

ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD

MINUTES OF 190th MEETING, May 21, 2021

via ZOOM

For approval at the 191st meeting, August 20, 2021

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Angelo Capparella, Dr. Janice Coons, Dr. Jeremie Fant (joined later), Dr. Joyce Hofmann, Mr. Bruce Ross-Shannon, Mr. Randy Schietzelt, Dr. Tih-Fen Ting, Dr. Philip Willink, and Mr. Chris Young

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: none

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Alessi (IDNR Division of Wildlife), Tara Kieninger (IDNR Natural Heritage Database), Ann Marie Holtrop (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage), Kelly Neal (INPC), Angella Moorehouse (INPC), Joe Kath, (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage), Heather Osborn (IDNR ITA Coordinator), Trent Thomas, (IDNR Division of Fisheries), Todd Strole (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage), Nathan Grider (IDNR Impact Assessment Manager), Meredith Mahoney (Illinois State Museum), Timothy Tyler (IDNR Office of Law Enforcement), Dr. Andrzej Bartke (SIU School of Medicine), Kyle Kopf (Natural Area Guardians of Whiteside County), Jenny Skufca (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage), Samantha Scalice (IDNR Division of Natural Heritage), Chris Miller (INHS), Philip Cox (IDNR)

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

Chair Hofmann called the meeting to order at 10:05 A.M. and read the roll call. Seven voting Board members were in attendance at that time, constituting a quorum. Dr. Hofmann welcomed the visitors and Mr. Young asked them to introduce themselves.

2. Adoption of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes from the 189th Meeting

Draft minutes of the 189th meeting had been distributed to Board members prior to the meeting by email. There were no corrections or additions. Dr. Ting moved that the minutes of the 189th meeting be approved as presented. Dr. Coons seconded the motion and it passed unanimously on a roll call vote. Dr. Hofmann said that she would have the minutes posted on the website.

4. Approval of a Resolution Honoring the Contributions of Dr. Tracy Evans

Mr. Young had written a resolution honoring the contributions of Board member Dr. Tracy Evans who died on March 16, 2021. Chair Hofmann read the resolution (attached to these minutes). Dr. Coons moved that the Board approve the resolution. Mr. Ross-Shannon suggested that all the other Board members be recorded as seconding the motion. Dr. Coons commented

that Dr. Evans had been a very valuable member of the Board. The motion to approve the resolution passed unanimously on a roll call vote. Dr. Evans' husband Dr. Andrzej Bartke thanked the Board and said that service on the Board had given Dr. Evans an opportunity to continue pursuing her interest in conservation.

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

The Department's report had been distributed to the Board via email. Ms. Ann Holtrop stated that the Division of Natural Heritage has been working to prioritize listed species for recovery efforts and will assign staff to lead the efforts for each of the species. Division staff have met with botanists at the Illinois Natural History Survey to discuss creating state rankings for plant species. She mentioned that Illinois Outdoor Journal is now an online publication and has been including articles on natural history topics. Jeannie Barnes retired recently and there is an ongoing search for her replacement to work on the Illinois Natural Heritage Database (INHD). The Natural Areas Program is working on standards and guidelines for aquatic systems. Mr. Nathan Grider reported that there will be an update for the EcoCAT system and that CICADA (Conservation Inclusive Construction and Development Archive) is now online. Hundreds of people accessed the CICADA website during its first few days. Dr. Ting pointed out that more than 300 endangered and threatened species permits had been issued in the first three months of 2021. She asked if the majority were renewals and Mr. Joe Kath said that was the case. Dr. Ting also asked about the parameters used in a GIS habitat model for Franklin's Ground Squirrel. Mr. Kath said he could provide Dr. Ting with that information. Dr. Hofmann commented that Ms. Barnes and Ms. Tara Kieninger have had a significant role in the conservation of listed species by maintaining the INHD. She expressed gratitude to Ms. Barnes for all the help she had provided the Board, the Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committees, and individuals submitting petitions to the Board during the list revision process.

