

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
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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?**
 - Apply online at <http://epermits.fws.gov>. Login or create an account and then use the Search Applications feature to search for the application for "Scientific Purposes, Enhancement of Propagation, or Survival Permits (i.e., Recovery Permits)" and follow the instructions for endangered and threatened species native to the United States (form 3-200-59) to submit your application online.
 - 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 at least 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. We require permit holders to report data in the format of the “Data Reporting Spreadsheets” located on the rusty patched bumble bee surveyor/researcher webpage (Data Reporting Spreadsheets <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/insects/rpbb/surveys.html>). Please check this website frequently to ensure you are using the most up-to-date form.

- **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.