

National WNS Executive Committee Update

June 22, 2011

General Update

Geomyces destructans, the fungus responsible for White-Nose Syndrome (WNS), is now found in 19 states and 4 Canadian provinces. WNS has been confirmed in 16 of the 19 states and all 4 of the Canadian provinces. Six (6) species of bats are found to be affected by WNS. An additional 3 species have had *G. destructans* detected, but WNS has not developed. Those include, Cave bat (*Myotis velifer*), Gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*), and Southeastern bat (*Myotis austroriparius*).

National Plan Update

The long anticipated “National Plan for Assisting States, Federal Agencies, and Tribes in Managing White-Nose Syndrome in Bats” was released in May. We commend the hard work of all partners in the creation of this comprehensive plan.

This document will provide the framework for agencies and tribes to work toward common goals and objectives. It does not provide detail on how to achieve these particular items. The National WNS Implementation Plan is in its infancy and individuals are being selected for that particular writing team. It will encompass many areas of specialty based on the structured working groups developed in the framework of the National Plan. If you have staff you feel would be an asset to the construction of the Implementation plan, I would encourage them to contact Jeremy Coleman (Jeremy_Coleman@fws.gov) or Sunni Carr (sunni.carr@ky.gov).

The plan can be found at:

<http://www.fws.gov/WhiteNoseSyndrome/pdf/WNSnationalplanMay2011.pdf>

National Structure Update

Both the National WNS Executive Committee and Steering Committee have been fully seated and the various Working Groups are now being developed. Key individuals have been involved with various working groups to date, but a renewed emphasis has been placed on filling vacancies within each area. Again, if you have staff you feel have an area of expertise, please have them contact either Jeremy or Sunni.

Financial Commitment

Funding for WNS work continues to be of utmost importance. We all realize the added pressure that WNS has imposed on limited state and federal budgets. Senate Hearing testimony was provided on June 24th. Federal and state partners provided testimony. Dr. Jon Gassett spoke on behalf of AFWA. We are hopeful that Senate members acknowledge the urgency for funding and continue to support the

critical work that is underway. State partners, thank you for your commitment regarding this disease. The following table provides information on both federal/state expenditures to date.

DRAFT 6.20.2011 - Government Agency Expenditures to Address White-Nose Syndrome
(\$ in thousands)

		FY 07-08 Final	FY 2009 Final	FY 2010 Draft	FY 2011 Estimate
FWS	Base Funds	396.15	586.11	712.71	300.00*
	Dedicated Funding	771.88	2,148.37	4,613.33	2,479.72
	Total WNS Funding (all sources)	1,168.03	2,734.48	5,326.04	2,779.72
USGS	Base Funds	86.95	120.59	266.09	483.51
	Dedicated Funding	0	185.50	644.22	406.25
	Total WNS Funding (all sources)	86.95	306.09	910.31	889.76
USFS	Base Funds			1,815.00	
	Dedicated Funding				
	Total WNS Funding (all sources)	0	890.00	1,815.00	2,000.00
NPS	Base Funds	125.00	125.00	207.00	100.00
	Dedicated Funding	0	0	0	0
	Total WNS Funding (all sources)	125.00	125.00	207.00	100.00
BLM	Base Funds			50.00	80.00
	Dedicated Funding				
	Total WNS Funding (all sources)	0	0	50.00	80.00
APHIS WS	Base Funds	1.00	4.00	10.00	10.00
	Dedicated Funding				
	Total WNS Funding (all sources)	1.00	4.00	10.00	10.00
DoD	Base Funds				
	Dedicated Funding		55.00	275.00	200.00**
	Total WNS Funding (all sources)	0	55.00	275.00	200.00
States (40 reporting)	Base Funds				
	Dedicated Funding				
	Total WNS Funding (all sources)	413.00 [†]	889.00 [†]	1,395.00 [†]	1,515.00 [†]
Total WNS Funding Across All Agencies		1,793.98	5,003.57	9,988.35	7,574.48

* Base funds in FY11 do not include salary for WNS Coordinators or Communication positions.

** Includes funds obtained by March 2011, does not include pending requests.

[†] Values corrected from March 2011 version to address inconsistencies in reporting.

Center for Biological Diversity Lawsuit

The CBD has filed a lawsuit suggesting that all caves and mines on federal lands be closed to non-essential human access, to attempt to limit anthropogenic spread of WNS. It is suspected that the large jump of *Geomyces destructans* as far west as Oklahoma could be human related. Department of Interior agencies will submit comments/responses to the Secretary, who will craft a single response for submission to CBD. US Department of Agriculture will provide a point response as well. A release of the CBD action can be found at: http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/campaigns/bat_crisis_white-nose_syndrome/pdfs/Bat_APA_Petition_NOI_5-25-11.pdf

Economic Impacts of WNS

There has been a tremendous effort put forth to capture the economic impact of WNS. This impact includes, but is not limited to, agriculture production losses, health issues, ecosystem services, and other values not easily quantified. It is estimated that bats have an annual economic benefit of \$3 – 54 billion per year. The articles' lead contact is Thomas Kunz of Boston University. The full article can be viewed at: <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/332/6025/41.full>

The USFS is also investigating the economic importance of bats. Sybil Abelon is working to complete two papers addressing this issue. Results and publication are anticipated soon.

USFWS WNS Website

The USFWS has maintained an up to date website which harbors fact sheets, photos, plan information, current range of WNS, articles, decontamination procedures, and advisories. This site serves as the “one-stop” shopping on current WNS topics. Please visit the site at: <http://www.fws.gov/whitenosesyndrome/>