



# Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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

Pat Quinn, Governor  
Marc Miller, Director

October 1, 2014

Ms. Julie Pasel  
Village Clerk  
Village of Aroma Park  
PO Box 117  
Aroma Park, IL 60910

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

**Re: Aroma Park Community/Emergency Center Construction  
Endangered Species Consultation Program  
Project Number(s): 1505066  
Alternate Project Number(s):  
County: Kankakee**

Dear Ms. Pasel and Ms. Tisdale:

This letter concerns the Endangered Species Consultation and wetland review for the **Aroma Park Community/Emergency Center Construction**, located in **Kankakee** County, Section **14**, Township **30N**, and Range **13W**. 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: “The Village of Aroma Park proposes to build a community/emergency center.”

## **E&T Review**

The following protected resources occur in the vicinity of the project area and proposed action:

Ornate Box Turtle (*Terrepepe ornata*), Black Sandshell (*Ligumia recta*), Mudpuppy (*Necturus maculosus*), Northern Brook Lamprey (*Ichthyomyzon fossor*), Purple Wartback (*Cyclonaias tuberculata*), River Redhorse (*Moxostoma carinatum*), Salamander Mussel (*Simpsonaias ambigua*), Sheepnose (*Plethobasus cyphus*), and the Kankakee River INAI Site.

To minimize or avoid potential adverse impacts, the Department recommends the measures described below be implemented by Village of Aroma Park.

**Ornate Box Turtle, *Terrepepe ornata***

This species was listed by Illinois as threatened in October 2009. Many populations have been adversely affected by habitat conversion to agriculture and development, road-kills, and over-collection for the pet trade. There is a record of this species to the south of the project footprint, but since it is a relatively small turtle (less than six inches) this animal can easily escape notice.

From late September through mid-April, the Ornate Box Turtle hibernates (brumates) in burrows as deep as three feet underground. Such burrows are far from obvious to humans, so that for more than six months of the year, this species is not subject to easy observation. This species spends significant portions of each day underground, either in burrows or shallow excavations near the surface called “forms.” Hatchlings spend most of their time underground during their first two or three years of life. Excavation of soils and trenching activities in potential habitat during the above-noted timeframe run the risk of killing or injuring unobserved turtles.

This turtle’s daily pattern consists of an early morning emergence, followed by basking to raise its body temperature. When the right temperature for activity is achieved, it forages across its range for several hours, feeding, until temperatures become too high, then it seeks shelter beneath vegetation, in a burrow, or in a “form.” It remains inactive until late afternoon or early evening, when temperatures allow a second foraging period. Before darkness falls, it retreats to its burrow, except for females during the nesting period (May and June), when eggs are laid at night.

This species also demonstrates high fidelity to brumation sites, often returning to within a yard of where it spent the winter the previous year. If a brumation site is located where work is being conducted, it is unclear how a turtle will respond.

Noise generated by excavation and trenching activities could interfere with animal communication and may hinder reproductive success, depending on its length and intensity. Vibrations from construction activities may pose another risk factor since reptiles are very sensitive to vibrations transmitted through the ground, as are earthworms and soil organisms, part of this turtle’s diet. Further, compaction of sandy soils can make it difficult or impossible for turtles to exit their burrows.

Because this species finds movement through dense vegetation difficult, it prefers areas where vegetation is sparse or absent. Roads satisfy this desire for easy movement, as do tilled fields, and also provide basking areas where temperatures may rise more quickly in the morning or during cooler weather. Most of the Department’s observation records for this species are adjacent to roads or are recorded road-kills.

*Recommendation #1.* Educate and inform construction crews and all on-site personnel about Ornate Box Turtles before work begins. Distribute photos (adult and juvenile) of the species and discuss the site management plan for responding to encounters in a training session and at the preconstruction site meeting. If a turtle is encountered on site, inform crews to immediately stop construction in the surrounding area and contact the Department’s Heritage Biologist, Dan Kirk, 630/553-1372, keeping in mind it is a criminal act to handle a listed species. Personnel on site should watch the turtle until the proper authority arrives to alleviate the situation, keeping at a respectable distance. If the turtle moves, crews should mark the spot they first saw the turtle and the last spot it was seen.

*Recommendation #2.* Because trenches can trap turtles (and other reptiles and amphibians), trenches and excavations should be routinely inspected throughout the day to ensure no turtles have become trapped within them. Trenches should also be checked before being backfilled, covered at the end of each work day, and returned to original grade when project is done. Graded areas should be planted with native, non-invasive species since invasive and exotic species can form dense patches which make it difficult for turtles to travel through.

*Recommendation #3.* Exclusionary fencing should be installed and in place from April through September to prevent turtles from entering the construction areas. Daily inspections should occur for the first two weeks and then be maintained weekly throughout the construction period to ensure the exclusionary fencing has been properly installed (dug into the ground) and to check if any turtles are present on either side of the fence.

*Recommendation #4.* Exclusionary 6" curbing around entire parking lot areas should be incorporated into project plans to prevent any turtles from entering parking lots and being crushed by vehicles.

*Recommendation #5.* Vehicles and machinery should stay off any soils that are defined as sandy and use matting as additional compaction avoidance.

### **Kankakee River INAI Site and listed river species**

Due to the sensitivity of the Kankakee River INAI Site and various protected species in the vicinity of this project, strict adherence to erosion and sedimentation control measures should be used to minimize the possibility of any adverse impacts to this site and all listed species in the vicinity.

### **Wetland Review**

The National Wetlands Inventory does not show wetlands within 250 feet of the project location.

### **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 that reads "Sheldon R. Fairfield". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "S".

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