



1/18/2023

Recommended Procedure to Avoid Impacting Venus Flytrap Populations in Boiling Spring Lakes

When Boiling Spring Lakes residents contact City Hall about avoiding potential impacts to Venus flytrap plants growing along road ways and in residential lots there are four basic options that landowners can select from to minimize impact to these unique plants.

Plants can be:

Relocated to suitable habitat within the lot or the roadside that will not be impacted by limited construction activities.

Moved to a 'safe' location in the Boiling Spring Lakes community where suitable habitat exists on State or conservation property (for example property owned and managed by the NC Plant Conservation Program, the Coastal Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy's Orton Plantation, or Orton Plantation.

Moved to a holding area in the BSL community and moved back to the original roadside or lot when construction is finished, and the site is stabilized.

Moved to a 'safe' location for educational displays such as a nature center, natural area, school garden in the community or a nearby community natural area where appropriate management is assured.

What does 'safe' location mean? The site is not likely to be disturbed by road maintenance, a new road, or house or business construction, and the location has the appropriate habitat that will be maintained for suitable growth and reproduction of flytraps.

City Hall will contact the NC Plant Conservation Program, NC Department of Agriculture, which issues permits for Venus flytrap relocations to alert them about the opportunity to rescue the plants.

Volunteer groups including the North American Sarracenia Conservancy and Venus Flytrap Champions have agreed to assist with rescues and train volunteers in the appropriate relocation techniques. The local chapter of the NC Native Plant Preservation Society may also assist.

NC PCP contact: katherine.culatta@ncagr.gov 919-707-3746 (o) 828-406-1724 (c)

In North Carolina the flytrap is recognized as a threatened species and is protected from theft (poaching). The state plant protection law does not carry a penalty for habitat alteration or destruction, however other federal and state laws may be relevant to some land alteration activities.

Threats to the Venus flytrap

Currently the greatest threat to flytraps is the loss of habitat due to construction of structures and roads, also habitat drainage and lack of burning to remove competition from shrubs and trees. In some unusual situations like at Boiling Spring Lakes, mowing of roadsides replaces burning by removing vegetation that shades out populations.

Poaching, taking plants from the property of others without permission, continues to be a serious threat to flytrap populations. Over the years, Venus flytrap plants have been taken from the wild for the horticulture trade and use in pharmaceuticals. Poaching Venus flytrap plants became a felony in North Carolina in 2014 and is punishable by prison time and substantial fines. If you observe poaching activities, notify NC Wildlife Commission at [1-800-662-7137](tel:1-800-662-7137).

In October 2016, the US Fish and Wildlife Service was petitioned to list the Venus flytrap as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act. The petition contained substantial information indicating listing may be appropriate to make sure the species does not disappear in the wild. Locations of the majority of existing populations, and who owns them, have now been documented including numerous populations in the Boiling Spring Lakes area. If a sufficient number of populations in North and South Carolina are protected and appropriately managed, federal listing may not be necessary. The decision regarding the need for listing under the Endangered Species Act will not be made until 2024.

Please see the web site venusflytrapchampions.org to learn more about one of the world's best known carnivorous plants and about the various efforts to make sure this unique species remains a part of North Carolina's natural heritage.