

Conservation Plan for the Little Spectaclecase (*Villosa Lienosa*) at Brouilletts Creek

1. **Description of the impact likely to result from the proposed taking**
 - A. **Legal description of the project area**

Specific locality information for this project site has been taken from the Chrisman, Illinois (7.5' series, 1966 edition; NAD 1927) U.S. Geological Survey topographic quadrangle map (all coordinates to north edge of bridge). UTM = Universal Transverse Mercator System.

Illinois, Edgar County, Brouilletts Creek, 1.8 mi. WSW Chrisman, at the U.S. Route 36/FAP 323 bridge (1.8 miles west of intersection with Illinois Route 1, where the creek flows in a southeasterly direction as it crosses under the bridge). 2nd Principal Meridian: Township 16 North, Range 12 West, SE ¼, SE ¼, Section 33. Latitude: 39.7924° North, longitude: 087.7111° West. UTM coordinates: Zone 16,049115 m East, 4404745 M North. Elevation (M.S.L.): 610'.
 - B. **Biological Data**

Although historically widespread in the lower Midwest and south, few extant populations are known in the northern part of its range. Almost no information is available on the life-history of this animal. Age and growth data are unknown. It probably lives about 10 year maximum. The larvae (glochidia) of freshwater mussels are obligate parasites on fishes. The fish host of the little spectaclecase is unknown.
 - C. **Habitat description of activities that will result in take.**

Brouilletts Creek at the U.S. 36 bridge number 023-0008 was approximately 60 feet in width with depths ranging from 1.3 – 1.6 feet. The little spectaclecase is typically found in small to medium-sized streams in sand or gravel. The construction associated with the replacement of the bridge over Brouilletts Creek at U.S. 36 will likely result in the take of Little Spectaclecase in the area of the structure construction.
 - D. **Explanation of the anticipated adverse effects on the listed species.**

If not relocated, mussels would likely be buried or otherwise crushed or killed by construction activities. It will be impossible to relocate all mussels in the area so some take will likely occur.

2. **Measures the applicant will take to minimize and mitigate that impact**

- A. **Plans to minimize the area affected by the proposed action, the number of individuals of an endangered or threatened species that will be taken, and the amount of habitat affected.**

Before construction begins, INHS representatives should relocate any Little Spectaclecase mussels located in the immediate vicinity of the structure (existing right-of-way) to a suitable habitat elsewhere in Brouilletts Creek. Construction activity will be limited to the existing right-of-way.

- B. **Plans for management of the area affected by the proposed action that will allow continued use of the area by the species.**

If measures are taken to minimize substrate disturbance in the area around the bridge, mussels should move back into the area over time.

- C. **Description of all measures to be implemented to minimize or mitigate the effects of the proposed action on the endangered or threatened species.**

The Little Spectaclecase mussels will be moved from their locations within existing right-of-way to a suitable habitat within Brouilletts Creek. This will prevent the mussels from being affected by construction activity involved in the structure replacement.

- D. **Plans for monitoring the effects of the measures implemented.**

It is the recommendation of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (Department), that IDOT conduct, or cause to be conducted, a thorough survey of the construction area (within existing right-of-way) for freshwater mussels in the second and fifth year following completion of bridge construction. "Completion" shall be defined as the date the bridge is officially open for public use. Freshwater mussels located within the construction right-of-way shall be identified to species and enumerated and the length of each mussel shall be measured to the nearest millimeter. Handling of mussels shall be in compliance with any and all conditions and/or protocols included in the State and/or Federal authorizations for this work. A report on the species, numbers, and sizes of mussels found shall be provided to the Department within 60 days of the completion of each survey. Each report shall also include a qualitative evaluation of the habitat for freshwater mussels being provided by the construction right-of-way area and the manner in which that habitat has changed since the previous survey.

- E. Projected cost of each measure that will minimize or mitigate the effects of proposed action on endangered or threatened species.**

The estimated cost of the preferred bridge replacement alternative is 548,100 dollars.

