

**Threatened and
Endangered Species
Technical Memorandum
for the
State College Area Connector**

August 2025



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List of Acronyms

AMM	Avoidance and Minimization Measures
BDA	Biological Diversity Area
BMP	Best Management Practices
CNHI	County Natural Heritage Inventory
ESA	Endangered Species Act
GIS	Geographic Information System
E&S	Erosion and Sedimentation
I-99	Interstate 99
IBA	Important Bird Areas
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHCH	Natural Heritage Core Habitat
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
PA	Pennsylvania or Pennsylvania Route
PA DCNR	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
PA DEP	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
PASDA	Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access
PBO	Programmatic Biological Opinion
PE	Pennsylvania Endangered
PEL	Planning and Environmental Linkages
PFBC	Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
PGC	Pennsylvania Game Commission
PNDI	Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory
PNHP	Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program
PR	Pennsylvania Rare
PT	Pennsylvania Threatened
SCAC	State College Area Connector
SSC	Species of Special Concern

T&E	Threatened and Endangered
TU	Tentatively Undetermined
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USFWS PAFO	United States Fish and Wildlife Service Pennsylvania Field Office

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project History

The State College Area Connector Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study identified transportation needs within southern Centre County, Pennsylvania in a 70 square mile initial study area. The study evaluated a range of alternatives to determine how the alternatives addressed the Study's purpose and need, balanced impacts on the natural and built environment, addressed traffic concerns within the overall study area, met engineering considerations such as constructability, cost, and considered area planning goals. The PEL Study screened nine corridors to determine the best options to advance for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) evaluation and preliminary engineering. Based on the impact analysis, three corridors were identified (US 322-1S, US 322-1OEX and US 322-5) to be advanced as reasonable alternatives, and a specific project area was developed to initiate detailed field investigations and conduct preliminary engineering investigations to address the transportation purpose and needs as part of the NEPA process. The final PEL Report was published in June 2023 and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) acknowledged in a letter, dated September 14, 2023, that the PEL Study was consistent with 23 USC Section 168 and 23 CFR 450.212. As a result, the PEL findings provide a starting point for the NEPA studies and preliminary engineering efforts. Additionally, FHWA concurred that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was the proper NEPA classification for the State College Area Connector project.

The PEL Study also identified other transportation projects which did not meet the full purpose and need identified in the PEL but could provide transportation benefits to the study area roadways independently. One such project was a safety study along PA 45 generally from Boal Avenue to PA 144. Subsequent to the PEL completion, additional traffic investigations and analysis and coordination with local officials for the State College Area Connector project determined that the connector road and interior interchange would provide some localized improvements to PA 45. However, it was determined that the connector road and associated interchange was not necessary to address the project's purpose and need, nor did it address corridor wide issues along PA 45. As a result, the proposed interior interchange and local road connection was removed from this State College Area Connector project and will be considered in the independent PA 45 Corridor Improvements project, as appropriate. The State College Area Connector project will advance independently but will not preclude the inclusion of a future interior interchange and local road connection should the independent safety study along PA 45 determine that it would be beneficial in connection with other proposed PA 45 Corridor Improvements project.

Following the PEL Study, the project area was reduced from 70 square miles to approximately 6 square miles to encompass the three alternatives proposed to move forward into preliminary engineering.

1.2 Project Location

The project area is approximately 3,963 acres, extends through the southern portion of Centre County, and traverses Potter and Harris Townships, see **Appendix A, Figure 1 – Project Location Map**. The project area is centered on US 322 which provides local access through the project area and to regional destinations and beyond. US 322, Mount Nittany Expressway at the western end of the project area provides direct access to Interstate 99 (I-99) which, in turn, provides access to nearby I-80. US 322 at Potters Mills provides access south to the Harrisburg area and connects to I-81 and I-83.

1.3 Project Purpose and Need

Project Purpose

The purpose of this project is to improve roadway congestion by achieving acceptable Level of Service (LOS) and to address safety issues by reducing the predicted crash frequency along the US 322 corridor between Potters Mills and Boalsburg. Additionally, the project will aim to provide a transportation network that meets driver expectations.

Project Needs

- High peak hour traffic volumes cause congestion and result in unacceptable LOS (LOS D [rural only], E, F) on US 322 roadway and intersections.
- Existing roadway configurations and traffic conditions contribute to safety concerns in the project area.
- The roadway network and configuration in the project area lacks continuity and does not meet driver expectations.

2.0 Alternatives

The three alternatives that were recommended in the PEL Study to move forward into the NEPA phase of the project were renamed to North, Central and South. Following public and agency involvement, refinements were made to all three alternatives.

2.1 North Alternative

The western end alignment would be the same for all three alternatives, from the SR 45 interchange to just east of the Mountain View Country Club. At the western end, the existing US 322 would remain in its current location and the new US 322 4-lane highway would be on the south side of the existing US 322. The western end alignment would also include a pedestrian/bicycle trail on the north side of the existing US 322. Just east of the Mountain View Country Club, the alignment would start to move north of the existing US 322 through the Nittany Farm and around the Kuhn tree farm. It would continue through the agricultural fields on the north side of US 322, avoiding the commercial area on US 322 in Potter Township. The alignment would return to the existing US 322 alignment through Tusseyville. The eastern end would maintain the existing US 322 as the local access road in its current position and the 4-lane highway alignment would be on the south side of the existing US 322 from approximately Tusseyville to Potters Mills.

2.2 Central Alternative

The western end alignment would be the same for all three alternatives, from the SR 45 interchange to just east of the Mountain View Country Club. At the western end, the existing US 322 would remain in its current location and the new US 322 4-lane highway would be on the south side of the existing US 322. The western end alignment would also include a pedestrian/bicycle trail on the north side of the existing US 322. Just east of the Mountain View Country Club, the alignment would start to move north of the existing US 322 through the Nittany Farm and around the Kuhn tree farm. It would then cross over the existing US 322 and travel south of the Potter Township Athletic Complex on the south side of US 322, avoiding the commercial area in Potter Township.

It is noted that at the time of the May 8, 2025 Public Meeting, the Central Alternative was located through the baseball fields within the Potter Township Athletic Complex. As part of the public involvement and follow-up from the public meeting, Potter Township issued a letter (June 23, 2025) to PennDOT raising concern with the proposed impact to the fields and requested PennDOT consider avoidance and minimization of the property. PennDOT shifted the Central Alternative to the south to avoid the baseball fields and will only impact the undeveloped portion of the Potter Township property.

From there, the alignment then crosses Sleepy Creek, a stream that drains to the Tussey Sink area, and flows north towards the existing US 322. The alignment returns to the existing US 322 alignment near Tusseyville. The eastern end would maintain the existing US 322 as the local access road in its current position and the 4-lane highway alignment would be on the south side of the existing US 322 from approximately Tusseyville to Potters Mills.

2.3 South Alternative

The western end alignment would be the same for all three alternatives, from the SR 45 interchange to just east of the Mountain View Country Club. At the western end, the existing US 322 would remain in its current location and the new

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US 322 4-lane highway would be on the south side of the existing US 322. The western end alignment would also include a pedestrian/bicycle trail on the north side of the existing US 322. Just east of the Mountain View Country Club, the alignment would start to move south of the existing US 322 through the Tait Farm and along the side of the Tussey Mountain Ridge (Tussey Ridge) behind the neighborhoods and communities along the south side of the existing US 322. It would then cross over Sleepy Creek (stream that drains to Tussey Sink) and start to move north towards the existing US 322. The alignment would return to the existing US 322 alignment near Tusseyville. The eastern end would maintain the existing US 322 as the local access road in its current position and the 4-lane highway alignment would be on the south side of the existing US 322 from approximately Tusseyville to Potters Mills.

3.0 Methods

The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) screening database was initially accessed for the project area on March 27, 2024. An update to the PNDI was completed on October 29, 2024 to reflect updates to the project area (45 connector portion of project area was removed). In the August 22, 2024 letter from the USFWS to the FHWA for the SCAC Notice of Intent (NOI), the USFWS identified concerns with protected bats, migratory birds, bald and golden eagles, pollinator habitat and wetlands and streams.

An update to the PNDI (PNDI #728928) was conducted on January 8, 2025. Further review was conducted by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) and Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), and response letters were received on January 10, 2025, indicating specific plant and aquatic species potentially present in the project area. The PNDI receipts are included in Appendix B and the agency coordination letters are included in Appendix C.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) reviews were conducted following the results of the PNDI. IPaC reviews for the North and South Alternatives were conducted on July 4, 2025 and for the Central Alternative on July 14, 2025. An IPaC Species List was completed for the project to determine potential concerns with federally listed species. The IPaC Species List includes federally listed bat species, bird species covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), and the monarch butterfly. The IPaC Species List is included in Appendix D.

4.0 Results

4.1 Regulatory Screening (PNDI / IPaC) Results

The results of the PNDI screening completed on October 29, 2024 for the project area identified the following potential conflicts:

- Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) and USFWS – protected bat species;
- PFBC – protected mussel species (Triangle Floater); and
- PA DCNR – Hemlock Palustrine Forest and a Sensitive Species.

In the August 22, 2024 letter from the USFWS to the FHWA for the SCAC Notice of Intent (NOI), the USFWS identified concerns with protected bats (Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat), migratory birds, bald eagles, pollinator habitat, wetlands and streams, wildlife crossings, and acid producing rock. The USFWS concerns with wetlands and streams, wildlife crossings, and acid producing rock are not addressed within this T&E Technical Memo, but rather addressed in the Wetland and Watercourse Impact Technical memo.

An update to the PNDI was conducted on January 8, 2025. Results from the January 8, 2025 PNDI update included:

- PGC – concern with protected bat species, but deferred authority to the USFWS;
- PFBC – protected mussel species (Triangle Floater);
- PA DCNR – Hemlock Palustrine Forest and a Sensitive Species; and
- USFWS – Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat.

Additional coordination was conducted with the PA DCNR and PFBC in January 2025 and PA DCNR and PFBC response letters were received on January 10, 2025, indicating specific plant and aquatic species may be potentially present in the project area. The PNDI results from the USFWS provided direction to review the project through the IPaC system. The IPaC screening (updated July 4, 2025 for North and South and July 14, 2025 for Central) identified potential concerns for protected bats (Indiana bat – endangered, northern long-eared bat - endangered, and tricolored bat – proposed endangered), along with northeast bulrush – endangered, proposed for delisting and green floater (proposed threatened).

Note: During the Threatened and Endangered Species (T&E) review process for the PEL Study, the PNDI and IPaC reviews identified potential concerns with migratory birds and northern goshawk (PA – endangered). Two Important Bird Areas (IBAs) were identified on the Tussey Ridge south of the project area: Rothrock State Forest (part) & Stone Mountain IBA and Greater Tussey Mountain IBA. These IBAs are partially within the project area and are home to several species of forest-nesting and migrant species of birds in addition to habitat favorable for migratory bird species.

On June 11, 2025, USFWS presented a webinar to present recent updates to better integrate the IPaC and PNDI review mechanisms. Based upon the direction received from the USFWS, the results of the IPaC reviews are to be compared to an up-to-date PNDI receipt and those species that are identified on both the IPaC and PNDI are considered potential federal conflicts for the project. To that end, the updated PNDI receipt for the project does not identify conflicts with northeast bulrush or green floater; therefore, those species are not considered as potential concerns or conflicts for the SCAC project. Additionally, since the PNDI did not identify a concern or conflict with the northern goshawk, that species is also not considered a concern for the project.

Finally, the August 2024 USFWS letter identified Pollinator Habitat as a concern for the project. The letter also referenced that PennDOT, with support from FHWA, has developed a Voluntary Pre-Listing Pollinator Conservation Program. Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) was proposed on December 12, 2024, by the USFWS to be listed as a threatened species with protective regulations under Section 4(d) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). If finalized, take, as defined by the ESA, of the monarch butterfly would be prohibited. The PennDOT Pollinator Habitat Plan was developed in support of state and federal actions and includes general guidelines in considering pollinator habitat development along roadsides and right-of-ways (ROWS) (<https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/penndot/documents/programs-and-doing-business/roadwaydesignenvironment/environment/environmental-policy/documents/pollinator-habitat-plan.pdf>).

Based upon the regulatory screening for threatened and endangered species and species of concern, the following species are addressed as follows:

- 4.2 Bird Species: Bald eagle and migratory birds
- 4.3 Plant Species: Handsome sedge, roundleaf serviceberry, declined trillium, hemlock palustrine forest
- 4.4 Aquatic Species: Triangle floater (mussel)
- 4.5 Mammal Species: Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat
- 4.6 Pollinator Habitat

As part of evaluating the potential for threatened and endangered species, it is noted that the SCAC project area is characterized by a mix of agricultural fields, forest land, wetlands, stream valleys and old growth fields. There is no critical habitat for threatened and endangered species in the project area.

4.2 Bird Species

Bald Eagle

Reports of bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nesting activity within the project area were identified by a local citizen residing in the Colyer Lake area. Bald eagle and the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) are species protected under the MBTA and *Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act*. Both laws prohibit killing, selling or otherwise harming eagles, their nests, or eggs. A review of bald eagle nesting locations in Centre County using the USFWS bald eagle mapping tool (<https://gis-fws.opendata.arcgis.com/maps/791e4054bab84a0aa0afe08d9d16a4cb/about>) identifies known nesting sites in both Benner and Gregg Townships with no known nesting sites identified within the project area.

A field view was conducted to verify the presence of a nesting bald eagle pair in the location communicated by the local citizen. The presence of an active bald eagle nest was verified during the field view and the project design team provided this location to the USFWS PA Field Office (PAFO) through the design process and avoidance and minimization measures were incorporated to address the active nest.

The project alternatives in this general area were designed in close proximity to existing US 322 to avoid and minimize encroachment on or near the bald eagle nest. The bald eagle nest is approximately 1,400 linear feet south of the project alternatives. Coordination with the USFWS will continue through final design regarding the presence of the nest

with respect to the alternatives. The USFWS Northeast Bald Eagle Project Screening Form was reviewed for the project (rev. 4/16/20). For Construction and Development activities including roads, the following avoidance measures are recommended to prevent disturbing nesting bald eagles.

AMM 1 – Maintain a distance buffer of at least 660 feet (200 meters) between all project activities and the nest.

AMM 2 – Maintain a distance buffer of at least 660 feet (200 meters) between all project activities and the nest. If there is an existing human-made feature (e.g., house, road, dock) similar to your project that is closer than 660 feet and tolerated by the nesting eagles, maintain a distance buffer equal to or greater than the distance separating that tolerated feature and the nest.

AMM 3 – Maintain a distance buffer of at least 330 feet (100 meters) year-round between all project activities and the nest. If a similar activity (i.e., similar in kind and size) is closer than 330 feet and has been tolerated by eagles, the distance buffer will be the same or greater than that of the existing tolerated activity.

AMM 4 – Do not perform disruptive project activities within 660 feet (200 meters) of the nest during the breeding season. This time-of-year restriction is in addition to your recommended distance buffer. Disruptive activities include, but are not limited to, external construction, excavation, use of heavy equipment, use of loud equipment or machinery, vegetation clearing, earth disturbance, planting, and landscaping.

AMM 5 – Maintain existing landscape buffers that visually screen the activity from the nest.

Additionally, there is an avoidance measure regarding extremely loud noise concerns during the eagle breeding season (January 1 to July 31) as described as follows:

AMM 16 - During the breeding season, do not perform blasting and other activities that produce extremely loud noises within 1/2 mile (800 meters) of in-use nests.

The Central and South Alternatives are on the same general alignment in the area of the bald eagle nest, approximately 1,400 feet north of the nest. The North Alternative is even further north of the nest than the Central and South Alternatives in this area. As such, the SCAC project is compliant with the avoidance measures 1, 2, 3, and 4. The proposed alternatives are in close proximity to existing US 322 and there are no plans to disturb the existing landscape buffers between the nest and the alternatives (maintain the existing 1,400 feet and the existing vegetative buffer). It is assumed that the construction of the project alternative will be able to be seen from the eagle nest at the top of the tree at its position at the top of the hill, just as existing 322 can be seen as well.

The area along all three project alternatives and US 322 that falls within a ½-mile of the nest, would be the section of the highway between Neff Road and Addleman Circle. In this area, there will be a time-of-year restriction established to avoid extremely loud noises (blasting or hammer drill type loud noises), if needed, between January through July. PennDOT may also elect to initiate noise monitoring in this area during the final design phase of the project to determine current ambient noise levels and coordinate with USFWS to determine if a time-of-year restriction on activities is necessary.

Migratory Birds

In the August 22, 2024 letter from the USFWS to the FHWA for the SCAC NOI, the USFWS identified the following species protected under the MBTA and summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Migratory Bird Species Identified as a Potential Concern

Scientific Name	Common Name	Breeding Season
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle	September 1 through August 31
<i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i>	Black-billed Cuckoo	May 15 through October 10
<i>Poecile atricapillus praticus</i>	Black-capped Chickadee	April 10 through July 31
<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>	Bobolink	May 20 through July 31
<i>Cardellina canadensis</i>	Canada Warbler	May 20 through August 10
<i>Chaetura pelagica</i>	Chimney Swift	March 15 through August 25
<i>Antrostomus vociferus</i>	Eastern Whip-poor-will	May 1 through August 20
<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	Golden Eagle	Breeds elsewhere
<i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>	Golden-winged Warbler	May 1 through July 21
<i>Aegolius acadicus</i>	Northern Saw-whet Owl	March 1 through July 31
<i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i>	Red-headed Woodpecker	May 10 through September 10
<i>Euphagus carolinus</i>	Rusty Blackbird	Breeds elsewhere
<i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>	Wood Thrush	May 10 through August 10

In their August 24, 2024 letter the USFWS recommended the following conservation measures:

1. Where disturbance is necessary, clear natural or semi-natural habitats (e.g., forests, woodlots, reverting fields, shrubby areas) and perform maintenance activities (e.g., mowing) between September 1 and March 31, which is outside the nesting season for most native bird species. Without undertaking specific analysis of breeding species and their respective nesting seasons on the project site, implementation of this seasonal restriction will avoid take of most breeding birds, their nests, and their young (i.e., eggs, hatchlings, fledglings).
2. Minimize land and vegetation disturbance during project design and construction. To reduce habitat fragmentation, co-locate roads, fences, lay down areas, staging areas, and other infrastructure in or immediately adjacent to already-disturbed areas (e.g., existing roads, pipelines, agricultural fields) and cluster development features (e.g., buildings, roads) as opposed to distributing them throughout land parcels. Where this is not possible, minimize roads, fences, and other infrastructure.
3. Avoid permanent habitat conversion in areas where birds are highly concentrated. Examples of high concentration areas for birds are wetlands, State or Federal refuges, Audubon Important Bird Areas, private duck clubs, staging areas, rookeries, leks, roosts, and riparian areas. Avoid establishing sizable structures along known bird migration pathways or known daily movement flyways (e.g., between roosting and feeding areas).

4. To conserve area-sensitive species, avoid fragmenting large, contiguous tracts of wildlife habitat, especially if habitat cannot be fully restored after construction. Maintain contiguous habitat corridors to facilitate wildlife dispersal. Where practicable, concentrate construction activities, infrastructure, and man-made structures (e.g., buildings, cell towers, roads, parking lots) on lands already altered or cultivated, and away from areas of intact and healthy native habitats. If not feasible, select fragmented or degraded habitats over relatively intact areas.
5. Develop a habitat restoration plan for the proposed site that avoids or minimizes negative impacts to birds, and that creates functional habitat for a variety of bird species. Use only plant species that are native to the local area for revegetation of the project area.

