

APPENDIX D
PROPOSED ACTION/MODIFIED PROPOSED ACTION
SUPPLEMENTAL ENDANGERED SPECIES DOCUMENTATION

This appendix contains a copy of OEA's October 13, 2010 field survey summary report about the presence of Branching Bur-reed (*Sparganium angrocladum*), a Pennsylvania Endangered Species, within certain wetlands located along the Western Segment of the Proposed Action and the Modified Proposed Action. This report presents the findings of OEA's field surveys and subsequent analyses conducted during the 2010 flowering/fruiting season for the subject species. Included in this appendix is a copy of PA DCNR's November 29, 2010 letter concurring with the findings presented in the field survey summary report.



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October 13, 2010

Ms. Rebecca H. Bowen
Environmental Review Specialist
Pennsylvania Department of
Conservation and Natural Resources
Bureau of Forestry
Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory
Post Office Box 8552
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105-8552

Re: Threatened and Endangered
Species
Field Survey Report, R. J. Corman
Railroad Company, Proposed Beech
Creek Branch Line Construction and
Operation Between Wallacetown and
Gorton, Pennsylvania
PER No. 20406, 19648, and 020163

Dear Ms. Bowen:

Skelly and Loy, Inc. has been retained by the R. J. Corman Railroad Company to assist with the threatened and endangered species coordination for the referenced development project. The initial PNDI coordination response letter dated June 6, 2008, listed the following six potential species that occur in the vicinity of this project area.

- Branching Bur-reed (*Sparganium androcladum*), current status PA endangered, known to inhabit wet meadows, swales, streambanks, and shallow water
- Allegheny Plum (*Prunus alleghaniensis*), currently not protected but proposed as a PA threatened species and it is found on rocky bluffs, shale barrens, roadsides, and floodplains
- Pinkweed or Carey's Smartweed (*Polygonum careyi*), current status PA endangered, known to inhabit sandy open woodlands and disturbed places, particularly after fire
- Mountain Starwort (*Stellaria borealis*), currently not protected but proposed as tentatively undetermined and is found on springy wooded slopes, sphagnum swamps, and streams
- Creeping Snowberry (*Gaultheria hispida*), PA rare and found in wet woods and bogs

Office Locations: Pittsburgh, PA Morgantown, WV State College, PA Hagerstown, MD

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- Mountain Fly Honeycuckler (*Lonicera villosa*), PA endangered found in bogs, swamps, and wet thickets.

A field survey was conducted in the 2008 and 2009 growing seasons by Skelly and Loy's botanist. Potential habitat was noted and field reports were sent to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) on November 12, 2008, and December 4, 2009. The 2008 field survey and secondary resource review noted potential habitat for the six species; therefore, the 2009 field survey was conducted. The December 4, 2009, field report concluded the presence of the Allegheny Plum along the new road upgrade alternative and several locations of an unidentified bur-reed species along the new railroad line alternative near Hawk Run and Laurel Run. Also, there is a 2000-foot-long section that was not surveyed due to the owner not providing permission to enter their property.

The PA DCNR response dated February 4, 2010, concurred that there is no impact anticipated for the Allegheny Plum (*Prunus alleghaniensis*), Pinkweed or Carey's Smartweed (*Polygonum careyi*), Mountain Starwort (*Stellaria borealis*), Creeping Snowberry (*Gaultheria hispida*), and Mountain Fly Honeycuckler (*Lonicera villosa*) along the proposed railroad line. The letter did request that the 2010 field survey verify the identification of the *Sparganium* species along this proposed alternative. The letter also requested the confirmation of the plum on the road upgrade alternative. However, the road upgrade alternative was dropped from further study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement phase; therefore, this was not included in the 2010 field survey. Also, we did not receive permission from the owner of the 2,000-foot portion of the railroad line between the 9th Street Bridge Phillipsburg and Troy; this area still needs to be surveyed prior to preparation of the permit application.

The 2010 field surveys were conducted on July 21 and September 14, 2010. The survey focused on the areas with bur-reed present to identify that species. This included Hawk Run (one wetland and creek adjacent to the old DEP building), Laurel Run (big wetland near Route 53, the new stream crossing and the tie down to the existing rail road that is adjacent to Laurel Run), and one pond along the Wallacetown alternative. A sample was collected at each survey time to get the plant at the appropriate time for the various plant parts for identification. Office identification of the species collected in July appeared to be *Sparganium americanum* but one source said the under-developed *S. androcladum* can be confused with *S. americanum*. Therefore, a sample was again collected from each area in September when the fruit heads started to turn brown, showing that they were fully developed. Based on the office identification of those samples, we determined it to be *Sparganium americanum*. We worked the samples through six different keys (noted on field data form) and all concluded it was this species. It had 1 stigma, achenes tapered at both ends, the body was between 4 and 5 mm and the beak was 2.5 to 4 mm, and the fruit head was in the noted range of 1.5 and 2.6 cm (most were 2 to 2.5 cm) in diameter. The leaves were erect or emerging from the water and had a keel but not strong triangle leaf. The flower stems were axillary, not super-axillary, and had 1 to 3 pistillate heads and 1 to 6 staminate heads and on the same stem as pistillate heads. The fruit was dull and dirty brown in color, not shiny. The samples collected are not in good shape to send to herbarium so we tried to take photographs to show the pistillate sizes and general habit of the plant. Other field photographs are also provided.

