# **WV Cave Closures to Protect Bats**

For many years, closures at important bat caves have been effective at reducing disturbance and assisting with the recovery of populations of endangered bats. However, at this time, White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) is having a dramatic negative impact on bat populations in West Virginia including species, such as the little brown bat, that a few years ago were considered both common and widespread. One of the ways that cavers can minimize their impact to the bats that remain is to avoid caves when significant bat populations are present. This can help bats survive WNS by minimizing disturbance at a time of year when they are under stress and could assist with the recovery of species in the post-WNS environment. The following list was developed to assist cavers in determining where and when significant populations of bats may be present. In general, however, the best policy for helping bats recover from WNS may be simply to avoid caves with any hibernating bats during the winter. Although minimizing winter disturbance will be beneficial to the bats, no one knows if it will be enough to allow bat populations to recover in the wake of WNS. The situation will have to be re-assessed in the future. For now, based on what we do know, we feel this effort is worthwhile.

#### Criteria:

## Winter closure (official dates for endangered bat caves -1 Sep through 15 May)

100 or more tricolored bats (pre-WNS) or

100 or more little brown bats in winter (pre-WNS) or

Endangered bats in winter (Indiana bats or Virginia big-eared bats)

(Note: Many caves have few northern long-eared bats in winter, but the important sites are captured with the little brown bats sites above.)

### Summer closure (official dates 1 Apr through 15 Sep)

Summer use by Virginia big-eared bats

### All year

Summer colony of Virginia big-eared bats and Significant concentration of hibernating bats

To be listed as an **endangered bat cave**, there has to have been a bat count with 10 or more endangered bats in the cave.

**Y-E** indicates a closure to benefit endangered bats. Y indicates a recommended closure that will benefit other bat species, but endangered bats are not usually present.

This list is limited to caves for which we have data. If you know of other caves which have (or had) large numbers of hibernating bats, please consider staying out of those caves in the winter also.

		Closure Season for Bat Protection				
Cave Name	County	Summer Only	Winter Only	All Year	Other	Endangered Bats
Alpena 2	Randolph		Υ			
Arbogast/Cave Hollow	Tucker			Y-E		Y
Beacon	Mercer		Υ			
Bear Heaven (of Bowden)	Randolph		Y-E			Y
Big Springs	Tucker		Y-E			Y
Blood	Pendleton		Y		Y-E= Aug 15 –Nov 15	Y

