

# Program Explanation

The Illinois Native Plant Society (INPS) 2020 Survey Grant Program was developed to assess the status of Illinois Endangered and Threatened species through comprehensive field surveys in order to: 1) determine whether populations (Element Occurrences or EOs) are extant; 2) determine whether their listing status warrants change; 3) recommend recovery strategies for extant populations. The reports resulting from these surveys will be shared with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Database, the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board, and with landowners.

## Availability of Funding

Grants are available for up to \$1500 each.

## Eligibility

Any individual or non-profit institution/group, with professional experience conducting botanic field surveys, can apply, with the exception of INPS State Officers and Board members. Only one award will be given to any applicant and applicants are not able to receive both a Survey Grant and a Research Grant. Applications from for-profit groups, or individuals working with for-profit groups, will be considered based on their merits. Of these, for-profit group applications involving partnerships with non-profit groups or individuals will be given preference. Project funds may be used for qualified interns or graduate students. Volunteer or unpaid assistance by qualified individuals may be utilized for the surveys. Each of these assistants, their qualifications, and their tasks must be identified in the application in Section 8A of the application form.

**Survey Categories** (refer to attached [Priority List Spreadsheet](#)):

- 1) **“Existence Surveys”** for those 32 listed species having only 1 to 9 (one with 15) Element Occurrences (EOs; #s 7-11 in the Search Priority EO Data (IDNR) column) which have not been searched for or observed in several to many years. Some or all of these EOs are potentially extirpated from the State. However, populations found to be extant through the Surveys may also have recovery potential.
- 2) **“Recovery Surveys”** for those listed species which are at risk of serious decline in the State but which would benefit from recovery actions. These fall into two sections:
  - Eight listed species targeted by IDNR in 2014 for recovery attention: “Recovery Outlines with Status Review Triggers”
  - 26 listed species recommended for further surveys by the Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee (ESTAC) resulting from the review process for the 2019 State listing (2018-2019)

## Survey Priorities

The [Priority List in Excel format](#) is divided into 3 sections:

- 1) List provided by IDNR (Search Priority EO Data (IDNR) which ranks species according to their survey priorities. The IDNR species ranking from 7-11 in the Survey Grant Priority List are identified as qualifying for “Existence Grants”
- 2) List of eight Endangered and Threatened species for which “[Recovery Outlines with Status Review Triggers](#)” were developed by IDNR staff in 2014. *Silene regia* was removed from the original list because recovery actions have been initiated. These 2014 reports will need EOR updating. The reports also serve as excellent models for the Survey Grant recovery reports.
- 3) List compiled by the Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee (ESTAC) during its deliberations for the 2019 State listing process by the Endangered Species Protection Board. This group includes listed species below the # 7 rank for which additional information is needed to determine change of status. Non-listed species from the ESTAC list are not included in the Survey priorities at this time.

Applicants may choose one or several species from the priority list. Species may be grouped by habitat type or by proximity within a county or region. Species prioritized for existence surveys have not been searched for or observed in many years; they may be extirpated, or they may have gone unnoticed. Either way, the lack of information makes identifying conservation actions difficult. Information on the extirpation or continued existence of these populations will be useful. If populations are found during existence surveys, reports should include information on their estimated viability and recommended recovery actions

Applicants may make a case for species not included on the priority list based on demonstrated need. These applications will be reviewed on their merit.

*To obtain information for updated and full EOR records for your chosen species, contact Natural Heritage Database manager Tara Kieninger (tara.kieninger@illinois.gov) and explain your proposal and the species involved. Upon approval by the Database, applicants will be issued a Data License Agreement. Depending on species chosen, additional information may be made available from botanical researchers.*

### **Grant and Funding Cycle: Submission, Review and Reporting**

- 1) Proposals are due by January 31, 2020, and must include copies of any applicable permit applications for work on public lands or copies of permits already in place. Written permission of private landowners is also required. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Permits must be in place before funding is released. Although multi-year surveys are not encouraged, extensions requested in writing after the first year will be considered.
- 2) Confirmation of receipt of application will be made by email upon submission. Applicants will be notified by March 31, 2020, of the outcome of their application and successful recipients will be asked to confirm via email that they agree to accept funding and will comply with the proposal outlined in their application. Upon receipt of this confirmation, a contract will be issued and, when signed by the recipient and the President of INPS, 50% of grant funds will be disbursed by separate USPS mail. Recipients will provide the name and address of the person or entity who should receive the funds, if

not themselves. Recipients receiving more than \$600 will receive an IRS Form 1099-MISC in January 2021

3) Final reports are due to INPS by March 31, 2021, unless an extension requested in writing is granted. Upon approval of the final report, the remaining 50% of funds will be disbursed, but not before January 1, 2021. Recipients receiving more than \$600 will receive an IRS Form 1099-MISC in January 2022.

### **Requirements for Funded Surveys**

Projects which require a permit, e.g., endangered species permit, nature preserves special use permit, or permit to conduct research on federal, state, county, or local municipality properties, will not be considered unless copies of permit applications or copies of permits already in place are included as part of this application. Permits must contain express permission from landowner to collect plant specimens. INPS will not submit permit applications. *(To facilitate the permit process, it is recommended that applicants contact landowners directly simultaneously with submitting permit applications to the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission or other public agency, and provide any resulting correspondence to the agency.)*

Approved projects will be considered contractual arrangements between the Illinois Native Plant Society and the individual or group who submitted the application – the Principal Investigator.