Based upon these recommendations, PennDOT proposes to limit tree clearing to occur between September 1 and March 31. The Central and North Alternatives are positioned across the SCAC landscape to minimize land and vegetation disturbance, avoid fragmentation, avoid permanent habitat alterations in areas where birds are highly concentrated (i.e. the Important Bird Areas), and avoid large contiguous tracts of wildlife habitat.

The South Alternative traverses the lower portion of the Tussey Ridge and has the highest forested impacts and impacts to Important Bird Areas.

4.3 Plant Species & Natural Communities

PA DCNR issued a project review letter on January 10, 2025, in response to PNDI #782938 (Appendix C). The project review letter identified three plant species of special concern (SSC) and one natural community under the jurisdiction of PA DCNR as potential concerns identified within or in the vicinity of the project area. The plant SSC are listed in Table 2 and the natural community is listed in Table 3.

Table 2: Plant Species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Current Status	Proposed Status	Survey Season
Handsome Sedge	<i>Carex formosa</i> *	PA Endangered	No Change	Flowers/Fruits: May to June
Roundleaf Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier sanguinea</i> *	Tentatively Undetermined	PA Endangered	Flowers: mid-April to late-May; Fruits: June to early-July
Declined Trillium	<i>Trillium flexipes</i> *	Tentatively Undetermined	PA Threatened	Flowers: late April to early-May

*Indicates PA DCNR records of species documented in the vicinity of the project area.

Table 3: Natural Communities

Name	Description
Hemlock Palustrine Forest	Riparian corridor along Sinking Creek, site includes wetlands as well as immediately adjacent lands

Handsome Sedge (*Carex formosa*) is distinguished from other sedges in Pennsylvania by the combination of hairy leaves, reddish basal sheaths, terminal spike that is mostly staminate with several perigynia at the tip, and lateral spikes which are pistillate with one or two staminate flowers or with empty scales at the base. Handsome Sedge flowers and fruits in late spring and early summer (May and June). This sedge species grows in mesic to dry calcareous woods. According to the *Centre County Natural Heritage Inventory (Updated December 2002)*, the only known population of Handsome Sedge was previously documented on a calcareous, wooded, north-facing slope and in moist woods at the base of the slope in remanent forest area at the Linden Hall Park Biological Diversity Area (BDA), located approximately 1 mile north of the project area.



- Based on landcover, soils, and geology background information, the project area contains suitable habitat similar to the previously documented local habitat at Linden Hall Park BDA. A botanical survey was conducted in Spring 2025 to investigate the areas identified as potential suitable habitat for occurrences of this species within the project area. No occurrences of Handsome Sedge were identified during the botanical survey field investigation.

Roundleaf Serviceberry (*Amelanchier sanguinea*) is a deciduous shrub or small tree that often grows in clumps. This species of serviceberry typically grows to 6 to 12 feet in height and occasionally reaching up to 20 feet in ideal conditions. The bark is smooth and grayish, often developing a slightly reddish tint on older stems. The leaves are oval to round in shape and measure 1 to 3 inches long with finely toothed edge. Leaves are usually half grown at the time of flowering. Roundleaf Serviceberry flowers in early spring in mid-April to late-May, producing showy, drooping clusters of white or light pink flowers with each flower consisting of five petals. Roundleaf Serviceberry fruits from June through early July and produces small, round, deep, purple-colored berries. This species prefers open woods and rocky slopes and barrens as habitat. According to PA DCNR, the local habitat consisted of a deciduous shrub community on limestone. The *Centre County Natural Heritage Inventory (Updated December 2002)* notes that Roundleaf Serviceberry was documented at three locations within Centre County – Spring Creek Valley BDA in Benner Township (approximately 5 miles north of the project area), Boalsburg Road Hillside BDA in College Township (approximately 1.5 miles northeast of the project area), and Scotia Barrens BDA State Game Land 176 in Ferguson, Halfmoon, and Patton Townships (approximately 7.5 miles from the project area).



- Based on landcover, soils, and geology background information, the project area contains suitable habitat similar to the previously documented habitat areas. A botanical survey was conducted in Spring 2025 to investigate the areas identified as potential suitable habitat for occurrences of Roundleaf Serviceberry within the project area. No occurrences of Roundleaf Serviceberry were identified during the botanical survey field investigation.

Declined Trillium (*Trillium flexipes*), also known as Bent Trillium, is a spring ephemeral wildflower, meaning it blooms early in the spring before the forest canopy fully emerges, taking advantage of the sunlight that filters through the trees. Declined Trillium typically grows to 10 to 18 inches tall and has three large, broad ovate-shaped leaves arranged in a whorl. The flowers are usually white or pale pink and consist of three petal-like tepals. These flowers appear in early spring, typically from April to May, and are characterized by their delicate downward-facing stance, giving them a “bent” appearance. After flowering, Declined Trillium produces a berry-like fruit that changes from green to red as it ripens. Declined Trillium grows in dry to mesic, shaded woodlands with rich loamy soils. According to PA DCNR, the local habitat where this species was previously documented consisted of a diverse calcareous forest remnant along Spring Creek, growing on a gentle slope above the floodplain, with rocky and very calcareous soil.



- Based on landcover, soils, and geology background information, the project area contains suitable habitat similar to the previously documented habitat along Spring Creek Valley BDA. A botanical survey was conducted in Spring 2025 to investigate the areas identified as potential suitable habitat for occurrences of Declined Trillium within the project area. No occurrences of Declined Trillium were identified during the botanical survey field investigation.

Hemlock Palustrine Forest is considered a unique forest community that occurs on saturated soils in basins or depressions on the fringe of inundated areas or in backwater areas along rivers. This community type may occur as a zone around a wetter community type. It may also occur in basins or slopes fed by groundwater seepage. There is often a pronounced hummock and hollow microtopography present within this forest community. The hemlock trees found in these communities may persist in the inundated and extremely saturated portions of these depressions, basins, and backwaters, by growing on hummock microtopography.

As indicated by the name, eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) is a dominant species in this forest community, which may also contain a mixture of other conifers including red spruce (*Picea rubens*), tamarack (*Larix laricina*), and eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*). Hardwood species may contribute up to 25% of the canopy with common species that include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), and black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*). Great Laurel Rhododendron (*Rhododendron maximum*) is often present and can be quite dense in the understory. Other shrub species commonly associated with Hemlock Palustrine Forests include withe-rod (*Viburnum cassinoides*), swamp azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*), winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), and highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*). Understory herbaceous species include cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*), skunk cabbage



(*Symplocarpus foetidus*), sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*), Canada mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*), goldthread (*Coptis trifolia*), violets (*Viola spp.*), dewdrop (*Dalibarda repens*), starflower (*Trientalis borealis*), and various grasses and sedges. There may be a strong bryophyte component, usually dominated by sphagnum moss (*Sphagnum spp.*).

According to the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program's (PNHP) Pennsylvania Conservation Explorer online system, PA DCNR identified an expansive Palustrine Hemlock Forest community that begins downstream of Colyer Lake and follows the riparian corridor along Sinking Creek before transitioning to maintained lawn and open fields approximately 650 feet upstream of US 322. The project area encompasses approximately 50 acres of this Palustrine Hemlock Forested community. The wetland and watercourse delineation field investigation conducted in 2023 identified the riparian area along Sinking Creek as a mosaic of palustrine scrub-shrub (PSS), palustrine emergent (PEM), and palustrine forested (PFO) wetland complex features.

- Based on aerial imagery and wetland delineation field observations, additional areas of Palustrine Hemlock Forest communities may be present along Sinking Creek upstream and downstream of US 322. Forested communities including forested wetlands, were evaluated for characteristics of Palustrine Hemlock Forests as part of the botanical survey field effort. The Hemlock Palustrine Forest is located along Sinking Creek south (upstream) of the proposed SCAC bridge crossing at the Darr Property and Darlington Farm properties. All the project alternatives are on the same alignment at this location. At this specific crossing location at Sinking Creek (S-LTZ-001-PER), the adjacent floodplain consists of palustrine emergent wetlands, WL-LTZ-039-PEM and WL-LTZ-040-PEM. There are no palustrine forested wetlands in this crossing area, therefore, the Hemlock Palustrine Forest Habitat identified by DCNR, will not be impacted by the project.

Field studies for Handsome Sedge, Roundleaf Serviceberry and Declined Trillium were conducted in the spring of 2025. None of these species were identified during field investigations. A botanical survey report has been prepared and is planned to be submitted to DCNR in August 2025.

4.4 Aquatic Species

PFBC response to PNDI #782938 and dated January 10, 2025 (Appendix C), identified SSC to be potentially present in the project area. PFBC identified the triangle floater (*Alasmidonta undulata*) freshwater mussel as the SSC and that this species of freshwater mussel may be potentially present due to suitable habitat within the Sinking Creek watershed which is located in the project area (**Appendix A, Figure 3 – Sinking Creek Watershed Potential Mussel Habitat**).

The Triangle Floater (*Alasmidonta undulata*) is a small mussel, usually less than 60 mm in length, with a triangular appearance. The shell is subtriangular to subovate and inflated, giving the mussel a swollen appearance. The anterior end is thicker and rounded, with a rounded ventral margin. The beaks are prominent and rise above the hinge line. The posterior ridge is poorly defined and rounded with a compressed posterior slope. The periostracum (outer covering) is smooth and coloration can vary from yellowish green (juveniles) to nearly black (adults). Rays are typically dark green and radiate from the beaks but can be obscured in older, darker adult shells. Lateral teeth are vestigial, appearing only as indistinct bumps parallel to the hinge line.



The triangle floater is found in the Susquehanna River watershed in Pennsylvania. The triangle floater is frequently found in streams and rivers in sand and gravel substrates. It is the only *Alasmidonta* species that can tolerate standing water typical of ponds, lakes, and canals. The confirmed host fishes for the triangle floater include the blacknose dace, common shiner, fallfish, largemouth bass, longnose dace, pumpkinseed, slimy sculpin, white sucker, central stoneroller, fantail darter, northern hogsucker, and rosyface shiner. The triangle floater seems to be affected less by habitat degradation than some other mussel species, and it is thought to use a greater diversity of fish hosts than most other mussels found in similar ecosystems.

- PFBC requested that they be notified nine months prior to construction so that they can perform on-site surveys to determine presence or presumed absence and perform mussel translocations in the area of disturbance during suitable conditions if presence is established. The mussel survey season begins May 15 and concludes October 1. In addition to mussel surveys and translocations, Best Management Practices (BMPs); Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs); and strict Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) measures will likely be required when work in and around Sinking Creek is required to minimize disturbance to in-stream and riparian ecosystems.

4.5 Mammal Species

The PNDI (PNDI #728928) screening conducted on January 8, 2025 identified potential T&E mammal species (Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat) and habitat presence in or adjacent to the project area. Mammal species identified as potential concerns for the project area are listed in Table 4.

Table 4: T&E Mammal Species

Scientific Name	Common Name	Listing Status
<i>Myotis sodalis</i> *	Indiana Bat	FE, SE
<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> *	Northern Long-eared bat	FE, SE
<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> *	Tricolored bat	PFE, SE

- FE – Federally Endangered; PFE – Proposed Federally Endangered; SE – State Endangered
- **Myotis sodalis*, and *Myotis septentrionalis* are federally listed species. *Perimyotis subflavus* is a proposed federally listed species. The PGC defers comment on these species to USFWS.

In addition to the IPaC review, the USFWS identified concerns with protected bats and their habitats with respect to the project area in their August 2024 letter to FHWA, including presence of hibernacula, spring staging and fall swarming habitat, suitable summer habitat, potential demolition to existing structures, karst features, and presence of rocky habitat.

Hibernacula: Historic records for Indiana and northern long-eared bats indicate that there are known bat hibernacula located outside of the project area. One historic hibernaculum is located to the northwest of the project area to the south of East College Avenue (SR 26) and to the east of Decibel Road. The second is located between Pleasant Gap and Centre Hall with the third known hibernaculum located to the east of Centre Hall and both outside of the project area. A fourth known hibernaculum is located approximately 9.5 miles south of the project area in Mifflin County.

Roosting/Swarming Habitat: Five-mile buffer areas were mapped around the known hibernacula to identify the spring staging/fall swarming habitat. **Appendix A, Figure 2** mapping illustrates fall swarming habitat for Indiana and northern long-eared bats around winter bat colony habitats. Spring staging habitat describes the habitat close to their winter hibernacula after exiting the hibernacula after the winter months prior to spring migration. Fall swarming habitat describes the habitat close to their winter hibernacula prior to entering the hibernacula for the winter months. Summer roost/maternity habitat describes the area in which bats may spend the months feeding and giving birth to pups.

For federal bat species listed in Table 4, summer roost/ maternity habitat / fall swarming habitat were identified within the project through a combination of qualitative assessment during the wetland and watercourse effort and through species-specific assessments conducted during 2024. No openings, portals, or existing bat hibernacula were identified within the project area. There is no federally designated critical habitat for bats within the project area. There are no rocky bat habitat features identified within the project area.

Each of the three alternatives are located, at least in part, within a swarming buffer of historic hibernaculum with known occurrences of at least one (1) threatened and/or endangered bat species. Potential summer roost and/or fall swarming habitat is present and buffers surrounding the known bat hibernacula encompass the majority of the project area.

The IPaC screening was completed for the three project alternatives to determine if consultation could be conducted through the use of the USFWS's Programmatic Biological Opinion/Conference Opinion (PBO) for Transportation Projects in the Range of the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat, dated December 13, 2024. The results of each screening are described as follows and are included in Appendix D.

NORTH ALTERNATIVE

The North Alternative IPaC review issued a determination result of *"May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect"* for federally listed bat species and therefore, use of the PBO should be applicable. Discussions with PennDOT determined that percussives (blasting, vibratory activity, noises, etc.) would not be necessary to the extent as is anticipated within the South Alternative due to the location of the alignment and the lack of rock removal necessary for construction. It was determined that any percussive activity associated with the North Alternative could be completed outside of and avoid the bat pup season. Tree removal necessary for the construction of the North Alternative falls below the 20 acres per 5-mile length of alignment. Tree removal for the alignment is estimated at 25 acres for approximately 8.5 miles of proposed road alignment. All tree and potential structure removal would occur during the inactive season for bats to avoid potential bat roosting.

CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE

The Central Alternative IPaC review issued a determination result of *"May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect"* for federally listed bat species and therefore, use of the PBO should be applicable. Discussions with PennDOT determined that percussives would not be necessary to the extent as is anticipated within the South Alternative due to the location of the alignment and the lack of rock removal necessary for construction. It was determined that any percussive activity associated with the Central Alternative could be completed outside of and avoid the bat pup season. Tree removal necessary for the construction of the Central Alternative falls below the 20 acres per 5-mile length of alignment threshold for use of the PBO. Tree removal for the alignment is estimated at 31 acres for approximately 8.5 miles of proposed road alignment. All tree and potential structure removal would occur during the inactive season for bats to avoid potential bat roosting.

SOUTH ALTERNATIVE

The South Alternative IPaC review determined that the South Alternative falls outside of the scope of the PBO. Use of percussives and the amount of tree clearing necessary to accommodate the construction of the proposed highway prohibit the use of the PBO. Use of percussives would be more extensive within the South Alternative due to the proposed highway design and the requirement to remove a potentially large amount of hillside. For this reason, percussive activity would likely not be avoided during the bat pup season (June – July) for the South Alternative. For the purposes of the IPaC review, question 30 was answered with “no” for percussives during the bat pup season although it is anticipated that is unlikely. Tree clearing would exceed the IPaC threshold of 20 acres per five miles of highway alignment (question 40). Forest impacts for the South Alternative are estimated at 123 acres over approximately 8.6 miles.

Finally, with respect to tree removal, the USFWS recommended in their August 2024 letter, that all tree removal occur during the bat inactive season of November 15 to March 31.

4.6 Pollinator Habitat

The August 2024 USFWS letter identified Pollinator Habitat as a concern for the project. The letter also referenced that:

“PennDOT, with the support of FHWA, in 2019, developed their Voluntary Pre-Listing Pollinator Conservation Program. The Program is voluntary, non-regulatory, and proactive for the conservation of pollinator species of special concern, including the monarch, regal fritillary, and frosted elfin butterflies; and the yellow-banded bumblebee. PennDOT’s intent of developing the Program included implementing conservation actions that may preclude the need to list these pollinator species of concern under the Endangered Species Act (Act). If, in the future, the Service determines that these species do require protection under the Act, PennDOT’s commitments through the Program enable them to provide advanced credits to offset impacts to these four species of special concern, which would result from transportation-related actions (USFWS August 2024).”

Based upon their letter, the USFWS recommended that FHWA and PennDOT implement conservation efforts to increase habitat for the pollinator species, including the four species listed above. Principle conservation approaches that hold the greatest potential for pollinator habitat increases include, but are not limited to:

1. Increasing implementation of conservation mowing seasons and methods;
2. Promoting milkweed and nectar producing plant growth;
3. Implementing specific planted pollinator sites; and
4. Using seed mixes that are native to Pennsylvania in roadside and right-of-way plantings.

PennDOT has developed a Pollinator Habitat Plan to promote this conservation effort (<https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/pennidot/documents/programs-and-doing-business/roadwaydesignenvironment/environment/environmental-policy/documents/pollinator-habitat-plan.pdf>). To address the USFWS request, PennDOT’s Pollinator Habitat Plan will be reviewed to identify appropriate plants for

potential seeding and landscaping opportunities that benefit the species as part of the development of the landscaping plans prepared as part of the earth disturbance permitting in final design.

5.0 Summary of Impacts

Potential impacts for threatened and endangered species and species of concern are described as follows. The general habitats impacted by each alternative are presented in the following table.

Table 5 - Habitat Impact Summary

Terrestrial Habitat Type – Impacts	North	Central	South
Forested/Wooded Habitat (acres)	25	31	123
Potential Bat Swarming Habitat (acres)	86	74	77
Productive Agricultural Land (acres)	144	116	104
Karst Geologic Areas (# features)	20	5	2
Important Bird Areas (acres)	0	2	110
Wetlands loss (acres)	14.5	14.7	11.9
Streams loss (linear feet)	1,614	4,406	8,452

USFWS – Migratory Birds: The North and Central Alternatives are positioned across the project area landscape to minimize land and vegetation disturbance, avoid fragmentation, avoid permanent habitat alterations in areas where birds are highly concentrated (i.e. the Important Bird Areas, [IBAs]), and avoid large contiguous tracts of wildlife habitat. The North Alternative impacts 25 acres of forest land and the Central Alternative impacts 31 acres of forest land. In contrast, the South Alternative impacts 123 acres of forest land and 108 acres of the Important Bird Area(s).

USFWS – Bald Eagle: The identified bald eagle nest within the project area is approximately 1,400 linear feet south of the project alternatives. The Central and South Alternatives are basically on the same alignment in the general area of the bald eagle nest. The North Alternative is slightly north of the Central and South Alternatives in this area and consequently even further north away from the bald eagle nest. Direct and indirect impacts are not anticipated from any alternative.

