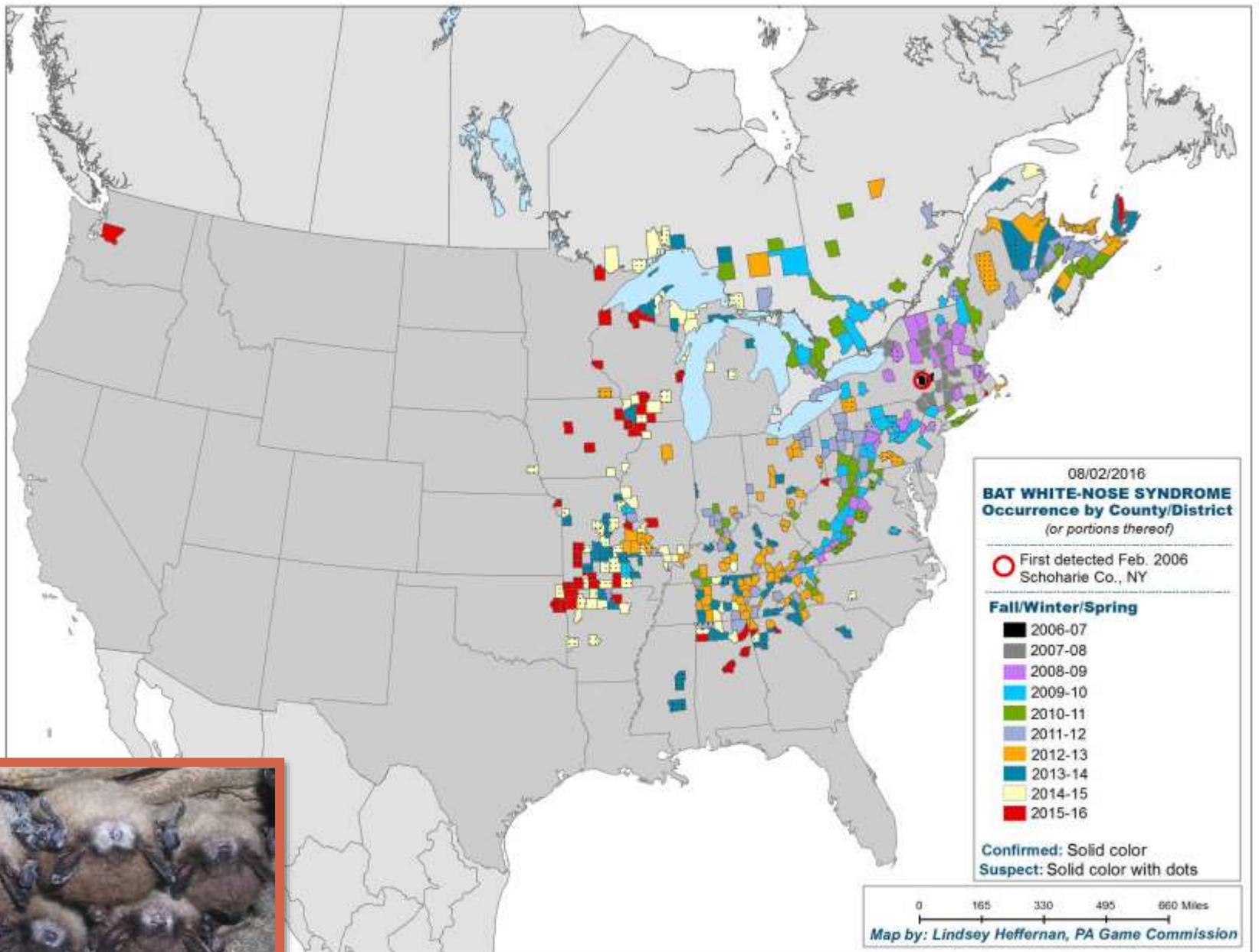


Lake States Forest Management Bat Habitat Conservation Plan

Debbie Begalle,
Assistant Division Chief, Michigan DNR,
Forest Resources Division

