

Obtaining a Scientific Recovery Permit under the Endangered Species Act and Frequently Asked Questions Pertaining to Rusty Patched Bumble Bee (*Bombus affinis*) Recovery Permits

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
February 20, 2019

The FWS Endangered Species program, located in each of our [Regional offices](#), issues permits of three basic types: Incidental take permits, enhancement of survival permits, and **recovery** and interstate commerce permits. We issue **recovery permits** to allow permittees to take listed species as part of their activities intended to foster the recovery of those species. **A typical use of a recovery permit is to allow for scientific research on a listed species in order to understand better the species' long-term survival needs.**

- **Do I need a permit?**
 - If a person is conducting research activities within known areas that could result in take of *Bombus affinis* (even if *B. affinis* is not the target species), we recommend they apply for a recovery permit.

- **How do I obtain a recovery permit?**
 - The "Federal FWS Permit Application Form: Native Endangered & Threatened Species - Scientific, Enhancement of Propagation, or Survival" and instructions for endangered and threatened species native to the United States (form 3-200-59) can be found at <https://www.fws.gov/forms/display.cfm?number1=200>.
 - The former permit application form 3-200-55 is labeled obsolete and should no longer be used.
 - Most permits are issued by the Service's regional office (<https://www.fws.gov/where/>) where the activity will take place.
 - It takes approximately 90 days to obtain a permit after you submit an application, so the USFWS encourages applicants to apply as early as possible.

- **What are the surveyor qualifications to obtain a permit?**
 - In order to be qualified to survey for *B. affinis*, an individual must meet the following criteria:
 - Receipt of a four-year university or college degree in a natural science (noted in resume).
 - Demonstrated ability to complete species surveys and resulting technical reports.
 - Demonstrated ability to use aerial nets, or vials to capture bees. Detail experience with aerial nets or vials, including (close approximation is fine) how many surveys and how many years you have used these techniques.
 - *Bombus* identification skills.
 - Experience conducting the specific activities requested (e.g., experience conducting non-lethal DNA sampling of *Bombus* or other bees, experience tagging *Bombus* or other bees, experience with non-lethal pollen or pathogen sampling, experience using bees to train detection dogs).

- **What are the reporting requirements?**
 - **Annual reporting requirements will be stated in your permit. The Service is working towards an electronic data reporting system for recovery permits. Although not required, we request that you report data in the format of the “Survey Data Sheet” located on the rusty patched bumble bee surveyor/researcher webpage (Survey Data Sheets <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/insects/rpbb/surveys.html>).**

- **What to do if you find *B. affinis* (e.g., in a previously undocumented location)?**
 - Reporting requirements will be stated in your permit. Notify FWS as soon as reasonably possible.