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BCI Highlights

A brief review of some of BCI's accomplishments in the last six months.

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The "BCI Highlights" report appears in the winter and summer issues of *BATS* to help keep members informed about BCI's progress. For more information on the following programs, please visit our web site at www.batcon.org, or call our office at (512) 327-9721. You may also request a copy of BCI's annual report or view it on our web site.

North American Bat Conservation Partnership (NABCP)

- Funded 19 research, education, and conservation projects across the U.S., Mexico, and Canada. BCI's grants totaling \$70,176 were matched nearly 13-to-1 by our partners with an additional \$902,999 in support of these top-priority projects.
- Facilitated a meeting at the 29th annual bat research symposium in which leading bat biologists and conservationists representing federal and state agencies, universities, corporations, and other conservation organizations, drafted the first continent-wide plan for conserving bats.
- Hired bat biologist Annika Keeley, in cooperation with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, to develop a Texas Bat Action Plan for managing 400-plus caves on state property, as well as forests, bridges, mines, and other vital habitat for Texas's 31 bat species.
- Collaborated with Weyerhaeuser and the Boise Cascade Corporation to form the Northwest Bat Cooperative, the first timber industry initiative that allows forest managers to support and share research and management strategies.

Public Outreach

- Consulted on NASA's "Echo the Bat" interactive multimedia software, which teaches elementary students about biodiversity, mapping technology, and other scientific concepts by tracking Echo on his seasonal migration path.
- Educated millions of people about bats through a variety of media including the Wall Street Journal and Washington Post newspapers, Modern Maturity and National Gardening magazines, and television programs on PBS and the Travel Channel.

Bats and Bridges

- Surveyed 137 bridges in Oregon state forests by request of the state government and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which are now exploring new bat-friendly bridge designs.
- Shared bat-compatible bridge designs and data with more than 300 attendees from 13 countries at the International Conference on Wildlife Ecology and Transportation.

Latin America

- Continued education programs for communities near key bat caves throughout Mexico,

most recently at La Gruta in Michoacan. More than 2,100 people viewed an exhibit about the cave's 17 species of bats, and local women learned to make bat-related crafts to sell to tourists.

- Published the third in BCI's series of bilingual children's books, *Don Sabino, el Murciélago de la Ciudad (Don Sabino, The City Bat)*, which will be used to teach urban students about the values of bats.

- Funded production of a "Bats of Bolivia" poster by the Program for the Conservation of Bolivian Bats.

North American Bat House Research Project

- Designed experiments and consulted on new bat house installations at sites in British Columbia, New Hampshire, Washington, Michigan, Texas, California, and Wisconsin.

- Advised on bat houses to be featured at the Costa Rica Rainforest Aerial Tram, visited by over 50,000 people a year.

- Consulted with DuPont on construction and installation of bat houses at their 60-acre artificial wetland in Victoria, Texas, which is visited by hundreds of school children each month.

Workshops / Education

- Held the 11th year of Bat Conservation and Management workshops in Arizona, Pennsylvania, and California. A total of 136 people attended the five-day sessions, representing six countries, 16 state and federal agencies, and 34 universities and private organizations.

- Coordinated the fourth annual Mexican free-tailed bat workshop with the Colorado Division of Wildlife. Participants from seven agencies, as well as private landowners, used management guidelines from previous workshops to create a watchable wildlife site at an abandoned mine.

- Trained 105 park interpreters and other educators at BCI's one-day Educator's Workshop in Texas and at the National Interpreters Workshop in New York.

North American Bats and Mines Project

- Instituted the Great Lakes Bats and Mines Initiative in June with grants from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the Environmental Protection Agency, state agencies, and others. The \$250,000 project will protect hibernation sites for hundreds of thousands of little brown and big brown bats by gating approximately 20 mines.

- Collaborated with the NRCS (see above) on a new bat pamphlet (www.ag.iastate.edu/centers/whmi/bats.pdf) and on a survey of six mines in Virginia City, Nevada.

- Trained 50 mining and wildlife professionals from 24 state and federal agencies and mining companies at a "Mine Assessment for Bats" workshop in Nevada.

- Surveyed 45 mines at Joshua Tree National Park in California, as the first part of a four-year plan to evaluate more than 200 mines.

Elsewhere Around the World

- Matched funds with the Bat Conservation Trust in the United Kingdom in support of Grupul Fauna, which has established the first bat reserve in a former Soviet republic. They are now working on a second reserve as part of their goal to restore habitats destroyed through years of strife in Moldova, the Ukraine, and Romania.

We regret that, given our limited space, we cannot possibly acknowledge all the organizations and individuals who have contributed to these projects. Your support is deeply appreciated.

CAPTIONS



The new "Bats of the Eastern Woodlands" poster was produced as part of BCI's ongoing Bats in American Forests Initiative and is being distributed to wildlife professionals throughout the eastern United States. Artwork from the poster was adapted for a new eight-by-eight-foot traveling exhibit, funded by the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



Once the home of the largest colony of Townsend's big-eared bats in Wyoming, Spence Cave had been badly damaged by careless visitors. The construction of a bat-friendly gate in the entrance was one of 19 projects funded by BCI through the North American Bat Conservation Partnership's granting program this year.

Because of the cave's remote location, a helicopter had to transport the steel and other

materials necessary for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to build the gate.

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