**VEGETATIVE COMPOSITE LIST FOR THE WETLANDS WITH SPARGANIUM PRESENT
BASED ON 2008, 2009, AND 2010 FIELD SURVEYS**

The following is a composite list of dominant vegetation found in the wetland habitat that has *Sparganium* present and are located within and/or adjacent to the proposed rail reconstruction area. The majority of the wetland systems are palustrine emergent (PEM) wetlands but there are also palustrine forested (PFC) and palustrine scrub-shrub (PSS) wetlands. Areas of seeps and vegetated edges of watercourses are also present and included in this composite vegetation list.

Tree Species

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)
Hickory Species (*Carya* sp.)
Shagbark Hickory (*Carya ovata*)
Tamarack or Eastern Larch (*Larix laricina*)
White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)
Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*)
Quaking Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*)
Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)
White Oak (*Quercus alba*)
Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*)
Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*)
Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)

Shrub and Woody Vine Species

Speckled Alder (*Alnus incana*)
Smooth Alder (*Alnus serrulata*)
Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)
American Hornbeam or Muscledwood (*Carpinus caroliniana*)
Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)
Silky Dogwood (*Cornus amomum*)
Red-Osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*)
Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*)
Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)
Morrow's Honeysuckle (*Lonicera morrowii*)
Tartarian Honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*)
Ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*)
Staghorn Sumac (*Rhus typhina*)
Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*)
Blackberry Species (*Rubus* sp.)
Black Raspberry (*Rubus occidentalis*)
Willow Species (*Salix* sp.)
Crack Willow (*Salix fragilis*)
Black Willow (*Salix nigra*)
Silky Willow (*Salix sericea*)
Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*)
Meadowsweet (*Spiraea latifolia*)
Steeplebush (*Spiraea tomentosa*)
Northern Arrowwood (*Viburnum recognitum*)

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The 2010 field survey concluded that there is potential habitat for the Branching Bur-reed in the form of wetlands, swales, and streams throughout the project area. Several wetlands had a *Sparganium* species present in them; however, positive identification concluded that it was *S. americanum*. There will be some minor impact to the habitat of the *Sparganium* plants due to drainage work or clearing vegetation adjacent to the rail line and potential direct impact to the *Sparganium* only in the area near the Laurel Run new section where the proposed line crosses the big wetland/stream complex near Route 322 in Phillipsburg to connect with the existing rail line. The 2010 field survey did not find any *Sparganium* plants located in the proposed Laurel Run crossing. However, due to the known population being located upstream of the proposed new crossing, it is recommended that the area be surveyed again prior to permitting to assure that no plants have colonized in the crossing area. A resurvey of the other wetlands along Hawk Run and the Wallacetown pond should also be completed prior to permitting if they will be impacted. Additionally, placement of protective fence and the use of E&S controls in these areas will reduce impact to the majority of the wetlands and any *Sparganium* population. If the listed species is confirmed in future surveys, your office will be contacted. If the area is impacted, mitigation measures will be developed with your office.

The 2010 field survey established that there is no listed species in the proposed study area. It is recommended to resurvey the areas of *Sparganium* to assure that no listed species is present in the future and also to survey for the listed plants with focus on the mountain fly honeysuckle and bur-reed in the 2,000-foot Hawk Run area that the owner did not allow access again this season. Any species found will be reported to your office. If impact will occur to any of the listed plants, your office will be contacted to develop mitigation measures. Enclosed are the field forms for the *Sparganium* survey that was the 2010 survey species focus. We will gladly schedule a field view of the project area at your convenience if that would help you in your review.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. We look forward to receiving your reply at your earliest convenience since the Final EIS will be produced by the end of 2010. Please call me if you have any questions regarding this matter or if you would like to set up a field view of the project area.

Sincerely yours,

SKELLY and LOY, Inc.

