

# Interagency Special Status and Sensitive Species Program Update – February 2018

## Background

In 2004, the Pacific Northwest Regional Office of the U.S. Forest Service (FS) and Oregon/Washington State Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) established an interagency program focused on the conservation and management of rare, but not federally listed, species called the Interagency Special Status and Sensitive Species Program (ISSSSP). Four interagency positions were identified: Conservation Planning Coordinator, Inventory and Monitoring Coordinator, Inventory and Monitoring Coordinator Assistant, and Special Status and Sensitive Species Specialist.

The goal of the ISSSSP is to provide field unit personnel with tools to utilize to manage Sensitive species on FS and BLM lands consistent with agency Sensitive species policies. In addition, the ISSSSP identifies larger-scale species information or conservation needs, and develops and implements tasks to address them. There are approximately 700 Sensitive species on the ISSSSP list.

To complete priority work, the ISSSSP utilizes field personnel, researchers, university personnel, contracts, and agreements with non-profits and state agencies. Key program leads from the FS (Botany and Threatened and Endangered species leads) and BLM (Native Plants lead) also help accomplish tasks and provide Program guidance. In addition, the ISSSSP works closely with data management personnel to ensure information on SSSS that are being collected are entered into agency databases.

The ISSSSP approaches the Program goals mainly by:

1. Maintaining and updating a Sensitive and Strategic species list, using common criteria for the FS and BLM (see page 6 for a more thorough discussion of Strategic species). The list is updated, on average, every 3 years.
2. Working with field units to understand the species of most interest to them and the information or conservation needs they think are important.
3. Annually utilizing a Project Proposal Process, where Forest and BLM District personnel can submit projects for the species identified in item 2, above.
4. Identifying and facilitating FS/BLM work groups for priority species/species groups, to address complex information gaps or conservation needs.
5. Providing basic information (species fact sheets) as well as identification services for little-known taxon, including fungi, lichens, bryophytes, and invertebrate SSSS.
6. Conducting regional or focused non-project surveys, particularly for species with little information known about them.
7. Developing conservation assessments or strategies for species with complex management issues and more known information.
8. Funding management actions to help protect, improve, or restore habitats for Sensitive species.

As a way of sharing some of the key tools that have been developed recently by the ISSSSP, we provide an annual update (this document).

We have a public website where we post all of the tools, reports, and lists we create:  
<https://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/>

We hope you'll enjoy this update, and if you have any questions, you'll contact the appropriate person listed in each section.

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## Key Points in this issue:

- Data snapshots for BLM, FS, ORBIC, WDFW and WNHP available
- Aquatic snail publications focused on taxonomy, checklists
- Over 100 new Conservation Planning documents completed
- White-nose syndrome communication tools available
- New SSSS list out this FY
- FS/BLM western pond turtle working group starting

## Survey and identification training

### Highlight-FY17 Bryophyte and Lichen Training

In summer 2017, lichen and bryophyte training sessions were held in central Washington and central Oregon in response to requests from field units in those areas. In total, approximately 25 FS and BLM botanists participated in the trainings.



Central Oregon lichen and bryophyte workshop: first day, at Lawrence Memorial Grasslands.

In central Oregon, FS Botanist Amanda Hardman partnered with Daphne Stone of the Biodiversity Research Collective for a 4-day workshop, including a couple of evening presentations. For one evening, Amanda talked about the PNW air quality monitoring program using lichens. For the other evening presentation, the attendees discussed grazing, its impact on soil crusts and possible management options that could improve retention of soil crusts.

Photo by Daphne Stone.



Central Washington training, at Fish Lake Bog outside Leavenworth.

In central Washington, Amanda Hardman (far left) and FS botanist Erica Heinlen (far right) provided training to Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest personnel (Sallie Herman, background, and Helen Lau, foreground).

Photo by Christina McKernan, botanist on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest.

If your Forest or BLM District has a training need that you think others may have as well, please contact Rob Huff, Carol Hughes, or Kelli Van Norman. Another way to provide training opportunities for personnel on your Forest or BLM District is to include training as a part of an ISSSSP project proposal.