Bob Ge						Y= Nov 16 -	
Bore Hole						Apr 30	
Bowden	Bob Gee	Greenbrier					
Buckeye Creek   Greenbrier   Y   Caldwell   Mercer   Y   Caldwell   Mercer   Y   Carpenters Pit   Pocahontas   Y   Cass   Pocahontas   Y   Cassell   Pocahontas   Y   Cassell   Pocahontas   Y   Cave Mountain   Pendleton   Y-E   Y   Y   Cave Rat   Pendleton   Y-E   Y   Y   Confluence   Tucker   Y   Cornwell   Preston   Y-E   Y   Y   Preston   Preston   Preston   Y-E   Y   Y   Preston   Preston   Y-E   Y   Preston   Y-E   Y   Preston   Y-E   Y   Preston   Y-E   Y   Preston   Y-E   Preston   Y-E   Y   Preston   Y-E   Prest	Bore Hole	Pocahontas					
Caldwell   Mercer   Y   Carpenters Pit   Pocahontas   Y   Cass   Pocahontas   Y   Cass   Pocahontas   Y   Cass   Pocahontas   Y   Case   Pocahontas   Y   Cave Muntain   Pendleton   Y-E   Y   Y   Cornwell   Preston   Y-E   Y   Y   Cornwell   Preston   Y-E   Y   Y   Preston   Y-E	Bowden	Randolph					
Carpenters Pit	Buckeye Creek	Greenbrier		Υ			
Cass         Pocahontas         Y           Casse Mountain         Pendieton         Y E           Cave Rat         Pendieton         Y           Confluence         Tucker         Y           Cornwell         Preston         Y-E           Dreen         Pocahontas         Y           Dyers         Hardy         Y           Eliza (Reeds Creek)         Pendleton         Y           Elkhorn         Grant         Y-E Jun           Elkhorn         Grant         Y-E Jun           Elkhorn         Grant         Y-E Jun           Falling Spring         Randolph         Y-E           Fort Lick         Randolph         Y-E           Fort Lick         Randolph         Y-E           Flute         Pendleton         Y-E           Y         Y-E         Y           General Davis         Greenbrier         Y-E           Flute         Pendleton         Y-E           Y-E         Y         Y           Green Hollow         Hardy         Y-E           Green Hollow         Hardy         Y-E           Green Hollow         Hardy         Y-E           Y-E	Caldwell	Mercer		Y			
Cassell         Pocahontas         Y           Cave Mountain         Pendleton         Y-E           Cave Rat         Pendleton         Y           Confluence         Tucker         Y           Cornwell         Preston         Y-E           Dreen         Pocahontas         Y           Dyers         Hardy         Y           Eliza (Reeds Creek)         Pendleton         Y           Elkhorn         Grant         Ty-E= Jun 15 - Oct 15 Y - Oct 15 Y - Oct 15 Y - Oct 16 - Apr 30           Falling Spring         Randolph         Y-E           Fort Lick         Randolph         Y-E           Fort Lick         Randolph         Y-E           Flute         Pendleton         Y-E           Green Hollow         Hardy         Y-E           Greenville Saltpeter         Monroe         Y-E           Hamiton         Pendleton         Y-E           Herb Greensha	Carpenters Pit	Pocahontas		Y			
Cave Mountain	Cass	Pocahontas		Y			
Cave Rat	Cassell	Pocahontas		Y			
Confluence	Cave Mountain	Pendleton	Y-E	Υ			Υ
Cornwell	Cave Rat	Pendleton		Υ			
Dreen	Confluence	Tucker		Υ			
Dreen	Cornwell	Preston		Y-E			Υ
Dyers	Dreen	Pocahontas					
Eliza (Reeds Creek)				Y			
Section							
Elkhorn				'		Y-E= Jun	
Fort Lick         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Flute         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           General Davis         Greenbrier         Y-E         Y           Green Hollow         Hardy         Y-E         Y           Green Hollow         Hardy         Y-E         Y           Goseberry         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Greenville Saltpeter         Monroe         Y-E         Y           Hamilton         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Herb Greenshank         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Herb Greenshank         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Herb Greenshank         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Higginbotham 1         Greenbrier         Y         Y           Higginbotham 2         Greenbrier         Y         Y-E         Y           Hoffman School         Pendleton         Y-E         Y         Y           Honaker         Mercer         Y-E         Y         Y           Indian Draft         Monroe         Y-E         Y         Y           Izaak Walton         Randolph         Y-E         Y         Y	Elkhorn	Grant				Y= Oct 16-	Υ
Fort Lick         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Flute         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           General Davis         Greenbrier         Y-E         Y           Green Hollow         Hardy         Y-E         Y           Green Hollow         Hardy         Y-E         Y           Goseberry         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Greenville Saltpeter         Monroe         Y-E         Y           Hamilton         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Herb Greenshank         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Herb Greenshank         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Herb Greenshank         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Higginbotham 1         Greenbrier         Y         Y           Higginbotham 2         Greenbrier         Y         Y-E         Y           Hoffman School         Pendleton         Y-E         Y         Y           Honaker         Mercer         Y-E         Y         Y           Indian Draft         Monroe         Y-E         Y         Y           Izaak Walton         Randolph         Y-E         Y         Y	Falling Spring	Randolph		Y-E			Υ
Flute				Y-E			Υ
Green Hollow         Hardy         Y-E         Y           Gooseberry         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Greenville Saltpeter         Monroe         Y-E         Y           Hamilton         Pendleton         Y         Y           Helhole         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Herb Greenshank         Pendleton         Y         Y           Higginbotham 1         Greenbrier         Y         Y           Higginbotham 2         Greenbrier         Y         Y           Hoffman School         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Honaker         Mercer         Y-E         Y           Indian Draft         Monroe         Y         Y           Izaak Walton         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Kilnes Gap         Grant         Y         Y           Lambert 1         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Lobelia Saltpeter         Pocahontas         Y         Y	Flute		Y-E	Υ			Υ
Green Hollow         Hardy         Y-E         Y           Gooseberry         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Greenville Saltpeter         Monroe         Y-E         Y           Hamilton         Pendleton         Y         Y           Helhole         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Herb Greenshank         Pendleton         Y         Y           Higginbotham 1         Greenbrier         Y         Y           Higginbotham 2         Greenbrier         Y         Y           Hoffman School         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Honaker         Mercer         Y-E         Y           Indian Draft         Monroe         Y         Y           Izaak Walton         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Kilnes Gap         Grant         Y         Y           Lambert 1         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Lobelia Saltpeter         Pocahontas         Y         Y				Y-E			
Gooseberry Randolph Y-E Y Greenville Saltpeter Monroe Y-E Y Hamilton Pendleton Y Hellhole Pendleton Y-E Y Hrigginbotham 1 Greenbrier Y Hoffman School Pendleton Y-E Y Laule Orek Walton Randolph Y-E Y Lambert 1 Pendleton Y-E Y Lambert 1 Pendleton Y-E Y Laurel Creek Monroe Y Lubdington Greenbrier Y Marthas Pocahontas Y-E Y Marthas Pocahontas Y-E Y Miller Monroe Y Miller Monroe Y Miller Monroe Y-E Y Millor-Simmons Randolph Y-E Y Minror Rexrode Pendleton Y-E Y Mitchells Pendleton Y-E Y Mitchells							
Greenville Saltpeter         Monroe         Y-E         Y           Hamilton         Pendleton         Y           Hellhole         Pendleton         Y           Herb Greenshank         Pendleton         Y           Higginbotham 1         Greenbrier         Y           Higginbotham 4         Greenbrier         Y           Hoffman School         Pendleton         Y-E           Honaker         Mercer         Y-E           Indian Draft         Monroe         Y           Izaak Walton         Randolph         Y-E           Key         Pendleton         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y           Kilines Gap         Grant         Y           Lambert 1         Pendleton         Y-E           Lambert 1         Pendleton         Y-E           Luddington         Greenbrier         Y           Luddington         Greenbrier         Y           Marthas         Pocahontas         Y-E           Ludli Run         Pendleton         Y-E           Miller         Monroe         Y           Miller         Monroe         Y-E           Miller         Monroe         Y-E							
