

From: Bat World Sanctuary <sanctuary@batworld.org>
To: barbara_douglas@fws.gov
Sent: Fri, March 12, 2010 1:35:41 PM

Subject: The dying bats at CRC

Dear Barbara Douglas,

For the sake of the 10 bats that are still alive, I am once again e-mailing to offer critical advice that will save these animals. As I've never received one response from you, and have come to realize my previous advice was never shared, I have cc-d others who may find my information helpful.

As a bat care specialist and bat behavioral expert with two decades of experience caring for thousands of insectivorous bats (CV attached), I am stating for the record that those remaining bats absolutely must be moved if they are to be saved.

It appears that, once again, a collective decision was made without consulting experts in the field. The decision was made by unqualified people to keep these bats at the very facility where 75% of them have perished in a few short months. This was not a complicated, high-risk, extremely difficult endeavor. This subspecies is not some magical creature, it is an insectivorous bat just like all the other insectivorous bats that have been raised in captivity for decades by hundreds of bat care specialists. The 'lessons' that the Smithsonian is learning are lessons that others learned over 20 years ago. Despite claims to the contrary, we are aware that offers of help from AZA facilities were ignored by CRC, including the Lube Conservancy. In addition, we have been unable to unearth ANY contact between the CRC and the so-called 'bat rehab community.'

It also appears that, again without consulting bat care specialists, it has been declared that moving the bats will create additional stress. This is absurd. Transferring them will not kill them. As an example, a few years ago we rescued 1,200+ *T. brasiliensis* from a sub-basement. These bats had been stuck inside the basement for almost two weeks. Over 1000 had fallen through an abandoned elevator shaft and landed in a pool of oily water at the bottom of the shaft. After falling, the survivors managed to swim to the edge and crawl half way up the sides, where their exit was blocked. They hung there, oily, filthy and wet, for over a week before we were notified. These bats were covered with oily, polluted water which also contained dead bats, so their coats smelled like death. Others had foam sealant covering their fur, and were lying on the floor throughout the basement. Almost all 1,200 bats were comatose and barely breathing, yet the vast majority survived being transported to our facility two hours away, where they were rehydrated, bathed and medically treated. All but a handful were able to be released back to the wild less than a month later. This is what bat care specialists do, we transfer sick and dying animals to bat care facilities and bring them back to health. This can, and **SHOULD**, be done for the remaining 10 VBEB that are still alive.

Despite pointing fingers, paperwork, red tape, cover-ups and all the other excuses, the immediate focus here should be saving these last few bats. Bats are highly intelligent, and these animals fully realize they are in a toxic environment. If those bats are transferred to a different setting with different caretakers they can be saved. Please, look at the faces of those dying bats and then make up your mind.

Then, **JUST ONCE**, listen to the experts in this field. Those bats have suffered enough and deserve a chance to live, and this project deserves a chance at some semblance of success. For the sake of those animals, just do the right thing one time, before it is too late.

Amanda Lollar

*Amanda Lollar, Founder/President
Bat World Sanctuary*

www.batworld.org

Bat World Sanctuary is a non-profit conservation organization that provides rescue for bats worldwide. For more information about bats and how they make our world a better place please visit www.batworld.org