## Data management

### Data snapshots

For improved project analyses, snapshots of flora and fauna data from the Oregon Biodiversity Information Center, Washington Natural Heritage Program, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife are updated every six months. In addition, the Oregon/Washington BLM (OR/WA BLM) and Region 6 Forest Service (R6 FS) provide data snapshots to each other every six months.

For R6 FS, the snapshots can be found at: <T:\FS\Reference\GIS\r06\LayerFile\Wildlife\WildlifeObservations>. Even though the folder is called "WildlifeObservations", the snapshots include flora species. Contact Carol Hughes ([cshughes@fs.fed.us](mailto:cshughes@fs.fed.us)) if you have problems or questions.

For OR/WA BLM, the above noted data snapshots are provided via the "Layer Browser" tool in ArcGIS. Please contact Chelsea Waddell ([cwaddell@blm.gov](mailto:cwaddell@blm.gov)) if you have any questions.

For a comprehensive understanding of lichen and bryophyte distribution in both states, we recommend consulting these websites as well as the data snapshots described above:

Consortium of North American Bryophyte Herbaria: <http://bryophyteportal.org/portal/>  
 Consortium of North American Lichen Herbaria: <http://lichenportal.org/portal/>  
 Consortium of Pacific Northwest Herbaria: <http://www.pnwherbaria.org/data/search.php>

### NRM (Natural Resource Manager) Databases—Forest Service

NRM Wildlife – Long-time R6 FS Center of Excellence for NRM Wildlife, Ann Glidden (nee Sprague) from the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest (NF) retired in December 2017. For many years Ann represented Region 6 wildlife biologists on the national NRM Wildlife advisory group, and she helped bring trainings to the region. Lisa Lyon, Fremont-Winema NF, ([llyon01@fs.fed.us](mailto:llyon01@fs.fed.us)), replaces Ann as the User Management Application Manager and will represent R6 FS on the National Wildlife User Group. Please contact her for user roles in NRM Wildlife. Catherine Serres, Mt. Hood NF, ([cserres@fs.fed.us](mailto:cserres@fs.fed.us)) is the contact for roles in NRM Taxa and adding wildlife names to the Regional Taxa list.

NRM TES Plants – Mark Skinner is the Regional contact for NRM TES Plants; [miskinner02@fs.fed.us](mailto:miskinner02@fs.fed.us)

Online tutorials and instructions are available for both NRM applications. FS personnel can find additional information at:

NRM Wildlife => <http://fsweb.nrm.fs.fed.us/support/docs.php?appname=wildlife>  
 NRM TESP => <http://fsweb.nrm.fs.fed.us/support/docs.php?appname=tesp>  
 NRM Aquatic Surveys => <http://fsweb.nrm.fs.fed.us/support/docs.php?appname=aqs>

### GeoBOB (Geographic Biotic Observations)—BLM

#### South West Side Training: Coos Bay, March 7th-8th

3/7 - GeoBOB 2.0 Desktop for Fauna  
 3/8 - GeoBOB 2.0 on S1 Mobile Application for Android (tablets, phones)

For more information on GeoBOB contact Chelsea Waddell.

#### GeoBOB SharePoint Site

We are redesigning the GeoBOB SharePoint site to consolidate the old intranet site with the SharePoint site! An announcement will be sent out when the redesign is complete. For the most up to date information about GeoBOB and species data resources, please go to the GeoBOB Training SharePoint site: <http://teamspace/or/sites/GeoBOB/Pages/default.aspx>

### Specimen Identification Services

Specimen vouchers for all new sites of Sensitive, Strategic, and Survey and Manage bryophytes, lichens, fungi, and invertebrate species are submitted to ISSSSP, given the difficulty in correctly identifying most of these species. ISSSSP then utilizes a variety of experts for timely identifications of these vouchers. Requiring voucher submission to ISSSSP also results in a public benefit, as vouchers of target species are then curated in a regional repository, making them publically available to experts and researchers. We've also had the main genetic loci of many specimens sequenced and entered in the public database GenBank, providing another public benefit; it has been gratifying to see our PNW specimens from GenBank cited in research papers.

