

WNS/Pd Surveillance Best Practices Workshop

When: Friday April 14, 2017 1:15pm-4:45pm

Where: Colorado State University –General Services Building, Rm. 242

Who: 25 participants

Cost: Free

Instructors: Anne Ballmann (USGS), Michelle Verant (NPS), others TBD

Description

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is an emergent fungal disease of hibernating, insectivorous bats that has caused massive bat mortality in the eastern North America. To date, WNS has been confirmed in 29 states (including the 2016 detection in Washington) and 5 Canadian provinces and continues to spread across the continent. Given the widespread distribution of the causative agent *P. destructans* (Pd) and the unprecedented population declines in several affected North American bat species, national cooperation is critical for monitoring and managing this disease. In response to the recent emergence of this previously unknown disease, many agencies, institutions, and scientists have become involved in disease investigation, research, surveillance, and management efforts. Coordination of these efforts following standardize protocols and sharing of acquired information will facilitate greater understanding of this disease and its significance for bat populations and the ecosystem. This workshop will foster common understanding of WNS/Pd surveillance strategies, sampling techniques, diagnostic interpretation, and biosecurity recommendations to aid in the conservation of bats. The format of the workshop will be lectures followed by a laboratory session that will allow participants to practice various non-lethal sampling techniques, approved bat euthanasia methods, and decontamination procedures.

Statement of Purpose

The focus of the workshop will be to expand upon the discussion of WNS/Pd surveillance introduced during the WBWG Meeting WNS session (Thu 4/13/17) and provide hands-on training with subject matter experts on surveillance and equipment decontamination techniques in the field. The target audience is agency biologists, contractors, students, and scientists conducting bat research in the western United States that complements national surveillance efforts for *P. destructans*. The objectives of this workshop are:

1. To provide a forum for information sharing and networking among institutions, agencies, and scientists working with bats or in their roosting environments in the era of WNS.
2. To facilitate understanding of various surveillance strategies for WNS/Pd and provide technical training on available sampling techniques and biosecurity measures to improve one's confidence and efficiency in implementation.

Presentation Topics (1.5 hr)

- WNS Epidemiology and Surveillance -20 min
- Specimen selection, sampling methods and diagnostic interpretation (including UV) – 20 min
- Photo gallery of WNS -20 min
- National decontamination guidelines -15 min
- Q/A session – 15 min

Break – 10 min

Demos/Hands-on training (1.5 hrs)

The laboratory session will provide hands-on training in field techniques for *Pd* surveillance sample collection from bats and the environment, long-wave UV screening methods, and decontamination procedures for equipment and clothing.

Lab Stations (15 min rotations):

- UV screening
- Skin swab/wing biopsy
- Environmental sampling (swab, sediment, guano)
- Decontamination best practices
- Bat euthanasia methods

To register, contact Anne Ballmann (aballmann@usgs.gov)

Please provide the following info:

Name

Phone number

Email

Employer/School affiliation