Karen M. Johnston
Botanist

Enclosures

cc: Kevin Starnier
Tom Johnston
R08-0101.000

File: BOWEN_KMJ.docx

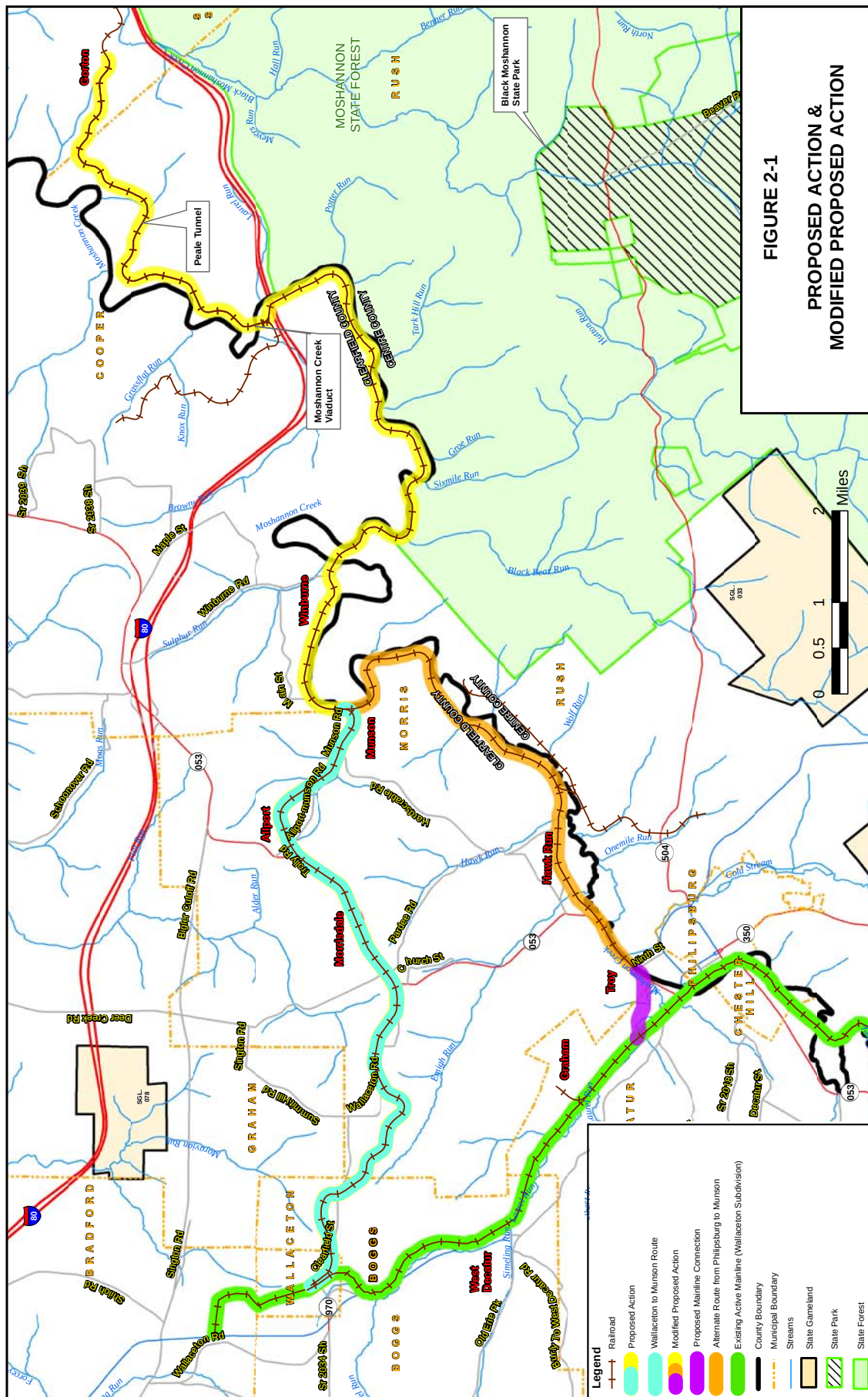
Herbaceous Species

Small Water-Plantain (*Alisma subcordatum*)
 Pearily Everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*)
 Indian Hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*)
 Burdock (*Arctium minus*)
 Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*)
 Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)
 Aster Species (*Aster* sp.)
 Flat-Topped White Aster (*Aster umbellatus*)
 Yellow Bartonia (*Bartonia virginica*)
 Beggar Ticks (*Bidens frondosa*)
 Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*)
 Sedge Species (*Carex* sp.)
 Fringed Sedge (*Carex crinata*)
 Bladder Sedge (*Carex intumescens*)
 Lurid Sedge (*Carex lurida*)
 Pointed Broomsedge (*Carex scoparia*)
 Awl-Fruited Sedge (*Carex stipata*)
 Tussock Sedge (*Carex stricta*)
 Blunt Broomsedge (*Carex tribuloides*)
 Fox Sedge (*Carex vulpinoidea*)
 Water Hemlock (*Cicuta bulbifera*)
 Virgin's Bower (*Clematis virginiana*)
 Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*)
 Three-Way Sedge (*Dulichium arundinaceum*)
 Blunt Spikerush (*Eleocharis obtusa*)
 Trumpetweed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*)
 Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*)
 White Snakeroot (*Eupatorium rugosum*)
 Lance-Leaved Goldenrod (*Euthamia graminifolia*)
 Cleavers (*Galium aparine*)
 Marsh Bedstraw (*Galium palustre*)
 Mannagrass Species (*Glyceria* sp.)
 Rattlesnake Mannagrass (*Glyceria canadensis*)
 Fowl Mannagrass (*Glyceria striata*)
 St. Johnswort Species (*Hypericum* sp.)
 Spotted St. Johnswort (*Hypericum punctatum*)
 Spotted Touch-Me-Not Species (*Impatiens campensis*)
 Sharp-Fruited Rush (*Juncus acuminatus*)
 Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*)
 Path Rush (*Juncus tenuis*)
 Duckweed Species (*Lemna* sp.)
 Northern Bugleweed (*Lycopus uniflorus*)
 Whorled Loosetrife (*Lysimachia nummularia*)
 Swamp Candles (*Lysimachia quadrifolia*)
 Monkey Flower (*Mimulus ringens*)
 Spatterdock (*Nuphar lutea*)
 Sundrops (*Oenothera fruticosa*)
 Sensitive Fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*)

