



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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<http://dnr.state.il.us>

Pat Quinn, Governor
Marc Miller, Director

August 28, 2014

Mr. Patrick Giacomini
Project Manager
City of Springfield, Office of Public Utilities
3100 Stevenson Drive
Springfield, IL 62703

Ms. Robin Tisdale
IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
500 East Monroe Street
Springfield, IL 62701

**Re: Natural Gas Startup Project at Dallman Power Station
Endangered Species Consultation Program
Project Number(s): 1501962
Alternate Project Number(s):
County: Sangamon**

Dear Mr. Giacomini and Ms. Tisdale:

This letter concerns the Endangered Species Consultation and wetland review for the **Natural Gas Startup Project at Dallman Power Station**, located in **Sangamon** County, Section **13**, Township **15N**, and Range **5W**. This project was submitted for consultation in accordance with the *Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act* [520 ILCS 10/11], the *Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act* [525 ILCS 30/17], Title 17 *Illinois Administrative Code* Part 1075, the *Interagency Wetland Policy Act* [20 ILCS 830], and Title 17 *Illinois Administrative Code* Part 1090.

The proposed action involves: installation of a new gas main and Natural Gas Startup System to facilitate conversion to natural gas in order to meet 2017 Nox and SO2 emissions standards by optimizing the startup process.

E&T Review

The following protected resources occur in the vicinity of the project area and proposed action:
Barn Owl, *Tyto alba*

To minimize or avoid potential adverse impacts, the Department recommends the measures described below be implemented by City of Springfield, Office of Public Utilities.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

This species prefers to inhabit pastureland, dairy farms, hay fields, marshes and rural towns where suitable hunting habitat is available and commonly hunts along fence rows, wetland edges and in fields. Barn owls nest in cavities found within trees, grain silos, barn lofts, church steeples, holes in cliffs or river banks, and man-made boxes. Changing agricultural practices in the Midwest appear most likely to have contributed to population declines over the last two decades. While late spring-early summer is the peak of nesting activity, incubation and brood rearing can occur during any month of the year in Illinois. If resources are abundant (such as mice and voles) then the owls are able to produce two clutches of eggs a year: a spring brood (March – July) and a late summer, early fall brood. A nesting pair of owls may reuse the same nesting site each year, so it is important to understand where nests are located in order not to disturb them. Nests can be occupied for approximately three months after eggs are laid, and fledglings can be encountered at or near base of nest trees even longer.

Recommendation #1. All on-site personnel involved in the project, including construction staff, should be educated on how to recognize this species. Color photos (of adults and juveniles), educational materials, and a plan for responding to potential encounters should be discussed in a training session and at the preconstruction site meeting(s).

Recommendation #2. Construction activities for a site such as this present an added risk of injury or death to fledglings as they learn to fly near their base tree. These owls prefer Silver Maples, but will use other cavity trees. If any Barn Owls are encountered on or near the project's footprint, work should stop, and the IDNR District Heritage Biologist (Ray Geroff, 217/285-2221) should immediately be contacted, keeping in mind it is a criminal act for anyone to handle or move a listed species unless Incidental Take Authorization has been permitted. Personnel on site should watch the species until the proper authority arrives to handle the situation.

Recommendation #3. If any trees must be removed, contact Ray Geroff to make him aware of the removal day, and request his presence in the event any Barn Owls are encountered during the removal of the tree(s).

Wetland Review

The Department has concluded that adverse impacts to wetlands are unlikely.

Summary

Consultation under 17 Ill. Adm. Code Part 1075 and the Wetland Review under 17 Ill. Adm. Code Part 1090 are terminated. The Department recommends any and all measures and/or recommendations be implemented by the applicant, and be required by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity as a condition of the grant funding.

Consultation for Part 1075 is valid for two years unless new information becomes available that was not previously considered; the proposed action is modified; or additional species, essential habitat, or Natural Areas are identified in the vicinity. If the project has not been implemented within two years of the date of this letter, or any of the above listed conditions develop, a new consultation is necessary. Consultation for Part 1090 (Interagency Wetland Policy Act) is valid for three years.

The natural resource review reflects the information existing in the Illinois Natural Heritage Database and the Illinois Wetlands Inventory at the time of the project submittal, and should not be regarded as a final statement on the site being considered, nor should it be a substitute for detailed site surveys or field surveys required for environmental assessments. If additional protected resources are encountered during the

project's implementation, you must comply with the applicable statutes and regulations. Also, note that termination does not imply IDNR's authorization or endorsement of the proposed action.

Please contact me if you have questions regarding this review.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sheldon R. Fairfield". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sheldon" and last name "Fairfield" clearly legible.

Sheldon R. Fairfield
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