

PRESS RELEASE

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**New Jersey Audubon Announces Succession Plan**

**Eric Stiles named President and CEO of New Jersey's oldest conservation organization.**

Bernardsville, NJ, August 4, 2011 – New Jersey Audubon (NJA), New Jersey's oldest conservation organization, announced that Eric Stiles, currently NJA's Chief Operating Officer, will become President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on April 15, 2012. He will succeed Tom Gilmore who has been NJA's President and CEO since 1983.

New Jersey Audubon's board of directors approved the succession plan at its meeting earlier this week in Bernardsville, NJ. The goal of the succession plan is to ensure that NJA continues to execute its mission of making New Jersey a better place for people and wildlife during a seamless and smooth transition. Gilmore will serve in his current role as President & CEO until his retirement in April of 2012 after which he will continue to support the Society. "It is comforting to know that Tom will continue to be an invaluable member of the NJA family," said board chair Mark Levy. "Tom Gilmore and Eric Stiles are two of the region's finest conservation leaders. It is a testament to the organization's strength that we can select a new leader from within the staff and not have to look outside the organization."

As enumerated by Levy, "Tom leaves behind a legacy of environmental successes we can all be proud of, and New Jersey residents grateful for, including the passage of the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act, the Highlands Watershed Planning and Protection Act and the creation of the Garden State Preservation Trust.

Stiles came to New Jersey Audubon in January of 2002 to serve as Vice president for Conservation and Stewardship. Stiles grew his department from a staff of 1 and a budget of less than \$100,000 to a staff of 8 and a budget in excess of \$1,000,000. He chaired the "Halt the Harvest Campaign" which succeeded in the passage of legislation to place a moratorium on the harvest of horseshoe crabs on the Delaware Bay until the greatly reduced populations of crabs and shorebirds can rebound. For his leadership on this environmentally significant issue, Stiles was awarded the Governor's Environmental Excellence Award. He also co-founded the "Keep It Green Coalition" which successfully advocated for the passage of three ballot initiatives to fund park capital improvements and acquisition.

Stiles currently serves on the board of the NJ Academy of Aquatic Sciences, is the past chair of the board of directors of the New Jersey Highlands Coalition. Stiles serves on the board of directors of the Environmental Endowment of New Jersey and was a founding board member of the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters.

Stiles earned a B.S. in Biology from Stockton College, a M.S. in Ecology & Evolution, from Rutgers University, an M.P.A. Executive Program from Rutgers University and has completed his Ph.D. Ecology & Evolution course work at Rutgers University.

Prior to joining NJA Stiles served as Senior Zoologist for the Endangered & Nongame Species Program in the NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife where he was awarded the 2000 NJDEP Excellent Award for his innovative leadership on the citizen science project-NJ Herptile Atlas.

Stiles co-chaired the Society's recent strategic plan and in January of 2010 he was promoted to the position of Chief Operating Officer. Says outgoing President Gilmore of his organization and successor: "In considering retirement, my guiding objective has been that NJ Audubon continue to grow and become even more effective in making New Jersey a better place for people and wildlife. Having worked side by side with Eric Stiles for almost a decade I am confident that under his leadership NJ Audubon will enjoy even greater success and respect in the years ahead."

Says incoming President Stiles about his appointment: "I am honored by the opportunity to continue Tom Gilmore's incredible legacy. I look forward to working with the NJ Audubon staff and Board along with our members, supporters and partners to make New Jersey a better place for people and wildlife."