USFWS – Pollinator Habitat: Pollinator habitats can generally include a multitude of areas including residential gardens, old fields, wetland complexes, forested lands, and floodplains. The North Alternative impacts the most agricultural lands while the South impacts the most forested lands. Bridges have been incorporated into the project design of each alternative to avoid and minimize impacts to the numerous stream/wetland/floodplain complexes across the project area.

PFBC – Protected Mussel Species (Triangle Floater): PFBC identified a potential concern for mussel species including the Triangle Floater in the Sinking Creek drainage basin. In the Sinking Creek drainage basin of the project area, the North, Central and South are primarily all located on the same alignment and bridges are planned for the main stream crossings. The bridge spans are planned to extend across the floodplain to avoid and minimize stream impacts and the in-stream biota.

DCNR – Handsome Sedge, Roundleaf Serviceberry, Declined Trillium, and Hemlock Palustrine Forest: Field studies for Handsome Sedge, Roundleaf Serviceberry and Declined Trillium were conducted in the spring of 2025.

None of these species were identified during field investigations; therefore, no impacts are anticipated for the project. The Hemlock Palustrine Forest habitat is located upstream of the proposed Sinking Creek bridge crossing that is included in the design for all three alternatives. The habitat under the proposed bridge crossing downstream of the Palustrine Hemlock Forest consists of palustrine emergent wetland floodplain and not forested.

USFWS – Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat: Following project screening in the IPaC system for all three alternatives, it was determined by the results of those reviews that the project would qualify for PBO usage for the North and Central Alternatives. Both the North and Central Alternatives would result in a may affect, likely to adversely affect determination for the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat and proposed tricolored bat. The North Alternative would impact 25 acres of forest land and 86 acres of potential swarming habitat. The Central Alternative would impact 31 acres of forest land and 74 acres of potential swarming habitat. Tree removal for the North and Central Alternatives does not exceed 20 acres of trees per 5 miles of alignment indicated in the IPaC review. PennDOT Engineering District 2-0 has committed to limit activities causing disturbance to roosting bats, including use of percussives and all tree removal, to be performed within the appropriate time-of-year restriction time frames to avoid and minimize impacts to protected bats.

The South Alternative would require a larger amount of forest impact and a large amount of rock/hillside removal due to the location on the ridge side. The South Alternative would impact 123 acres of forest land and 77 acres of potential swarming habitat. Due to the anticipated forest loss and extensive construction, including percussive activities, a Biological Assessment (BA) would be needed to further evaluate the advancement of the South Alternative with respect to potential effects to protected bat species. The PBO cannot be used to advance the Southern Alternative due to the amount of forest impacts required for construction of the alignment.

6.0 Conclusion and Mitigation Measures

The results from the January 8, 2025 PNDI update and specific coordination with PA DCNR and PFBC on January 10 identified the following species of concern within the project area.

- PGC – Protected bat species, but deferred authority to the USFWS;
- PFBC – Protected mussel species (Triangle Floater);
- PA DCNR – Protected plant species (Handsome Sedge, Roundleaf Serviceberry, Declined Trillium) and natural communities of concern (Hemlock Palustrine Forest); and
- USFWS – Protected bat species (Indiana bat, Northern Long-eared Bat, and Tricolored Bat).

Additionally, the USFWS's August 22, 2024 letter to the FHWA for the SCAC Notice of Intent (NOI), identified concerns with protected bats (Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat), migratory birds, bald and golden eagles, pollinator habitat and wetlands and streams. The PNDI receipt for the project area is in Appendix B. Agency correspondence is in Appendix C. The following summarizes the potential effect and mitigation commitments for each species.

USFWS – Migratory Birds: PennDOT proposes to limit tree clearing to occur between September 1 and March 31 to avoid conflicts with migratory birds. The Central and North Alternatives are positioned across the SCAC landscape to minimize land and vegetation disturbance, avoid fragmentation, avoid permanent habitat conversion in areas where birds are highly concentrated (i.e. the Important Bird Areas), and avoid large contiguous tracts of wildlife habitat.

USFWS – Bald Eagle: The identified bald eagle nest within the project area is approximately 1,400 linear feet south of the three project alternatives. Direct and indirect impacts are not anticipated from any alternative. Coordination with the USFWS will continue through final design regarding the presence of the nest with respect to the alternatives. The area along the project alternative and US 322 that falls within a ½-mile of the nest, would be the section of the project alternative between Neff Road and Addleman Circle. In this area, there will be a time-of-year restriction established to avoid extremely loud noises (blasting or hammer drill type loud noises), if needed, between January through July.

USFWS – Pollinator Habitat: PennDOT's Pollinator Plan will be reviewed to identify appropriate plants for potential seeding and landscaping opportunities that benefit the species as part of the development of the landscaping plans prepared as part of the earth disturbance permitting in final design.

PFBC – Protected Mussel Species (Triangle Floater): PFBC requested that they be notified nine months prior to construction so that they can perform on-site surveys and mussel translocations in the area of disturbance during suitable conditions. The mussel survey season begins May 15 and concludes October 1. In addition to mussel surveys and translocations, Best Management Practices (BMPs); Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs); and strict Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) measures will likely be required when work in and around Sinking Creek is required to minimize disturbance to in-stream and riparian ecosystems.

PA DCNR – Handsome Sedge, Roundleaf Serviceberry, Declined Trillium, and Hemlock Palustrine Forest: Field studies for Handsome Sedge, Roundleaf Serviceberry and Declined Trillium were conducted in the spring of 2025. None of these species were identified during the botanical survey field investigations. The Hemlock Palustrine Forest habitat is located upstream of the proposed Sinking Creek bridge crossing (included in the design for all three alternatives). Coordination with the PA DCNR regarding the results of the field studies is ongoing.

USFWS – Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat: Following project screening in the IPaC system for all three alternatives, it was determined by the results of those reviews that the project would qualify for PBO usage for the North and Central Alternatives. Both the North and Central Alternatives would result in a *May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect* determination for the endangered Indiana bat and northern long-eared bats and proposed-endangered tricolored bat. Use of the PBO requires several avoidance and minimization measures to avoid take of the protected bats. PennDOT Engineering District 2-0 has committed to limit activities causing disturbance to roosting bats, including use of percussives and all tree removal, to be performed within the appropriate time-of-year restriction time frames. Tree removal for the North and Central Alternatives do not exceed 20 acres of trees per 5 miles of alignment indicated in the IPaC review.

Mitigation Measure Commitments for protected bat species include the following:

- Ensure all contractor employees are aware of the environmental commitments,
- For karst areas, use best management practices, secondary containment measures and other spill prevention to avoid impacts to hibernacula. Where practicable, employ a 300-ft buffer for fueling areas from caves, sink holes, losing streams, and springs in karst,
- Direct temporary lighting away from suitable habitat during active season,
- Limit tree removal to all that is needed to complete all aspects of the project,
- Avoid tree removal and percussives during the pup season (May through July),
- Clearly identify tree removal from tree avoidance areas, using bright protective fencing,
- Conduct tree removal during bat inactive season of November 15 through March 31.

The South Alternative would require a large amount of rock/hillside removal due to the location on the ridge side. It would likely not be possible to limit/stop the use of percussives to avoid the bat pup season. Tree removal could likely be avoided during the bat active season; however, the amount of tree clearing is in excess of the 20 acres per 5-mile threshold indicated in IPaC reviews. A Biological Assessment (BA) would be necessary to evaluate the impacts and potential effects to protected bat species and advance construction of the South Alternative.

7.0 Preparers

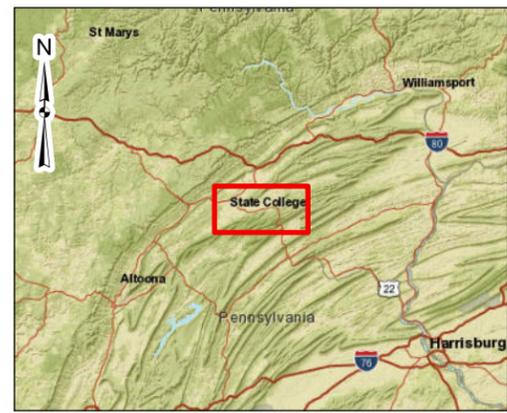
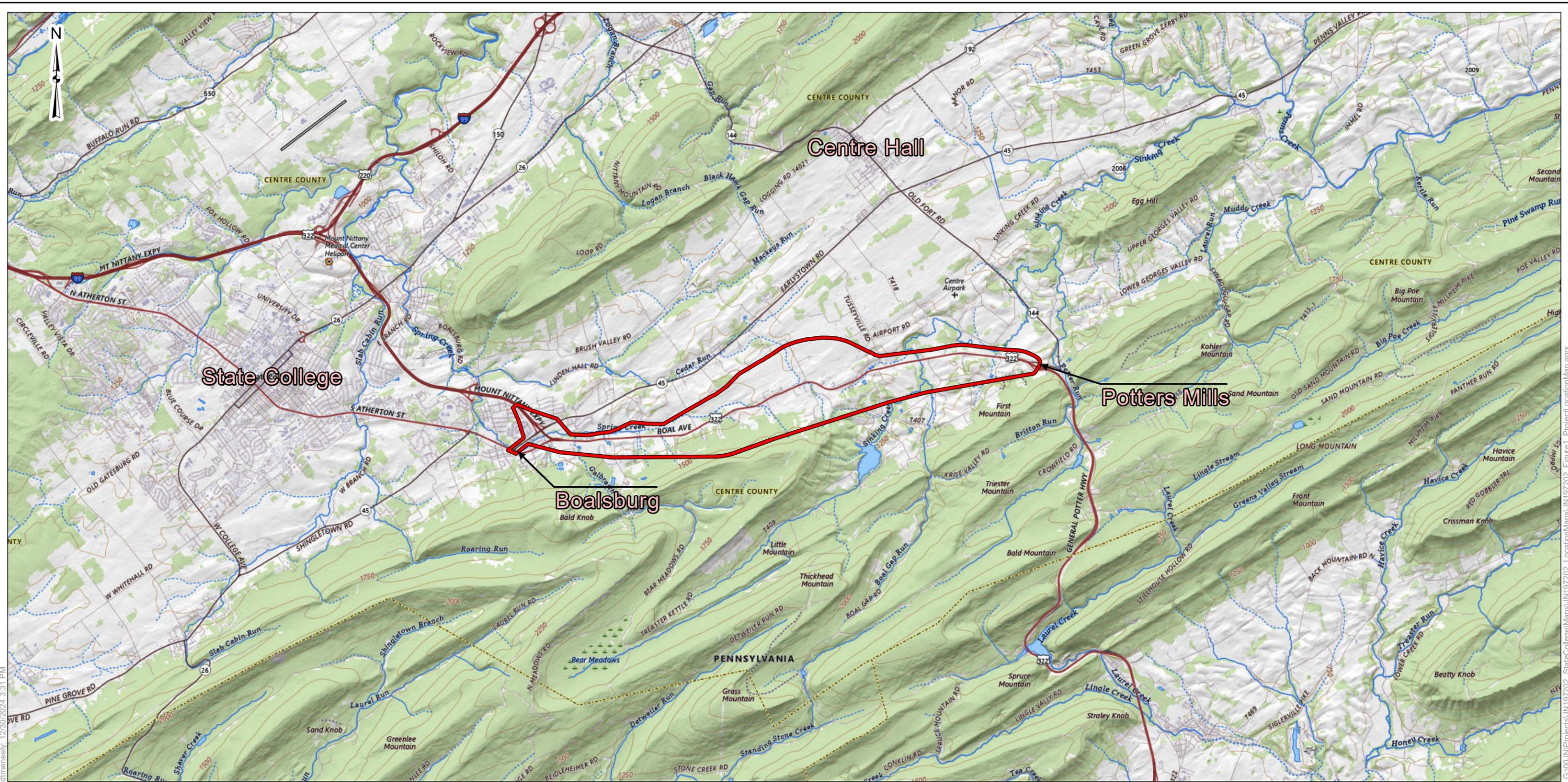
James A. Sinclair, Senior Scientist, Skelly and Loy, Inc., *A Terracon Company*

Samantha Hockenberry, PWS, CE, Senior Scientist, Skelly and Loy, Inc., *A Terracon Company*

Emma Shuey, Field Scientist, Skelly and Loy, Inc., *A Terracon Company*

Paul DeAngelo, Senior Principal, Skelly and Loy, Inc., *A Terracon Company*

APPENDIX A - FIGURES



Legend
 Project Location

DATA SOURCE(S):
 USGS Quadrangle - Centre Hall and State College, Pennsylvania 2023



Project No.: JN197202
 Date: December 2024
 Drawn By: DTM
 Reviewed By: BSR

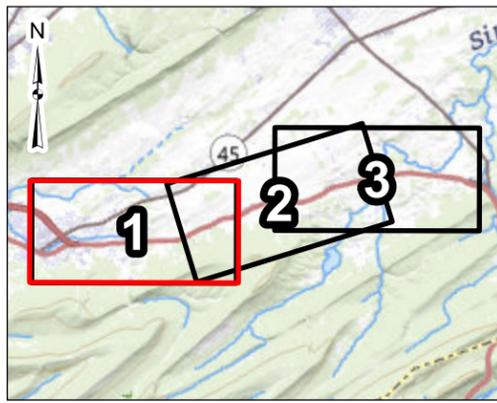
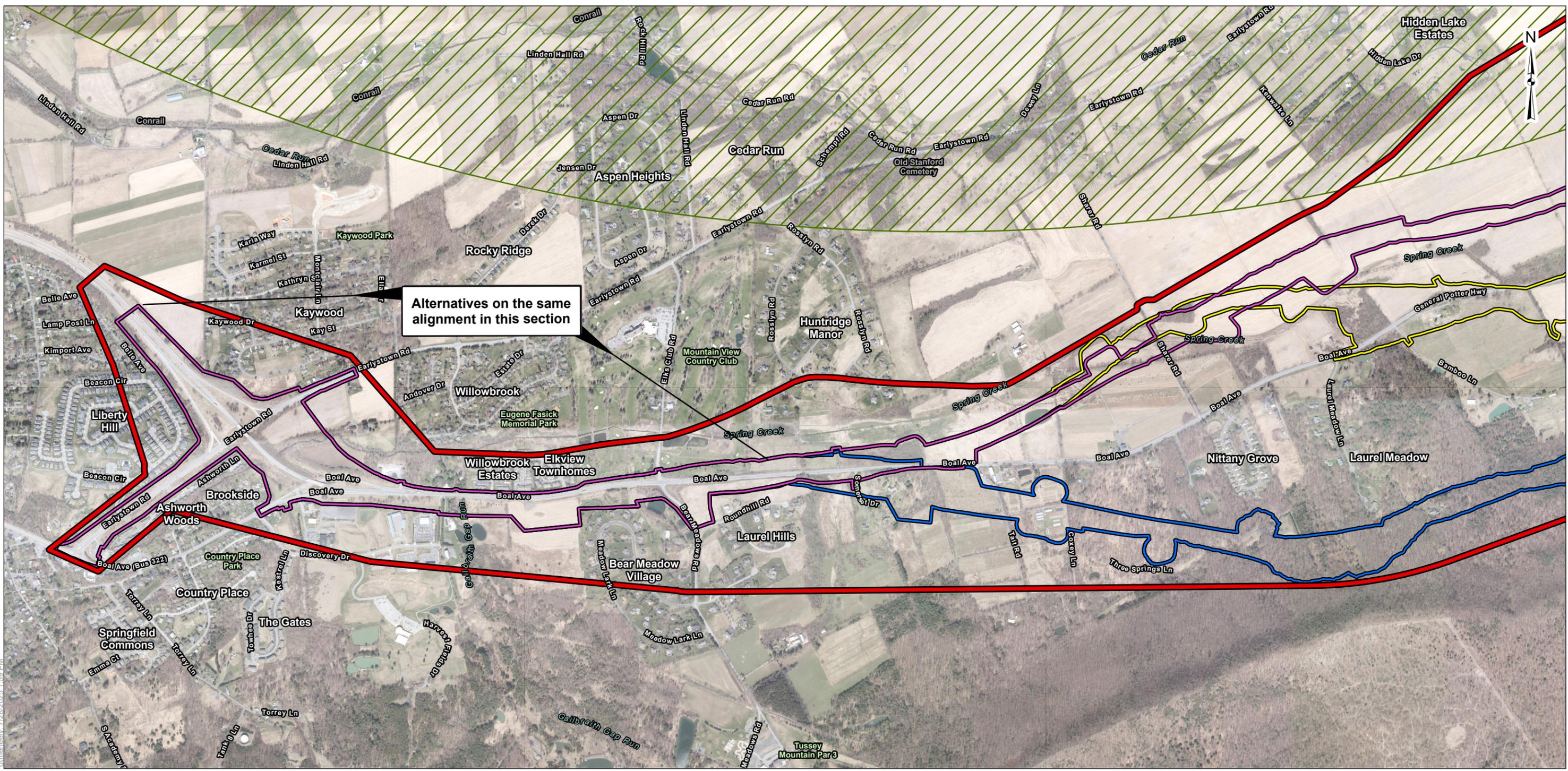
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Project Location Map
 State College Area Connector Project
 Centre County, Pennsylvania

Figure
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Legend

-  Project Area
-  North Alternative
-  Central Alternative
-  South Alternative
-  Northern Long Eared Bat Swarming Habitat

