
ITEM 4C

**OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES – THREATENED
AND ENDANGERED SPECIES COORDINATION**



Ohio Department of Natural Resources

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November 23, 2015

Tara Buzzelli
Dominion Resources Services, Inc.
320 Springside Drive, Suite 320
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Re: 15-651; The East Ohio Gas Company, Pipeline Infrastructure Replacement (PIR) Program, Ohio Endangered Species Consultation, PIR 789 - Waterworks Hill Road

Project: The proposed project involves the replacement of approximately 3.49 miles (18,411 linear feet) of existing high pressure natural gas pipeline (six [6]-inch, ten [10]-inch, and twelve [12]-inch diameters) under the East Ohio Gas Company's PIR Program.

Location: The proposed project is located in City of Uhrichsville in Mill and Union Townships, Tuscarawas County, Ohio.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) has completed a review of the above referenced project. These comments were generated by an inter-disciplinary review within the Department. These comments have been prepared under the authority of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.), the National Environmental Policy Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, Ohio Revised Code and other applicable laws and regulations. These comments are also based on ODNR's experience as the state natural resource management agency and do not supersede or replace the regulatory authority of any local, state or federal agency nor relieve the applicant of the obligation to comply with any local, state or federal laws or regulations.

Natural Heritage Database: The Natural Heritage Database has the following data at or within a one mile radius of the project area:

Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Federal species of concern
Mussel bed
Great blue heron rookery

We are unaware of any geologic features, scenic rivers, state wildlife areas, nature preserves, parks or forests, national wildlife refuges, parks or forests, or other protected natural areas within the project area. The review was performed on the project area you specified in your request as well as an additional one mile radius. Records searched date from 1980.

Please note that Ohio has not been completely surveyed and we rely on receiving information from many sources. Therefore, a lack of records for any particular area is not a statement that rare species or unique features are absent from that area. Although all types of plant communities have been surveyed, we only maintain records on the highest quality areas.

Fish and Wildlife: The Division of Wildlife (DOW) has the following comments.

The DOW recommends that impacts to streams, wetlands and other water resources be avoided and minimized to the fullest extent possible, and that best management practices be utilized to minimize erosion and sedimentation.

The project is within the range of the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), a state endangered and federally endangered species. The following species of trees have relatively high value as potential Indiana bat roost trees to include: shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*), shellbark hickory (*Carya laciniosa*), bitternut hickory (*Carya cordiformis*), black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), shingle oak (*Quercus imbricaria*), northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), slippery elm (*Ulmus rubra*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), post oak (*Quercus stellata*), and white oak (*Quercus alba*). Indiana bat roost trees consists of trees that include dead and dying trees with exfoliating bark, crevices, or cavities in upland areas or riparian corridors and living trees with exfoliating bark, cavities, or hollow areas formed from broken branches or tops. However, Indiana bats are also dependent on the forest structure surrounding roost trees. If suitable habitat occurs within the project area, the DOW recommends trees be conserved. If suitable habitat occurs within the project area and trees must be cut, the DOW recommends cutting occur between October 1 and March 31. If suitable trees must be cut during the summer months, the DOW recommends a net survey be conducted between June 1 and August 15, prior to any cutting. Net surveys should incorporate either nine net nights per square 0.5 kilometer of project area, or four net nights per kilometer for linear projects. If no tree removal is proposed, this project is not likely to impact this species.

The project is within the range the sheepsnose (*Plethobasus cyphus*), a state endangered and federally endangered mussel, the fanshell (*Cyprogenia stegaria*), a state endangered and federally endangered mussel, the clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*), a state endangered and federally endangered mussel, the long-solid (*Fusconaia maculata maculata*), a state endangered mussel, and the sharp-ridged pocketbook (*Lampsilis ovate*), a state endangered mussel. Due to the location, and that there is no in-water work proposed in a perennial stream of sufficient size, this project is not likely to impact these species.

The project is within the range of the western banded killifish (*Fundulus diaphanus menona*), a state endangered fish, the northern madtom (*Noturus stigmosus*), a state endangered fish, and the mountain madtom (*Noturus eleutherus*), a state threatened fish. The DOW recommends no in-water work in perennial streams from April 15 through June 30 to reduce impacts to indigenous aquatic species and their habitat. If no in-water work is proposed in a perennial stream, this project is not likely to impact these species.

The project is within the range of the eastern hellbender (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis alleganiensis*), a state endangered species and a federal species of concern. Due to the location, and that there is no in-water work proposed in a perennial stream of sufficient size to provide suitable habitat, this project is not likely to impact this species.

The project is within the range of the eastern spadefoot toad (*Scaphiopus holbrookii*), a state endangered species. This species is found in areas of sandy soils that are associated with river valleys. Breeding habitats may include flooded agricultural fields or other water holding depressions. Due to the location, the type of habitat along the project route, and the type of habitat within the vicinity of the project area, and the type of work proposed, this project is not likely to impact this species.

The project is within the range of the northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), a state endangered bird. This is a common migrant and winter species. Nesters are much rarer, although they occasionally breed in large marshes and grasslands. Harriers often nest in loose colonies. The female builds a nest out of sticks on the ground, often on top of a mound. Harriers hunt over grasslands. If this type of habitat will be impacted, construction should be avoided in this habitat during the species' nesting period of May 15 to August 1. If this habitat will not be impacted, the project is not likely to impact this species.

The project is within the range of the black bear (*Ursus americanus*), a state endangered species. Due to the mobility of this species, this project is not likely to impact this species.

Due to the potential of impacts to federally listed species, as well as to state listed species, we recommend that this project be coordinated with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Please contact John Kessler at (614) 265-6621 if you have questions about these comments or need additional information.

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