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Cinnamon Fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*)
 Interrupted Fern (*Osmunda claytoniana*)
 Deertongue Grass (*Panicum clandestinum*)
 Reed Canary Grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*)
 Phragmites (*Phragmites australis*)
 Bluegrass Species (*Poa* sp.)
 Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)
 Common Smartweed (*Polygonum hydropiper*)
 Mild Waterpepper (*Polygonum hydropiperoides*)
 Arrow-Leaved Tearthumb (*Polygonum sagittatum*)
 Bracken Fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*)
 Tail Buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*)
 Swamp Dewberry (*Rubus hispidus*)
 Common Arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*)
 Dark Green Burush (*Scirpus atrovirens*)
 Woolgrass (*Scirpus cyperinus*)
 Goldenrod Species (*Solidago* sp.)
 Late Goldenrod (*Solidago macrophylla*)
 Rough-stemmed Goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa*)
 Bur-reed (*Sparganium americanum*)
 Shagnum Moss Species (*Sphagnum* sp.)
 Skunk Cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*)
 Fern Species (*Thelypteris* sp.)
 Poison Ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*)
 Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*)
 Common Cattail (*Typha latifolia*)
 Bladderwort Species (*Utricularia* sp.)
 Cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*)
 New York Ironweed (*Vernonia noveboracensis*)

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Other Listed Species in same habitats as *Sparganium angrocladum*

Wet meadows

Acorus americanus
Bidens laevis
Cardamine pratensis var. *palustris*
Carex bebbii
Carex cryptolepis
Carex flava
Carex haydenii
Carex meadii
Carex mitchelliana
Carex shortiana
Carex tetanica
Eleocharis intermedia
Eriophorum viridicarinatum
Lobelia nuttallii
Ludwigia polycarpa
Lysimachia hybrida
Lythrum alatum
Platanthera dilatata
Platanthera hyperborean
Salix candida
Salix serissima
Spiranthes lucida
Spiranthes magnicamporum
Thalictrum dasycarpum

Swales

Acorus americanus
Agrostis altissima
Alisma triviale
Alopecurus aequalis
Carex aquatilis
Carex buxbaumii
Carex garberi
Carex pseudocyperus
Carex retrorsa
Carex tetanica
Eleocharis elliptica
Galium trifidum
Hottonia inflata
Juncus biflorus
Juncus debilis

Juncus torreyi
Ludwigia polycarpa
Lycopus rubellus
Lythrum alatum
Oronitum aquaticum
Panicum flexile
Panicum lucidum
Panicum scoparium
Pedicularis lanceolata
Phragmites australis ssp. *americanus*
Platanthera peramoena
Pluchea odorata
Ranunculus ambigens
Ranunculus pusillus
Salix petiolaris
Symphoricarichum dumosum
Utricularia cornuta
Utricularia radiata
Veronica catenata
Stream Banks
Acorus americanus
Alisma triviale
Baptisia australis
Carex mitchelliana
Carex schweinitzii
Carex sprengelii
Chasmanthium latifolium
Conioselinum chinense
Conoclinium coelestinum
Cuscuta compacta
Cyperus diandrus
Eleocharis compressa
Eleocharis intermedia
Equisetum variegatum
Eriarthus giganteus
Eupatorium godfreyanum
Euphorbia obtusata
Gratiola aurea
Houstonia serpyllifolia
Hypericum densiflorum
Iris cristata
Isoetes valida
Isoetes x brittonii
Juncus debilis



Photograph No. 1: Large Laurel Run Wetlands near Route 53 *Sparganium americanum* in bloom in July.

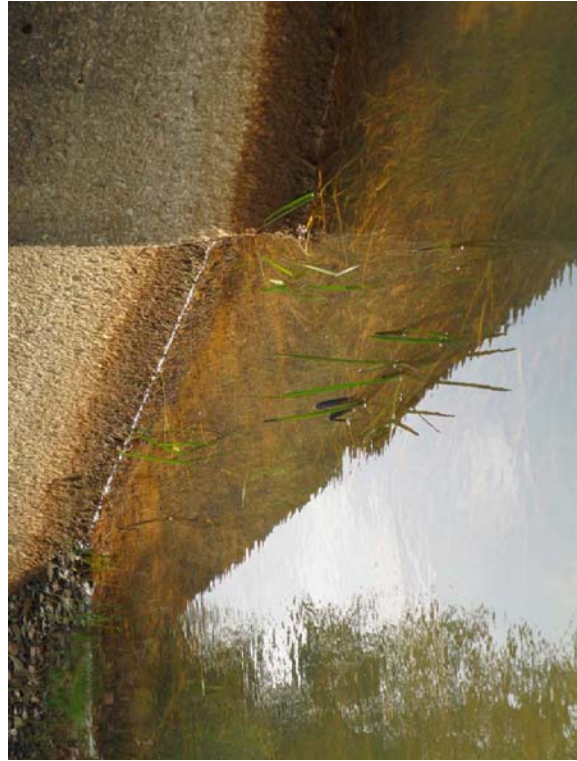


Photograph No. 2: Other plants in the Route 53 wetlands.

Ligusticum canadense
Lupinus perennis
Lycopus rubellus
Marshallia grandiflora
Myrica gale
Phyllanthus carolinensis
Polymnia uvedalia
Ptelea trifoliata
Salix caroliniana
Salix myricoides
Schoenoplectus fluviatilis
Scutellaria saxatilis
Sida hermaphrodita
Stachys hyssoipifolia
Stellaria borealis
Tipularia discolor
Trautvetteria carolinensis
Viola appalachensis
Shallow Water
Hydrocotyle umbellata
Lemna obscura
Lemna valdiviana
Polygonum setaceum var. *interjectum*
Ranunculus flabellaris
Ranunculus flammula
Ranunculus hederaceus
Schoenoplectus acutus
Schoenoplectus torreyi
Sparganium minimum
Utricularia cornuta
Utricularia radiata
Utricularia resupinata
Utricularia subulata
Zizania aquatica
Muddy Shores
Hydrocotyle umbellata
Hypericum gymnanthum
Juncus torreyi
Potamogeton pulcher
Ranunculus flabellaris
Samolus parviflorus



Photograph No. 5: Existing railroad where new Laurel Run creek crossing segment ties down.