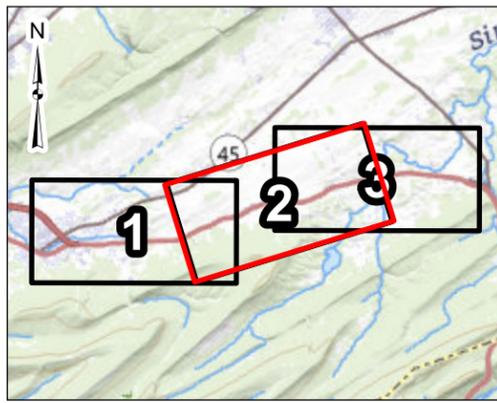
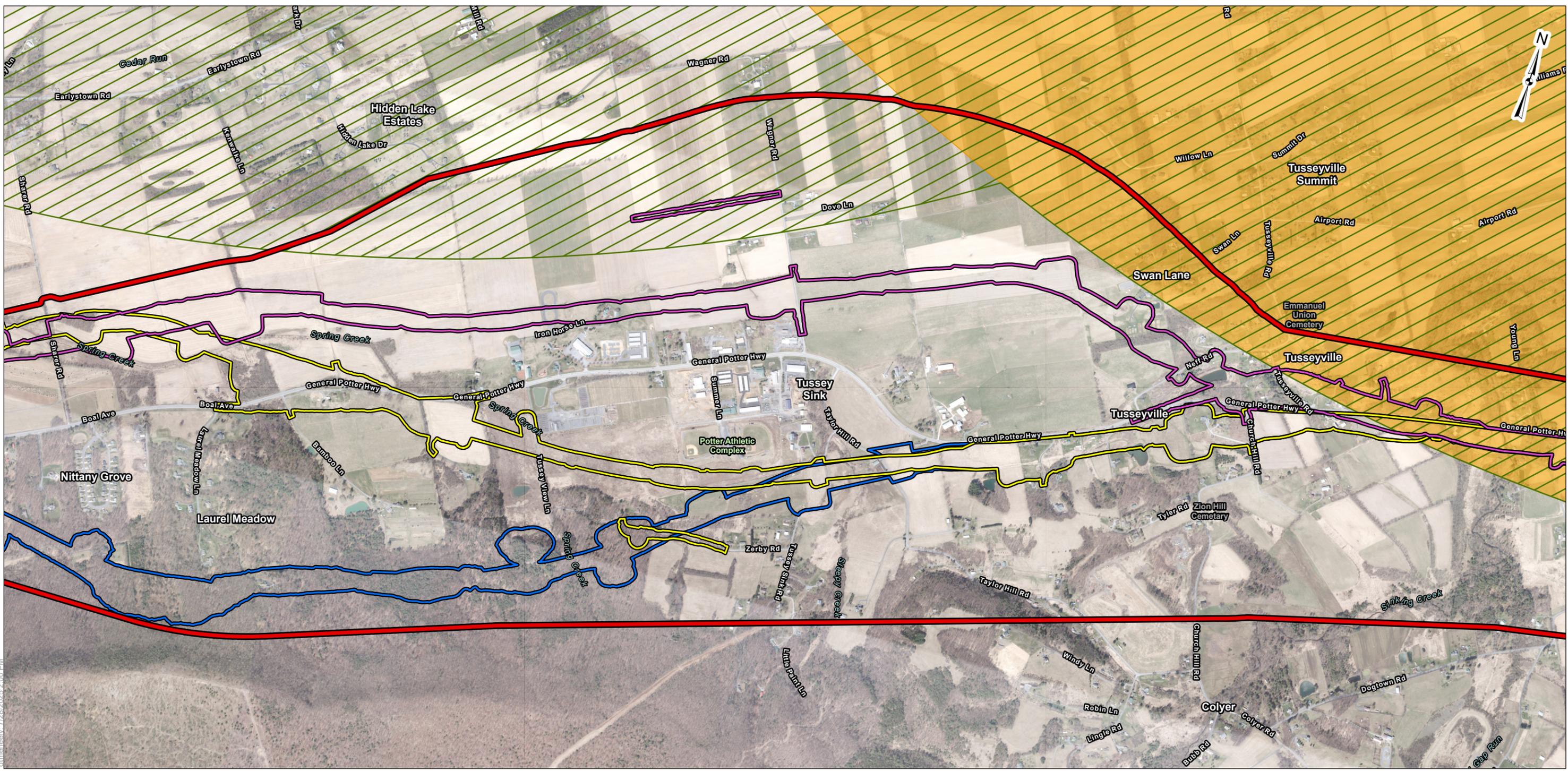


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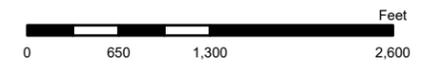
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Bat Hibernacula Buffer Zones for Indiana and Northern Long-eared Bat
 State College Area Connector Project
 Centre County, Pennsylvania

Figure 2
Sheet 1 of 3



- Legend**
- Project Area
 - North Alternative
 - Central Alternative
 - South Alternative
 - Northern Long Eared Bat Swarming Habitat
 - Indiana Bat Swarming Habitat



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Bat Hibernacula Buffer Zones for Indiana and Northern Long-eared Bat

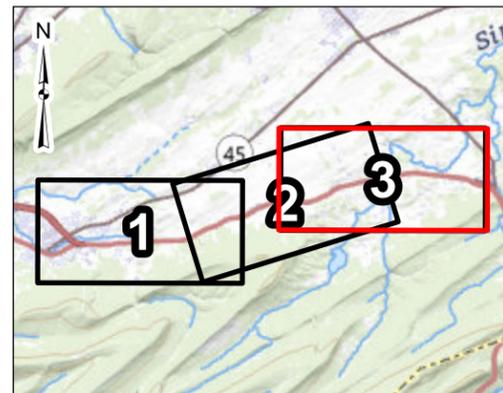
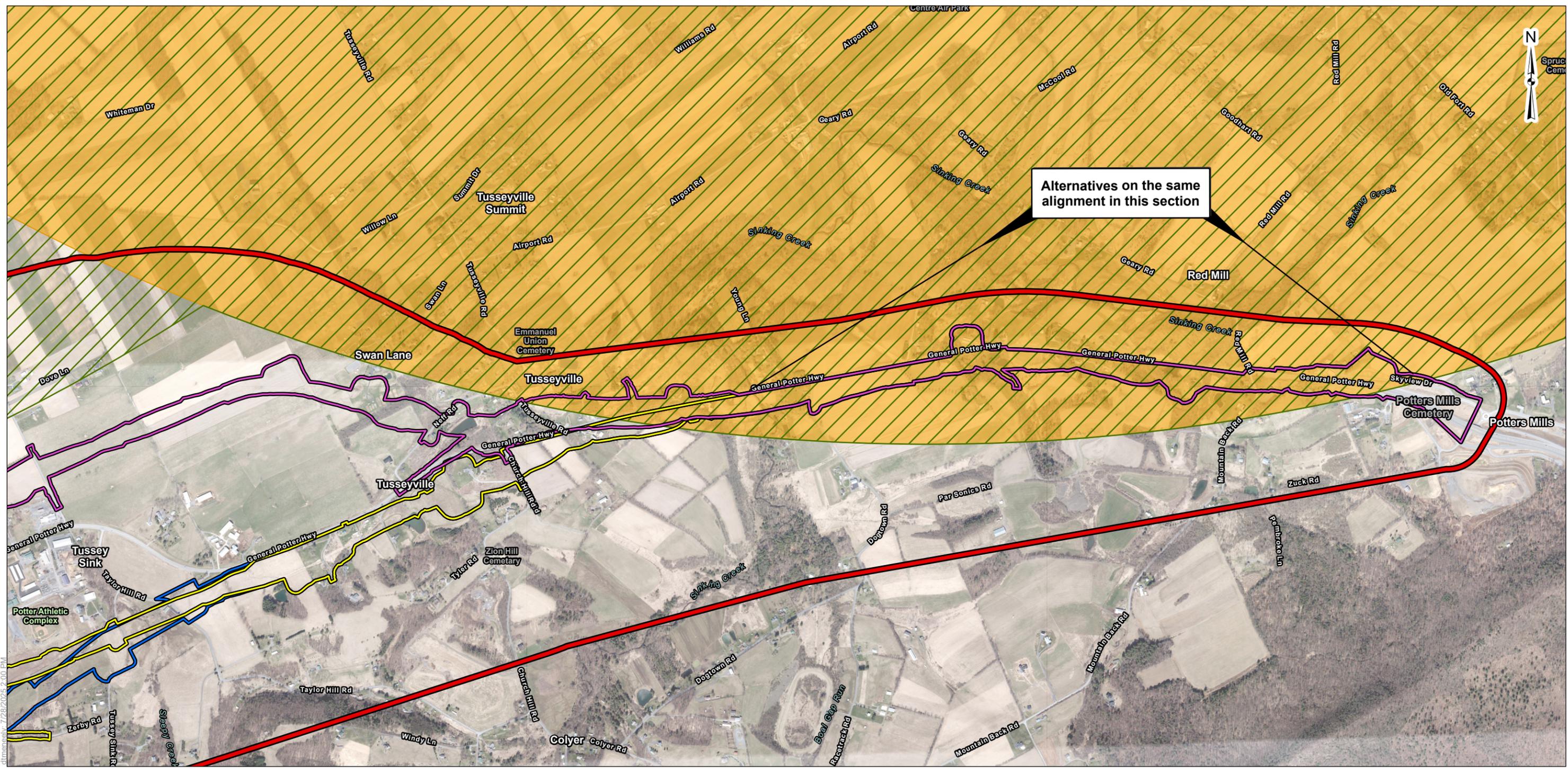
State College Area Connector Project
 Centre County, Pennsylvania

Figure 2

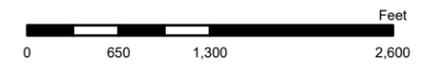
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- Legend**
- Project Area
 - North Alternative
 - Central Alternative
 - South Alternative
 - Northern Long Eared Bat Swarming Habitat
 - Indiana Bat Swarming Habitat



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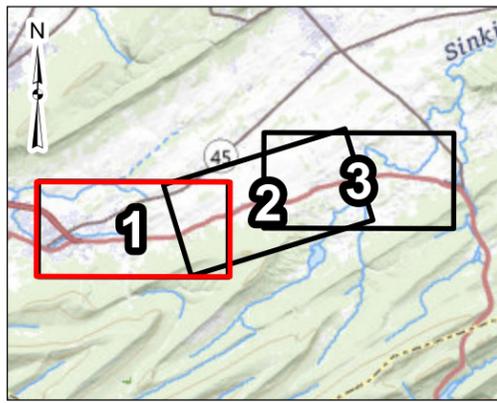
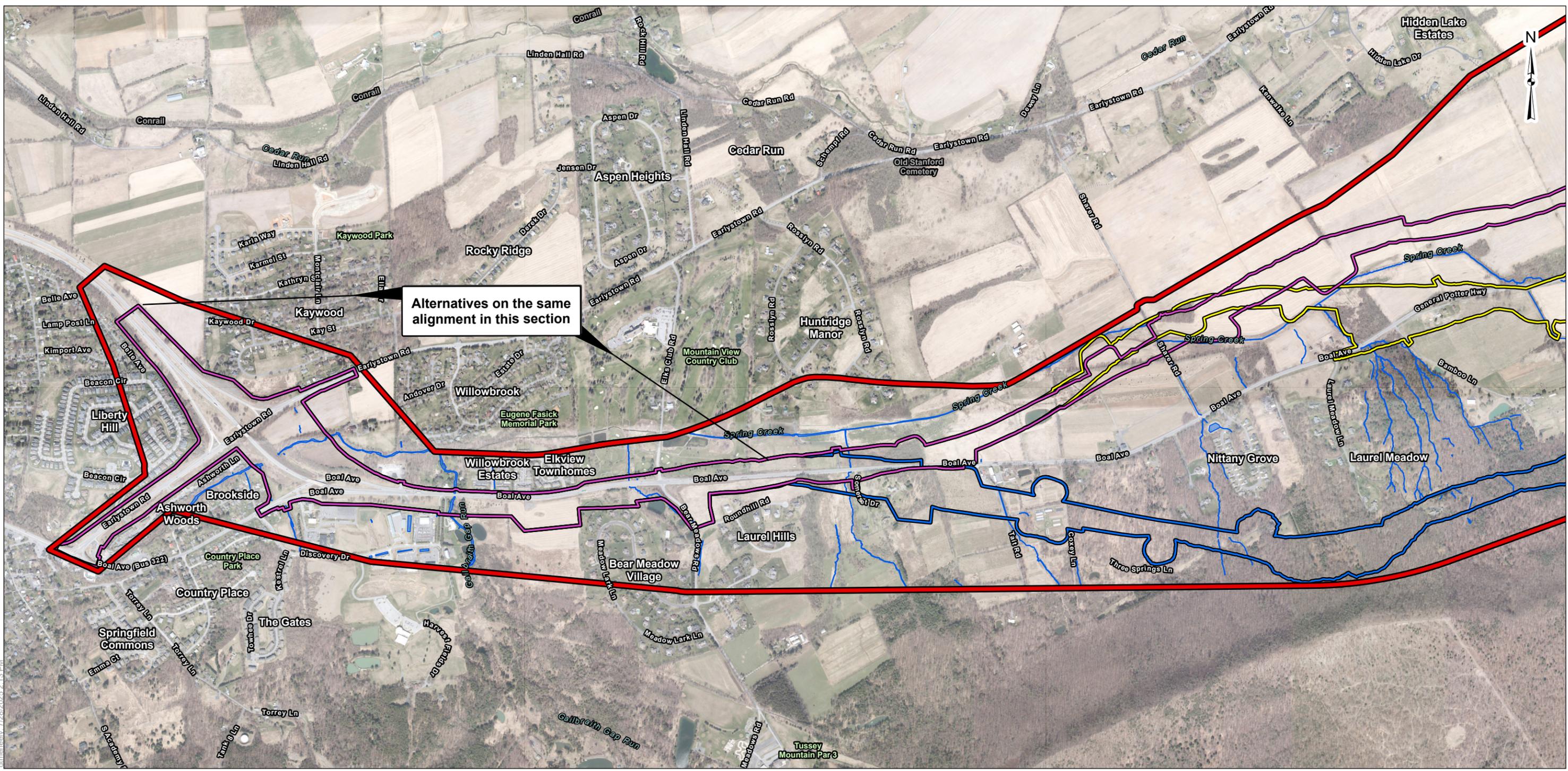
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Bat Hibernacula Buffer Zones for Indiana and Northern Long-eared Bat
 State College Area Connector Project
 Centre County, Pennsylvania

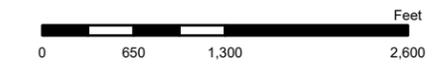
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- Legend**
- Project Area
 - North Alternative
 - Central Alternative
 - South Alternative
 - Watercourse



Project No.: JN197202
 Date: July 2025
 Drawn By: DTM
 Reviewed By: ARL

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**Sinking Creek Watershed
 Potential Mussel Habitat**

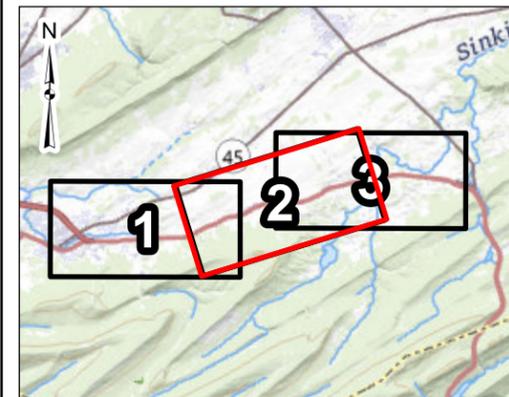
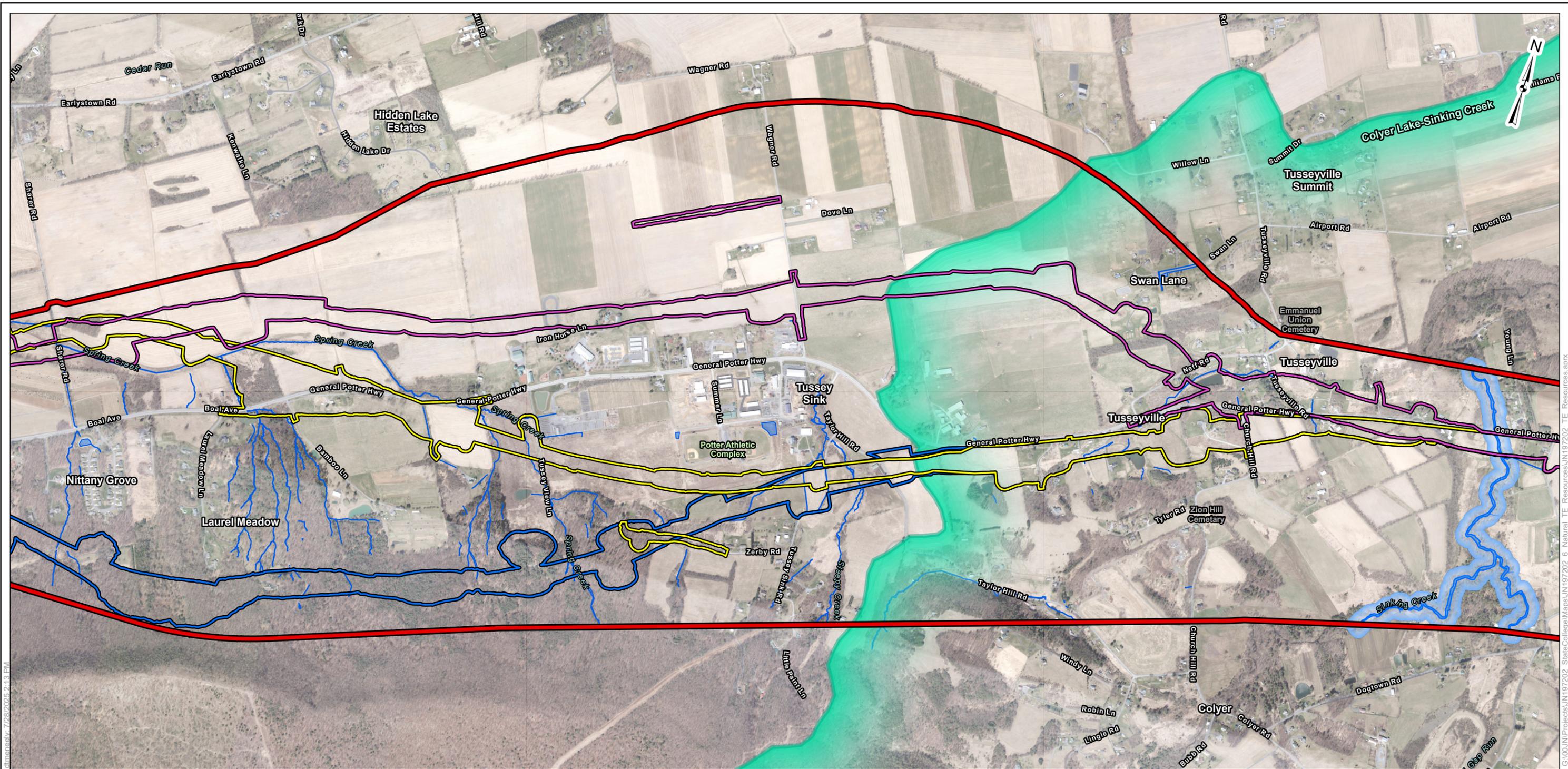
State College Area Connector Project
 Centre County, Pennsylvania

Figure 3

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 1 of 3**

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Legend

- Project Area
- North Alternative
- Central Alternative
- South Alternative
- Watercourse
- Sinking Creek
- Sinking Creek Watershed



