

Permit application No.	Applicant	Species	Location	Activity	Type of take	Permit action
PER9604902-0	Kaitlyn Torrey; Woodstock, GA.	Indiana bat (<i>Myotis sodalis</i>), gray bat (<i>Myotis grisescens</i>), northern long-eared bat (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>), and tricolored bat (<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>).	Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.	Presence/probable absence surveys.	Capture, handle, identify, band, radio tag, and release.	New
PER9605390-0	Amanda Rosenberger; Cookeville, TN.	Chucky madtom (<i>Noturus crypticus</i>) and 53 species of freshwater mussels.	Tennessee and Virginia.	Presence/probable absence surveys and scientific research.	Fishes: capture, handle, identify, swab, fin clip, and release; Mussels: capture, handle, identify, release, and salvage relic shells.	New

Public Availability of Comments

Written comments we receive become part of the administrative record associated with this action. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public disclosure in their entirety.

Next Steps

After the comment period closes, we will make decisions regarding permit issuance. If we issue permits to any of the applicants listed above in this notice, we will publish a subsequent notice in the **Federal Register**. You may locate the notice announcing the permit issuance by searching <https://www.regulations.gov> for the application number listed above in this document.

Type in your search exactly as the application number appears above, with spaces and hyphens as necessary. For example, to find information about the potential issuance of Permit No. PER 1234567-0, you would go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and put “PER 1234567-0” in the Search field.

Authority

We publish this notice under section 10(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Sean Blomquist,

Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, Southeast Region.

[FR Doc. 2024-09347 Filed 4-30-24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4333-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[Docket No. FWS-R3-ES-2023-0248; FXES11140300000-245-FF03E00000]

Receipt of Incidental Take Permit Application and Proposed Habitat Conservation Plan for the Sweet Acres Wind Project, White County, IN; Categorical Exclusion

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability of documents; request for comment and information.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, have received an application from Indiana Crossroads Wind Farm II LLC (applicant), for an incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act, for its Sweet Acres Wind Project (project). If approved, the ITP would be for a 6-year period and would authorize the incidental take of the federally endangered Indiana bat, the federally endangered northern long-eared bat, and the tricolored bat and little brown bat, both of which are proposed for listing. The applicant has prepared a habitat conservation plan in support of the application. We request public comment on the application, which includes the applicant’s proposed habitat conservation plan (HCP), and on the Service’s preliminary determination that the proposed permitting action may be eligible for a categorical exclusion pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality’s National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations, the Department of the Interior’s (DOI) NEPA regulations, and the DOI Departmental Manual. To make this preliminary determination, we prepared a draft environmental action

statement and low-effect screening form, both of which are also available for public review. We invite comment from the public and local, State, Tribal, and Federal agencies.

DATES: We must receive your written comments on or before May 31, 2024.

ADDRESSES:

Obtaining Documents: The documents this notice announces, as well as any comments and other materials that we receive, will be available for public inspection online in Docket No. FWS-R3-ES-2023-0248 at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

Submitting Comments: If you wish to submit comments on any of the documents, you may do so in writing by one of the following methods:

- *Online:* <https://www.regulations.gov>.

Follow the instructions for submitting comments on Docket No. FWS-R3-ES-2023-0248.

- *U.S. mail:* Public Comments

Processing, Attn: Docket No. FWS-R3-ES-2023-0248; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: PRB/3W; Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Susan Cooper, Field Supervisor, Indiana Ecological Services Field Office, by email at susan_cooper@fws.gov or by telephone at 812-334-4261, extension 214; or Andrew Horton, Regional HCP Coordinator, by email at andrew_horton@fws.gov or by telephone at 612-713-5337. Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), have received an application from Indiana Crossroads II Wind Farm LLC (applicant) for a 6-year incidental take permit (ITP) under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). The applicant requests the ITP to take the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), both federally listed as endangered, and the proposed as endangered tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) and little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), being considered for listing. Take would be incidental to the operation of 42 wind turbines, with a total generating capacity of 201.6 megawatts (MW), at the Sweet Acres Wind Project in White County, Indiana. While the ITP would be for 6 years, the operational life of most new wind

energy facilities is 30 years; therefore, intensive monitoring conducted during the 6-year permit term would inform the need for future avoidance or a future new or revised long-term ITP for the remaining life of the project that would comply with a new NEPA analysis and habitat conservation plan (HCP). The applicant has prepared an HCP that describes the actions and measures that the applicant would implement to avoid, minimize, and mitigate incidental take of the covered species for the first 6 years.

We request public comment on the application, which includes the applicant's proposed HCP, and on the Service's preliminary determination that this HCP qualifies as "low effect," and may qualify for a categorical exclusion pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (40 CFR 1501.4), the Department of the Interior's (DOI) NEPA regulations (43 CFR 46), and the DOI's Departmental Manual (516 DM 8.5(C)(2)). To make this preliminary determination, we prepared a draft environmental action statement and low-effect screening form, both of which are also available for public review.

Background

Section 9 of the ESA and its implementing regulations prohibit the "take" of animal species listed as endangered or threatened. Take is defined under the ESA as to "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect [listed animal species], or to attempt to engage in any such conduct" (16 U.S.C. 1532). However, under section 10(a) of the ESA, we may issue permits to authorize incidental take of listed species. "Incidental take" is defined by the ESA as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, carrying out an otherwise lawful activity (16 U.S.C. 1539). Regulations governing incidental take permits for endangered and threatened species, respectively, are found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 50 CFR 17.22 and 50 CFR 17.32.

