

Mitchell's Satyr Butterfly Habitat Conservation Plan Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the Mitchell's satyr endangered?

Mitchell's satyrs are confined to mixed shrub and herbaceous habitats often isolated in local fen wetlands. Habitat for these butterflies has been lost as either the habitat has changed or the fens themselves have been drained for other purposes. Mitchell's satyrs are now reduced to 19 occupied habitat sites, less than 200 acres combined in Michigan and Indiana.

What will a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) do?

A HCP is a management effort to provide enough habitat to ensure survival of Mitchell's satyrs in the long term. Having met the butterfly's habitat need, the HCP then provides assurances that management applied to additional habitat, potentially killing some individual Mitchell's satyrs in the process, will not threaten the overall survival of this butterfly.

Will I lose control of my land if it is included in the HCP?

No. The HCP supports issuance by the US Fish and Wildlife Service of an Incidental Take Permit which allows limited take of Mitchell's satyrs as a part of otherwise lawful land and habitat management activities. Permit authority will be extended to land owners who agree to abide with provisions of the HCP and Permit. None of these activities result in a taking of property or property rights.

If I improve habitat on my land and attract Mitchell's satyrs as a result, am I limited in what I can do with my land?

Not necessarily. Landowners having this concern can enter into Safe Harbor agreements with the US Fish and Wildlife Service that protect their options. Under Safe Harbor and before completing improvements to their land, landowners must complete surveys of Mitchell's satyrs and associated occupied habitat to serve as a baseline and as part of the basis for an agreement with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. If the land improvements result in more Mitchell's satyrs or additional occupied habitat, landowners are eligible under this agreement to take Mitchell's satyrs and habitat in excess of levels established during the baseline surveys.

If I participate in the HCP, must I open my land to the public?

No. Increased public access is not a part of either HCPs or Safe Harbor agreements. Limited surveys and auditing are part of both programs to ensure continued compliance with these programs and associated Permit provisions.

Will my participation in these programs reduce my land value?

No. Program outputs are increased numbers of Mitchell's satyrs and enhanced habitat, neither of which reduces land value. Also, these programs are voluntary allowing participants to withdraw from them if and when they desire.

Can I manage my land for deer or other game species if I am enrolled in these programs?

Yes. These land uses are compatible. The habitat management occurring within these programs is often good management for game species.

Can I get a tax break by enrolling in these programs?

Not directly. Landowners may voluntarily restrict uses of their land through conservation easements and then enjoy reduced taxes as a result of the reduced value of the land, often reduced development value.

Are funds available to me if I enroll in these programs?

Funds are available from several sources depending upon the potentials of your property and your willingness to support Mitchell's satyrs and associated habitat there.

Can I continue to farm my land if I enroll wetland portions in these programs?

Program requirements vary, but in general you can choose what portions of your property to include in a given program. Application of agriculture and forestry Best Management Practices results in farming and forestry that have no significant impacts to Mitchell's satyrs or their habitat.

Where can I learn more about these programs?

Information is available on the web at:

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/permits/hcp/mitchellsatyr/index.html>

or you may contact the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, or the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

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