Hamilton Pendleton Y Hellhole Pendleton Y-E Herb Greenshank Pendleton Y Higginbotham 1 Greenbrier Y Higginbotham 4 Greenbrier Y Hordman School Pendleton Y-E Honaker Mercer Y-E Indian Draft Monroe Y Izaak Walton Randolph Y-E Kenny Simmons Pendleton Y Key Pendleton Y-E Lambert 1 Pendleton Y-E Laurel Creek Monroe Y Lobelia Saltpeter Pocahontas Y Luddington Greenbrier Y MorFerrin Greenbrier Y Miller Monroe Y Mingo-Simmons Randolph Y-E Y My Mreprocept Y Mitchells Pendleton Y-E Y My							
Hellhole Pendleton Y-E Y Herb Greenshank Pendleton Y Higginbotham 1 Greenbrier Y Higginbotham 4 Greenbrier Y Hoffman School Pendleton Y-E Y Honaker Mercer Y-E Y Indian Draft Monroe Y Izaak Walton Randolph Y-E Y Kenny Simmons Pendleton Y Key Pendleton Y-E Y Lambert 1 Pendleton Y-E Y Laurel Creek Monroe Y Lobelia Saltpeter Pocahontas Y Luddington Greenbrier Y Marthas Pocahontas Y-E Y McFerrin Greenbrier Y Miller Monroe Y Mingo-Simmons Randolph Y-E Y Mirchells Pendleton Y-E Y Mitchells							<u> </u>
Herb Greenshank Pendleton Y Higginbotham 1 Greenbrier Y Hoffman School Pendleton Y-E Y Honaker Mercer Y-E Y Indian Draft Monroe Y Izaak Walton Randolph Y-E Y Kenny Simmons Pendleton Y Key Pendleton Y Lambert 1 Pendleton Y-E Y Laurel Creek Monroe Y Luddington Greenbrier Y Marthas Pocahontas Y-E Y MorFerrin Greenbrier Y Miller Monroe Y Minor Rexrode Pendleton Y-E Y Mitchells Pendleton Y-E Y Mitchells Pendleton Y-E Y Mitchells Y-E Y Migreer Y-E Y Migreer Y-E Y Mitchells Pendleton Y-E							Υ
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Hoffman School         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Honaker         Mercer         Y-E         Y           Indian Draft         Monroe         Y           Izaak Walton         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Kenny Simmons         Pendleton         Y         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y         Y           Klines Gap         Grant         Y         Y           Lambert 1         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Laurel Creek         Monroe         Y         Y           Lobelia Saltpeter         Pocahontas         Y         Y           Luddington         Greenbrier         Y         Y           Marthas         Pocahontas         Y-E         Y           McFerrin         Greenbrier         Y         Y           Mill Run         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E         Y-E           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y         Y-E           Mitchells         Pendleton         Y         Y-E							
Honaker         Mercer         Y-E         Y           Indian Draft         Monroe         Y           Izaak Walton         Randolph         Y-E           Kenny Simmons         Pendleton         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y           Klines Gap         Grant         Y           Lambert 1         Pendleton         Y-E           Lambert 1         Pendleton         Y-E           Laurel Creek         Monroe         Y           Lobelia Saltpeter         Pocahontas         Y           Luddington         Greenbrier         Y           Marthas         Pocahontas         Y-E         Y           McFerrin         Greenbrier         Y           Mill Run         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Miller         Monroe         Y           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E         Y-E           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y					Y-E		Υ
Indian Draft         Monroe         Y           Izaak Walton         Randolph         Y-E           Kenny Simmons         Pendleton         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y           Klines Gap         Grant         Y           Lambert 1         Pendleton         Y-E           Laurel Creek         Monroe         Y           Lobelia Saltpeter         Pocahontas         Y           Luddington         Greenbrier         Y           Marthas         Pocahontas         Y-E           McFerrin         Greenbrier         Y           Mill Run         Pendleton         Y-E           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y-E           Mitchells         Pendleton         Y				Y-E			
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Kenny Simmons         Pendleton         Y           Key         Pendleton         Y           Klines Gap         Grant         Y           Lambert 1         Pendleton         Y           Laurel Creek         Monroe         Y           Lobelia Saltpeter         Pocahontas         Y           Luddington         Greenbrier         Y           Marthas         Pocahontas         Y-E           McFerrin         Greenbrier         Y           Mill Run         Pendleton         Y-E           Miller         Monroe         Y           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y-E           Mitchells         Pendleton         Y				-			Υ
Key         Pendleton         Y           Klines Gap         Grant         Y           Lambert 1         Pendleton         Y-E           Laurel Creek         Monroe         Y           Lobelia Saltpeter         Pocahontas         Y           Luddington         Greenbrier         Y           Marthas         Pocahontas         Y-E           McFerrin         Greenbrier         Y           Mill Run         Pendleton         Y-E           Miller         Monroe         Y           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y-E           Mitchells         Pendleton         Y							
Klines Gap Grant Y  Lambert 1 Pendleton Y-E Y  Laurel Creek Monroe Y  Lobelia Saltpeter Pocahontas Y  Luddington Greenbrier Y  Marthas Pocahontas Y-E Y  Mill Run Pendleton Y-E Y  Miller Monroe Y  Mingo-Simmons Randolph Y-E Y  Mitchells Pendleton Y  Mitchells	-						
Lambert 1PendletonY-EYLaurel CreekMonroeYYLobelia SaltpeterPocahontasYYLuddingtonGreenbrierYYMarthasPocahontasY-EYMcFerrinGreenbrierYYMill RunPendletonY-EYMillerMonroeYYMingo-SimmonsRandolphY-EYMinor RexrodePendletonY-EYMitchellsPendletonYY							
Laurel Creek         Monroe         Y           Lobelia Saltpeter         Pocahontas         Y           Luddington         Greenbrier         Y           Marthas         Pocahontas         Y-E           McFerrin         Greenbrier         Y           Mill Run         Pendleton         Y-E           Miller         Monroe         Y           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y-E           Mitchells         Pendleton         Y			Y-F	· ·			Υ
Lobelia SaltpeterPocahontasYLuddingtonGreenbrierYMarthasPocahontasY-EYMcFerrinGreenbrierYYMill RunPendletonY-EYMillerMonroeYYMingo-SimmonsRandolphY-EYMinor RexrodePendletonY-EYMitchellsPendletonYY			. =	Y			•
Luddington         Greenbrier         Y           Marthas         Pocahontas         Y-E           McFerrin         Greenbrier         Y           Mill Run         Pendleton         Y-E           Miller         Monroe         Y           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y-E           Mitchells         Pendleton         Y							
Marthas         Pocahontas         Y-E         Y           McFerrin         Greenbrier         Y           Mill Run         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Miller         Monroe         Y           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Mitchells         Pendleton         Y         Y							
McFerrin         Greenbrier         Y           Mill Run         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Miller         Monroe         Y           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Mitchells         Pendleton         Y         Y							Υ
Mill Run         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Miller         Monroe         Y           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Mitchells         Pendleton         Y         Y							•
Miller         Monroe         Y           Mingo-Simmons         Randolph         Y-E         Y           Minor Rexrode         Pendleton         Y-E         Y           Mitchells         Pendleton         Y         Y			Y-E				Υ
Mingo-SimmonsRandolphY-EYMinor RexrodePendletonY-EYMitchellsPendletonY			. =				•
Minor RexrodePendletonY-EYMitchellsPendletonY				_			Υ
Mitchells Pendleton Y				· <del>-</del>	Y-F		
				Y	_ · <del>_</del>		•
Molers Jefferson Y				Y			