For additional information on Specimen Identification Services, contact Darci Rivers-Pankratz or Kelli Van Norman.

## Inventory and Monitoring

### Ramaria Highlight

Fungi in the genus *Ramaria* are notoriously difficult to identify. Salem BLM botanist Ron Exeter (retired) was frustrated enough to dig in, learn the *Ramaria*, and publish [Ramaria of the Pacific Northwestern United States](#) (2006). Yet even for those who develop expertise, the *Ramaria* can be confounding. Eighteen species or varieties of *Ramaria* are on the R6 FS and OR/WA BLM Sensitive and Strategic species' lists and an additional 11 species or varieties are on the Survey and Manage list.

As part of an ISSSSP Rare Species Genetics contract, we had contractor Matt Gordon of [Molecular Solutions](#) sequence the ITS (internal transcribed space) and LSU (large subunit) genetic regions of 245 voucher *Ramaria* specimens. That was enough data to then have [Molecular Solutions](#) analyze the dataset and construct ITS sequence trees, which resulted in 5 subgroups and shows the interspecies relationships and identifies species groups. This effort also helped test and correct morphological specimen identifications. In all, 44 specimens were classified as 20 different unknown species. The other 209 specimens were assigned to 30 different species. These data are publicly available and would be a great dataset for someone to take the next steps to clean up the *Ramaria* taxonomy.

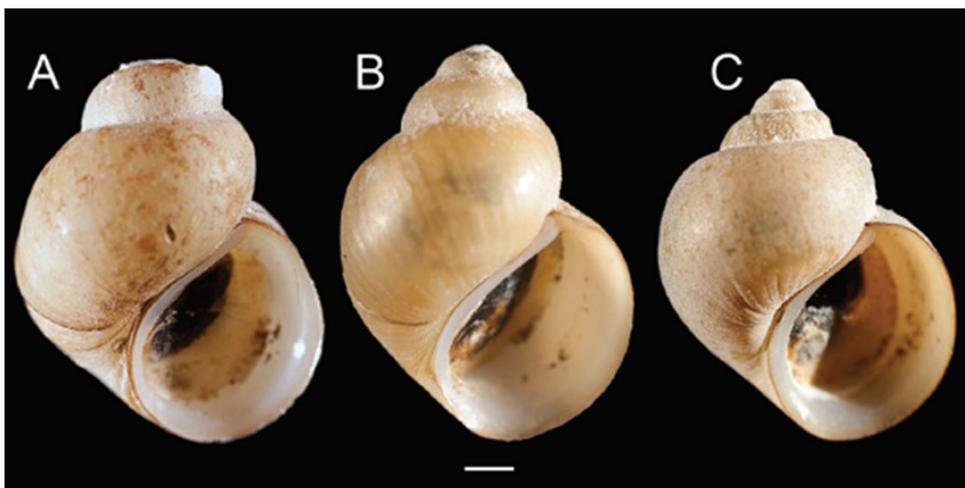
### Upland Sandpiper Highlight

The upland sandpiper is a grassland bird that was once abundant mostly in the Great Plains, but there were breeding populations in eastern Oregon and southeastern Washington. Holly Akenson, working for Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, conducted surveys in the early 1990's. Laura Navarette, from the La Grande Ranger District on the Wallowa Whitman National Forest (NF), grew concerned that no one had visited the two historic upland sandpiper sites on her district for many years so she submitted an ISSSSP proposal. Laura was then able to get Holly Akenson to survey those sites in 2017. Holly confirmed that upland sandpipers no longer use the historic breeding sites on the Wallowa Whitman NF. She notes that these birds generally have high site fidelity. Several years ago Cindy Kranich (retired), on the Malheur NF, coordinated a 3-year survey effort at the populations in Logan Valley with negative results. It's not known if the breeding populations that used private land near Ukiah or Bear Valley are still extant.

