

# ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD

MINUTES OF 195<sup>th</sup> MEETING, August 26, 2022

Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Director's Boardroom

One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702

and remotely via WebEx

Approved at the 196<sup>th</sup> meeting, November 18, 2022

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Angelo Capparella, Dr. Janice Coons, Dr. Jeremie Fant, Dr. Joyce Hofmann, Mr. Randy Schietzelt, Dr. Tih-Fen Ting, Dr. Philip Willink, and Mr. Chris Young.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Heather Osborn (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage ITA Coordinator), Todd Strole (Executive Director INPC), Brian Metzke (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage, Aquatic Ecologist), Ann Holtrop (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage), Natalia Maass (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage Database Program), Joe Kath (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage), Tara Kieninger (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage Database Program), Angella Moorehouse (INPC), Chris Whittom (IDNR Forestry), Julie Nieset (INHS), Nancy Perlman (Illinois resident), Kelly Neal (INPC), Charles O'Leary (IDNR), Chris Miller (INHS), Bob Bluett (retired IDNR), Valerie Njapa (INPC), and Mark Alessi (IDNR).

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

Vice-Chair Coons called the meeting to order at 10:03 A.M. and conducted the roll call. (Chair Hofmann attended remotely.) Seven voting Board members were in attendance, constituting a quorum. Dr. Coons welcomed the visitors and asked them to introduce themselves. It should be noted that this was the first hybrid meeting (some individuals attended in-person while others attended remotely via WebEx) in the history of the Endangered Species Protection Board.

## 2. Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Schietzelt moved that the agenda be adopted as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Ting. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

## 3. Approval of Minutes from the 194<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Draft minutes of the 194<sup>th</sup> meeting had been distributed to Board members prior to the meeting by email. Dr. Ting moved that the minutes of the 194<sup>th</sup> meeting be approved as presented. Dr. Capparella seconded the motion and it passed unanimously, with Dr. Fant abstaining. Dr. Hofmann said that she would have the minutes posted on the website.

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

The Department's report had been distributed to the Board via email. Ms. Holtrop stated that the Department's Species Recovery Process continues to move forward as it is working with species leads to assess the status of species and put together plans. To date, 28 Species Status Assessments are under review for completeness, with ten more to go. The next step is to determine what actions could be taken, within the realm of possibility. Then IDNR would choose what actions to actually take, as well as appropriate approaches. Some species have abundant amounts of information, whereas others have little. Funding options are being considered.

Five sites were approved as new natural areas or boundary expansions to support the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory that harbors specific suitable habitat for listed species.

IDNR staff and university collaborators conducted a survey for gray bats, and are working closely with the federal recovery lead on assessing sites for this species.

Later in this meeting, there will be a presentation on pollinators. Ms. Holtrop wondered if the Board found these presentations interesting and useful, and would like to see additional similar presentations.

Dr. Capparella asked if the Species Status Assessments will be made public. Ms. Holtrop replied that they would.

Dr. Capparella asked if the new timber rattlesnake sites were on protected land. Mr. Kath answered that some were, and some were not, but all sites were at least semi-protected.

Dr. Ting asked if the list of Species Leads is available. Ms. Holtrop said she will share the list.

Dr. Hofmann wondered if there was any recent news regarding northern and little brown bats? Mr. Kath replied that news is supposedly coming sometime soon. That is what he has heard at this time.

#### 5. Report from the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC)

An INPC report was distributed to the Board at the meeting. Mr. Strole stated that 394 out of 486 listed species are present at least partially within a Nature Preserve or Land and Water Reserve.

INPC now has a Graduate Public Service Intern from University of Illinois - Springfield. This is a two-year program.

Ms. Moorehouse has completed a State Species Status Assessment for the Regal Fritillary.

A publication is coming out documenting the changes in woody plants over 20 years at Karcher's Post Oak Woods Nature Preserve. This is notable for the long duration of the study.

