



## State of Wisconsin | DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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May 31, 2007

Chuck Whiting  
Administrative Coordinator, St. Croix County  
1101 Carmichael Rd  
Hudson, WI 54106

SUBJECT: Endangered Resources Information Review (Log Number 07-099)  
Proposed Sale or Development of County Land at 1101 Carmichael Road

Dear Mr. Whiting:

Thank you for contacting us to request information regarding rare species on your property. The Bureau of Endangered Resources has reviewed the project area described in your letter of April 24 for the proposed sale or development of 82 acres of county land at 1101 Carmichael Road.

Our Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) data files contain information on the following rare species for the project site located in T29N R19W, Section 19 in St. Croix County. In addition to the actual project site, I am providing endangered resource information for an area within one mile of the project's location (within two miles for aquatic species.) This information is provided so impacts to nearby endangered resources can be assessed and to assist in determining if rare species may occur in the project's impact area when appropriate habitat exists. If the described habitat types occur in the project's impact area, then species that occur nearby may be present. The species information provided includes information useful in planning protection measures. Rare species occurring within or near the project site include:

Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), a bird listed as Endangered in Wisconsin, prefers open country with scattered trees and shrubs (usually hawthorne and red cedar), and edge habitat such as open areas in forests. The breeding season extends from early April to late July.

Regal fritillary (*Speyeria idalia*), a butterfly presently listed as Endangered in Wisconsin and a Federal Species of Concern, has been found in large grassland areas with tallgrass prairie remnants or lightly grazed pasture lands containing prairie vegetation. The larval food plants are violets, primarily prairie violet (*Viola pedatifida*), birdsfoot violet (*V. pedata*) and arrowleaf violet (*V. sagittata*). Adults are present between late June and early September with peak flight usually the first part of July.

Melissa blue (*Lycaeides melissa* *Melissa*), a State Special Concern butterfly, is found in open grassland areas, including weedy situations. Melissas use a variety of hostplants: many legumes including lupine, alfalfa and wild licorice. Adults are present probably in late May when they may be confused with Karner blues, and in late summer.

There are also multiple rare fish, mussels and other invertebrates that occur in the St. Croix River.

In addition to the above information, our data files also contain historical records (records 25 years or older) of rare species known to occur within the vicinity of the project site. Unfortunately, the Bureau does not have more current survey information documenting the continued existence of these species in

the area. I am including these older records as an indication of species which may occur in the project area if appropriate habitat still exists:

Dotted blazing star (*Liatris punctata* var. *nebraskana*), a plant listed as Endangered in Wisconsin, prefers sandy and gravelly prairies, and is often found on roadsides. Wisconsin is on the eastern edge of this plant's range. Blooming occurs from early July through late August. Optimal identification period is from mid-July to late August.

A Tiger Beetle (*Cicindela patruela patruela*), a State Special Concern beetle, has been found in semi open pine/oak barrens, jack and red pine stands with open areas on sandy soil, sandy firelanes or trails. Understory usually dominated by *Vaccinium*, bracken fern, and with a ground cover of moss patches. Optimal identification period is in the spring/fall with diminished numbers in mid summer.

Special Concern species are species about which some problem of abundance or distribution is suspected but not yet proved. The main purpose of this category is to focus attention on certain species before they become endangered or threatened.

