# Dan Salas, CSE

Director, Sustainable Landscapes Program | Principal Research Specialist
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ENERGY RESOURCES CENTER

*The Energy Resources Center, based out of the College of Engineering at the University of Illinois Chicago, is an interdisciplinary public service, research, and special projects organization that works to advance energy sustainability and improve the environment.*

## EDUCATION

- Purdue University, B.S. in Forestry and Natural Resources Specialized in Ecological Restoration, 2001

## ONLINE PROFILES

- LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/dan-salas-59364721/
- ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Dan_Salas/research

## CERTIFICATIONS

- Expert Practitioner, Decision Analysis Certification Program, U.S. Department of Interior, 11/15/2020 - Present
- Certified Senior Ecologist, Ecological Society of America, 6/1/2007 – Present
- Rosgen Level IV Trained in Natural Channel Design 2013 - 2016
- Endangered Resource Reviewer, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources 12/1/2011 – 5/31/2024
- Lake and McHenry Counties Certified Wetland Specialist 4/2013 – 5/31/2024
- Wildland Firefighter "Red Card" Certification (S-130, S-190, I-100)
- Wisconsin Pesticide Applicator Certification

## EXPERIENCE

**ENERGY RESOURCES CENTER (ERC), UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS CHICAGO (UIC)** Chicago, IL
***Director, Sustainable Landscapes Program | Principal Research Specialist*** *2024 – Present*

- Leads the Sustainable Landscapes Program and Rights-of-Way as Habitat Working Group at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Energy Resources Center.
- Researches, oversees tool development, and publishes guidance on topics related to biodiversity, endangered species, vegetation management, conservation planning, and decision making.
- Oversees the Monarch CCAA and Bumble Bee CBA conservation agreement programs and associated staff.
- Oversees refinement and outreach related to the Pollinator Habitat Aligned with Solar Energy (PHASE) tools available at https://rightofway.erc.uic.edu/phase-toolkits/.

**Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.** Madison, WI
***Senior Ecologist | Senior Consultant*** *2021 –2024*

*Team Leadership and Organizational Management*

- Office leader overseeing office budget, workspace allocations, security, and team coordination, and support of regional office collaboration.
- Recruiting, hiring, onboarding, training, corrective action planning, and terminating staff.
- Financial management for over $2 million in project contracts.

*Conservation Planning, Facilitation, and Decision Analysis*

- Technical support for the implementation of the Nationwide Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) for Monarch Butterfly on Energy and Transportation Lands program. More at FWS and UIC websites. The agreement was recognized by USFWS as a 'historic' effort.
- Supported strategic planning and decision making for dozens of companies and highway agencies considering enrollment in the Monarch CCAA.
- Facilitator, technical lead, and grant writing for development of a Nationwide Conservation Agreement for At-Risk Bumble Bees. More on the UIC website.
- Pollinator solar tool team leader for the University of Illinois Chicago's Evaluating the Economic, Ecological, and Performance

Impacts of Pollinators in Large-scale Solar Facilities project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy. Resources created are at https://rightofway.erc.uic.edu/phase.
- Principal Investigator on a multi-year study of haying and grazing effects on CRP short and mixed grass prairie in the southern Great Plains.
- Supported and led the decision analysis for the USFWS Pacific Region's Inventory and Monitoring Program Strategy creating a seven-year workload plan for the regional program.

*Nature-based ESG Consultation*
- Acted as corporate biodiversity lead across internal teams and industry clients responding to ESG disclosure frameworks.
- Facilitated development of a corporate biodiversity strategy for a multi-state electric and gas utility to support company sustainability reporting and ESG disclosures.
- Project manager and technical lead for biodiversity-oriented data collection, mapping, and reporting for several multinational corporations sustainability reporting and ESG disclosures.
- Supported multiple utility-scale solar companies with vegetation management planning, biodiversity strategy planning, and decision support tool development.

*Regulatory Consultation*
- Acted as corporate biodiversity lead across internal teams and industry clients responding to ESG disclosure frameworks.
- Project manager and technical lead for development of a wetland functional values assessment tool for Minnesota and Wisconsin in collaboration with several state and federal agencies.
- Program manager and technical lead for wetland, waterway, public lands, and endangered species regulatory compliance oversight for a utility company vegetation management program.
- Technical lead and reviewer for state and federal endangered species compliance.