### Aquatic Snail Highlight

For the last decade, ISSSSP has worked with Dr. Robert Hershler from the Smithsonian Institute. Dr. Hershler (Bob), is an expert in tiny freshwater aquatic snails. In preparation for retirement, Bob wanted to publish a checklist of the truncatelloidean gastropods. Unfortunately, the Smithsonian had closed their publication arm so Bob asked Kelli Van Norman to help find a publication venue. The BLM's Technical Note series turned out to be a good fit. Bob's publication, along with geneticist co-author Dr. Hsiu-Ping Liu, was published in June 2017 – [Annotated Checklist of Freshwater Truncatelloidean Gastropods of the Western United States, with an Illustrated Key to the Genera, Technical Note 449](#) – available online (<https://www.blm.gov/learn/blm-library/agency-publications/technical-notes>) or hardcopy from Kelli Van Norman.

Additionally in 2017, the Rogue River and Umpqua Valley *Fluminicola* taxonomic study was completed by Bob and others. This project was an ISSSSP proposal submitted by SW Oregon fish biologists who wanted resolution on these tricky pebblesnails. The journal article is open access and available online: <https://zookeys.pensoft.net/article/13472/>. ISSSSP still has some data clean-up to do as a result of this project. Bob expects to finish up and publish the upper Klamath Basin *Fluminicola* in the next year.



Shells of the newly described species *Fluminicola umpquaensis* from the Rogue River-Umpqua Valley publication, Hershler et al. (2017). Scale bar 1.0 mm.

For additional information about ISSSSP inventory or monitoring efforts contact Kelli Van Norman.

## Conservation Planning

ISSSSP Conservation Planning includes the creation of informational documents such as species fact sheets for the little known SSSS (fungi, lichens, bryophytes, invertebrates), as well as more detailed conservation and management oriented documents (Conservation Assessments, Conservation Strategies, Conservation Agreements, Site Management Plans) for higher-priority species or species with more information known about them. Conservation Planning also includes planning and implementation of habitat restoration and enhancement projects.

### Completed but not yet posted documents

The backlog for posting items on the ISSSSP website is now over 6 months from when a document gets completed to when it gets posted. If you have an immediate need for any of these documents, please contact Rob Huff.

**Conservation assessments** for *Callophrys johnsoni*, *Corydalis aquae-gelidae*, and *Rorippa columbiae*

#### Species Fact Sheets:

**Fungi:** *Cortinarius pavelekii*, *Gastrolactarius camphoratus*, *Gymnomyces nondistincta*, *Leptonia occidentalis* var. *occidentalis*, *Otidea smithii*, *Rhizopogon alexsmithii*, *Rhizopogon clavitisporus*, *Rhizopogon masoniae*

**Bryophytes:** *Bartramiopsis lescurii*, *Calliargon richardsonii*, *Campylium stellatum*, *Fissidens fontanus*, *Iwatsukiella leucotricha*, *Orthotrichum praemorsum*, *Polytrichastrum sexangulare* var. *sexangulare*, *Racomitrium depressum*, *Racomitrium ryszardii*, *Rivulariella gemmipara*, *Schistostega pennata*, *Splachnum sphaericum*, *Tetraphis geniculata*, *Tritomaria exsecta*

**Lichens:** *Alectoria ochroleuca*, *Bunodophoron melanocarpum*, *Dermatocarpon mouliinsii*, *Fuscopannaria laceratula*, *Kaernefeltia californica*, *Stereocaulon spathuliferum*, *Umbilicaria lyngei*, *Umbilicaria rigida*, *Umbilicaria scholanderi*, *Vulpicida tilesii*

**Invertebrates:** *Acetropis americana*, *Allogona ptychophora solida*, *Ashmeadiella sculleni*, *Bombus suckleyi*, *Chloealtis aspasma*, *Euphydryas colon colon*, *Fossaria perplexa*, *Lanx alta*, *Magnipelta mycophaga*, *Oreohelix junii*, *Oreohelix variabilis* spp. 1, *Rhyacophila haddocki*, *Vorticifex effusa diagonalis*