Project No.: JN197202
 Date: July 2025
 Drawn By: DTM
 Reviewed By: ARL

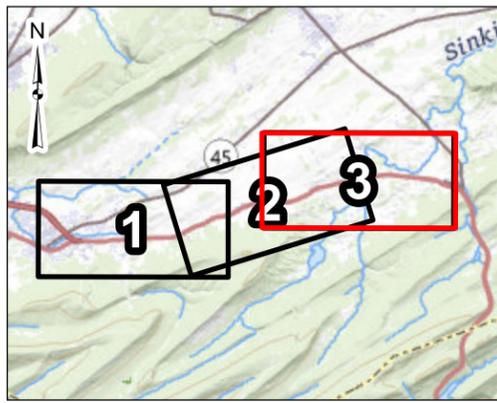
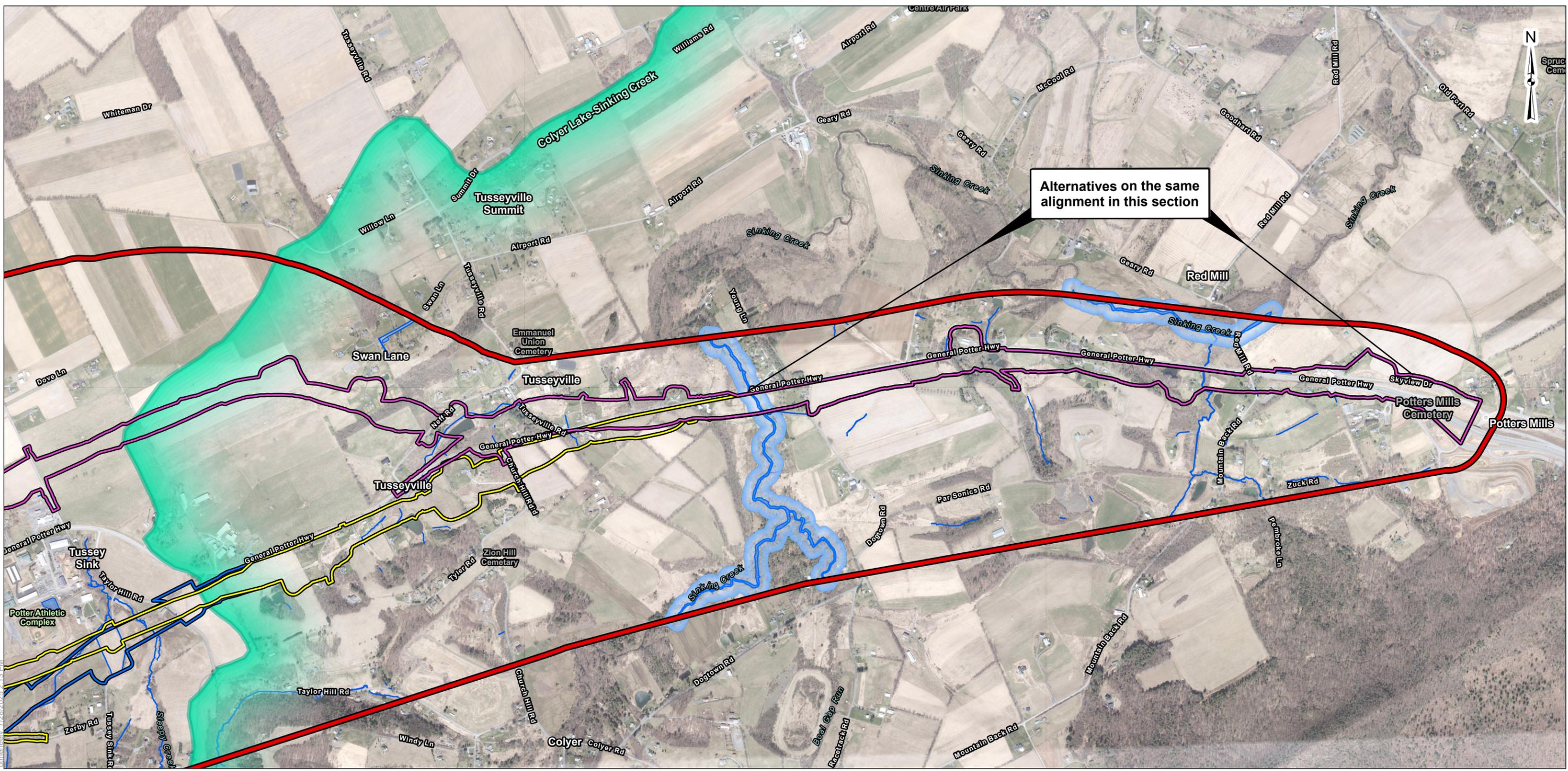
SKELLY AND LOY
 A Terracon Company
 449 Eisenhower Blvd #300 Harrisburg, PA 17111
 PH. (717) 232-0593 terracon.com

**Sinking Creek Watershed
 Potential Mussel Habitat**
 State College Area Connector Project
 Centre County, Pennsylvania

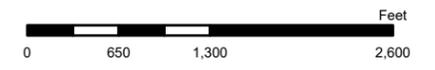
Figure 3
Sheet 2 of 3

dimensions: 7/28/2025 2:13 PM

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- Legend**
- Project Area
 - North Alternative
 - Central Alternative
 - South Alternative
 - Watercourse
 - Sinking Creek
 - Sinking Creek Watershed



Project No.: JN197202
 Date: July 2025
 Drawn By: DTM
 Reviewed By: ARL

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**Sinking Creek Watershed
 Potential Mussel Habitat**
 State College Area Connector Project
 Centre County, Pennsylvania

Figure 3
Sheet 3 of 3

dimensional: 7/28/2025 2:13 PM

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APPENDIX B – PNDI RECEIPT

1. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: **PennDOT_State College Connector Project - NEPA Study Area PNDI Re-Run**

Date of Review: **1/8/2025 05:14:01 PM**

Project Category: **Transportation, Roads, New construction/ New alignment**

Project Area: **3,963.37 acres**

County(s): **Centre**

Township/Municipality(s): **Harris Township; Potter Township**

ZIP Code:

Quadrangle Name(s): **CENTRE HALL; STATE COLLEGE**

Watersheds HUC 8: **Bald Eagle; Lower Susquehanna-Penns**

Watersheds HUC 12: **Cedar Run; Colyer Lake-Sinking Creek; Spring Creek-Bald Eagle Creek**

Decimal Degrees: **40.788598, -77.706353**

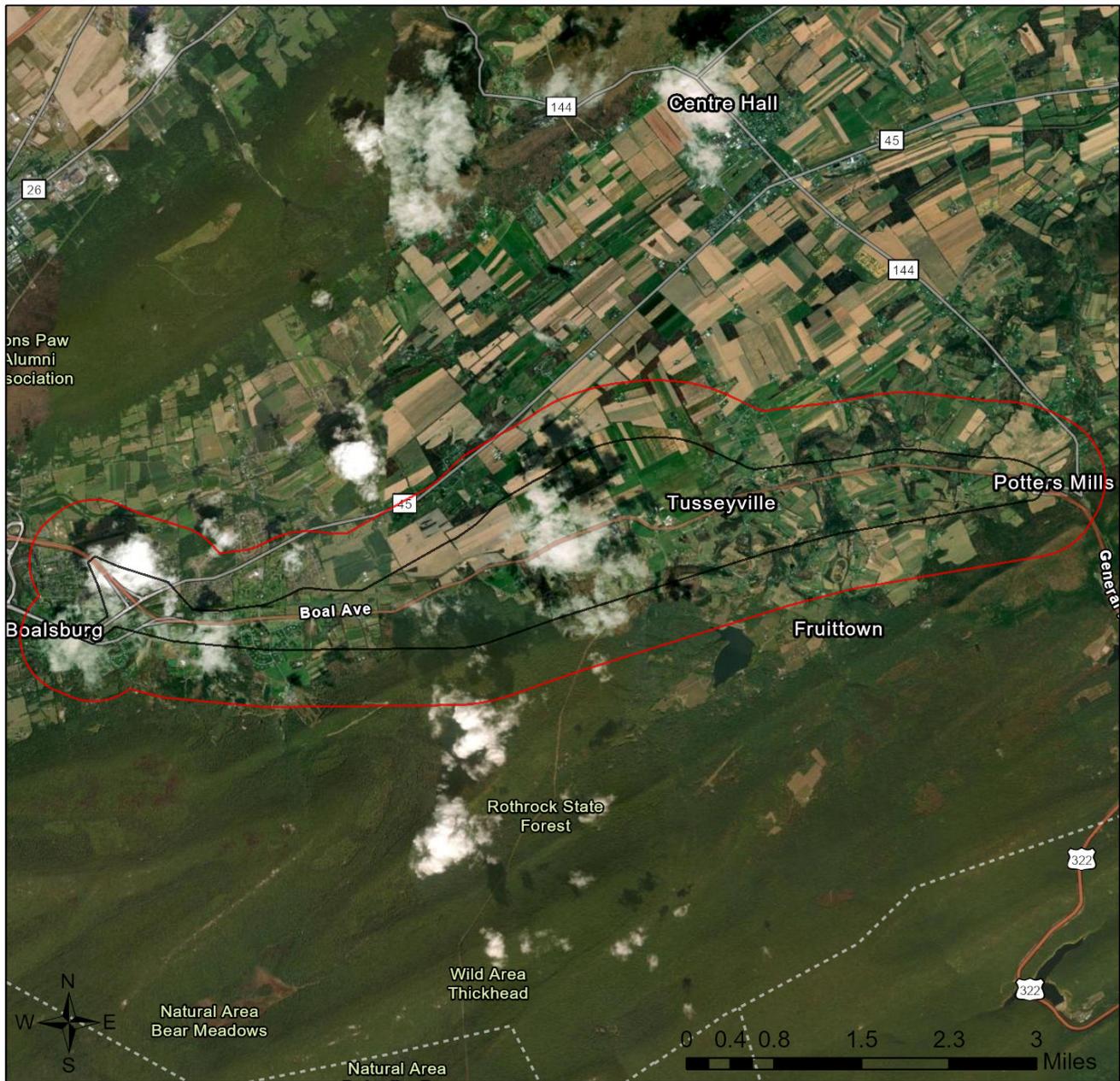
Degrees Minutes Seconds: **40° 47' 18.9510" N, 77° 42' 22.8706" W**

2. SEARCH RESULTS

Agency	Results	Response
PA Game Commission	Conservation Measure	No Further Review Required, See Agency Comments
PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	Potential Impact	FURTHER REVIEW IS REQUIRED, See Agency Response
PA Fish and Boat Commission	Potential Impact	FURTHER REVIEW IS REQUIRED, See Agency Response
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Potential Impact	MORE INFORMATION REQUIRED, See Agency Response

As summarized above, Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) records indicate there may be potential impacts to threatened and endangered and/or special concern species and resources within the project area. If the response above indicates "No Further Review Required" no additional communication with the respective agency is required. If the response is "Further Review Required" or "See Agency Response," refer to the appropriate agency comments below. Please see the DEP Information Section of this receipt if a PA Department of Environmental Protection Permit is required.

PennDOT_State College Connector Project - NEPA Study Area PNDI Re-Run

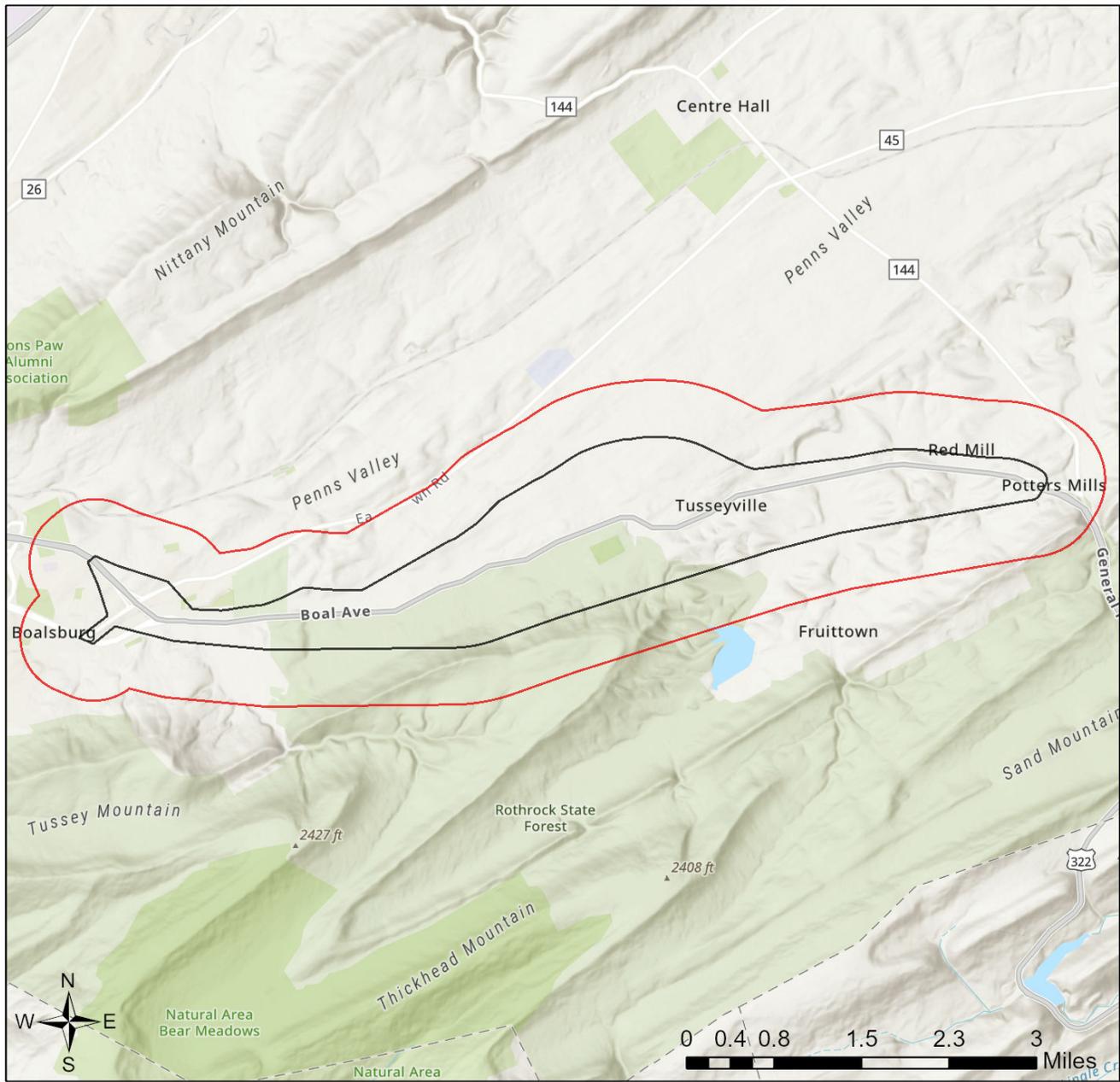


-  Buffered Project Boundary
-  Project Boundary



Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community

PennDOT_State College Connector Project - NEPA Study Area PNDI Re-Run



- Buffered Project Boundary
- Project Boundary



Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community

RESPONSE TO QUESTION(S) ASKED

Q1: Does the following statement apply to this project? The project area HAS been investigated by someone qualified to identify and delineate wetlands, and wetlands or streams were located, and some project activities will or might occur within 300 feet of a wetland or stream.

Your answer is: Yes

Q2: Will the entire project area (including any discharge), plus a 300 feet buffer around the project area, all occur in or on an existing building, parking lot, driveway, road, road shoulder, street, runway, paved area, railroad bed, maintained (periodically mown) lawn, crop agriculture field or maintained orchard?

Your answer is: No

Q3: The proposed project is in the range of the Indiana bat. Describe how the project will affect bat habitat (forests, woodlots and trees) and indicate what measures will be taken in consideration of this. Round acreages up to the nearest acre (e.g., 0.2 acres = 1 acre).

Your answer is: The project will affect 40 to 200 acres of forests, woodlots and trees AND a seasonal restriction on tree clearing will be implemented (Conduct any tree cutting, tree inundation (flooding), and prescribed burning from October 1 to March 31.)

Q4: Is tree removal, tree cutting or forest clearing necessary to implement all aspects of this project?

Your answer is: Yes

Q5: Is tree removal, tree cutting or forest clearing of 40 acres or more necessary to implement all aspects of this project?

Your answer is: Yes

Q6: How many acres of woodland, forest, forested fencerows and trees will be cut, cleared, removed, disturbed or flooded (inundated) as a result of carrying out all aspects or phases of this project? [Round acreages UP to the nearest acre (e.g., 0.2 acres = 1 acre).]

Your answer is: More than 50 acres

3. AGENCY COMMENTS

Regardless of whether a DEP permit is necessary for this proposed project, any potential impacts to threatened and endangered species and/or special concern species and resources must be resolved with the appropriate jurisdictional agency. In some cases, a permit or authorization from the jurisdictional agency may be needed if adverse impacts to these species and habitats cannot be avoided.

These agency determinations and responses are **valid for two years** (from the date of the review), and are based on the project information that was provided, including the exact project location; the project type, description, and features; and any responses to questions that were generated during this search. If any of the following change: 1) project location, 2) project size or configuration, 3) project type, or 4) responses to the questions that were asked during the online review, the results of this review are not valid, and the review must be searched again via the PNDI Environmental Review Tool and resubmitted to the jurisdictional agencies. The PNDI tool is a primary screening tool, and a desktop review may reveal more or fewer impacts than what is listed on this PNDI receipt. The jurisdictional agencies **strongly advise against** conducting surveys for the species listed on the receipt prior to consultation with the agencies.

PA Game Commission

RESPONSE:

Conservation Measure: Potential impacts to state and federally listed species which are under the jurisdiction of both the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may occur as a result of this project. As a result, the PGC defers comments on potential impacts to federally listed species to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. No further coordination with the Pennsylvania Game Commission is required at this time.

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

RESPONSE:

Further review of this project is necessary to resolve the potential impact(s). Please send project information to this agency for review (see WHAT TO SEND).

DCNR Species: (Note: The Pennsylvania Conservation Explorer tool is a primary screening tool, and a desktop review may reveal more or fewer species than what is listed below. After desktop review, if a botanical survey is required by DCNR, we recommend the DCNR Botanical Survey Protocols, available here:

<https://conservationexplorer.dcnr.pa.gov/content/survey-protocols>)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Current Status	Proposed Status	Survey Window
Hemlock Palustrine Forest	Hemlock Palustrine Forest	Special Concern Resource*	Special Concern Resource*	
Sensitive Species**		Special Concern Species*	Threatened	Flowers late April - early May

PA Fish and Boat Commission

RESPONSE:

Further review of this project is necessary to resolve the potential impact(s). Please send project information to this agency for review (see WHAT TO SEND).

PFBC Species: (Note: The Pennsylvania Conservation Explorer tool is a primary screening tool, and a desktop review may reveal more or fewer species than what is listed below.)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Current Status
Alasmidonta undulata	Triangle Floater	Special Concern Species*

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

RESPONSE:

Information Request: The proposed project is located in the vicinity of northern long-eared bat spring staging/fall swarming habitat. Enter project information, including the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory receipt number, into the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation tool (IPaC) (<https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>). Follow the Northern Long-eared Bat Rangewide Determination Key step-by-step process to review this projects's potential effect on northern long-eared bats.

Avoidance Measure: Conduct any tree cutting, disturbance, inundation (flooding) and prescribed burning from October 1 to March 31.

As the project proponent or applicant, I certify that I will implement the above Avoidance Measure:

 (Signature)

SPECIAL NOTE: If you agree to implement the above Avoidance Measure and if applicable, any Information Requests, no further coordination with this agency regarding threatened and endangered species and/or special concern species and resources is required. If you are not able to comply with the Avoidance Measures, you are required to coordinate with this agency - please send project information to this agency for review (see "What to Send" section).

* Special Concern Species or Resource - Plant or animal species classified as rare, tentatively undetermined or candidate as well as other taxa of conservation concern, significant natural communities, special concern populations (plants or animals) and unique geologic features.

** Sensitive Species - Species identified by the jurisdictional agency as collectible, having economic value, or being susceptible to decline as a result of visitation.

WHAT TO SEND TO JURISDICTIONAL AGENCIES

If project information was requested by one or more of the agencies above, upload* or email the following information to the agency(s) (see AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION). Instructions for uploading project materials can be found [here](#). This option provides the applicant with the convenience of sending project materials to a single location accessible to all three state agencies (but not USFWS).

*If information was requested by USFWS, applicants must email, or mail, project information to IR1_ESPenn@fws.gov to initiate a review. USFWS will not accept uploaded project materials.

