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## Memorandum

Re: Northern Long-eared Bat and Tricolored Bat Updates

June 21, 2024

To Whom it May Concern,

We are writing to inform you of important updates to occurrence data and map applications for the northern long-eared bat (NLEB) in Vermont. We also anticipate future updates to range maps and areas of concern around known occurrences for both the federally/state endangered northern long-eared bat and the state endangered/federally proposed endangered tricolored bat (TCB) based on federal listing implications under the Endangered Species Act.

**First, our [current guidance](#) and approach to avoid take of NLEB and to minimize and mitigate for impacts to NLEB habitat during regulatory review remains in place at this time.**

**Second, we are removing the visible 1-mile buffers around known NLEB occurrences represented on rare, threatened, and endangered species layer found in [Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources Atlas](#) and [Vermont Open Geodata Portal](#) to better protect sensitive Endangered species locations.** The occurrences remain visible on the Atlas, but without the large buffers. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department (VFWD) continually updates species occurrence records through the Natural Heritage Database and uploads any changes approximately every four months to the Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species layer. However, the visible 1-mile radius feature was inconsistent with the way all other species occurrences are represented and drew attention to sensitive locations such as caves and mines, mostly on private lands. **Individuals or organizations with a current data use agreement can request access to an ArcGIS Online view with NLEB occurrences to look for records within a mile of their project for state-level regulatory review.** Indiana bat and tricolored bat occurrences are also visible on this view. If you need a data use agreement, please email [Everett.Marshall@vermont.gov](mailto:Everett.Marshall@vermont.gov)

**Projects that involve a federal nexus (i.e., on federal land, involve a federal agency, or use federal funding) should go directly to the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) (USFWS) with questions. It is the applicant's responsibility to figure out whether a federal nexus is present.**



Applicants can use the [USFWS IPaC process](#) to generate an official species list and use Determination Keys to assess impacts to federally endangered or candidate species. We recommend they include federal Determination Key results in their state permit application.

**Finally, the USFWS is anticipated to announce their listing decision regarding the proposed federally endangered tricolored bat in 2024.** In addition, they will finalize new range maps, predicted occupancy maps, and conservation tools some time in 2024 for both the NLEB and TCB. **We recommend [contacting the USFWS directly](#) with questions about these potential, upcoming changes.** We will reach out if and when any federal changes require us to make changes to our own guidance and regulatory review processes for bats in Vermont.

We hope these changes make sense and we are happy to provide further information on request. Thank you for your support as we all work together to fill in important information gaps and adapt to the changing natural and regulatory environment.



Alyssa Bennett  
Small Mammals Biologist  
Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department

cc. John Austin, Billy Coster, Rosalind Renfrew, Jen Mojo, Paul Hamelin