**Vascular Plants:** *Ribes divaricatum* var. *pubiflorum*

**Other conservation planning tools:** Updated bibliography and associated tables on effects to fungi

### Completed and posted

Documents that have been completed and posted on our website since the last ISSSSP update include:

**Conservation strategies:** Inland redband trout

**Conservation assessments** for Oregon vesper sparrow, Townsend's big-eared bat, fringed myotis, pygmy rabbit, *Boechera atrorubens* and *Sanicula marilandica*

#### Species Fact Sheets:

**Invertebrates:** *Bombus morrisoni*, *Calliopsis barri*, *Colias christina sullivani*, *Callophrys polios maritima*, *Euphydryas gillettii*, *Fluminicola modoci*, *Juga acutifilosa*, *Neothremma prolata*, *Perdita accepta*, *Perdita salicis sublaeta*, *Physa megalochlamys*, *Physella hordacea*, *Planorbella oregonensis*, *Plebejus saepiolus littoralis*, *Pristiloma crateris*, *Taylorconcha insperata*, *Vorticifex effusus dalli*, *Vorticifex klamathensis sinitsini*, *Valvata tricarinata*

**Bryophytes:** *Aloina bifrons*, *Andreaea schofieldiana*, *Brachydontium olympicum*, *Bruchia flexuosa*, *Bryoerythrophyllum columbianum*, *Bryum calobryoides*, *Campylopus schmidii*, *Conostomum tetragonum*, *Encalypta brevipes*, *Entosthodon fascicularis*, *Ephemerum crassinervium*, *Ephemerum serratum*, *Limbella fryei*, *Micromitrium synoicum*, *Orthodontium pellucens*, *Physcomitrella patens*, *Polytrichastrum sexangulare* var. *vulcanicum*, *Polytrichum strictum*, *Pseudocalliargon trifarium*, *Rhytidium rugosum*, *Schistidium cinclidodonteum*, *Tortula mucronifolia*, *Trematodon asanoi*, *Triquetrella californica*

**Fungi:** *Hydropus marginellus*, *Ramaria abietina*, *Sarcodon fuscoindicus*

**Site Management Plans** for mardon skipper sites (Gifford Pinchot NF, Mt. Adams RD)

**Habitat enhancement/restoration actions:** Whitebark pine 2015 progress report

For additional information about ISSSSP Conservation Planning contact Rob Huff.

### FY18 work in progress

**Conservation Strategies:** 4 vascular plant species/species groups

**Conservation Assessments** for fungi, 2 birds, and 4 vascular plants

**Species Fact Sheets** for 15 Fungi, 27 Bryophytes, 15 Lichens, 23 Invertebrates, 1 Vascular plant, 1 Mammal

**Habitat restoration/enhancement projects** for western pond turtle, mardon skipper and whitebark pine, and NEPA for restoration projects for *Iliamna latibracteata*

**Site Management Plans:** 2 bat roost sites; reports from the Okanogan-Wenatchee and Medford BLM on effectiveness of completed site management plan actions for mardon skipper

## Highlight-Strategic Species

In 2007, a new category of rare species was created by the ISSSSP called “Strategic”. Strategic species are rare or little-known species, but they do not meet the criteria for Sensitive; they have significant information gaps, that if included as Sensitive, would make it difficult to determine how to effectively manage them consistent with FS and BLM Sensitive species policies. Since they are not covered by agency Sensitive species policies, Strategic species do not need to be addressed in project NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) documents, and sites of these species do not require protection. However, field units are directed to enter site information into agency databases for any Strategic species discovered. Because they are rare or little-known, we want to keep track of them and see if we can fill the information gaps.

There are five main gaps that render a species Strategic. The species is:

- 1) suspected but not documented on any FS or BLM unit within the particular state;
- 2) undescribed;
- 3) “historic” or “extirpated” from the state;
- 4) List 3 under a rating from the Oregon Biodiversity Information Center (ORBIC) , or is a Review List 1 or 2 species from the Washington Natural Heritage Program (WNHP), or;
- 5) unranked by the state (SNR or SU ranks).

