly concrete into project proposals where applicable and analyze its feasibility for large-scale infrastructure developments.

## **Current and Future Living Shoreline Projects**

CECONY is actively exploring a living shoreline project at a facility on Newtown Creek in Brooklyn. The project seeks to replace degrading bulkhead structures with a stone revetment that naturally slopes into the waterway. This stone revetment would serve as a barrier from wave action and passing vessels. Once the barrier is implemented, a diverse marsh will be constructed consisting of low, high, and upland marsh areas. Plantings will include trees, shrubs, different graminoids (grasses) and flowering plants that would help increase pollinator habitat.

As part of our Shoreline Resiliency initiative, Con Edison is actively assessing waterfront sites that require maintenance to identify locations that would be strong candidates for future living shoreline projects over the next decade. By reincorporating tidal marshes along New York City’s waterways, the company aims to enhance coastal resilience and biodiversity in vulnerable areas.



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## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

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### **The Role of Green Infrastructure**

Green infrastructure systems like rain gardens, green roofs, and permeable pavements are designed to absorb rainwater as it falls, reducing reliance on traditional stormwater management systems such as gutters, pipes, and treatment facilities (e.g., gray infrastructure). Unlike conventional stormwater systems which can carry various forms of pollution that damage the natural ecosystem and harm local species, green infrastructure systems absorb rainwater, reduce runoff and flooding, and help protect waterways from pollution.

### **Sustainable Design at the Brooklyn Clean Energy Hub**

Our Brooklyn Clean Energy Hub, which commenced construction in early 2024, is a flagship project demonstrating CECONY's commitment to green infrastructure and renewable energy integration. The facility will feature:

- Solar panels to reduce reliance on fossil fuels;
- Rainwater collection systems to sustainably manage stormwater;
- A LEED-certified building design, connecting offshore renewable energy to the NYC power grid.

As part of its 2025 project milestones, the hub remains on schedule to implement a green roof, which will include native plants to help create an urban habitat in a New York State disadvantaged community area. As third-party developers connect to the Brooklyn Clean Energy Hub from the marine side of the facility, CECONY anticipates proposing living shoreline elements along the waterfront to advance our broader sustainability and biodiversity initiatives.

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## LOOKING AHEAD AT 2025

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As we continue advancing our environmental stewardship, CECONY is committed to achieving several key goals by the end of 2025:

·Rewilding and habitat restoration: CECONY will create a rewilding site in a New York State disadvantaged community and work to restore selected remediation sites in NYC with biodiversity enhancements.

- Natural landscaping at substations: CECONY also plans to pilot natural plantings at unit substation properties, replacing the manicured lawns currently found onsite with native vegetation. Additionally, we will reduce our mowing frequency to lower fossil fuel consumption and foster the development of native habitats within the communities we serve.
- Living shoreline project: Newtown Creek’s living shoreline project is currently awaiting final permitting approval, with construction anticipated to begin by mid-2025. An additional living shoreline project at Hellgate Wharf is slated to commence in 2025 as well.
- Biodiversity assessment and research: The third annual biodiversity assessment report of our TROWs conducted by SUNY ESF will provide valuable insight into biodiversity trends within our TROWs and help inform future conservation strategies.

We look forward to continuing our efforts to revitalize natural habitats, promote biodiversity conservation awareness, and help drive sustainable innovations within the utility industry.

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