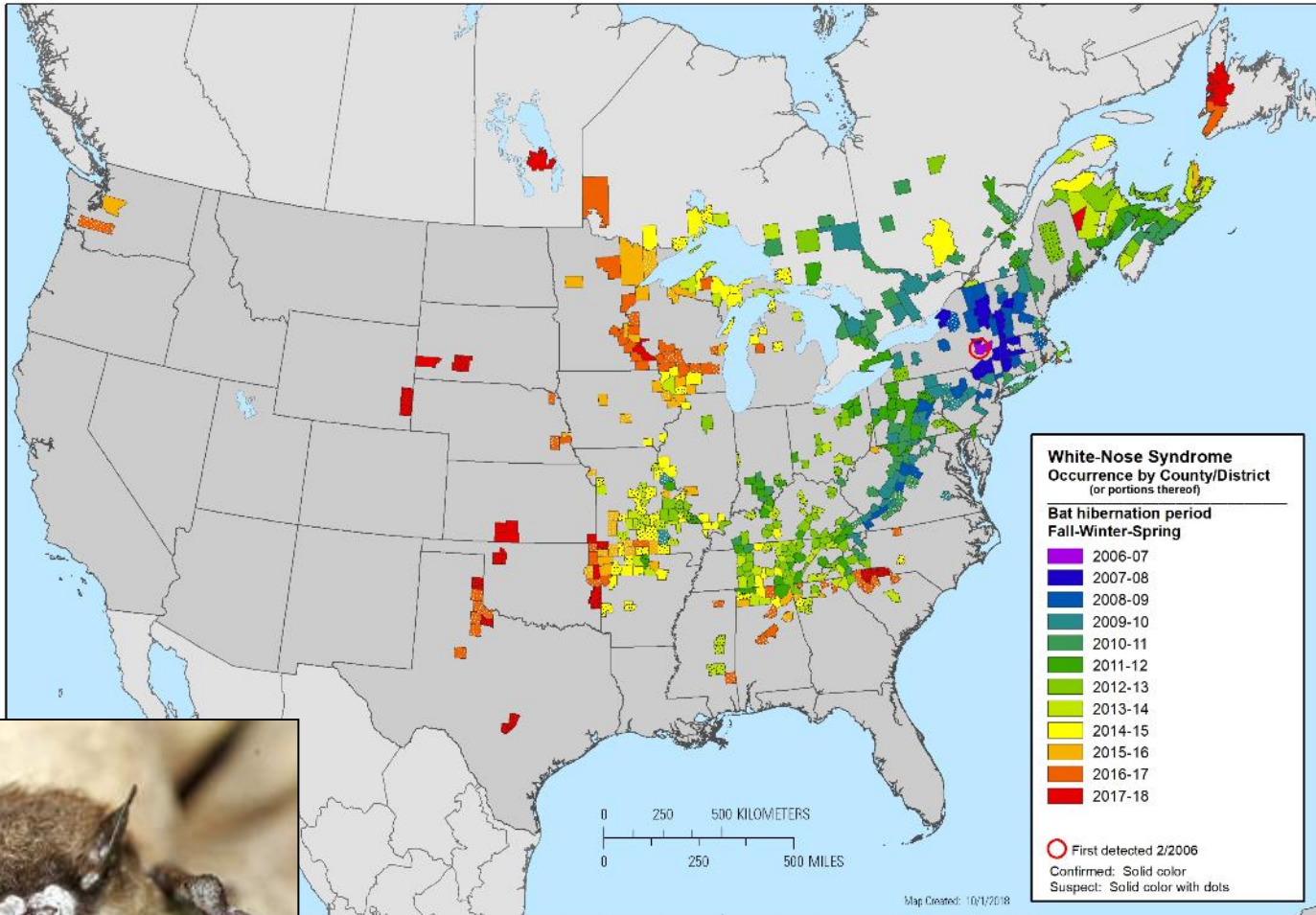


Lakes States Forest Management Bat Habitat Conservation Plan

A close-up photograph of a bat peering out from a hole in a rock. The bat's face, including its large ears and small mouth, is visible as it looks towards the camera. The rock is a light brown color with a rough, textured surface.

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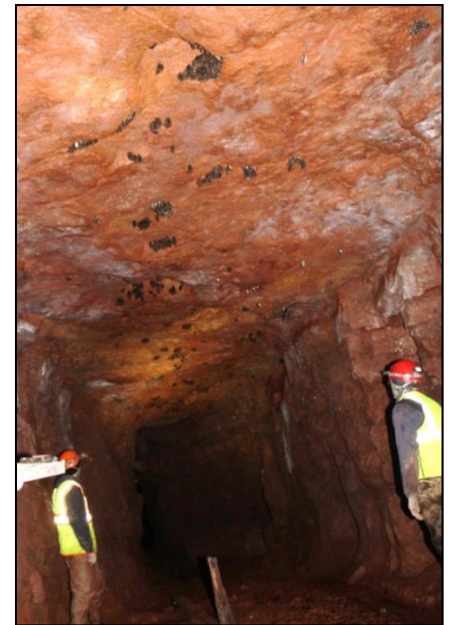
White-nose Syndrome



by year (2018). Data Last Updated: 10/1/2018. Available at: <https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/resources/map>.



