

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 17, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Dan Ashe, Director
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Room 3331
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell and Director Ashe:

We are writing in response to a notice published by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in the October 2, 2013 Federal Register (78 Fed. Reg. 61046) in which the Service proposed, in response to a petition from the Center for Biological Diversity, to list the Northern Long-Eared Bat as an endangered species. The notice also made a not warranted decision on listing the Eastern Small-Footed Bat.

The Northern Long-Eared Bat population has been decimated by a disease known as White Nose Syndrome. The Center for Biological Diversity seeks to use the Endangered Species Act to halt all human development and economic activity where this species of bat is present, regardless of the cause of the species' population decline.

We request that the Service publish all scientific data used to evaluate the species or the impacts to the species from White Nose Syndrome. As a number of commenters on the proposed listing have demonstrated, the available information does not support listing the species as endangered. There is significant scientific disagreement over the bat's population levels and trends and the spread and effect of White Nose Syndrome on the species. This is troubling because an endangered listing would significantly and irretrievably harm the economy of the state of Louisiana, with no appreciable benefit to the species. Virtually every segment of the economy would be affected by such a listing as it would severely restrict activities associated with energy development, timber harvesting, home building, commercial development, farming, and manufacturing.

The impacts on our economy are avoidable, however, if the Fish and Wildlife Service complies with its statutory mandate to use only the best available scientific and commercial data and consider the information that affected states, local entities, private landowners and other

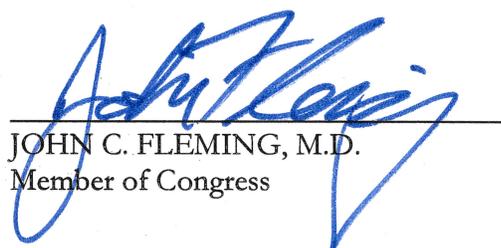
stakeholders have provided in comments. We urge the Service to reverse its current listing decision for the species in light of the information provided through comment submission.

We are confident that a good faith review of the stakeholder comments will lead the Fish and Wildlife Service to agree that the petition from the Center for Biological Diversity is incorrect and unwarranted.

We support the not warranted decision regarding the Eastern Small-Footed Bat. We strongly oppose the proposed listing of the Northern Long-Eared Bat as endangered.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



JOHN C. FLEMING, M.D.
Member of Congress



MARY L. LANDRIEU
United States Senator



DAVID VITTER
United States Senator



CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, Jr., M.D.
Member of Congress



STEVE SCALISE
Member of Congress



BILL CASSIDY, M.D.
Member of Congress



VANCE McALLISTER
Member of Congress