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## **Broad Incidental Take Permit/Authorization Grassland and Savanna Protocols**

### **Ottoo Skipper (*Hesperia ottoe*)**

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This Broad Incidental Take Permit/Authorization (BITP/A) has been issued by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to allow landowners to conduct certain grassland and savanna management activities while remaining in compliance with the state's endangered species law (s. 29.604, Wis. Stats.). This BITP/A allows for the incidental taking (mortality) of the state endangered ottoe skipper (*Hesperia ottoe*) that may occur as a result of the grassland and savanna management activities listed below.

Background information/criteria on this BITP/A must also be reviewed and followed:

[https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ERReview/Documents/GSP\\_Overview.pdf](https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ERReview/Documents/GSP_Overview.pdf)

Protocols for all other species covered under this BITP/A can be found here:

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ERReview/ItGrasslands.html>

*Note: If carrying out a given protocol is not feasible, or multiple listed species in a given management area pose conflicts, contact the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation (NHC) at [DNRERReview@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRERReview@wisconsin.gov). Staff in NHC will work with species experts and managers to establish an acceptable protocol for a given site that will allow for incidental take without further legal consultation or public notice.*

#### **I. Species Background Information**

**State Status:** Endangered

Background information on the ottoe skipper can be found on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' web page for the species:

<https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/EndangeredResources/Animals.asp?mode=detail&SpecCode=IILEP65050>

#### **II. Management Protocols for Permitted/Authorized Incidental Take**

If the management activity is for the purpose of recovering, maintaining, or improving the grassland, prairie, or savanna ecosystem that includes habitat for the ottoe skipper, then incidental take is allowed if the conditions listed below are followed:

**If screening indicates ottoe skipper records at the site, within the time period of 2005 to present OR there is evidence, based on critical habitat features, context, or other information leading to that conclusion then:**

## A. Burning

1. If no monitoring of the ottoe skipper is occurring, and

- a. If burning in early spring (*see definitions*),

then you may burn up to a **20 ft wide linear band** of open prairie vegetation (*see definition*) around the perimeter of the unit between the core/center of the open prairie and the surrounding brush or woodland. Note: this linear band shall **exclude the core/center of the open prairie** vegetation while at the same time allow burning of the brush/open prairie interface.

- b. If burning at other times of the year,

then you may burn up to a **20 ft wide linear band** of open prairie vegetation (*see definitions*) around the perimeter of the unit between the core of the open prairie and the surrounding brush or woodland **as long as at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the open prairie vegetation has been unburned for at least the last 4 consecutive years**. Note: this linear band shall **exclude the core/center of the open prairie** vegetation while at the same time allow burning of the brush/open prairie interface.

2. If monitoring of the ottoe skipper is occurring,

then you may burn up to a **50 ft wide linear band** of open prairie vegetation (*see definitions*) around the perimeter of the unit between the core of the open prairie and the surrounding brush or woodland **OR** you may burn up to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total open prairie vegetation (*see definitions*), **as long as at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the open prairie vegetation has been unburned for at least the last 4 consecutive years**. Note: this linear band shall **exclude the core/center of the open prairie** vegetation while at the same time allow burning of the brush/open prairie interface.

## B. Mowing/Haying

1. If no monitoring of the ottoe skipper is occurring, and

- a. If mowing/haying once between April 1st and Sept. 30th,

then you may cut up to 1/10th of the site's total dry to dry-mesic prairie habitat at a minimum cut height of 4" above the ground.

- b. If mowing/haying between Oct. 1st and March 31st,

then you may cut up to 1/3 of the site's total dry to dry-mesic prairie habitat at a minimum cut height of 4" above the ground.

2. If monitoring of the ottoe skipper is occurring and,
  - a. If mowing/haying once between April 1st and Sept. 30th,

then you may cut up to 1/5th of the site's total dry to mesic prairie habitat at a minimum cut height of 4" above the ground.
  - b. If mowing/haying between Oct. 1st and March 31st,

then you may cut up to 1/2 of the site's total dry to mesic prairie habitat at a minimum cut height of 4" above the ground.

### C. Selective Tree/Brush Cutting

Selective hand cutting/brushing may be used to maintain or restore a site. If heavy equipment is used, it must be restricted to brush/shrub dominated areas to the greatest extent possible. **Host plants must not be buried under cut materials.**

### D. Grazing

1. If no monitoring of the ottoe skipper is occurring,

then you may **lightly graze** at a maximum density of 1 head cattle or 1 horse or 6 sheep for 3.5 acres, on up to **1/10th** of the site's total **open prairie vegetation (see definitions)** per year.
2. If monitoring of the ottoe skipper is occurring,

then you may **lightly graze** at a maximum density of 1 head cattle or 1 horse or 6 sheep for 3.5 acres, on up to **1/5th** of the site's total **open prairie vegetation** per year (*see definitions*) with the grazed area rested for at least two years.

OR

then you may use **moderate to heavy grazing** at a maximum density of 1.5 head of cattle per acre or comparable numbers of other herbivores up to **1/10** of the site's total **open prairie vegetation (see definitions)** per year with the grazed area rested for at least two years.

OR

then you may use **high intensity grazing/browsing with goats** on up to **1/10** of the site's total **open prairie vegetation (see definitions)** per year with the grazed/browsed portion of the open prairie vegetation rested for at least two years.

**E. Herbicide Use**

Herbicides may be used for spot treatment of woody growth and herbaceous invasives. Broadcast spraying of invasives is allowed as long as native prairie grasses are not being affected.

*<sup>1</sup> At least 2 years of baseline monitoring must occur before management begins, and the monitoring must follow protocol acceptable to the Bureau of Natural Heritage Inventory.*

## Survey Protocols

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For Presence/Absence Surveys for Ottoe skipper:

Surveys must be conducted by personnel with the expertise to identify ottoe skipper adults.

Survey at least 20 minutes per acre of habitat per person over a minimum of two flight seasons.

Survey period: Adult flight season; typically late June to late July.

Weather conditions: Survey above 70 degrees F. Survey on sunny or partially sunny days. Do not survey during rain or high winds.

Time of day: Survey between 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

Number of site visits: Survey 2 times during the flight season for two consecutive seasons.

Survey method: Person(s) walk through all areas of open prairie vegetation on the site paying particular attention to nectar plants and hilltop locations where males are known to gather. In more level terrain such as that found on sand prairie/barrens habitats, pay particular attention to nectar plant concentrations especially along roadsides and depressions.

## Definitions

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**Site:** patch of remnant prairie vegetation ottoe skipper record(s) occur at. If the area straddles a property line, the different ownerships must be considered different sites, unless ottoe skipper survey/management agreements exist between the owners.

**Early Spring:** any time prior to the 7th day after the first opening of pasque flowers (*Anemone patens*) on the site. If no pasque flowers are on site, the closest population with a slope aspect similar to the site in question may be used.

**Open prairie vegetation:** area dominated by remnant open prairie that may contain some scattered shrub patches or scattered juniper/red cedar but generally has an open line of sight across patch.

## References

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Dana, R.P. 1991. Conservation management of the prairie skippers *Hesperia dacotae* and *Hesperia ottoe*: basic biology and threat of mortality during prescribed burning in spring. Minnesota Agric. Exp. Sta. Bull. 594-1991. St. Paul, MN. 63 pp.

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