

Northern Long Eared Bat Comment Period Reopened

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) announced on November 18 that they are reopening the public comment period on a proposal to list the northern long-eared bat as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Comments will be accepted through **Dec. 18, 2014**. A final decision on the proposal is due on April 2, 2015.

The Service is reopening the comment period as the result of a letter sent by four associations representing 25 of the 39 impacted states. The agency letter points out limitations to the science cited by USFWS as the basis for an endangered designation and notes that existing state conservation efforts are underway to prevent the spread of White Nose Syndrome, the primary threat to the bat. You may view the letter [HERE](#).

Reopening of the comment period will allow the public to provide comments on the proposed rule in light of that additional information. Only new comments should be submitted. The Hardwood Federation recommends that any individual or company submitting comments include language along the following lines:

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should strongly consider the comments provided in the joint letter sent by The Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Southern Group of State Foresters and the Northeast Area Association of State Foresters on November 5, 2014. The letter, representing state natural resource management agencies in 25 states, clearly demonstrates that an endangered designation is not supported by the best available science and data. In addition, the states are engaged in numerous conservation efforts to slow the spread of White Nose Syndrome, the primary threat to the bat. Considering the wide range of the bat and the number of states impacted, efforts at the state level are much more likely to have an impact than general restrictions covering nearly half of the continental United States."

Those interested in providing comments may do so using one of the following methods:

- **Electronically:** Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter Docket No. FWS-R5-ES-2011-0024, the docket number for this decision. You may submit a comment by clicking on "Comment Now!" Please ensure that you have found the correct rulemaking before submitting your comment.
- **By Hard Copy:** Submit by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R5-ES-2011-0024; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: BPHC; 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

Include links above as follows: