

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

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) proposes to issue an authorization for the incidental taking of a rare plant, which may result from the I-41 Expansion 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.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's project involves converting I-41 from a four to a six-lane configuration. The expansion would be approximately 23 miles long and run from WIS 96 in Appleton to County F in De Pere. The project includes one system interchange (between I-41 and WIS 441) and 10 service interchanges within the project limits (including limited ramp work at the WIS 96 and WIS 441/OO Interchanges). The project would also construct a new service interchange at I-41 and Southbridge Road.

A new on-ramp at the WIS 15/County OO interchange will run through an area of southern mesic forest. In this area, there were 11 clusters of handsome sedge identified. Cluster 10 is located in a small patch of suitable habitat that would likely be permanently impacted by the service interchange.

The presence of the state-threatened handsome sedge is confirmed in the vicinity of the project site. DNR staff determined that the proposed project may result in the incidental taking of some plants.

The DNR concludes that the proposed project will minimize the impacts to the species by adhering to conservation measures; is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence and recovery of the state population of the species or the whole plant-animal community of which it is a part; and has benefit to the public health, safety or welfare that justifies the action.

Conservation measures to minimize the adverse effect on the threatened species will be incorporated into the proposed Incidental Take Authorization. Copies of the jeopardy assessment and background information on handsome sedge are available by visiting the [DNR Incidental Take Public Notices webpage](#) or upon request from DNR Conservation Biologist Stacy Rowe at 608-228-9796 or Stacy.Rowe@wisconsin.gov.

The public is encouraged to submit written comments regarding project-related impacts to the handsome sedge by April 16, 2023 to:

Department of Natural Resources
c/o Stacy Rowe, DNR Conservation Biologist
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Janesville, WI 53545
Stacy.Rowe@wisconsin.gov or 608-228-9796