Mystic	Pendleton	Y-E	Υ		Υ
Organ	Greenbrier		Y-E		Y
Patton	Monroe		Y-E		Υ
Peacock	Grant			Y-E	Υ
Piercys	Greenbrier		Y-E		Υ
Piercys Mill	Greenbrier		Υ		
Poor Farm	Pocahontas		Υ		
Red Run (Moore)	Tucker		Υ		
Ridgeville	Mineral		Υ		
Ryan Hollow (mine)	Monongalia		Υ		
Saltpeter	Pendleton			Y-E	Υ
Schoolhouse	Pendleton			Y-E	Υ
Sharps	Randolph		Υ		
Sinks of Gandy	Randolph		Υ		
Sinnett/Thorn	Pendleton			Y-E	Υ
Sites	Pendleton		Υ		
Snedegars	Pocahontas		Y-E		Υ
Stewart Run	Randolph		Y-E		Υ
Stillhouse	Randolph		Υ		
Swecker Stream	Randolph		Υ		
The Portal	Pocahontas		Υ		
Trout	Pendleton			Y-E	Υ
Tub	Pocahontas		Y-E		Υ
Two Lick Run	Randolph	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Y-E		 Υ
Union	Monroe		Y		
Upper Beaverhole	Preston		Υ		
Upper Marthas	Pocahontas		Υ		

