

## Colorado Bat Working Group (CBWG) Meeting- October 27, 2010

**Rio Tinto Minerals  
8051 E. Maplewood Ave.  
Greenwood Village, CO 80111**

Attendees: Shelly Grail Braudis, John Burghardt, Laura Ellison, Kathy Estes, Tina Jackson, Shylo Johnson, Kirk Navo, Mikele Painter, Toni Piaggio, Mike Rauschkolb, Ed Schmal, Mike Sherman, Wes Anderson, Jeremy Siemers, Apple Snider, Ron Toretta, Raquel Wertsbaugh, Rob Billerbeck, Jonathon Huey, Roger Pryton, Kristen Philbrook, Lowrey Brown, Ashley Nettles, Dan Neubaum, Jason Corbett, Cyndi Mosch, Julie Anmenson, Lance Carpenter, Carron Meaney, Ron Spears.

**Bat Matrix**- close to being done. Bat matrix is a tool for land managers, researchers to use rankings as starting point for indentifying and prioritizing threats to CO bats. Categories need to be split based on new information- WNS, wind energy (in process). Apple Snider presenting poster on Bat Matrix at NASBR this week. Jeremy Siemers -main contact for information. Matrix will be put on website for review. Especially want species specific information.

**AML Update in CO (survey/mine effort)**- CDOW biologists each took on a couple of projects and this will be ongoing. White Nose Syndrome (WNS) will determine how projects proceed in 2011. Rob and Jeremy (Colorado Natural Heritage Program) – 7 to 8 projects of 90-100 holes. Kirk /Lance/ Mike/Dan (CDOW) 1 project each, Raquel, 3projects. Coordination of projects needed.

**White Nose Syndrome (WNS)** - Fungus found in TN, W.OK, MO, spreading West. The cave with WNS fungus in OK is a managed/visited cave. Bats are coming out of winter of 2010. No known mortalities. *Myotis velifer* is a new species with fungus. Important if suspect WNS to collect and freeze guano.

- Genetics of WNS- the PCR test used is not developed to be specific to geomyces destructans (WNS fungus), just geomyces. Many geomyces natural to cave ecosystems (100's), do not want to destroy. Difficult situation.
- Mine/cave closures- Forest Service has Region-wide closure in place for 1 year and will decide what happens next. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)- closures in refuge system. National Park Service- no area closure. Case by case basis. Boulder Parks and Rec.- closed caves. Bureau of Land Management- no closures specific to WNS, have stay out of mines to stay alive- already a closure policy (18,000 -20,000 mines in state). Working with Colorado Cave Survey of National Speological Survey (NSS) recommend keeping mines open. Discussion on how closures working. Cindi has seen a reduction in cavers at FS lands and suspects going to BLM. Some cavers taking signs down, most seem to be cooperating. Communication with NSS and other cavers critical. Hazel Barton (researcher and caver) concerned about communications with caving groups. If do not get some opportunities for compromises with cavers, she predicts relationships with agencies will fall apart.
- NSS national convention (1,600 members) coming to the White River NF next summer. Deputy Regional Forester promised group some caves will be available. R2 cave and mine closure will still be in effect. Hibernacula data needed to determine which caves/mines for use. Request by Phil Nyland and Wendy Macwire for CBWG help.

- Decontamination Protocols- not full-proof. Spores found on treated back pack. More work being done. Six different sources of protocols. Tweaking occurring. The FWS protocol (updated in 2010) is not doable in the west with many caves visited per day in small area. Different from FS/BLM protocol that allows for decontamination procedures based on landscape basis (grouping of mines in similar area). CDOW protocols not updated since 2009- some changes have occurred since then. State protocol tied to Western Bat Working Group Protocol.

Important to make decontaminant products available to field personnel. Alcohol does **not** work. Currently using sparquat (CDOW), bleach (degrades equipment over time), Lysol wipes, Lysol IC wipes (have to dispose of in city sewer system). Can rinse with wet baby wipes.

Hazel Barton working on decontamination procedure. Difference between killing fungus and killing spores. Spores are more resistant and transport easier. Heat and UV does not work. Important to rinse the product off after your decon application. Kirk- should go ahead and put equipment in sun to dry, the extra heat couldn't hurt, just don't make it for your only source of decon. Use the approved and recommended treatments for your decon! We didn't have time to discuss our experiences with decon this field season, but it would be important and helpful for us to share. Get experiences on using decontamination procedures to Toni Piaggio. Using decontamination protocols is a trust issue; no one is checking us in the field.

