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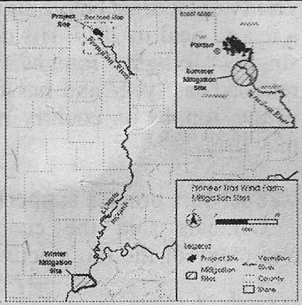
Public Notices 599

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SECTION TO PAXTON,
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CENTRAL RAILROAD,
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OF PAXTON, COUNTY
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pioneer Trail Wind Farm, LLC (PTWF) has applied to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for Incidental Take Authorization related to the operation of its Pioneer Trail Wind Farm, a state-of-the-art wind energy facility located in Iroquois and Ford counties, Illinois; just east of the towns of Paxton and Loda, Illinois. The accompanying map shows the location of the wind farm and the areas where mitigation activities may occur. PTWF's mailing address is:
Pioneer Trail Wind Farm, LLC
c/o E.ON Climate & Renewables
353 N. Clark, 30th Floor
Chicago, IL 60654



Turbine operation is the only activity that is expected to result in mortality of Indiana and northern long-eared bats. The northern long-eared bat is not currently protected under the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act (IESPA). However, on April 2, 2015 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a final rule listing the species as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. That rule becomes effective on May 4, 2015, and thus, the species will automatically be listed under the IESPA on that date. PTWF is requesting authorization to take up to 129 Indiana bats and up to 96 northern long-eared bats over the 43-year life of the project, based on an expected average take of 3 Indiana bats and 2 northern long-eared bats per calendar year. Take in the form of temporary harassment and disturbance of individual bats may also occur during project maintenance and the implementation of mitigation measures. However, the impact of this harassment and disturbance on both species is expected to be negligible. PTWF has prepared a Conservation Plan for public viewing, which outlines measures to minimize and mitigate the effects of the project on Indiana bats and northern long-eared bats. These include:

1. Avoiding any direct impacts on summer maternity habitat by relocating turbines
2. Raising cut-in speeds (i.e. the wind speed at which turbines begin generating power and sending it to the grid) from 7.8 mph (3.5 m/s) to 11.2 mph (5.0 m/s) from sunset to sunrise when the ambient temperature is above 50° F from 15 August through 15 October based on a rolling 10 minute average.
3. Feathering turbine blades below the manufacturer's rated cut-in speed of 7.8 mph (3.5 m/s) for the remainder of the year to minimize turbine rotation when power is not being generated.
4. Completing summer habitat and winter habitat mitigation projects that would compensate for 315 female Indiana bats and 125 female northern long-eared bats. Mitigation will be accomplished through installing a gate at Griffiths Cave and restoring or preserving a minimum of 206 acres of summer habitat in the Vermillion River watershed.
5. Implementing a post-construction monitoring plan over the life of the project that provides a means of ensuring compliance with the take authorization in the HCP.
6. Implementing an adaptive management process that will allow PTWF to adjust cut-in speeds if monitoring results indicate that the conservation measures outlined in the HCP are not having the desired effects.

A copy of the conservation plan can be found at the following locations:

- Paxton Carnegie Library
254 S Market St
Paxton, Ford County, IL 60957
- A. Herr Smith & E. E. Smith Library
105 E. Adams
Loda, Iroquois County, IL 60948

Comments on the conservation plan should be directed to Jenny Skufca, Endangered Species Project Manager, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702, (217) 557-8243, or by email to Jenny.Skufca@illinois.gov.

This notice is being published in the Breeze Courier on April 15, 2015 and 3 times in the Paxton Record beginning on April 15, 2015. The comment period closes 30 days after the final publication of this notice in the Paxton Record. Final publication is scheduled for April 29, 2015. The deadline for receipt of comments is May 29, 2015.