
Broad Incidental Take Permit/Authorization Grassland and Savanna Protocols

Phlox Moth (*Schinia indiana*)

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 phlox moth (*Schinia indiana*) 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

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. 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 phlox moth 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=IILEYMP130>

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 phlox moths, then incidental take is allowed if the conditions below are followed:

A. Burning

1. If burning between August 1 and April 20, then it is assumed there will be no take, thus unless evidence is presented to the contrary, there is no need for incidental take authorization.
2. If burning between April 21 and July 30th, and
 - a. if no monitoring of phlox flower moth is occurring,

then you may burn up to 1/5 of the site's entire host plant population, **as long as** at least 3/4 of the entire host plant population has remained unburned between April 21 and July 30th for at least the 4 previous growing seasons, and there is no more than 50 ft separating burned and unburned host plant populations.
 - b. if monitoring of phlox flower moth is occurring¹,

then other burn regimes may be employed under consultation with the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation.

B. Mowing/Haying:

1. If mowing between August 1st and April 20, then it is assumed there will be no take, and unless evidence is presented to the contrary, there is no need for incidental take authorization.
2. If mowing once between April 21 and July 30th, and
 - a. if no monitoring of phlox flower moth is occurring,

then you may cut up to 1/4 of the site's entire host plant population, **as long as**, at least 2/3 of the entire host plant population has remained unmowed for at least 3 consecutive growing seasons, and there is no more than 50 ft separating mowed and unmowed host plant populations.
 - b. if monitoring of phlox flower moth is occurring¹, and

then other mowing regimes may be employed under consultation with the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation.

C. Selective Tree/Brush Cutting:

As long as the cutting is done between August 1st and May 1st and the host plants are not buried under cut material, then there are no restraints on this activity.

D. Grazing:

Allowed only under consultation with the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation.

E. Herbicide Use:

As long as prairie phlox is not being affected, there are no restraints on the use of herbicide.

¹At least 2 years of baseline monitoring must occur before management begins, and the monitoring must follow protocol acceptable to the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation.

Survey Protocols

Personnel conducting the monitoring must be adequately trained in the use of sampling techniques and phlox flower moth identification. The training must include field experience.

Surveying of Adults

Sampling period: May 20 to June 15

Weather conditions: Air temp between 60 F and 72 F - best
Air temp over 72 F and overcast/rainy - good
Air temp below 60 F and sunny is less desirable
Wind speed: < 15mph

Time of day: Early morning (before 8:30 AM) and evenings are most productive. After 8:30 AM and before 5:30 PM if the temperature is below 72 F or weather is overcast/rainy. Avoid hot, sunny middays.

Number visits per site: 3 visits per season, with not less than 5 days between visits.

Sampling effort per site visit: 5 minutes search time for a dense patch of phlox at about 20 blossoms/sq. ft. or about 10 sq. ft.

Sampling methods: Walk along the edge of the phlox patch outside of the patch to avoid disturbing the plants but close enough to be able to see the petals well. In some cases, a close-focus binocular is useful to scan a group of plants from one perspective. If it is necessary to enter the phlox patch, walk only through those flowers that have already been surveyed. It may be necessary to carefully bend the plants to see all the flowers in the inflorescence. Under ideal weather conditions, the moths are unlikely to flush simply by the presence of humans.

Definitions

Site: Any contiguous patch of prairie/savanna vegetation or clusters of patches of prairie/savanna vegetation not separated from one another by more than 200 ft. of open (non-prairie) cover or by more than 50 ft. of dense brush or tree cover. If the area straddles a property line, the different ownerships must be considered different sites, unless phlox flower moth survey/management agreements exist between the owners.

Late-Spring: Starting in the last week of April to the first week of May (depending upon latitude in the state and the phenology of the spring) through June 20th.