### **Recommendations**

1. Dotted blazing stars were historically present in this area, and are known to occur on nearby sites. Rare plants are protected by law on publicly owned property. From your letter, it is not clear whether you know if this species is currently present on site. If prairie habitat occurs on the property and plant surveys have not already been conducted for this (and possibly other) rare prairie plants, we recommend that surveys be conducted during the optimum identification period to document the number and location of rare prairie plants on site, including the dotted blazing star. The consultant conducting the surveys must be a qualified biologist able to identify this and other rare prairie plants in the region. Please contact us if you need information about survey methodologies or area consultants who would be qualified to perform these surveys.
2. Regal fritillaries and Melissa blue butterflies are known to occur in nearby areas. It appears that there may be appropriate habitat on site for both species. We recommend initially that a habitat assessment should be conducted to determine if host plants are present on site. If one or more host plants for each species are present on site, surveys should be conducted during the peak flight periods to determine if the butterflies are present on site. The consultant conducting the habitat assessments must be a qualified biologist able to identify the host plants used by these butterflies. The consultant conducting the butterfly surveys must be a qualified biologist familiar with the ecology and field identification of the butterflies listed above. Please contact us if you need information about survey methodologies or area consultants who would be qualified to perform these surveys.
3. Loggerhead shrikes are known from nearby sites, and it appears that there may be suitable habitat for loggerhead shrikes on this property. To avoid harming this and other rare grassland birds and their nests, all disturbances in areas which might be currently providing habitat for these species (including mowing, clearing of grass, trees or shrubs), should occur during mid August through March to avoid the breeding season for this species. If this time of year restriction is not possible, we recommend that surveys for loggerhead shrikes as well as other rare grassland birds be conducted to determine avoidance measures necessary for the species present on the property.
4. Because of the sensitive nature of the St. Croix River, we recommend using strict erosion and siltation controls during the entire construction period. This will help to protect the rare aquatic

species associated with the St. Croix River. This process would also include stabilizing the disturbed areas after the construction period ends.

5. If the site includes areas which may provide habitat for the rare beetle listed above, please contact me to discuss possible survey methodologies and measures that could be used to avoid impacts to the species.
6. Please submit all survey results to me at the Bureau of Endangered Resources. Our staff biologists will review the results, and we will then work with you (or other parties in the future) to identify ways in which we can avoid negatively impacting these rare species.

Comprehensive endangered resource surveys have not been completed for the project area. As a result, our data files may be incomplete. The lack of additional known occurrences does not preclude the possibility that other endangered resources may be present.

The specific location of endangered resources is sensitive information that has been provided to you for the analysis and review of this project. Exact locations should not be released or reproduced in any publicly disseminated documents.

**This letter is for informational purposes and only addresses endangered resource issues. This letter does not constitute Department of Natural Resources authorization of the project and does not exempt the project from securing necessary permits and approvals from the Department.**

Please give me a call at (608) 264-6057 if you have any questions about this information.

Sincerely,



Sarah Carter  
Environmental Review Specialist

cc: Armund Bartz - WCR/La Crosse

## **WiDNR Endangered Resources Information Review (05/31/07):**

**Purpose of review – determine if species\habit exists and assist in planning protection measures**

- **WiDNR looked at data files of site and area within 1-2 miles of site**
- **Evaluated whether species and\or habitat exists in or near site**

**WiDNR data files show Rare Species on or near site include:**

- **Loggerhead Shrike, a grassland bird listed as endangered in Wisconsin**
- **Regal fritillary, a butterfly listed as endangered in Wisconsin**
- **Melissa Blue, a butterfly listed as of State Special Concern**
- **Multiple rare fish, mussels, invertebrates in St. Croix River**

**WiDNR data files show Rare Species known to exist with vicinity 25 or more years ago**

- **Dotted blazing star, a Liatris plant listed as endangered in Wisconsin**
- **Tiger Beetle, a State Special Concern beetle**

### **WiDNR Recommendations:**

**All surveys must be done by a “qualified biologist”; survey methods and biologist lists available from WiDNR.**

- **Dotted blazing star – survey for presence in July-August**
- **Regal fritillaries and Melissa Blue butterflies – survey habitat for plants, if present, survey for butterflies during peak flight periods (Regals in early July; Blues in late May)**
- **Loggerhead Shrike – if present, no grass and shrub disturbances during April through mid August; or additional surveys to determine avoidance measures**
- **Tiger Beetle - survey for habitat, if found, contact WiDNR for avoidance measures.**
- **Erosion and siltation controls during entire construction period**