



EVERGLADES COALITION

Resolution Recommending the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Protect All Critical Habitat Necessary to Safeguard the Florida Bonneted Bat from Urban Development and Climate Change

WHEREAS, the Florida bonneted bat, named for its large, bonnet-like ears, is the largest species of bat in Florida;

WHEREAS, the Florida bonneted bat lives exclusively in south Florida within the Greater Everglades Ecosystem;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 because of urban development, climate change, sea level rise, pesticides, and inadequate regulatory measures to address those and other threats;

WHEREAS, urban development has already destroyed and degraded much of the Florida bonneted bat's habitat across its historic range and imminently threatens many of the remaining fragments of habitat the bat needs to survive, particularly in Miami-Dade and Collier counties;

WHEREAS, sea level rise and storms of increasing intensity driven by climate change threaten to destroy significant areas of Florida bonneted bat habitat, including several known roost sites;

WHEREAS, there are currently no federal protections for the habitat that Florida bonneted bats depend upon to survive and recover;

WHEREAS, on June 10, 2020, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife proposed critical habitat for the Florida bonneted bat;

WHEREAS, the 2020 proposal failed to include occupied and unoccupied areas of habitat that are essential for the survival and recovery of the Florida bonneted bat;

WHEREAS, on November 22, 2022, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published revised proposed critical habitat for the Florida bonneted bat;

WHEREAS, the 2022 proposal continues to omit key areas of habitat necessary for the Florida bonneted bat to survive and recover, including occupied roosting and foraging habitat and airspace that are imminently threatened by urban development, and unoccupied habitat that bats will need when they are forced out of currently occupied areas by climate change and sea level rise; and

The Everglades Coalition is a 501(c)3 alliance of local, state, and national conservation organizations dedicated to the full protection and restoration of America's Everglades.

WHEREAS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will consider public comments and issue a final critical habitat designation for the Florida bonneted bat on or before November 2023.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED ON JANUARY 26TH, 2023

The Everglades Coalition strongly urges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to include in its final designation of critical habitat for the Florida bonneted bat all habitat necessary to safeguard the species' survival and recovery, including occupied habitat in urban areas and unoccupied habitat necessary for the species to adapt to climate change and sea level rise.



Mark Perry
Co-Chair



Kelly Cox
Co-Chair

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