



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Pacific  
Northwest  
Region

333 SW First Avenue (97204)  
PO Box 3623  
Portland, OR 97208-3623  
503-808-2468

---

**File Code:** 2670/7120/1920  
**Route To:**

**Date:** September 21, 2012

**Subject:** Information and Direction Regarding Buildings Used by Bats Within the Northwest Forest Plan Area

**To:** Forest Supervisors, Director's, Natural Resources, Engineering, Recreation Lands and Minerals, Occupational Safety and Health, And Resource Planning and Monitoring Staff

This memorandum specifically addresses assessing and managing buildings as bat habitat in relation to the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) Bat Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs) and the Forest Service's (FS) Sensitive Species policy (FSM 2670). It replaces the June 16, 2006, memorandum "Bat Survey Needs Associated with Facility Disposal."

It is very important that employees at all levels carefully manage and maintain FS facilities to prevent the entrance of bats into a building because they can compromise FS activities and present a health and safety risk. Engineering staff are responsible for buildings and building maintenance. Wildlife biologists can and will provide assistance to building managers about how to prevent bats from entering buildings or how to proceed if bats are found in a building.

The NWFP S&Gs, as amended in 2001, outlines specific management direction for bats. The intent of the S&Gs is to maintain bat species throughout the NWFP area through management and protection of abandoned structures and facilities used by bats. The S&Gs speak specifically to the need to conduct surveys for bat species or assume bat occupancy whenever management actions could impact abandoned facilities or structures. Individual species identification is not required in order to determine bat occupancy. According to the NWFP, abandoned buildings determined or assumed to be used by bats should be retained (subject to safety and legal requirements) and a management plan for the facility developed. Abandoned buildings used by bats should be protected from destruction, vandalism or other activities that could change microclimatic conditions that are essential to maintaining roosting habitat for bats.

Abandoned buildings are those buildings that are not maintained or inventoried by the Forest Service. They are typically buildings located on Forest Service lands that do not serve a mission. The Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 7309.11 42.04 (7), states: "Do not abandon Government-owned buildings on Government-owned land. Any building not needed must be removed or destroyed (FPMR 101-47.5)." This Handbook requirement does not preclude designating a building or a portion of a building as bat habitat and Line Officers can choose to leave an abandoned building on FS land until it no longer provides bat habitat.



In addition to NWFP S&Gs, bat management must also be consistent with the FS Sensitive Species policy. While NWFP S&Gs focus on the management of abandoned buildings for all bats, the Sensitive Species policy should be used in the biological evaluation process to determine effects to sensitive bats present or assumed to be within abandoned, storage, livestock-occupied or human-occupied buildings. Individual species identification may be needed in order to manage a building under the FS Sensitive Species policy. Building maintenance activities and conveyance of buildings occupied or used by people and used by bats will need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by a biologist, building management specialist and a conveyance specialist to determine the potential for impacts to bats while meeting all human health and safety requirements. Ultimately, the decision about how to proceed rests with the Line Officer.

Surveys are one tool which can be used under the NWFP S&Gs and the FS Sensitive Species policy to help determine effects of a proposed action and potential mitigation. Surveys for bats may require up to a year to complete so planning in advance is important.

This memo provides information to assist field units dealing with the maintenance, conveyance, or removal of buildings. The following enclosures provide:

1. Safety Considerations When Conducting Bat Surveys.
2. Survey Protocol for Determining Bat Use of Buildings.
3. Management Recommendations for Buildings used by or assumed to be used by Bats.
4. Bat Education and Information Sources.
5. Plans for the Oregon Wedge Bat Box Design.
6. A copy of the NWFP 2001 Standards and Guidelines and Management Recommendations for Bat Roosts.

If you have questions regarding any of the information presented in this document, please contact interagency (BLM/FS) Bat Specialist, Pat Ormsbee at (541)-954-0083 [pormsbee@fs.fed.us](mailto:pormsbee@fs.fed.us), Elaine Rybak, R6 TES Assistant, [erybak@fs.fed.us](mailto:erybak@fs.fed.us), (503) 808-2663, or Rob Huff, interagency (BLM/FS) Conservation Planning Coordinator, [rhuff@blm.gov](mailto:rhuff@blm.gov), (503) 808-6479.

*/s/ Maureen T. Hyzer (for):*

KENT P. CONNAUGHTON  
Regional Forester

Enclosures

cc: Pat Ormsbee, Sarah Madsen, Robert Alvarado, Elaine N Rybak, Jose Linares, Claire Lavendel, Diana Hsieh, Charles L Byrd, rh