Photograph No. 6: Few *Sparganium* located at existing bridge at Laurel Run tie down area that may be impacted if bridge needs improvement and plants are still present.



Photograph No. 3: Closeup of *S. americanum* plants found in all wetlands in July 2010.



Photograph No. 4: Northern end of the large Route 53 Laurel Run wetlands.



Photograph No. 7: Opposite side of existing bridge with no *Sparganium* in direct area but is just out of the work area so indirect impacts could occur if bridge replacement occurs.



Photograph No. 8: Area of new crossing of the creek (to left through woods) and tie down location on existing railroad line.



Photograph No. 9: New Laurel Run crossing area. Currently no *Sparganium* in this area, is grass in the creek but known *Sparganium androcladum* population is located upstream so should resurvey before permit.



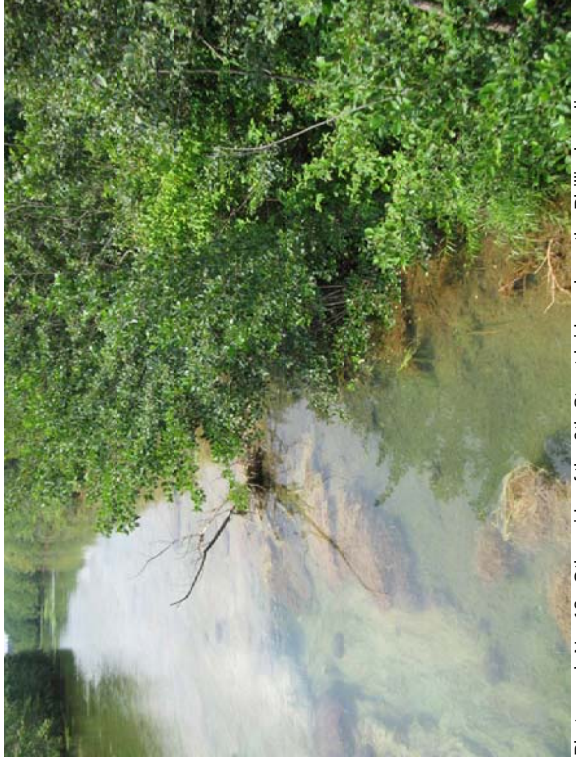
Photograph No. 10: Other wetlands along Hawk Run that contained *Sparganium americanum*.



Photograph No. 11: Wetland on the Wallaceton Line that has *Sparganium americanum* population.



Photograph No. 12: The Hawk Run area of the Phillipsburg to Munson line with the line located along the left side of Hawk Run. There is *Sparganium* on the opposite side of the creek, but the line will not impact the creek; therefore, the population will not be impacted.



Photograph No. 13: Other side of the 9th Street bridge where the Phillipsburg line runs along the Hawk Run to right of photograph. Again, *Sparganium* is on the other side of the creek not this side so no impact.



Photograph No. 14: Office identification sample measured before separated for scope work shows heads in the 2.5-cm or less diameter for the pistillate heads (collected 9/14/2010)

KAREN M. JOHNSTON YEARS EXPERIENCE: 20 23 EDUCATION: B.S., Biology, 1983, Shippensburg University B.S., Education (Secondary Science/Environmental Education), 1985, Shippensburg University RELEVANT TRAINING: FHWA National Highway Institute, 1989, Wetland Evaluation Technique (WET II) Narrow Plains in the Landscape, 1991 and 1997, Millersville University Roadside and Right-of-Way Vegetation Management, 1991, Rutgers State University- Cook College Wetland Horticulture, 1992, Environmental Concern, Inc. Identification of Freshwater Wetland Sedges, Grasses & Rushes, 1993, Institute for Wetland & Environmental Education and Research Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Project Kare/Aquatic Wild Teacher Education Program, 1994, Fort Hunter, PA PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS: The Society of Wetland Scientists Millersburg Botanical Society Pennsylvania Native Plant Society	Senior Botanist/Ecologist and maximum environmental education potential. Ms. Johnston's capabilities also include PAM HEP and HEP field collection and analysis and threatened and endangered species coordination. Power Station Expansion, Indiana - Managed the collection of plant species profiles. Compiled composite list for each upland habitat community type use and identified using the Auderson Land Cover/Land Use Classification System. U.S. Route 220 EIS - Directed several botanical studies including vegetative data collection, for the wetlands delineation, biodiversity analysis, and coordination of the Species of Special Concern Assessment for 11 plant species, including 2 Federally-listed endangered species. Responsible for coordinating the threatened and endangered species assessment. Specific species of issue where the small-whorled pagoda, the Northeastern Bulrush, and several State-listed plant species. Served on the field crew during the wetland delineation studies and terrestrial habitat studies. Warren Street Highway Project - Served as Senior Botanist responsible for collecting vegetative data for potential hog turtle habitats and was responsible for listing plants found at each bog turtle location. Lackawanna Valley Industrial Highway EIS - Supervised the vegetative field assessment for the wetland studies and coordinated the environmental monitoring of wetland impacts for the construction phase.
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KAREN M. JOHNSTON

(Continued)

Senior Botanist/Ecologist

Utility Substation Construction and Line Reconstruction, Pennsylvania - Responsible for coordinating all aspects of the project including wetland fieldwork, report documentation, and permit preparation. Technical work areas included botanical data collection completed for the wetlands studies, endangered species assessment including actual field surveys for one confirmed species, agency coordination, and author of the Wetlands Findings Report.