Applicant's Proposed Project

The applicant requests a 6-year ITP to take the federally endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), federally endangered northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), proposed endangered tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) and under discretionary review, the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*). The applicant determined that take is reasonably certain to occur incidental to operation of 42 previously constructed wind turbines in White

County, Indiana, covering approximately 11,646 hectares (28,778 acres) of private land. The proposed conservation strategy in the applicant's proposed HCP is designed to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impacts of the covered activity on the covered species. The biological goals and objectives are to minimize potential take of covered bat species through on-site minimization measures and to provide habitat conservation measures to offset any impacts from project operations. The HCP provides on-site avoidance and minimization measures, which include turbine operational adjustments. The authorized level of take from the project is 18 Indiana bats, 2 northern long-eared bats, 18 tricolored bats, and 18 little brown bats bat over the 6-year permit duration. To offset the impacts of the taking of the species, the applicant will implement one or more of the following mitigation options:

- Purchase credits from an approved conservation bank;
- Contribute to an in-lieu fee mitigation fund;
- Implement a permittee-responsible mitigation project; or
- Contribute to a white-nose syndrome treatment fund.

National Environmental Policy Act

The issuance of an ITP is a Federal action that triggers the need for compliance with NEPA. The Service has made a preliminary determination that the applicant's proposed project, and the proposed mitigation measures, would individually and cumulatively have a minor effect on the covered species and the human environment. Therefore, we have preliminarily determined that the proposed ESA section 10(a)(1)(B) permit would be a low-effect ITP that individually or cumulatively would have a minor effect on the species and may qualify for application of a categorical exclusion pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA regulations, DOI's NEPA regulations, and the DOI Departmental Manual. A low-effect ITP is one that would result in (1) minor or nonsignificant effects on species covered in the HCP; (2) nonsignificant effects on the human environment; and (3) impacts that, when added together with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions, would not result in significant cumulative effects to the human environment.

Next Steps

The Service will evaluate the application and the comments received to determine whether to issue the

requested ITP. We will also conduct an intra-Service consultation pursuant to section 7 of the ESA to evaluate the effects of the proposed take. After considering the preceding and other matters, we will determine whether the permit issuance criteria of section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA have been met. If met, the Service will issue the requested ITP to the applicant.

Request for Public Comments

The Service invites comments and suggestions from all interested parties on the proposed HCP and screening form during a 30-day public comment period (see **DATES**). In particular, information and comments regarding the following topics are requested:

1. Whether the adaptive management, monitoring, and mitigation provisions in the proposed HCP are sufficient;
2. The requested 6-year ITP term;
3. Any threats to the covered bat species that may influence their populations over the life of the ITP that are not addressed in the proposed HCP or screening form;
4. Any new information on white-nose syndrome effects on covered bat species;
5. Whether or not the significance of the impact on various aspects of the human environment has been adequately analyzed; and
6. Any other information pertinent to evaluating the effects of the proposed action on the human environment.

Availability of Public Comments

You may submit comments by one of the methods shown under **ADDRESSES**. We will post on <https://regulations.gov> all public comments and information received electronically or via hardcopy. All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the administrative record associated with this action. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can request in your comment that we withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public disclosure in their entirety.

Authority

We provide this notice under section 10(c) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1539) and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 17.22) and NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR 1500–1508; 43 CFR part 46).

Karen Herrington,

Acting Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services.

[FR Doc. 2024–09349 Filed 4–30–24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Geological Survey

[GX.24.DJ73.V3410.00; OMB Control Number 1028–NEW]

Vulnerability to Water Insecurity, Hazards Planning and Response

AGENCY: U.S. Geological Survey, Department of Interior.

ACTION: Notice of information collection; request for comment.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is proposing a new information collection.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before May 31, 2024.

ADDRESSES: Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. Find this particular information collection by selecting “Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments” or by using the search function. Send your comments on this information collection request (ICR) by mail to U.S. Geological Survey, Information Collections Officer, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, MS 159, Reston, VA 20192; or by email to gs-info_collections@usgs.gov. Please reference OMB Control Number 1028–NEW—Water Insecurity in the subject line of your comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request additional information about this Information Collection Request (ICR), contact Jennifer Rapp by email at jrapp@usgs.gov, or by telephone at 804–261–2635. You may also view the ICR at <http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain>. Individuals who are hearing or speech impaired may call the Federal Relay Service at 1–800–877–8339 for TTY assistance.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with the PRA (44 U.S.C.

3501 *et seq.*) and 5 CFR 1320.8(d)(1), we provide the general public and other federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on new, proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public’s reporting burden. It also helps the public understand our information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format.

A **Federal Register** notice with a 60-day public comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on September 2, 2022 (87 FR 54240). No comments were received.

As part of our continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burdens, we are again soliciting comments from the public and other federal agencies on the proposed ICR that is described below. We are especially interested in public comment addressing the following:

- (1) Whether or not the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether or not the information will have practical utility;
- (2) The accuracy of our estimate of the burden for this collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- (3) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- (4) How the agency might minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, *e.g.*, permitting electronic submission of response.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifiable information (PII) in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your PII—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your PII from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Abstract: The United States is facing growing challenges related to the availability and quality of water due to shifting demographics, aging water delivery infrastructure, the impacts of climate change, and increasing hazards risk, like floods and drought. Working with incomplete knowledge, managers must consider the needs of various