

ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD
MINUTES OF 185th MEETING, FEBRUARY 21, 2020
MIDEWIN NATIONAL TALLGRASS PRAIRIE, MAIN MEETING ROOM, VISITOR
CENTER 30239 SOUTH STATE ROUTE 53, WILMINGTON, IL 60481

Approved at the 186th meeting, August 28, 2020

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Angelo Capparella, Dr. Janice Coons, Dr. Tracy Evans, Dr. Jeremie Fant, Dr. Joyce Hofmann, Mr. Bruce Ross-Shannon, Mr. Randy Schietzelt, Dr. Philip Willink, and Mr. Chris Young

OTHERS PRESENT: Austin Omer (Illinois Farm Bureau), Ann Holtrop (IDNR), Jeannie Barnes (INHS), Greg Wahl (private individual)

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. Eight voting Board members were in attendance, constituting a quorum. Dr. Hofmann welcomed the visitors and asked them to introduce themselves.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Dr. Janice Coons moved that the agenda be adopted as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ross-Shannon and carried by a unanimous vote.

3. Approval of Minutes from the 184rd Meeting

Draft minutes of the 184th meeting had been distributed to Board members prior to the meeting by email. There being no corrections, the minutes of the 184th meeting were approved as presented.

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

Board members received a report from Ms. Holtrop. She stated that the report was generally routine. She reported on the USFWS annual coordination meeting. This meeting included discussions about the Migratory Bird Treaty. Chair Hofmann asked if the potential listing of additional bat species had been discussed. Ms. Holtrop said listing of additional species would be studied. Dr. Capparella asked about federal listing of Kirtland's snake. Ms. Holtrop replied that it was not going to be listed. Dr. Capparella stated that it would be helpful for people to have access to all recovery plans. Ms. Holtrop also mentioned personnel changes within the department.

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

The INPC report was distributed to the Board via e-mail and by paper copy.

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

Chair Hofmann reported that a major activity since the last Board meeting was revision of the Administrative Rules containing the List of Endangered and Threatened Illinois Fauna and List of Endangered and Threatened Illinois Flora. Typographical errors were fixed and the lists of animal species were alphabetized to match the style of the plant list. Dr. Bridget Henning of IDNR assisted with the revision and forwarded the Administrative Rules to IDNR Legal Counsel. Ms. Holtrop will inform the Board when JCAR puts the Administrative Rules in the Illinois Register for public comment.

7. Semi-annual Review of Whether to Keep Closed the Minutes from Previous Closed Sessions
Mr. Ross-Shannon motioned to keep minutes closed. Mr. Schietzelt seconded the motion. All closed sessions have dealt with personnel issues. Unanimously approved.

8. Discussion of Improvements to the Petition Forms for Changes in Listing Status
Overall, there was consensus that the use of the petitions was a good idea. Chair Hofmann suggested separating the instructions from the petition forms. She said there were questions that gave some petitioners problems and should be reworded. Minor adjustments to numbers are also needed. Dr. Capparella said that because the listing of federally listed species is automatic the form should indicate that no petition is required. There was discussion about whether climate change should be specifically listed in criterion #3 and about requesting that ESTACs provide recommendations for threat remediation. Also discussed was the addition of an executive summary with a listing of threats to a species and the rationale for a change in its status. Other items that might be helpful in a petition review are "S" ranks and whether a species is listed as a species in greatest need of conservation. These can be generated by Jeannie Barnes as part of the database information. Chair Hofmann will collect comments on the petitions from Board members and ESTAC members and send them to Kristi Sorenson at IDNR. Ms. Sorenson will compile the comments and provide draft revisions of the petitions for the Board to evaluate.

9. Discussion of a Process for the Distribution and Storage of Petition Forms
There was general discussion about the posting and storage of petitions. Posting of petitions with the location of sensitive species may be a problem and require redaction. Mr. Young said that IDNR Legal Counsel should redact information rather than the Board. An alternative would be to post an executive summary for each species. Dr. Coons received a request to distribute petitions among the plant ESTAC members. The Board has no policy on this. A motion was made by Dr. Coons and seconded by Mr. Schietzelt to allow petitions to be sent to members of a specific ESTAC group. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Discussion of the Process for Revising the Illinois List of Endangered and Threatened Species in Relation to Future Revisions
There was general discussion about creating a flow chart and timeline of the just completed process. The process took three and a half years. Board members should consider how the process might be improved. There was a consensus that plants should be started earlier in the process to allow for the three meetings needed to cover the large numbers of plants across the state. Chair Hofmann will provide a written outline of the process to IDNR and Department staff will create graphics.

11. Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)
Mr. Greg Wahl, a resident of Sterling in Whiteside County, requested that the ESPB help make it easier to establish endangered species on private lands. He stated that some private landowners want to make a difference and are being obstructed. In particular, he would like to establish a population of Prairie Chickens on his property at his own expense with expertise provided by IDNR.

12. Other Business (topics may be discussed, but no actions may be taken)
Chair Hofmann pointed out that the Board's website will need to be updated when the list changes become official. Dr. Capparella brought a book entitled Endangered Beauty by Carol Freeman. This is a book of photographs of endangered species in Illinois. Paul Marcum wrote an article about the plant

listing changes for the Illinois Native Plant Society publication "Harbinger." The IDNR website is undergoing an upgrade and will be ready for an information update in early March.

13. Next meeting Information

The next meeting will be May 15, 2020 at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie Visitor Center, Wilmington, IL.

14. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Hofmann adjourned the meeting at 12:01 P.M.