



Implementing a Rangewide Programmatic: The Indiana Bat and Northern Long-Eared Bat Programmatic Consultation in Practice

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Session Overview

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| I. Session Overview | Julianne Schwarzer |
| II. Making of a Programmatic | Brian Yanchik |
| III. Details of the Programmatic | Robyn Niver |
| IV. State Perspectives | Eric Ham, Glen Ginras,
Tim Dexter |
| V. Panel Discussion | |

Background

Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*)

- Federally endangered species, listed 1967
- Found over most of the Eastern half of the United States
- Hibernates in large numbers in caves
- Roost in summer in tree snags



Image courtesy FWS

Background

Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)

- Federally threatened, listed 2015
- Found in 37 states from the Atlantic coast westward to eastern Montana and Wyoming
- Threatened by white-nose syndrome





Background

Consultation and mitigation approaches

- Vary greatly across the bats' ranges
- Have been rapidly changing in recent years
- Will evolve independently in response to white-nose syndrome

Such variations and changes cause uncertainty, conflict, delays, large workloads for agencies

Project History

- FHWA proposed collaboration with FWS to develop a range-wide *Conservation and Consultation Strategy* focused on Indiana Bat
- Other modal agencies, FTA and FRA, then joined the working group



Image courtesy FWS



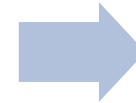
Project History

2012



- FHWA and FWS agree to develop a range-wide *Conservation and Consultation Strategy*
- FHWA, FTA and FRA and supported by the USDOT Volpe Center.
- Collaborative development of programmatic, biweekly meetings

2015



- FHWA and FWS released the *Programmatic Informal Consultation*, in conjunction with USDOT partners

2016

- FWS signed *Programmatic Biological Opinion*, effects of select transportation actions



Project Summary

Programmatic consultation

- One of the largest, spanning five Regions and covering 38 States and the District of Columbia
- Includes streamlined consultation procedures, which reduce agencies' workload and ensuring appropriate interagency coordination of actions

The conservation measures will further landscape-scale conservation for both bat species, and species which use similar forested habitats

Formal and Informal Programmatic



Image courtesy FWS

The rangewide consultation covers both the Indiana bat and the northern long-eared bat (NLEB). It is the culmination of a partnership between FHWA/FTA/FRA and USFWS, and is consistent with the major goals of this effort:

- 1) Landscape-scale conservation for both the Indiana bat and NLEB.
- 2) To reduce time, cost, and workload associated with ESA Section 7 consultation
- 3) To create consistency in ESA Section 7 consultation for the two bat species across their ranges



Outcomes to Date

- Programmatic informal used on over 919 projects, in at least 18 States
- For State DOTs, methodology repeatable, simple
- Avoids effects analysis or extensive documentation by State DOTs to inform the informal consultation
- State DOTs now simply fill out project submission form, 20-30 minutes to complete

Outcomes to Date

- Standard practice for informal consultation: 30 days for FWS respond to project lead agency, often with weeks of back and forth, then conduct surveys for 6 months – 1 year
- Using the programmatic, process takes ≤ 14 days from receipt of project submittal, often completed within 8 days



FHWA Image



Outcomes to Date

- State DOTs are aware of surveys they need to conduct earlier, and may do so in a more systematic way
- More transparency and predictability to FHWA and State DOTs through proactive planning
- The range-wide consultation has increased consistency for partnering agencies throughout the species' range

Team Members



Image courtesy FWS

FWS:

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- Phil DeGarmo
- Sumalee Hoskin
- Catherine Liller
- Robyn Niver
- Kimberly Smith
- Jerry Ziewitz

FHWA:

- Dan Buford
- Cindy Callahan
- Marlys Osterhues
- Brian Yanchik

FTA:

- Sharyn LaCombe

FRA:

- Andrea Martin

Volpe Center:

- Jon Cybulski
- Anjuliee Mittelman
- Julianne Schwarzer