

ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD

MINUTES OF 176th MEETING, NOVEMBER 17, 2017

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

Approved at the 177th meeting, February 23, 2018

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Jeremie Fant

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeannie Barnes (INHS), Joe Kath (IDNR), Kelly Neal (IDNR), and the following persons from Pleasantdale Middle School in Burr Ridge: Griffin Sonntag (principal), Jennifer Lauermann (teacher), Malina Carli, Rebeka O'Connell, Reese Krueger, Nayeli Negron, Sophia Jiotis, Sal Imbarrato, Liam Doyle, Ieva Dilunas, Samantha Girgis, Aliyah Swanson, Abbie Besich, Vinnie Petrich, and Luca Casciani (students).

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

Chair Hofmann called the meeting to order at 10:01 A.M. and read the roll call. Since all but one of the Board members were in attendance, there was a quorum. Chair Hofmann welcomed the visitors and asked them to introduce themselves.

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 175th Meeting

Draft minutes of the 175th meeting were distributed to Board members prior to the meeting. No corrections were proposed so the minutes of the 175th meeting were approved as presented.

4 Report from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Mr. Joe Kath gave a report detailing activities of the IDNR's Office of Resource Conservation and Office of Realty and Environmental Planning. The fourth year (of eight) for the Alligator Snapping Turtle release program has been completed. There has been success with survival, but no reproduction yet. Consideration is being given to rearing mussels at the Jake Wolf Hatchery. The Department recently held its first bat festival and more than 1200 people attended. Planning is underway for the Department to host the annual meeting of the Midwest Bat Working Group at the Field Museum in April 2019.

5 Report from the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

Ms. Kelly Neal represented an oral report and a written memorandum from the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. The Commission's next meeting will be in January 2018.

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

Chair Hofmann reported on her activities since the 175th meeting; her written report to the Board is attached. Activities included presiding at a September 21, 2017 meeting of the Mammal Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee (ESTAC), preparing a report for the September meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, and distributing draft Incidental Take Authorizations and Conservation Plans to Board members.

7 Report on Natural Areas Evaluation Committee

Dr. Evans has been attending meetings of the Natural Areas Evaluation Committee (NAEC) as the Board's representative. The NAEC reviews and updates the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI). The two most recent meetings focused largely on mussels. New sites providing habitat for unusual concentrations of mussels were added to the INAI, while other sites were removed. Dr. Capparella suggested a program to reach out to organizations such as conservation land trusts with information about protection of INAI sites.

8 Compliance with Mandatory Ethics Training for Board Members

Chair Hofmann confirmed that all Board members completed mandatory online ethics training and their certificates of completion have been filed. She pointed out that the Board's Secretary has been listed as its ethics officer who could act as a liaison with IDNR Legal Counsel.

9 Preliminary Approval of a Petition to Change the Status of the Elfin Skimmer (*Nannothemis bella*) from Threatened to Endangered

The Board discussed granting preliminary approval for changing the status of the Elfin Skimmer from threatened to endangered. The petition was submitted by Drs. Tim Cashatt and Tracy Evans. This species was only discovered in Illinois in 1985 and has very specific habitat requirements. There were two populations in northeastern Illinois, but now only one known population exists. Mr. Schietzelt made a motion to give preliminary approval to changing the status of the Elfin Skimmer from threatened to endangered. The motion was seconded by Dr. Coons and approved by a unanimous vote.

10 Approval of Potential Members of the Botanical ESTAC (Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee) for the Revision of the List of Endangered and Threatened Plant Species

Drs. Coons and Fant contacted 72 botanists to determine their interest in serving on the Botanical ESTAC. As of the meeting date, they have had responses from 46 individuals, 29 of whom expressed an interest in the ESTAC. Upon a motion made by Mr. Ross-Shannon and seconded by Mr. Schietzelt, the following persons were approved by unanimous vote as potential members of the Botanical ESTAC: Tim Bell, Chris Benda, Rachel Goad, Bill Handel, Paul Marcum, Susanne Masi, Bill McClain, Robert Mohlenrock, Michael Murphy, Randy Nyboer, Rick Philippe, Beth Shimp, Greg Spyreas, John Taft, Gordon Tucker, Eric Ulaszek, and John Wilker. Several of these botanists have already agreed to serve on the ESTAC and Drs. Coons and Fant will contact the others.

11 Update on the Process for the Review of Listed Plant Species

Three ESTAC meetings will be held to review plants from the northern, central and western, and southern regions of Illinois. The committee will seek input from individuals knowledgeable about the flora of these regions, but only ESTAC members will vote on recommendations for listing changes. Chair Hofmann offered to provide the ESTAC members with information about

Open Meetings Act training; she and Mr. Schietzelt offered to help update data tables for listed plant species that could be distributed to ESTAC members.

12 Approval of Schedule for 2018 Quarterly Board Meetings

Upon a motion by Dr. Coons, which was seconded by Dr. Evans, the following dates were unanimously approved for 2018 Board meetings.

February 9, 2018 – Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Wilmington, IL

May 18, 2018 – Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Wilmington, IL

August 17, 2018 – Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Wilmington, IL

November 16, 2018 – Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Wilmington, IL

Chair Hofmann reserved the meeting room at Midewin for these dates.

13 Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

Students Abbie Besich, Malina Carli, Liam Doyle, Reese Krueger, Nayeli Negron, and Aliyah Swanson from Pleasantdale Middle School addressed the Board about their activities studying and raising awareness of the Alligator Snapping Turtle, an Illinois endangered species, and raising funds to aid the reintroduction of this species in the state. Their class has been caring for an Alligator Snapping Turtle (which will be released next summer) and, among other things, selling t-shirts to raise funds to support their activities. Members of the Board expressed their appreciation for the students' interest and efforts on behalf of endangered species. They also thanked teacher Jennifer Lauermann and principal Griffin Sonntag for encouraging the students.

14 Other Business

Chair Hofmann mentioned that since the Board has reestablished ESTACs the policy manual for these committees should be updated prior to the next review and revision of the Illinois List. She also expressed the opinion that Board members may have time at 2018 meetings to discuss basic policy issues.

15 Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Hofmann adjourned the meeting at 11:56 A.M.



ILLINOIS ENDANGERED SPECIES PROTECTION BOARD

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Report from the Chair, 17 November 2017

Joyce Hofmann

Activities for the period between the 175rd and 176th Board meetings

- performed follow-up for 175th meeting – arranged for the final agenda and the approved minutes of the 174th 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 IDNR
- updated the electronic file containing the list of closed Board sessions
- scheduled a meeting of the Mammal Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee (ESTAC); prepared, distributed, and posted a draft agenda for the meeting
- collected Open Meetings Act training certificates from Mammal ESTAC members and sent them to IDNR Legal Counsel
- prepared a report for the 227th meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (12 September 2017)
- presided at the meeting of the Mammal ESTAC (21 September 2017)
- distributed four draft Incidental Take Authorizations (ITAs) and four Conservation Plans (CPs) to Board members for individual review and comment
- performed an administrative review of a petition to change the status of the Elfin Skimmer
- sent final agendas for the meetings of the zoological ESTACs and draft minutes of the Aquatic Invertebrate and Terrestrial Invertebrate ESTACs to be posted on the Board's website
- finished writing draft minutes of the Fish ESTAC meeting and distributed them to ESTAC members for review (several corrections needed)
- completed mandatory Ethics Training for Board Members
- prepared for the 176th 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