Our current Strategic list includes 684 species.

Of these,

- 1) 217 species meet criteria 1;
- 2) 40 species meet criteria 2;
- 3) 78 species meet criteria 3;
- 4) 325 species meet criteria 4, and;
- 5) 74 species meet the 5th criteria.

Some of the species meet multiple criteria.

The ISSSSP actively works to address the information gaps for these species, as possible, in an effort to learn enough information to place the species in the Sensitive category, or to remove them from the list altogether, depending upon the outcome of the new knowledge. To date, much of the ISSSSP focus has been on addressing species meeting criteria 1 and criteria 3, information gaps that may possibly be addressed by targeted surveys. ISSSSP works with field unit personnel to identify priority habitats for surveys, or to determine exact sites of historic locations, and conducts surveys for the species using agreements and contracts. Some “species” meeting criteria 2 have also been addressed by ISSSSP, notably aquatic and terrestrial mollusks. Species placed in Strategic due to meeting criteria 4 or 5 are more difficult to address, as often the information needs are beyond the scope of the ISSSSP, or there are too many unknowns, such that ORBIC and WNHP are unable to rank the species.

## New publication-Mussel best management practices

A nice, new, practical resource to utilize when considering projects that may impact mussels, put together by our partners at The Xerces Society is now available: [Conserving the Gems of Our Waters: Best Management Practices for Protecting Native Western Freshwater Mussels During Aquatic and Riparian Restoration, Construction, and Land Management Projects and Activities](#) by Emilie Blevins, Laura McMullen, Sarina Jepsen, Michele Blackburn, Aimée Code, and Scott Hoffman Black, The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. This guide can be a useful tool when managing any freshwater mussels, not just those on the ISSSSP list.

Download this guide as a free pdf: [2018-001 Freshwater Mussel BMPs](#), and contact [mussels@xerces.org](mailto:mussels@xerces.org) to obtain a printed version.

Coming Soon: A companion handbook to [Conserving the Gems of Our Waters](#), available in Spring 2018, will provide a condensed, field-ready summary of these guidelines. For more information about western freshwater mussels check: <https://xerces.org/western-freshwater-mussels/> and <https://pnwmussels.org/>.

## Botanical species tools-updates

The Oregon Flora project ([www.oregonflora.org](http://www.oregonflora.org)), with support from BLM and USFS, has been redesigning the Oregon Flora website for release in April. The new atlas (showing the locations of all herbarium specimens) will have an interactive GIS interface, and will be able to download location and herbarium label information into shapefiles for use in planning and conservation. Users will have the ability to create species checklists for any given area, a Forest, a District, watershed, or a unique polygon. There will be an interactive botanical key online much like the current downloadable Oregon Flora App., and some new modules such as gardening with native plants and pollinators. The Oregon Flora project is interested in coming to the next FS or BLM botany meetings and giving some training on using these new tools. Also, this fall 2018, Vol. 2 of the flora, the dicot families A-F will be published. Volume 3, the dicots G-Z is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2019 resulting in a new complete flora for Oregon.

The Carex Working group, with support from BLM and USFS, has completed a field guide to PNW Grasses, which is currently in press and should be released soon this spring. This monumental book covers nearly all native and non-native grasses in the PNW, with easy to use keys, pictures and line drawings. Stay tuned, a great resource is coming!

## White-nose syndrome in bats: FS/BLM response

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is a disease caused by the fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (Pd). The disease is estimated to have killed over six million bats in eastern North America since 2006, and can kill up to 100% of bats in a colony during hibernation. The fungus can grow on the nose, wings, and ears of an infected bat during winter hibernation, giving it a white, fuzzy appearance. Affected bats arouse more often during hibernation which causes them to use crucial fat reserves, leading to possible starvation and death. Additional causes of mortality from the disease include wing damage, inability to regulate body temperature, breathing disruptions, and dehydration. The fungal disease is spread primarily through bat-to-bat contact. Bats can also contract the disease from an environment where the fungus is present. People can carry fungal spores on clothing, shoes, or recreation equipment that has come in contact with the fungus.

