



AFWA Committee Work Plan

Worksheet

Guidelines: Each AFWA Committee, Subcommittee and Workgroup is required to review their charge and develop a work plan at the AFWA Annual Meeting and submit to John Lord, Operations Director, jlord@fishwildlife.org by October 1. The purpose of the work plan is to improve communication and effectiveness of committee work and enable committee chairs and the Executive Committee to evaluate their status annually.

Workgroup Work Plan		
Date: 09/05/2023 Update		
Workgroup Name: BAT WORKING GROUP		
Chair: Katrina Morris, GA DNR	Contracted Support: Leanne Burns	Staff: Mark Humpert
Workgroup Charge:		
<p>The Bat Working Group (BWG) will help identify barriers to bat conservation and work with other AFWA committees to provide guidance or assistance on cross-cutting issues. The working group creates a forum for coordination and information sharing regarding broad collaborations (e.g. NA Bat monitoring and WNS response) and develops new conservation tools and solutions.</p>		
Changes to the Charge:		
None.		
List Major Activities and Objectives Accomplished During the Last Year:		
<p>Between 10/2022 and 10/2023 the working group completed the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hosted an AFWA Webinar in February 2023 entitled <i>Increasing Cooperation Between State DOTs and State Natural Resources Agencies to Advance Projects while Protecting Bats and other Wildlife Using Transportation Structures and Right-of-Ways.</i> - Co-hosted a Webinar Series with the AFWA Energy & Wildlife Committee in February 2023 entitled <i>Data Standards for Bat Research and Monitoring at Wind Energy Facilities.</i> - Presented BWG Report to the Wildlife Diversity and Conservation Funding Committee at the 2023 North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. - Hosted the Interagency Bat Conservation Forum at the 2023 North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. - Provided USFWS with a list of states' questions related to Threatened or Endangered bat species listing/uplistings for inclusion in updated FAQ documents. - Maintains a current State Contacts List identifying State Agency bat leads. - Continued issuing monthly AFWA Bat Conservation E-Newsletters to grow and inform a network of bat professionals across North America. - Continued to provide expert guidance such as technical assistance, information messaging, and review to AFWA members and partner organizations for a variety of bat related issues. - Provided an update on activities and objectives to the Wildlife Diversity and Conservation Funding Committee at the annual AFWA meeting. - 		
List Objectives and Activities that will be Accomplished in the Coming Year:		

OBJECTIVES (Short-term)

Assist States with recommendations and actions related to bat conservation for their State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs) with an emphasis on states that are currently revising their SWAPs.

Promote *Bats and Transportation Structures* (BATS) AFWA resolution including providing national training and survey guidance recommendations for state agencies and Departments of Transportation.

Continue to provide guidance related to proposed Threatened or Endangered bat species listing/uplistings, working with USFWS and the AFWA Threatened and Endangered Species Policy Committee as appropriate.

ACTIVITIES (Short-term)

Host informal social at the annual AFWA meeting to allow for networking and discussion for participants interested in Bat Conservation in North America.

Work with the Energy and Wildlife Committee to develop wind energy siting guidance for state agency staff working in states with current wind energy projects and those expecting future development to streamline the review and recommendation process across the US.

Provide survey guidance and information for Bats and Transportation Structures through the AFWA Bat Working Group webpage. This may include a short refresher video as well as links to survey protocol and NA Bat data entry forms.

List Objectives and Activities likely to be Ongoing:

OBJECTIVES (Ongoing)

Identify regional bat conservation and research priorities to provide guidance or assistance to AFWA members, facilitate coordination, share information, and develop new conservation tools and solutions.

Promote expansion of NABat monitoring and adoption of NABat data collection protocols and standardization across states, including expansion and use of Hubs where applicable.

Work with USGS and AFWA's Energy and Wildlife Committee to help states provide adequate pre-construction reviews for new wind energy facilities by recommending national guidelines and consistent messaging for states, as possible. Also, assist with mitigation for new and existing facilities by filling in data gaps, predicting risk at site-specific levels, and providing better data to state managers.

Pending passage, create a voluntary list of bat conservation priorities and actions that states can reference for directing Recovering America's Wildlife Act (H.R.2773/S.2372; [RAWA]) funding, including fund matching options, regional project ideas, and developing additional partnerships with North American Bat Monitoring Program (NA Bat) Hubs.

ACTIVITIES (Ongoing)

Reach out to regional Bat Working Groups and State Bat Contacts to share progress and solicit additional feedback on how AFWA BWG can best serve to meet their needs. This may encompass expanding Work Group membership to broaden geographic representation when deemed beneficial by current Work Group members.

Continued to provide expert guidance such as technical assistance, information messaging, and review to AFWA members and partner organizations for a variety of bat related issues. This includes technical

assistance as needed for risk assessments and research related to bats and viruses with a focus on bat-health from a One Health approach, working with the AFWA Wildlife Health Committee and the Education, Outreach, and Diversity Committees as appropriate to provide bat-related guidance and messaging information.

Describe any Changes you Anticipate to the Work Group:

Work Group members Dennis Krusac (USFS) and Tina Jackson (CPW) retired and stepped down from the committee.
 Work Group members Brett Andersen (NGPC), Joe Kath (IL DNR), Erin Swerdferger (Saskatchewan F&W), Theresa Davidson (USFS), and Brad Jost (BLM) were added.
 Additional Work Group members may continue to be added to encompass a broader representation, including additional representation from Canada.

List Workgroup Members:

AFWA Contracted Staff Support: Leanne Burns

State:

1. Katrina Morris, Georgia DNR
2. Jenny Dickson, Connecticut DEEP
3. Carolyn Eckrich, Oregon DFW
4. Owen Boyle, Wisconsin DNR
5. Brett Andersen, Nebraska GPC
6. Nate Fuller, Texas PWD
7. Joe Kath, Illinois DNR
8. Erin Swerdferger, Saskatchewan F&W

Federal agency:

9. Jeremy Coleman, USFWS – Northeast Region
10. Brian Reichert, USGS – Fort Collins Science Center
11. Theresa Davidson, USFS – Eastern Region
12. Marikay Ramsey, BLM – New Mexico
13. Brad Jost, BLM - HQ

NGO:

14. Mylea Bayless, Bat Conservation International

Date Workgroup Formed: September 12, 2018

Expected Termination Date: None

Comments