

Species Protective Measures for Ozark Big-eared Bats

Ozark Big-eared Bats (OBEB) are known to roost in caves, sandstone cracks, and talus. The following species protective measures should be implemented to minimize adverse effects of the project to OBEB.

- Survey the project area for suitable roosting habitat for Ozark Big-eared Bats (caves, cracks, overhangs, breakdown piles or mines) prior to construction and notify the Arkansas Ecological Services Field Office of all such features. The Field Office can be reached at (501) 513-4470.
- All project activities shall occur outside a ½ mile buffer of identified OBEB colonies.
- No blasting shall occur within 1 mile of an occupied cave where bats are present.

The following applies to projects with caves or other openings occurring within the project area:

- Establish a natural area of 300 feet or greater around any cave, sinkhole, losing stream, or spring found during the survey (or during any aspect of project implementation). The Service should be contacted for further evaluation to determine if caves are used by federally listed species.
- If caves or other openings are encountered during construction, work efforts should cease within 300 feet of the opening. The opening should be adequately marked and protected from work activities, and the Service should be contacted immediately. No fill materials should be placed into the opening until Service or Service approved personnel have the opportunity to inventory the site.
- If a cave or fracture is breached or surface water is rerouted into a karst feature, all activities should cease and the Service should be contacted to assess the situation and provide further consultation before proceeding.