Forest Resources Association, Lake States Fall Meeting
October 18-19, 2016





Plan Purpose

To take a proactive, collaborative approach to conserving bat species that are in steep decline from white-nose syndrome while minimizing potential impacts to sustainable forest management



Fish & Wildlife Service Decisions Being Challenged in Court

- Northern long-eared bat (NLEB) current *threatened listing*
- 4(d) rule
- Biological opinion
- National Environmental Policy Act decision
- Lack of critical habitat designation



Potential Consequences of Lawsuits

- Decisions will be made by federal court
- NLEB could be up-listed to *endangered*
- Could lose 4(d) rule
- Potential restrictions to summer forest management



Why a Habitat Conservation Plan?

- Provide certainty to managers of both state and private lands
- More flexibility to develop reasonable actions to conserve bat habitat
- Other options for Endangered Species Act compliance in a timely manner are limited



Who is Involved?

- Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin DNRs
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- ICF Jones & Stokes Inc. - contractor
- Partners & stakeholders
- Fish & Wildlife Service funding 90% of project



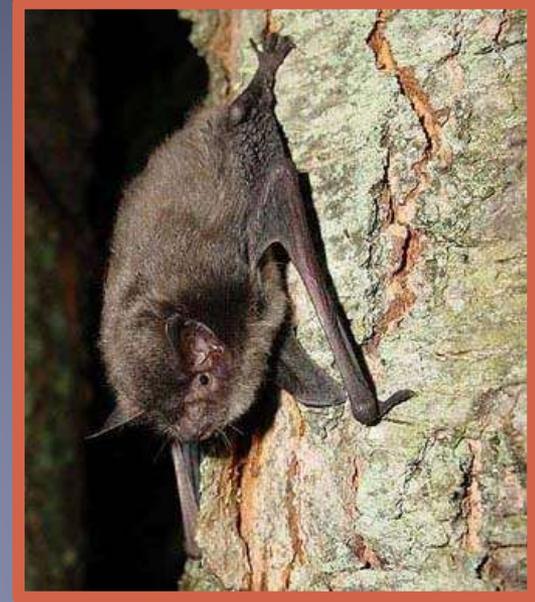
Potential Covered Lands

Private lands	32.0 million acres
DNR lands	9.2 million acres
Nonfederal public	5.5 million acres
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Total	46.7 million acres



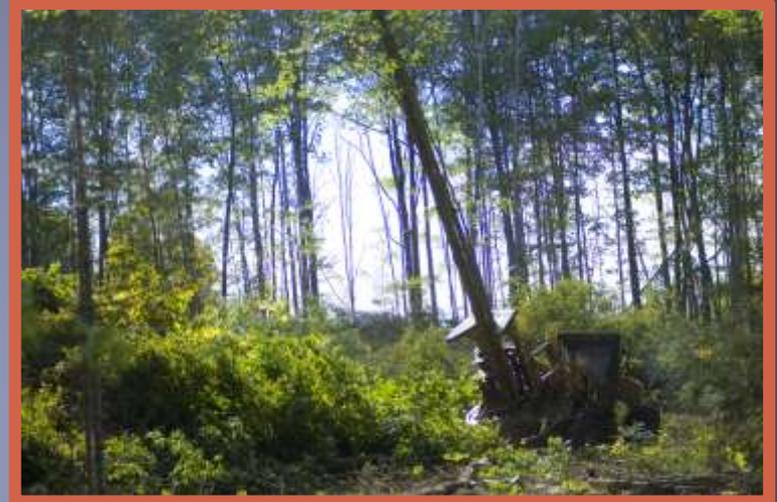
Covered Species

- Indiana bat – federal endangered
- Northern long-eared bat – federal threatened
- Little brown bat – listing decision expected by September 2023
- Tri-colored bat – petition to list currently under review by Fish & Wildlife Service



Covered Activities

- Timber harvest
- Prescribed fire
- Road and trail development and maintenance



Next Steps

- States developing outreach, partner and stakeholder engagement plans
- Goal is to have a draft in 2019
- Contractor to write the draft LSFMB HCP and associated NEPA document



Michigan DNR Contact

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