- F. Adaptive management practices that will be used to deal with changed or unforeseen circumstances that affect the effectiveness of measures instituted to minimize or mitigate the effects of the proposed action on endangered or threatened species.**

Due to the nature of the project, IDOT does not anticipate any changed or unforeseen circumstances. The bridge replacement will be completed and no additional work will be necessary afterwards.

- B. The obligations and responsibilities of each of the identified participants with schedules and deadlines for completion of activities in the conversation plan and a schedule for preparation of progress report to be provided to the Department.**

The Illinois Natural History Survey will have duties of surveying for threatened or endangered mussels and moving the Little Spectaclecase away from the project location. Post construction the INHS will examine Brouillets Creek for colonization by Little Spectaclecase mussels.

The Illinois Department of Transportation is responsible for all biological clearance coordination and recommendations related to the project and addresses those items listed under the Incidental Take Notice.

- C. Assurances that each participant in the execution of the conservation plan has the legal authority to carry out their respective obligations and responsibilities under the conservation plan.**

This project is authorized by the Illinois Department of Transportation, which receives funding from Illinois General Assembly and the Federal government in carrying out its programs.

- D. Assurances of compliance with all other federal, state, and local regulations pertinent to the proposed action and to execution of the conservation plans.**

The Illinois Department of Transportation exclusively abides by the National Environmental Policy Act and all associated state and federal environmental laws in carrying out its mission of performing the most environmentally sensitive methods of transportation planning and engineering.

- E. Copies of any federal authorizations for taking already issues to the applicant.**

Not applicable since the Little Spectaclecase mussel (*Villosa lienosa*) is not federally threatened or endangered.

- F. For projects that will result in the taking of endangered or threatened species of plants, copies of expressed written permission of the landowner.**

Not applicable since the Little Spectaclecase mussel (*Villosa lienosa*) is considered an animal under the Illinois Endangered Species Act (ILCS 10/2)

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has applied for Incidental Take authorizations to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Resource Conservation, concerning an Illinois endangered mussel species, the Little Spectaclecase (*Villosa lienosa*).

IDOT mailing address is:

Illinois Department of Transportation
Attn: Mr. Dennis Markwell
13473 IL HWY 133 / P.O. Box 610
Paris, IL 61944-0610

The location of the site that, through IDOT bridge replacement, may impact the Little Spectaclecases inhabiting Brouilletts Creek is Illinois, Edgar County, Brouilletts Creek, 1.8 mi. WSW Chrisman, at the U.S. Route 36/FAP 323 bridge (1.8 miles west of intersection with Illinois Route 1, where the creek flows in a southeasterly direction as it crosses under the bridge). 2nd Principal Meridian: Township 16 North, Range 12 West, SE ¼, SE ¼, Section 33.

The activity of removing and replacing the bridge over Brouilletts Creek may take an undetermined amount of Little Spectaclecases that could still be under or downstream of the bridge.

In addition, in accordance with the IDOT Conservation Plan, Illinois Natural History Survey scientists will visit the site after bridge replacement to determine if Little Spectaclecases have re-colonized the area.

In order to avoid impact to the species, any Little Spectaclecases that are discovered by Illinois Natural History Survey personnel prior to construction will be relocated to other suitable habitat within Brouilletts Creek. The structure design that represents the least impact to aquatic resources and has the greatest public safety will be chosen.

A copy of the Conservation Plan is available for inspection at (1) The Illinois Department of Transportation, 13473 IL HWY 133, Paris, Illinois 61944-0610; 2) Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Division of Resource Protection & Stewardship, Illinois State Fairground, 1 Natural Resources Way, Springfield, Illinois 62702-1272; 3) Chrisman Public Library, 112 S. Illinois, Chrisman, Illinois 61924.

Comments on this proposal should be directed to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Division of Resource Protection & Stewardship, Illinois State Fairground, 1 Natural Resources Way, Springfield, Illinois 62702-1272 to e-mail to endspec@dnrmail.state.il.us.

The comment period closes thirty (30) days after the final publication of this notice that first appears in the Paris Beacon News and the Edwardsville Intelligencer (Official State Newspaper) on January 15, 2003. The final publication is scheduled for January 29, 2003. Therefore the comment period closes on February 28, 2003.

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