

CBWG Meeting Minutes

May 18, 2007

Attendees

Julie Annear, DRMS
Randy Ghormley, USFS
Nancy LaMantia-Olson, CDOW
Mark Hayes, UNC
Kirk Navo, CDOW
Sophie Oglesby, CDOW
Jeremy Siemers, CNHP
Paul Cryan, USGS
Lea' Bonewell, USGS
Kristen Philbrook, USFS/BLM
Cyndi Mosch, Cave Resources Specialties/Helping Handwings
Tom Holland, USFS
Lance Carpenter, CDOW
Sandy Vana-Miller, FWS
Rob Schorr, CNHP

Forwarded emails

Kristen is trying to shorten the unnecessary sections of forwarded emails and will continue to work on this. Her email program makes this difficult.

Bat Plan

Discussion ensued about whether a revision is needed on the Colorado Bat Plan. From the state's perspective, it's good to refer to for things like grant proposals, but not being used as an official document. From a management standpoint, the plan is good to use as backup. At NASBR, a WBWG meeting was held and ran like a roundtable. It became evident that some people didn't know what other people were working on regarding bat research, which was frustrating for some. As a result, do we want to use the bat plan to show what things are going on in Colorado? Discussion about amending the plan or just have separate pdf amendments next to the bat plan in the website. Jeremy – Imbed chapters in the website. How do we insert the amendments? Discussion. Species ranking? Priorities of most conservation need.

Regarding the website in general, have pages about what's going on in Colorado, like what's happening at UNC, what BIMP is doing, etc.

Priorities: wind energy, species ranking, PJ, and research needs.

Summary – Will create amendments and won't change plan, but will have amendments imbedded in website. Someone can write up an amendment and send out to everyone for input. These amendments are particularly important for the newest issues of most conservation need. Then send to be added to the website. Kirk and Mark and Jeremy to start on species ranking. Paul is working on wind energy.

One thing to add is the water resources info from BCI.

Species ranking discussion. Some species in Colorado ranked higher or lower than it seems like they should be. Could be a lot of work to revisit. Was originally meant to be changed occasionally. Need to tweak a little or completely redo? It would be interesting to see how it would look completely redone. If tweaked a little, then adjust some species, like tree bats from the wind energy issue. Summary – To start, Kirk will look at the species ranking and will let us know how things rank out.

Summaries on new bat habitat literature findings were discussed, including forests, mines, caves, range, wind energy, and urban areas. These summaries were sent out by Kirk. Bats and Mines handbook being written, main author Rick Sherwin, and Kirk was asked to write the prologue.

Wind Farms

At the WBWG Tucson meeting, lots of research on wind energy like mortality searches, why bats are hitting the blades, etc. Colorado perspective – turbines going up so fast we can't keep up. Summary – energy is happening fast and we're not keeping up and research not helpful because it will be too late.

Hoary, silver-haired, and red bats in huge #'s at same time of year Aug.-Oct. being killed. New site – Maple Ridge in New York – lots of bats killed already. Mortality of individual sp. ranges from single to over 5000 bats in a 6 week period. New turbines killing a lot more bats. Grover Creek and Pete's Table in Colorado. 20% growth of turbines per year. Governor trying to get green energy pushed. Some people looking at how to keep bats away from turbines. Flood environment with loud ultrasonics proposed in conference, but not practical. 5 papers in press and 1 in review to show what might be happening. No info. from TX and very little from CA.

Going in on private land and lots of competition by wind companies to put up in windy areas. Avoiding federal transmission lines in order to avoid federal regulation. House natural resources subcommittee grilling FWS about why they weren't doing more to deal with bats. Federal tax credit motivates companies to build.

Permitting going on at the county level and biggest challenge to get companies to look at it takes 2-300 million to set up a wind farm. Not been cooperative getting wildlife researchers out. Co. may be one of the most turbine-filled states but we may be able to work with the companies to get research done.

Paul's work mostly research as to why and getting consulting companies coming to him asking to help. West Inc. in Laramie is one consulting co. Co's quadrupled in the last year working on wind work.

It looks like the main kills are happening in the fall, but there haven't been thorough studies done for year-round. Ed Arnett has documentation thru BCI about this.

In Colorado, 20-40 found in a few years at Poniquin. Suggested that an article go out to let the public know about bat kills so that the public might influence the industry.

In the East at regional government levels, wind farms are required to do post-monitoring. Golden eagles

Banding of tree bats? Not enough info. about how they handle a band, but anecdotally interesting. Not worth the risk to band tree bats captured.

Impacts of wind/green energy vs. mining for energy a difficult subject. Acknowledge that bats being killed, but focus on the why – this is most important. Challenge – find places allowing the research. Work with existing places, not worry about places going up. Don't know pattern emergence of where larger kills are yet. Ridges, flat lands? Bats don't get killed by windmills. Paul working on height of turbines as a possible reason. Be open and ready to help if kills occur. Not that they have to pay for it, but a cooperative effort with several organizations helping to support the research.

