

APPENDIX D

Natural Heritage Information System Index Report



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Ecological & Water Resources
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

March 30, 2022

Correspondence # ERDB 20090697-0004

Julie Farnham
City of Bloomington
1800 West Old Shakopee Road
Bloomington, MN 55431

RE: Natural Heritage Review of the proposed South Loop District AUAR Update, Hennepin County

Dear Ms. Farnham,

As requested, the Minnesota Natural Heritage Information System has been queried to determine if any rare species or other significant natural features are known to occur within an approximate one-mile radius of the proposed project. Based on this query, rare features have been documented within the search area (for details, please visit the [DNR Rare Species Guide](#) for more information on the biology, habitat use, and conservation measures of these rare species). Please note that the following rare features may be adversely affected by the proposed project:

Ecologically Significant Areas

- The AUAR Study Area overlaps with a Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) Site of Biodiversity Significance that is ranked Moderate. Sites of Biodiversity Significance have varying levels of native biodiversity and are ranked based on the relative significance of this biodiversity at a statewide level. Sites ranked as Moderate contain occurrences of rare species and/or moderately disturbed native plant communities, and/or landscapes that have a strong potential for recovery. In particular, the AUAR Study Area overlaps with Red Oak – White Oak – (Sugar Maple) Forest communities (Conservation Status Rank of S4: apparently secure; uncommon but not rare) and several rare wetland native plant communities (Conservation Status Ranks of S1-S3). As proposed, the development does not include the rare wetlands. Additional actions to minimize disturbance to this ecologically significant Site include, but are not limited to, the following recommendations:
 - Minimize disturbance to the Red Oak – White Oak – (Sugar Maple) forests,

- Use stringent sediment and pollution containment measures,
- Inspect and clean all equipment prior to bringing it to the site to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species, and
- Revegetate disturbed soil with [native species suitable to the local habitat](#) as soon after construction as possible.

State-listed Species

- The northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), and the big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), all state-listed species of special concern, have been documented roosting on bridges in the vicinity of the AUAR Study Area. Tree removal, if proposed, can negatively impact bats by destroying roosting habitat, especially during the pup rearing season when females are forming maternity roosting colonies and the pups cannot yet fly. To minimize these impacts, the DNR recommends that tree removal be avoided during the months of June and July.

Federally Protected Species

- The AUAR Study Area overlaps with a Rusty Patched Bumble Bee High Potential Zone. The rusty patched bumble bee (*Bombus affinis*) is federally listed as endangered and is likely to be present in suitable habitat within High Potential Zones. From April through October this species uses underground nests in upland grasslands, shrublands, and forest edges, and forages where nectar and pollen are available. From October through April the species overwinters under tree litter in upland forests and woodlands. Please visit the [USFWS Rusty Patched Bumble Bee Map](#) for the most current locations of High Potential Zones. To ensure compliance with federal law, please conduct a federal regulatory review using the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's online [Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPaC\) tool](#).
- The northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), federally listed as threatened, can be found throughout Minnesota. During the winter this species hibernates in caves and mines. During the active season (approximately April-October) it roosts underneath bark, in cavities, or in crevices of both live and dead trees; and in human structures such as buildings and bridges. Pup rearing is during June and July.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has published the [Northern Long-eared Bat Final 4\(d\) Rule](#) that identifies prohibited take. To ensure compliance with federal law, please conduct a federal regulatory review using the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's online [Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPaC\) tool](#). To assist in that review, please note that there are no known hibernacula within 1/4 mile of the AUAR Study Area and no known maternity roosts within 150 feet of the AUAR Study Area. Please see the [USFWS Northern Long-eared Bat Fact Sheet](#) for additional information on this species.

Environmental Review and Permitting

- Please include a copy of this letter in any state or local license or permit application. Please note that measures to avoid or minimize disturbance to the above rare features may be included as restrictions or conditions in any required permits or licenses.

The Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS), a collection of databases that contains information about Minnesota's rare natural features, is maintained by the Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Department of Natural Resources. The NHIS is continually updated as new information becomes available, and is the most complete source of data on Minnesota's rare or otherwise significant species, native plant communities, and other natural features. However, the NHIS is not an exhaustive inventory and thus does not represent all of the occurrences of rare features within the state. Therefore, ecologically significant features for which we have no records may exist within the project area. If additional information becomes available regarding rare features in the vicinity of the project, further review may be necessary.

For environmental review purposes, the results of this Natural Heritage Review are valid for one year; the results are only valid for the project location (noted above) and the project description provided on the NHIS Data Request Form. If project details change or construction has not occurred within one year, please resubmit the project for review.

The Natural Heritage Review does not constitute project approval by the Department of Natural Resources. Instead, it identifies issues regarding known occurrences of rare features and potential effects to these rare features. If needed, please contact your [DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist](#) to determine whether there are other natural resource concerns associated with the proposed project.

Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources.

Sincerely,



Lisa Joyal
Endangered Species Review Coordinator
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cc: Melissa Collins