**Cardno, Inc.** Madison, WI
***Senior Ecologist / Senior Principal / Branch Manager*** *2006 –2021*

*Team Leadership and Organizational Management*
- Managed a team of 30+ staff across five office locations in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Acted as direct supervisor and technical quality control reviewer.
- Fostered team and administrative innovations that were adopted by other offices across the company.
- Managed an annual operational budget totalling over $4 million dollars.
- Responsible for achieving revenue targets through funding requests, proposals, and presentations.
- Responsible for managing team workload, strategic planning, and staff professional goals.
- Provided leadership during challenging transition periods including company acquisition, staff turnover, and client conflict resolution.
- Created a multi-office coaching and mentoring program; actively mentored staff professional development and personal growth.
- Regular use of online polling, one-on-one outreach, and workgroups to engage and elicit feedback.
- Conducted annual performance reviews, plus recruiting, hiring, onboarding, training, corrective action planning, and terminating staff.

*Conservation Planning, Facilitation, and Decision Analysis*
- Technical lead for the development of the Nationwide Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances for Monarch Butterfly on Energy and Transportation Lands.
- Lead author on the Managing Compatible Vegetation using Integrated Vegetation Management, A Companion to the 3rd edition of the ISA's IVM Best Management Practice Standard developed in collaboration with the Utility Arborists Association.
- Supported development of a Conference Report for monarch butterfly on USDA's Conservation Reserve Program. Coordinated collaboration between USDA and USFWS to address agricultural land management concerns.
- Lead facilitator and decision analyst for the Tonto National Forest Travel Management Planning minimization criteria decision analysis.
- Facilitated conservation planning efforts (comprehensive conservation plans, habitat management plans, and water resources inventory assessments) on over 40 National Wildlife Refuges across USFWS Midwest, Northeast, and Mountain-Prairie Regions.
- Aided in development and facilitation of USFWS Region 3's selection process for surrogate species in the Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers LCC.
- Developed the ROCSTAR tool: a structured decision making tool to aid in identification and selection of priority resources of concern for USFWS-managed lands. ROCSTAR was incorporated into the Service's most current handbook on selecting

resources of concern.

- Technical support to the University of Illinois at Chicago's development of a pollinator habitat assessment scorecard. Lead development of the accompanying management module - a management effectiveness tool.
- Lead planner, facilitator, and decision analyst in collaborative development of an operating plan for American Transmission Company and U.S. Forest Service on the Hiawatha National Forest. The plan was completed in one year from start to finish, including public comment review.
- Completed numerous NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) documents and planning efforts resulting in categorical exclusions, environmental assessments, and environmental impact statements.
- Created the POWR (Pollinator Opportunities Within Rights-of-Ways) Model in order to aid a utility in voluntary conservation.
- Graduated as an 'expert' level practitioner from the National Conservation Training Center's Decision Analysis Certification Program.

*Regulatory Consultation*

- Led wetland delineation, mapping, and 401/404 regulatory permitting and compliance support for streams and wetlands throughout Wisconsin and the Midwest. Delineations included significantly disturbed and naturally problematic conditions.
- Consulted clients on threatened and endangered species requirements for avoidance, plus state and federal permitting. Conducted desktop analysis, field surveys, and coordinated follow up required to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts.
- Oversaw relocation of State-endangered plants including Dotted Blazing Star (*Liatris punctata*) and Seaside Crowfoot (*Ranunculus cymbalaria*).
- Provided technical review for a Hine's Emerald Dragonfly habitat conservation plan.
- Completed preparation of incidental take permits, biological assessments, and biological evaluations. Interpreted and applied State and Federal regulatory guidance.
- Developed and oversaw a 10-year program to provide desktop habitat analysis and on-call regulatory support to a utility vegetation management program.
- *Stream, Wetland, and Ecological Restoration*
- Performed all aspects of project implementation, including design, permitting, construction, and monitoring.
- Managed large ecological consulting projects including focuses on wetland, stream, and ecosystem restoration, and conservation planning in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Virginia, Colorado, and Utah.
- Presented dozens of sessions related to stream, riparian, and wetland ecology, decision analysis, and restoration at conferences, workshops, and seminars.

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**Delaware Riverkeeper Network** Washington Crossing, PA

***Restoration Program Manager*** *2002 –2006*

- Managed all aspects of a highly effective restoration program including grant writing/reporting, personnel, budget, and workload management.
- Managed all aspects of over 50 stream and riparian wetland restoration projects throughout Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania including planning, cost estimation, design, permit application, installation, evaluation, public relations, and maintenance.
- Worked with local, state, and federal government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private landowners to advise and complete a variety of restoration projects including riparian corridor restoration, watershed restoration planning, invasive species management, bioengineering stabilization, and natural channel design.