

Illinois Native Plant Society 2021 Survey Grant:

Explanation and Guidelines

The Illinois Native Plant Society (INPS) Survey Grant 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) provide information to help 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 \$5,000 each.

Eligibility and Conditions

Any individual or non-profit institution/group having professional experience conducting botanic field surveys can apply, with the exception of INPS State Board 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.

New for 2021: a stipend of up to \$2000 can be included as part of the budget, for the Principal Investigator (PI) only, or shared with a Co-PI. This stipend cannot be used to displace an institutional salary, but is intended to acknowledge time spent in organizing and planning the project. Project funds may also be used for qualified intern or student assistants. Volunteer or unpaid assistance by qualified individuals may be utilized for the surveys, but volunteer time cannot be used for matching funds. Each of these assistants, their qualifications and tasks must be identified in Section 8A of the application form. The PI is responsible for distributing any funds to the Co-PI or assistants.

Survey Categories (refer to Priority List Spreadsheet linked here).

1) **“Existence Surveys”** refers to those 32 listed species having only 1 to 9 (one with 15) Element Occurrences (EOs) (*#s 7-11 in the EO Search Priority - IDNR Data - 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”** refers to 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 (8) 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 2020 State listings.

Survey Priorities

The priority list in Excel Format is divided into 3 sections:

1. List provided by IDNR (EO Search Priority [IDNR data] which ranks species according to their survey priorities. The 30 IDNR species ranking from 7-11 in the Survey Grant Priority List are identified as qualifying for “Existence Surveys” 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.
2. List of eight (8) Endangered and Threatened species for which “Recovery Outlines with Status Review Triggers” were developed by IDNR staff in 2014; these qualify for Recovery Surveys. (<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/ESPB/Pages/RecoveryPlans.aspx>). (*Silene regia* was removed from the original list because recovery actions have been initiated.) These 2014 reports will need EOR updating if one of the species is chosen by the applicant. The reports also serve as excellent models for the Survey Grant recovery reports.
3. List of 26 species compiled by the Endangered Species Technical Advisory Committee (ESTAC) during its deliberations for the 2020 State listing process of the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board. This group includes listed species below the # 7 rank for which additional information is needed to determine change of status or consideration for listing. These qualify for Recovery Surveys. Non-listed species from the ESTAC list are not included in the Survey Grant priorities at this time.

Applicants may choose one or more species from the priority list. Species may be grouped by habitat type or by proximity within a county or region. 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 EO 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 noted in the EO record.

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 (*see voucher section below*). 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.*)

A listing of species, sites, landowners and counties must be uploaded with the application.

Approved projects will be considered contractual arrangements between the Illinois Native Plant Society and the individual or group who submitted the application – the PI. Institutional indirect costs cannot be included in the grant. Grant funds cannot be used to displace PI or other institutional staff salaries, but a **stipend** of up to \$2000 is available to the PI (or shared with a Co-PI). Funds can also 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 institutional 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 Social Security number or Federal Vendor number. The final invoice will not be paid until the final report and invoice are received and approved. INPS will issue a 1099-MISC form to the PI for tax purposes in January of the year following receipt of \$600 or greater.

Grant and Funding Cycle: Submission, Review and Reporting

Proposals are due by January 31, 2021, 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. 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. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Confirmation of receipt of application will be made by email upon submission. Applicants will be notified by March 31, 2021, 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 Survey Grant requirements and with the proposal outlined in their application. Upon receipt of this confirmation, a contract will be issued and, when signed by the recipient and by the President of INPS, 50% of grant funds will be disbursed by separate USPS mail. PI recipients should provide the name and address of the person or entity who should receive the funds, if not themselves. If the application provides for sharing the stipend between Co-PIs, or for hiring of assistants, the primary PI is responsible for distributing these funds to any assistants. All reports are due to INPS by March 31, 2022, 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, 2022.

FINAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS

A final report must be submitted electronically to the INPS website by March 31, 2022 (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 should minimally include (see samples from the “Recovery Outlines with Status Review Triggers” for guidelines - these do not need to be precisely duplicated.)
<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/ESPB/Pages/RecoveryPlans.aspx>

(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, and habitat. 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
- Complete Element Occurrence Report history including new EORs submitted with this project. Discuss 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
- Reasons for recommending 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 photo-vouchered through digital photographs that show the entire plant (habit), the inflorescence (in flower or seed; spores for ferns) and any diagnostic features. A physical herbarium specimen should be collected **only** when diagnostic characteristics are hidden, ambiguous or somewhat subjective and, even then, only above-ground portions of the plant should be collected and 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). If a physical specimen is deemed necessary, the landowner, and the Nature Preserves Commission for a nature preserve, must be contacted for a collection permit if one is not already in place. Consideration will be given by the Nature Preserves Commission if applicants show that they are updating historic Element Occurrences or reporting new Occurrences through the support of an INPS grant. Finally, information about which Herbarium the specimen will be deposited should be included in the report.

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

3. **Excel spreadsheet or other format:** To provide an overview of the report data, a spreadsheet for each species surveyed should be developed to include: Scientific Name and Common Name in the heading and columns for each observation: EO#; Site Name; County; Landowner; Population GPS coordinates; Population size; Date of Survey; Surveyor Name(s); Comments on reproductive status (flowers, fruits, relative percent reproductive); Threats to population; Past or current management activities. Separate Worksheets within a single Excel document can be used for different species.

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 habitat searched.

4. **Protocol forms:** To avoid duplication of effort, the IL Natural Heritage Database Element Occurrence Report (EOR) forms for each occurrence are **not** required to be submitted as part of the Survey Grant report, since the pertinent information requested in the EOR will be included in the Survey Grant report. All reports will be shared with the Natural Heritage Database so that they may update records. However, surveyors **may** choose to submit an EOR form directly to the Natural Heritage Database in addition to submitting the Survey Grant report to INHS:

<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/NaturalHeritage/Pages/ETSightingForm.aspx>

Additionally, Survey Grant reports will be shared with the Plants of Concern program in order for POC to update their database for Survey plants also on the POC monitoring list. Surveyors who are POC monitors may also choose to submit a separate report to POC: www.plantsofconcern.org

Grantees are required to present a summary of their project findings at the INPS Annual Gathering (as complimentary guests), to a local INPS chapter meeting, or to another conservation group. If they are not able to attend in person, a poster describing the project may be submitted. Grantees are also required to submit short, popular-type article to the INPS member newsletter, *The Harbinger*, or to an 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 Grant Program. Copies of any publications must be sent to the INPS Grant Program email address, inpsgrants@gmail.com, and unless the grantee requests otherwise, these may be linked on the INPS grants web page, with appropriate permission from the publisher as applicable.