Indirect costs required by institutions cannot be included in the grant. Grant funds cannot be used to displace Principal Investigator or staff salaries, but can be used for project assistants such as qualified interns or graduate students.

No matching funds are required, but providing matching funds from other sources (excluding grantee salaries and indirect costs) will merit extra consideration. Other grants for the same project can be used as a match. Volunteer hours are not considered a monetary match.

Successful applicants will be asked to supply a Federal Vendor Number or Social Security Number as applicable. The final invoice will not be paid until the final report and invoice are received and approved.

### **FINAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS**

A final report must be submitted electronically to the INPS website by March 31, 2021 (Microsoft Word or PDF format and Excel spreadsheet only). A budget report must demonstrate alignment with the budget submitted on the original application. Volunteer and paid assistant contributions should be reported.

**1) Report.** The final report should minimally include (see samples from the [“Recovery Outlines with Status Review Triggers”](#) for guidelines – these do not need to be precisely duplicated.)

*Each species requires a separate report.*

- Title: include species surveyed and whether surveys were existence or recovery
- Summary statement of project activities and results, including pre-survey research, methodology and contributions of paid or volunteer assistance

- Scientific name, author and family (for each species surveyed)
- Common name
- Species description, life history/ecology, habitat and associate species
- Current listing status (and any former listing status): Illinois, Federal (including Regional Forester Sensitive Species), Other States, NatureServe
- IDNR Ranking from Priority List and whether species is on ESTAC list
- Species total range
- Species Illinois distribution by County and Natural Division, both historic and current
- Element Occurrence Report history and any notable trends (e.g. increase/decrease in numbers of populations, sizes of populations, number of counties represented, extirpations, etc.)
- Overall threats to populations of each species
- (Optional): Estimated viability of each population observed using the NatureServe EO rank key <http://explorer.natureserve.org/eorankguide.htm>  
[http://downloads.natureserve.org/explorer/Key to Generic EO Ranking Approach 12 15 2008.pdf](http://downloads.natureserve.org/explorer/Key_to_Generic_EO_Ranking_Approach_12_15_2008.pdf)
- Reasons for status change, if applicable
- Recovery strategies recommended, including management, monitoring, protection, population enhancement, translocation, etc. (*For Recovery Surveys or for Existence Surveys where populations are located and show potential for recovery.*)

2) **Vouchers.** Species at each location surveyed must be vouchered. Species from at least one location surveyed should be vouchered through digital photographs that show the entire plant (habit), the inflorescence (in flower or seed; spores for ferns) and any diagnostic features. One digital photo of the species for other surveyed locations must be included.

If a new EO is located, a voucher herbarium specimen should be collected **only** when diagnostic characteristics are hidden, ambiguous or somewhat subjective and, even then, only when the population is large enough to warrant collection. (For example, populations with counts under 25 individuals or with other factors negatively impacting population viability should not be collected). In these cases, photo vouchers as described above are acceptable. If a herbarium specimen is needed to show diagnostic characters, information about which Herbarium the specimen will be deposited should be included.

*Unless the grantee requests otherwise, these images (without location information) may be used for INPS platforms such as the INPS website, The Harbinger, or Facebook page.*

3) **Protocol form:** A survey form for each EO must be submitted. This form will be available for grantees with instructions on the Grant page of the [INPS website](#) by March 31, 2020, and will merge relevant sections of the Illinois Natural Heritage Database Element Occurrence Report (EOR) and the Plants of Concern (POC) monitoring protocol. This new form will be uploaded with the final report.

For reference, here is the [Illinois Natural Heritage Database Element Occurrence Report \(EOR\)](#)

For reference, here is the [Plants of Concern monitoring protocol](#).

The forms will request data on site name and location of population (including GPS coordinate of population center or a polygon); population size and area covered; reproductive rate based on observed flowering or seed set; list of dominant associate species; list of invasive species and other threats and their relative degree of impact; and current management practices on site and particularly within the population area.

Survey reports of negative searches (populations not found) must give an indication of the confidence in the results: i.e., was the survey comprehensive and exhaustive, how much time was spent and the area searched.

4) **Excel spreadsheet:** To provide an overview of the report data, a spreadsheet for each species surveyed should be developed to include: Scientific Name, Common Name, Site Name, County, Landowner, Population GPS, Date of Survey, Surveyor Name(s). Separate Worksheets within a single Excel document can be used for different species.

INPS will share all reports with the IDNR Natural Heritage Database, the Endangered Species Protection Board, and the respective landowners.

Grantees are encouraged to present a summary of their project findings to a local INPS chapter meeting, at the INPS Annual Gathering or to another conservation group. Grantees are also encouraged to submit short, popular-type article to the INPS member newsletter, *The Harbinger*, or a INPS Chapter newsletter, which describes the project, its results, its importance to native plant knowledge and conservation, and how the project supports the INPS mission. Alternately, a scientific article may be submitted to the INPS professional journal, *Erigenia*, or to another peer-reviewed journal. **However, specific locations, including site names, should not be given in presentations or popular-type articles, or via social media platforms such as iNaturalist .**

All publications and presentations must include a statement that the project was funded by the Illinois Native Plant Society Survey Grant Fund. Copies of any publications must be sent to the INPS Grant Program email address ([inpsgrants@gmail.com](mailto:inpsgrants@gmail.com)), and, unless the grantee requests otherwise, these may be posted or linked on the INPS grants web page, with appropriate permission from the publisher as applicable.