

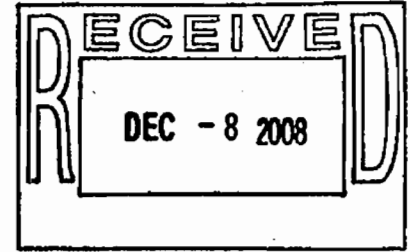
EI-16209



Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Bureau of Forestry

December 2, 2008



Ms. Sandy Basehore
 Skelly & Loy, Inc.
 2601 North Front St.
 Harrisburg, PA 17110

Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory Review, PNDI Number	19648
RJ Corman Railroad Co., Proposed Beech Creek Branch Line Construction and Operation between Wallacetown & Gorton PA (Finance Docket No. 35116)	
Clearfield & Centre Counties	

Dear Ms. Basehore,

This responds to your request about a Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) ER Tool "Potential Impact" or a species of special concern impact review. We screened this project for potential impacts to species and resources of special concern under the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' responsibility, which includes plants, natural communities, terrestrial invertebrates and geologic features only.

Our office received this project in April of 2008 and responded in June providing information on species known to be found in the vicinity including *Sparganium angrocladum*, *Prunus alleghaniensis*, *Polygonum careyi*, *Stellaria borealis*, *Gaultheria hispidula* and *Lonicera villosa*. A survey was performed by Skelly & Loy for the species listed above on July 16 and September 24, 2008. The results of this survey were received in our office November 12, 2008.

The following summarizes DCNR's understanding of the outcome of the investigations, as well as our concerns. Also, the survey information did not include the botanical field survey forms for each species and maps showing areas surveyed. Please submit these forms (<http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/InternetFieldSurveyForm.pdf>, reminder one species per form) and maps to our office for the follow-up surveys as well as the previous surveys.

Sparganium angrocladum (Branching Bur-reed)

Potential habitat was surveyed, including wetlands, swales and streams. Wetland 012 was found to have a specimen of *Sparganium* present, however it was not possible to identify to the species level. In the survey report, Skelly & Loy recommend that this wetland be revisited next field season to confirm the identity of the species. Some disturbance is planned to this species' habitat. Please verify the identity of this *Sparganium* specimen to the species level. Please include botanical field survey forms, maps showing areas surveyed for this species and photos of diagnostic characteristics.

Prunus alleghaniensis (Allegheny Plum)

Potential habitat was identified in the project right of way, however no individuals of *Prunus alleghaniensis* were found. No impact anticipated to *Prunus alleghaniensis*, pending receipt of botanical survey form and map showing area surveyed for this species.

Polygonum careyi (Pinkweed)

A few *Polygonum* species were found associated with wetlands and stream edges, but were not identified to species level. However, *Polygonum careyi* is a FACW species, and may potentially be in this type of habitat. Please confirm the identity of the *Polygonum* specimens to the species level. Please include botanical field survey forms, maps showing areas surveyed for this species and photos of diagnostic characteristics.

Stewardship

Partnership

Service

Stellaria borealis (Mountain Starwort)

A few areas of potential habitat were found in project area, however, no Mountain starwort plants were found in any of those areas. No impact anticipated to *Stellaria borealis*, pending receipt of botanical survey form and map showing area surveyed for this species.

Gaultheria hispidula (Creeping Snowberry)

A few areas of potential habitat were found in project area, however, no Creeping Snowberry plants were found in any of those areas. No impact anticipated to *Gaultheria hispidula*, pending receipt of botanical survey form and map showing area surveyed for this species.

Lonicera villosa (Mountain Fly Honeysuckle)

A few areas of marginal habitat were found in project area, however, no Mountain fly honeysuckle plants were found in any of those areas. No impact anticipated to *Lonicera villosa*, pending receipt of botanical survey form and map showing area surveyed for this species.

Our office will complete the environmental review for this project upon receipt of the requested information.

This response represents the most up-to-date summary of the PNDI data files and is good for one (1) year from the date of this letter. An absence of recorded information does not necessarily imply actual conditions on-site. A field survey of any site may reveal previously unreported populations. Should project plans change or additional information on listed or proposed species become available, this determination may be reconsidered.

This finding applies to impacts to plants, natural communities, terrestrial invertebrates and geologic features only. To complete your review of state and federally-listed species of special concern, please be sure the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the PA Game Commission and the Fish and Boat Commission has been contacted regarding this project either directly or by performing a search with the online PNDI ER Tool found at www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us.

Thank you,

Rebecca H. Bowen

Rebecca H. Bowen, Environmental Review Specialist.

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