

# ERReview

## Endangered Resources Certification Program

### What is the ER Certification Program?

The certification program is part of the Endangered Resources (ER) Review Program, which helps customers comply with endangered species laws and conserve Wisconsin's rare plants, animals, and habitats. It was created in response to stakeholder requests for a way to share detailed Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) data with a broader group of customers while maintaining the safety, security, and proper interpretation of that data.

After completing the required training, Certified Reviewers are authorized to write formal letters assessing how a proposed project may impact rare species. These letters also outline the requirements and recommendations needed to help projects comply with endangered species laws. These then have sign-off by the certification coordinators.



Black-and-white Warbler, photo © Brian Collins.

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### What are the benefits of the ER Certification Program?

- **Faster review times:** Certified reviews generally have a quicker turnaround than standard reviews.
- **Expanded project coverage:** More activities may fall under the No/low Broad Incidental Take Permit and Authorization, which can exempt project from needing to complete a full ER Review letter. A verification form is instead used.

- **Improved compliance support:** Certified reviewers can better assist their organizations and customers in meeting endangered species requirements.
- **Early conflict resolution:** Reviewers can identify, address, and develop solutions to potential endangered resource conflicts earlier in project planning.
- **Greater convenience for applicants:** Applicants can obtain ER Review services from many of the consultants already involved in their project planning, making the process more efficient and streamlined.

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## Steps to becoming a Certified Reviewer

To ensure NHI data are used appropriately and effectively by certified reviewers, the program offers Teams training twice per year. After completing the training, applicants must pass two exams that demonstrate the skills and knowledge needed to conduct Certified ER Reviews. The total cost for initial certification (application and exams) is \$960, with a \$180 biennial renewal fee. The certification status stays with the individual even if they change companies.

Please note that in addition, an NHI Data Sharing License is required to access the NHI data used in Certified ER Reviews.

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