

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/27/2018 4:00:00 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service,

Thank you for the chance to comment on proposed changes to the protective plan for Daniel Boone National Forest. I have spent much time in the forest, hiking at all different times of days and in seasons. As a Kentuckian, I greatly treasure the unique balance of life in this jewel of a forest.

I have grave concerns regarding changes to restrictions or parameters in the Forest Plan affecting vegetation management, and logging in particular. The removal or reduction of protective measures with regards to Indiana and northern long-eared bat maternity colonies are particularly worrisome. Both of these species of bats are in sharp decline, and immediately imperiled. The possibility that the Daniel Boone National Forest would change Forest Plan standards in such a way as to increase the probability of impacting or destroying a maternity colony is not something that we find acceptable. The loss of a single maternity colony at this juncture could be catastrophic.

The following are questions and concerns that should be addressed in the environmental analysis for the Plan Amendment:

1) What are the current protocols for identifying maternity colonies or other active roosts? When during planning and harvest operations are surveys made, and by whom? What training is received by personnel to identify active roosts?

2) How often have maternity colonies been found in project areas? Following the identification of Indiana (and northern long-eared) bats, how did the Forest Service modify or delay specific projects and operations in order to comply with Forest Plan Standards? Please be specific.

3) Please provide ample scientific evidence demonstrating that the newly proposed Forest Plan standards (e.g., changes to basal area standards, snag retention, seasonal harvest restrictions relating to habitat occupancy, etc.) are more or as protective for federally-listed bat species as the current plan standards. It does not appear to me that they are.

I expect the Forest Service to commit to a thorough, detailed, and reasoned analysis with regards to any changes to Indiana and northern long-eared bat management on the Daniel Boone National Forest. Any changes to the Forest Plan should be firmly rooted in evidence that future management will be as or more protective of Indiana and northern long-eared bats as the current procedures.

I am also concerned that the plan is short-sighted and will have unintended consequences on other species. I believe it is the first step in selling off our heritage for a profit. In 50 years, little changes like this can be footsteps towards abandoning protection of the forest for profit. This must be stopped now.

Sincerely,

Denise M. Logsdon, MS