- Populations of cave hibernating bats in precipitous decline due to a white-nose syndrome.
 - WNS present in all counties with hibernacula
 - Declines of 30% to 100% in hibernacula where WNS is present.
- NLEB and Tri-colored bat proposed for Endangered listing. LBB being reviewed for listing by FWS.



Bats and Forest Management

- During the summer these species:
 - Utilize trees for maternity colonies and day roosts
 - Forage in forested areas
- FWS identified forest management as a potential source of take in the Biological Opinion published with the final 4d rule.
- Any take of endangered species is prohibited.

Lake States Forest Management Bat HCP

- WI, MI, MN are jointly developing the Bat HCP
- Purpose: Obtain a federal ITP under ESA section 10 requesting authorization for the incidental take of bats during forest management activities.
- Federal public draft comment period closed 9/28.
 - 37 comments received

Covered Species

- Northern Long-eared Bat
 - Federally threatened species 2015
 - FWS proposed up listing to Endangered
- Little Brown Bat
 - FWS currently reviewing status and will make a listing decision in the 2023
- Tri-colored bat (eastern pipistrelle)
 - FWS proposed listing as Endangered
- Indiana Bat (MI only)
 - Federally endangered species



Covered Activities

- Timber harvest and related forest practices.
- Prescribed fire
- Forestry road and recreational trail construction & maintenance on State and County lands.



Forest Management Projects:

- Implement state retention guidelines.
- 150 ft year-round buffer around known maternity roost trees.
- 0.25 mile buffer around known hibernacula entrances.
 - No harvest except where objective is improving habitat for bats.

Maintenance of existing permanent roads and trails on public lands:

- Refers to maintenance that requires tree cutting.
- Remove trees from October 1 to March 1 within 150 feet of a known maternity roost.
- Remove trees from October 15 to March 31 or from May 15 to August 15 within 2.5 miles of a known hibernaculum.
- Removal of hazard trees always allowed.

Construction of new permanent roads and trails on public lands:

- No removal of large-diameter trees (i.e., 9 inches dbh) during pup season (June 1 – July 31).
- No new roads and trails within 150 feet of a known occupied maternity roost tree.
- No new roads or trails within 0.25 miles of a known hibernaculum entrance year round.
- Remove trees from October 15 to March 31 or from May 15 to August 15 within 2.5 miles of a known hibernaculum.

Roads and Trails on Private Lands:

- Permanent roads and recreational trails on private lands are not addressed in this HCP.
- Roads and trails associated with timber harvest are covered as a forestry activity.
 - Avoid 150 ft buffer around known roosts
 - Avoid 0.25 mile buffer around hibernacula entrances.

Prescribed Burning:

Incorporate the following minimization measures into burn plans:

- Ensure wind will carry smoke away from the entrance(s) of hibernacula.
- Prohibit prescribed burns within 150 feet of known occupied maternity roost trees during pup season (June 1–July 31).
- Reduce fire intensity within 0.25 miles of hibernacula entrances during spring and fall.

Other Conservation Strategies:

- Maintain forests as forests
- Bat management zones on state lands
 - Protected areas, no management in June and July
 - Designated wilderness areas, wild river areas, old growth areas, wild areas (WISFIRS)
- Maintain hibernacula entrances on DNR lands:
 - Gates, remove obstructions
- Provide a way for other landowners to receive take authorization through the HCP.

Landowner Enrollment Program

- Landowners who meet certain criteria can receive incidental take coverage by joining WDNR's permit.
- The risk of taking covered bats on most individual parcels is extremely low, especially those with smaller parcels with little or no risk of take.
- DNRs do not have the capacity to administer a landowner program with unlimited eligibility.

LEP Criteria:

- All County Forests are eligible
- Applicant owns forestland greater than 500 acres in one state, or
- Applicant owns lands (of any size) containing a known roost or known hibernaculum entrance

LEP Conservation Actions:

- Implement State DNR Retention Guidelines in Forest Habitat
- Protect Known Roost Trees
- Protect Known Hibernacula
- Prepare and Implement Prescribed Burn Plans in Forest Habitat

Applying for the LEP

- LEP application and agreement are in development.
- Goal to have eligible landowners enrolled by March 2023.

Thank You

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