



**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources**  
**Division of Ecological & Water Resources**  
**500 Lafayette Road, Box 25**  
**St. Paul, MN 55155-4025**

May 9, 2017

**Correspondence # ERDB 20170391**

Mr. Kevin Zytkevich  
MN DNR Ecological & Water Resources  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Natural Heritage Review of the proposed Gorman Creek and Tributary Restoration,

Wabasha County – T.109N, R.11W, S. 1; T.110N, R.11W, S.36

Dear Mr. Zytkevich,

As requested, the Minnesota Natural Heritage Information System has been queried to determine if any rare species or other significant natural features are known to occur within an approximate one-mile radius of the proposed project. Based on this query, rare features have been documented within the search area (for details, please visit the Rare Species Guide at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rsg/index.html> for more information on the biology, habitat use, and conservation measures of these rare species). Please note that the following rare features may be adversely affected by the proposed project:

*Ecologically Significant Areas*

- The Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) has identified a Site of *Moderate* Biodiversity Significance adjacent to the proposed project area (see attached map). Sites of Biodiversity Significance have varying levels of native biodiversity and are ranked based on the relative significance of this biodiversity at a statewide level. Sites ranked as *Moderate* contain occurrences of rare species and/or moderately disturbed native plant communities, and/or landscapes that have a strong potential for recovery. Indirect impacts, such as surface runoff and the spread of invasive species, should be considered during project design and implementation.

*State-listed Species*

- Timber rattlesnakes (*Crotalus horridus*), a state-listed threatened species, and North American racer (*Coluber constrictor*), a state-listed species of special concern, have been documented in the vicinity of the project area. Timber rattlesnakes are protected by Minnesota's Endangered Species Law and associated rules. Crews working in the area should be advised that if they encounter any snakes, the

snakes should not be disturbed. Given the presence of these rare species, the use of erosion control mesh should be limited to wildlife-friendly materials (see enclosed fact sheet).

- Wood turtles (*Clemmys insculpta*) and Blanding's turtles (*Emydoidea blandingii*), both state-listed threatened species, have been documented in the vicinity of the proposed project and may be encountered on site. Please see the attached fact sheets for recommendations on avoiding and minimizing impacts to these rare turtles.
- For further assistance in minimizing potential impacts to the above state-listed species, please consult with Jaime Edwards, the Regional Nongame Specialist.

#### *Environmental Review and Permitting*

- The Environmental Assessment Worksheet should address whether the proposed project has the potential to adversely affect the above rare features and, if so, it should identify specific measures that will be taken to avoid or minimize disturbance.
- Please include a copy of this letter in any state or local license or permit application. Please note that measures to avoid or minimize disturbance to the above rare features may be included as restrictions or conditions in any required permits or licenses.

The Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS), a collection of databases that contains information about Minnesota's rare natural features, is maintained by the Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Department of Natural Resources. The NHIS is continually updated as new information becomes available, and is the most complete source of data on Minnesota's rare or otherwise significant species, native plant communities, and other natural features. However, the NHIS is not an exhaustive inventory and thus does not represent all of the occurrences of rare features within the state. Therefore, ecologically significant features for which we have no records may exist within the project area. If additional information becomes available regarding rare features in the vicinity of the project, further review may be necessary.

For environmental review purposes, the results of this Natural Heritage Review are valid for one year; the results are only valid for the project location (noted above) and the project description provided on the NHIS Data Request Form. Please contact me if project details change or for an updated review if construction has not occurred within one year.

The Natural Heritage Review does not constitute review or approval by the Department of Natural Resources as a whole. Instead, it identifies issues regarding known occurrences of rare features and potential effects to these rare features. If you have not done so already, please contact your DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist to determine whether there are other natural resource concerns associated with the proposed project (contact information available at [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/ereview/erp\\_regioncontacts.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/ereview/erp_regioncontacts.html)). Please be aware that additional site assessments or review may be required. Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samantha Bump". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a dashed rectangular border.

Samantha Bump

[Samantha.Bump@state.mn.us](mailto:Samantha.Bump@state.mn.us)

Enc. Wildlife Friendly Erosion Control  
Wood Turtle Fact Sheet  
Blanding's Turtle Fact Sheet & Flyer

Cc: Becky Horton  
Leslie Parris  
Jaime Edwards