

ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD

MINUTES OF 177<sup>th</sup> MEETING, FEBRUARY 23, 2018

MIDEWIN NATIONAL TALLGRASS PRAIRIE, MAIN MEETING ROOM, VISITOR CENTER, 30239 SOUTH STATE ROUTE 53, WILMINGTON, IL 60481

Approved at the 178<sup>th</sup> meeting, May 18, 2018

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Dr. Joyce Hofmann, Dr. Angelo Capparella, Dr. Tracy Evans, Mr. Bruce Ross-Shannon, Mr. Randy Schietzelt, and Dr. Philip Willink

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Jeremie Fant, Dr. Janice Coons, and Mr. Chris Young

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeannie Barnes (INHS), Joe Kath (IDNR), Kelly Neal (IDNR), Heather Osborn (INPC), Angella Moorehouse (INPC), and Drew Ullberg (USDA FS, Midewin)

1 Call to Order, Roll Call of Board Members, and Introduction of Guests

Chair Hofmann called the meeting to order at 10:03 A.M. and read the roll call. Since six voting Board members were in attendance, there was a quorum. Chair Hofmann welcomed the visitors.

2 Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Schietzelt moved that the agenda be adopted as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Evans and carried by unanimous vote.

3 Approval of Minutes from the 176<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Draft minutes of the 176<sup>th</sup> meeting were distributed to Board members prior to the meeting. No corrections were proposed so the minutes of the 176<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved as presented.

4 Report from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

Board members received a report from Mr. Joe Kath detailing activities of the IDNR's Office of Resource Conservation and Office of Realty and Environmental Planning. Mr. Kath presented specific information regarding the bat hibernaculum at the Unimin facilities in Alexander/Union Counties. Biologists were able to conduct a bat census at Magazine Mine in this complex for the first time in several years and found a large number of Indiana bats.

5 Reorganization Proposal for IDNR Division of Natural Heritage

Mr. Chris Young, Director of the Office of Resource Conservation, had planned to present information about a proposed reorganization within IDNR, but was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

6 Report from the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

Ms. Kelly Neal presented an oral report and a written memorandum from the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.

7 Report from the Chair of the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board

Chair Hofmann reported on her activities since the 176<sup>th</sup> meeting; her written report to the Board is attached. These included sending information on Open Meetings Act training to members of the Botanical Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee (ESTAC), preparing a report for the 228<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, and sending a list of recommendations from the animal ESTACs to IDNR. Chair Hofmann was unable to attend the Commission meeting in January, but Board member Evans represented the Board.

8 Semi-Annual Review of Whether to Keep Closed the Minutes from Previous Closed Meetings

Chair Hofmann stated that the Board must make its semi-annual determination as to whether minutes from previous closed meetings of the Board shall remain closed. All closed sessions dealt with personnel issues. Following discussion and upon a motion of Bruce Ross-Shannon, seconded by Mr. Schietzelt, the Board unanimously voted to keep such minutes closed.

9 Update on the Process for the Review of Listed Plant Species and Approval of Additional Members for the Botanical Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee

Chair Hofmann reported that thirteen botanists previously approved to serve as members of the Botanical ESTAC had accepted the Board's invitation, but two individuals had subsequently withdrawn. Consequently, the Botanical ESTAC has eleven members, all of whom have completed Open Meetings Act training. It was decided that no additional members were needed because regional experts will be invited to attend the ESTAC meetings. Drs. Coons and Fant have provided records from the Illinois Natural Heritage Biotics5 Database to ESTAC members. They plan to hold the first Botanical ESTAC meeting in May to review plants of central and western Illinois.

10 Update on the Review of Listed Animal Species

Chair Hofmann updated the Board on the review of listed animal species. She reported that, to date, the Board has acted on thirteen petitions. A list of the petitions given preliminary approval was distributed to Board members. Four petitions sought to reclassify a species from threatened to endangered, two to reclassify a species from endangered to threatened, six to delist a species, and one to list the Monkeyface (mussel) as threatened. A petition to delist the Mississippi Kite remains under consideration and Chair Hofmann is expecting to receive more fish petitions. Chair Hofmann has also compiled a list of changes in the nomenclature of listed species and will ask experts to review the current Illinois List for other potential changes.

11 Status of Board Appointments

Chair Hofmann reported that the Board has one vacancy, which should have been filled in 2017. She also noted that Mr. Schietzelt's term had expired in 2015, Dr. Coons' and Dr. Fant's terms expired in 2017, and all three have applied for reappointment. Members continue to serve after the expiration of their term until a replacement is appointed or they resign. The terms of Dr. Hofmann, Dr. Evans, and Mr. Ross-Shannon will expire in May 2018. They all stated their intention to submit an online self-nomination for reappointment.

12 Discussion of Board's Budget and Staffing

Chair Hofmann pointed out that the Board has received no funding since FY2016. The Board's funding previously was a line-item in the IDNR budget. She suggested that the Board seek funding again by submitting a budget request although it is presumably too late for FY2019. The main item in the Board's budget was for personnel. There was a general discussion about the

prospects for the Board's budget and staffing. The proposed IDNR reorganization, which was to have been described by Mr. Young, may have some bearing on a future budget and staffing.

13 Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

There were no public comments.

14 Other Business

Chair Hofmann noted that the Board's biennial report for 2016-2018 will soon be due and that she would prepare a draft for consideration at the next Board meeting. Dr. Evans volunteered to assist with the report.

15 Next Meeting Information

The next meeting will be at 10 A.M. on May 18, 2018 at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie Visitor Center, Wilmington, IL.

16 Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Hofmann adjourned the meeting at 11:54 A.M.



**ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD**

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**Report from the Chair, 23 February 2018**

Joyce Hofmann

Activities for the period between the 176<sup>th</sup> and 177<sup>th</sup> Board meetings

- performed follow-up for 176<sup>th</sup> meeting – arranged for the final agenda of the 176<sup>th</sup> meeting and the approved minutes of the 175<sup>th</sup> meeting to be posted on the Board’s website
- sent schedule of the Board’s 2018 quarterly meetings for posting on the website and publication in the State newspaper
- monitored the Board’s email account – responded to some messages, forwarded others to appropriate personnel at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- sent information about online Open Meetings Act training to Botanical Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee (ESTAC) members, collected certificates of completion, and forwarded the certificates to IDNR Legal
- prepared a report for the 228<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (23 January 2018)
- sent a letter to students at Pleasantdale Middle School in Burr Ridge thanking them for their attendance and presentations at the 176<sup>th</sup> Board meeting
- sent draft minutes of the Amphibian/Reptile ESTAC meeting to the IDNR herpetologist to have sensitive locations for listed species redacted before public posting of the minutes on the Board’s website
- sent information packets about listed plant species prepared for the previous revision of the Illinois List of Endangered and Threatened Species (Illinois List) to Drs. Coons and Fant
- distributed two draft Incidental Take Authorizations (ITAs) and one Conservation Plan (CP) to Board members for individual review and comment
- compiled a list of proposed changes to the Illinois List that have been received preliminary approval from the Board
- started compiling a list of recommendations for IDNR from the animal ESTACs
- prepared for the 177<sup>th</sup> Board meeting – developed an agenda; had the draft agenda posted at the IDNR building, at the Midewin Visitor Center, and on the Board’s website; distributed materials for the meeting to Board members