INPC conducted biological surveys for 22 listed species at 52 sites.

A new situation has developed along Rock Creek where the Village of Monee is proposing to construct a new sewage treatment plant upstream of a nature preserve. INPC is monitoring developments.

Dr. Capparella asked if the ITA for Bell Bowl Prairie would take into consideration the habitat destruction. Ms. Holtrop clarified that IDNR negotiates after the submittal of the Conservation Plan, and that the focus is on species instead of habitat.

#### 6. Report from the Chair of the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board

Dr. Hofmann previously provided a written report on her activities since the last meeting; the report is attached to these minutes. She performed the usual administrative tasks of dealing with email, reviewing draft minutes from the previous meeting, distributing draft ITAs and Conservation Plans to Board members, and distributing materials for the current meeting. Dr. Hofmann contacted current ESTAC members and asked them for their CVs. She also contacted potential new ESTAC members.

7. Status of Board Appointments

Mr. Ross-Shannon has resigned from the Board. There are now only seven voting members. Dr. Hofmann is keeping track of when members' terms expire. Only Dr. Ting is serving on an active appointment. Mr. Young will talk with Assistant Director Mr. John Rogner, who will in turn talk with the Governor's Office.

8. Semi-annual Review of Whether to Keep Closed the Minutes from Previous Closed Sessions

Chair Hofmann pointed out that there have been no closed sessions since the Board voted on this issue at the 193<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Mr. Schietzelt moved to keep the minutes of previously closed sessions closed and the motion was seconded by Dr. Capparella. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Presentation: Four Years of Pollinator Surveys on Protected Natural Areas in West-central and Central Illinois and Implications for the Protection and Management of Endangered, Threatened and Rare Insects Plants, and Vegetative Communities - Angella Moorehouse, INPC

This is Year 4 of what is intended to be a five-year project. After Year 5, the hope is to then repeat the project over the next five years. To facilitate comparisons among sites and between 5-year time periods, a Standardized Repeatable Method was developed. For example, six sites are visited per year, with four visits/site, and each visit lasting roughly 60-90 minutes. All sites are INPC preserves in west-central Illinois. A survey consists of a meandering transect, focusing on flowers. Plants and animals are documented with images through iNaturalist, with very few preserved specimen vouchers being taken.

One goal is to collect baseline data. At the moment, there has been an average of 130 (range 102-185) taxa/site. Average abundance has been 697 (range 428-1158). The number of pollinator species visiting a flower species is also recorded, with the most pollinators (126 species) visiting Canada goldenrod. Several non-native plants are also heavily utilized. Non-native pollinators are also present.

Overall, specialist insects focus on particular plants, not on community types. The greater the diversity of native plants, the higher the diversity of insects. Intensely managed areas (e.g., burning, few invasive species) tend to have more insect taxa/hour as well as a higher total number of individual insects/hour.

In the future, it would be beneficial to include more sand prairies and small isolated cemetery prairies (which will help to determine the potential impacts from pesticides). Landcover maps could be used to look for trends.

Dr. Coons asked if every insect visitor was recorded or just those actively pollinating a flower. Ms. Moorehouse responded that she uses her best judgement based on experience. If a non-pollinating species just happens to be taking a break on a flower, it is not recorded.

Dr. Ting inquired about when sites were surveyed. Ms. Moorehouse answered that site visits are spread over the seasons, generally aiming for when plants are flowering. Most surveys are between 10 A.M. and 2 P.M.

Dr. Coons wondered if when there were more flowers, she found more insects. Ms. Moorehouse replied that that was the case, but weather can also impact some taxa, especially butterflies.

10. Committee of the Whole Meeting to Propose Nominations for Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board Officers

Elections are held every three years. Dr. Hofmann agreed to run for another term as Chair. Dr. Coons no longer wished to be Vice-Chair and nominated Dr. Ting to take her place. Dr. Ting accepted the nomination. Dr. Willink agreed to run for another term as Secretary. Elections will be held later in the meeting.