As of January 2018, there are six cases of Pd documented in the western United States (US), all within King County, Washington. 1) In March 2016, a little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) found near North Bend was determined to have WNS. 2) A silver-haired bat (*Lasiurus noctivagans*) also collected in March 2016, approximately 40 miles away from the above bat, tested positive for Pd but did not show symptoms of WNS. 3) Bat guano collected in July 2016 from under a bridge near North Bend tested positive for Pd. Genetic testing of the guano showed the bat was likely a *Myotis* species. 4) A dead Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*) found in spring 2017 near North Bend tested positive for Pd and WNS. 5) A Yuma myotis/little brown bat (species not confirmed) found in the same location as the WNS-positive Yuma myotis tested positive for Pd and WNS. 6) Bat guano collected in the summer of 2017 from a maternity roost near North Bend tested positive for Pd. To date, an environmental reservoir (i.e., cold dark place such as a cave, mine, deep rock crevice) where Pd is able to persist has not been located.

WDFW is the lead agency determining the appropriate response to the discovery of WNS in Washington. The FS and BLM participate on a Pacific Northwest (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, British Columbia) interagency team with representatives from state, federal and Canadian government agencies. The Oregon and Washington FS and BLM WNS team is comprised of Rob Huff and Kelli Van Norman from ISSSP, Josh Chapman (FS Regional Wildlife Program Manager) and Shawna Bautista (FS Invasive Plant and Pesticide Use Coordinator). We work with the Pacific Northwest team to identify surveillance strategies and priorities within Oregon and Washington, response strategies, and decontamination and cleaning requirements.

The FS/BLM team has worked over the past year to:

- develop and provide communication tools for our field units;
- provide funding for FS units with “show caves” to help with people management and education, and;
- partner with the states to help fund and implement environmental sampling in caves and mines on National Forests and BLM Districts to determine if the fungus is present.

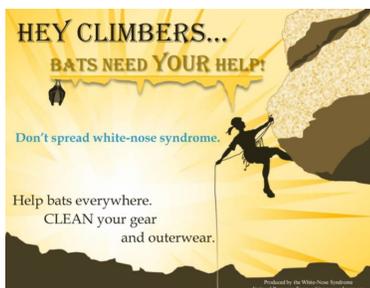
For information on environmental sampling, contact Kelli Van Norman.

Communication products include:

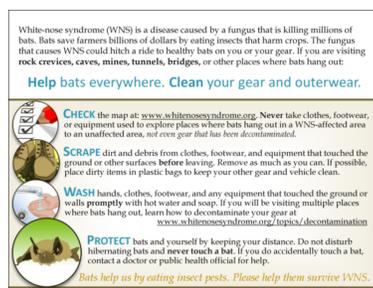
- white-nose syndrome environmental education signs in English or Spanish. The 2' x 3' NPS-style signs utilize a national WNS communications message, modified for Pacific Northwest use.
- reporting signs that encourage the public to share information about dead, sick, or congregations of bats. The reporting signs have been translated into Spanish for both states, as well as German, French, Chinese, and Japanese for Oregon.
- informational postcards directed at explorers and rock climbers for use at visitor's centers, kiosks, campgrounds, event sites, outdoor equipment businesses, or similar locales. These cards have been translated into Spanish, French, German, Chinese, and Japanese.
- FS R6 and OR/WA BLM-specific Frequently Asked Questions document about WNS. The document is also available in Spanish, German, French, Chinese, and Japanese.
- a national “Battle for the Bats” brochure: <https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/resource/battle-bats-brochure-updated-may-17-2016>

We're asking Forests and BLM Districts again to engage your public lands visitors to help reduce the risk of spread of the fungus, and to report sightings of sick, dead or groups of bats to their respective state wildlife agency.

If you are interested in getting copies of any of these tools, contact Rob Huff.