6. Report from the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC)

An INPC report was distributed to the Board via e-mail and Ms. Kelly Neal addressed the Board. The Commission held its 238th meeting on May 11, 2021 and added five Nature Preserves totaling nearly 600 acres to the system. The next Commission meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2021 and may be held in-person at Olney Central College. Dr. Capparella mentioned the problem of blatant encroachments on protected sites. He asked if a role for the new Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves organization could be to detect encroachments sooner. Ms. Neal responded that volunteers at INPC sites can report any problems that they notice.

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

Chair Hofmann previously provided a written report on her activities since the last meeting; the report is attached to these minutes. She has completed an update of the material on parts of the Board's website. She added information about the Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committees and documents pertaining to the 2016-2019 list revision process. Information about the previous list revision has been archived on the website as well. Dr. Hofmann also created and distributed a spreadsheet of types of information for potential inclusion in the revised petition package for changes to the Illinois List of Endangered and Threatened Species.

8. Board Appointments

The terms of Board members Evans, Hofmann, and Ross-Shannon expire in May 2021. Mr. Ross-Shannon stated that he was willing to continue serving on the Board until a replacement is appointed. Dr. Hofmann reported that she had recently completed the self-nomination form. There will be one vacancy on the Board because of the loss of Dr. Evans. Dr. Coons asked if there has been any action on other reappointments. Mr. Young will check into the matter.

9. Committee of the Whole Meeting to Propose Nominations for Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board Secretary

Board members convened as a committee of the whole to collect nominations for the position of Board Secretary. That office had been held by Dr. Evans and the position needs to be filled until the next election of officers in August 2022. Dr. Willink volunteered to serve as Secretary.

10. Selection of the Board's Representative on the Natural Areas Evaluation Committee

Dr. Evans had represented the board on the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Natural Areas Evaluation Committee (NAEC). Mr. Schietzelt indicated that he had a long-standing interest in natural areas and was willing to serve on the NAEC. Dr. Capparella moved that the Board approve Mr. Schietzelt as the Board's representative on the NAEC and Dr. Coons seconded the motion. Mr. Schietzelt abstained from voting on the motion, which passed unanimously on a roll call vote of the remaining members.

11. Discussion on the Update of the Petition Forms Used for the Review and Revision of the Illinois List of Endangered and Threatened Species

Chair Hofmann pointed out that this was a continuation of the discussion at the previous meeting. She stated that the Board needed to decide how many petition forms to use for future revisions and what types of information to request in the form(s). Drs. Coons and Capparella favored having three separate forms and there was a consensus to proceed accordingly. Members went through the spreadsheet of potential information that could be requested. Dr. Capparella suggested having petitioners indicate their expertise with the species or the taxonomic group to which it belongs. The Board had received a suggestion that the scientific name of a species at the time of listing be included, if it has changed. Concern was expressed about sensitive location information for listed species becoming public knowledge. Ms. Kieninger told the Board that anyone receiving INHD records had to sign a data license agreement and offered to provide the Board with a sample EOR report. Dr. Hofmann noted that only the cover sheet with the Executive Summary would be posted on the Board's website and it could be screened prior to posting. Dr. Capparella mentioned the possibility that location information might be shared with members of an organization that submitted a petition. Mr. Young said he would look at the license agreement. Dr. Hofmann suggested that the table of INHD records (EORs) be included as an attachment to the petition instead of the petitioner having to enter the information into a table within the form. Members felt that it would be useful to have the EOR information for five-year intervals as part of the form and the time frame for initial and recent records should remain 10 years. There was a brief discussion of whether results from "negative survey" are included. It was suggested that the definition of "protected sites" be clarified. Dr. Capparella asked if collection records should be required and Dr. Coons asked whether all petitioners would know how to access them. It was suggested that an explanation be given of which data sources are consulted since there is a wide variety ranging from zoological/botanical collections to online

open-access sources like breeding bird surveys, eBird, etc. Concern was also expressed about the possibility of petitioners who report their personal research data having that information appropriated by other people. Mr. Young will check with the Department's legal counsel about protecting such data. Dr. Hofmann raised the issue of Department information needing to be easily accessible to petitioners. Ms. Holtrop told the Board that Species in Greatest Conservation Need and the Department's watch list were available online. Dr. Hofmann asked if the Board's intentions were well enough defined at this time to develop draft petitions that could be reviewed at the next meeting. There being a consensus that this was the case, Drs. Coons and Hofmann volunteered to write the drafts.