Functional life of turbines 20 years.

Paul thinks tree bats have mating systems evolved to search for the tallest trees in the landscape. Easy meeting point during migration is tallest trees, or wind turbines. They exhibit song flight where they defend their territory. Visually orienting to migrate. A lot of anecdotal evidence that these bats are forming leks, which matches the most killed species – hoary and red.

Find out why it's happening? And do post-turbine monitoring.

Low winds, cloud cover – more kills. Characterize when these kills are happening over many periods, will help back up why and when its happening to get answers.

Population dynamics on a broad scale – Nancy Simmons, Martin Von Hoff, Gary McCracken – techniques for effective population size – looking at historical data to help determine population.

Band recovery in general is poor. But collecting them from turbines kills is a good way to get sample bats. Rob will be approaching WBWG to see if they want to promote bat banding. No one at the meeting in Tucson who brought up the banding wanted to be on the committee to talk about it.

Confidence intervals of 20-50,000 bat kills in the next several years.

NASBR/Int'l Mexico meeting – special turbine symposium; Wildlife Society will have a wind energy section in their conference; FACA being created.

What role for CBWG to play? Statement on the website that is an issue and interested in looking at why it's happening and what's the solution. Guidelines are out in some states, but we should avoid endorsing anything at this point. Paul will write up a statement for CBWG.

Mark/UNC

Talked about grad students, Ross Hall, bats in their facility (Jamaican fruit bats and fruit bats), and the bat lab. Field research will be with *M. thysanodes* because it ranks high. Not much known about this species in the Southern Rocky Mtns. Collect some wing punches for Kirk? Female bats selecting water sites – calcium loads. Climate change impacts. Happenings – dietary analysis and wing-loading. Mark will be working on maternity roost characterization. New book *Bats in Forests* doesn't address rock crevices. OLT stuff. CBS mentioned.

Bat Trek

Focus on IDPH again like next year. Optional dates to go would be Aug 2-5 or Aug 9-12.

Randy - Last week of June 25-29 to mist net and check out mines.

Kristen – Person wants to go on the bat trek and show us about Anabat. Tabled until next year.

Roundtable

Rob – Didn't get conservation grant money. Boulder County Open Space work on bats and mines. Working with mice. Pit tag reader experiment not working. Illinois researcher figured out by using 20x20 frames and has been tested and he may have access to the equipment in Illinois. 4 new species documented in Jackson County. Send Rob any info. we have on bat banding – the more the better. Anecdotal, etc.

Mark – Using pit readers made for fish to track bat use at water holes. Timing of water hole use by bats can be tracked. Will also look at survival rates.

Lea' – OLT, CBS, BIMP volunteer

Paul – Mesa Verde; wind turbines; looking at chemical signatures in their fur; SE island off coast of CA in Fall – looking at what their doing on the island; agave feeding,

foraging, and roosting – New Mexico southwest corner 5 miles from Mexico border

Jeremy – Small mammal project done in June with San Luis Valley; telemetry study of PJ

Sophie – Worked with Kirk and John Pope about protocol creation to go out to people; 477 bats came in and 66 tested positive

Kirk – Make sure you have a collection permit to handle bats (dead or alive); Rick Sherwin doing research on glandular secretions of COTO and BIMP may do some work collecting for Rick. Paul said that the idea was floated that bats are attracted by the scent of bats that had been hit by turbines. Trip to OLT July 21 – if interested, contact Kirk.

Nancy – Eli new employee; new projects w/BIMP, esp. Dead Man Project in SLV

Randy – Lost 2100 acres and gained 11000 to the Park Service on the Baca Ranch land exchange; doing work on this now. Access issues being worked out. Looking in June at birds and mammals – contact him if you're interested in helping. Make presentation to

the regional people at the FS workshop. Rob expressed interest in helping Randy with lots of expensive research equipment. Randy could help facilitate this. Kristen said that she knows someone who might be interested. Rob's interested in a cooperative effort with a land agency to do some research.

Cyndi – Went to Elephant Mtn mine/cave complex with a maternity roost of COTO. Conducted an internal winter survey. Found some dead COTO's – probably died of bad air. Lots of guano. Will work on White River National Forest caves this summer.

Looking for cave

Tom – Grand Mesa – Hydroaxing PJ stands and trying to save snags and old growth. Doing at all times of year.

Kristen – Working out of Bayfield. Will be working on an area that will become a gravel pit. Will be working with Jeremy on surveys. Past 2 years – 18 stations – bats at all places. Doesn't know what species or where they're roosting. Would like to work with Randy on the PJ section of the update.

Meeting next year, Friday, April 25.