



February 20, 2025

Michael Holm
650 Pierce Blvd
O'Fallon, IL 62269

**RE: Woodstock Community Energy Initiative LLC Solar Project
Consultation Program
EcoCAT Review #2509418
McHenry County**

Dear Mr. Holm:

The Department has received your submission for this project for the purposes of consultation 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.

The proposed action consists of the construction of a solar project in McHenry County.

The Illinois Natural Heritage Database shows the following protected resources may be in the vicinity of the project location:

Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI)
West Woodstock Prairie INAI Site

Class 3 Groundwater
Yonder Prairie Nature Preserve Class 3 Groundwater

State Threatened or Endangered Species
Blanding's Turtles (*Emydoidea blandingii*)
Rusty-patched Bumble Bee (*Bombus affinis*)

Due to the project scope and proximity to protected resources the Department recommends the following actions be taken to avoid adversely impacting listed species in the vicinity of the project:

West Woodstock Prairie INAI Site

The Department has determined adverse impacts to this site are unlikely.

Yonder Prairie Nature Preserve Class 3 Groundwater

This project falls within the Yonder Prairie Nature Preserve Class 3 Groundwater recharge area, which protects the integrity of the Yonder Prairie Nature Preserve. The modification of groundwater quality and quantity which may affect conditions within a Nature Preserve is prohibited. The Department recommends the following to avoid and minimize impact to the Class 3 Groundwater:

- Use the lightest weight equipment possible to complete the job.
- Balloon or large tires should be used whenever possible to reduce compaction.
- Disc site upon completion to de-compact the surface after final soil is placed to ensure good infiltration.

Blanding's Turtles

EcoCAT has indicated records for the state-listed Blanding's Turtle in vicinity of the project area. The Department recommends:

- Educate personnel working on site about the Blanding's Turtle. Post photos of juvenile and adult Blanding's Turtles at a central location. State-listed species may not be handled without the appropriate permits pursuant to the *Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act*.
- If Blanding's turtles are encountered, crews should stop work immediately, allow the turtle to move out of the way and contact IDNR at (217) 785-5500.

Rusty-Patched Bumble Bee

The Department has determined adverse impacts to this species are unlikely.

Given the above recommendations are adopted the Department has determined that impacts to these protected resources are unlikely. The Department has determined impacts to other protected resources in the vicinity of the project location are also unlikely.

In accordance with 17 Ill. Adm. Code 1075.40(h), please notify the Department of your decision regarding these recommendations.

Consultation on the part of the Department is closed, unless the applicant desires additional information or advice related to this proposal. Consultation for Part 1075 is valid for two years unless new information becomes available which was not previously considered; the proposed action is modified; or additional species, essential habitat, or Natural Areas are identified in the vicinity. If the action 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 reflects the information existing in the Illinois Natural Heritage Database at the time of the project submittal and should not be regarded as a final statement on the project being considered, nor should it be a substitute for detailed site surveys or field surveys required for environmental assessments. If additional protected resources are unexpectedly encountered during the project's implementation, the applicant must comply with the applicable statutes and regulations.

This letter does not serve as permission to take any listed or endangered species. As a reminder, no take of an endangered species is permitted without an Incidental Take Authorization or the required permits. Anyone who takes a listed or endangered species without an Incidental Take Authorization or required permit may be subject to criminal and/or civil penalties pursuant to the *Illinois Endangered Species Act*, the *Fish and Aquatic Life Act*, the *Wildlife Code* and other applicable authority.

The Department also offers the following conservation measures be considered to help protect native wildlife and enhance natural areas in the project vicinity:

- The Department strongly recommends that the project proponent establish pollinator-friendly habitat as groundcover wherever feasible. Solar Site Pollinator Establishment Guidelines can be found here:
<https://dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/pollinatorscorecard.html>
- The site should be de-compacted before planting.
- Long term management of the site should be planned for prior to development to ensure successful native pollinator habitat establishment and prevent the spread of invasive species throughout the lifetime of this project. An experienced ecological management consultant should be hired to assist with long-term management.
- Required fencing, excluding areas near or adjacent to public access areas, should have a 6-inch gap along the bottom to prevent the restriction of wildlife movement. Woven wire or a suitable habitat wildlife friendly fence should be used. Barbed wire should be avoided.
- If tree clearing is necessary, the Department recommends removing trees between November 1st and March 31st to avoid impacts to the state-listed bats and birds.
- Any required night lighting should follow International Dark-Sky Association's (IDA) Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting to minimize the effect of light pollution on wildlife: Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting | DarkSky International

Please contact Isabella Newingham (Isabella.newingham@illinois.gov) with any questions about this review.

Sincerely,



Bradley Hayes
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Division of Real Estate Services and Consultation
Office of Realty & Capital Planning
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702
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Applicant: SCI ENGINEERING, INC.
Contact: Michael Holm
Address: 650 Pierce Blvd
O'Fallon, IL 62269

IDNR Project Number: 2509418
Date: 02/11/2025

Project: Woodstock Community Energy Initiative LLC Solar Project
Address: South of Highway 14 and north of Kishwaukee Valley Road, Woodstock

Description: Proposed construction of a new solar development with associated access roads and infrastructure.

Natural Resource Review Results

Consultation for Endangered Species Protection and Natural Areas Preservation (Part 1075)

The Illinois Natural Heritage Database shows the following protected resources may be in the vicinity of the project location:

- West Woodstock Prairie INAI Site
- Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)
- Rusty Patched Bumble Bee (*Bombus affinis*)

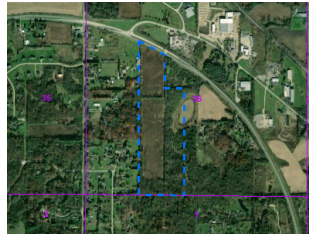
An IDNR staff member will evaluate this information and contact you to request additional information or to terminate consultation if adverse effects are unlikely.

Location

The applicant is responsible for the accuracy of the location submitted for the project.

County: McHenry

Township, Range, Section:
45N, 6E, 36



IL Department of Natural Resources
Contact
Isabella Newingham
217-785-5500
Division of Ecosystems & Environment

Government Jurisdiction
IL Environmental Protection Agency
Division of Water Pollution Control
PO Box 19276
Springfield, Illinois 62794 -9276

Disclaimer

The Illinois Natural Heritage Database cannot provide a conclusive statement on the presence, absence, or condition of natural resources in Illinois. This review reflects the information existing in the Database at the time of this inquiry, 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, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations is required.

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