

Dept. of Natural Resources: Incidental take notice for Juneau County

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Incidental Take Notice For Juneau County

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) proposes to issue a permit for the incidental taking of a rare snake, which may result from the Cranberry Creek and Wisconsin River Power Company (WRPCO) ditch maintenance project. Incidental take refers to the unintentional loss of individual endangered or threatened animals or plants that does not put the species' overall population at risk.

Cranberry Creek Cranberries, Inc., proposes to conduct maintenance on a Wisconsin River Power Company (WRPCO) ditch and a portion of Cranberry Creek in Juneau County. WRPCO constructed a network of drainage ditches to alleviate groundwater flooding that resulted from damming the Wisconsin River to create the Petenwell Flowage in the 1930s.

Restricted flow in several ditches resulting from years of accumulated down trees and the formation of sand deposits has negatively impacted landowners within the drainage area, including the flooding of residential basements and a small rural cemetery. Cranberry Creek Cranberries, Inc., has difficulty moving water off their

cranberry beds that discharge water into the WRPCO ditch during periods of peak flow.

The presence of the state endangered eastern massasauga is confirmed in the vicinity of the project site. DNR staff determined that the proposed project may result in the incidental taking of some snakes. The eastern massasauga is also a federally threatened species, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has already approved the project.

The DNR concludes that the proposed project is not likely to appreciably reduce the likelihood of the survival or recovery of the species within the state, the whole plant-animal community of which it is a part of or the habitat that is critical to its existence.

Conservation measures to minimize the adverse effect on the endangered species will be incorporated into the proposed Incidental Take Permit. Copies of the jeopardy assessment and background information on the eastern massasauga are available by visiting the [DNR Incidental Take Public Notices webpage](#) or upon request from DNR Conservation Biologist Rori Paloski at 608-516-3742 or rori.paloski@wi.gov.

The public is encouraged to submit written comments regarding project-related impacts to the eastern massasauga by Sept. 9, 2021 to:

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