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COMMENTS ON THREATENED AND ENDAGERED SPECIES REPORTS

04/05/95

BARTOSZEK SCHNEIDER
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MEMORANDUM

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To Becky Bixby	From Tom Schneider
Co. FERMCO	Co. OEPA - DFFO
Dept.	Phone # 295-6409
Fax # 513 738 6213	Fax #

File 4.4.1

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Memorandum

Becky, Pls. call at 12:30. Thanks Tom S

To: Tom Schneider

CC: Diana Zimmerman, Donna Bohannon, (Dave Ross ODNR)

From: Joe Bartoszek

Date: April 5, 1995

Subject: Threatened and endangered species reports

I have reviewed the reports received from you April 3, 1995 and offer the following comments:

The survey reports for Slender Finger-Grass (*Digitaria filiformis*) and Mountain Bindweed (*Polygonum cilinode*) indicate their absence on the FEMP property. However, for as thorough as RUST was in their verification of identification of those similar species they found, they did not check the specimens in the herbarium at Miami University to verify the identifications of those species found by Facemire, et al, 1990. As the Facemire report indicates the presence of those species at the FEMP site and they are maintained in the herbarium at Miami University, it is recommended that the catalogued specimens be checked. If these are found to be misidentified, then that would support RUST's position, but I would not feel comfortable supporting the position that these plants are not present at the FEMP site until those specimens were checked.

The survey of the Running Buffalo Clover, (*Trifolium stolonifernm*), appeared complete and thorough. As this was not identified in the Facemire, et al, 1990 site characterization, I feel comfortable supporting the position that it is not present at the FEMP site.

The statement in Attachment A (Summary of Species Surveys at the FEMP (1993-1994) regarding RUST's survey for Spring Coral-root (*Corallorhiza wisteriana*) seems misleading. The summary states that the habitat was unsuitable because of the lack of beech trees. However the RUST survey states "Despite the presence of suitable habitat near the western edge of the northern woodlands..." and "However, the woodlands observed at the FEMP site are dominated by elms, maples and buckeye trees and did not contain any beech trees, which are often found in association with

several species of saprophytes such as Indian-Pipe, Beechdrops, and Pinesap. Thus, the woodlands at the FEMP site are not thought to provide the mesic conditions necessary to support a population of Spring Coral-root." (emphasis added). The association between the beech trees and the Spring Coral-root is not as clear as the summary letter indicates. Additionally the survey was conducted during May 18 & 19, 1994. The flowering period for the Spring Coral-root is mid-April to mid-May and the plant can only be observed during flowering. This survey time in conjunction with the inconsistent flowering of the plant could easily have led to any potential plants being missed by the survey. I would not be inclined to so easily dismiss the potential for presence of the Spring Coral-root at the FEMP site. Additional surveys in the mid-April to mid-May time frame should be conducted in the suitable habitat areas of the FEMP property.

Although cited as marginal habitat, the population of Sloan's Crayfish (*Orconectes sloanii*) at the northwest portion of the FEMP site is significant and should be protected. As indicated in the report on the Cave Salamander (*Eurycea lucifuga*) by Jeffery G. Davis, "Genetic variation for a species increases in populations farther from the center of its range. Therefore, populations located at the periphery of a species' range represent genotypic diversity for the species." This population of Sloan's Crayfish is at the eastern edge of its range, the entire range being limited to southern Indiana and a few southwestern Ohio counties. At the FEMP site it occurs sympatrically with a population of *Orconectes rusticus*. As Dr. St. John indicated in his report, it is usual for *Orconectes rusticus* to outcompete *Orconectes sloanii* in most habitats, especially those with environmental stress. Its ability to maintain a population at the FEMP site may be significant. For these reasons it seems prudent to make an effort to preserve the population of Sloan's Crayfish at the FEMP site.

It is apparent from the survey of the Cave Salamander, *Eurycea lucifuga*, that the timing was not appropriate for observation of any potential populations of the Cave Salamander on the FEMP site. Difficulty in observation of the known existing populations adjacent to the site at the time of the survey confirms this. An effort should be made to preserve the ravine found as a potential habitat on the northern edge of the property. Although not observed during the survey, the potential for a population to exist here coupled with the ease of keeping this area undisturbed supports the recommendation of preserving this area.

Although no specimens of the Indiana Bat, *Myotis sodalis*, were captured on site, the presence of suitable habitats along Paddys Run, the Storm Sewer Overflow Ditch, and in older growth woodlands were located. As a 1988 survey located a colony of Indiana Bats in the vicinity of the FEMP, an effort should be made to preserve the older and dead trees in these areas, particularly in the riparian zones.

In summary:

The plant specimens at Miami University should be checked to verify that species previously identified as *Polygonum cilinode* and *Digitaria filiformis* were correctly identified;

Running Buffalo Clover (*Trifolium stoloniferum*) does not appear to be present at the FEMP site.

A continued effort should be made to locate Spring Coral-root in suitable habitat on site during its mid-April to mid-May flowering time;

A earnest effort should be made to preserve the natural habitat in and along Paddys Run and the Storm Sewer Outfall Ditch. Particular attention should be made to preventing pollutants (including sediments and silt from mitigation activities on site) from entering Paddys Run or the Storm Sewer Outfall Ditch and preservation of old growth trees in the riparian zone and woodland areas;

Although an existing population was not seen, an effort should be made to preserve the potential habitat for the Cave Salamander in the ravine along the north edge of the property. This should not be difficult as this area is remote from most activity at the FEMP. Observations at the ravine and well 1124 at the northern section of the property should be made during periods of surface activity of the Cave Salamander.