Ms. Johnston provides the landscape designs for Skelly and Loy's wetland and terrestrial mitigation plans and recreational and environmental educational site plans. Her unique combination of vast botanical field experience, knowledge of native plants, environmental education background, and formal training in landscape design affords her unparalleled expertise in the area of natural habitat creation. Ms. Johnston has been involved in more than 50 wetland replacement and terrestrial mitigation construction projects in almost all of the PennDOT Districts.

Lackawanna Valley Industrial Highway (LVIIH) - Involved in the construction inspection and coordinated the environmental monitoring of wetland impacts for the construction phase of this project.

S.R. 6015-DS1 Wetland Monitoring Plan/Stream Sampling - Completed conceptual wetland designs that were approved by Federal and State agencies. Prepared the Final Plans, Specifications, and Estimates for the six wetland replacement sites. A Wetland Monitoring Plan was completed and approved by the ACOE. Construction monitoring has been completed and post-construction monitoring events are presently taking place.

SR 6036-001 Loysburg Bypass Environmental Monitoring - Performing environmental monitoring during construction activities.

8100-FM-FR0034 Rev. 7/01

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
BUREAU OF FORESTRY**WILD PLANT MANAGEMENT PERMIT APPLICATION**

I hereby apply for a Pennsylvania Wild Plant Management Permit to remove, collect or transplant wild plants classified as Pa Endangered or Pa. Threatened as listed within 17 Pa. Code Chapter 45, "The Conservation of Pennsylvania Native Wild Plants." Enclosed is a check for \$5.00, payable to the "Commonwealth of Pa." for the Wild Plant Management Permit.

Name of applicant: Karen M. Johnston Telephone No. 717-444-3691
Address: c/o Skelly and Loy, Inc. (Home)
449 Eisenhower Blvd., Suite 300 Telephone No. 717-232-0593
Harrisburg, PA 17111 (Work)

Scientific name(s) of plant species to be affected:

Also, please see attached PNDI letters for five known projects for the 2010 field season as of this date. Most current letters attached. I may also do other surveys depending on the results of future PNHP-PNDI coordination that has not occurred at the time of permit application.

1. R.J. Corman/Beech Creek follow up surveys: Sparganium androcladum (needs species identification on railroad reconstruction alternative, plus all 6 species on 2000 section not surveyed to date and includes: Sparganium androcladum, Prunus allegheniensis, Polygonum carvi, Stellaria borealis, Gualtheria hispida, and Lonicera villosa).
2. CSVT north end surveys: new species for 2010 include: Dodecatheon meadia, Ludwigia polycarpa, Carex bullata, Juncus scirpoides, Schoenoplectus fluviatilis, and Rotala ramossior; plus past species re-survey including: Lupinus perennis, Dodecatheon amethystinum, Alisma plantago-aquatica var. americana, Populus balsamifera, Hemicarpha micrantha, Monarda punctata, Eupatorium rotundifolium, Salix petiolaris, Ranunculus trichophyllus, and Corvalis aurea.
3. Indian Run Dam Rehabilitation re-survey: Juncus debilis.
4. Bridge Repair of Little Manatawny Creek: Carex typhina.
5. I-283 Improvements/Interchange project. Ruellia strepens, Ellisia nyctelea, Rudbeckia fulgida, and Rubus cuneifolius.

Description of proposed activity: The first project is the R.J. Corman Railroad project in Clearfield and Centre Counties and is a proposed railroad branch line construction and operation, some of which is re-establishing an out of service existing line (see PNDI No. 19648 letter dated June 6, 2008 and attached location map).

The second project is the Central Susquehanna Valley Thruway (CSVT) project, Route 15, Section 088 in Snyder, Union and Northumberland Counties and is a highway improvement project, including a new bridge over the Susquehanna River (most current letter is PNDI No. 020249 letter dated December 29, 2009). At this time no field surveys have been completed for these new species so do not know potential impacts. I will also re-survey for the ten other plants we have surveyed for since the start of the project in 1995.

The third project is a follow-up survey for the Indian Run Dam rehabilitation project in Schuylkill County. I had conducted a fall survey but it was too late to positively identify the rushes found, so will re-visit the site this summer to re-survey the wetlands (see attached PDI No. 20090729203832).

Project four is a bridge repair over the Little Manatawny Creek in Berks County (see PNDI No. 20100107223148).

The fifth known project is I-283 improvements project in Dauphin County (see PNDI No. 020628).

Also, I will conduct plant surveys for any other projects that PNDI coordination requests a survey be completed. I mainly work in central and eastern PA but at times to go to the western part of the state to help Jason Harkcom on his projects as needed.

Location(s) of the proposed activity (include an outline of the affected areas drawn on a USGS topographic map or copy. If a copy, include map name on copy).