12. Election of Board Secretary

Dr. Willink was the sole candidate for the position of Board Secretary. Dr. Capparella moved that the Board elect Dr. Willink as Secretary to serve until the next election of officers in August 2022. The motion was seconded by Dr. Coons. Dr. Willink abstained from voting and the motion was approved by a unanimous roll-call vote of the remaining members.

13. Public Comment Period

No public comments were made.

14. Other Business

There was no other business.

15. Next Meeting Information

The next meeting is scheduled for August 20, 2021 at 10 A.M. Dr. Hofmann raised the idea of holding the meeting in person since many people are now vaccinated for Covid 19. She stated that the meeting room at Midewin was not very large and suggested meeting in a larger room at the IDNR building in Springfield. Mr. Young pointed out that the State Fair will be in progress on August 20 so a change in the meeting date would be needed in order to use the IDNR building. Dr. Hofmann said she would check if the meeting room at Midewin would be available on August 20. Dr. Capparella asked about holding a hybrid meeting and Mr. Young said remote access could be arranged. Mr. Ross-Shannon suggested that the Chair decide on the date and location based on coronavirus conditions and space availability.

16. Adjournment

Chair Hofmann adjourned the meeting at 12:02 P.M.

ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD

One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, Illinois 62702 - 1271; dnr.espb@illinois.gov;

Report from the Chair, 21 May 2021

Joyce Hofmann

Activities for the period between the 189th and 190th Board meetings

- performed follow-up for 189th meeting – arranged for the final agenda of the 189th meeting and the approved minutes of the 188th 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)
- created and distributed a spreadsheet listing types of information that might be included in the revised petition form(s) for future revisions of the Illinois List of Endangered and Threatened Species
- completed material for an update of the Board’s website
- distributed eight draft Incidental Take Authorizations (ITAs) and one Conservation Plan to Board members for potential review
- prepared a report for the 238th meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
- attended 238th meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission on 11 May 2021 remotely
- attended a special meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission on 10 May 2021
- prepared for the 190th Board meeting – prepared the notice for the 190th meeting, edited draft minutes for the 189th Board meeting, developed an agenda for the 190th meeting, had the draft agenda posted on the Board’s website and at the IDNR building, and distributed materials for the 190th meeting to Board members

A Resolution Honoring the Contributions of Dr. Tracy R. Evans

Whereas the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board lost a valued member and colleague with the death of Dr. Tracy R. Evans on March 16, 2021, and

Whereas Dr. Evans faithfully served the Board and its mission to safeguard Illinois' most vulnerable plant and animal life since May 19, 2017, and

Whereas her contributions to the fields of conservation, education, research, and advocacy extend beyond the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board, and

Whereas Dr. Evans shared her love for the outdoors with the public by serving as a site interpreter for the Cache River State Natural Area, and protected the public interest by conducting environmental reviews for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and

Whereas she also served as a Research Assistant at the Illinois State Museum and participated on the Department's Natural Areas Evaluation Committee, and

Whereas Dr. Evans inspired others with her decision to pursue a Ph.D. after her retirement from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and

Whereas Dr. Evans' friendship, kindness, energy, and counsel enriched all those fortunate enough to know and work with her, be it

Resolved that the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board

Extends its deepest condolences to the family, including her husband Andrzej, sons Kyle and Collin, her siblings, and grandchildren, and

Recognizes with admiration and appreciation the contributions of Dr. Tracy R. Evans over the course of her career and especially her service to the Board.

So moved on this day, May 21, 2021 by Dr. Janice Coons

Seconded by Dr. Angelo Capparella, Dr. Jeremie Fant, Dr. Joyce Hofmann, Mr. Bruce Ross-Shannon, Mr. Randall Schietzelt, Dr. Tih-Fen Ting, Dr. Philip Willink, Mr. Chris Young