Front of “climber” postcard



Back of postcard

For more information on Oregon/Washington FS/BLM management: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r6/home/?cid=FSEPRD501165>  
For national information: <https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/>

## Program Information

### ISSSSP List Update

In August 2016, the Oregon Biodiversity Information Center (ORBIC) updated their list of rare species for the state of Oregon. In 2017, the Washington Natural Heritage Program (WNHP) also updated their lists of rare animal and vascular plant species. These updated lists triggered a re-assessment of the R6 Regional Forester and OR/WA State Director SSS lists to determine if there should be species additions, removals, or category changes based on the new information provided by ORBIC and WNHP. New draft R6 Regional Forester and OR/WA State Director SSS lists will be shared with Forests and BLM Districts this spring. Forests and BLM Districts will be given 6 weeks to review the lists and provide information on suspected and documented statuses for the species on the draft list.

### Top 10% species prioritization

At the same time Forests and BLM Districts are reviewing the draft SSS lists, FS/BLM personnel will also be asked to update their identification of priority species, including information on conservation needs associated with those species, tools or products available, and FS/BLM personnel who might be knowledgeable of the species. Each Forest and BLM District will identify 10% of their total number of sensitive species as a priority, which in turn will be useful for determining species work groups, range-wide or larger-scale priority species, and drive the ISSSSP Project Proposal Process. Forest and BLM District personnel will need to work across disciplines to come up with a fair way to determine the top priority botanical, fish, and wildlife species for their unit.

### FY19 Project Proposal Process

Forest and BLM District personnel can put in project proposals for Sensitive species included in the draft updated SSSS list that are not currently Sensitive. Proposals are more likely to be funded if they address priority species and the conservation or information gaps identified by the Forest/BLM District. Proposals may include field studies, analysis of existing data, mapping/spatial analysis, modeling, inventory, establishing initial monitoring plans or plots, taxonomy, meta-analysis of existing literature, species fact sheets, conservation assessments, conservation agreements, conservation strategies, and conservation actions including habitat maintenance, restoration or enhancement activities. Proposals are due to Kelli Van Norman by March 29, 2018.

### Coordination with other Agencies

The ISSSSP has been working with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and state wildlife agencies (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife) to discuss species of common interest, and how we can work together to help meet each other's objectives. Our main focus to date has been species that overlap these three criteria: 1) State Wildlife Action Plan Species of Greatest Conservation Need, 2) ISSSSP Sensitive or Strategic, and 3) species on the USFWS 7-year action plan regarding Endangered Species Act decisions. We're looking at bigger picture information gaps for these species, and develop species-specific action plans, as needed. For some of the species, we'll need to engage Forest and BLM District wildlife personnel as we progress.

On a similar note, the US Geological Survey recently released a national database that compiles each State's Species of Greatest Conservation Need. The SGCN lists are part of the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) process and identify the species most in need of conservation action in that state or territory. In total, 16,420 species have been included in the SGCN national list. This database can serve as a useful tool in identifying those species of concern across multiple states.

<https://www.usgs.gov/news/new-database-available-usgs-releases-species-greatest-conservation-need-lists>

### Western pond turtle work group

ISSSSP personnel are organizing a FS/BLM western pond turtle work group to kick-off this spring. The work group members have been identified and represent a number of BLM and FS units across the range of the species in Oregon and Washington. The 10-member team will review existing information and determine important information gaps and conservation needs on FS/BLM lands, looking at our Sensitive and Special Status Species (SSSS) policies as guides. For the top 3-5 gaps/needs, tasks will be identified, including appropriate personnel, timelines, products, and costs. We'll then work to implement those tasks. The work group members will also tie in with regional interagency western pond turtle teams (upper Willamette, lower Willamette, southern Oregon/northern California) to coordinate and share information/conservation needs, and ensure we are working on priority tasks. The first work group meeting is set for March 7th and 8th.

For additional information about the work group contact Rob Huff or Kelli Van Norman.

## Contact Information and Feedback

We're always looking for feedback. Is this newsletter helpful? What other kind of information or topics would you like to hear about?

Please send any comments you have to Rob Huff.

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