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BCI Highlights
A brief review...

North American Bat Conservation Partnership (NABCP)

- Co-sponsored the fifth Cave Gating Workshop held in June in conjunction with the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service, the American Cave Conservation Association, and the USDA Forest Service. The 14 participants included representatives from six state and federal agencies and cavers from West Virginia, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Missouri. In hands-on training sessions, the group gated the entrance to McDowell Cave in Lake of the Ozarks State Park in Missouri. As a rich archeological site, the cave was subject to frequent vandalism that also disturbed maternity roosts of resident endangered gray bats (*Myotis grisescens*).

Latin American Initiatives

- Conducted surveys at four important maternity caves on the Paraguaná Peninsula in the state of Falcón, Venezuela, where human disturbance and resort development threaten approximately 200,000 lesser long-nosed bats (*Leptonycteris curasoae*). BCI is now working with the Venezuelan Association for the Conservation of Natural Areas, through BCI Scientific Advisor Dr. José Ochoa, to develop education programs in communities surrounding the caves, as well as management plans to protect each site.

- Co-sponsored two bat conservation workshops in Venezuela. Participants at the Neotropical bat workshop in Mérida City included 22 students and professionals from Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico, and Bolivia who learned about the value of Neotropical bats in ecosystems and how to identify bat species; they also cooperated to develop conservation priorities for the region. The second workshop, in the state of Bolívar, promoted conservation of bats in lowland rain forests, teaching 16 indigenous tribal leaders the value of bats to their communities along the Caura River, and helping them initiate bat education programs in local schools.

Bats & Mines Project

- Assisted Unimin Minerals Corporation and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources with installation of a second bat-compatible gate at Illinois' Magazine Mine, a critical hibernation site for 15,000 to 20,000 Indiana bats-- the state's largest known Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) colony. The first gate was installed in 1996, but the second entrance to the fragile silica sand mine required steel supports. The additional gate was installed in May, protecting not only Indiana bats but also little brown (*Myotis lucifugus*), big brown (*Eptesicus fuscus*), pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus subflavus*), and northern long-eared (*Myotis septentrionalis*) bats.

-Conducted the Idaho Mine Assessment for Bats Workshop in July, training 35 participants from the USDA Forest Service, the USDI Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Idaho state agencies in survey techniques, mine safety, and bat-friendly gating methods.



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- Gated Minnesota's largest mine, Tower Soudan, in August, providing a permanent haven for thousands of little and big brown bats that hibernate there. The state now plans educational programs and will promote the mine as a "Watchable Wildlife" site for bat watching during fall swarming.

- Conducted a follow-up survey of Rose Guano Cave and Mine in Nevada in conjunction with Pete Bradley of the Nevada Department of Wildlife. The entrance was first gated in 1996 when approximately 70,000 bats were present. During the September survey, an estimated 75,500 emerged.

Bat House Research Project

- Distributed 50 copies of the *Building Homes for Bats* video to the University of California's Davis Cooperative Extension for farmers participating in BCI's study of bats in integrated pest management in California's central valley. The project is being conducted in conjunction with the Organic Farming Research Foundation.

- Installed a "Bridge Lodge" beneath a bridge along Interstate 35 near Buda, Texas. Designed by Marvin Maberry, the lodge is a reliable, cost-effective bat house design for bridges. It provides roosting spaces for colonies of 3,000 to 5,000 bats. In addition, transportation departments in Pennsylvania and Florida are planning to test this new design.

- Created a training video for bat house installation in conjunction with the Wildlife Habitat Council and Enron while installing experimental bat houses along pipelines in Louisiana. The video will be used by Enron employees to install additional houses along pipelines in Arizona, New Mexico, Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota, and Florida. The data reported from these diverse sites will help BCI evaluate the best ways to provide alternative habitat for bats.

Bats and Buildings

- Consulted with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on Kodiak Island on how to exclude little brown bats roosting in U.S. Coast Guard housing. The Coast Guard is simultaneously building and installing bat houses as alternative roosts.

Global Grassroots Conservation Fund

- Funded 12 projects in 10 countries, awarding more than \$30,000 for local efforts ranging from conservation of bat caves in Romania to field education programs for high school students in the Cayman Islands.

Education and Workshops

- Distributed 185 packets of bilingual children's books, workbooks, posters, bat fact cards, and other educational materials to public libraries, schools, radio stations, and nature centers in Texas's Rio Grande Valley. Schoolchildren and local communities there are learning about the value of bats in agricultural pest control and the importance of conservation.

- Hosted 55 participants from more than a dozen U.S. states and Canadian provinces at BCI's Arizona- and Pennsylvania-based Bat Conservation and Management Workshops. Representatives from eight federal, state, and local agencies, museums, and universities

participated along with teachers and other conservation-minded individuals who learned to conserve bats and conduct educational activities.

Outreach

- Delivered keynote address at the 2001 Association of Zoo and Aquarium Docents Conference in Chicago, Illinois, on September 3. BCI's Bob Benson hosted more than 750 people who attended from the U.S. and Canada, learning about the need for bat conservation and how they, as volunteer educators, can help. Many purchased BCI educational materials to use in implementing bat programs in their home communities.
- Addressed the annual Wildlife Society Meeting in Reno, Nevada, sharing the latest findings from BCI's research on hibernation requirements of endangered Indiana bats.
- Consulted with NASA on production of an illustrated book entitled Echo the Bat, which teaches elementary school children about biodiversity, mapping technology, and other scientific concepts. The book follows the initial success of NASA's "Echo the Bat" interactive Web site, which tracks Echo on his seasonal migration.
- Appeared on the Web in *National Geographic Online's* feature about greater long-nosed bat (*Leptonycteris nivalis*) research in Texas's Big Bend region. The article reached approximately one million Web viewers and emphasized the importance of agave plants to sustain bats with pollen and nectar during migration.

For more information about these programs, or to receive a copy of the BCI Annual Report, visit our Web site at www.batcon.org or call 512-327-9721.

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