11. Approval of Members of Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committees (ESTACs) for the 2025 Review and Revision of the Illinois List of Endangered and Threatened Species

A list of potential members for two ESTACs and additional members for three existing ESTACs is attached to these minutes. Each taxonomic group was considered and voted upon separately. Additional potential ESTAC members can always be added at later Board meetings.

Dr. Hofmann moved that the list of Terrestrial Invertebrate ESTAC members be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schietzelt. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Ting moved that the addition to the list of Aquatic Invertebrates ESTAC members be adopted as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Capparella. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Capparella moved that the addition to the list of Fish ESTAC members be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hofmann. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Ting moved that the addition to the list of Amphibian and Reptile ESTAC members be adopted as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Capparella. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Hofmann moved that the list of Plant ESTAC members be adopted as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Fant. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Report on Discussion with Illinois Natural Heritage Database Staff about Data to be Provided to ESTAC Members

Mr. Schietzelt and Dr. Coons met with Illinois Natural Heritage Database staff Tara Kieninger, Natalia Maass, and Jeanie Barnes (retired). Ms. Kieninger indicated that some types of data easily fit into a spreadsheet, such as number of occurrences. It is also relatively straightforward to generate the past/present summary tables as seen in current listing petitions. For some species, statewide distribution maps and sRanks are available or could be produced. The graphs of

Element Occurrence Records over five-year intervals are much more difficult to create, so these could be a problem.

The next step is to produce a sample packet for feedback from Board members, followed by discussion at the next Board meeting. There are a lot of plants to be considered, and generating all the data for them will be challenging.

13. Discussion on Scheduling of ESTAC Meetings

Dr. Ting wondered which group is most complete. Ms. Kieninger requested that plants be pushed back, as there is currently a lot of ongoing work on plants, which means many records to enter. It is also important to consider when fieldwork is conducted to make sure ESTAC members have enough time to attend meetings and write petitions.

The Terrestrial Invertebrate ESTAC meeting will be held in late fall 2022. Other meetings will wait until after the holiday season.

14. Election of Board Members

Since only one person was running for each position, it was decided to vote on the candidates as a slate. Dr. Capparella moved that Dr. Hofmann be elected as Chair, Dr. Ting be elected as Vice-Chair, and Dr. Willink be elected as Secretary. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schietzelt. The motion passed unanimously. Positions are effective immediately after this meeting.

15. Public Comment Period

Ms. Nancy Perlman represents a network of safe-technology groups and made the following comments. Wireless infrastructure is impacting people and the environment. Federal agencies are not satisfactorily following National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines “to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions.” Microwave radiation from cell towers is essentially an “invisible airborne toxin.” There have been no studies on 5G safety, and a court has ruled Federal Communications Commission (FCC) guidelines to be out-of-date. Bats, plovers, bees, and perhaps other endangered species could be impacted. Non-ionizing radiation may have negative impacts. There are plans to install even more cell towers, especially 5G. We need to protect endangered and threatened species from this environmental toxin.

Dr. Hofmann responded that the Board should work with IDNR to investigate this and thanked Ms. Perlman for her information.

Mr. Bluett thanked Ms. Moorehouse for her presentation. He thanked Ms. Kieninger and the rest of the database staff for all their efforts to ensure that Element Occurrence Records could be used in an impactful manner. And he thanked the Board for all its efforts to protect endangered and threatened species in Illinois.

16. Other Business

The next INPC meeting will be September 13 at 10:00 A.M. in Olney, IL

17. Next Meeting Information (November 18, 2022 10 A.M.)

The next meeting site is tentatively set at the IDNR building in Springfield.

18. Adjournment

Vice-Chair Coons adjourned the meeting at 12:00 P.M.



# **ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD**

*One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, Illinois 62702 - 1271; [dnr.espb@illinois.gov](mailto:dnr.espb@illinois.gov);*

## **Report from the Chair, 26 August 2022**

Joyce Hofmann

### **Activities for the period between the 194<sup>th</sup> and 195<sup>th</sup> Board meetings**

- performed follow-up for 194<sup>th</sup> meeting – arranged for the final agenda of the 194<sup>th</sup> meeting and the approved minutes of the 193<sup>rd</sup> Board meeting to be posted on the Board’s website
- monitored the Board’s email account – responded to some messages, forwarded others to appropriate personnel at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- reviewed draft minutes for the Board’s 194<sup>th</sup> meeting
- distributed seven draft Incidental Take Authorizations (ITAs) to Board members for potential review
- finalized and submitted the Board’s Biennial Report for 2020 – 2022
- notified members of the Aquatic Invertebrate, Fish, Amphibian/Reptile, Avian, and Mammal Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committees (ESTACs) that their appointments had been approved at the 194<sup>th</sup> Board meeting and requested copies of their current CVs/resumes
- contacted potential additional members of the Aquatic Invertebrate, Fish, and Amphibian/Reptile ESTACS
- prepared a list of potential members of the Terrestrial Invertebrate ESTAC for approval at the 195<sup>th</sup> Board meeting
- prepared for the 195<sup>th</sup> Board meeting – prepared the notice for the 195<sup>th</sup> meeting, developed an agenda for the 195<sup>th</sup> meeting, had the draft agenda posted on the Board’s website and at the IDNR building, and distributed materials for the 195<sup>th</sup> meeting to Board members

**Potential Members of Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committees (ESTACs)  
for Approval at 195<sup>th</sup> ESPB Meeting**

**Terrestrial Invertebrate ESTAC**

Dr. Tierney Brosius (Associate Professor, Department of Biology, Augustana College)

Dr. Christopher Dietrich (Systematic Entomology Section Leader, Illinois Natural History Survey)

Angella Moorehouse (Natural Areas Preservation Specialist, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission)

Dr. Douglas Taron (Chief Curator, Chicago Academy of Sciences/Peggy Notebaert Nature Center)

Isaac Stewart (Assistant Professor of Biology, Black Hawk College)

James Wiker (naturalist)

**Add to Aquatic Invertebrate ESTAC**

Jodi Vandermyde (Environmental Protection Specialist III, Bureau of Water, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency)

**Add to Fish ESTAC**

Dr. Greg Whitledge (Professor, Center for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Aquatic Sciences, Department of Zoology, Southern Illinois University)

**Add to Amphibian/Reptile ESTAC**

Dr. Robin Warne (Associate Professor, School of Biological Science, Southern Illinois University)

**Plant ESTAC**

- Dr. Timothy Bell (retired Professor of Botany, Chicago State University)
- Mr. Christopher Benda (Botanist, Southern Illinois University)
- Ms. Gretel Keifer (Manager of Plants of Concern, Chicago Botanic Garden)
- Mr. Paul Marcum (Associate Botanist & Project Leader for Botany, Illinois Natural History Survey)
- Ms. Susanne Masi (retired, Manager of Regional Floristics and Plants of Concern, Chicago Botanic Garden)
- Dr. Brenda Molano-Flores (Senior Plant Ecologist, Illinois Natural History Survey)
- Mr. Randy Nyboer (retired Ecologist, Illinois Department of Natural Resources)
- Ms. Shannan Sharp (Botanist, Shawnee National Forest, USDA Forest Service)
- Ms. Elizabeth Shimp (retired Botanist, Shawnee National Forest, USDA Forest Service)
- Dr. Greg Spyreas (Research Scientist, Plant Ecology & Botany, Illinois Natural History Survey)
- Dr. John Taft (retired Plant Ecologist, Illinois Natural History Survey)
- Mr. Steve Tillman (District Heritage Biologist, Illinois Department of Natural Resources)
- Mr. Eric Ulaszek (Botanist, Illinois Natural History Survey)