- WNS Response plans- Many plans due to each agency responding quickly to WNS in Oklahoma event. Response plans address the disease, surveillance, conservation, recovery, goals and action items. BLM has draft response –should be out within the month. There is a committee under the FWS. ID, CA have plans. There is a state plan and National Plan. CDOW for CO- working on a response plan by end of year. Draft National Plan released for public on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Lots of mention in draft CO plan to look at CBWG as a key player and providing advice.
- Discussion on role of CBWG in relation to CO WNS Action Plan – How best to provide our expertise?

Education outreach- Jason Corbett- caving groups easy to get in contact with. Mining claimants, private mining companies, geocachers. Power points available on WBWG website. Train field office personnel on issues, decontamination procedures. Teach teachers- slide shows. Provide brochures to landowners. BCI has outreach info.

Part of action plan is help with monitoring/surveillance. Provide advice  
Winter monitoring an issue. Need to provide points of contacts among agencies/ orgs. There is a lack of coordination among plans. CBWG wants more involvement in development of WNS action plans.

Committee formed to help with WNS action plan and implementation, and to provide “bat expertise” to the Colorado effort: Mike Rauschkolb, Ed Schmal, Jeremy Siemers, Ron Torretta, Roger Peyton, Dan Neubaum, Apple Snider, Laura Ellison, Cyndi Mosch, Raquel Wertsbaugh, Lance Carpenter, (Mark Hayes, Lea Bonewell added later), Kirk Navo. Let Kirk know if want to sign up.

### **Miscellaneous**

Bat Permits with CDOW. Not known how WNS affecting permit process. Backlog of permits. Get permits in early.

National WNS Committee- meets every other week-much of info on WNS from this conference call. Anyone can be on the conference call, but it is limited to State and Federal employees.

Election time for WBWG- 6 positions open. Contact Kirk or go to website if interested. Pres. (Rita Dixon) looking for ideas for 2011 WBWG workshop. Kirk has contact list of WBWG.

Kristen Philbrook stepping down as co-chair of CBWG. Let Kirk know if interested in being a co-chair. Wind energy workshop last week- could result in CBWG time and energy.

Reference bat call library- need for CBWG to help. Sonobat III- easier to use. More people collecting data.

### **Round Robin**

Mike Rauschkolb- Participated in Death Valley mine closures and coordination- provided pictures. Info update- Kevin Patterson developed mobile bat gates that can carry in backpacks for remote sites. Scott Darling in Vermont surveyed bats in one cave- 83 bats of 4 species (5yrs ago) now none. WNS affecting increasing mosquito population and Vermont's lifestyle. Could cause increase in tularemia, Lyme disease. Jason Corbett- conducting training with bat gates. Working on AML and cave issues.

Raquel- first CBWG meeting. Completed some bat survey projects this past year for CDOW.

Laura Ellison- Bat surveys in marsh in Utah. 10 bat species. Decontamination procedure worked OK.

Apple Snider- representing poster of bat matrix at NASBR.

Dan Neubaum- finished up a two year acoustic survey of bats in Dinosaur National Monument which will be compiled in a report this winter. Also noted seeing Kirk's new pub in JMAMM this month, nice paper.

Jeremy Siemers- CNHP worked on surveying mines for DRMS and the BIMP Project as well some survey work in SW Colorado this summer for the BLM.

Ed Schmal- Wants to provide help to CBWG. Call if need help.

Tina Jackson- new to working on bats in CDOW. Available to help.

John Burghardt- National Park Service has Director's memo on WNS. Kevin Castle is lead for WNS for NPS. Website exists. There is \$22.6 million for closures (contracts), \$3.2 million for inventory and assessments. WNS- lots of attention in NPS.

Kristen Philbrook- FS closure policy being implemented. Signs out and brochures. Some funding made available. Leadership at all levels participating in meetings for implementing the closure policy.

Mikele Painter- Pike San Isabel NF several thousand available for bat equipment on Forest. Invited CBWG to bat blitz for next year. Raquel and Ed offered to help. Details available in future for others to help.

Roger Pryton- Ft. Carson- Conflict with bats present in mines and agency wanting to gate 6 mines in 2 weeks. It is a Townsend's hibernacula and maternity site. Contract written with no ability in contract to change date. Jason Corbett will provide contact information for DOD bat working group. Find out when funds expire for contract to see if gating can be delayed.

