



Best Management Practices for Construction and Development Projects Illinois Chorus Frog *Pseudacris illinoensis*

Common name • Illinois Chorus Frog
Scientific name • *Pseudacris illinoensis*
Federal status • None
State status • None

Purpose and Use

The information in this document is to be used to help avoid and minimize species impacts due to construction practices. It is not intended to be used as a guide to manage habitat for a given species. If that is the goal, please contact the Department of Conservation for habitat management information. Because every project and location differs, following the recommendations within this document does not ensure that impacts will not occur to the species and additional information might be required in certain instances. Following the recommendations within this document does not complete Endangered Species Act consultation that may be necessary for species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act; please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for more information.

Ecology

Illinois Chorus Frogs are a species of conservation concern. They are located in west-central and southwestern Illinois, southeastern Missouri and northeastern Arkansas. In Missouri, they historically preferred open, sandy areas, but the majority of the habitat is now cultivated fields (soybean, corn, and cotton). Illinois Chorus Frogs are the largest chorus frog, with large, muscular forelimbs used for digging in the sandy substrate. Their color may vary from light tan to tan-gray with a distinct V-shaped marking between the eyes, a dark stripe from the snout to the shoulder and a dark spot below the eye. The majority of this frog's life is spent burrowing in the sand. The frog emerges from the sandy substrate in late winter (typically late February through early April) to breed in flooded fields, roadside ditches or other temporary, fishless bodies of water. Females typically lay 400+ eggs and tadpoles develop into frogs after about 60 days. Adults range in length from 1-1.6 inches. Illinois Chorus Frogs eat various small insects, spiders, and possibly burrowing insect larvae.

Reasons for Decline

Illinois Chorus Frogs historically inhabited the former sand prairies, and associated wetlands of southeastern Missouri. However, as this unique habitat has been totally eliminated, so has much of the Chorus Frog population. In addition, continued draining and clearing of wetlands in southeastern Missouri have greatly

reduced breeding habitat of this species. It also is possible that increased exposure to herbicides and pesticides will cause further declines in populations of the Illinois Chorus Frog and other amphibians and reptiles.

Specific Recommendations

Illinois Chorus Frogs appear to be tolerant of agricultural as long as breeding sites exist in the area. As do many amphibians, Illinois Chorus Frogs require different habitat conditions at different stages in their life cycle. From the time eggs are laid until the tadpoles develop into frogs, these amphibians require temporary pools. As adults, Chorus Frogs require loose, sandy soil for burrowing. For these reasons, it is important to protect all sand prairie habitats and associated temporary pools within the range of the Illinois Chorus Frog.

- Draining or destroying known wetland habitat should be avoided.
- Erosion and sediment controls should be strictly implemented, monitored and maintained for the duration of the project.
- Avoid removing or destroying unique habitat features, such as downed trees, that provide habitat for reptiles and amphibians.
- Avoid altering water levels and regimes in wetlands or seasonally flooded areas within the range of the Illinois Chorus Frog.
- Disposal of wastes and garbage should be done in designated areas far from wetlands.
- Avoid physically or chemically removing or altering the vegetation in the 100-foot buffer around wetlands or seasonally flooded areas.
- If application of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers in or near seasonal wetlands is necessary, carefully follow all label directions and consider application of more wildlife and wetland friendly herbicides and pesticides

General Recommendations

Refer to Management Recommendations for Construction Projects Affecting Missouri Streams and Rivers and Management and Recommendations for Construction Projects Affecting Missouri Wetlands. Refer also to Amphibian and Reptile Management Guidelines.

If your project involves the use of Federal Highway Administration transportation funds, these recommendations may not fulfill all contract requirements. Please contact the Missouri Department of Transportation at 573-526-4778 or

www.modot.mo.gov/ehp/index.htm for additional information on recommendations.

agency for further coordination and to complete compliance requirements.

Information Contacts

For further information regarding construction projects in wetlands, contact:

For species information:

[Missouri Department of Conservation](#)

Resource Science Division
P.O. Box 180
2901 W. Truman Blvd
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180
Telephone: 573/751-4115

For species information and Endangered Species Act Coordination:

[U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#)

Ecological Services
101 Park Deville Drive, Suite A
Columbia, MO 65203-0007
Telephone: 573/234-2132

For Clean Water Act Coordination:

[Missouri Department of Natural Resources](#)

Water Protection Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176
Telephone: 573/751-1300, 800/361-4827

[U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#)

Regulatory Branch
700 Federal Building
Kansas City, MO 64106-2896
Telephone: 816/983-3990

[U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#)

Water, Wetlands, and Pesticides Division
901 North 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101
Telephone: 913/551-7307

Disclaimer

These Best Management Practices were prepared by the Missouri Department of Conservation with assistance from state and federal agencies, contractors and others to provide guidance to those people who wish to voluntarily act to protect wildlife and habitat. Compliance with these Best Management Practices is not required by the Missouri wildlife and forestry law nor by any regulation of the Missouri Conservation Commission. Other federal laws such as the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act, and state or local laws need to be considered for construction and development projects, and require permits and/or consultation with the appropriate agency. Following the recommendations provided in this document will help reduce and avoid project impacts to the species, but impacts may still occur. Please contact the appropriate