**National Forest:** <u>All caves</u> on National Forest lands in West Virginia and Virginia are currently closed year round.

**The Nature Conservancy:** Piercy's Cave may be open to low-impact caving in the summer with TNC approval. For current information please contact Mike Powell, Preserve Steward, at 304-637-0160 x 106 or <a href="mailto:dpowell@tnc.org">dpowell@tnc.org</a> and see <a href="mailto:www.nature.org/piercyscave">www.nature.org/piercyscave</a>. All other TNC caves are closed except for approved research and surveys.

**NSS, John Guilday Preserve:** <u>Trout Cave</u> is closed for endangered bats. <u>New Trout</u> and <u>Hamilton caves</u> will remain open. Cavers wishing to minimize disturbance to hibernating bats should consider scheduling trips in the summer rather than the winter whenever possible.

Nothing in the list above is intended to imply that access is granted to caves during the "open" period when there is a partial-year closure for bats. Please get land owner permission before going into caves.

Cave closures for bats at sites containing **no endangered species** have no legal status, but are included solely to provide guidance to the caving community. We have not sought landowner permission for these closures.

Also, to help ensure that the WNS fungus or other potential pathogens are not being transported between caves or introduced to new environments, please clean and decontaminate clothing and gear between all cave trips. The most recent decontamination protocols can be found here: http://www.fws.gov/whitenosesyndrome/cavers.html

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