The proposed study areas for each project are shown on the maps with the attached letters, but impacts are not known at this time.

1. R.J. Corman (PNDI No. 19648, 020163, and 20406) quads are: Karthaus, Snowshoe, Black Moshannon, Philipsburg, Wallacetown, and Frenchville, PA.
2. CSVT Highway Improvement Project - Section 2 (PNDI Nos. 5032, 12241, 013978, 13343, 13978, and 020249) quads are: Northumberland and Sunbury, PA.
3. Indian Run Dam Rehabilitation (PNDI No. 20090729203832) quad is Pottsville, PA.
4. Bridge over Little Manatawny Creek (PNDI No. 20100107223148) quad is Fleetwood, PA.
5. I-283 Improvement/Interchange Project (PNDI No. 020638) quads are Steelton and Middletown, PA.

Applicant's botanical knowledge, experience and credentials: (List training, degrees, certificates, publications, other pertinent information). The Department reserves the right to obtain copies of the applicant's credentials.

I have worked as a botanist for over 23 years and have confirmed approximately 2 1/2 dozen species sites to date and have looked for a variety of species on about 160 different projects. I have surveyed for various upland and aquatic grass, sedge, rush, fern, wildflower, vine, shrub, and tree species. My degree is a BSED (Shippensburg University, 1985) and I have attended several plant ID courses.

Name of landowner(s):

R.J. Corman Railroad Co.	PennDOT District 3-0
Address: P.O. Box 751, Clearfield, PA 16830	P.O. Box 218, Montoursville, PA 17754
Telephone Number (Work): 814-768-7555	570-368-4390
Schuylkill County Municipal Authority	PennDOT District 5-0
c/o project engineers: Alfred Benesch & Company	1002 Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA 18101
Address: 400 One Norwegian Plaza	610-871-4100
P.O. Box 1090, Pottsville, PA 17901	
Telephone Number (work): 570-622-4055	
PennDOT District 8-0	
Address: 2140 Herr Street, Harrisburg, PA 17103	
Telephone Number (work): 717-787-6653	

(Verbal consent of the landowner must be obtained prior to conducting permitted activities)

We have been hired by the property owners to do these studies.

Previous Wild Plant Management Permit Numbers

09-001 (20 February 2009) 08-2 — (can't find 2008 permit #) 07-033 (15 Aug. 2007)
 06-020 (7 July 2006) 05-030 (17 June 2005) 04-033 (16 July 2004)
 03-19 (8 May 2003)

Have you ever had a Wild Plant Management Permit revoked? No
 If yes, list permit numbers and explain _____

Additional information pertinent to the proposed activity:

The ROW is owned by PennDOT on the three PennDOT projects so access is not an issue. The R.J. Corman Co. (Beech Creek RR) owns all the project work area or has property approval to enter for study purposes for the Beech Creek RR project accept for about a 2000 section near Phillipsburg that to date the property owner has denied us access. We hope to be able to go on this property this season.

Attach additional sheets if necessary to complete any item and identify the item. Include your name and permit application date on the top of each page.

All information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

 Applicant's Signature Date April 5, 2010

Please mail this application to:

Bureau of Forestry
 FAS
 P.O. Box 8552
 Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552

8100-FM-FROO33 Rev. 7/95
 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
 DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
 BUREAU OF FORESTRY

WILD PLANT MANAGEMENT PERMIT

Date 10 May 2010 No. 010-34

This permit is issued to Karen Johnston for collection of Pennsylvania
Endangered and Threatened plant species for voucher specimens in Pennsylvania

 (List species and locations)

The permittee must carry this permit during the removal, collection, or transplanting of Pa. Endangered and Pa. Threatened plant species and will present this permit for inspection upon request. The permittee must also comply with Chapter 45 section 47 and 48 relating to report information.

Permit conditions: Vouchers are to be deposited in an accredited institution. Notify land managers before conducting permitted activities. Permittee shall report results to the Bureau of Forestry central office. Land owner permission must be acquired before conducting work.

James K. Lustberg Plant Program Manager 10 May 2010
 Signature Title Date

This permit will expire 10 May 2011

NONTRANSFERRABLE

This permit may be revoked for good cause.



BUREAU OF FORESTRY

November 29, 2010

PNDI Numbers: 20406, 19648, and 20163

Karen Johnston
Skelly and Loy, Inc.
449 Eisenhower Boulevard, Suite 300
Harrisburg, PA 17111-2302

Re: RI Corman Railroad Co., Proposed Beech Creek Branch Line Construction and Operation between Wallacetown and Gorton, PA
Various Townships, Clearfield and Centre Counties,

Dear Ms. Johnston,

Thank you for submission of the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) Environmental Review Receipt Numbers 20406, 19648, and 20163 for review. PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources screened this project for potential impacts to species and resources of concern under DCNR's responsibility, which includes plants, terrestrial invertebrates, natural communities, and geologic features only.

Project History

This project has three alternatives: the original railroad alternative (PNDI 19648, submission dated 4/17/08); the "Proposed Minimization Alternative" or the "new railroad alternative" (PNDI 20163, submission dated 5/06/09); and the "Local Road System Upgrade Alternative" (PNDI 20406, submission dated 9/30/09).

