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Comments: I am against the U.S. Forest Service's proposed reduction in protections in the Daniel Boone National Forest. The proposed amendments would weaken protections for federally-endangered Indiana bats (*Myotis sodalis*) and federally-threatened northern long-eared bats (*Myotis septentrionalis*) with no real gain.

In the Draft Environmental Assessment, the Forest Service states that lifting logging restrictions is needed to shift logging to drier parts of the year, and therefore better limit sedimentation in streams which could impact aquatic species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Yet, in the environmental analysis for each and every timber sale on the Daniel Boone National Forest, the Forest Service states emphatically that the amount of sediment reaching streams from their timber operations is minimal, and will not impact threatened and endangered aquatic species and their habitats. Does that mean that their logging projects are, in fact, degrading aquatic habitats? If so, will the Forest Service commit to cancelling all active timber sales until the projects can be revised to adequately protect aquatic species?

The Draft EA states that "The Proposed action will not increase vegetation management volume extracted identified in the 2004 Forest Plan." What's left out is that meeting the established Forest Plan timber harvest goals - which were widely opposed during the Forest Plan revision process - would mean nearly tripling of the amount of timber cut on the Daniel Boone National Forest. Therefor, these revisions are not about protecting aquatic species, but are instead about further monetizing our natural resources while ignoring the environmental costs.

Periodically revising management plans based on updated science and evolving conservation strategies can be a responsible thing to do. Amending the Forest Plan with respect to endangered bats or other at-risk species is not necessarily bad. But even the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been critical of this proposal, stating in their early comments that "If the action is carried out as proposed, an increase in adverse effects on federally-listed species is anticipated." This proposed Plan Amendment is not coming out of concern for protecting endangered bats, or protecting our most imperiled aquatic species. It's coming from a desire to see more timber cut on more acres. That is a problem and, as such, this proposal should not be allowed to move forward.