



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

One Natural Resources Way Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
www.dnr.illinois.gov

Bruce Rauner, Governor
Wayne A. Rosenthal, Director

February 20, 2015

Mr. Brien Sheahan, Chairman
527 E. Capitol St.
Springfield IL 62701

**RE: Grand Prairie Gateway 345-kV Transmission Line
Endangered Species Consultation Program
EcoCAT Review #1508590**

Dear Chairman Sheahan:

The Department has received from Stantec, on behalf of Commonwealth Edison, a submission for the purpose of consultation between the Department and the Commission pursuant to the *Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act* [520 ILCS 10/11], the *Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act* [525 ILCS 30/17], and Title 17 *Illinois Administrative Code Part 1075*.

EcoCAT Review #1508590 covers a one-kilometer segment running parallel on the north side of Stearns Road in South Elgin.

At the eastern end of this segment, west of McLean Boulevard, a large colony of the State-listed threatened plant, **Slender Bog Arrow Grass**, *Triglochin palustris*, occurs directly adjacent to the power line right-of-way. (The adjacent property may be in the public domain: the Department has seen references to it as the "Stearns Road Corridor Natural Area," EcoCAT Project Code 1501092, although it is not included on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory.)

Where conditions are suitable, it is likely this species occurs within the planned construction zone of the power line. As with any State-listed plants, any form of harm, temporary or permanent, to a listed plant must be authorized in writing by the land owner and be in the possession of the person(s) harming the plant to avoid violations of the *Endangered Species Protection Act*. [520 ILCS 10/3.]

Due to the use of heavy equipment during construction, listed plants may be subject to being crushed by vehicles, and dug-up or buried during excavation for structural foundations. If soil conditions are not drastically altered, such plants are likely to recover over time. However, general applications of broad-spectrum herbicides during routine vegetation maintenance

operations could also be harmful, as well as damage such plants growing outside of the right-of-way.

The Department recommends the applicant survey the extent of the occurrence of this species within the construction area, and take feasible steps to limit damage to the listed plants and their supporting soils. The applicant should also consider, however, how it might assist the owner of the adjacent colony to manage or improve this habitat to promote conservation of this species.

This consultation is valid for two years unless new information becomes available which was not previously considered; or the proposed action is substantially modified; or additional species, essential habitats, 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.

The natural resource review primarily reflects the information existing in the Illinois Natural Heritage Database at the time of this consultation, 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, the applicant must comply with the applicable statutes and regulations. Also, note that closing consultation does not imply IDNR's authorization or endorsement of the proposed action. Please contact me if you have questions regarding this review.

Sincerely,



Keith M. Shank
Division of Ecosystems and Environment
keith.shank@illinois.gov
(217) 785-5500

cc: Brian Bub, Stantec