Check-list of Minimum Materials to be submitted:

___ Project narrative with a description of the overall project, the work to be performed, current physical characteristics of the site and acreage to be impacted.

___ A map with the project boundary and/or a basic site plan (particularly showing the relationship of the project to the physical features such as wetlands, streams, ponds, rock outcrops, etc.)

In addition to the materials listed above, USFWS REQUIRES the following

___ **SIGNED** copy of a Final Project Environmental Review Receipt

The inclusion of the following information may expedite the review process.

___ Color photos keyed to the basic site plan (i.e. showing on the site plan where and in what direction each photo was taken and the date of the photos)

___ Information about the presence and location of wetlands in the project area, and how this was determined (e.g., by a qualified wetlands biologist), if wetlands are present in the project area, provide project plans showing the location of all project features, as well as wetlands and streams.

4. DEP INFORMATION

The Pa Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires that a signed copy of this receipt, along with any required documentation from jurisdictional agencies concerning resolution of potential impacts, be submitted with applications for permits requiring PNDI review. Two review options are available to permit applicants for handling PNDI coordination in conjunction with DEP's permit review process involving either T&E Species or species of special concern. Under sequential review, the permit applicant performs a PNDI screening and completes all coordination with the appropriate jurisdictional agencies prior to submitting the permit application. The applicant will include with its application, both a PNDI receipt and/or a clearance letter from the jurisdictional agency if the PNDI Receipt shows a Potential Impact to a species or the applicant chooses to obtain letters directly from the jurisdictional agencies. Under concurrent review, DEP, where feasible, will allow technical review of the permit to occur concurrently with the T&E species consultation with the jurisdictional agency. The applicant must still supply a copy of the PNDI Receipt with its permit application. The PNDI Receipt should also be submitted to the appropriate agency according to directions on the PNDI Receipt. The applicant and the jurisdictional agency will work together to resolve the potential impact(s). See the DEP PNDI policy at <https://conservationexplorer.dcnr.pa.gov/content/resources>.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The PNDI environmental review website is a preliminary screening tool. There are often delays in updating species status classifications. Because the proposed status represents the best available information regarding the conservation status of the species, state jurisdictional agency staff give the proposed statuses at least the same consideration as the current legal status. If surveys or further information reveal that a threatened and endangered and/or special concern species and resources exist in your project area, contact the appropriate jurisdictional agency/agencies immediately to identify and resolve any impacts.

For a list of species known to occur in the county where your project is located, please see the species lists by county found on the PA Natural Heritage Program (PNHP) home page (www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us). Also note that the PNDI Environmental Review Tool only contains information about species occurrences that have actually been reported to the PNHP.

6. AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Bureau of Forestry, Ecological Services Section
400 Market Street, PO Box 8552
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552
Email: RA-HeritageReview@pa.gov

PA Fish and Boat Commission

Division of Environmental Services
595 E. Rolling Ridge Dr., Bellefonte, PA 16823
Email: RA-FBPACENOTIFY@pa.gov

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Pennsylvania Field Office
Endangered Species Section
110 Radnor Rd; Suite 101
State College, PA 16801
Email: IR1_ESPenn@fws.gov
NO Faxes Please

PA Game Commission

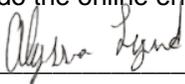
Bureau of Wildlife Management
Division of Environmental Review
2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797
Email: RA-PGC_PNDI@pa.gov
NO Faxes Please

7. PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Alyssa Lynd
Company/Business Name: Skelly and Loy Inc., A Terracon Company
Address: 449 Eisenhower Blvd., Suite 300
City, State, Zip: Harrisburg, PA 17111
Phone: (717) 510-7770 Fax: ()
Email: alynd@skellyloy.com

8. CERTIFICATION

I certify that ALL of the project information contained in this receipt (including project location, project size/configuration, project type, answers to questions) is true, accurate and complete. In addition, if the project type, location, size or configuration changes, or if the answers to any questions that were asked during this online review change, I agree to re-do the online environmental review.



applicant/project proponent signature

1/8/25

date

APPENDIX C – AGENCY PNDI RESPONSE LETTERS



1/10/2025

PNDI Number: PNDI-782938
 Version: FINAL_1; 01/08/2025

James A. Sinclair
Skelly and Loy, Inc.
 449 Eisenhower Boulevard, Suite 300
 Harrisburg, PA 17111
 Email: jsinclair@skellyloy.com (hard copy will not follow)

**Re: PennDOT_State College Connector Project - NEPA Study Area PNDI Re-Run
 Harris Township, Potter Township, Centre County, PA**

Dear James A. Sinclair,

Thank you for the submission of the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) Environmental Review Receipt Number **PNDI-782938 (FINAL_1)** for review. PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources screened this project for potential impacts to species and resources under DCNR’s responsibility, which includes plants, terrestrial invertebrates, natural communities, and geologic features only.

Potential Impact Anticipated – Survey Request

PNDI records indicate species or resources under DCNR’s jurisdiction are located in the project vicinity. Based on a detailed PNDI review, DCNR determined potential impacts to the following threatened, endangered, or special concern species.

Scientific Name	Common Name	PA Current Status	PA Proposed Status	Survey Window	Suitable Habitat	Local Habitat
<i>Hemlock Palustrine Forest</i>	Hemlock Palustrine Forest	Special Concern Resource	Special Concern Resources			
<i>Amelanchier sanguinea</i>	Roundleaf Serviceberry	Special Concern Species	Endangered	Flowers mid-April - late May; fruits June - early July	Open woods, rocky slopes and barrens.	Deciduous shrub community on limestone.
<i>Carex formosa</i>	Handsome Sedge	Endangered	Endangered	Flowers / fruits May - July	Dry woods.	Calcareous, dry wooded north facing slope and in moist woods on level ground at the base of the slope.
<i>Trillium flexipes</i>	Declined Trillium	Special Concern Species	Threatened	Flowers late April - early May	Wooded hillsides, swampy woods and floodplains.	A diverse calcareous forest remnant along Spring Creek, growing on a gentle slope above the floodplain, with rocky and very calcareous soil.

- ✓ **Survey Request:** A botanical survey for the above species should be conducted by a qualified botanist at the appropriate time of year. Please submit the resulting report to our office for review. Contact our office prior to the survey for detailed information about the species or for a list of qualified surveyors.
- ✓ **Your botanist should carefully review the new DCNR Botanical Survey Protocols available at <https://conservationexplorer.dcnr.pa.gov/content/survey-protocols>.** These protocols are recommended to ensure that all necessary information is collected and that survey reports are prepared properly. It is the expectation of DCNR that these protocols will be followed when conducting surveys for species under our jurisdiction.
- ✓ **DCNR recommends that a Wild Plant Management Permit be obtained before conducting botanical surveys for Threatened, Endangered, and Special Concern PA Plant Species.** Permit information and application can be found here: <https://conservationexplorer.dcnr.pa.gov/content/resources>
- ✓ **A list of qualified botanists who have obtained our Wild Plant Management Permit can be found at <https://conservationexplorer.dcnr.pa.gov/content/wild-plant-management-permit-holders>.** These botanists are suitable candidates to perform a survey to our scientific standards.
- ✓ All target and non-target state-listed species found during the botanical survey should be reported to our office. **Please submit a completed Botanical Field Survey Form for each occurrence or population identified:** <http://www.gis.dcnr.state.pa.us/PNDI/2015%20Field%20Survey%20Form.pdf>. Mitigation measures and monitoring may be requested if state-listed species are found on or adjacent to the site.
- ✓ If preferred habitat does not exist on site, a survey may not be necessary. Please submit a habitat assessment report which describes the current land cover, habitat types, and species found on site.

This response represents the most up-to-date review of the PNDI data files and is valid for two (2) years only. If project plans change or more information on listed or proposed species becomes available, our determination may be reconsidered. Should the proposed work continue beyond the period covered by this letter and a permit has not been acquired, please resubmit the project to this agency as an "Update" (including an updated PNDI receipt, project narrative, description of project changes and accurate map). As a reminder, this finding applies to potential impacts under DCNR's jurisdiction only. Visit the PNHP website for directions on contacting the Commonwealth's other resource agencies for environmental review.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Hope Brooks, Ecological Information Specialist, by phone (717-705-2819) or via email (c-hobrooks@pa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Greg Podnieszinski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G' and 'P'.

Greg Podnieszinski, Section Chief
Natural Heritage Section



January 10, 2025

IN REPLY REFER TO

SIR# 60846

Skelly & Loy, Inc.
James Sinclair
449 Eisenhower Boulevard
Suite 300
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17111

**RE: Species Impact Review (SIR) – Rare, Candidate, Threatened and Endangered Species
PNDI Search No. 782938
State College Area Connector Project
Harris Township, Potter Township: CENTRE County**

Dear James Sinclair:

This responds to your inquiry about a Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) Internet Database search “potential conflict” or a threatened and endangered species impact review. These projects are screened for potential conflicts with rare, candidate, threatened or endangered species under Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission jurisdiction (fish, reptiles, amphibians, aquatic invertebrates only) using the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) database and our own files. These species of special concern are listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, the Wild Resource Conservation Act, and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Code (Chapter 75), or the Wildlife Code.

I have examined the project information accompanying your recent correspondence which shows the location of the above referenced project. Based on records maintained in the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) database and our own files, **rare or protected freshwater mussel species are known from the vicinity of the project area, specifically, within Sinking Creek.**

Freshwater mussels are the most imperiled taxonomic group in North America. Nearly half of the species known to occur in the Commonwealth are now extirpated (locally extinct) from Pennsylvania. Freshwater mussel species are extremely vulnerable to physical (i.e., siltation, dredging, trenching, riprap) and chemical (i.e., pH, temperature, dissolved oxygen, organic contaminants, heavy metals) changes to their aquatic environment. As such, we are concerned about direct and indirect effects that the proposed project may have on these species of concern. Therefore, we recommend construction techniques that avoid and/or minimize in-stream work, sedimentation, and changes to water quality.

Based on the project description that was submitted, in-stream disturbances are proposed that may have the potential to adversely impact freshwater mussels known to exist within the proposed project area. **We request that you notify this office nine (9) months prior to construction so that we will have enough lead time to perform on-site surveys and mussel translocations in the area of disturbance during suitable conditions. Please note that the mussel survey season begins May 15 and concludes October 1.** The notification can be in the form of an email to this office and should include

the project start date, a plan sheet showing the area to be impacted, description of the waterway in the disturbance area (i.e. depths, substrate, etc.) and a detailed description of the proposed work activities and sequencing. This information will assist us in our evaluation and expedite our review process and ultimately help us determine our survey and translocation methods.

This response represents the most up-to-date summary of the PNDI data and our files and is valid for two (2) years from the date of this letter. An absence of recorded species information does not necessarily imply species absence. Our data files and the PNDI system are continuously being updated with species occurrence information. Should project plans change or additional information on listed or proposed species become available, this determination may be reconsidered, and consultation shall be re-initiated.

If you have any questions regarding this review, please contact Bill Savage at 814-359-5145 or wisavage@pa.gov and refer to the SIR # 60846. Thank you for your cooperation and attention to this important matter of species conservation and habitat protection.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Bill Savage". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Savage, Fisheries Biologist
Watershed Analysis Section

/WS/dn

APPENDIX D – IPAC RECEIPTS



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Pennsylvania Ecological Services Field Office
110 Radnor Road Suite 101
State College, PA 16801-7987
Phone: (814) 234-4090 Fax: (814) 234-0748

In Reply Refer To:

07/06/2025 23:42:06 UTC

Project code: 2025-0117954

Project Name: PennDOT State College Connector Project North Alternative

Subject: Likely to Adversely Affect Technical Assistance letter for the 'PennDOT State College Connector Project North Alternative' project under the December 13, 2024, FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects within the Range of the Indiana Bat, Northern Long-eared Bat, and Tricolored Bat.

To whom it may concern:

This letter records the determination of effects to federally listed (or proposed) bat species anticipated to result from the PennDOT State College Connector Project North Alternative (the Project). This determination is based upon information you entered into the assisted determination key (Dkey) associated with the above referenced Programmatic Biological Opinion/Conference Opinion (PBO/PCO) in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system on the date listed above. **This letter does not satisfy compliance requirement under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (16 USC 1536), as amended.** Those requirements will be met upon taking the actions described below.

Ensuring Accurate Determinations When Using IPaC:

The Service developed the IPaC system and this Dkey in accordance with the ESA and based on the PBO/PCO. All information submitted by the project proponent into IPaC must accurately represent the full scope and details of the Project.

Failure to accurately represent or implement the Project as detailed in the Dkey invalidates this letter. Answers to certain questions in the Dkey commit the project proponent to implementation of conservation measures that must be followed for the ESA determinations to remain valid. Carefully review this letter, your ESA requirements are NOT yet complete.

Determinations:

Based on the information you provided (Project Description shown below), you have determined that the Project is within the scope and adheres to the criteria of the PBO/PCO, including the adoption of applicable avoidance and minimization measures. Based on your IPaC submission and the PBO/PCO, the Project is consistent with the following effect determinations:

Species	Listing Status	Determination
Indiana Bat (<i>Myotis sodalis</i>)	Endangered	LAA
Northern Long-eared Bat (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>)	Endangered	LAA
Tricolored Bat (<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>)	Proposed Endangered	LAA

Federal agencies must consult with the Service under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA when an action *may affect* a listed species. The tricolored bat is proposed for listing as endangered under the ESA, but not yet listed. For actions that may affect a proposed species, agencies cannot consult, but they can *confer* under the authority of section 7(a)(4) of the ESA. Such conferences can follow the procedures for a consultation and be adopted as such if the proposed species is listed. Should the tricolored bat be listed, prior to completion of the action, the Transportation Agencies shall send a request to the Service to convert the PCO for the tricolored bat to a PBO, and request individual projects, such as this, that are completed as Conference Opinions under the PCO be converted to Biological Opinions for the tricolored bat under the PBO. If the Service reviews the proposed action and finds there have been no significant changes in the action as planned or in the information used during the opinion, the Service will confirm the PCO as a PBO and no further ESA section 7 consultation will be necessary.

This "may affect - likely to adversely affect" determination for the Project becomes effective when the lead Federal action agency or designated non-federal representative requests the Service rely on the PBO/PCO to satisfy the agency's consultation requirements for this project. **To fulfill the next steps in the consultation process, the lead Federal action agency or its designated non-federal representative shall transmit this letter to this Service Field Office for verification that the project is consistent with the PBO/PCO.**

This Service Field Office will respond by letter to the requesting Federal action agency or designated non-federal representative within 30 calendar days after receiving request for verification to:

- verify that the Project is consistent with the scope of actions covered under the PBO/PCO;
- verify that all applicable avoidance, minimization, and compensation measures are included in the proposed action;
- identify any action-specific monitoring and reporting requirements, consistent with the monitoring and reporting requirements of the PBO/PCO, and
- identify anticipated incidental take of the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and/or the tricolored bat.

The response letter from the Service will conclude consultation for the Project.

ESA section 7 compliance for this Proposed Action is not complete until the Federal action agency or its designated non-federal representative receives a verification letter from the Service.

If the Proposed Action is modified, or new information reveals that it may affect the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or tricolored bat in a manner or to an extent not considered in the PBO/PCO, further review to conclude the requirements of ESA section 7(a)(2) may be required.

For Proposed Actions that include bridge/culvert or structure removal, replacement, and/or maintenance activities:

If your initial bridge, culvert, or structure assessment failed to detect Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or tricolored bat use or occupancy, yet bats are later detected prior to, or during construction, promptly notify the local Service Field Office within 2 working days of the discovery. In addition, please document whether incidental take occurred, and if so, the type (i.e. kill or harm) and amount (i.e. number of individuals) and submit documentation to the local Service Field Office within 5 working days from the completion of the bridge, culvert, or structure construction (use Appendix E - Post Assessment Discovery of Bats at Bridge/Culvert or Structure Form in the [User's Guide](#)). In these instances, potential incidental take of Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats, or tricolored bats may be exempted provided that the take is reported to the Service. In these instances, potential incidental take of Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats, or tricolored bats may be exempted provided that the take is reported to the Service.

If the Project may affect any other federally listed or proposed species and/or designated critical habitat, additional consultation between the lead Federal action agency and this Service Field Office is required for those species/designated critical habitat. If the Project has the potential to take bald or golden eagles, additional coordination with the Service under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act may also be required. In either of these circumstances, please advise the lead Federal action agency to contact this Service Field Office

The following species may occur in your project area and **are not** covered by this determination:

- Green Floater *Lasmigona subviridis* Proposed Threatened
- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* Proposed Threatened
- Northeastern Bulrush *Scirpus ancistrochaetus* Endangered

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The following project name and description was collected in IPaC as part of the endangered species review process.

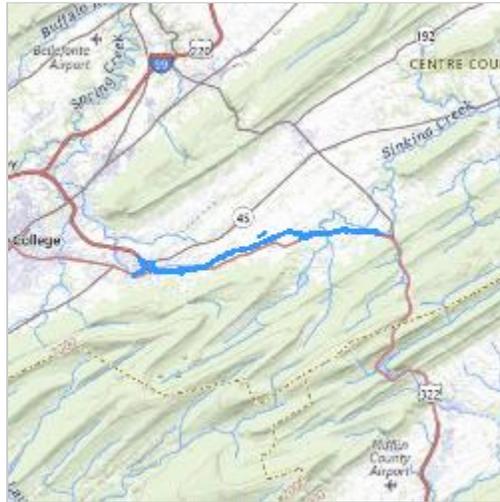
NAME

PennDOT State College Connector Project North Alternative

DESCRIPTION

New road construction project beginning at Potters Mills Gap and ending at Boalsburg interchange

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@40.787918250000004,-77.72672375663382,14z>



DETERMINATION KEY RESULT

Based on your answers provided, this project is likely to adversely affect the endangered Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or tricolored bat. Therefore, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat. 884, as amended 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) is required. However, also based on your answers provided, this project may rely on the conclusion and Incidental Take Statement provided in Service's Programmatic Biological Opinion/Conference Opinion for Transportation Projects in the Range of the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat, dated December 13, 2024.

QUALIFICATION INTERVIEW

1. Which Federal Agency is the lead federal agency the action?
A) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
2. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the Northern long-eared bat?
Automatically answered
Yes
3. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the Indiana bat?
Automatically answered
Yes
4. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the tricolored Bat (TCB)?
Automatically answered
Yes
5. Is the project within 0.5 miles radius of an entrance/opening to any known Indiana bat hibernaculum?
No
6. Is any portion of the action area within a 0.5 mile radius of an entrance/opening to any known NLEB or TCB hibernacula?
Automatically answered
No
7. Does your project's activities include raising the road profile above the tree canopy in documented habitat for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB?
Note: For the definition of documented habitat, refer to Appendix A: <https://www.fws.gov/media/users-guide-range-wide-programmatic-consultation-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat>
No
8. Is your project located within a karst area?
Yes
9. Will the project include any activities that alter the entrance or environment of a known Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB hibernaculum?
No

10. Will the project include bridge, culvert, or structure removal, replacement, and/or alteration activities?

Note: For definitions of bridge, culvert, and structure, refer to Appendix A: <https://www.fws.gov/media/users-guide-range-wide-programmatic-consultation-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat>.

No

11. Do your project's activities involve tree removal/trimming, temporary lighting, new/additional permanent lighting, ground disturbance, percussives that involves noise/vibration above existing background levels, vibrations, or slash pile burning?