19648—Original Railroad Alternative

The original version of this project was received in our office in April of 2008 from the Surface Transportation Board. On May 15, 2008, Environmental Reviewer Rebecca Bowen responded with an information letter including the names of six species known in the area (*Sparganium angustifolium*, *Prunus alleghaniensis*, *Polygonum careyi*, *Stellaria borealis*, *Gaultheria hispida*, and *Lonicera villosa*) and noted that if earth disturbance was planned, to please coordinate further with our office. We subsequently received a survey report from Skelly & Loy dated Nov. 12, 2008. We responded with a follow-up letter dated Dec. 2, 2008 requesting a confirmation of identification of *Sparganium angustifolium*, and *Polygonum careyi*. We agreed with Skelly & Loy's assessment that no impact would be anticipated to *Prunus alleghaniensis*, *Stellaria borealis*, *Gaultheria hispida*, and *Lonicera villosa* for the original railroad alternative. The follow-up of the *S. angustifolium* and *P. careyi* are discussed below.

20163—Proposed Minimization Alternative or New Railroad Alternative

This version of the project was received in our office May 7, 2009 from the Surface Transportation Board and referred to as the new alternative. Environmental Reviewer Andrew Rohrbaugh responded with a survey request for the six species noted previously—*Sparganium angustifolium*, *Prunus alleghaniensis*, *Polygonum careyi*, *Gaultheria hispida*, and *Lonicera villosa*. This letter also noted the request for confirmation of *Sparganium* and *Polygonum* from the previous letter.

A combined follow-up survey report was received from Skelly & Loy on December 4, 2009. For the new railroad alternative, no impact was anticipated as per the survey conducted for *Prunus alleghaniensis*, *Polygonum careyi*, *Stellaria borealis*, *Gaultheria hispida*, and *Lonicera villosa*. A *Sparganium* specimen was observed, but it was not identifiable to the species level. DCNR requested a follow up survey for *Sparganium* if the new railroad alternative was to be pursued.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement was received in our office in July of 2010 and we responded in August of 2010. This EIS noted that the only species left to identify was *Sparganium angustifolium*, and that all other potential impacts were cleared. It was also determined that a follow-up survey for *S. angustifolium* would be appropriate. Our office agreed with the EIS.

PNDI Number: 20406, 19648, and 20163

The most recent survey report from Skelly & Loy was received in our office on October 13, 2010. The sites along the new railroad alternative where the unidentified *Sparganium* was previously found were revisited in July and September of 2010. It was determined that the species of *Sparganium* present was *S. americanum* and not *S. angustifolium*. However, potential habitat is present and the known population of *S. angustifolium* upstream led Skelly & Loy to conclude that the area should be resurveyed prior to permitting to assure that no plants have colonized the Laurel Run wetlands along Hawk Run and the Wallacetown Pond and, if possible, to survey the areas to which Skelly & Loy were not granted access by the landowners previously.

20406—Local Road Upgrade Alternative

This version of the project was received in our office October 2, 2009 from the Surface Transportation Board and was referred to as the "Local Road System Upgrade Alternative" or the "Road Upgrade." This project was reviewed by Environmental Reviewer Joy VanDervort-Sneed and a survey was requested, if disturbance was anticipated, for *Polygonum careyi* and *Prunus alleghaniensis*.

A combined follow-up survey report was received from Skelly & Loy on December 4, 2009. Our response on February 4, 2010 stated that, according to Skelly & Loy's assessment, potential habitat was observed for all six species and follow-up surveys should be conducted if this alternative was to be pursued.

The most recent survey report from Skelly & Loy is dated October 13, 2010. This notes that the Local Road Upgrade Alternative has been dropped from consideration and no further botanical surveys have been conducted in that area. If this alternative is revived in the future, further coordination is requested with our office.

Summary

- No impact is anticipated to *Prunus alleghaniensis*, *Stellaria borealis*, *Gaultheria hispida*, *Lonicera villosa* and *Polygonum careyi* for the new railroad alternative and the original railroad alternative as per surveys conducted by Skelly & Loy.
- Sparganium angustifolium* was not identified along the original railroad alternative/new railroad alternative. However, since Skelly & Loy determined that potential habitat exists in the project area, and that *S. angustifolium* populations exist upstream, it is possible that the species may colonize the area. Therefore, DCNR agrees with Skelly & Loy's assessment that a survey should be conducted of the Laurel Run crossing, wetlands along Hawk Run and at Wallacetown Pond prior to permitting.
- The Local Road Upgrade Alternative has been dropped from consideration; therefore the surveys which have been requested have not been completed. If this plan is revived, please coordinate further with our office.

This response represents the most up-to-date summary of the PNDI data files and is valid for one (1) year from the date of this letter. An absence of recorded information does not necessarily imply actual conditions on-site. Should project plans change or additional information on listed or proposed species become available, this determination may be reconsidered. Should the proposed work continue beyond the period covered by this letter, please resubmit the project to this agency as an "Update" (including an updated PNDI receipt, project narrative and accurate map).

This finding applies to impacts to DCNR only. To complete your review of state and federally-listed threatened and endangered species and species of special concern, please be sure the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, PA Game Commission, and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission have been contacted regarding this project as directed by the online PNDI ER Tool found at www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us.

Sincerely,

Rebecca H. Bowen, Environmental Review Manager FOR Chris Firestone, Wild Plant Program Mgr.
Ph: 717-772-0258 ~ cbowen@state.pa.us

conserve sustain enjoy

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