

29 April 2013

Dear Interested Parties:

On behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all who took time to comment on the 2013 Draft Revised Rangewide Indiana Bat Summer Survey Guidance (Summer Survey Guidance) and associated documents. The Service received 59 comment letters during a 60-day public-comment period ending on 11 March 2013. The multi-agency survey guidance team reviewed all of the comments and we appreciate the thoughtful review that you provided. Please note that all comments are now available on the Midwest Region's Indiana Bat Web Site <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/inba/inbasummersurveyguidance.html>.

At this time, we are providing a document that provides an overview of the 2013 Indiana Bat Summer Survey Guidance and outlines the survey methods, mist netting or acoustics, and the minimum level of effort that would be accepted for use in 2013. We are releasing this overview document prior to the complete Summer Survey Guidance document, which will be released as soon as possible and posted to the website above. Please note that there is one difference in the protocols among the Service regions for 2013. This difference is in the level of mist-netting that we recommend for assessing presence/probable absence of Indiana bats. Given the severe declines of Indiana bat populations observed in the Northeast Region of the Service (Region 5), additional survey effort is now needed to document the presence/probable absence of this species when using mist nets in this region. All other components of the guidance are the same rangewide.

Similar to our 2012 requests, we appreciate any pertinent information or data to assist the Service with finalizing the Summer Survey Guidance for use in 2014 and beyond. We are primarily interested in netting and acoustic survey results to estimate detection and occupancy rates that will be used to help finalize our recommended level of effort. In 2013, the U.S. Geological Survey will also be conducting independent tests of acoustic analysis software. If you are interested in submitting software for these tests, please let us know.

Should you have any questions or wish to share your field-testing observations and results, please feel free to contact one of the Service's Indiana bat summer survey guidance team leaders, Mike Armstrong (mike_armstrong@fws.gov), Andy King (andrew_king@fws.gov) and Robyn Niver (robyn_niver@fws.gov).

Thank you again for your time, interest, and dedication to the conservation of the Indiana bat.

Sincerely,

The Indiana Bat Summer Survey Guidance Team