Yes

12. Is there suitable summer habitat for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within the project action area?

Note: See the Service's summer survey guidance for current definitions of suitable habitat [<https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/inba/inbasummersurveyguidance.html>].

Yes

13. Have P/A surveys for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB been conducted within the suitable summer habitat located within your project action area? This refers to mist-netting or acoustic surveys, not bridge assessments.

Note: See the Service's survey guidance <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/inba/inbasummersurveyguidance.html>

No

14. Will the project involve the removal or trimming of trees within suitable habitat for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB?

Yes

15. Will any tree removal or trimming occur during the bat pup season?

Note: For more information about bat pup seasons please visit https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-10/2024_usfws_rangewide_ibat-nleb_survey_guidelines.pdf

No

16. Will the removal or trimming of trees occur **within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB?

Note: For the definition of documented habitat, refer to Appendix A: <https://www.fws.gov/media/users-guide-range-wide-programmatic-consultation-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat>

Yes

17. Will all tree removal or trimming occur within 100 feet of the road or rail surface?

No

18. Does your project include activities involving the temporary or permanent exclusion of Indiana bats, NLEBs, or TCBs from a bridge/culvert or structure?

Note: exclusion is conducted to deny bats' entry or reentry into a bridge/culvert or structure. To be effective and to avoid harming bats, it should be done according to established standards.

No

19. Does your project involve the use of temporary lighting within Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB suitable habitat?

Note: For the definition of lighting, refer to Appendix A: <https://www.fws.gov/media/users-guide-range-wide-programmatic-consultation-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat>

Yes

20. Will the use of temporary lighting be conducted during the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB active season?

Yes

21. Will temporary lighting be directed away from Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB suitable habitat?

Yes

22. Will the project substantially increase baseline light conditions via the use of permanent lighting (replacement or new/additional) in suitable habitat.

No

23. Will your project include percussive activities?

Note: Refer to Stressor #2 Noise/Vibration on page 109 of the PBO/PCO.

Yes

24. Are the percussive activities only related to tree removal/trimming or bridge/culvert structural work?

No

25. Will the percussive activities involve noise/vibration above existing background levels?

Note: For example, pile driving, rock drilling, hoe ramming, jackhammering, and blasting are examples of percussive activities that cause noise/vibration above existing background levels

Yes

26. Will percussive activities that involve noise/vibration above existing background levels be conducted during the **bat active season**?

Yes

27. Will the percussive activities that involve noise/vibration above existing background levels be conducted **greater than 100 feet** from the road or rail surface?

Yes

28. Will any percussive activities that involve noise/vibration above existing background levels be conducted during the **bat pup season**?

Note: For more information about bat pup seasons please visit https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-10/2024_usfws_rangewide_ibat-nleb_survey_guidelines.pdf

No

29. Will the project involve the removal or trimming of more than 20 acres of Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB suitable habitat per 5-mile section of road/rail?

No

30. Will the removal or trimming of trees occur within 0.5 miles of a known Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB hibernaculum?

No

31. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the Indiana bat?

Automatically answered

Yes

32. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the tricolored Bat (TCB)?

Automatically answered

Yes

33. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the northern long-eared bat (NLEB)?

Automatically answered

Yes

PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Have you made a No Effect determinations for all other species included on the FWS IPaC generated species list?

No

2. Have you made a May Affect determination for any other species on the FWS IPaC generated list?

No

3. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **outside of documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within 100 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the inactive season (NLAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

8

4. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **outside of documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within 100 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the active season (**outside the pup season and not between Dec 15th-Feb 15th in Zone 1 of the NLEB and TCB YR active areas**) (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0

5. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **outside of documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within 100 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the pup season (**trees must be <9 in DBH, and not between Dec 15th-Feb 15th in Zone 1 of the NLEB and TCB YR active areas**) (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0

6. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within 100 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the inactive season (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

4

7. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within 100 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the active season (**outside the pup season, and not between Dec 15th -Feb 15th in Zone 1 of the NLEB and TCB YR active areas**) (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0

8. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **either outside or within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB between 100-300 feet of the existing road/rail surface during the inactive season (LAA)? Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

24

9. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **either outside or within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB between 100-300 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the active season (**outside the pup season, and not between Dec 15-Feb 15 in Zone 1 of the NLEB and TCB YR active areas**) (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0

10. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **either outside or within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB beyond 300 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the inactive season (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

24

11. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **either outside or within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB beyond 300 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the active season (**outside the pup season, and not between Dec 15th-Feb 15th in Zone 1 of the NLEB and TCB YR active areas**) (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0

12. Select what type of mitigation mechanism will be used to mitigate for the Indiana bat and/or NLEB?

Note: No mitigation required for NLEB LAA if outside documented habitat in inactive season. Also, no mitigation required for TCB. See choices in dropdown. if applicable

Conservation Bank

13. What is the **name** of the ILF, Conservation Bank, or Proponent Responsible mitigation being used for the Indiana bat and/or NLEB?

RES or Magnolia Conservation Bank mechanism

14. You have indicated that the following Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs) will be implemented as part of the proposed project:

- *GAMM1*
- *HAMM1*
- *LAMM1*
- *TRTAMM1*
- *TRTAMM2*
- *TRTAMM6*
- *TRTAMM7*

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION MEASURES (AMMS)

This determination key result includes the commitment to implement the following Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs):

GAMM1

Ensure all operators, employees, and contractors working in areas of Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB suitable habitat are aware of all Transportation Agency environmental commitments, including all applicable AMMs.

HAMM1

For projects located within karst areas, on-site personnel will use best management practices, secondary containment measures, or other standard spill prevention and countermeasures to avoid impacts to the possible hibernacula. Where practicable, a 300 ft (91.4 m) buffer will be employed to separate fueling areas and other major contaminant risk activities from caves, sinkholes, losing streams, and springs in karst topography.

LAMM1

Direct temporary lighting away from suitable habitat during the active season

TRTAMM1

Modify all phases/aspects of the project (e.g., temporary work areas, alignments) to the extent practicable to avoid tree removal/trimming in excess of what is required to implement the project safely.

TRTAMM2

Ensure tree removal/trimming is limited to that specified in project plans and ensure that contractors understand clearing limits and how they are marked in the field (e.g., install bright colored flagging/fencing prior to any tree removal/trimming to ensure contractors stay within clearing limits

TRTAMM6

Avoid conducting tree removal/trimming within documented habitat for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB during the pup season.

TRTAMM7

Avoid conducting tree removal/trimming of suitable habitat for the NLEB and/or TCB in Zone 1 of their YR active ranges between December 15 – February 15.

DETERMINATION KEY DESCRIPTION: FHWA, FRA, FTA PROGRAMMATIC CONSULTATION FOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AFFECTING IBAT, NLEB, OR TCB

This key was last updated in IPaC on July 02, 2025. Keys are subject to periodic revision.

This decision key is intended for projects/activities funded or authorized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and/or Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which may require consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and may affect the federally listed endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), and/or federally proposed endangered tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*).

This decision key should only be used to verify project applicability with the Service's Programmatic Biological Opinion/Conference Opinion for Transportation Projects in the Range of the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat, dated December 13, 2024. The programmatic consultation limited transportation activities that may affect the covered bat species and addresses situations that are both likely and not likely to adversely affect the covered bat species. This decision key will assist in identifying the effect of a specific project/activity and the applicability of the programmatic consultation. The programmatic consultation is not intended to cover all types of transportation actions. Activities outside the scope of the programmatic consultation, or that may affect ESA-listed species other than the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or tricolored bat, or their designated critical habitat, may require additional ESA Section 7 consultation.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Name: James Sinclair
Address: 449 Eisenhower Blvd
Address Line 2: Suite 300
City: Harrisburg
State: PA
Zip: 17111
Email: jsinclair@skellyloy.com
Phone: 7175123496

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Federal Highway Administration



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Pennsylvania Ecological Services Field Office
110 Radnor Road Suite 101
State College, PA 16801-7987
Phone: (814) 234-4090 Fax: (814) 234-0748

In Reply Refer To:

07/14/2025 16:20:38 UTC

Project code: 2025-0121178

Project Name: PennDOT SCAC Central Alternative with Changes2_7.14.2025

Subject: Likely to Adversely Affect Technical Assistance letter for the 'PennDOT SCAC Central Alternative with Changes2_7.14.2025' project under the December 13, 2024, FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects within the Range of the Indiana Bat, Northern Long-eared Bat, and Tricolored Bat.

To whom it may concern:

This letter records the determination of effects to federally listed (or proposed) bat species anticipated to result from the PennDOT SCAC Central Alternative with Changes2_7.14.2025 (the Project). This determination is based upon information you entered into the assisted determination key (Dkey) associated with the above referenced Programmatic Biological Opinion/Conference Opinion (PBO/PCO) in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system on the date listed above. **This letter does not satisfy compliance requirement under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (16 USC 1536), as amended.** Those requirements will be met upon taking the actions described below.

Ensuring Accurate Determinations When Using IPaC:

The Service developed the IPaC system and this Dkey in accordance with the ESA and based on the PBO/PCO. All information submitted by the project proponent into IPaC must accurately represent the full scope and details of the Project.

Failure to accurately represent or implement the Project as detailed in the Dkey invalidates this letter. Answers to certain questions in the Dkey commit the project proponent to implementation of conservation measures that must be followed for the ESA determinations to remain valid. Carefully review this letter, your ESA requirements are NOT yet complete.

Determinations:

Based on the information you provided (Project Description shown below), you have determined that the Project is within the scope and adheres to the criteria of the PBO/PCO, including the adoption of applicable avoidance and minimization measures. Based on your IPaC submission and the PBO/PCO, the Project is consistent with the following effect determinations:

Species	Listing Status	Determination
Indiana Bat (<i>Myotis sodalis</i>)	Endangered	LAA
Northern Long-eared Bat (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>)	Endangered	LAA
Tricolored Bat (<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>)	Proposed	LAA
	Endangered	

Federal agencies must consult with the Service under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA when an action *may affect* a listed species. The tricolored bat is proposed for listing as endangered under the ESA, but not yet listed. For actions that may affect a proposed species, agencies cannot consult, but they can *confer* under the authority of section 7(a)(4) of the ESA. Such conferences can follow the procedures for a consultation and be adopted as such if the proposed species is listed. Should the tricolored bat be listed, prior to completion of the action, the Transportation Agencies shall send a request to the Service to convert the PCO for the tricolored bat to a PBO, and request individual projects, such as this, that are completed as Conference Opinions under the PCO be converted to Biological Opinions for the tricolored bat under the PBO. If the Service reviews the proposed action and finds there have been no significant changes in the action as planned or in the information used during the opinion, the Service will confirm the PCO as a PBO and no further ESA section 7 consultation will be necessary.

This "may affect - likely to adversely affect" determination for the Project becomes effective when the lead Federal action agency or designated non-federal representative requests the Service rely on the PBO/PCO to satisfy the agency's consultation requirements for this project. **To fulfill the next steps in the consultation process, the lead Federal action agency or its designated non-federal representative shall transmit this letter to this Service Field Office for verification that the project is consistent with the PBO/PCO.**

This Service Field Office will respond by letter to the requesting Federal action agency or designated non-federal representative within 30 calendar days after receiving request for verification to:

- verify that the Project is consistent with the scope of actions covered under the PBO/PCO;
- verify that all applicable avoidance, minimization, and compensation measures are included in the proposed action;
- identify any action-specific monitoring and reporting requirements, consistent with the monitoring and reporting requirements of the PBO/PCO, and
- identify anticipated incidental take of the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and/or the tricolored bat.

The response letter from the Service will conclude consultation for the Project.

ESA section 7 compliance for this Proposed Action is not complete until the Federal action agency or its designated non-federal representative receives a verification letter from the Service.

If the Proposed Action is modified, or new information reveals that it may affect the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or tricolored bat in a manner or to an extent not considered in the PBO/PCO, further review to conclude the requirements of ESA section 7(a)(2) may be required.

For Proposed Actions that include bridge/culvert or structure removal, replacement, and/or maintenance activities:

If your initial bridge, culvert, or structure assessment failed to detect Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or tricolored bat use or occupancy, yet bats are later detected prior to, or during construction, promptly notify the local Service Field Office within 2 working days of the discovery. In addition, please document whether incidental take occurred, and if so, the type (i.e. kill or harm) and amount (i.e. number of individuals) and submit documentation to the local Service Field Office within 5 working days from the completion of the bridge, culvert, or structure construction (use Appendix E - Post Assessment Discovery of Bats at Bridge/Culvert or Structure Form in the [User's Guide](#)). In these instances, potential incidental take of Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats, or tricolored bats may be exempted provided that the take is reported to the Service. In these instances, potential incidental take of Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats, or tricolored bats may be exempted provided that the take is reported to the Service.

If the Project may affect any other federally listed or proposed species and/or designated critical habitat, additional consultation between the lead Federal action agency and this Service Field Office is required for those species/designated critical habitat. If the Project has the potential to take bald or golden eagles, additional coordination with the Service under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act may also be required. In either of these circumstances, please advise the lead Federal action agency to contact this Service Field Office

The following species may occur in your project area and **are not** covered by this determination:

- Green Floater *Lasmigona subviridis* Proposed Threatened
- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* Proposed Threatened
- Northeastern Bulrush *Scirpus ancistrochaetus* Endangered

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The following project name and description was collected in IPaC as part of the endangered species review process.

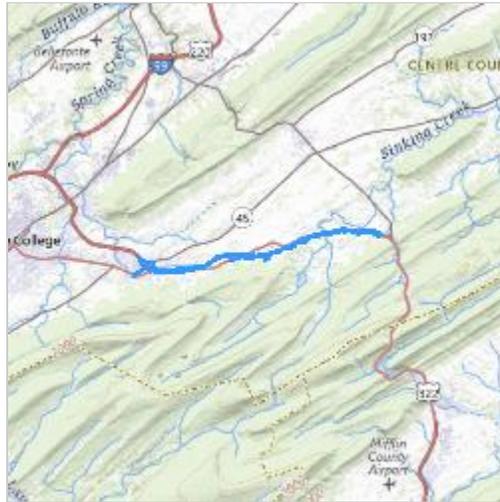
NAME

PennDOT SCAC Central Alternative with Changes2_7.14.2025

DESCRIPTION

Proposed new road construction project beginning at Potters Mills Gap and extending approx. 8 miles to the west near Boalsburg, PA. Alignment changed slightly to avoid the baseball fields in Potter Township.

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@40.7879143,-77.69879150876389,14z>



DETERMINATION KEY RESULT

Based on your answers provided, this project is likely to adversely affect the endangered Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or tricolored bat. Therefore, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat. 884, as amended 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) is required. However, also based on your answers provided, this project may rely on the conclusion and Incidental Take Statement provided in Service's Programmatic Biological Opinion/Conference Opinion for Transportation Projects in the Range of the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat, dated December 13, 2024.

QUALIFICATION INTERVIEW

1. Which Federal Agency is the lead federal agency the action?
A) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
2. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the Northern long-eared bat?
Automatically answered
Yes
3. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the Indiana bat?
Automatically answered
Yes
4. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the tricolored Bat (TCB)?
Automatically answered
Yes
5. Is the project within 0.5 miles radius of an entrance/opening to any known Indiana bat hibernaculum?
No
6. Is any portion of the action area within a 0.5 mile radius of an entrance/opening to any known NLEB or TCB hibernacula?
Automatically answered
No
7. Does your project's activities include raising the road profile above the tree canopy in documented habitat for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB?
Note: For the definition of documented habitat, refer to Appendix A: <https://www.fws.gov/media/users-guide-range-wide-programmatic-consultation-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat>
No
8. Is your project located within a karst area?
Yes
9. Will the project include any activities that alter the entrance or environment of a known Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB hibernaculum?
No

10. Will the project include bridge, culvert, or structure removal, replacement, and/or alteration activities?

Note: For definitions of bridge, culvert, and structure, refer to Appendix A: <https://www.fws.gov/media/users-guide-range-wide-programmatic-consultation-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat>.

No

11. Do your project's activities involve tree removal/trimming, temporary lighting, new/additional permanent lighting, ground disturbance, percussives that involves noise/vibration above existing background levels, vibrations, or slash pile burning?

Yes

12. Is there suitable summer habitat for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within the project action area?

Note: See the Service's summer survey guidance for current definitions of suitable habitat [<https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/inba/inbasummersurveyguidance.html>].

Yes

13. Have P/A surveys for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB been conducted within the suitable summer habitat located within your project action area? This refers to mist-netting or acoustic surveys, not bridge assessments.

Note: See the Service's survey guidance <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/inba/inbasummersurveyguidance.html>

No

14. Will the project involve the removal or trimming of trees within suitable habitat for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB?

Yes

15. Will any tree removal or trimming occur during the bat pup season?

Note: For more information about bat pup seasons please visit https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-10/2024_usfws_rangewide_ibat-nleb_survey_guidelines.pdf

No

16. Will the removal or trimming of trees occur **within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB?

Note: For the definition of documented habitat, refer to Appendix A: <https://www.fws.gov/media/users-guide-range-wide-programmatic-consultation-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat>

Yes

17. Will all tree removal or trimming occur within 100 feet of the road or rail surface?

No

18. Does your project include activities involving the temporary or permanent exclusion of Indiana bats, NLEBs, or TCBs from a bridge/culvert or structure?

Note: exclusion is conducted to deny bats' entry or reentry into a bridge/culvert or structure. To be effective and to avoid harming bats, it should be done according to established standards.

No

19. Does your project involve the use of temporary lighting within Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB suitable habitat?

Note: For the definition of lighting, refer to Appendix A: <https://www.fws.gov/media/users-guide-range-wide-programmatic-consultation-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat>

Yes

20. Will the use of temporary lighting be conducted during the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB active season?

Yes

21. Will temporary lighting be directed away from Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB suitable habitat?

Yes

22. Will the project substantially increase baseline light conditions via the use of permanent lighting (replacement or new/additional) in suitable habitat.

No

23. Will your project include percussive activities?

Note: Refer to Stressor #2 Noise/Vibration on page 109 of the PBO/PCO.

Yes

24. Are the percussive activities only related to tree removal/trimming or bridge/culvert structural work?

No

25. Will the percussive activities involve noise/vibration above existing background levels?

Note: For example, pile driving, rock drilling, hoe ramming, jackhammering, and blasting are examples of percussive activities that cause noise/vibration above existing background levels

Yes

26. Will percussive activities that involve noise/vibration above existing background levels be conducted during the **bat active season**?

Yes

27. Will the percussive activities that involve noise/vibration above existing background levels be conducted **greater than 100 feet** from the road or rail surface?

Yes

28. Will any percussive activities that involve noise/vibration above existing background levels be conducted during the **bat pup season**?

Note: For more information about bat pup seasons please visit https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-10/2024_usfws_rangewide_ibat-nleb_survey_guidelines.pdf

No

29. Will the project involve the removal or trimming of more than 20 acres of Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB suitable habitat per 5-mile section of road/rail?

No

30. Will the removal or trimming of trees occur within 0.5 miles of a known Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB hibernaculum?

No

31. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the Indiana bat?

Automatically answered

Yes

32. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the tricolored Bat (TCB)?

Automatically answered

Yes

33. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the northern long-eared bat (NLEB)?

Automatically answered

Yes

PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Have you made a No Effect determinations for all other species included on the FWS IPaC generated species list?

No

2. Have you made a May Affect determination for any other species on the FWS IPaC generated list?

No

3. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **outside of documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within 100 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the inactive season (NLAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

8

4. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **outside of documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within 100 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the active season (**outside the pup season and not between Dec 15th-Feb 15th in Zone 1 of the NLEB and TCB YR active areas**) (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0

5. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **outside of documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within 100 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the pup season (**trees must be <9 in DBH, and not between Dec 15th-Feb 15th in Zone 1 of the NLEB and TCB YR active areas**) (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0

6. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within 100 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the inactive season (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

4

7. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB within 100 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the active season (**outside the pup season, and not between Dec 15th -Feb 15th in Zone 1 of the NLEB and TCB YR active areas**) (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0

8. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **either outside or within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB between 100-300 feet of the existing road/rail surface during the inactive season (LAA)? Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0

9. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **either outside or within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB between 100-300 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the active season (**outside the pup season, and not between Dec 15-Feb 15 in Zone 1 of the NLEB and TCB YR active areas**) (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

0

10. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **either outside or within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB beyond 300 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the inactive season (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

25

11. How many acres of trees are proposed for removal/trimming **either outside or within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB beyond 300 feet of the existing road/rail surfaces during the active season (**outside the pup season, and not between Dec 15th-Feb 15th in Zone 1 of the NLEB and TCB YR active areas**) (LAA)?

Note: If described as number of trees, multiply by 0.09 to convert to acreage and enter that number.

6

12. Select what type of mitigation mechanism will be used to mitigate for the Indiana bat and/or NLEB?

Note: No mitigation required for NLEB LAA if outside documented habitat in inactive season. Also, no mitigation required for TCB. See choices in dropdown. if applicable

Conservation Bank

13. What is the **name** of the ILF, Conservation Bank, or Proponent Responsible mitigation being used for the Indiana bat and/or NLEB?

RES or Magnolia Conservation Bank mechanism

14. You have indicated that the following Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs) will be implemented as part of the proposed project:

- *GAMM1*
- *HAMM1*
- *LAMM1*
- *TRTAMM1*
- *TRTAMM2*
- *TRTAMM6*
- *TRTAMM7*

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION MEASURES (AMMS)

This determination key result includes the commitment to implement the following Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs):

GAMM1

Ensure all operators, employees, and contractors working in areas of Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB suitable habitat are aware of all Transportation Agency environmental commitments, including all applicable AMMs.

HAMM1

For projects located within karst areas, on-site personnel will use best management practices, secondary containment measures, or other standard spill prevention and countermeasures to avoid impacts to the possible hibernacula. Where practicable, a 300 ft (91.4 m) buffer will be employed to separate fueling areas and other major contaminant risk activities from caves, sinkholes, losing streams, and springs in karst topography.

LAMM1

Direct temporary lighting away from suitable habitat during the active season

TRTAMM1

Modify all phases/aspects of the project (e.g., temporary work areas, alignments) to the extent practicable to avoid tree removal/trimming in excess of what is required to implement the project safely.

TRTAMM2

Ensure tree removal/trimming is limited to that specified in project plans and ensure that contractors understand clearing limits and how they are marked in the field (e.g., install bright colored flagging/fencing prior to any tree removal/trimming to ensure contractors stay within clearing limits

TRTAMM6

Avoid conducting tree removal/trimming within documented habitat for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB during the pup season.

TRTAMM7

Avoid conducting tree removal/trimming of suitable habitat for the NLEB and/or TCB in Zone 1 of their YR active ranges between December 15 – February 15.

DETERMINATION KEY DESCRIPTION: FHWA, FRA, FTA PROGRAMMATIC CONSULTATION FOR TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS AFFECTING IBAT, NLEB, OR TCB

This key was last updated in IPaC on July 02, 2025. Keys are subject to periodic revision.

This decision key is intended for projects/activities funded or authorized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and/or Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which may require consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and may affect the federally listed endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), and/or federally proposed endangered tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*).

This decision key should only be used to verify project applicability with the Service's Programmatic Biological Opinion/Conference Opinion for Transportation Projects in the Range of the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat, dated December 13, 2024. The programmatic consultation limited transportation activities that may affect the covered bat species and addresses situations that are both likely and not likely to adversely affect the covered bat species. This decision key will assist in identifying the effect of a specific project/activity and the applicability of the programmatic consultation. The programmatic consultation is not intended to cover all types of transportation actions. Activities outside the scope of the programmatic consultation, or that may affect ESA-listed species other than the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or tricolored bat, or their designated critical habitat, may require additional ESA Section 7 consultation.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Name: James Sinclair
Address: 449 Eisenhower Blvd
Address Line 2: Suite 300
City: Harrisburg
State: PA
Zip: 17111
Email: jsinclair@skellyloy.com
Phone: 7175123496

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Federal Highway Administration

Endangered Species Act Review

DETERMINATION KEY

FHWA, FRA, FTA Programmatic Consultation for Transportation Projects affecting IBAT, NLEB, or TCB

Release date: July 2, 2025

You completed the latest version of this key, published July 2, 2025, and reached a determination of not applicable for species or critical habitats covered by the key.

This decision key is intended for projects/activities funded or authorized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and/or Federal Transit Administration (FTA), which may require consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and may affect the federally listed endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), and/or federally proposed endangered tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*).

This decision key should only be used to verify project applicability with the Service's Programmatic Biological Opinion/Conference Opinion for Transportation Projects in the Range of the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and tricolored bat, dated December 13, 2024. The programmatic consultation limited transportation activities that may affect the covered bat species and addresses situations that are both likely and not likely to adversely affect the covered bat species. This decision key will assist in identifying the effect of a specific project/activity and the applicability of the programmatic consultation. The programmatic consultation is not intended to cover all types of transportation actions. Activities outside the scope of the programmatic consultation, or that may affect ESA-listed species other than the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or tricolored bat, or their designated critical habitat, may require additional ESA Section 7 consultation.

Species covered by this key

This key covers the following species expected to occur in this project area:

Indiana Bat *Myotis sodalis*

Northern Long-eared Bat *Myotis septentrionalis*

Tricolored Bat *Perimyotis subflavus*

Critical habitats covered by this key

This key covers the critical habitats for the following species expected to occur in this project area:

None

For more information about this determination key, including a list of all potential questions, refer to the [detailed overview](#).

Qualification interview

1. Which Federal Agency is the lead federal agency the action?

A) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

2. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the Northern long-eared bat?

Automatically answered

Yes

3. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the Indiana bat?

Automatically answered

Yes

4. Does the Action Area intersect the species list area of the tricolored Bat (TCB)?

Automatically answered

Yes

5. Is the project within 0.5 miles radius of an entrance/opening to any known Indiana bat hibernaculum?

No

6. Is any portion of the action area within a 0.5 mile radius of an entrance/opening to any known NLEB or TCB hibernacula?

13. Have P/A surveys for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB been conducted within the suitable summer habitat located within your project action area? This refers to mist-netting or acoustic surveys, not bridge assessments.

Note: See the Service's survey guidance

<https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/inba/inbasummersurveyguidance.html>

No

14. Will the project involve the removal or trimming of trees within suitable habitat for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB?

Yes

15. Will any tree removal or trimming occur during the bat pup season?

Note: For more information about bat pup seasons please visit

https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-10/2024_usfws_rangewide_ibat-nleb_survey_guidelines.pdf

No

16. Will the removal or trimming of trees occur **within documented habitat** for the Indiana bat, NLEB, or TCB?

Note: For the definition of documented habitat, refer to Appendix A: <https://www.fws.gov/media/users-guide-range-wide-programmatic-consultation-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat>

Yes

17. Will all tree removal or trimming occur within 100 feet of the road or rail surface?

Yes

18. Does your project include activities involving the temporary or permanent exclusion of Indiana bats, NLEBs, or TCBs from a bridge/culvert or structure?

Note: exclusion is conducted to deny bats' entry or reentry into a bridge/culvert or structure. To be effective and to avoid harming bats, it should be done according to established standards.

No



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Pennsylvania Ecological Services Field Office
110 Radnor Road Suite 101
State College, PA 16801-7987
Phone: (814) 234-4090 Fax: (814) 234-0748

In Reply Refer To:

07/04/2025 00:35:49 UTC

Project Code: 2025-0117954

Project Name: PennDOT State College Connector Project North Alternative

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2) (c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological

evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

<https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf>

Migratory Birds: In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts see <https://www.fws.gov/program/migratory-bird-permit/what-we-do>.

It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures see <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/threats-birds>.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/partner/council-conservation-migratory-birds>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Code in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

- USFWS National Wildlife Refuges and Fish Hatcheries

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Pennsylvania Ecological Services Field Office

110 Radnor Road Suite 101
State College, PA 16801-7987
(814) 234-4090

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2025-0117954

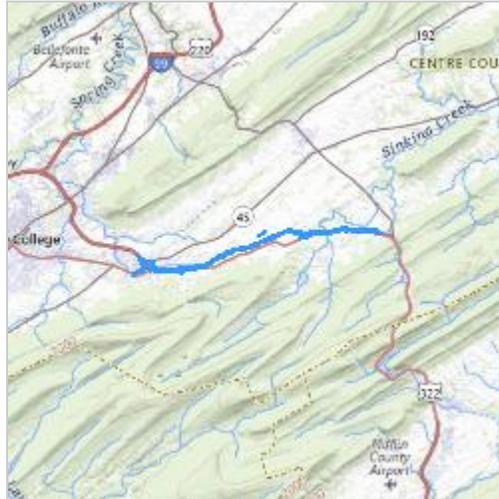
Project Name: PennDOT State College Connector Project North Alternative

Project Type: Road/Hwy - New Construction

Project Description: New road construction project beginning at Potters Mills Gap and ending at Boalsburg interchange

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@40.787918250000004,-77.72672375663382,14z>



Counties: Centre County, Pennsylvania

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 6 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Indiana Bat <i>Myotis sodalis</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5949	Endangered
Northern Long-eared Bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045	Endangered
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

CLAMS

NAME	STATUS
Green Floater <i>Lasmigona subviridis</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7541	Proposed Threatened

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Proposed Threatened

FLOWERING PLANTS

NAME	STATUS
Northeastern Bulrush <i>Scirpus ancistrochaetus</i> Population: No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6715	Endangered

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

USFWS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE LANDS AND FISH HATCHERIES

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the [National Wildlife Refuge](#) system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

THERE ARE NO REFUGE LANDS OR FISH HATCHERIES WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Name: James Sinclair
Address: 449 Eisenhower Blvd
Address Line 2: Suite 300
City: Harrisburg
State: PA
Zip: 17111
Email: jsinclair@skellyloy.com
Phone: 7175123496

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Federal Highway Administration



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Pennsylvania Ecological Services Field Office
110 Radnor Road Suite 101
State College, PA 16801-7987
Phone: (814) 234-4090 Fax: (814) 234-0748

In Reply Refer To:

07/14/2025 16:14:51 UTC

Project Code: 2025-0121178

Project Name: PennDOT SCAC Central Alternative with Changes2_7.14.2025

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

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A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2) (c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological

evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

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Migratory Birds: In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts see <https://www.fws.gov/program/migratory-bird-permit/what-we-do>.

It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures see <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/threats-birds>.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/partner/council-conservation-migratory-birds>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Code in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

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This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

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Pennsylvania Ecological Services Field Office

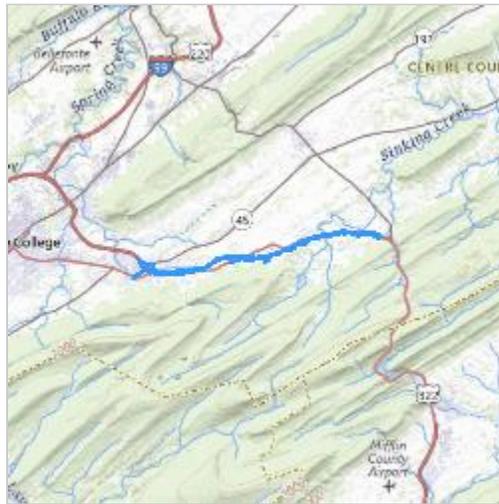
110 Radnor Road Suite 101
State College, PA 16801-7987
(814) 234-4090

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2025-0121178
Project Name: PennDOT SCAC Central Alternative with Changes2_7.14.2025
Project Type: Road/Hwy - New Construction
Project Description: Proposed new road construction project beginning at Potters Mills Gap and extending approx. 8 miles to the west near Boalsburg, PA. Alignment changed slightly to avoid the baseball fields in Potter Township.

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@40.7879143,-77.69879150876389,14z>



Counties: Centre County, Pennsylvania

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 6 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Indiana Bat <i>Myotis sodalis</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5949	Endangered
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CLAMS

NAME	STATUS
Green Floater <i>Lasmigona subviridis</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7541	Proposed Threatened

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Proposed Threatened

FLOWERING PLANTS

NAME	STATUS
Northeastern Bulrush <i>Scirpus ancistrochaetus</i> Population: No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6715	Endangered

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

USFWS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE LANDS AND FISH HATCHERIES

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the [National Wildlife Refuge](#) system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

THERE ARE NO REFUGE LANDS OR FISH HATCHERIES WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Name: James Sinclair
Address: 449 Eisenhower Blvd
Address Line 2: Suite 300
City: Harrisburg
State: PA
Zip: 17111
Email: jsinclair@skellyloy.com
Phone: 7175123496

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Federal Highway Administration



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Pennsylvania Ecological Services Field Office
110 Radnor Road Suite 101
State College, PA 16801-7987
Phone: (814) 234-4090 Fax: (814) 234-0748

In Reply Refer To:

07/04/2025 00:17:39 UTC

Project Code: 2025-0117953

Project Name: PennDOT State College Connector South Alternative

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2) (c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological

evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

<https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf>

Migratory Birds: In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts see <https://www.fws.gov/program/migratory-bird-permit/what-we-do>.

It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures see <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/threats-birds>.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/partner/council-conservation-migratory-birds>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Code in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

- USFWS National Wildlife Refuges and Fish Hatcheries

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Pennsylvania Ecological Services Field Office

110 Radnor Road Suite 101

State College, PA 16801-7987

(814) 234-4090

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2025-0117953

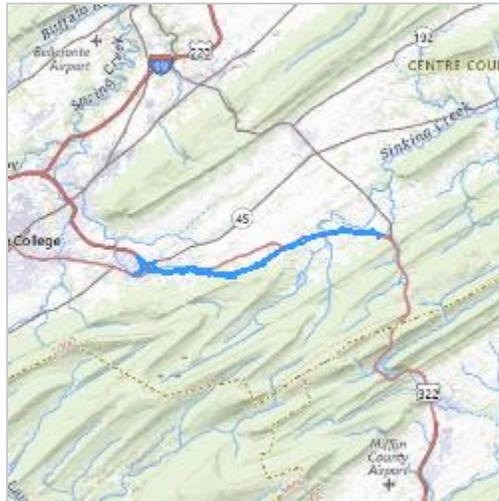
Project Name: PennDOT State College Connector South Alternative

Project Type: Road/Hwy - New Construction

Project Description: New road construction project beginning at Potters Mills Gap and ending at Boalsburg

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@40.7874566,-77.69871112986382,14z>



Counties: Centre County, Pennsylvania

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 6 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

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1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Indiana Bat <i>Myotis sodalis</i> There is final critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5949	Endangered
Northern Long-eared Bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045	Endangered
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515	Proposed Endangered

CLAMS

NAME	STATUS
Green Floater <i>Lasmigona subviridis</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7541	Proposed Threatened

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Proposed Threatened

FLOWERING PLANTS

NAME	STATUS
Northeastern Bulrush <i>Scirpus ancistrochaetus</i> Population: No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6715	Endangered

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

USFWS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE LANDS AND FISH HATCHERIES

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the [National Wildlife Refuge](#) system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

THERE ARE NO REFUGE LANDS OR FISH HATCHERIES WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Name: James Sinclair
Address: 449 Eisenhower Blvd
Address Line 2: Suite 300
City: Harrisburg
State: PA
Zip: 17111
Email: jsinclair@skellyloy.com
Phone: 7175123496

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Federal Highway Administration

APPENDIX E – PENNDOT POLLINATOR HABITAT
PLAN

Pollinator Habitat Plan

The Presidential Memorandum, “Creating a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and other Pollinators” and the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) of 2015 both emphasize the importance of [Integrated Vegetation Management](#) and encourage state Departments of Transportation to develop habitats for pollinators through planting of highway rights-of-way (ROW). The Pennsylvania [Pollinator Protection Plan](#) (P4;2017) was recently completed through a collaborative effort of 28 state, national, and private stakeholder organizations and includes general guidelines in considering pollinator habitat development along roadsides and ROWs. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Pollinator Habitat Plan was developed in support of these P4, State and Federal actions.

Why Develop And Protect Pollinator Habitats

Historically, agriculture has been, and continues to be important to the Pennsylvania economy. The diversity of crops, and the number of pollinator-dependent crops grown in Pennsylvania is greater than almost all other states. Nearly 75 percent of our flowering plants and crops are pollinator dependent. Pollinators are particularly important for fruit and vegetable production.

Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation in combination with increases in pesticide use and introduced disease threaten the pollinators on which we depend for food crops and a sustainable agricultural economy. In fact, the declining numbers of several species have been so significant that these species are under review for listing as federal threatened and endangered species, including the migratory Monarch Butterfly.



PennDOT’s Pollinator Habitat Plan will, in partnership with other federal and state agencies, private and community organizations, create naturalized gardens and meadows planted with pollinator-friendly plant species at designated sites. Sites within rest areas and welcome centers will provide additional public education benefit.

Goals



1. Plant. Support the establishment of seasonal flowers that are pollinator host and forage plants at designated sites and apply integrated vegetation management (IVM) to sustain the developed habitats.
2. Protect. Minimize vehicle/pollinator conflicts through well-planned site selection and designation.
3. Partner. Successfully partner with local community organizations through the PennDOT Adopt and Beautify Program to establish sites.
4. Promote. Provide educational signage, literature, and web-media information about pollinators and their habitats in ROWs.

Adopt & Beautify For Pollinators

The PennDOT Adopt and Beautify Program is an expansion of our roadside clean-up Adopt a Highway Program. Volunteer groups can enhance PennDOT planting efforts and can support pollinator conservation by adopting, planting, and maintaining a PennDOT-designated Pollinator Habitat site. For an application and planting resource information, visit [Adopt and Beautify](#) at www.penndot.gov.

APPENDIX F - REFERENCES

REFERENCES

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- NatureServe. 2025. *Alasmidonta undulata*. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Accessed: March 1, 2025. https://explorer.natureserve.org/Taxon/ELEMENT_GLOBAL.2.111433/Alasmidonta_undulata
- NatureServe. 2025. *Amelanchier sanguinea*. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Accessed: March 1, 2025. https://explorer.natureserve.org/Taxon/ELEMENT_GLOBAL.2.960021/Amelanchier_sanguinea
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GIS Data Sources

Layer Name	Source	Date
Northern Long Eared Bat Swarming Habitat	USFWS	2024
Indiana Bat Swarming Habitat	USFWS	2024
Sinking Creek Watershed	PASDA HUC 12 Watersheds	2024